

BS
0021
AMENDMENTS
FILE

All-India Trade Union Congress

27th SESSION
Bombay

DRAFT REPORT

by

Com. S. A. DANGE
General Secretary

SIXTEENTH—TWENTYSECOND MAY, 1966

International Situation

As a working class organisation, we look at events at home and abroad from world outlook of proletarian internationalism. The events abroad, the life of the working people, their successes and failures are as much a part of our life as theirs. From this standpoint, what can be said about the international situation and its main features?

The first main feature is that the world socialist system as a whole has become stronger in its economic and political might, vis-a-vis the world capitalist-imperialists system. In the main struggle, as between the forces of socialism and the forces of capitalism on world scale, it is the forces of socialism that have advanced and not the forces of imperialism.

The leading force in the world socialist system and the world socialist forces is the successes of the biggest and the first socialist state in the world, that is, the Soviet Union, in socialist construction. By their advance in industry, in engineering, science and technology and education, they have not only built prosperity for themselves but have become a great positive factor of help to the newly-liberated countries, who take to building an independent economy and life of their own to overcome their backwardness, a legacy left over by imperialism. Their aid to the fight against imperialism and to the national revolutionary forces is acknowledged by all those countries, who are fighting in the anti-imperialist front.

The share of the socialist production in the world total has risen and the share of imperialist system has relatively fallen.

While the soft-landing on the moon and the orbiting of the satellite round the moon, and sending out of the thrilling musical tunes of the revolutionary song of the *Internationale* from space shows the successes and advance of Soviet science, the introduction of the five-day, forty-hour week in Soviet industry, the new advance in wages and standards of living, testify to the successes on the economic front, which the trade unions there have welcomed with great satisfaction.

The successes of the Soviet Union are not an isolated phenomenon. All the countries of socialism have advanced in socialist

construction, at varying rates, including the biggest socialist country of Asia, that is, People's Republic of China.

No country of socialism has suffered from unemployment, inflation, rise in prices and scarcity or any of the ills, which afflict the working people in capitalist countries. Some countries of socialism may not be as showy as America or the other countries of the imperialist system like Britain or West Germany in motor cars and fountain pens or nylons. But they have a high standard of living and a life of high social security. Housing of the working people which is a crying scandal in all the capitalist countries of the world has attained astounding proportions in the socialist world.

When we say this, the critics of socialism and the science of socialist economy turn round and point out to the shortcomings of the growth of the socialist countries.

In India, especially where our ruling class and its Congress Party is engaged in wooing U.S. imperialism for supplies of wheat, the critics throw at us the question : If socialism is so superior and successful, why can they not supply us wheat and why do Russia and China buy it from the capitalist countries ?

The London *Economist* wrote the following on March 19, 1966, on this question :

"The communists have found out that their centralised system is fine at pouring out large quantities of steel and concrete and electricity but bad at turning these into things a discriminating consumer actually wants to buy."

Forty years ago when socialist planning took its birth on Soviet soil, this organ of British monopoly capital was scoffing at it and was not prepared to admit, as it does today, that socialist economy can succeed in "pouring out large quantities of steel and electricity". Now it complains of its quality and others talk of non-abundance in agriculture, comparing it with that of the USA, Canada and Australia.

By this question, the enemies of socialism want to weaken the faith of the working class in socialism as a theory of life and successful socialist construction as a fact of life. But this attempt is futile.

The working class answers by pointing out to the gentlemen of the capitalist system that the economy of the imperialist country is over two hundred years old. The first socialist state was

founded only in 1917 and the world socialist system came up at the end of the second world war, between 1945 and 1949.

The imperialists fattened themselves on the loot from the colonies and their richest country, U.S. imperialism never suffered from the devastation of war, in its sheltered home of vast expanses and helpful climates. Even those countries of imperialism who suffered from defeats in war like Germany and Japan were put on their feet by heavy supplies of industrial capital from U.S. imperialism. Even during the war, a large part of their industry remained intact.

As against this, the Soviet Union suffered from two wars of devastation launched against it by the imperialists and a total blockade all through its life at the hands of the imperialists. Yet single-handedly, without bowing to the imperialist aid and contrary to what some Congress leaders say, the working people of the Soviet Union built their socialist economy and brought it to a position of superiority over the U.S. imperialists in many fields. Not only no socialist country was helped by the rich capitalist countries, their economies are constantly held under the threat of imperialist aggression and war and actual war as it happened in Korea in 1950 and as is happening now in Vietnam. And with all that, the socialist system has proved superior, ridding its own people from all the miseries of capitalism and helping others to do the same.

Reverting again to the question of agriculture let us not forget the fact that even when Soviet Union or China suffered from severe droughts and failure of crops, people there did not die of famines in any area.

In the Soviet Union particularly, the purchases of farm products from Canada and elsewhere were understood even better by the Big Business journal, *Commerce*, than many who talk of friendship with Soviet Union and get immense help from it of a vital nature for their own economic construction. In its issue dated August 28, 1965, *Commerce* has the following to report on the agreement the USSR made with Canada to purchase 187 million bushels on August 1, 1965 :

"A large part (about five million tons) of Russian wheat purchases abroad is, of course, on behalf of other countries, namely Cuba, UAR and some East European countries. This year, there is one more significant development which has necessitated heavy wheat purchases by Russia. The Soviet authorities have increased meat prices (paid to the farmers by the State — SAD) thereby

encouraging farmers to divert grains as feed-stuff, which is profitable. They have also scaled down the target for grain procurement from 65 million tons in 1964 to 54 million tons in 1965." (*Commerce*, August 28, 1955).

Moreover, the critics of the socialist system ought to remember that in order to buy the supplies, the socialist countries or for that matter even a country like the U.A.R. do not surrender their internal or external policies to the dictates of the World Bank of foreign monopoly capital.

If the world socialist system gets a few more years of peace and freedom from the imperialist threats of war, it will outstrip the world capitalist system, quantitatively and qualitatively in every sphere of economic advance, because for one thing, the growth rates of socialist economy are as a whole high and uninterrupted while those of the capitalist system are lower, and vitiated by the interruption of crises, which are inherent in capitalism. The working people in India will not give up their growing belief in scientific socialism as the best form of life and social system, and the leadership of the working-class as the instrument to attain it, despite all capitalist propaganda aimed at corrupting that faith.

The second feature of the international situation is that the system of world imperialism continues to suffer from the economic and political crises that are inherent in the system. The crisis is not reflected, in the old way, by depression, fall in prices and glut in the market. In fact, the industrial base of countries like the U.S.A., Britain, France, West Germany, etc., is undergoing a technological revolution by means of automation. The six Common Market countries of Europe converted themselves into a vast complex of State-monopoly capital through the mechanism of the Common Market and lifting of tariff barriers. Their production had gone up considerably and they became a challenge to the American monopolies also.

While the American monopolies exported their capital to the Common Market countries to avoid the tariff barriers, they overhauled their own industrial equipment at a fast rate with new technique, which has outstripped the economy of the West European block.

The new industrial revolution, symbolised by the computer cybernetics, while reducing the labour cost in production, has not led to any fall in prices or cost of living of the working people.

It has enormously multiplied the profits of the giant monopolies who alone are able to automate their production lines.

While the automated worker gets a higher wage for his higher skill and attention required under automation, the displacement of employed labour is leading to a serious crisis in the life of the working class. It is leading to mass retrenchment of workers and middle class employees, which will affect the imperialists, not so much in the economic field as in the political

The proponents of U.S. imperialist economy in our country speak a lot of its boom, its might, its great volume of production. But they do not tell us what happens to the workers, who are the main bulk of the population

Speaking in March 1963, President Kennedy said

"I think the number one domestic concern of the U.S. is going to be in the 1960s — jobs, jobs for a tidal wave of men and women who are going to be hitting our labour market in the next five years. . . . Some people may think it strange that jobs which was the great issue of the 'thirties, when we were in a depression, should also be the great concern of the 'sixties, when we enjoy a relative period of economic prosperity.

"...All these trends you have seen...workers displaced by automation, school drop-outs, roaming the streets, those looking for work who have left the farm, the mine, the factory, the railroad or the distressed areas. Some 14 million Americans had some unemployment in 1962 and 28% of last year's unemployed were out of work 15 weeks on average... This nation must do better than that."

The proponents of American ideology in life and living, of American industrial might, know-how, automation and all that, hide the anti-people aspect of the development of monopoly capital in the richest country of the imperialist bloc. Some intellectuals and governmental leaders and officials dazzled by the dollar, want India to follow the American way. Even before India has had a firm industrial base powerful enough to combat the advances of neo-colonialism, the monopolists in our country want automation. And in this, they hide the truth from our working class and trade unions, that in the home of automation and computers, the working people are suffering and rising in strike struggles

And in this misery, the Negro workers suffer more than the white workers. In June 1963, when five per cent of white males

were unemployed, 11.2 per cent of the Negro males were jobless. This is one of the causes for the great battle for civil rights being fought by the Negro people in this "unique democracy" of U.S. imperialism, where the racial fascists of Ku Klux Klan and others resort to bombings of churches and schools and kill even white resisters with police help.

By various manoeuvres of state intervention, U.S. imperialism has kept up its production in a boom condition. But even then, not all the productive capacity is fully used.

The vast profits made by the giant monopolies are diverted to invest in the economies of the competing West European monopolies, to buying up the reactionary ruling circles in various countries, in fomenting conspiracies against those newly-liberated countries who refuse to take the road of American domination and monopoly capitalism.

And when all the billions sunk in making America the supreme neo-colonial power fail to achieve the desired results, U.S. imperialism takes to aggressive wars against freedom-loving peoples.

All the war pacts of the imperialists such as the NATO, the CENTO and the SEATO are on the verge of collapse due to the growing inner-contradictions among the imperialists. Unable to achieve their aims that way, the U.S. imperialists are resorting to the desperate gamble of military interventions and counter-revolutionary coups to enlarge their fields of investment and exploitation in the countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America.

Blinded by their vast sources of production, their profits and their military machine, the U.S. monopolies ran to South Vietnam, where the reactionary landlord-bourgeois regime, run by military junta and factions was being successfully defeated by the revolutionary masses of South Vietnam.

The Vietnamese people had fought and defeated French imperialism, who then forced on them a partition of their country as a price of peace. It however provided that the Vietnamese people as a whole will be able to unite their country by ascertaining the will of the people by means of a peaceful election. The Geneva Agreement, which recognised the socialist Democratic Republic of North Vietnam and provided for peace and unification was violated by the U.S. imperialists, who had now replaced the French imperialists. The people of South Vietnam, after failing to secure democracy, unification and peace, took to the road of

armed struggle against the imperialist puppets and the occupation army of U.S. imperialism.

The National Liberation Front of South Vietnam rules over the major part of that country despite the presence of the American army of half a million. Thinking that the liberation forces of the South Vietnam Liberation Front will collapse militarily if the Democratic Republic of Vietnam were bombed, the U.S. imperialists launched a practical war against the DRV by bombing its territories.

The U.S. imperialists are bound to be defeated in their aggression against Vietnam. All the socialist countries are rendering military help as asked for by the Government of the DRV. All the sympathies of the peace-loving countries are with Vietnam. Even sections of the American ruling class and American people do not approve of the war against Vietnam and want that South-East Asia be left to itself. *Ador*
Pfe

The present situation can best be put in the words of Comrade NGUYEN TAI BINH, Member of the Central Committee of the National Liberation Front who, in her speech, in Moscow on April 4th said:

"The just and patriotic struggle of the people of South Vietnam has become a truly national war involving all sections of the population -- peasants, workers, students, intellectuals, national bourgeoisie, Buddhists, people of all age-groups, including children and grey-haired old men. This is the chief source of the invincible strength of the people of South Vietnam, their mighty weapon which helps them to deliver ever more powerful and victorious blows. . . .

"The armed forces of the USA and its satellites found themselves in a ring of nationwide resistance. . . . In the course of 1965, we destroyed 227,500 enemy soldiers, including 19,200 American aggressors. To this should be added 36,000 men, including 16,300 American soldiers, put out of action, in the first two months of 1966. And now too, our people's army is multiplying its military victories with each passing day. . . .

"Making use of their military bases in South Vietnam, the U.S. imperialist circles are carrying over their destructive air war to North Vietnam, attacking an independent, sovereign state. They are intensifying their aggressive war in Laos and continuously committing acts of provocation against neutral Cambodia which is fraught with the danger of war spreading to the whole of South east Asia and developing into a global conflict.

"It should be perfectly clear that the only condition of ensuring peace in South Vietnam is for the U.S. to withdraw its troops, recognise the South Vietnamese people's fundamental rights defined by the Geneva agreements and recognise the National Liberation Front as the sole genuine representative of the South Vietnamese people.

"Progressive-minded people the world over invariably regarded the South Vietnamese people's just struggle as the front-line of battle against American imperialism — the enemy of the people's freedom and peace, and therefore, rendered us all-round assistance and support. Our people express their deep gratitude to the Soviet Union, China and other socialist countries, to the Communist Parties, independent national states, the national liberation movement, to the peaceful and freedom-loving peoples of the world for their generous assistance and support. We are also grateful to all progressive-minded Americans for their noble struggle against the aggressive war unleashed by the Johnson administration in South Vietnam.

"Addressing the Congress from this lofty rostrum we particularly wish to express the deep-felt gratitude of the South Vietnam National Liberation Front to the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and to the entire Soviet people for their whole-hearted political, moral and material support."

The inspiring struggle of the Vietnamese people against the U.S. imperialists who are aided by the Governments of Britain, Australia, New Zealand and West Germany, has evoked support from the working class and people of all newly liberated countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America.

The Indian people and particularly the working class and trade unions have expressed solidarity and sympathy with fighting Vietnam and have demanded the withdrawal of American troops and observance of the Geneva agreement as demanded by the DRV Government and the NLF of South Vietnam. In India, in all strike meetings under the flag of the AITUC, resolutions of support to the people of Vietnam have been passed. Demonstrations against the American embassy and their visiting dignitaries have been staged from time to time and days have been observed in accordance with the resolutions of the World Federation of Trade Unions.

Yet we have to state that the campaign for Vietnam and against U.S. imperialism has not gathered that momentum that it should.

Apart from our own weaknesses, there is also the regrettable fact that some of the left political parties and trade unions in India consider that the U.S. imperialists in Vietnam are containing Chinese "expansionism" and that the Vietnamese are merely "tools" of the Chinese Communists. And since China has adopted a posture of hostility to India, it is better if the Americans fight them or beat them in Vietnam, thereby helping India in an indirect way. That the Vietnamese people have their own country, civilisation and people to defend, that the Americans in Vietnam are not fighting China but only creating a base for themselves from which they can threaten the freedom of the whole of Asia and its new independent States is completely lost sight of. The monopoly press in the country feeds this illusion in order to strengthen the influence of reactionary forces in our country, in which the U.S. imperialists help them.

The Government of India, which under Shastri had at least mildly disapproved of the bombing of North Vietnam and asked for its "pause" as the Americans put it, the present Prime Minister in her anxiety to secure American economic aid abstained from taking even the stand of the previous government. And, in addition, she signed a statement with the U.S. imperialists agreeing to common aims with the U.S. imperialists in the matter of "containing China". This was nothing but surrender before American blackmail.

The trade unions throughout the country must launch a vigorous campaign in support of Vietnam and force the Government of India to lend unequivocal support to the demands of the Vietnamese people. The people of India must loudly proclaim that they would rather starve than live on American wheat only to go and die for saving the U.S. imperialists in Vietnam.

The aggressive wars and military intervention of the U.S. imperialists are not limited only to Vietnam. Every movement to overthrow the neo-colonialist and reactionary regimes in any Latin American country is put down by U.S. military intervention as in the Dominican Republic or in Panama, Venezuela, etc.

The American Parliament has blatantly declared that it will intervene with military force against any attempt in any part of South America which tries to change its regime in a progressive direction.

This series of aggressive acts of the imperialists is not a sign of their growing strength and the weakening of the socialist and national liberation forces. It is a sign of the growing

crisis of the imperialist system, which more and more is unable to prosper in conditions of peaceful co-existence. At the same time, its aggression is met with revolutionary resistance from all sides, which shows the growing isolation of the counter-revolutionary imperialist forces.

