



THE WORKING CLASS

MONTHLY JOURNAL OF THE CITU 08

Defeat Imperialist Conspiracies Against The Socialist World

THE historic day of 7th November comes this year in the midst of clank of arms, of preparations for nuclear war. The imperialist language of the year is Neutron bomb, Pershing and Cruise missiles and billions of dollars to achieve superiority in war strength over the Soviet Union and the Socialist Camp.

The U.S. imperialists, the arch enemy of human freedom and world peace are bringing the world to the brink of a nuclear holocaust, which will lead to the destruction of millions of lives.

The talk of detente has disappeared in thin air. Those who believed that detente could be made permanent with the imperialist system, in fact, forgot the cannibalistic traits and character of imperialism.

The sudden change from the sweet talk of detente, Helsinki declaration, Salt II agreement, is not due just to a change in the USA administration. It is the real face of U.S. imperialism, now faced by all round challenges and with the prospect of the world slipping out of its hand.

Therefore the bellicose and **B.T. Ranadive** pircritical language of a limited nuclear war.

Against whom is the effort directed? Reagan has made it clear that it is directed against socialism. He talks about the sunset of socialism in the coming years. And he is preparing for it with neutron bombs and new missiles. The USA imperialists are preparing to unleash a war against the socialist world to regain the lost world for capitalism. Reagan is following in the footsteps of Hitler. He is openly supported in his preparations by some powers like Britain, though there are misgivings in the minds of some others. But the danger of war is real and has to be countered by the working class. It is intended to drown the world in a sea of blood, unleash unheard of destruction and mass killings by millions. To achieve what? To achieve and fulfil the sunset of socialism, the global ambition of the USA-the ambition of dominating and subjugating the world.

The working class cannot surrender the conquests of socialist revolutions to the American gunmen. The international movement fought unitedly to defeat Hitler and it succeeded.

Today also the same call for defence of the socialist world must reverberate throughout the country on the 7th November. Neither the working class of India nor the people as a whole realise the acuteness of this threat; still less they realise that the war is being organised for a counter-revolutionary purpose-sunset of socialism.

To rouse the working class and the people to oppose war, to frustrate imperialist designs against the socialist camp is today the primary task of proletarian internationalism and the working class in India should not be found wanting in discharging it.

It is all the more necessary because the ruling party and opposition bourgeois parties have all these years combined to conceal the real danger from imperialism and its war plans. The ruling party's incessant talk about two super powers-which eliminated the difference between the imperialist and socialist systems-conceals the criminal designs of U.S. imperialism. The opposition bourgeois parties generally follow the same line. And the BJP-that political signboard of RSS-concentrates fire on the Soviet and Socialist Camp in matters of international policies and gives a clear alibi to U.S. imperialism. Last three decades, successive Congress Governments continued to play between the two camps; they took valuable help from the USSR, signed the all important Indo-Soviet Treaty of

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Friendship, but refused to tell the people that the danger to country's freedom and world peace emanated from only one source—the imperialist camp headed by the USA.

The country is therefore likely to be caught unawares unless the working class and the trade union movement discharge its task and remind the people that the U.S. war preparations are also directed to intimidate the third world into subjugation. They are part of the imperialist plans to remould the world to its own needs. The need for this has become greater after the fiasco its policies have met in Afghanistan and Iran.

In pursuance of its policy of global domination, the USA is threatening India with war and attack on its freedom. The feverish arming of Pakistan, the indulgence shown towards its plans to develop nuclear weapons, are part of the old plan of making Asians fight Asians. Immediately they constitute an attempt to pressurise India to relax or give up the Indo-Soviet Treaty of Friendship and join the American ring.

India's interests are directly involved in fighting the war and pursuing peace.

The war plans of the USA directly affect the safety and security of millions of people. Huge peace protests are surfacing all over the world and oppose U.S. This broad peace movement in which people from all walks of life are involved constitutes an important support in the proletarians struggle to maintain peace and defeat the war-mongers. It shows isolation of the war mongers and constitutes an assurance that the people can defeat their plans and save the world from a genocidal nuclear catastrophe.

The working class and our people do not know the fact about aggressive war preparations.

The proposal to deploy Pershing and Cruise missiles in Europe is a direct threat to the USSR. These missiles with their range extending from 1,000 to 2,000 kilometres bring for the first time since the defeat of Hitler, the European part of the USSR under threat of direct attack from German soil.

The U.S. defence budget exceeded 100 billion dollars in 1976, by 1980 it reached 145 billion dollars and raised by Reagan to 227 billion dollars. For 1986 it will approach 400 billion dollars.

By 1980 the Pentagon had more than 20,000 bases in 26 countries manned by 260,000 officers and men. The increased U.S. presence in the Indian Ocean and the attempts to dominate the Persian Gulf area have already led to wide protests from the countries in these areas.

The U.S. further plans to include these areas part of the NATO operational area.

The USA is supported in these aggressive policies by Thatchers' Britain. During her visit to the USA in 1980 the British Prime Minister assured, "We, in Britain, stand with you. America's successes will be our successes—Your problems will be our problems. In Britain you will find a ready response, an ally, valiant, staunch and true."

Such are the ramifications of the plot against peace.

These aggressive plans have their origin in the desperate condition of the capitalist economy. The imperialists therefore are doing everything to undermine the advancing socialist economies, slander socialist countries, and support counter revolutionary forces as in Poland.

But their own economies are in disorder. Today again capitalism finds itself in another crisis which is considered to be the worst since the 1930 crisis. Following production loss in several countries in 1980, the capitalist world faces further drop in 1981. At the end of 1980, unemployment in capitalist countries rose to 24 million of which the USA share was 7.8 million, FRG had 1.3 million unemployed and France had 1.6 million. By the middle of 1981 Britain's figure exceeded 3 million. During the last ten years prices in capitalist countries have more than doubled and risen 50 per cent since 1975.

While real wages in most of the capitalist countries fell, profits of 500 largest U.S. companies rose by 23 percent in 1979 and amounted to 110,000 million dollars.

Unproductive huge defence expenditure has been one of the measures of the ruling Industrial Military complex in these countries to steady the economy. This has failed, leading to a desperate situation.

That is why the danger of war has to be taken seriously and fought with determination.

In this critical situation for the world and the international working class movement, the exposure of imperialist camp is hampered by the stand of People's China which abets imperialist designs.

In contrast to the capitalist world the USSR and the socialist countries show steady and boundless progress. The curse of unemployment no longer affects their economies. The right to work is ensured. Prices are stable. Standards of living are continuously rising. This economic progress would have been far more rapid had the socialist countries not been compelled to spend large sums for defence to match the aggressive preparations of the USA imperialists. (See Page 13)

FORWARD TO NOVEMBER 23

BY the time this issue reaches the readers, the Working Class and all sections of toiling people must be all set, giving finishing touches to the preparation for the Workers' March to Parliament on November 23, after having observed November 3 as Protest and Demand Day in a befitting manner. The slogan "Delhi Chalo" must be echoing in the factories, offices, the fields and the towns. The stirring call given by the historic Bombay Convention on June 4 has unleashed mighty forces throughout the length and breadth of the country and having overflowed the capacities of the convention halls in the states, regions or districts from Jammu and Kashmir to Andaman Nicobar or from Goa to Assam they are surely going to overflow the lawns of the Boat Club. The mighty voice of the working class and the rural toiling masses is going to serve a notice on the Govt. of India for a change in its anti-people, anti-working class, pro-landlord, pro-monopoly, pro-multinational policies.

