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REPORT and RESOLUTIONS

Of the Working Committee Meeting of
the All India Trade Union Congress held
at Calcutta on 17th - 18th August 1953.

UNEMPLOYMENT AND GOVERNMENT IN PARLIAMENT

All-India Trade Union Congress.
1953.

"Our people should be given productive work. We must produce our own goods even at a higher price rather than import them from outside."

Economic Review — AICC, September 1953.

VIEWS OF THE FINANCE MINISTER, MR. DESHMUKH

Expressed in the Parliament on September 22, 1953.

"Any proper assessment of the magnitude and character of the problem was handicapped by lack of adequate data."

"The aggravation of the unemployment situation with which they were now concerned was mainly an urban phenomenon."

"It did not appear that aggregate employment in organised industries had gone down though it should be conceded that in some industries and some units of certain industries difficulties had been and were being experienced, but in trade and ancillary services, employment opportunities appeared to have declined."

"The real problem of the country was their inability to utilise their resources to an optimum extent."

"Banning of imports by itself would not also lead to an increase in domestic output, but in some cases might merely create monopoly profits for the favoured producer."

"Talk of confiscation of British capital and its transfer to Indian hands would not, by any means, increase employment. India was lacking in capital resources and they had to attract outside capital. Talk of confiscation was certainly not a method of attracting outside capital."

Replying to the questions posed by Mr. Muzumdar, the Finance Minister gave a categorical "no" to the demand for setting apart Rs. 50- crores for unemployment relief. He also negated the suggestion for compulsory re-investment within the country of profits by British capital. As regards stopping retrenchment by an ordinance, Mr. Deshmukh said: "My answer is no, subject to what I am going to say."

The remedies suggested, he continued, would only aggravate the problems of unemployment and not relieve the situation. The remedies were all unproductive and likely to be looked upon as political.

"In the short run it was difficult in an under-developed economy to increase the supply of consumer goods and this necessarily limited any advance towards full employment."

In short, all it means is—no relief, no production, no work, no hope, so far as the benign Government is concerned. That is what the debate revealed.

[Note 2: WHY 50 CRORES ONLY? In answer to the query, why the AITUC put the demand for relief at Rs. 50 crores, it is stated as follows:

The number of the urban and semi-urban unemployed is taken roughly at two million (twenty lacs). Giving them a pound of rations and eight annas a day would cost not more than Rs. 50 crores per year.]

Report of the Working Committee of the A.I.T.U.C.

(CALCUTTA : AUGUST 17th-18th)

The Working Committee of the A.I.T.U.C. met in Calcutta on 17th and 18th August 1953.

In the absence of the President, Com. Chakkral Chettiar, due to his illness, Vice-Presidents Coms. Satyapriya Banerjee, S. S. Mirajkar and S. S. Yusuf presided at the different sittings of the Committee on these two days.

The meeting first adopted a resolution on the death of Com. Stalin. Condolence resolutions were passed on Coms. Shanta Mukherjee and S. V. Deshpande.

The Committee adopted resolutions on the firings resorted to by various State Governments in India against workers. Resolutions on unemployment, and the World T. U. Congress of the WFTU were also passed. Main discussion centred on the question of unemployment.

A short report on the situation on the working-class front and the general situation was made by the General Secretary, Com. S. A. Dange. The report and statement of accounts for the two years 1951 and 1952 were approved.

On 18th August our Working Committee had a joint meeting with the Working Committee of the UTUC as previously agreed upon. In the preliminary meeting that had taken place between the UTUC and AITUC representatives at Calcutta in June, it was agreed that this joint meeting would discuss merger and that there were no hurdles in the way of immediate merger.

It was, therefore, strange that when the agreed joint meeting took place, the UTUC comrades put before us a resolution which they had adopted the previous day in their General Council, which ruled out the question of immediate unity of the two organisations.

The discussion which followed showed that certain elements in the UTUC, who are opposed to unity in the TU movement and have habitually taken disruptive attitudes towards the AITUC, had got the upper hand, after the June talks. For example, the UTUC raised the point that their representatives from Bombay and Kerala had complaints to make about certain happenings which obstructed united work. The AITUC comrades refused to go into such allegations, in view of the UTUC resolution, which had been already adopted without any prior discussion with the AITUC on the alleged differences.

The AITUC suggested that all such questions could be discussed in the united organisation and differences resolved, in joint work. Or they could have been placed beforehand in the joint

committee of the two organisations, before being made the excuse for torpedoing the unity move, at the last minute. The fact that the UTUC suddenly sprung upon us this excuse of differences in certain areas to break up joint work and cancel its previous proposals of immediate merger showed what changes had taken place in the composition of the UTUC.