While pointing out the role of the U.S. imperialists as the leader of world imperialism, one must not forget that the imperialists of Britain, France, West Germany, Japan and Italy still exist and pose a threat to world peace, national freedom and socialism.

In Europe, the West German monopolists having rebuilt their industrial base with U.S. help have revived their Nazi organisations, built a strong base for wars of aggression in Europe and are trying to acquire nuclear weapons for the purpose.

But the West German imperialists have now to reckon with the German Democratic Republic, the first ever socialist state of the German people. The GDR stands as a bulwark of peace and against war. Though the India Government maintains trade relations with the GDR and gets help from its industries, it is not prepared to recognise the Government of the GDR. In this, it is bowing before the blackmail of the West German monopolists who threaten to cut off their loans and supplies, if India recognises the GDR.

The TU movement in India insists that the Government must give recognition to the GDR.

While looking at the world of the imperialists, their economic might and aggressive militarism, their threats to world peace and freedom, we also find that the increasing intensification of the exploitation of the working class at the hands of the monopolies is forcing the workers into strike struggles to protect their rights and living.

All the countries of the imperialist bloc have been having strike struggles for higher wages, against retrenchment by automation, for reduction in hours of work and protection of TU rights.

On Christmas last year, New York was closed down by its transport workers. Though the U.S. TU leaders generally bow to the fiat of the U.S. President, who is empowered to hamstring strike action, the transport workers' leaders preferred not to surrender to the monopolists. There was also the famous shut-down of all newspapers by the printing workers. Automation, speed-up

and threats to job security are showing the cracks in the system of monopoly-capital.

The same is the case in England, France and other countries.

The famous Spring campaign launched by the Sohyo called out the railway workers and others into action against Japanese monopolists.

Anti-monopoly actions of the working people are gathering in volume in the highly-advanced capitalist-imperialist countries.

Along with them, the movement of the youths and women for peace, national liberation, democracy and socialism is also forging ahead.

The third feature of the international situation is the collapse of the colonial system in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

The world revolutionary process for the liquidation of imperialism has received a very vital contribution from the collapse of the colonial system, which, except for a few areas, has almost come to an end.

But the imperialists are trying to raise, in place of the old colonialism, based on political and economic bondage of the conquered peoples, a system of neo-colonialism in which the new States retain their political independence and the semblance of sovereignty, but their economic growth is subverted and subjected to the influence, dictates and exploitation of the imperialist monopoly capital with whose aid they seek to overcome their backwardness. The free developing countries of this third world and the progressive democratic forces in them have to unite and resist the offensive of monopoly capital and their political-military machinations against the economic and political freedom of the newly-liberated countries.

The threat to the freedom of these countries does not lie only in the economic field.

The imperialists carry out direct interventions as in South Africa, against the liberation movements, and building new military bases East of Suez. They foment conspiracies to overthrow those regimes in the newly-liberated countries which want to follow a policy of independent development. The suppression of the progressive regime in British Guiana, of the struggle of the people in Aden, the overthrow of the Ghana Government, the encouragement to the racists of Africa to fight the African people as in Rhodesia, the continuance of Portuguese rule in their African colonies, the suppression of the Congo, Angola, etc., the continued

U.S. occupation of South Korea, are some instances to show that the struggle against colonialism and neo-colonialism is not yet fully completed though the system of colonialism has finally collapsed.

The most glaring example of the reverses suffered by a newly-developing independent country at the hands of its internal reaction aided by neo-colonialist forces from outside is the counter-revolution in Indonesia. There the State power has been seized by the military junta, whose first step has been to massacre the leadership and cadres of the Communist Party and the trade unions of the SOBSI. Over two lakhs of people have lost their lives at the hands of the military junta and the reactionary fanatics of the Muslim Brotherhood organisations, who were once a part of the Nasakom national front and others, some of whom have been organised and inspired by the American CIA. Comrade Njono who was the Vice-President of the WFTU has been sentenced to death and all the unions of the SOBSI banned. Comrade Njono was our guest at the AITUC session in Coimbatore and we strongly condemn his death sentence and the massacre of his comrades-in-arms. The fate of Comrade Aidit, Chairman of the Communist Party of Indonesia, is not yet known, though it is strongly remoured that he was shot by his captors.

The working class in India and the AITUC has conveyed messages of sympathy and solidarity to the SOBSI leadership in exile, some of whom are in the WFTU centre in Prague.

affected These reverses suffered by some of the developing countries are, no doubt, serious. They call for a greater cohesion and unity in the international working class movement, and overcoming the differences that exist in it, in order to build a still stronger anti-imperialist anti-monopoly front.

There are also victories to record, where some of the developing countries have not only kept neo-colonialism out of their doors but have taken further steps to strengthen independence and build a progressive economy. Major reforms have been carried out in countries like United Arab Republic, Algeria, Mali, Guinea, Congo (Brazzaville) and Burma. Foreign monopolies are being driven out. Feudal estates are being confiscated and capitalist enterprises nationalised. The state sector in the economy is being enlarged, industrialisation is implemented and broad social legislation adopted in the interests of the people.

The revolutionary advance of these countries strengthens the common front of anti-imperialism and the struggle towards socia-

lism, each contributing its special features to the general world revolutionary process.

This brief review of the international situation would be incomplete without reference to India which occupies an important place in world economy and politics.

India has been following in general a policy of peace, non-alignment and Afro-Asian solidarity, though with reservations and vacillations. But since recently with the growing strength of monopoly capital and the crisis of its capitalist economy, the ruling Congress Party and its Government are tending to lean more towards the imperialist camp and, particularly towards the U.S.A., though it maintains friendly relations and economic cooperation with the socialist countries also. India is under high pressure from the imperialists to drag her into their neo-colonial net

*major
Camer*

In order to facilitate their designs, the imperialists are using the conflict that has existed between India and Pakistan and between India and China, with the border issue as the fulcrum

It is needless to recapitulate the events of the India-China war of 1962 and the Indo-Pak war of 1965.

The India-China armistice or cessation of hostilities got stuck up in the Colombo proposals and there has been no progress in the settlement of the dispute, which embraces the fate of vast areas in Ladakh and in the NEFA area below the MacMohan Line.

The stalemate had, in practice, resulted in each one holding his own line and living in peace with the other, with occasional notes on trespasses and the like. In fact, if anyone had taken the initiative, a peaceful settlement could have been proposed and argued on the basis of the given positions, for which enough official studies by both sides had been done and put on record

*Outward
J. G. G.*

It is obvious to anyone that the Colombo proposals are dead and gone. They cannot be said to occupy any more historical stage for a peace-treaty between the two countries.

The door to negotiations could have been opened earlier but for the Indo-Pak conflict and the unnecessary Chinese intervention in that conflict.

When the Indo-Pak war was entering a stage of cease-fire, the Chinese not only supported the Pakistan side and called for self-determination of Kashmir, that is, virtually asking for its separation from India; they even gave an ultimatum to India on

the pretext that India had taken some 800 sheep of the Tibetan shepherds.

That ultimatum was clearly intended to keep the Indo-Pak war going and to prevent a cease-fire.

At the outbreak of the Indo-Pak war, there was a wave of anti-imperialist feeling in India. It arose out of the realisation that the imperialists of United States and Britain were the real power behind Pakistan's invasion and that it was American arms poured freely into Pakistan for the last several years that had enabled it to launch a war of aggression against India.

This anti-imperialist feeling was heightened more when U.S. and Britain openly showed displeasure when India took firm steps and halted the Pakistan offensive and mounted its own on the Lahore front.

The age-old tactics of imperialism to make India, Pakistan, China and others in Asia get locked in an internecine feud to the benefit of the imperialists was becoming clearly visible to the people. It was also becoming clear that the Indo-Pak war was being used by the U.S. imperialists to divert attention from their defeats in Vietnam and to make India support the U.S. aggression in Vietnam in exchange for military and economic aid.

But as soon as China joined hands with Pakistan to give an ultimatum to India, the anti-American, anti-British indignation was diverted from imperialism to this new Chinese menace. It was immediately used by the imperialists and Indian reactionaries to call for an anti-Chinese alliance with the U.S., on the basis of mutually "common goals".

But the cease-fire proposals of the United Nations which were accepted by India first and later by Pakistan and the initiative of the Soviet Union which brought the two countries together at the negotiating table in Tashkent prevented the situation from getting worse.

When the Tashkent Declaration opened the road to peace and friendship with Pakistan, it could have provided a new turn in the Indo-Chinese relations in the same spirit. But here too when China denounced the Tashkent Declaration as a step towards encircling China by the imperialists of U.S., India and the "revisionists" of Soviet Union acting in a common alliance, those who desire a peaceful settlement of the India-China dispute received a set-back.

The reactionaries in India opposed the Tashkent Declaration. They even tried to use the death of Prime Minister Shastri at Tashkent to incite anti-Soviet feelings. But they failed to evoke mass support.

The speeches of the Chinese leadership in their visit to Pakistan, which incite Pakistan to take anti-Indian postures, reject the Tashkent Declaration and continue to make claims on the Indian State of Kashmir, strengthen the hands of those in India who do not want settlement with China and push India into American arms and weaken the hands of those who want a peaceful settlement both with China and Pakistan.

While not neglecting to note this aspect of the situation and the need for vigilance in national defence, it is in the interests of the Indian people and the country as a whole to try for a peaceful settlement with China. One reason is that the existence of the feud enables the imperialists to intervene in our affairs and draw India towards them in the name of helping her against China. Secondly, it enables the Indian reactionaries to exploit the people in various ways in the name of defence and to attack the democratic rights and liberties in the name of emergency.

The Indo-Pak conflict is now partly settled by the Tashkent Declaration and all the democratic forces in India and Pakistan owe it to their people and the world to see that it leads to a permanent peace between our two countries.

There can be no question of new self-determination to Kashmir. India and Pakistan can settle the problem on the basis of the existing positions of the Kashmir borders and bury the conflict for ever.

The AITUC appeals to the Governments of all the three countries to meet at the highest level, directly or thru any friendly mediation and arrive at a treaty of permanent peace and friendship in the interests of the people of Asia and world peace.

The trade unions in Pakistan both in the West and East have been showing new life in the matter of unity and action in defence of their demands. Our trade unions should develop friendly contacts in common interest with them which can be a helpful step in the translation of the Tashkent spirit. Development of trade relations also will lead to better understanding and will be a relief to the economies of both the countries thus pre-

cultural

paring further grounds for peaceful relations and friendship between the two countries.

The tricontinental solidarity conference of the democratic movements of Asia, Africa and Latin America which met at Havana showed the desire of the anti-imperialist masses to forge a common front of united action against imperialism and its allies. The Indian working class and the AITUC join wholeheartedly in this noble revolutionary task.

The Face Of Our Economy and Imperialist Threat :

When we turn our attention from the International situation to the National, it does not require much effort or complicated argument to understand it. *black mail*

The economy of the country is in the grip of a severe crisis as was never seen before. Production rates have slowed down. Food has been hoarded and its free movement obstructed by regional interests to such an extent that millions are starving for want of supplies. The reactionary block of monopolists is doing everything to worsen the crisis and attack the people's livelihood in every sphere. The imperialists from abroad, particularly the U.S. imperialists are intensifying their blockade in those economic spheres, which have been dependent on them and are preparing to take over and push India into their neo-colonial preserve. The American C.I.A. is fomenting conspiracies against the democratic forces, in its usual counter-revolutionary traditions as described so well by the *New York Times* itself. The ruling Congress Party is factionally divided and has lost its bearings before the onslaughts of the imperialists from abroad and monopolists at home. It is unable even to use the tremendous economic and other help that the Socialist countries give to India in order to keep her from being blackmailed by the imperialists and to develop her economy along independent democratic lines and take the path forward to complete economic independence and well-being of the masses. Responsible Ministers, including the Prime Minister, are ordered about by the Americans, as if they were nothing but colonial puppets. Even their speeches have to be scrutinised and sanctioned by the World Bank before Parliament can hear them and decide its policies.

Those patriotic and democratic forces, who would oppose these policies and resolve the political-economic crisis by relying on the people's strength have been under attack and are not yet strong and united enough to fight the surrender of our country's economic and political independence to imperialist blackmail and monopolist betrayal. The so-called centre-left in the ruling Congress Party itself is helping to carry out what the Right reaction wants in the name of resolving the crisis. It is afraid of telling the truth to the people and mobilising their forces to overcome

the crisis because the Government itself represents those very class interests which are at the bottom of the crisis.

The working-class is going into action to defend its own interests. Its leadership is aware of the danger. But its organised strength is not so big, as to be able to halt the offensive on its own. The trade unions and political parties of the working-class are divided into so many centres and groups that one loses count of them. Even then, mighty struggles are being fought to defend the people. The massive 'Bundh' actions throughout the country are gathering momentum and even scoring successes — but only small ones. A real political battle against the attack of the foreign imperialists and Indian reactionaries and the Congress Government which shields them has yet to open in right earnest. It can be done if we all unite.

Such, in a nutshell, is the National situation. Let us note, however, some of its broad features more concretely, in order to see why such a situation has arisen.

It is admitted by everyone that the Third Five Year Plan has failed and the Fourth Plan is in a freeze.

But this collapse has taken place on the background of economic growth, which has taken India forward and has changed, in some measure, the totally backward economy in which it was left by the British.

Since, however, the political and economic power is mainly and decisively in the hands of the capitalist class, neither the policies of the State apparatus nor the direction of the new economic construction could be so made as to benefit the country and its working people and develop the power of the democratic masses over the affairs of the State and the economy.

We might note some of the objective facts of economic growth, in the period 1951 to 1966.

Production in certain lines has grown as follows :

		<i>Year</i>	<i>Year</i>
		<i>1950-51</i>	<i>1964-65</i>
1. Pig Iron	— Million Tonnes	1.60	6.67
2. Finished Steel	— „ „	1.04	4.43
3. Aluminium	— Thousand Tonnes	4.00	54.10
4. Copper	— „ „	7.10	9.40

5. Machine Tools	—Million Rupees	3.00	257.00
6. Bicycles	—Thousand numbers	99.00	1,442 00
7. Coal	—Million Tonnes	32.80	64 40
8. Cement	— „ „	2.73	9 70
9. Cotton Cloth	—Million Meters	4,215	7,745
10. Sugar	—Thousand Tonnes	1,124	3,260
11. Electricity (Generated)	—Million K.W.	5,107	27,880
12. Foodgrains	—Million Tonnes	54.92	88 40

Productive capacity of the country in iron and steel, machine tools, coal, copper, aluminium and oil has grown. For the first time, industrial goods which were not made in India are now being manufactured in the country with Indian capital and Indian skill. New plants for machine building are being set up. The oil industry has grown up as quite a new force in the economy of the country. Big plants for manufacturing all the essential drugs are nearing completion. We can now produce our own locomotives and wagons. The Gnats of Hindustan Aircraft — HAL — have won a name and pride for our worker and our airforce fighter. The huge new townships that have sprung up on virgin soil in various parts of the country tell us that something has been built up in the country of ours after it attained freedom of which we should be proud and glad.

Even though this growth is not much for a big country of near five hundred million souls, it has given birth to a new force in the life of the country and that is the working-class. The working-class has increased in size to the tune of twenty million. The growth of this potential vehicle of revolutionising the social process for the birth of a new society is the biggest contribution of the new growth in independent India.

This has to be said because the crisis which is on us and which is imposing misery on millions may give us the feeling that we are a lost nation, a country, whose people are fit for nothing, but dying in despair, a country, whose intelligentsia has no intellect and capital which has no enterprise. That would be a one-sided picture, a false picture, which will give us a wrong direction in our class-battles with the common enemy, imperialism and fail to win the workers their all.

Even the peasantry, which has been denied the necessary freedoms, capital and its rightful ownership of land has raised

production from 55 million tonnes of foodgrains in 1951 to 88 million tonnes in 1964. The working people and the working peasantry are blamed for the growth in population but food has kept pace with it though not in plenty. Even in 1965, the per capita availability was not so low as to cause scarcity and starvation that is seen in so many places.