The determination of the Working Class is increasing. Protest is developing into resistance. The people of Kerala, West Bengal and Tripura have rejected the lawless law-ESMA through strike actions. Preparation in other states are also going on. The leftled Governments have championed the cause of the people and working class by openly declaring that they would never invoke the NSA or the ESMA. They serve as the bastions of democracy and are beacon light for the down trodden masses, by showing alternative policies. The desperate ruling class, unable to check the mounting inflation and sky

rocketing of prices which is the creation of the fiasco of their capitalist planning, has taken recourse to ruthless suppression of all struggles and stifle the voice of the people. The working class have unitedly taken up the challenge. It is speaking for the whole people, by demanding the steps to ensure supply of essential commodities at subsidised prices. It is speaking for the agricultural workers by demanding remunerative prices for their produce. It is demanding better living conditions, freedom of association, right to collective bargaining and full democratic rights. It is a fight against the retrograde policies and repressive measures of an authoritarian regime.

The preparations for building up the class unity from the grass root level have had to overcome the divisive forces, active in many fields. They had to overcome the passions of the people roused on secessionist, casteist or religious channels. They had to face brutal and barbarous attacks unleashed by the goonda hirelings of the management in collusion with the police. They had to wither the storm of all repressive measures of the Government. Efforts made at some places to create confusion or attack the other partners from

within were either quelled through protest or ignored. Angered masses are coming into the vortex of struggle, because there is a growing consciousness about the urgent need to unite for a fight for a change in the policies. The NSA, ESMA or any amount of repression has not been able to stem the tide of the struggle. Many are already in struggle. Many more have served notices of strike. Still many others have declared their intention to go on strike if their legitimate demands are not met.

Let all these struggle converge together in a mighty battle arena. Let November 23 be a 'Red Letter Day' in the annals of the trade union movement of the country. Let the capital shake under the determined footsteps of the toiling masses. Let the ruling classes shake in their boots. Let there be no complacency in the preparations—All forward to November 23 for declaring an all India strike action as the next course and continuous massive action thereafter. Let the slogan 'Delhi Chalo' reverberate throughout the country. Let the left and democratic forces take the lead and play the vital role, history has placed on them.

ATTENTION FOR STATE COMMITTEES AND UNIONS

Vide BTR'S Circulars 23/81 of September 30 and 24/81 of October 2.

March To Parliament November 23.

- Send the number of participants (men and women) from your States.
- Send your Quota of Contributions.
- All Unions to Collect Rs. 3.00 per participant.
- Mobilise Women Workers for Participation.

(Orissa State Committee has already Contributed Rs 1000 00).

Note : Because of early advent of winter all participants should bring warm garments.

All India Convention of Working Women at New Delhi on November 22.

States Complete Conventions

Reception Committee Formed

JOINT Conventions against price rise and anti-labour policies of the Government are now complete in all the states.

CITU, AITUC, HMS and UTUC (LS) held the Joint State Convention of Karnataka at Bangalore on September 6. It called upon all sections of the working people to mobilise the maximum number of workers for the Protest and Demands Day on November 3 and March to Parliament on November 23.

The convention in Bihar held at Shrikrishna Memorial Hall, Patna on September 20 was jointly sponsored by eight Central Trade Unions, viz. CITU, AITUC, HMS, UTUC, BMS, TUCC, UTUC(LS) and HMP. About three thousand delegates representing the Central T.U.s and other organisations of Central and State Govt. employees, Railways, Bank, LIC, Pharmaceuticals, Coal, Steel, Mines, Electricity, P & T, D. V. C., Agricultural Workers and Women's Organisations attended the convention and gave the call to observe the All India Protests and Demands Day on November 3 by demonstrations and rallies and March to Parliament on November 23.

Another three thousand strong packed house at Desh Bhagat Hall, Jullundur writ the task of November 3 and 23 for the working class and agricultural workers in Punjab. The convention was organised by CITU, AITUC, HMS and BMS and other mass organisations. M. K. Pandhe, Secretary, CITU gave a stirring call to the working class to unite and join the November 23 March to Parliament to challenge the anti-labour policies

of the Government and demand an alternative economic policy.

In Gujarat, the all union convention on October 21 at Ahmedabad decided to join the mainstream of the movement on November 3 and 23.

The joint convention organised by Government and Bank employees at Uri in Kashmir on October 21 and 22 decided to observe November 3 in a befitting manner and send delegates to the Parliament March on November 23. In pursuance of the decisions of the Bombay Convention, demonstrations were held at various places like Shopian, Tral, Anantnag, Doora, Pahalgam, Bejbehara, Kulgam, Pulwama, etc.

IN a joint meeting of Delhi State Committees of CITU, DYF, SFI, AIDWF and various other mass organisations, a Reception Committee with 25 members has been formed with Samar Mukherjee M.P. as Chairman, P. Ramamurti, M.P. as Vice Chairman and Sushil Bhattacharya, M. P. as the Secretary. The organisational work will be conducted from the office of Delhi State Committee office at 3, V. P. House while correspondence and contact with various states and unions would be maintained from the CITU Central Office at 6, Talkatora Road.

All correspondence in connection with November 23 Workers' March from outside states be sent to P. Ramamurti, M. P. Vice Chairman, Reception Committee, 6-Talkatora Road, New Delhi-110001.

Esma is a Penal Law

C.M. STEPHEN, Minister of Communications, intervening in the debate in the Lok Sabha on the Bill on September 15, said :—

“Unless there were some reasons, we could not have brought it. We do not reveal all the reasons to everybody. There were reasons. We knew what was going on in the Railways, we knew what was going in the P. & T., we knew what operation was going on in the electricity sector. Let it be very clearly understood that we are not blind men operating in a dark room. We are operating with our eyes wide open. We know what is going on in this country.....”

This is an amendment spelling out a penal offence and giving out the measures which have got to be taken to meet that penal offence. A new penal offence is spelt out by this measure and it will be a cognizable offence. Punishment is spelt out. Method of trial is spelt out. It is a pure penal legislation bringing in a penal law, defining an offence under the criminal Law and it has nothing at all to do with the Industrial Disputes Act.....”

By one stroke of pen the industrial disputes have been turned into cognizable offence and the Indian Working Class have been bonded into slavery with their Right to Collective Bargaining having thus been taken away. If the workers resist, the Stephens would want to punish them.

Police Escalate Repression In Assam Tea Gardens

Workers Killed in Police Custody : Firing at Nagrijuli & Herchura

Assam Tea Garden owners, particularly some foreign companies have once again let loose a terror regime on the workers, hand-in-glove with INTUC hoodlums aided by the Police who have killed Kailash Karmakar in police lock-up and shot two workers to death, injuring many. Closely following barbarous attack, rape and arson in Krishnakali and Chaper Tea Estates, the Police now under Central Rule is once again on murder spree, defending the interests of the foreign and Indian owners.

This time the struggle started on bonus. On September 1, the leadership of the INTUC affiliated Assam Cha Mazdur Sangh (ACMS) and Assam Cha Karmachari Sangh (ACKS) with secret understanding with employers issued a leaflet exhorting the workers to accept whatever bonus the management offered to them (8.33%) and refer the dispute, if any, to them. The CITU affiliated Akhil Bharatiya Cha Mazdoor Sangh, Assam (ABCMS) through a leaflet issued on September 3, called upon the workers to defeat the conspiracy and stand firm on the demand of 20% bonus. Many units of ACMS and ACKS, defied their leadership and joined the common struggle. A conspiracy was hatched and repression was mounted. On September 15, Nurul Amin and Aftab Hussain, Secretary and Vice President, Tongla Branch of ABCMS were arrested and one after another false charges are being brought against them to keep them in jail. On September 30, Kailash Karmakar of Kharikatiya Tea Estate was arrested and tortured to death in Titabar lock-up on October 1. On October, 10, the

police fired upon the Nagrijuli Tea Estates workers injuring Ranjit Oraon. MLAs and representatives of Central Trade Unions met the Home Secretary, Chief Adviser, Government of Assam on 12.10.81 and 15.10.1981

respectively. But no action was taken. On October 17, the police shot dead two workers and injuring many others in Herchura Tea Estate. Over hundred workers have been arrested in the struggle.

All India Plantation Workers Meet

The Working Committee of All India Plantation Workers' Federation took stock the situation in the industry in its meeting held at Belur (Howrah) on August 25. B. T. Ranadive, President, CITU, guided the deliberations.

From the reports it was noted that crisis was deepening in the tea industry. While tea was being exported in a big way, the depression was being passed on to the workers by the planters by deducting D. A. and denying bonus. More than 20 tea gardens were closed and repression was let loose on all the plantation workers all over the country, which has taken a serious shape in Assam. The meeting discussed about the move for all India consolidation and solidarity struggle against the repressive actions of the Government and the planters and demand for nationalisation of the big plantations and wholesale trade.

An international meeting for consolidation of the workers of the Canadian multi-national company ALCAN was held in Montreal from October 5 to 9, organised by Confederation Des Syndicate Nationaux. CITU nominated K. Balachandran, member, General Council to attend the meeting.

Bangladesh Bank Employees Struggle

Nearly 72,000 bank employees in Bangladesh are in struggle, when all the attempts to have a negotiated settlement have failed.

Instead of arriving at an honourable settlement with the employees, the Government of Bangladesh had begun to suppress the struggle resorting to large scale victimisation. The distressing aspect is more than six thousand employees have been dismissed and thousand of employees have been suspended from service. Hundreds of employees have been arrested, and tortured.

The Bank Employees Federation, West Bengal, while strongly condemning the vindictive steps taken by the Bangladesh Govt. has expressed its solidarity with the struggling employees.

The Federation demanded the Bangladesh Government give up its policy of repression and take effective steps so that the grievances of the employees are solved in an amicable atmosphere.

Head Load Workers' Victory

The head load workers of Trichur, Kerala, have after a bitter struggle, successfully entered into an agreement with the traders.

The politically motivated 54 days lock out of shops by the traders could not be continued in face of opposition from all the democratic sections of the leaders of the church had to intervene.

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Restore Normal Labour Relations In Indian Railways

IN his letter dated October 8, Samar Mukherjee M.P., leader CPI (M) Group in Parliament drew the attention of Smt. Gandhi to the Report and Resolutions of the 55th Annual Convention of AIRF in which the railway authorities have been accused of taking "avoidably provocative actions" and resorting to "large scale victimisation on political pressures or on instigations of the INTUC affiliated unions" and said :

"This is a sorry state of affairs. I would like to draw your attention to the fact that the Government of India has not yet ratified the ILO Convention No. 135 concerning workers' representation in the Undertakings adopted in 1971." He further said:

"Most of the dismissals or compulsory retirements have been imposed without giving any hearing to the staff or opportunity of self defence. You are aware of the fact that in the 67th session of the International Labour Conference the representative of the Government of India failed to secure even a single support to their views."

Referring to his correspondence with Railway Minister, he said, that

"All the arguments advanced by Shri Pandey are untenable and smack of unfair labour practice. If this attitude continues, I am afraid, that normalisation of industrial relations in Indian Railways will be a far cry."

Referring to a secret D.O. letter dated 26.11.1980 from Advisor(IR) Ministry of Railways in which it was stated that "It should be clearly understood that hearing representatives

from other than recognised unions if only a case of lending Administrative ear to the employees individually or in small groups for their problems and difficulties to be heard and examined," Samar Mukherjee said in a subsequent letter that this constitutes a reversal of the policy which was enunciated in an earlier D. O. communication dated 27.5.1978 though the Government had announced in 1980 that all earlier commitments will be honoured. He said, this proves the contention of Secretary General AILRSA that the channel of communication granted to them earlier was frozen from Nov. 1980 itself. The suomoto statement of the Railway Minister in Parliament on 17.2.1981 merely formalised what was done in November, 1980.

Again quoting from the D.O. letter dated 26.11.1980 in which it was stated that "The present emphasis on the other hand is to help the recognised unions in their role to bring substantial population of employees within their fold" Samar Mukherjee said that in view of the resolution adopted in the AIRF Convention at Mathura it would appear as if the Railway Administration is coercing the employees to join NFIR unions or penalising them. He, therefore, urged upon Smt. Gandhi to intervene immediately and restore normal relations."

SPONTANEOUS OUTBURSTS OF RAILWAY MEN:

On the death of an electric fitter in Waltair Diesel Shed on September 21 due to fall from the roof and non attendance of railway doctor, the angry

workers stopped work and gheraoed all officers who came to the Shed demanding immediate action for the negligence of the doctor. The Superintendent of police intervened and on his assurance that proper action against the doctor would be taken and there would be no victimisation, the workers went back to work. But after four days three workers have been removed from service under hated rule 14 (ii) and one was arrested.

The operating staff of Bokaro Steel City stopped work for five hours protesting against vandalism of RPF staff after they were defeated in a foot-ball match. The workers resumed after they were assured that action against the concerned RPF staff would be taken.

Head Load Workers'

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The agreement has entered into between representatives of AITUC and CITU on behalf of workers and representatives of the chamber of commerce on behalf of the employers.

The workers gained some enhancement in their wages and some standardisation in regard to their jobs and working conditions. The bonus for this year was Rs. 530 and it would be enhanced to Rs. 535 next year.

CITU NOMINATION

CITU has nominated Jagjit Singh Layallpuri, President of the Punjab State Committee of CITU as a member of the Central Standing Committee on Bonded, Migrant and Casual Labour.

Editorial Board

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NOTWITHSTANDING NSA, ESMA

Audit Employees Decide Strike

The political and bureaucratic interferences in the functioning of the Indian Audit and Accounts Department, which made a mockery of Article 148(5) of the constitution, have come home to roost.

The Working Committee of the 'All India Non-Gazetted Audit & Accounts Association' representing 55,000 employees of the Department, in its meeting held in Nagpur on September 23-24 decided to have a strike ballot by December 1981 for a day's strike in the 2nd half of February 1982. Their main demands include functional scale of pay commensurate with the responsibilities and complexities of duties, and a set up where there is no stagnation, filling up of vacancies which are more than 20% of the sanctioned strength, cessation of unilateral implementation of reorganisation schemes etc. It is unique in this Deptt., that the bulk of the basic functional cadre called 'Auditors' who are educationally highly qualified and getting UDC's scale, have no promotional prospects at all and they have to retire as auditors despite many years of service.