No doubt this is nothing compared to our needs. To raise one million tonnes of steel production to just four or five million tonnes in fifteen years is not a very creditable thing, when we find that China, with whom some people want to compete in everything, including the atom bomb, raised its production of steel from hardly a million tonnes in 1949 to 10 million tonnes in 1964 and it proposes to reach 16 million tonnes by 1970 in her new plan.

The planners and leaders of the Congress Government had made all sorts of promises and forecasts, one of which was to reach 100 million tonnes in foodgrains, and 9 million tonnes in steel. All those promises have proved a hoax. The reason is not far to seek. A capitalist system cannot fulfil an overall *social plan* of production. It can make some programmes of building this or that industrial plant but a balanced integrated plan of the whole of social economy is impossible for capitalism. And India has been building capitalism, that too in an under-developed country. Naturally a crisis and failure were inevitable unless she had changed her path.

The leadership of the ruling party, when taking one correct step always countered it by taking an opposite and incorrect step. For example they decided correctly to build a state sector of economy, heavy industry and ties of friendship with Socialist States and particularly the Soviet Union, which alone would help India to build a State sector and the most important plants of heavy industry.

In the same breath, they allowed the big bankers and monopolists to rob the country's foreign exchange for building their private sector for private profits, begged the U.S. imperialists for massive aid, tied themselves up more with the British Commonwealth, made their armaments and industrial technique dependent on imperialist supplies, and advice, spurned the Indian intelligentsia and the smaller industrialist, allowed a whole bunch of bureaucrats to man the State apparatus, and suppressed with a heavy hand the working class and those democratic forces who opposed it.

The inevitable result is the present crisis.

Let us put down here a few facts regarding our capital structure, which is the financial basis of the national economy and which today is weighing down heavily on all of us and yet is the instrument which the democratic forces have to use to overcome the crisis.

In the absence of colonial loot to form the basis of our capital and the capital accumulation in the hands of the private capitalists being too small to finance big projects, the State took over the task of heavy capital investments, including those, which have to be maintained for security and social movement — such as defence factories, railways and roads etc.

Net Capital Formation out of the Budgetary Resources of the Central Government has grown as follows :

<i>Year</i>				<i>Rupees in Crores</i>
1950-51	..	..		98.5
1951-56	..	..	..	1,385.8
1956-61	..	..	..	3,470.0
1961-66	..	..	..	6,727.3

The modern State is no longer only a police State or organ of suppression. It engages in production, distribution, trade exchange. In part, it is, by itself, a huge company or corporation with taxes on the people and the public debt as its main source of capital formation.

The total capital outlay of the Government of India at the end of 1965-66 stands at Rs. 6,663.28 crores. In the ten years from 1950-51, it has grown four and a half times. It is to be noted, however, that out of this sum Rs. 2,675.01 crores are put into railways alone. Nearly 71 crores are in Atomic Energy Commission, which is expected to jump to Rs. 122.13 crores next year that is thru this year's budget. Government Companies and Corporations such as Hindustan Steel, Machine Tools, Shipping, I.I.C., Mining, Hotels etc., absorb Rs. 1,779.60 crores. Defence services, Public works, trading in foodgrains etc. take up Rs. 1,844.35 crores.

Apart from the capital formation directly under the Central Government, there are loans given by it to State Governments and private parties etc. This sum amounts to Rs. 5,427.34 crores.

Thus total capital outlay and loans advanced by Central Government amount to Rs. 12,090.62 crores in 1965-66 (Source

Explanatory Memorandum on the Budget of the Central Government 1966-67, pp. 85-87).

One can see what tremendous money power of expenditure and disbursements rests with the Government, the ministers, secretaries, their underlings and so on, and what an enormous source it can become for fortune building, patronage, corruption in capitalist society which is dominated by the law of private profit. It also shows what opportunities there are to serve the people.

The State sector in India was opposed by the monopolists in this country as well as abroad. They argued that if the Government could find the money by taxing the people or borrowing from abroad and from the public in India, it could as well loan it to those whose business it has been to build industries and to trade.

In the Second Plan period the policy makers of the Government took the decision to build heavy industry in the State Sector; foreign private capital and the Government of U.S.A., refused to lend money and supply the machines. But their blockade was broken when India began to obtain plants and machinery of the most advanced type and on very generous terms from the Soviet Union. Bhillai, Bokaro, Hardwar, Ranchi are witnesses to this.

Now when the State Sector has been established and it has begun to serve the interests of private capital also, their opposition has taken a new form. They want its management to be left to them and the pricing of the products of State Sector production to be so low as to yield super-profits to the monopolists, who use the products of the State Sector.

The bureaucratic management of the State Sector is in many cases corrupt and inefficient. The appointment of raw civil servants, without technical experience, with no incentives beyond their salary grades and no revolutionary zeal and brought up in bourgeois traditions has rendered many fine plants inefficient and loss-making concerns. And where the technicians or workers try to criticise or improve matters they are victimised. The result is that slowly monopolists are preparing the ground to take over the State Sector into their fold if the people do not show vigilance.

The treatment given to the workers in the State Sector is in many cases worse than in the private sector and when the workers struggle they have to face all the might of the State as an employer. After the State Sector established itself and grew in size, the AITUC in its State Sector Unions Conference decided to launch struggles to improve the conditions of the workers in

these units and in this matter, make no distinction between the State and the Private sectors.

The growth rate of the State sector as well as its importance in national economy are now recognised by all. India would not have got its oil or its steel and machine tools if the policy of building the State sector had not been adopted. That policy played a progressive role in the industrialisation of the country.

And in developing the best and most important part as in oil and steel, machine building, it was socialist capital that helped, and imperialist capital which sabotaged.

It is said that State Sector capital is building capitalism as much as private capital, that it smells no better and treats the worker no better. As such, there is nothing to feel good about it and the Socialist countries, who ought to help socialism and revolution are only helping to build the forces of monopoly capital and counter-revolution. In fact, in some countries, such plans built with Soviet help were later used by the perpetrators of counter-revolutionary coups and reactionary regimes against the people, as in Iran or in Indonesia.

Socialist capital is given to a newly-liberated country to make it stand up against the onslaught of neo-colonialism and thereby enable the democratic forces to strengthen themselves and go towards social progress. Even in a capitalist country like India it helps to fight the grabbing hands of the imperialists and the monopolists. This positive anti-imperialist, anti-monopoly aspect of the help given by socialist capital is the real revolutionary content of its aid to developing countries.

weaken If counter-revolution and neo-colonialism capture it, it is the fault of the revolutionary democratic forces, who have failed to unite and strengthen their anti-imperialist and anti-reactionary forces. In the absence of socialist capital, India would have gone into the hands of foreign monopolists and neo-colonialists long ago. But for the big socialist world, it would have no other alternative. The existence of an 'alternative' is one of the big factors in the new epoch in strengthening independence and opening the road to new perspectives, even where the newly liberated state is in the hands of the bourgeoisie as in India. Socialist capital coming to our country is a factor of progress and ally of the working class in its struggle to build a better country and better life for itself and for all people.

And that is exactly the reason why the imperialists and monopolists are trying their hardest to wean India away from its friendship and economic ties with the Socialist camp.

The State Sector has grown at a very fast rate and that is the reason, why foreign and Indian monopolists have opened an attack on India's economy.

What is the relative strength of the two sectors if measured by corporate capital ?

The capital formation by the budgets of the Government show the economic levers in the hands of the State as such but that huge bloc is not all productive or value-producing capital.

There is, as yet, no overall capital accounting of the Indian economy, except as seen through the National Income, where also it is vitiated by the inclusion of services or the tertiary incomes in the national total.

But in order to see the *trend* of development, we may use the table of the formation of government and non-government companies and their paid up capital. In this, the capital in government departmental undertakings is not taken into account. Also, private capital that does not take the form of companies is also excluded. But one can see the trend very visibly.

Year.	All com- panies	Paid-up capital Rs. (crores)	Govt. Companies		Non-Govt. Companies	
			No.	Capital Rs. (crores)	No.	Capital Rs. (crores)
1957	29,357	1,077.6	74	72.6	29,283	1,005.0
1960	26,897	1,618.7	125	477.2	26,772	1,141.5
1964	26,002	2,388.9	178	895.5	25,824	1,493.4

(Source: COMPANY NEWS & NOTES, February 1, 1965)

The trend shows that State Sector capital in the form of paid up capital of Government companies rose from Rs. 72.6 crores to Rs. 895.5 crores. That means the share of State capital in the total corporate capital rose from 7 per cent in 1957 to 37.5 per cent in 1964. Private capital rose from Rs. 1,005.0 crores in 1957 to Rs. 1,493.4 crores in 1964, that is, its share in the total corporate sector of the economy fell from 93 per cent to 62.5 per cent

Both capitals rose in absolute volume. But State capital rose by 436% and private capital by 48%. The galloping speed of corporate state capital is nearly ten times that of the private, in these eight years.

In September 1964, the number of companies stood at 26,341 and the aggregate paid-up capital at Rs. 2,482 crores in which Government companies (November 1964) were 184 with a paid-up capital of Rs. 971 crores.

The Government report on the working of 61 industrial and commercial undertakings for the year 1963-64 presented to Parliament in February 1965, says that the equity capital in these undertakings at end of 1963-64 stood at Rs. 1,039 crores and long-term loan capital at Rs. 741 crores — the total being Rs. 1,780 crores.

The gross block of all these 61 undertakings stood at Rs. 1,550 crores, the gross block being less than the capital invested because all investments have not yet come into force.

If we take the total productive state sector capital at Rs. 4,632 crores as abstracted from the total capital formation of Rs. 11,936 crores (1964), how does it compare with the gross fixed assets of the private sector of corporate capital?

There is no study available up to the latest year and in the way to match comparable items in both the sectors. The paid up capital of Government and non-government companies is one indicator but that omits many productive capital assets in the government's departmental undertakings which also are part of state sector capital.

But there is a study of 1,333 public limited, non-financial, non-governmental companies (1962-63) which form 89 per cent of the total paid up capital of all such companies at work as at the end of March 1961 (*Reserve Bank Bulletin*, July 1964).

The total *gross assets* of these companies were Rs. 4,067 crores in 1962-63 in which the share of net real capital (net fixed assets and inventories) amounted to Rs. 2,237 crores. If we omit depreciation provision of Rs. 927.85 crores from the gross assets, the total net assets amount to Rs. 3,137 crores. This represents 89 per cent of the total capital of such companies, the total can be taken at Rs. 3,525 crores.

The conclusion would be that State Sector capital in the productive sphere is as big as the private sector capital in its corporate form. But, if we take all private productive capital, not only in the form of public limited but private limited and private partnership and trust capital, the State Sector is still smaller than the private, though it is growing at a rapid rate. It will outstrip the private sector only if the trend continues and at the same or greater speed.

But there are already signs to arrest this trend and the monopoly capital group which all along opposed the state sector entering new productive spheres where they already had a hand, is mobilising all forces for the job. They will succeed, if the working class and democratic forces do not counter-attack with a united force and understanding.

The perspectives presented by the discussion in the Fourth Plan were such that at the end of 1970, the State Sector would have been co-equal with the private sector and it was intended to enter into branches of consumer goods, which today is almost the exclusive preserve of private capital yielding the highest rate of profit and exploiting the consuming public with high prices. That was one more reason for the imperialists and monopolists to create the present crisis.

It is necessary to see what "division of Labour" has been made by Government and Non-Government Companies in the sphere of important industrial groups.

An interesting table given by "Company News and Notes" (February 1965) shows where government and non-government public limited companies exist as on 31st March 1964.

<i>Important industrial groups</i>	<i>Govt. Co's Paid-up capital</i>	<i>Non-Govt. Co's Paid-up capital</i>
	<i>(In Rs. Crores)</i>	
1. Tea Plantations	0.0	34.6
2. Sugar factories and refineries	1.9	48.1
3. Cotton textile mills	3.1	162.0
4. Iron and Steel (Basic)	451.0	87.1
5. Transport Equipment Mfg.	30.5	52.7
6. Mfg. of Electrical Machinery	42.1	39.3
7. Machinery other than transport and electric	92.8	75.1
8. Basic industrial chemicals, fertilisers, etc.	59.3	44.8
9. Products of petroleum and coal	45.0	17.5
10. Manufacture of cement	0.0	46.4
11. Paper and Paper Products	5.0	43.4
12. Wholesale Trade	9.6	111.4
13. Banking, loan and other financial institutions	13.1	94.8
	<hr/> 753.4	<hr/> 857.2

A picture of twelve important industrial groups in the sphere of manufacture and one in the sphere of bank capital show that in the sphere of the twelve manufacturing groups, the paid-up capital of the state sector or government companies is Rs. 740 crores and that of private companies was Rs. 762 crores. In financial companies, government had Rs. 13.1 crores and private banking capital was Rs. 94.8 crores. We need not mix up here the financial companies as we have omitted them from previous comparisons also. Taking these two public and private blocks of Rs. 740 crores and Rs. 762 crores, we find that the State Sector is bigger than private in iron and steel, electric and other machinery, chemicals and fertilisers, petroleum. Private sector is bigger than State Sector in plantations, sugar, textiles, transport equipment manufacture such as cars, cycles, etc., cement, paper and wholesale trade.

Thus it will be seen that of all thirteen groups, there is none where private capital does not exist but there are three where State capital is wholly absent or almost non-existent. State capital has left the whole field of plantations, cotton textiles, sugar and cement to private capital. These are highly profitable and consumer industries and private monopoly rules them to the detriment of the country and the people. Trading capital as represented by State trading with Rs. 9.6 crores is far behind Rs. 111.4 crores of private paid up capital in wholesale trade.

There are proposals that the state sector will enter on a larger scale in the consumer industries. But already the private monopolists have started a row against the proposal.

It is necessary for the working class to demand that State Sector capital enter the field of the big consumer industries, both by the direct takeover of some existing units and by establishing new ones. That would be one of the economic measures to fight the crisis that is on us.

FOREIGN CAPITAL

The weakest and most dangerous part of the economic development of the country is the reliance of the Government on foreign monopoly capital and the growing influence of American capital, both in the political and economic field, and now fast spreading to cultural-educational field also.

The external assistance sought and obtained by Government stood at Rs. 5,575 crores upto 30th September, 1965 and out of this it has used Rs. 4,156.50 crores to that date

In this U.S. 'P.L. 480' and 'P.L. 665' assistance stood at Rs. 1,463.19 crores.

In this huge liability credits repayable in Indian rupees that is mostly loans authorised from Socialist countries were Rs. 292.26 crores upto September 30, 1965.

The loans from U.S.A. and others have to be paid in their currency. But since they refuse to buy our goods in return for the loans as the socialist countries do, India is always in a crisis of foreign exchange. Moreover, whatever they buy, they do at prices, which do not give us full value. All economists now agree that we and other under-developed countries are robbed by the imperialist countries in our trade with them, and that they take away more from the countries that they help than what they give to them.

One report has to say the following on this :

"Recent data show only too clearly how badly they (the under-developing countries) have been hit by recent trends in trade. Since 1957, it has been computed, the industrial countries have benefitted to the tune of 7,000 million dollars a year from the decline in their import prices and of another 4,000 million dollars a year thru the rise in their export prices or by 10,000 to 11,000 million dollars a year in all; as against this their total assistance to economically backward nations has not exceeded 10,000 million dollars a year".

(Times of India — "Liquidity Problem"—29-7-'65)

Thus the imperialists take away from us and all other developing countries more than they loan to us. Their annual profits are as much or more than their loans. They take back what they give and over and above keep us in debt still to be paid. This is the face of neo-colonialism.

India has come to a stage where she cannot pay even the interest on foreign loans.

But that is not so much the serious part of the present crisis.

The most serious part is that those industries which have been built with American help are being blockaded and denied the supplies of spares and components, which threatens the very roots of our national economy in many vital spheres.

Not only have the industrialists and Government been borrowing from the imperialists but borrowing things incompletely and

second-hand. And when the U.S.A. and Britain and other imperialists imposed the blockade on us under the excuse of the Indo-Pak War, we were thrown in a severe crisis.

The American imperialists conspired very cleverly to inveigh India into their net.

By means of generous grants and loans they started occupying strategic positions in the Indian economy, though they could not displace British capital which even now occupies a bigger position in private industry.