For redressal, the employees observed 'All India Protest Day' on 5th June, a 'Demands Week' culminating in one hour 'Section Boycott' on 26th June, 'Non-Cooperation Week' by the end of July, a 'Mass Relay Squatting Programme' from 16th to 18th September. In order to launch an united struggle, the three All India Organisations of staff and officers except Class I Officers, have formed an 'All India Co-ordination Committee', which has decided to hold regional seminars all over the country and a National Level Convention by the 3rd week of November, whereupon a memorandum will be submitted to the President of India, demanding a high power committee to go into the question of relation of Audit with the executive, and the very conduct of Audit, and the method to be followed for appointment of Comptroller and Auditor General of India for retaining independent status of the department.

The recalcitrant attitude of the Government to the just demands of the employees, has forced them to the path of agitation.

Strike By ESIC Employees

All India ESIC Employees Federation would go on one day's token strike on November 5, if authorities fail to pay bonus as recommended by the Committee of Experts and approved by ESIC Standing Committee and Ministry of Labour.

Strike By Andaman Nicobar Government Employees

The Federal Council of A & N Government Employee and Workers Federation which met on September 30 decided to give a call to observe a token strike on November 27, 1981 in case the Charter of 8 point demands is not settled.

The resolution protested against the victimisation of employees for alleged participation in a procession organised by a cultural organisation and calling for explanation from employees for participation in a procession taken out on September 6 by the federation and other trade unions. The authorities published a notice forbidding the employees to participate in the procession organised by the Federation. This tantamounts to denial of the Right to Organise and Freedom of Association.

The Charter includes the demand for re-instatement of 105 PWD workers placed under suspension, service conditions of the casual, daily rated, NMR staff, weekly paid holiday etc. which are elementary legal rights of the workers.

AIRF Decides For a Strike Ballot

In a resolution adopted in the 55th Annual Convention of AIRF held at Mathura recently it is stated that if the Government does not settle the ten point Charter of Demands which was submitted after the Convention held at Bikaner last year, the AIRF would have no other alternative but to mobilise the Railway-men before Parliament in February 1982 and decide for a strike ballot. In a separate resolution the General Secretary has been asked to include opposition to 3rd/4th Generation Computer as an additional demand for negotiation with Government.

Defence Employees

700 delegates attending the 14th Conference of All India Defence Employees Federation held at Jabalpur on September 24-28 decided unanimously to go on a general strike if the agreement on August 11, 1979 is not fully implemented before 31st December 1981. The agreement was arrived at on a Charter of 9 demands submitted by the Federation, but was not implemented which forced the employees to observe one day token strike on December 18, 1980. After this there was only partial implementation. In the resolution the Federation said that the patience of the employees have almost been exhausted and they are left with no alternative but to take the decision for a general strike.

Theory of Class Collaboration—Anti-Strike Trusteeship

— P. Ramamurti

(In a "Symposium of Gandhian Movements" organised by the Department of History Meerut College, Meerut on October 3-4, P. Ramamurti, General Secretary CITU delivered Presidential Address. Some excerpts dealing with his ideas about trade union movement are published below for information. Ed.)

P. Ramamurti said

The epitome of the principles of Gandhi on the Trade Union movement is what has come to be known as the theory of Trusteeship. To put it in a nutshell, this theory propounds the idea that the owners of property, who engage labour, shall be deemed to be Trustees of that property. They should act and behave as Trustees managing their property in the interest of the whole society. They should not act in with any motive of self-interest and aggrandisement. They should not succumb to any temptation. This naturally includes the owners of modern industry as well.....

In 1918, the workers had struck work in Ahmedabad and the mills had come to a standstill. The leader and spokesman of the Ahmedabad Mill owners was Gandhi's friend, Ambalal Sarabhai, at that time the President of the Mill Owners' Association of Ahmedabad. Gandhi was then organising national schools in Champaran, but he left his constructive work when he received a letter from Anusuyabai Sarabhai, the sister of Ambalal Sarabhai, and rushed to Ahmedabad to intervene in the strike. On reaching Ahmedabad, he found that the Millhands' demand was just and the strike justified. They had been receiving a bonus of 70 or 80% since August 1917 because of the plague that raged in the city which was withdrawn by the mill-owners in 1918 all of a sudden. The workers then demanded at least 50%. This was the basis of the dispute.

The description that Gandhi himself gives of his handling the situation gives an insight into the famous theory of trusteeship that he later developed and elevated to the plane of a high moral principle.

Gandhi writes in his Auto-biography :-

"I was in a most delicate situation. The mill hands' case was strong. Smt. Anusuyabai had to battle against her own brother, Sjt. Ambalal Sarabhai, who led the fray on behalf of the Mill owners. My relations with them were friendly, and that made fighting with them the more difficult. I had consultations with them to refer the dispute to arbitration, but they refused to recognise the principle of arbitration. I had, therefore, to advise the labourers to go on strike".

But then he scaled down the demand to 35% and imposed crippling conditions on the workers: They should not resort to violence; they should not molest black-legs; they should not depend on alms (i.e. strike struggle funds etc.), and would go to work elsewhere during the strike period, if they could. How those thousands of poor labourers could get work elsewhere, when both the countryside and the towns were teeming with mounting unemployment, was no concern of his. All he was concerned with was that they should starve themselves out in this period and inflict starvation on their children and dependents and thus help the mill-owners to break the strike, and, if that was not possible, withdraw the strike on their terms. This was his great principle.

"The strike went on for twenty one days. During the continuance of the strike I consulted the Mill-owners from time to time and entreated them to do justice to the labourers. We have our pledge too", they used to say, 'Our relations with the labourers are those of parents and children. How can we brook the interference of a third Party? Where is the room for arbitration?'

But all these entreaties of Gandhi fell on deaf ears. Among the workers, hatred against the mill-owners was bound to grow and actually was growing. Gandhi feared the outbreak of rowdiness. Before him dangled the fear of the strike being broken by the sheer inability of the workers to continue starving. So, this self-styled leader and spokesman of the workers had to abandon the principle of strict neutrality. When all the entreaties and offers to make the mill-owners his own friends-to see reason failed, he declared; "Unless the strikers rally and continue the strike till a settlement is reached or till they leave the mill altogether, I will not touch any food."

Note the words carefully. The whole edifice of class peace, trusteeship, arbitration-was collapsing. His whole prestige was at stake. He realised that without coercion to some degree his capitalist friends would not budge, even to serve their own longterm interests. They do not accept the tenets

of trusteeship that he made so much of later. They would not agree to place their self interest even in the hands of a trustee or friend like him.

Their greed for profit was insatiable. The mill-owners, however, finally sensed the plight to which their well-wisher was reduced, and also the danger to their own interests-both immediate and long term-if Gandhi died, as well as the repercussions it would have both in Ahmedabad and in the whole country. They at last yielded and appointed their own man Sjt. Anand Shankar Dhruva as arbitrator.

In this choice of the arbitrator neither the workers nor Gandhi himself had any hand; and they had to finally settle for 27½ per cent bonus only, much less than what Gandhi himself had thought a just and reasonable compromise.

However, in the meanwhile Gandhi had done his best to demobilise the workers. He forbade Smt. Anusuyabai and his co-workers from entering upon the fast along with him. That was his conception of Satyagraha, of change of heart of the opponent and what not.