The most vulnerable part which the U.S.A. captured was in the matter of food supplies. The failure of the Congress leadership to raise agriculture to a higher level by giving land and capital to the working peasant enabled the U.S.A. to batter Indian economy with wheat loans. Coupled with this was the fact that banking capital aided the hoarders of food and heightened the scarcity. The suffering people began to fight which frightened the Government, whose ministers, instead of relying on the people, started surrendering one position after another to foreign capital which now is fully poised for attack to capture the whole field to the detriment of our independence and progress.

The U.S. imperialists are dictating terms for aid, which if accepted will lead to the destruction of our independence. Their terms can be summed up as follows :

1. Full and free entry to foreign private capital in all fields on equal terms with Indian Capital.
2. Majority share and management control in the hands of the foreigner with full freedom of the market and prices.
3. No extension of the State Sector any more, least of all in heavy industry and machine building.
4. Industrial crops (viz. cotton, oil seeds) to be bought from the U.S. and India to produce foodgrains only.
5. Indian know-how and science to be attached to U.S. which has already got what India wants to do and hence can buy it from the U.S.
6. No restrictions on Indian monopoly capital.
7. Indian education to be oriented on American lines through Indo-American Foundation.

8. Reduce costs by slashing wages and firm suppression of strikes, democratic liberties and trade unions.

9. Government and Parliament to follow American advice given directly or thru the World Bank.

10. Curbing of socialist capital and trade with socialist countries.

11. Finally total agreement with American foreign policies including the war in Vietnam.

These are the terms that the U.S.A. has put to the Congress leadership, whose representatives have gone on visits to U.S.A. in search of more aid to meet the crisis of food and industrial production.

The present indications are that the major part of the Governmental leadership is ready to accept them. The Indian monopolists and political reactionaries both inside and outside the Congress have been in agreement with such ideas for a long time.

The democratic forces are opposed to them. A large part of the intelligentsia is against them. A part of Congress leadership and sections of the Indian bourgeoisie who want independent development are not in favour of them.

The Anglo-American imperialists despite their inner contradictions have been trying to push us in many ways. They tried the Kanjarkot battle to make us join them. They incited the Pakistan invasion and were surprised that India could stand up. So they put the embargo.

Reaction took advantage and manoeuvred the food crisis, which moved the masses to hit back. The U.S. intervened with an offer to feed them and save the Government. Instead of rejecting the terms and hitting at the monopolies and the banks, the police and army was called to quell the mass-movement.

The imperialists moved in and started dictating their final terms of surrender.

The situation can be saved only if the democratic masses, parties and organisations go into action against the sell-out, in a united militant manner. Trade unions and trade union unity can play a great role in this.

Indian Monopoly and the Masses

We have posed the seriousness of the threat from the imperialist bloc, particularly the U.S. imperialists. We have seen how they manoeuvred the situation in their favour through the crisis in the creation of which they have a main hand.

But imperialism is not playing a lone hand. It has its allies in the reactionary ruling circles and primarily in the monopolists, who have grown very powerful during the course of the three Five-Year Plans and the resultant increase of wealth in the country.

The powerful monopoly houses, which are not more than 75 in the whole country, are helping in the deepening of the crisis of the economy and are the protagonists of the policy of surrender to U.S. capital. They are the main partners in the collaboration agreements with foreign capital.

Between January 1957 and 1965 December, there were 2,358 approved collaboration agreements between Indian and foreign private capital.

If you judge by the number of agreements, Britain stands first with 663 agreements and U.S.A. second with 408 agreements, and West Germany third with 348 agreements. British capital does not shout much but it has quite a big hold in our country's economy.

Foreign capital comes to India, not for charity but for amassing profits and taking them home. They are a serious drain and danger. At the same time, we must not get the idea that foreign capital has got hold of all our wealth.

Not only has State Sector capital become large in size and has come to occupy a very important place in the structure of our economy. Private Indian capital also, in comparison with foreign capital in India is quite large and solid.

If we compare the total paid-up capital and total assets of all large sized foreign companies in India with the paid-up capital and assets of all large sized Indian companies with paid-up capital of

Rs. 50 lacs and above) companies at work, we get the following picture :

	<i>Rs. crores.</i>
1. Total net assets of all large sized Companies	5,978
2. Total net assets of all large sized foreign Companies	461
2 as % of 1 — 9.0	
3. Total paid-up capital of all large sized Companies	1,799
4. Total paid-up capital of all large sized foreign Companies	133
4 as % of 3 — 7.5	

If we pay attention to the big noise created about the existence of foreign capital in our country and when some of us speak of it as if the whole country is run on nothing but foreign capital, one gets surprised to find that in the net assets of all large sized companies foreign capital is only 9 per cent.

The reason for the alarm, which is quite legitimate does not lie in the volume of foreign capital. It lies in the command they have over the most vital aspects of our production and the power or influence they begin to exercise not only in the field of economy, but in the political field of our national policies.

This power was seen when the foreign collaborators from their home country at the bidding of their Government put an embargo on components, spares and raw materials which threw a large part of our production apparatus out of gear. Foreign capital commands certain arteries of the heart of our economy, by which it can succeed in killing us of "heart failures", if we do not remove his clasping murderous hand on them.

And we are not able to do it even now, when foreign capital has revealed its true face since last year. The reason for that is that they have a powerful ally in the monopolists of our country.

Concentration of wealth in the hands of a few is the inevitable outcome of capitalist growth. It could not be otherwise in India, even if the parliament and the Congress Government swore by socialist phrases. Even in British days a few Indian monopolists had begun to mushroom, while serving their master on one side and blessing the national movement on the other with a few

coppers. The Birlas did not hesitate to export gold bought from the distressed Indian peasant in the 1930's when the pound (and the rupee linked to it) went off the gold standard. Now the smugglers are working in reverse.

The monopolies grew fast in the Second and Third Plans when the economy was being given a push by large subsidies, licences, foreign imports and big Government contracts and purchases. The rising national income, the rising profits from the growing productivity and falling real wage of the worker, the command over the vast banking finance in the country fostered the growth of giant monopolies. They cornered whole lines of production vital to the life of the people. And Governmental policies helped them to grow in the name of fostering enterprise and economic growth.

The Government appointed two Commissions to inquire into this question and both have reported that growth of monopoly capital, concentration of wealth and command over goods vital to the needs of society and people are in their hands, though they have not yet come to the position of State-monopoly capital, dominating all politics and economy of the country. They have yet to reckon with the small and medium and some big entrepreneurs in the capitalist world, as also the rural bourgeoisie which has come to acquire political and economic weightage.

The conclusions of the Mahalanobis Commission and the Monopolies Commission are now well-known.

The Monopolies Inquiry Commission gives a list of 75 monopoly houses or groups who comprise 1,536 companies and their total assets are Rs. 2,605.95 crores and their total paid-up capital is Rs. 646.32 crores. How much of the total corporate do they command?

The assets of non-Government non-banking companies for 1963-64 amounted to Rs. 5,552.14 crores and their paid-up capital to 1,465.46 crores.

Thus the proportion of the assets of the 75 groups to those of all non-Government non-banking companies works out at 46.9%; and the proportion of paid-up capital works out at 44.1%.

The monopolists have come to occupy nearly half the capital assets in industry.

The assets of the Tata group come to Rs. 385 crores and those of Birlas to Rs. 271 crores. There are 53 Companies with

assets of not less than Rs. one crore in the Tata group and 151 Companies in the Birla group. Their total annual turnover is Rs. 615 crores.

Is it any wonder that they control press and public opinion, control essential supplies to the people, buy up not only merchandise but even votes outside and opinion inside the Parliament? Did not Minister Nanda himself say that 45 M.P.s are on the payroll of one big group? The Krupps of Germany financed the counter-revolution in Germany and put Hitler in power. The American monopolies use the C.I.A. Are not our Tata and Birla cousins to these their brethren abroad?

The monopolies control the Banks and the market, and thru them raise prices far above their value and fleece the consumer. They withhold supplies from the market and create artificial scarcity to raise prices and profits.

They are the sources of corruption and are the repositories of hundreds of crores of black money. They defraud the State of its tax-dues. If they are caught in the act, they buy up the bureaucracy or a part of Governmental machinery and get away with it. And if some Minister does dare to persist, as in the case of Bird & Co., he soon loses his head as T.T.K. found to his cost.

Gold and diamond smugglers thrive under their protection. Their newspapers quote the rates of smuggled gold and its quantities.

It is these monopolists who are now clamouring for agreeing to the terms of the American monopolies.

Even though there was no real famine of foodgrains, these monopolies financed hoarding of food on a vast scale throughout the country. When once the Hundi market was raided, prices of grain fell on the Bombay market and supplies reappeared. But soon the raids were called off.

The Government failed to break these monopolies and their anti-social, anti-national activities, because Governmental Ministers are not afraid of shooting the starving people but afraid of the monopolies.

Having worked up a shortage of food and the consequent mass anger, the Food Minister dramatised the situation by flying to Washington for American wheat. The great rich uncle was put before the people as the saviour of a hungry India.

But the rich uncle held back his aid until the beggars agreed to all his terms. These terms are nothing but surrender to imperialism, which the Indian people will never allow.

Our trade unions must persistently combat the propaganda of the monopoly and pro-American press that the imperialists are only trying to help us to build our economy in a disinterested manner. It is admitted by statistical evidence that American Capital investment reaps a far higher profit in India than elsewhere. It is also known that the U.S. imperialists themselves are in difficulties of foreign exchange due to their heavy military expenditure on the military bases they maintain round the world to fight the socialist countries and national revolutions. American finance is getting strained due to their heavy defeats and commitments in the long war in Viet Nam.

The cracks in the NATO alliance due to the French walk out and in the CENTO-SEATO due to the attitude of Pakistan have set the U.S. worrying. Hence they are putting up the face of a bully to find other dupes like the Congress Government to do their dirty jobs and to provide them a rich grazing ground and cannon fodder in India.

We have given so much time to this problem because our workers must learn what the imperialists and the Indian monopolists, who are in league with them, are doing. Every trade union, in fact, should know which these 75 monopoly houses are and what they do to exploit us and rob the country. All their black names should be hung in our offices to remember them and to curse them.

The Constitution of India lays down in its directive principles in article 39(b) and (c) the following principle :

"The State shall in particular direct its policy towards securing (1) that the ownership and control of the material resources of the Community are so distributed as best to subserve the common good, and (2) that the operation of the economic system does not result in the concentration of wealth and means of production to the common detriment."

The Commission found that concentration had taken place to the detriment of the common good. What is the remedy?

The only remedy is the programme put forward from time to time by the AITUC and other democratic organisations. The first step is to break the power of monopoly capital, in which National-

lisation of Banks should be the first in priority. Then all the big monopolies, who have harmed the interests of the people and have conspired with the foreign imperialists to deprive the country and the people of food, clothing, and all the essential goods and have dictated impermissible prices and traded in black and done all those crimes that the under-world of Finance does, should be nationalised.

The Commission takes up a list of one hundred consumer goods and shows which of them are controlled wholly by one or two firms alone, some of them mostly American and British as in the field of essential medicines whose prices in India are the highest in the world. All of them must be nationalised in public interest.

We must campaign for Nationalisation of Banking¹ and the anti-social monopolies.

That alone will bring food on the market and reduce prices. That will scotch all imperialist schemes to strike at our independence and growth.

When the imperialist blockade of our industries took place and factories began to close down, the patriotic technicians, engineers, scientists and some Governmental leaders gave a call for "a new Swadeshi movement" that is for import substitution and self-reliance.

The monopoly industrialists had failed to build special alloy steels that are so vitally needed to manufacture machines, tools and many defence items. They had failed to find substitutes for imported components and non-ferrous metals, in which India is short.

The American blockade initiated a new movement to do away with as much as possible of dependence on foreign supplies. Some directors of well-known firms prepared papers and spoke in conferences to show what substitutes the Soviet Union and America had used in place of scarce metals. The H.M.T., the Defence Industries, and many others could find quite a few items to save themselves from going abegging to the U.S.

But this movement, in which our young intelligentsia, technicians and scientists joined enthusiastically was cold-shouldered by the monopolists, because no one dared to punish them for their sabotage of independent national development and national self-reliance.

Our trade unions and workers are ever willing to help in such a movement and they do help because they are the people who build the machines and run them. But the bureaucrats, and many of the Ministers with their anti-people attitude would not like a worker to become a "teacher" or "leader" in self-reliance and independence of our economy.

But this is a job which the trade unions can help in doing. It will benefit not only the national economy but also the working-class in as much as it will help in continued employment and production.

The trade unions and workers must be made aware of this situation and the dangers that confront us. The imperialists have failed to dislodge our independence and make us walk into their camp in the two crises of 1962 and 1965 border wars. They do not hope to stage a military coup like in Ghana or Indonesia.

Hence they are trying the economic blockade, hoping to win India by an economic coup or financial take-over

The workers must take the lead in mobilising the nation and all democratic masses to fight this danger, smash the monopolies, change the Government which aids the monopolies and attacks the masses and make way for democracy, and anti-monopolist order and social progress.

SM

The Wages Picture

The national income has risen, industrial production has gone up, productivity of the worker is on upgrade and profits are soaring especially in the monopoly sector and the incomes of the well-to-do farmer in the last two years have not been bad, though in that sector the overwhelming number of the working-peasant has not gained much from the rise in the market price of agricultural commodities. Where do the incomes of the working class stand in this context? Has the working-class improved its condition in the matter of wages and living, which is the basic question for every worker. Has its share of the total product risen? Has its share in relation to the value added by his labour and appropriated by the owning class risen? Has it improved its position in any other respect or has suffered a retreat, partial or total?

We shall look into these questions in a brief manner with some broad conclusions which should serve us as a guide for future action.

The answer of the employers to the above questions is that, the workers have earned a lot, that the employers both in the public and private sectors, have done everything to satisfy them, that on the whole things are better for them.

In that case this state of affairs should have been reflected in the reduction of strike struggles and mandays lost in them. There, however, we find that the strikes have increased, the mandays lost are in the upgrade and the major cause of the strikes is the question of wages, bonuses and earnings.

The answer from the workers' side is that his strike struggles which require an immense amount of sacrifices from him show that he is not contented, that he is highly discontented and therefore he has to fight.

In the recent period, all the employers' organisations in India, including the Governments at the Centre and the States, have been clamouring against the dearness allowances which they are paying.

The main theme in all the meetings of the employers' organisations is that the payment of dearness allowance, as at present made should be cut or frozen and that all wages be converted to piece-rate and linked to nothing but production.

Even the present Finance Minister of the Government of India, while giving the last rise in D.A. to Government employees declared that government would have to stop paying D.A. in cash and find methods of payment in kind of some essential wage-goods. In his recent speech in Bombay he agreed to the demand of the employers that the wage-structure in India must be recast

But no one stops to ask the question — has the worker's share in the very national product he himself produces and whose quantum is going up every year gone up or gone down? These gentlemen do not want to ask — whether the real wages of the worker in terms of the prices he has to pay for his living have gone up in a continuous strain, over a whole period, and not just spasmodically?

The Government of India and many research institutions set up in the country (and some of them with generous American donations) have been trying to prepare a picture of the wage-movements and wage-structure in the country. Though each employer knows what his worker costs him and what profits he is making out of him, yet the national bourgeoisie as a whole in India has been so backward and blind, even from the point of view of its own class interests, that it has all along resisted the attempts to have a wage-census and bring out a correct picture of the wage-structure in our country. Even a decision of the Tripartite Committee on this question was never carried out beyond publishing some sort of occupational wage survey in 1958-59.

But the big employers maintain their own research institutions manned by some of the best intellectuals in the country and do things for themselves and draw their conclusions to fight the working-class. In this respect the Labour Ministry of the Government of India has been a failure nor has the planning Commission done much, as can be easily seen from the philistine way it has made its notes on the Labour Policy in the plans in the past and the present one.

Even from the limited material available on the question of wage-movements during the three plan period, what do we find?

The conclusion of the ten years 1951-1961 of the two plans, are roughly drawn as follows :

During the war period the workers' real wages fell though money wages rose.

It took the workers five years after the end of the war to come up to 1939 level. By 1950, the level of real wages was at par with 1939.

During the First Plan period, real wages started rising and this upward trend in real wages was primarily due to a rising trend in money wages with relatively stable prices.

In the case of factory workers during the period 1951-56, the index of money wages rose to 115 and the index of real wages also rose to 115.

The miners in particular made a good gain in this period, their real wages having gone up by 44 per cent. For once in the lifetime of a whole century perhaps, they got some relief, some fighting gains.

But these gains got frozen in the Second Plan period of 1956-1961. The prices of goods rose faster than money wages.

The Second Plan went in for building some basic industries for which more taxes on consumer goods came up and the big rich began to resist rise in wages commensurate with the rise in prices in most of the new sectors of industry that had begun to come up.

The result was the consumer price index rose by 20 per cent in the period 1956-61.

The index of real wages of factory workers which was 115 in 1956 fell to 106 in 1959.

It recovered again to only 115 in 1961.

That means real wages between 1956-61 in the Second Plan got frozen to the level of 1956. The employers were determined to see that the workers' real wages and standard of living did not go up beyond what it was in 1956 and in between it even fell to 106 as in 1959.

If in one cycle, the worker gains something by sheer dint of struggle, he is always threatened with the loss of it in another cycle. Even a pittance of a wage rise is not stable under capitalism.

The Third Plan period of 1961-66 is now over. We have not got a study of this period yet. But the attack of the capitalist market on consumer living in those five years has been far more ferocious than ever before.

The All India Working-Class Consumer Price Index which was 96 (1949=100) in 1955 had risen to 124 in 1960, that is by 28 points. The same index rose from 124 to 166 in 1965 that is by 42 points.

Did the workers receive enough money-wage increases to cover this big jump in the cost of living in the period 1961-1966? They did not.

The index of real earnings of employees earning less than Rs. 200/- per month which was 115 in 1961 rose to 116 in 1962, fell to 113 in 1963 and still further to 102 in 1964. And it became worse in 1965 the year of Indo-Pak war. Soon in 1966, we are once again to 1951 or even below.

The havoc played by the employers with the life of the workers, their resistance to link dearness allowance to cost of living index in all the industries, the resistance being greatest in the public sector, the Government services and the unorganised and new industries, is well indicated by the big wave of strikes and bandhs in 1964 and 1965. The secret of the unrest of these years is not the malevolence of anti-congress political parties nor the trade unions. It is the attack of the imperialists and their monopolist partners in our country, who are sabotaging our industrial and national growth, that is forcing the workers to fight in self-defence.

This, is however, a picture of the factory industries. It has not included middle-class employment in such sectors as the banks, insurance, port and docks, who fared better than the factory industries.

But unorganised industries suffered a greater set back than the gains of the organised industries, rendering the wages-picture uneven from employment to employment and region to region.

This does not mean that no strata of workers improved its position. There are some sections in engineering or such as in banking, who did make gains but in sum-total the picture of the working-class is that Indian capitalism has resisted giving any share of the rising wealth of the country and the rising capitalist share of it to its working-class.

That is exactly why monopolies have grown in large sectors. The concentration and centralisation of capital has gone on with great strides on the basis of the expropriation of fruits of labour of the working-class and the vast consumer masses of India.

This picture of wages would suggest as if all our struggle is futile and this octopus of capital will never let us go forward. But it is not so. The working-class of India in its struggle against capital has made gains, which are useful for the path we are preparing to go towards socialism.

In 1957 we forced the Government and the employers to accept need based minimum wage, after defining what the worker must have at an absolutely subsistence level, in the matter of food, clothing, housing, education, etc.

Then we demanded that Wage Boards be set up in each industry to bring about some order and rationale in the chaos of wage rates within the same industry and from industry to industry and region to region.

So far ten Wage Boards have been appointed between 1957 and 1966 besides some Central Tribunals. It has taken nine years and much agitation to make the Government and the employers even to look at the most anarchic, frightfully low wage-structure in the country and evolve some norms and order.

But nowhere did we succeed in making the Wage Boards give us the need-based minimum wage. Even the most established, old time industries, who have spread their profits from one industry to another and become vast trusts and monopolies, have refused to give us a wage-structure in terms of the 1957 Convention of need-based minimum.

The need-based minimum wage calculated in the diet recommended by the Nutrition Advisory Committee works out to Rs. 185 for major centres at an all-India index of 160.

The balanced diet would be costing Rs. 275.

*Freedom
and
Justice*
Such a minimum with the necessary differential additions for skilled jobs is nowhere available even in highly profitable and specialised concerns like Guest-Keen, Indian Aluminium, etc.

Still we have secured a jumping platform in each industry, from where all workers on an industrial level can begin the attack.

In certain areas and industries like in Bombay or Delhi, the lowest money wage is almost 170 or so including D.A. We will be nearing the need-based minimum with a little more push by organised and united action.

The Wage-Boards being appointed on an all-India level, have also been used by the trade union movement as an instrument

to give the working-class an all-India outlook and basis for building the T.U. organisation and trade actions on a national scale. And we did use the Wage Boards to forge better instruments of struggle in the T.U. field to take us forward.

As the working-class tries to use the Wage-Boards for its advance, the employers and the Government defeat our attempts by their manoeuvres, which are many. They take a long time to appoint a Wage-Board. Then the Board itself takes years to come to any conclusions. When workers' actions begin to gather momentum, the Boards are used as a diversion by giving some interim relief. Once a report is made, it freezes the wage at that level even upto five years. And no recommendation of the Board which is not unanimous, in effect meaning without the consent of the employer, is given effect to by the Government. And in order to get unanimity the workers' representatives are forced to lower their demand, which they sometimes have to do, for tactical reasons such as securing some limited benefits in a backward area or to avoid a complete failure which might strengthen the employers.

The wage-map of India, on the basis of the changes that have occurred in those years, is not available to us today even after all these Wage-Boards have been appointed.

But one thing can be said that the new worker, who has come to the factory along with the old, does not think of money and earnings like the worker of the pre-independence days, in terms of annas per day or just one full rupee and no more. He no longer binds himself to any rigid fixed idea beyond which he can never think or go. He no longer feels any inhibition in asking for and getting just five rupees a day for an unskilled job or ten rupees a day for a semi-skilled one. That itself is a kind of mental freedom he has achieved through the rise in money wages that he has fought for and got.

Some years back we said that there should be no wage below rupees one hundred. We have not achieved it for all trades and at the national level. Moreover, the value of money also has depreciated.

Even then there are still big areas and trades wherein the bulk of the wage-range, even now with depreciated value of the rupee, is below Rs. 100/-.

The occupational wage survey of 1958-59 showed the following percentage of workers earning below Rs. 100/- in some of the major industries as follows:

	<i>% of workers</i>	
	<i>Below Rs. 100</i>	<i>Rs. 100 and above</i>
Cotton textile	52.7	47.3
Engineering	52.3	47.7
Railway Workshops	53.0	47.0
Bicycles	38.5	61.5
Metal extraction	35.3	64.7
Sugar	96.0	4.0
Tea	86.7	13.3
Coal	84.7	15.3

In the years since then due to certain wage awards and rise in prices and D.A. the below Rs. 100 category has been reduced a little, but vast belts of coal, tea, sugar, construction remain far below even now.

This shows that the main object of struggles still remains and will always remain the problem of wages.

In short, while we have not made any big gains in the value or content of wages for the whole of the working-class, we have succeeded in bringing about certain structural changes in the wages in some industries, in the matter of minimums, differentials, norms, etc.

THE BONUS BATTLE

One of the biggest battles we have fought and which is still not over is in the matter of profit-sharing Bonus.

Profit-sharing bonus first came in the textile industry in 1920 but it was lost in 1924. The strike of 1940 on dearness allowance in Bombay textiles at the beginning of the Second World War set in motion claims of dearness allowance linked to cost of living and the claim for bonus soon followed. The victory that the Bombay workers won on this question soon spread to other areas and industries.

The capitalist resists the claim of the worker to a share in the profits at the end of a year from the point of view of a principle which is very sacred to capitalism and on which is based his fundamental concept of the employer-employee relation or produc-

tion relation. He says that after he has hired the worker by the day or month and paid him for his work, the worker has no claim left on the results of his labour. Whether it leads to profit or loss is the concern of the owner of the product and capital. Wage payment on the daily or monthly rate is the final settlement of the contract between the owner of labour power that is the worker and the owner of capital that is the employer. Where then is the claim of the worker for a share in the profits at the end of the year? If the employer has paid any such bonus, it is his pleasure, it is ex-gratia.

The theoretical positions of the employers have been defeated and Bonus has been established now as a right of the worker on the employer. It is a deferred wage he must receive, maybe at the end of the year, looking into how the capitalist has managed his end of the contract.

In fact, as a result of the victories of socialist economy and the rule of the working class in countries, where production and all the organisation of the social life of man has been conducted for years without the existence of the capitalist class, the working-class in the capitalist countries has been able to demolish many of the theoretical or moral-philosophical positions of the exploiting classes, who were so long governing on the basis of the classical principles of free enterprise and freedom of contract between capital and labour that is freedom to exploit the working-people. Share in profits or annual bonus irrespective of profit and loss, comprehensive social insurance including job-security, unemployment benefits, sickness or health insurance, housing, training within industry, right to challenge and inspect balance-sheets and to go behind them into the functioning of the capitalist and his enterprise and finally participation in management are all indices of the workers' advance against capital, with which he fortifies his positions in the class-struggle, both ideologically and economically, before he succeeds in nationalising industry and abolishing the now superfluous intervention of the capitalist in social production over major field of economy.

The determined struggles with which the workers in India fight for bonus, are not merely for a few rupees. It is also a struggle on the way to winning positions against capital.

The capitalists in India know this very well and they too are fighting as bitterly as possible.

The appointment of the Bonus Commission and its major results were thus an important stage in the class-struggle being fought by all the trade unions in India.

The Commission established Bonus as a right of the worker on the employer. It converted that right into a definite system of quantum to be paid. The payment is to be made from profits where they exist. If they do not and there are losses, the worker charges his bonus on the reserves which are the accumulations of his past labour in the hands of the capitalist; only the charge is made into a minimum and almost a token charge. It is in fact a penalty on the employer for his failure to realise the surplus value which his worker has rendered him by his labour but which he lost to some brother capitalist in the market.

side
The Commission rejected the position which the LAT formula had imposed in the name of rehabilitation charges that is making the worker of today responsible for finding the money to rehabilitate his exploiter on some imaginary basis of the future price-level of machines. The Commission also accepted the position that after the employer has got his stipulated rate of profit as return on capital, the major part of the remainder should go to the worker and the rest to the owner for further extension of production.

These positions were certainly an advance. But when it came to fixing the rates, the employers and their allies created a deadlock and wanted to blow up the Commission as a whole, which they had been trying all along, even before its appointment and after.

It was a question before the AITUC as to which tactics to follow—whether to get the basic positions in principle and some quantum in money fixed first and then start the attack at a later stage to alter and improve them or to allow the Commission here and now to be blown up by the employers. After consultations in the National Conference of trade unions which was held in Bombay, it was decided not to allow the Commission to be blown up, though we knew that certain compromises would have to be made.

We were forced to raise the return on capital from six per cent to seven and the return on reserves employed as working capital from two to four. The rehabilitation deductions were abolished, but normal corporation tax deduction was allowed. A minimum of four per cent bonus even to loss-making units was admitted in exchange for a maximum limit of 20 per cent on profit making units. And the bonus was to be on total wages that is basic wage plus dearness allowance.

And then there was the understanding that those, who were getting better terms in the period prior to the Commission, would continue to get on the same basis and same terms.

We were not sure of the statistical implications in all those industries where Bonus was already being paid. Hence we provided for the above protective clause.

We were aware that in all those cases of industries, trades and areas, where no bonus had ever been paid, this bargain would mean a good advance. And the whole position could be bettered once the all-India, all-trade basis of bonus had been established.

The big employers' representative tried his best to win a majority for his positions but he did not succeed. But he succeeded in doing one damage. On the expectation that he would agree to a unanimous recommendation on seven per cent return, the other members made a number of concessions. But the move failed and the majority then would not retreat to their original positions. I had to put in six dissenting views on record on some other points also.

In the final analysis it was the Government of India which rejected the near-unanimous recommendation and accepted the one-man minority report. It surrendered to the demands of the monopolists and gave them all that they wanted, except on the minimum of four per cent, despite losses and the continuity of ratios of past payments. *Shankar*

The amendments introduced by the Government of India hit the bonus of all workers in the organised industries. *Ad*

The working-class has resented this attack. When the Bonus Bill was brought into effect by an ordinance on 22nd June, 1965, the textile workers in Bombay went on a one-day protest strike on 7th June which was a lightning swift action, under the leadership of our union, an action which was the only one of its kind throughout the country on the issues of a principle apart from actual dues. It was in essence a political strike against an obnoxious law which favoured the monopolists and slashed the gains of the workers.

The bonus battle is not over. The employers, with the help of the Congress Government, took the offensive still further. They have challenged the very basis of the Bonus law in the Supreme Court, whose judgement is now being awaited.

Making their appeal as an excuse, though they had not obtained any interim stay order, the employers throughout the

this was under the Central Government the bureaucrats of the Labour Bureau of the Central Government refused to accept the fault and revised it through another committee. Even that Committee while lowering the points, found the index wrong.

The AITUC severely criticised the Government for not taking up an all-round review of the Indices and eliminate the faults and give the workers their dues. The workers had to go into demonstrations and other forms of protests to move the Government which felt bitter because it had been literally caught in the act of pilfering the workers' pocket by a faulty index prepared by its own offices, thereby saving crores of rupees to the employers in their wage bill.

Millions of employees in the public sector and Government services also made gains thru' this Index correction movement.

And even now, many industrial centres, like Kanpur, Calcutta, Bangalore, Mysore, Madras remain to be examined and corrected.

The AITUC has demanded that the trade unions should be associated with the compilation of the Index and its check-up and it should not be left to the sole control of the Government labour offices.

Basic, and D. A. Structure

A movement has been set afoot on the question of basic wages and D.A. and the structural relation between the two. In many areas we find that the D.A. is the main part of the wages and the basic wage has lost all relation to the value of the workers' work. For example the basic wage in textiles in Bombay is Rs. 40/- and the D.A. Rs. 140/-.

It is also found that the system of paying flat rate D.A. to all categories of wage levels has resulted in the skilled workers getting less and less neutralisation of the rise in cost of living. While the minimum wage-earner got some justice, the higher one has lost his just dues. A system of slabs in D.A. with a sliding scale and a revision of the basic minimums is on the agenda of the movement.

Deductions, Benefits, Insurance

While the sickness insurance has come to stay, the old scandal of failure to build enough hospital accommodation continues to mar the effectiveness of the scheme; While workers

continue to pay their full contribution, the Government has failed to make employers pay their full quota as provided under the law. A recent review Committee has asked for recasting the organisation structure of the ESI top executive bodies.

It is worth mentioning here that the Minister for Health in Central Government had made a proposal that maternity benefit under the ESI should not be paid to a mother from the third child onwards. This was supposed to help in family planning. The proposal was rejected in the Tripartite Committee

If one raises the question as to how many cuts the workers' pay packet has to pay on various items in order to secure relief in later life or when in need, we find the following picture.

Deduction for Provident Fund of 8-1/3 per cent is now general. But he gets an equal addition from the employer. This is supposed to give him a sort of old-age and unemployment insurance.

It has been suggested that as a savings measure to help the national economy, the workers' share be raised to 10 per cent without raising the employers'. The AITUC flatly opposed the move.

Among Government employees there is a scheme of General Provident Fund to which the employer does not contribute.

There was the compulsory Deposit Scheme, which had to be defeated by workers' action. Then there is a Small Savings Scheme.

Some years ago a Pay Roll Savings Scheme was introduced. The AITUC opposed it. It is again cropping up with INTUC support.

Lately an unemployment insurance scheme is being discussed to which the worker should contribute half a per cent of his wages. The AITUC has opposed the contribution side of the scheme.