Upon the appointment of the arbitrator, the strike was withdrawn to the glee of the mill-owners. They celebrated the event by distributing sweets among the workers. Class peace was at last ensured by the intervention of their friend.

How did Gandhi react to this colourful ending of the strike? He portrayed the workers as greedy scramblers for sweets. Poor workers who had gone through the ordeal of hunger and starvation for more than three weeks, at Gandhi's bidding, if they were scrambling after the sweets (assuming they did), they are greedy!

But for the unabashed intransigence and greed of the Mill-owners, he had nothing but fulsome praise. And the highest tribute, for which he could even muster workers, was reserved for his bosom friend and leader of the mill-owners, Sjt. Ambalal Sarabhai: "His resolute will and transparent sincerity were wonderful and captured my heart. It was a pleasure to be pitched against him. The strain produced by my fast upon the opposition, of which he was the head, cut me therefore to the quick. And then, Sarladevi, his wife, was attached to me with the affection of a blood sister, and I could not bear to see her anguish upon my action"...

One has only to see the contempt he poured on the brave workers who had gone on strike for more than three weeks, with all the privations they had gone through attendant upon it, and contrast it with the handsome tributes he had paid to the leader of the Mill-owners in the passage quoted from his own Auto-Biography, and one understands his thinking and attitude to the working class and their organised mass actions. This fear of the masses going beyond the limits set by him, to their mass actions haunted him throughout his life.

Gandhi, it is true, organised the *Majoor Mahajan* (later to be known as the Ahmedabad Textile Labour Association). But he was not alone in this. The strike wave that swept the country in those days led to the formation of the organised Trade Unions throughout the country. They laid the foundation for the formation of the All India Trade Union Congress, whose first Session was inaugurated and presided over by Lala Lajpat Rai. Later leaders of the national movement like Chittaranjan Das and Jawaharlal Nehru have been Presidents of its sessions till 1927. The AITUC could secure the status of nominating the Indian Trade Unions representative for the I.L.O.

But Gandhi saw to it that the *Majoor Mahajan* was scrupulously kept out of the main stream of the developing working class movement. For the All India organisation did not accept his theory of Trusteeship, Class Peace, and eschewing of class struggle. To him, on the other hand, the idea of Socialism was anathema.

It will not be out of place to note here that the working class of Czarist Russia seized political power in 1917, during the closing days of the first World War, and the first Socialist State was born. He, however, had not a word of praise for it. On the other hand, the national poets of the time, like Subramaniam Bharati the immortal bard of Tamil Nadu, hailed the Revolution as the beginning of a new era, as did Rabindra Nath Tagore and Premchand and a host of others. As for the working class of India, the AITUC at its Jharia Session in 1921, appealed to all the workers of India to donate a day's wages to aid the famine-stricken Russia just emerging from the clutches of eight invading armies and a Civil War. This again shows how divergent the aspirations of the working class and Gandhi were...

Is it to be wondered at that in 1937-38, when the Textile Mill Workers of Kanpur went on a General Strike, with great hopes pinned on the Congress Ministry, Gandhi condemned the mass picketing resorted to by them most viciously? He characterised it as violence and coercion, and inconsistent with his tenets of non-violence, despite the fact no one was touched by the striking workers who merely pleaded that no one should enter the factory. But he had no words for the goonda attacks resorted to by the gangsters hired by the mill-owners or the use of the Criminal Law Amendment Act against the striking workers by the Government, an Act that was specifically promulgated by the Viceroy when picketing was resorted to by the Congress volunteers during the Civil Disobedient Movement against foreign cloth shops and arrack, toddy shops. That picketing, of course, falls into a different category, according to Gandhian tenets; but picketing by workers is coercion, violence and what not.

Gandhi never changed his view on strikes. On 26th January, 1948 in one of his last public utterances he declared:

“In a well ordered democratic society there is no room for lawlessness or strikes. In such a society there are ample lawful means for vindicating justice.”

But he himself stated earlier that ‘justice too is a relative term’. Its concept depends on the class bias of the judge, as has been amply proved in numerous cases decided by the high courts and the Supreme Court. Gandhi himself could not get from the arbitrator at Ahmedabad to do what he deemed to be a just and reasonable compromise. And yet he declares there are ample means for vindicating justice other than strikes.

The class bias is obvious. If there is no place for strikes compulsory arbitration imposed upon the workers is the obvious means he has in mind. Strikes, which are a stage of class struggle in a class society are anathema to him. Class peace, and the exploiting system then must be preserved at all costs.....

What, then, was his theory of ‘Trusteeship’? He conceded grudgingly that the Labour Theory of Value, that all material values are created by the labour of workers, peasants, agricultural labourers, and the artisans. He even goes to the extent of saying that, “it is labour that is capital.” But seizure of this capital by the working class on behalf of the whole of society and transforming it into socially owned property, he shuns and abhors. He admits that except in a rare case, where some one finds a treasure on his land, exploitation is the basis of

wealth. He goes on to say that “every one is tarred with the same brush” and “Justice too is a relative term”.....

It is patent and clear that this theory of trusteeship cannot be said to be by any stretch of imagination, independent on a class bias. To pose it as such would be sheer deception of the working class and the toiling masses. It should be clearly identified with what it is; a theory of a dogma to serve the interests of the capitalist class and a weapon in their hands to stem the tide of social revolution....

(To be concluded)

Coal India Management Scuttling Bipartite Forum

When several problems arising out of the last wage agreement are yet to be settled, the management has practically decided to wind up the Joint Bipartite Committee for Coal Industry (JBCCI) on the plea that the INTUC has withdrawn its nomination from it.

The meeting of the Standardisation Committee fixed on September 29 and 30 had been cancelled by the management without giving adequate notice to the members. Similarly the bipartite meeting on coal production scheduled to be held on October 23 was unilaterally cancelled by the management.

In the meeting of the JBCCI held in CIL Headquarters on September 3 the withdrawal of the INTUC was considered. It was agreed that while efforts should be made to bring back the INTUC representatives in the bipartite forum the work of the Committees should not be discontinued since many outstanding issues are yet to be settled.

The representatives of the CITU, AITUC, HMS and BMS have addressed identical letters to the CIL management protesting against this attitude and demanded immediate restoration of the JBCCI. They warned the CIL management that in case of failure to do so they would have to consider launching countrywide movement of coal workers on the pending issues.

CITU NOMINEES IN ILO SEMINARS

CITU has nominated Bidyut Ganguly and Tarit Topdar from W. Bengal and T. Nandagopal and D. Janakiraman from Tamilnadu to attend the National Seminars on Plant Level Industrial Relations organised by I.L.O. at Calcutta and Madras, respectively from November 2 to 5 and November 9 to 12.

Advance of CITU in Gujarat

RECENT developments in the workers' movements and organisations indicate an increasing swing and confidence in CITU leadership in Gujarat. The capital city of Ahmedabad has been the centre-piece of a series of movements led by the CITU leadership and CITU unions in different industries like Textiles, Engineering, Paints, Chemicals, Printing Press, Dairy, etc.

Textiles-The management of Arvind Textiles Mill terminated the services of the CITU leader Sakhrudin Chacha on a false and concocted charge of Chacha working in two mills simultaneously before 20 years. An wide spread movement was launched by the workers. The Congress(I) Government, true to its class character, immediately invoked Sec. 144 and arrested 17 workers. But the workers refused to be cowed down and retaliated by breaking Sec. 144. Gate meetings and agitations have now been spread to all the seven mills under the textile magnate Kasturbhai. The police had to release all the 17 workers arrested. A joint platform with AITUC and other unions have been formed to carry forward the movement. CITU influence has widened to more than 35 textiles units in Ahmedabad during the recent period.