There are various other schemes like T.B. Seal, Death Benefit Fund on local factory levels, which workers are asked to contribute. The AITUC does not favour such schemes. It is the duty of the State and employers to provide comprehensive social insurance for the worker from the vast surplus they get out of his labour.

But in capitalist states this is never done, not even in England or America.

Only the socialist states do it, because they are a state of the working people.

The fight for comprehensive social insurance at state cost is an important item in our struggles.

Automation, Unemployment and Socialism

The Planning Commission and all the leaders of the ruling Congress Party admit that compared to those coming on the market every year for employment, the increase in the number of new jobs created is lagging behind. It is openly admitted that unemployment among the young workers, especially and the old, who are retrenched, is fast increasing. Something like twelve to fourteen million are in search of employment but the present rate of economic development in the country is unable to absorb them.

In spite of this, the capitalist employer in search for larger profits is attacking the field of employment by ever new schemes of rationalisation and retrenchment. Even the public sector of employment is having recourse to "labour-displacing" mechanisation, including electronic computers.

Recently this question attracted great attention, when the public sector concern, the Life Insurance Corporation imported huge computers to centralise the L.I.C. operations in two or three places in the country. The computers are expected to do the work of several thousand employees, who are now doing the job in various centres of the L.I.C. in India.

With the initiative of the L.I.C. unions, an anti-automation conference met in Delhi on 8th December 1965 in which many central T.U. organisations and federations participated. It adopted a decision to oppose the introduction of automation in offices and industry in conditions when millions in the country are starving due to unemployment.

The Government of India assured the L.I.C. employees that no retrenchment would take place due to these computers. But no one believes in these assurances, moreover the question is not merely of retrenchment but of stopping increase in employment and giving work to the entrants in the world of labour.

Mechanical aids to execution of work that is done by human intellectual labour have been coming in other industries also. There have been attempts at mechanisation in the banking industry. There the strong united action of the bank workers has frozen the use of the machines, except in such cases as are allowed

by mutual agreement between the unions and the employers and do not lead to retrenchment.

Quite a number of these aids are introduced in the railways, where of course, the problem is of a different nature.

The most notorious case of automation, with all the disastrous consequences is in the Oil and Petrol industry, where the American Companies have turned over whole departments to automated working and retrenched hundreds of workers. When challenged by the unions, the Companies replied that they had not retrenched any worker by compulsion. They had introduced what they called voluntary retirement scheme by which hundreds had gone out after taking "handsome" compensation payments.

A Tripartite Committee appointed by the Labour Ministry reported in April 1966 that their voluntary retirement had nothing voluntary in it. It was all compulsory retrenchment due to introduction of automated working.

The all powerful oil companies have defied the Committee, the Government and the Unions to do their worst.

A question is asked even in the trade union movement as to how far we can go in opposing mechanisation and automation. If a developing backward country like ours is to industrialise faster and to compete in the world market, we must go in for automation and all forms of mechanisation and make things cheaper by reducing labour costs.

In the first place, we have to remember that we as workers are not running the economy of the country. We are in no way responsible for framing its policies, determining its direction or appropriating its final results. It is a capitalist economy which is run for private profits of the capitalist class.

Even the State sector does not run for the benefit of society. It has now reached a stage where more and more of its gains are being sought to be appropriated by the capitalist class and their henchmen in the bureaucracy, many of whose members blossom into a new bourgeois thru the Public Sector. Therefore unless the working-class achieves some power to divert the country's development away from its capitalist-monopolist direction, we as trade unions cannot undertake to solve the problems of the economy by entering into the question as to what sacrifices we should suffer for it.

We stand for technological progress. We have not opposed new industrial plants installing the latest machinery in production.

There also we have a criticism to offer. But in the new plants it does not lead to retrenchment of the already employed worker though it bars the entrance to a larger force than is absorbed by the automated plant.

Mechanisation, automation under capitalism are nothing but devices to increase the super-profits by the big monopolies. In a developing economy of a newly liberated country like India, a state sector of production appropriating the profits of its plants can help to reduce taxes on the people, accelerate production to overcome colonial backwardness and open the road to social progress. But in India, which in the early days showed this hope, the usual logic of capitalism has come to the forefront and though the state sector is not yet supplanted by private monopoly, the danger has grown. Hence, we, as workers and trade unions have to defend our own class interests as against the class interests of the monopolists.

In a socialist economy automation does not lead to unemployment or poverty or attack on workers' health. There the growing surplus becomes a social product. It is spread over the whole of the working-class and society by rise in real wages, reduction in working hours and the working week and distribution of part of the social product as free supply, like cheapest housing, free transport, free and compulsory education upto the highest levels, and non-contributory social insurance in every sphere. Technological advance under socialism is asked for by the working-class and not resented.

Hence, the ATTUC puts forward its ideological standpoint on this question before the working-class and all working people, declares its refusal to help, in any way, under any form, any device to increase the super-profits of the monopolies and the retrenchment or fall in potential employment of the workers in our country.

All trade unions, not only of the ATTUC, but of all centres should define their attitude to this question on the basis of a principled approach and build a joint front to oppose automation, rationalisation as harmful to the working people under present conditions.

There was a tripartite convention on rationalisation. But it has not been observed either by the Government or the private employers. And so the trade unions have had to resist rationalisation by direct action.

The fight against automation, rationalisation and unemployment is going to dominate the stage of struggles more and more as the economy will face the inevitable crisis of capitalist development.

CLOSURES :

Not content with the super-profits that they make out of the normal laws of the capitalist order, some employers, commit fraud on their own system, run away with the finances of their own companies and the taxes due to their own state-machine and ultimately close down the factories as being "uneconomic". Unemployment due to closures assumed quite serious problems in the recent period.

The workers had to go on strikes in order to compel Government to take over the closed factories. Government pleaded inability to put in money to take over factories which they said had become "old and scrap". Actually where the owners had taken to fraud and misappropriation, factories which were as old as the closed ones were still running in profits.

Government opposed the take-over of closed factories for fear that it might harm the prestige of their class and the capitalist system. It would strengthen the demand for nationalisation

But the workers' actions and the growing anger of the unemployed made them partly change their attitude. They took over the closed factories. It was soon found that they could run profitably and that in most cases fraud or family disputes among the owners were the cause of closures.

As soon as the mills were reorganised and the losses recouped mainly at the cost of the worker, they were handed back to the same owners, whose full ownership rights, were restored to them in terms of the Constitution by the Supreme Court judgment as in the Sholapur case.

And once again the same cycle of fraud began to work.

The Government had to admit the existence of big fraud in the case of many mills, as the main cause of closures, but they would not amend the Constitution to permit the confiscation of such factories in the name of "social justice" or "social security". The case of the notorious India United Mills in Bombay, a big monopoly group is an illustration. And there are cases of mills and factories like this, in Tamilnad, Pondicherry, U.P., Bengal and elsewhere.

Idea

The workers demand not only the take-over of closed factories. They want a law which would permit the State to seize the private properties of the owners, who have made their fortune out of such frauds. At present, the workers and the country suffer and the owners prosper.

The workers also demand that factories taken over by the State because of fraud, closures and retrenchment and run as un-employment relief measure, should not be returned to the owners. The Government of Maharashtra in the recent Bombay textile strike agreement agreed to this principle and the Government of India also is considering the question of change of law enabling them to do so.

While the workers succeeded in making Government overcome its ideological inhibition in the matter of take-over by the State of factories which have closed down or threaten to close, it imposed on the workers a cut in their dearness allowance, bonus and other benefits, until the factory recouped the losses and began making profits.

This practice has strengthened the argument of the employers, who maintain that in order to make production profitable, they also should be allowed to cut or freeze wages and bonus just as the Government is doing. If the State as an employer finds it necessary to cut wages, may be for a limited period, why should not the private sector employers do the same?

The workers demand that this practice of reducing wages and suspending all labour laws in the case of take-over factories of the state should be stopped and they should not be penalised for the frauds and failures of the employers.

HOUSING :

Housing, which scarcely existed for the working people in the British days, started becoming worse, when the new industrialisation began.

Lacs of people migrating to the new towns under construction, lacs, who flocked to the old cities, where new factories were going up by the side of the old had no places to live, no water, no sanitation. Huge slick and clean factories were surrounded everywhere by huge colonies of slum dwellers, who were not just homeless beggars, but real good workers, producing wealth and profits for their capitalist employers.

In the beginning instead of building houses or at least providing the slum-dwellers some minimum amenities, the Government, the employers and urban landowners started destroying the huts, and when the workers put up resistance; many lost their lives in police firings. Even children were wounded in the smash which the police organised to pull down the shanties. And all this was done without providing any alternative sites, even for another slum to arise, where men could find some shelter at least. Every industrial town in India has a slum satellite town spreading into the open spaces or nooks and caves of rocks, which have been blasted for rubble or by roadside paths and drains.

After persistent struggles, and the failure of the employers to provide housing even when given subsidies, some of the Governments have begun to build industrial housing and also to provide conveniences in the slum areas.

Industrial housing built by Government in the State Sector industries is of a tolerably good order, but does not cover, in some cases all the employees. The banking industry also has begun to provide some housing viz., the Reserve Bank and the L.I.C. is moving towards giving loans for middle-class houses. Yet when one looks at the big industrial towns like Calcutta, Bombay, Delhi, Madras etc., one finds that side by side with new housing new slums also are growing.

The main hurdle in housing is the high price of land which is the monopoly of the big urban landlords and the scarcity and high cost of building materials. Unless urban housing land is taken over by Municipal Corporations, unless the building contractors and manufacturers of materials are controlled and their profiteering stopped, problem of housing will continue to be acute. The trade unions will have to fight for better and cheaper industrial housing.

Such in brief is the condition of the wages and living of the industrial working-class.

Struggles, T. U.s and Unity

The five years since our Coimbatore Session have witnessed a remarkable development of united action on the plane of workers' struggles in defence of their demands as well as in participating in popular struggles in protest against the anti-people policies of the Government.

At our 26th Session in Coimbatore, we had noted the impact of the steep rise in prices of essential commodities and the resulting erosion of the real wage standards of the workers. We had then stated :

"By raising prices to a pitch, totally unrelated to cost of production and by refusing to increase the incomes of those who labour and produce things, the exploiting classes are earning vast super profits and running away with the cream of the prosperity and growth of the national income.

"In spite of the 42 per cent growth in national income and 20 per cent in per capita income (during the first and second five year plan periods), there are many on record who have had to commit suicide because they had not got a pie of the per capita income and had nothing to eat.

"In order to guard the interests of the country and the toiling people from these profiteering classes, who are robbing us of our labour and wealth, it is necessary to struggle. And that struggle has a two-fold aspect.

"One aspect is of general demands directed against the exploiters and their sources of power and wealth.

"Such demands are : extension of the State Sector of economy in strategic industries, land reforms in favour of the peasantry, State-trading in foodgrains, nationalisation of banks and key industries like oil, jute, plantations and mines. In view of the record of the textile and sugar millowners, in robbing the people, it is time to put them under drastic control. Abolition of the stock exchange and speculative markets is also necessary. Unless the fangs of the concentrated big bourgeois houses are blunted, you cannot control prices nor distribute the growing national income to the toiling people or use it in a planned manner for the country's development. For this, the working class along with its allies have to wage a political battle against the ruling classes.

"The second aspect of the struggle is against the direct employer for day-to-day demands on questions of wages, dearness allowance, bonus and conditions of work."

Our 26th Session had laid particular emphasis on the struggle against the price rises and in the slogans formulated at the session, we highlighted the demand for the linking of D.A. with consumer price index numbers, providing for full neutralisation of the rise in living costs through appropriate increment in D.A.

The trade unions took up this slogan for intensive campaigning and a large number of struggles were conducted on the demand for D.A. to offset the rise in prices. Wide mobilisations were also carried on in industrial centres behind the general demands outlined at the 26th session.

In 1962, particularly after budget proposals for imposition of more tax burdens, prices shot up appreciably and the trade unions came in the forefront of the struggle for relief from taxation and for bringing down prices. In June and July 1962, in various industrial centres in the different States, united campaigns were conducted, including marches to the Legislative Assemblies, meetings and demonstrations on State-wide scale.

In the conditions of national emergency created by the Chinese aggression in October 1962, an industrial truce agreement was arrived at in a tripartite meeting of the workers' and employers' and Government representatives, the key provision of which was that while the workers would agree to hold back their strike actions, the employers must hold the price-line and put a curb on their war profits. While the workers and trade unions observed the truce, government and employers did not and no effective measures were taken to hold the price line. The result was that prices shot up and the series of additional taxes falling mainly on the working people and their consumer goods, imposed in the 1963-64 budget, meant a further worsening of their living standards by the greatly-accelerated price rises. On top of it came the legislation for the compulsory cut in workers' wages — the Compulsory Deposit Scheme (CDS), which affected almost every earning family in the country including the peasantry.

Taking advantage of the fact that it was a Communist Government with which India was in conflict, an anti-Communist hysteria was worked up in the country by the Congress ruling circles and die-hard reactionaries. A number of the leaders of the working-class and trade unions were arrested under the Defence of India Rules and put in prisons, without any charge-sheet

and without any evidence that they were actually engaged in any activity against the country's defence.

The set-back which the T.U. movement suffered in this period began to be overcome when once again the AITUC General Council which met in April 1963 called upon workers to observe May 29, 1963, as an ALL-INDIA DAY FOR NATIONALISATION AND AGAINST TAX BURDENS. The day was observed throughout the country.

Immediately following this, the campaign on the GREAT PETITION and the MARCH TO PARLIAMENT was set into motion. This campaign initiated by the Communist Party of India had the wholehearted support of the AITUC and its affiliated unions. This was, indeed, the mightiest nationwide movement in recent times, which brought the common people from far corners of the country together to agitate for relief from high prices, reduction in taxes, abolition of CDS, and the general demands like nationalisation of banking, etc. The CDS was opposed by all trade union centres except the INTUC. Several pay strikes were organised and huge demonstrations were held in industrial centres. More than two lakh industrial workers in W. Bengal participated in the pay boycott in August 1963. A token protest strike was organised in Ahmedabad, in the teeth of opposition by the INTUC. In several States as in Kerala, the additional levies such as increased transport fares were resisted and some concessions were won.

It was in this background that a new type of struggle came on the scene in the call for BOMBAY BANDH of August 20, 1963. The Bandh was an effective protest by the organised workers and the people at large against the unjust tax burdens, the steep rise in prices and the demand for rise in wages and D.A. The anger of the workers was all the more when the manipulated consumer price indices failed to reflect the actual increase in cost of living and in the case of Calcutta actually recorded a fall.

In fact, the first result of the emergency was the worsening of the living conditions of the working people and the arbitrary actions of the Government, under the DIR and otherwise, to ride roughshod even over elementary human decencies. The cut in D.A. brought about by a manipulated index had to be resisted through a BOMBAY BANDH and Government yielded by appointing the first inquiry committee to probe into the index numbers — the Lakdawala Committee.

Despite the scoffing by the bourgeois press and the Congress leadership and others, the GREAT PETITION was signed by

over 10 million people. It was submitted to Parliament, with a MARCH TO PARLIAMENT on September 13, 1963, in which about two lakhs of workers, peasants, middleclass employees and political workers, who came to Delhi from all parts of the country participated.

The immediate impact of the Great Petition was the abolition of the CDS in respect of non-income-tax paying categories of the employed population as well as modification in the Gold Control Scheme which had resulted in unemployment of thousands of goldsmiths. *Syllabus note*

Among the wide popular protests over the price rises was the hartal in Calcutta on September 24, 1963.

The unity and increased consciousness generated in the campaign of the Great Petition of September 1963 was taken forward when the AITUC convened the All-India Convention of Trade Unions in Bombay in December 1963 and decided on launching of the National Campaign of the Toilers of India from January 1, 1964. The campaign was on an 11-point national charter of demands which were common to all trade unions and toiling people.

The highlights of the campaign were :

JANUARY 12/13, 1964 — All-India Demands Day observed throughout the country, in support of the 11-point charter of demands.

THE THREE-FOLD STRUGGLE — decided upon by the National Campaign Committee at its meeting in Hyderabad on February 2, 1964 : (1) The nationwide hunger-strikes held in all industrial centres on February 20 to 22, 1964, in which over fifty-thousand workers and TU leaders participated (2) The demonstrations conducted before all factories and offices on March 7 fifteen minutes before and after commencing and closing time. The third phase of the National Campaign, i.e. the satyagrah before Parliament in April 1964 was held over by the National Campaign Committee, in view of the serious communal disturbances in major industrial centres in eastern India

The National Campaign helped to focus national attention over the working class demands and served as a rallying point to raise slogans on a national plane for positive alternatives to check the burden of rising prices, and played an important part in securing some of the immediate gains of the workers in this period. A number of agreements were reached at local level, providing for

increased wages and D.A. Government and employers accepted, in principle, to link D.A. with consumer price indices and employers were asked to open fair price shops in industrial undertakings. The indices in Bombay, Ahmedabad and four other centres in Maharashtra were corrected and similar probes were ordered in Delhi and Rajasthan. The correction of the index meant a rise in D.A. for the workers, especially textile workers in major centres of the industry, where their D.A. is linked to cost of living index.

BANDHS — A NEW FORM OF STRUGGLE

The compelling forces of the so-called "emergency", the rejection of popular demands and the utilisation by Government of the undemocratic and illegal "Defence of India Rules" to suppress popular struggles and to deny democratic rights over a wide field brought forth a strong reaction from the working class and the popular movement. While in the wake of the need for national solidarity and unity, to defend the country against external aggression, the working class and trade unions rallied as one man i. e. the fulfilment of national tasks, this very opportunity was utilised by employers and Government to impose heavier burdens on the people, reject all legitimate demands and sought to crush with a heavy hand all democratic protest movements. The solidity of the movement which was seen in the unity shown by the working class at the time of the emergency became, to an extent, a rallying point to forge new weapons of united action when their interests were hurt most deeply. It was in this background that the first BOMBAY BANDH was organised by the trade unions in August 1963 and it was becoming evident that the problems were sizing up on a massive scale, requiring very massive intervention on the part of the organised trade union movement.

The year 1964 witnessed a series of BANDHS — July 31, — Kerala Bandh; August 5 — Gujarat Bandh; August 12 — Maharashtra Bandh; August 18 — U.P. Bandh; August 20 — Goa Bandh and on September 24 — West Bengal Bandh. Apart from these State-wide actions, there were centre-wise Bandh actions in Hyderabad and Coimbatore.

The main features of these Bandhs were that in these united actions, the working class and the popular masses acted together in concert, and that all trade union centres, except those belonging to the INTUC, joined in these protest actions. New forms of united action were thus noted when on parallel calls, despite having no formal understanding, the trade union centres — AITUC,

HMS, UTUC, HMP and independent trade federations and unions acted together in defence of common interests.

The significance of this new feature of united action is all the more greater when considered in the light of the manoeuvres made by the INTUC and certain others to build up an "anti-communist" joint front, in order to isolate the AITUC particularly, immediately after the India-China border conflict of October 1962. This game was roundly defeated by the forces of united action which grew during this period.

It was in the background of the Bandhs of 1964 that national TU centres and independent trade federations except those belonging to INTUC and HMS met at Ahmedabad in October 1964 and decided upon the formation of the Rashtriya Sangram Samiti.

The Sangram Samiti formulated five point demands, for national campaigning and for developing appropriate all-national action.

The constituents of the Samiti were : AITUC, UTUC, HMP, Mahagujarat Janata Parishad, AIBEA, National Federation of Insurance Field Workers of India, National Federation of Indian Road Transport Workers, All-India Newspaper Employees' Federation and the All-India Cement Workers' Federation. At its meeting held on November 21, 1964, the Samiti decided that State units should be formed and as per this decision, in most of the States, Samiti units were set up. In these State units, especially in West Bengal, independent TU organisations like those of the teachers also joined in. In Rajasthan, the Action Committee of Trade Unions consisted of the Local HMS unit also.

The Samiti at its meeting on July 4, 1965 decided to convene an all-India T.U. Conference to discuss proposals for all-India action. This convention could not be held as was scheduled but an extended meeting of the Sangram Samiti met on August 24 and 25, 1965. From this meeting, the Samiti issued a call for all-India action on September 21. However, following the Indo-Pak war and the invasion of Kashmir, the Samiti had to call off the struggle and September 21 was observed instead as NATIONAL SOLIDARITY DAY.

By early 1965, the food situation had begun to rapidly deteriorate and the price rise continued unabated. In Bengal, the people rose in action against the rise in tram fares, there was a hartal in Calcutta on July 30 followed by a BENGAL BANDH on August 5. By far the most widespread action was witnessed

immediately after on August 9 PATNA BANDH followed by the BIHAR BANDH on August 11.

The Bihar Bandh was particularly noteworthy for the mass participation of the State Government employees and students who took part in actions in a most determined manner. Government let loose a reign of terror in the entire State and some of the State Government employees' leaders detained under the DIR are still in jail.

The Indo-Pak hostilities of September 1965 called a sharp halt to working-class action in defence of their interests against the attacks of the employers and the unity that was growing through these common struggles. The trade unions voluntarily postponed their struggles when the nation faced external aggression. The experience of the emergency period of 1965 for the workers was again reminiscent of its experience in the post-1962 period when employers and Government utilised the opportunity to mount further attacks on the workers' standard of living. Following the 22-day war and the embargo on supplies imposed by the British and American imperialists, there appeared a new crisis in our economy. The brave workers of Amritsar and other border areas of Punjab who constituted the most active "rear" for our armed forces and gave splendid civilian support to the army, were left in the lurch immediately after the end of the hostilities. Employers ran away without paying wages and later began to dismantle machinery and equipment to shift them to other centres. It required a grim struggle on the part of the Punjab workers to secure some relief from the Government.

The food situation worsened early this year and in protest against reduction in rice rations (to a miserable four oz. rice ration), the workers and people of Kerala organised the KERALA BANDH on January 28, 1966. This Bandh action was unique in that every trade union centre (including the INTUC) and every political party (including Congress) had to come in support of the call for the Bandh which was the first major protest action against the Government's bankrupt food policy. As a result of the Bandh, the Central Government which had a special responsibility to feed Kerala under the single State zone arrangements, had to increase the rice rations.

The people of Bengal were forced into an action soon to ward off the reappearance of the grim days of the Bengal famine of the second world war period. It started with the students coming on the streets to demand food, they were fired upon and the working

class and the people of Bengal organised the most united and the mightiest and most militant protest movement that was ever seen in its history, since independence. The protest movement was massive and braved the worst orgy of repression. In police firing and the clashes between the people and police over 50 people were killed. The popular outburst of anger led by the organised working class embraced all the toiling masses, including the middle-classes and the BENGAL BANDH of March 10, 1966 was an unprecedented event, all life in the whole state was at a stand-still. The trade unions in West Bengal, the students and youth masses bore the brunt of the police repression and hundreds of them were thrown in jail.

On March 14, Calcutta city witnessed the most eloquent "silent demonstration" in memory of the martyrs who were killed in police firing. They came "in wave after wave" and no policeman was needed to control the procession. And, the eloquent silence, discipline and peacefulness of the demonstration, gave the lie to the Government propaganda about people taking to "organised violence" and conclusively proved that it was only the provocation from the Government side which inevitably called forth a strong reaction from the people in defence against police violence.

The Government of West Bengal held negotiations with the United Left Front but failed to meet the demands of the people, especially in the matter of increased rations and release of prisoners.

For the second time within a month, Bengal Bandh was called again on April 6, 1966. Two such massive actions in quick succession showed the seething discontent which had gripped the people of West Bengal on the issues of food shortage, police repression, arrests and imprisonments, and violation of democratic rights by the Congress Government. They also gave evidence of the militant and determined mood of the masses.

INDUSTRIAL ACTIONS

In the period under review, industrial actions by the working class witnessed a remarkable sweep and ever broader sections of the workers of all trades and middle class employees were in the vortex of the struggle. While the struggle against the price rises and for making up loss in purchasing power through increases in wages and D.A. assumed form of united class actions as industry-wide and state-wide general strikes and bandhs, there were innumerable struggles on the local and regional plane on these as well as other issues.

Widespread protest actions were organised by the workers against the anti-labour policies of the Government. For example, on the rejection of the Bonus Commission's recommendations by the Government and the acceptance of Dandekar's minute of dissent, there was a nationwide campaign. Most significant of these protest actions was the token strike of two lakh textile workers of Bombay on June 7, 1965, immediately on the announcement of the anti-labour Bonus Ordinance on 2nd June.

On the wages question, many trades had moved into concerted action. In plantations where wages are, indeed, the lowest, the Wage Board appointed six years ago, has only just submitted its report, which gives a wage-rise so miserable that they do not mitigate the misery of the worker in any appreciable manner. The employers in West Bengal refused to implement the statutory provisions under the minimum wage fixation, providing for a D.A. revision. Against this, on August 2, 1965, over two lakhs of plantation workers in West Bengal went on a token strike. Mass hunger-strikes were organised in Dehra Dun plantations protesting against the delay in the wage board recommendations. On April 11, 1966, two lakh plantation workers employed in over 200 estates in Kerala struck work on April 11, on the issue of bonus for 1963 and protesting against the wage board's recommendations.

The struggle of the workers in the low-wage areas and industries was particularly marked in this period. Important among them is the strike of bidi workers in several States, the strike of tailoring workers in Bombay and Delhi, the struggle of the cashew workers in Kerala and Karnatak, the determined strikes of iron ore mine workers of Barbil (Orissa) and BSP mines (Madhya Pradesh) to secure even the interim relief awarded by the Wage Board. Recently on March 28, 1966, there was a complete strike in the captive mines of the Bhilai Steel Plant protesting against the unjust discrimination in D.A. rates as between the steel plant workers and the mine workers. Jute mill workers in Andhra Pradesh had go on prolonged strikes as for instance, in Bajrang Jute Mills for nearly three months in 1964, over the wage demand.

In West Bengal jute industry, over two lakhs of workers went on a token general strike on February 13, 1964, protesting against the unilateral decision of the employers on the question of working hours. The strike was jointly called by AITUC, INTUC, UTUC and HMS. On December 1, 1964, the jute workers of West Bengal went on a strike demanding enforcement of the Bonus Commission's formula on bonus as against the Wage Board formula.

The struggles of the workers engaged in construction work of major projects for adequate wages as well as for placement in suitable jobs after completion of the projects were particularly sharp during the last few years. In this category also fall those large number of workers employed for railway construction work, departmentally. In almost all construction projects, workers had to fight braving severe repression for even certain elementary demands. There was the strike by the construction workers in the Barauni area. Another example is the firing on Tarapore atomic power plant construction workers and the strike of the vitro workers of the same Bechtel Co. In Bhilai Project, the workers who have been employed for about a decade in the initial construction and expansion work of the project had to struggle for job security.

In cotton textile industry, workers in several centres had to fight prolonged struggles for getting units closed due to fraudulent practices by employers, reopened and worked by Government. In this connection, they also had to fight against the policy of the Government in imposing wage-cuts and withdrawing several other privileges for the period the Government manages the mill, in the name of rehabilitation of the industry.

Lately, the attack on workers' wages and D.A. in the cotton textile industry has become all the more serious and the workers had to fight against the offensive of the management. Nearly 3.75 lakh workers in the state of Maharashtra went on an industry-wide general strike on Dec. 30 against closures, retrenchment and the threatened wage cut, and the denial of bonus. And, on the same issues, the Bombay textile workers went on a 12-day general strike from February 28 to March 12, 1966. This strike demonstrated the will of the textile workers to resist the offensive of the millowners with all their strength. It had a successful outcome when the Maharashtra Government made an agreement with our Union for expeditious payment of the Bonus and opposition to D.A. cut etc. In pursuance of this agreement Rs. three crores were paid on 30th April with another instalment to come. The textile workers in Nagpur organised a general strike from March 21 to 27, 1966, and in Sholapur, there was a complete hartal against the cut in D.A. and for bonus on March 18, 1966. The threatened closure in Sanganghat led to serious conflict in which a manager was killed, the D.M.C. mills were locked out and the workers had to literally take possession of the mill to save it from being destroyed by the very anti-social elements, whom the the management had so long used against the Union.

Bonus

In Rajasthan too there were hunger-strikes and Bandh in which there were arrests. too.

The NGO's of Andhra and the workers of the Praga Tools had to fight struggles and won successes: ^{55 days} the B category workers in the docks in Calcutta helped by one day sympathetic strike by all port and dock workers despite the opposition of the officially recognised Federation of H.M.S., has re-awakened old history of the Calcutta dockers. The port and dock workers of Goa, Kandla, Vizag, Madras and Cochin have achieved some of their demands, and are awaiting the results of their Wage Board. And when you remember these dogged prolonged strikes, you can also see the Reserve Bank Employees observing a 90 minute strike of protest against wrongful promotions.

The 52-day strike of 15,000 workers in Amritsar textiles from April 10 to June 1, 1965, was another instance of the determined struggles the workers had to lead even to secure the implementation of the agreed recommendations of the Minimum Wage Committee.

The strikes over the bonus issue have been quite widespread in the recent period. The workers in all trades have been involved in bonus struggles and these struggles did help to gain a higher quantum of bonus. The settlements and agreements on this question are quite numerous and it is difficult to catalogue them here.

The traditional feature of bonus struggles as the mobilisation of whole areas and industries around bonus demands as it happens in 'Puja Bonus' struggles in West Bengal and similar struggles in other States before Diwali has assumed more developed forms over the years. Particularly significant were the struggles in Bengal in 1965 after the promulgation of the Bonus Ordinance, and the concessions secured after militant struggles in getting a higher quantum of bonus than what was provided under the statute.

The Jay Engineering Workers' Strike from December 17, 1963 to May 27, 1964 took place primarily over the bonus issue. The strike in which over seven thousand workers participated was marked by the determination and unity displayed by the workers, and especially when communal disturbances had broken out in Calcutta when the strike was in progress. The solidarity movement with the Jay Engineering strike was also great. Rallies, demonstrations and processions were taken out in support of the strike and thousands of rupees were donated as solidarity fund. On

*1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60
61
62
63
64
65
66
67
68
69
70
71
72
73
74
75
76
77
78
79
80
81
82
83
84
85
86
87
88
89
90
91
92
93
94
95
96
97
98
99
100*

April 16, the overwhelming majority of the 1½ lakh engineering workers in West Bengal went on a one-day sympathetic token strike. The dispute was ended by reference to a tribunal.

A struggle of similar intensity was the strike in the tile factories of Commonwealth Trust (a foreign-owned concern) from April 10, 1961 to May 12, 1961. The strike was over non-payment of the four per cent minimum bonus which was agreed as per a tripartite agreement. The strike was supported by the AITUC, INTUC and HMS.

In 1961, West Bengal also witnessed the hotly contested bonus dispute and lock-out in Birla's Hindustan Motors, the lock-out lasting from October 10 to December 9, 1961. On December 6, Hind Motors Day was observed throughout West Bengal protesting against the brutal police repression on the Hind Motors workers, in their struggle against the lock-out.

The bonus struggles in Bombay cotton textile industry since 1962 onwards led by the AITUC have had an important contribution in the determination of bonus payments in the country in general. Significant in this regard was the huge demonstration of 50,000 textile workers in Bombay on August 30, 1962, and the call for strike given by the MGKU over the bonus for 1959, 1960 and 1961. A day before the strike was to begin, on September 23, the millowners accepted the mediation of Chief Minister Y. V. Chavan. The Chief Minister's award on bonus was that Rs. 10.7 crores should be paid as bonus for the three years. Similar struggles had to be organised by the textile workers over the bonus demand in subsequent years, including the recent 12-day strike already referred.

These are by no means isolated instances of bonus struggles. In fact, no trade or industry remained unaffected by bonus struggles and with the enactment of the Payment of Bonus Act, the struggles are both on the broad policy plane as well as for obtaining the maximum bonus through assertion of the collective strength of the workers. Bonus movement in coal mines has been quite intensive in the recent months.

Public Sector

The public sector units which developed and expanded during the period under review did not develop stable industrial relations. It required the united struggles of workers to get even labour laws, etc., implemented. The public sector managements refused to implement awards and agreements. Workers had to organise

many determined struggles for elementary T.U. rights in some of the public sector units.