Development in the Engineering Industry in the Vatva industrial estate is equally noteworthy. Having compelled the management to arrive at a satisfactory settlement, the membership of the CITU union in R.M. Engineering Works has gone upto one thousand.

In Saurashtra Paints, to meet the rising prices, the workers could wrest from the management substantial financial and

material benefits even before the expiry of the previous agreement.

In Everest Chemicals, a massive movement forced the management to reinstate all the thirteen leading workmen who were removed from services.

In Brighto Met, the workers' struggle is mounting up against the management's blatant attack on the recognised CITU union to break it in collusion with the police. Eight leading workers, including two female workers have been chargesheeted and arrested.

In the field of Press Workers, the General Press Kamgar Union is taking up its strides steadily. In Navajivan Press, Aijay Printing Press and Vadilal & Co. Press the CITU unions through series of determined struggles compelled the managements to recognise them and meet the workers' economic demands. In Storemake India Ltd. also the struggles led by CITU achieved substantial benefits for the workers.

Against the divisive forces :

Scared by the growing influence of CITU, the management of Ahmedabad Dairy helped by the divisive forces engineered a communal strife amongst the workers. But led by CITU, the workers turned the table against the management and nipped its nefarious games in the bud through an united struggle. The

management-planted communal leader of this union was forced to resign from services and escape.

Municipal Corporation :

The correct policies of CITU and the dedicated work of the workers have attracted large number of workers to desert their opportunist leader and openly join the CITU in Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation. The character of the erstwhile isolated stooge leader was exposed and confirmed when he joined Congress(I). The CITU led the union through a successful strike and compelled the Municipal Commissioner and his deputy to concede to the workers' demands.

All union convention against ESMA :

Consistent struggles led by CITU have united large sections of all working people to stand determined to protest their democratic and fundamental trade union right to strike and fight against the authoritarian attack. An All Union Convention has been arranged on October 21 to protest against the hated Essential Services Maintenance Act. Preparations are atop for the All India Protest and Demands Day on November 3 and the March to Parliament on November 23, in pursuance of the programme set by the Bombay Convention against price-rise and anti-labour policies of the Government.

WORLD CONGRESS OF WOMEN

The World Congress of Women was held at Prague, Czechoslovakia from October 8 to 15. The main subjects discussed were : Women and Work including rural women; Women and Peace; Unequal Status of Women in family and society; Co-ordination in women's movement in national and international spheres etc. About 20 women delegates representing different organisations from India attended the Congress. Vimla Ranadive, Secretary of All India Co-ordination Committee of Working Women attended the Congress on behalf of CITU.

All India Steel Workers Convention—8-10 January 1982

The meeting of the All India Co-ordination Committee of Steel Workers' Unions, held in Calcutta on 1 and 2 October decided to postpone the All India Steel Workers Convention to 8-10 January, 1982 due to certain unavoidable circumstances. Earlier the Committee decided to hold it on 6-8 November. The venue of the Convention will remain unchanged i.e. Durgapur.

The meeting reviewed the submission of Charter of Demands by all the unions and decided to take immediate steps to popularise the charter among the steel workers. It decided to launch a signature campaign among the steel workers so that maximum support of the workers can be mobilised. The signed statement of workers in support of the Charter of Demands will be submitted to the management by the end of December next.

A Reception Committee has already been constituted at Durgapur to make preparation for the Convention with Com. Robin Sen as the Chairman. The address of the Committee would be 36/49, Harshabardhan Road, Durgapur-4. A fund collection drive has been started in right earnest and a good collection is expected by the Reception Committee.

The Co-ordination Committee decided to launch local campaign to popularise the issues before Convention. Programme of postering issuing of leaflets and collection of funds was also chalked out.

The meeting condemned the dismissal of Com. K.K. Tripathi, Com. Nandji Pandey and other

the TISCO management, Jamshedpur for leading the strike of 10,000 contract workers. It decided to hold gate meetings all over the steel plants on 24 October and to pass resolutions demanding their reinstatement. It also demanded withdrawal of other victimisation measures by the steel managements.

The meeting decided to unitedly observe 3rd November in all the steel townships and make preparations for good participation in joint March before Parliament on 23rd November.

The next meeting of the Co-ordination Committee has been fixed at Durgapur on 14-15 October to finalise the report to be submitted before the Convention. It will also prepare a draft of the Constitution of the proposed Federation for placing it before the Convention for adoption.

Com. Bamapada Mukherjee presided over the meeting which was attended by Com. M.K. Pandhe from the CITU Centre.

BHEL Bonus issue Partially Settled

In a meeting of BHEL Joint Committee held in New Delhi on 5 and 6 October the bonus for the year 1980 was settled only for Hardwar, Tiruchi and Hyderabad plants. The agreement provides for 20 percent bonus though the dispute regarding the calculation of available surplus remains yet to be settled. The management offered 16.5 percent bonus for Bhopal but the workers' group demanded 20 per cent. For CFFP (Hardwar) and Jhansi, the management offered 8.33 percent plus an additional amount varying from Rs. 160 to Rs. 210 as was paid last year. In these two plants also the workers group asked for 20 percent payment. In a meeting of representatives of CITU, AITUC, BMS it was decided to jointly protest against the attitude of the management and to press for 20 percent bonus. The INTUC representatives however did not agree for such a joint move.

At the outset in the meeting, the CITU representatives criticised the dilatory tactics adopted by the management in settling the other outstanding issues not settled in the last agreement. The management did not convene the joint meeting for the last 4 months which also was a point of criticism by several representatives. The management had to agree for a meeting on 6th November to discuss all the pending issues of the BHEL workers. The question of new elections through secret ballot was also raised by many representatives but the INTUC representatives insisted for check-off system. It was decided to discuss this question in the next meeting.

The CITU was represented in the meeting by Com. M.K. Pandhe and Com. N.V. Bhaskara Rao.

SEMANAR ON THE DRUG INDUSTRY AND THE INDIAN PEOPLE

A Seminar on the Drug Industry and the Indian People will be held on November 7 and 8 at All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi. The Seminar is being organised jointly by six organisations, viz. Federation of Medical Representatives' Associations of India (FMRAI), Delhi Science Forum; Society of Young Scientists; Forum for Science, Technology and Society; Association of Scientific Workers of India and All India Federation of Junior Doctors' Associations. Mr. P.N. Haksar and Dr. (Mrs) Imrana Qadir are respectively the Chairman and Convenor of the Seminar. A large number of eminent doctors, scientists and economists of the country will participate in the seminar alongwith representatives of various Central Trade Unions.

Defeat Imperialist Conspiracies

FROM PAGE TWO

It would have been an impermissible error if believing in the continuation of detente the USSR and the socialist countries had neglected the task of military preparedness. Today the strength of the USSR to meet all eventualities, its assurance that the USSR will not be allowed to have military supremacy offer a standing guarantee that world peace will not be allowed to be violated with impunity.

The USSR is not only piling success in economic building and rising living standards for its people, it is also defending world peace and helping many countries to defend their independence. It stands in the way of U.S. global domination. Its help to Afghanistan and Angola has already roused the anger of the imperialists. On 7th November this year, the working class must firmly declare that it will frustrate all attacks against the USSR and the socialist world, protect peace and save the world from the holocaust of a nuclear war. The 1917 revolution arose

SUCCESSFUL BONUS STRUGGLE

The Working Class in West Bengal has been able to realise their demands for Bonus in a large number of industries through united struggles. Encouraged by the authoritarian actions of the Indira Government and her anti-labour laws, the employers in various industries adopted a stiff attitude towards payment of Bonus, not even the minimum prescribed. On convening a meeting of the State Labour Advisory Board by the State Labour Minister, the representatives of

out of a fight against imperialist war; it defeated and survived the Nazi imperialist attack and again lent its full support to the cause of world peace. This time aided by the world working class and peoples of the world it is in a position to put the warmongers in a strait jacket. Let the working class and progressive forces in the country join hands to ensure success for its fight for world peace.

the employers raised the plea of financial losses even though their profits surpassed those of the previous year. The Jute Mill owners refused to pay even the minimum bonus. But through united struggles in all industrial areas like Calcutta, Howrah-Hooghly, 24-Pargans, Asansol, Durgapur etc. the workers achieved 12 to 20 per cent bonus in engineering, rubber, tannery, chemicals, pottery and other industries. The workers in beedi, tobacco, oil mills and wolfram factories also achieved similar successes. The private transport workers in Calcutta and the districts also achieved higher bonus this year through struggles, Led by Hindusthan Motors Workers' Union (CITU), sixteen thousand workers of Hindusthan Motors achieved 20 percent bonus after a prolonged struggle. The most adamant and audacious of the employers are the Jute Barons under IJMA who have even turned down the Labour Minister's recommendations. Massive Joint struggles are continuing involving 2.5 lakh jute workers in the state.

"VOICE OF AMERICA" AGAINST REAGANOMICS

A mammoth march of half a million workers to Capitol in Washington, the biggest ever in America, was organised by AFL-CIO on September 19, to protest against Regan's economic policies. The workers raised the slogans: "Regan robs the poor, feeds the rich". "Hound out Regan's economics". Data of Reganomics: In the second quarter this year, USA's GNP dropped 2.4 per cent; Ten million jobless in August; Number of Americans living below poverty line in 1980 was 30 millions; Workers' real income came down by 5.5 per cent in 1980 alone.

For hectic war preparations, Regan's Defence Bill for 1982 of 227 billion dollars is the costliest military measure in U.S. history, giving up or curtailing all social programmes.

BATA WORKERS' STRIKE

Eleven thousand workers and employees of Bata Shoe Co. observed a general strike on September 18 demanding reinstatement of six retrenched workers. In a massive rally at the factory gate the workers resolved to carry forward the struggle till the victimised workers are taken back.

Convention of J.K. Workers

The struggle in J.K. Rayon is to take an All India shape. Against threatened closure, the J.K. Group and Rayon workers from all over India will meet in a convention at Kanpur on November 7 and 8

Since the last two years the workers of J.K. Rayon, Kanpur have been heroically resisting the gruesome attack of the management. Bypassing the recognised CITU union, the management grafted one INTUC union and unleashed severe repression on the workers. Large number of workers have been laid off for the third time within the last five years and a section of the leadership has been dismissed. The police directly in collusion with the management have arrested several workers

Under such circumstances CITU discussed the struggle of J.K. Workers in the last General Council and convened a meeting of the J.K. Group unions of Kanpur on October 10. The meeting decided to convene the All India Meet of all J.K. Group and Rayon Workers to discuss measures to extend the struggle throughout the country to express solidarity to the struggling workers of Kanpur.

VICTORIOUS BONUS STRUGGLE

Led by CITU the determined united struggle by the workers compelled the managements of all the J.K. Group industries in Kota to concede higher bonus to them. In addition to 20 per cent bonus, J.K. Synthetics, J.K. Stapple and Tools and J.K. Tire Cord had to concede substantive ex-gratia payments also. P.N. Dhanda, the District Committee Secretary congratulated the workers on their glorious victory.

Consumer Price Index Numbers

State/Centre	Base 1960			State/Centre	1981		
	June	July	Aug		June	July	Aug
Andhra Pradesh				Orissa			
Gudur	437	461	471	Barbil	398	406	402
Guntur	486	491	502	Sambalpur	446	460	473
Hyderabad	453	465	465	Punjab			
Assam				Amritsar	452	469	473
Digboi	441	446	449	Rajasthan			
Doom Dooma	355	359	366	Ajmer	470	477	481
Labac	352	353	346	Jaipur	487	491	499
Mariani	353	359	365	Tamil Nadu			
Rangapara	365	377	385	Coimbatore	462	468	482
Bihar				Coonoor	440	457	476
Jamshedpur	415	420	428	Madras	428	452	457
Jharia	405	409	420	Madurai	449	463	468
Kodarma	437	450	464	U.P.			
Monghyr	456	473	491	Kanpur	429	443	446
Noamundi	419	426	441	Saharanpur	436	446	450
Gujarat				Varanasi	483	491	494
Ahmedabad	427	438	441	West Bengal			
Bhavnagar	448	454	465	Asansol	440	444	449
Haryana				Calcutta	406	408	412
Yamunanagar	468	477	481	Darjeeling	350	360	365
J. & K.				Howrah	390	392	395
Srinagar	459	465	471	Jalpaiguri	348	357	364
Karnataka				Raniganj	442	425	422
Ammathi	465	471	475	Delhi	461	476	480
Bangalore	485	490	505	Other Centres			
Chikamagalur	476	480	487	Berhampur ('49)	577	596	613
Kolar G.F.	457	458	458	Cuttack ('49)	543	559	560
Kerala				Jabalpur ('49)	589	576	578
Alleppey	469	448	482	Beawar ('51-52)	566	587	595
Alwaye	456	460	464	Tripura (1961)	401	394	392
Mundakayam	450	460	470	H.P. (1965)	321	326	329
Madhya Pradesh				Goa (1966)	324	329	329
Balaghat	452	462	467	Bhilai (1966)	303	307	310
Bhopal	461	470	477	Bhilwara ('66)	291	304	308
Gwalior	467	481	482	Chhindwara ('66)	259	262	265
Indore	480	487	492	Kothagudem ('66)	304	313	314
Maharashtra				Rourkela ('66)	309	311	318
Bombay	450	459	462	All India ('49)	534	543	552
Nagpur	454	459	466	-do-	439	447	454
Sholapur	482	490	504				

Figures in bracket indicate base year.

STRIKE BY J.K. JUTE WORKERS

Jute workers of Kanpur have served notice for an indefinite sit-in strike from November 17 to J.K. Jute Mills Co. The four unions under CITU, AITUC, HMP and BMS had submitted a Joint 27 point Charter of Demands to the management, which included reinstatement of all victimised workers during emergency and other demands.

In spite of prolonged efforts by the unions, the management refused to negotiate. The unions have formed a Joint Action Committee to conduct the struggle. The Joint Action Committee has also notified to the management to go in for indefinite strike in case they resort to victimisations for the Sit-in Strike.

CITU INDICTS GOVERNMENT LABOUR POLICY

The Union Labour Minister Shri N.D. Tiwari met the representatives of CITU, and other Central Trade Unions separately on 12-14 October in New Delhi to discuss the industrial relations situation in the country. The Govt. side also raised questions like revival of the Industrial Committees and the National Apex Body and holding of the Indian Labour Conference.