Notable among these struggles was the strike of the Pimpri Penicillin factory workers in June 1964 to secure the implementation of the Meher Award. The Meher Award had firmly rejected the plea of the management to link public sector wages with the Pay Commission scales and the management went in appeal to the Supreme Court. The workers' strike resulted in a compromise settlement.

The worst ever orgy of repression was unleashed by Government in the Heavy Electricals plant in Bhopal which had strikes almost every year from 1961 to 1964. All these strikes were provoked by the anti-labour policies of the management, and despite the overwhelming support enjoyed by the Heavy Electricals Servants Trade Union (HESTU), an independent union, the Government imposed an INTUC union on the workers. The repression on the workers in 1964 was the worst ever and all the leading employee trade unionists were arrested and detained under the DIR, some of them till very recently.

In all the public sector plants, the workers had to organise departmental and local struggles to secure their demands. The struggle for securing collective bargaining rights for the really representative unions is continuing.

The struggles of the public sector units in Bangalore were led by the trade unions there with a good deal of coordination. In the Indian Telephone Industries, certain interim relief was won through an arbitration award in 1964 after a strike. The BEL workers were forced into a strike in protest against the non-implementation of the award. Recently, on April 11, 1966, the workers of the HAL and BMEL went on a token strike over the bonus issue.

Struggles over the wage demand were quite pronounced in most of the public sector units. And it was equally intense for T.U. rights and against victimisation — the reprehensible manner of removing workers from jobs over alleged police verification reports.

Government Employees' Movement

The period under review has witnessed a remarkable growth of the Government employees' T.U. movement. Apart from the Central Government employees, including the industrial categories in railways, defence, P. & T., civil aviation, etc., what was of

particular significance was the upsurge of the State Government employees' T.U. movement. The struggles of the State Government employees in almost all the States assumed forms of action which displayed a militant character. Similar intensity was seen in the movement of the teachers. The industrial employees under the State Governments such as in road transport, electricity, etc. were also active in struggles. A degree of co-ordination between the administrative employees and the industrial workers under the State Government was achieved in the course of this struggle. The most outstanding achievement of these struggles has been the gradual removal of irrational inter-regional disparities in wages, chiefly the large gap in wage and D.A. rates as between the Central and State Government scales. But the salaries and D.A. scales are still uneven and if the Finance Ministry's proposals to freeze D.A. are carried, there will be an upheaval again.

The organised T.U. movement in the Central Government sector of employment was able to gain through struggles periodic revision of D.A., certain improvement in house-rent and city compensatory allowance.

Overall Position

According to statistics of the Labour Bureau, Government of India, the figures of industrial disputes resulting in work-stoppages, man-days lost, etc., during the last five years, were as follows:

<i>Year</i>	<i>No. of disputes</i>	<i>No. of workers involved</i>	<i>No. of man-days lost</i>
1961	1,357	5,11,860	49,18,755
1962	1,491	7,05,059	61,20,576
1963	1,471	5,63,121	32,68,524
1964	2,151	10,02,955	77,24,694
1965 (P)	1,740	8,02,741	62,98,742

(P) Provisional figures given in L.M. Report, 1965-66

It will be noticed that in 1963, number of man-days lost due to work stoppages had declined considerably, in terms of workers involved, it was higher than in 1961. This shows that although the workers showed restrained action during the year in an abnormal emergency situation, the policies of employers and Government were such that workers were forced into actions. Similarly, in 1965 also, when the workers had held over all calls for direct action at the time of the Indo-Pak conflict, even during the other

months, the intensity of struggles was such that as many as 8.02 lakh workers were involved in direct action.

During this period, the year 1964 had seen the largest number of disputes and struggles, the highest number of workers involved and highest number of man-days lost. A Labour Bureau study on the causes of the strikes, etc., during 1964 is given below :

	No. of Disputes		No. of workers involved		No. of man-days lost	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Wages & Allowances	740	34.9	2,87,395	28.9	27,46,579	35.7
Ponus	167	7.9	1,39,511	14.0	6,89,570	8.9
Personnel	567	26.7	2,01,155	20.2	17,52,325	22.7
Retrenchment	16	0.7	1,805	0.2	20,674	0.3
Leave & Hours of Work	42	2.0	23,869	2.4	23,881	0.3
Others	590	27.8	3,40,668	34.3	24,72,152	32.1
Not Known	29	—	8,552	—	19,513	—
TOTAL	2,151	100	10,02,955	100	77,24,694	100

Recent Struggles And Notable Features

In order to better understand the variegated character of the innumerable strike struggles and protest actions of the workers, the understanding of the situation that the workers themselves reveal and the conclusions that they suggest, we ought to have a far more detailed review and diary of all the struggles during this period. But the pressure of the work of these very struggles has prevented all concerned from carrying out such a review. We should, however, try to comprehend the new features of the situation as revealed by the struggle waves of the last three years.

The number of strike days fought in 1963, 1964, 1965 and the six months of 1966 show an ascending curve in the resistance, which the workers are putting up against the ruling class in order to defend their wages, employment, their rights and organisation.

The workers do not strike simply because their leaders or Unions ask them to do so. There are instances when the leaders or the Union call a strike but nothing happens; and also instances when workers act on their own before the Union has moved.

There are also struggles which have been doggedly fought lasting for five or six months and nothing tangible has been gained

and the struggle had to end where it started with just a reference to a tribunal or arbitration. Even then it does leave some valuable lessons behind to guide the future.

The rising tempo of the movement shows that the workers and their unions are acting in unison. Without such a persistence, these struggles would not have been there.

The comparatively quiet year of 1963 with 3.3 million days of strikes burst up to 7.7 million in 1964. This was the year of the series of Bundhs referred to above. It was this series that made the Bundh idea and the technique of unity that is required for it that caught and carried forward the movement in 1965 and 1966.

The intervention and diversion of the Indo-Pak war did not affect the strike movement much. The workers called off their struggles dutifully during the period of war, but resumed them with full force soon after. The reason was that the Government thought that emergency and D.I.R. and the patriotic sentiment would hold back the worker from action even after the war was over and all the tension had not yet gone down. The Government's failure to handle the food situation and control the hoarders and bankers deprived it of all the credit it had gathered in the defence of the country. The workers moved into action again.

The Government's failure to curb the monopolists and its pig-headed resistance to lifting the emergency and the DIR even when the courts and all public opinion had ruled against it helped to move the masses and the year 1966 already has seen more wide-spread actions than ever before.

Not only have struggles grown in number and intensity. They have covered *all the States* in India and *all industries and trades* — with only one exception and that is the railway system. The railways have not had a unified all-India action for the last twenty years. There have been ballots for strikes and concessions won along with other Government employees but no all-India action, which could have forged the railway worker into a powerful leader of an all-India struggle.

In the last two years, not only industries, mines, road transport, port and docks have had their struggles but even the Government employees particularly in the regional State sector have taken to forms of action suitable to them, and have won successes.

The impact has been such that even the Auditor General's Czardom, which had refused to pay heed to their employees'

struggles, gave them back their recognition. Perhaps the change of the Auditor General also had something to do with it. Anyway it enlivened that section.

The Government employees' struggles are gradually bringing into acceptance the view that all Government employees as common employees of the State as a whole must get identical wage and identical rights.

In this period, the educational services have had to act as also sections of the medical services of the middle ranks. University professors and teachers, generally used to shouting at the pupils, for once began to shout at their employers. It was a sight to see professors, who taught from the text book that rising dearness allowance to workers leads to rise in prices, now saying exactly the reverse and asking for dearness allowance for themselves contrary to the text book. They established an action committee also and descended to the level of trade unionism from the ivory heights of the pure intellect. It was good change and made them human and enabled them to see the misery around.

Food having been common platform for all, in the recent period, the students and workers began acting together. This new unity is the biggest gain of the period. When the students of Quilon in Kerala were beaten and professors, and principals, who protested were threatened right inside the sanctuary of their colleges, a new unity between the teacher and the taught between the worker and the student was forged.

None of the principals, whom I met was interested in politics or any radical views. And yet they protested and asked — Will the Government not keep the educational institutes free from violation by the police? Could not schools and colleges be given that status of a sanctuary, which some of the medieval churches secured from despotic Kings, whose pikemen could not arrest even a criminal once he got into the sanctuary of a cathedral.

The emotional and ideological churning that the Indian intelligentsia got in this period is a new feature of our situation.

The impact of the struggles in these years has leapt over the boundaries of parties and rigid narrow loyalties. One important outcome is that large sections of congressmen have ceased to resent the struggles and some have even come to support them from a democratic point of view. Hence many congressmen

joined in the view that all T.U. and political leaders be released and the D.I.R. scrapped.

The struggles in the last two or three years attained new heights of militancy and boldness, one of the reasons being that some of them were driven forward by actual starvation like in Bengal and Kerala. Struggles in other areas, though fought with intensity and boldness too, had not that inflaming factor of actual lack of food altogether to drive them forward, as was the case of the student boy of Krishnanagar, who was shot. The Amritsar textile strike lasting for nearly two months or the Jay Engineering for five months had a different setting than the Bengal Bundh of March and April this year. These two have churned the whole of Bengal top to bottom in a new way.

In the recent struggles, people have ceased to fear the police or the firing. And the sweep of the movement was so wide and deep that in many cases, military forces were called in to save the civil power from being over-run.

New prosperous industries where workers are not badly paid began to go into action in these two years. We have before us the Pharmaceutical industry. There the simple question of the "marriage-clause" started gathering momentum and the pharmaceutical workers began to go into strike actions on other questions too. Mere payment of high wages does not stop a worker from fighting for his rights.

The working women got together on their special platform: the demand for cheap Burshane gas for the harassed housewife and some water in the water-taps. An attack on the oil companies and the Government, which could not give the gas cheap even though it was a waste bye-product and such other demands sent ten thousand women in Bombay City into a march to the Secretariat.

During the last few years, a new working-girl drawn from middle-class families has come to the workshops and offices. The T.U. movement must encourage women to enter factories and offices for work and give them special protection and reservation as working women. Unless women take part in the T.U. work and struggles, there can be no democracy and no socialism in this country, even if the working-class comes to power.

A new young worker, who had never seen the National Movement nor the old class-struggles, has entered the factory. His outlook on life and culture, his mode of behaviour and strug-

gle, his hopes and illusions require a new approach from the trade unions. 'This new force has been thrust into action in the last two^{how} three years. Along with Nationalism and National pride roused by such things as Indo-Pak war, experience is teaching him to look at things from the point of view of his class also. Today, in his mind, National defence and class-struggle are not contradictory. That is perhaps one reason why immediately on the wake of peace, the strike struggle flared up everywhere. The Congress Government can rally him for defence of the country but cannot detach him from fighting for his interests as a worker. With the experience of the old worker by his side, he is learning the lessons and becoming class-conscious.

It was one of the directives of the AITUC to its Unions that during all these struggles, the leadership must popularise the defence of Vietnam and denounce the aggression of the U.S. imperialism, which has taken up the role of gendarmerie of the world reaction against Peace, Democracy, National Revolution and Socialism.

The AITUC also has seen to it that the struggle in one place gets solidarity from workers everywhere, including international solidarity in which the World Federation of Trade Unions plays a big role.

With all this, the movement has its shortcomings.

T. U. Unity

In these last two years, actions were taking place on a more united basis than before. In fact, no Bundh in any area is possible without unity in some form, thru direct or indirect understandings among all the effective trade unions.

Formal united fronts have also been coming into being from issue to issue like in the Rashtriya Sangram Samiti, which however, has caught some wider roots in Bengal, Andhra, Kerala and Gujarat, though centrally it is almost in a freeze.

In many struggles in this period, the INTUC unions have joined hands with others.

*and
a
and
Congress* A tendency is growing in some sections of the INTUC leadership that they must overcome their bad reputation as black-legs of the bourgeoisie. And so they too give strike notices and join in common actions. A common front of all the national T.U. centres has to be brought about for winning more successes.

The Sixth World Congress of WFTU discussed this question of unity and struggles on the international level and called upon all forces of the working-class to unite.

The question of unity has now arisen in the AITUC itself, following from the political differences that have cropped up in its leadership and have reached right to the trade union ranks.

The AITUC has had several splits in its history of forty-six years, due to political differences. It split in 1929 into two and again split in 1930. It took eight years to reunite all under the same banner.

The war once again virtually split it but formally it remained one, until the Congressmen and the Socialists walked out in 1947. Then there was a further split in 1949, which was partly healed in 1953. Since then we have gathered more experience and more strength.

We hope we shall continue to remain united despite political differences among ourselves, though already rivalries on Union levels in some places are marring unity and united action.

At present something like seven national centres (including the one of Jana Sangh) speak in the name of the workers. Besides there are quite a number of industrial federations, some of them independent of any Central T.U. Organisation, some as part of them. There are thousands of workers who seek the help of all of them and want all to unite. *idea*

Secret Ballot for Recognition :

The employers try to play one Union against the other and most of them, so far, have preferred to give recognition and patronage to the INTUC. But the INTUC has no hold over the masses, except in so far as it can command the patronage and support of the Government and the employer. That compels the workers to enrol in the INTUC but they desert it in times of struggles.

In the recent wave of struggles, the INTUC workers joined in the common fight and only a few leaders were left to do black-legging and that too unsuccessfully. Even then the INTUC has still a following in some areas, which should not be neglected.

The AITUC has been agitating for a long time that the recognition of unions and their representative character should be decided by a secret ballot of the workers in the trade or factory

ot by the T.U. members of all the unions in a given plant or trade. The Labour Panel of the Planning Commission accepted this principle and the INTUC leader also agreed to it but he was later disowned by the bigger bosses.

Even the employers have got fed up with this state of affairs and many of them are now inclined to accept. In the recent textile strike in Bombay, the INTUC was thoroughly isolated and exposed, though it is recognised both by the employers and the law as the representative union. The Government had to make an agreement with the unrecognised Girni Kamgar Union, which has enraged the employers very much. This rage was expressed by the President of the Employers' Federation of India, Mr. Naval Tata, at their thirty-third annual meeting in Madras.

The employers' president criticised the INTUC for its failure "to deliver the goods" and prevent the strike. He criticised the Government for its patronage to an ineffective body and its insistence on the employers to recognise it for political reasons. Then he denounced Government for settling the dispute with our Union and thus virtually recognising it. Ultimately, disagreeing with Tata and denouncing us also, the "Commerce" as the organ of big business says:

"The present system of recognising the unions needs some modifications, if the present anomalous position is to be rectified. One just does not understand the Governments' reported stand against the recognition of unions through secret ballot." Then the journal goes on showing the advantages and would-be results of such a system.

The AITUC maintains its stand in this matter. In fact, secret ballot will be the best instrument to ensure democracy in the trade unions and will help in unifying the various trade union centres ultimately into one, beginning with facts for common panels of election and common platforms. Secret ballot in the country is one of the instruments of political democracy. It can be made an instrument of trade union democracy and unity in the factory, if it is used as a method of recognition of unions.

The AITUC as the faithful adherent of the World Federation of Trade Unions is carrying out the general line of the World T.U. movement as evolved in the last Sixth World Congress held at Warsaw, in the spirit of proletarian internationalism. The AITUC is pledged to fight imperialism and defend National independence from imperialist threats and internal reaction. It is

against world war and for peace and peaceful co-existence. It stands for friendship with the socialist countries and the newly liberated democracies of Asia, Africa, and Latin America. It stands for solidarity of the international working-class of all countries, supports T U unity and the class-struggle for a true democracy and socialism. It desires all democratic forces to help Vietnam against U S imperialism.

The AITUC wants India to be strong and develop her industries and agriculture for the common good, to develop on the basis of democracy and the rights of the working people. The AITUC declares its solidarity with the intelligentsia, the students and youths, the middle classes, technicians and scientists and all working women in their efforts to build a better future for the country, for themselves and for all toiling people. The AITUC will defend the gains of national independence and fight for democracy and socialism for the benefit of the Indian people and all mankind.

★ LONG LIVE THE AITUC !

★ LONG LIVE THE WFTU !!

★ LONG LIVE THE INTERNATIONAL WORKING
CLASS AND UNITY !!!