The CITU representatives, P. Ramamurti and M.K. Pandhe, who met him on October 12, sharply criticised the Government of India for giving up the policy of consultation with the Central Trade Unions. Even after the Bombay Convention, the Government did not open dialogue with the Central Trade Unions on the issue raised by the Convention. The Government had not only gone ahead with unilateral decisions on issues vitally affecting the entire working class like introduction of 1981 series of Consumer Price Index Numbers, on recommendations of Provident Fund Review Committee etc., reducing the process of consultation into a mere formality but also introduced draconian laws like National Security Act and Essential Services Maintenance Act to suppress the growing struggles of the working class. Consultation at this stage meant discussion at the point of dagger, they said.

The CITU indicted the Govt. for discrimination against all trade unions, particularly the CITU and naked patronage shown towards the official INTUC in giving nomination on various committees. In several undertakings agreements were signed by the managements at the instance of the Government with the fake official INTUC unions bypassing the recognised unions as has been done in J.K. Rayon Kanpur and other places.

The CITU condemned ruthless suppression of struggles and expressed concern at the growing attacks on the T.U. activists and leaders by the Congress (I) gangsters. The Govt.'s going back on its agreement on 10 hour duty and vindictive measures against Locomen, growing spate of major railway accidents, collapse of all labour and safety legislations, barbarous attack on Assam Tea Garden Workers, police repression in Haryana, murderous attacks on CITU leaders like Ajeya Rout in Orissa, C. Govindarajan in Tamilnadu and murder of H.M.S. leader in Modinagar were cited by CITU leaders.

The CITU leader said that these policies of the Govt. of India are leading to further tension instead of quick settlement of industrial disputes.

The CITU held the economic policies of the Government responsible for high prices, decline in real wages, pauperisation of rural masses and higher profits for big business houses and multinationals.

Unless these policies are changed the discontent among the workers is bound to increase, they pointed out.

The CITU unequivocally rejected the new verification procedure finalised by the Govt. and re-emphasised that secret ballot should be conducted to determine the strength of the disputed unions. The Government has practically given veto power to the official INTUC ignoring the stand of the entire trade union movement.

The CITU highlighted irrelevance of the existence of the Union Labour Minister since no employing ministry in Public Sector is giving weight to the Labour Ministry while the private sector disputes are dealt with by the State Governments. As a result the Union Labour Ministry fails to make any impact on the industrial disputes.

The CITU leaders criticised the unilateral decision of the Government of India not to rectify the price index as per recommendations of Rath Committee and the notes appended by T.U. representatives.

They emphatically stated that the Government's move to make the conciliation proceedings time-bound cannot be a substitute for genuine collective bargaining. They opposed compulsory arbitration and the powers usurped by the Government to reject arbitration or modify the arbitrators' award in case of Government employees.

They agreed that revival of Industrial Committees may be helpful provided regularly meetings are held and trade unions are given powers to decide the agenda of the meetings. The Government has not spelt out the details of the proposal to revive the National Apex Body and, therefore, the confirmed opinion of CITU could be given only after knowing the same. Regarding the question of holding the Indian Labour Conference, they criticised the unilateral postponement of the Conference on two occasions and pointed out that since 1977 there have been no Tripartite meetings in the country to consider the industrial relations situation.

The CITU deprecated the attempts to revive the Industrial Relations Bill which was rejected by the entire trade union movement and bring it in the form of amendments to the Industrial Disputes Act. Pointing out that any further delay will only lead to further deterioration in the industrial relations in the country, the CITU demanded early convening of the Indian Labour Conference. Hope was expressed that the Government would give serious consideration to the issues raised in the memorandum submitted to the Union Labour Minister.

Simplex Struggle Continues

FACING severe repression and goonda attacks, the workers of Simplex Engineering in Bhilai (M.P.) are determinedly carrying forward their struggle. The workers are on strike since April 81. The strike had begun on the issue of illegal termination of services of five workers. The peacefully agitating workers were beaten up by the police inside the factory premises on April 21 and twelve of them were arrested on trumped up charges. In solidarity with the striking Simplex workers, the workers from a number of factories observed one day strike and represented to the D.M. Since April 23, the workers of Simplex Udyog joined the strike and the workers of Simplex Casting joined the strike on May 3.

On May 1, a huge workers' meeting was held at the gate of Simplex Engineering. On May 4, the police in collusion with the management and its goondas attacked the workers and arrested 44 of them. On May 25, the goondas of the management attacked the union office and police arrested 87 workers. On June 4, the police arrested P. K. Moitra, Vice President of Madhya Pradesh State Committee of CITU, who is still in jail.

On September 20, a mass meeting was organised at the gate of Simplex Casting to express solidarity with the striking workers. The meeting was addressed among others by Hannan Mollah, M. P. and Badal Saroj President DYFI, Madhya Pradesh. In the meeting the workers of Chattisgarh Mines Shramik Sangh, Rajhara gave 15 bags of rice for the striking workers

The Madhya Pradesh Committee of the CITU has called upon all the State CITU Unions to express solidarity with the striking Simplex Workers and collect contributions for their struggle fund.

Convention Against Drug Multinationals

U. P. Medical Representatives' Association organised a Convention on Multi-nationals in Drug Industry at Lucknow on October 4. A large number of workers from Bank, LIC, GIC, Railways, Government employees, Doctors, Teachers and other mass organisations attended the Convention, which was inaugurated by J. S. Majumdar, General Secretary of Federation of Medical Representatives' Association of India. The Convention unanimously adopted a resolution demanding nationalisation of the multinationals and the Indian monopoly concerns in the drug industry.

TUI SECRETARY VISITS CITU

Paul Gergele, Secretary of Trade Union International of Oil Chemicals and Allied Workers (ICPS), who is on a tour in India to attend a Seminar on the Drug Industry on the invitation of All India Chemical and Pharmaceutical Employees Federation, visited the CITU Office on October 24. He discussed with the leadership of CITU various matters for mutual co-operation in the field of trade union activities and for strengthening the fraternal bonds of CITU with WFTU and TUI.

Hosiery Workers Strike

The hosiery workers in Varanasi went on indefinite strike from October 15 demanding increase in wages. Working under severe exploitations and hard hit by the spiralling prices, the hosiery workers made several representations to the employers for increase in their wages to enable them to make the both ends meet. But the adamant employers refused to make any concessions, compelling them to go in for the indefinite strike. All other sections of the working people have expressed solidarity in support of the struggle.

Greetings To The AUCCTU

On the occasion of the 64th anniversary of the historic October Revolution, the CITU sends its warm fraternal greetings to the All Union Central Council of Trade Unions, USSR.

In sharp contrast to the deepening economic crisis which has beset the capitalist world reducing their growth rate, the working class of USSR under the leadership of AUCCTU, have maintained a steady growth surpassing USA in many fields and ensuring better standards of living for the people. The CITU wishes the AUCCTU further success in their efforts.

The CITU is happy to note the growing friendly relations and better understanding between the AUCCTU and the CITU. The visit of Comrades K. Ramani, Vice-President and M. K. Pandhe, Secretary of CITU and free frank exchange of opinion with the leadership of AUCCTU has strengthened the bonds of friendship and the CITU is confident that it would continue to be strengthened in future.