The position now appears to be that for some time to come there would be no question of merger with the UTUC. The political group of the Revolutionary Socialist Party, led by Jatin Chakravarty and Padmanabhan, who were the leading people in this meeting in sabotaging unity, continue to hold dominating positions in the UTUC. And the workers of the UTUC unions, favouring unity, are not yet in a position to checkmate these elements. So for some time to come we shall work on joint platforms with the UTUC unions only where conditions permit such work, as we did before.

The Working Committee of the AITUC discussed the outcome of the meeting with the UTUC and came to the above conclusions.

A Press Conference was held by Com. Dange on 19th August on the results of the meetings of the AITUC. The Conference was held under the presidentship of Com. Satyapriya Banerjee.

The Working Committee allocated to the various State Committees the number of delegates and observers to be sent to the World Congress of the WFTU. A separate circular has been sent on this.

It was also decided to call an All-India Unemployment Conference in the near future and also explore the possibilities of holding trade conferences of Transport, Textiles, Engineering and Mining. Note was taken of the fact that the Calcutta Convention resolution remained unfulfilled in this matter.

Reports were made on the question of Provident Fund Law, the Sickness Insurance Law and the recent agreement on the payment for lay-offs at the meeting of the Standing Labour Committee at Delhi at the end of July.

It was decided to send a deputation of M.P.s to move the Government of India to issue passports to the delegates of the AITUC to the World Congress.

It was decided to hold the Session of the Congress of the AITUC in February 1954. The venue of the Congress will be decided later.

Secretariat.

Report to the Working Committee of the A.I.T.U.C.

The present meeting of the Working Committee is being held after a very long interval. This Working Committee was elected in May 1949. It held its meeting in May 1951 to review the work and policies of the AITUC and took very important decisions.

The General Elections to the Parliament, the legalisation of our unions and the revival and reorganisation of the unions of the AITUC enabled us to call a convention of the AITUC at Calcutta in May 1952. At that time a meeting of the Working Committee was attempted but could not take place. The Convention itself took the place of the General Council and Working Committee meeting.

REVIVAL OF TU ACTIVITY

Since the Convention the situation has changed rapidly. All the AITUC unions have been revived and are functioning. The AITUC now has emerged as the major force in the trade union movement in India. We have outstripped in influence and organisation the Hind Mazdoor Sabha, which formerly dominated the field. In this period, the INTUC has no doubt gathered some more strength and today in the T.U. field, it is the major force which is opposing the AITUC. Though the INTUC is trying to become the sole recognised organisation of the organised workers in India, it has failed so far to attain that position, because the top layers of its leaders relying on the big bourgeois circles, the governmental patronage and backing of the law and police forces refused to defend the interests of the workers. Thousands of workers who are members of the INTUC have begun to protest against the bureaucratic leadership and are demanding a change in the policy pursued by the INTUC leadership as was seen in the struggles in Burnpur, tea plantations, mining areas and in some textile centres also. These workers more and more are coming to appreciate the standpoint of unity in action and organisation put forward by the AITUC to all TU organisations, including the INTUC.

Not a small part of the changes that we see in the INTUC and HMS, is due to the reorganisation and strengthening of the AITUC unions.

GROWTH OF UNEMPLOYMENT & FAILURE OF FIVE YEAR PLAN

Since the Convention there has been a rapid change in the economic situation, the most outstanding feature of which is the problem of unemployment, which has assumed very serious dimensions. The growth of unemployment and the actions of the working class in defence of employment and standards of living have shattered all the claims of the big bourgeoisie, the landlords and the Congress Government that they were developing the country and its resources through the Five Year Plan in such a way that employment opportunities would grow and people's necessities would be served in growing proportions. Unemployment and the working-class action have forced the Government to talk of revising the Plan. When the AICC at Agra and Governmental circles began to argue over the necessity to revise the Plan, it was an admission that the Plan was a failure and that it has to be scrapped.

Even some circles of the big bourgeoisie are now coming out openly exposing each others' robbery of the people through the Plan. Some bourgeois circles are showing surprise that while production has risen, prices, instead of falling as expected earlier, are still rising and unemployment is growing. These circles by showing surprise and wonder hide the fact that just behind this and through this phenomena, the top circles in the world of finance are reaping huge profits and preparing to increase them by bringing in more rationalisation and unemployment, in which the smaller and medium industrial circles will be wiped out, leading to further crisis.

Every political party and T.U. organisation is agreed that solution of the unemployment problem is the most urgent task. The Agra session of the All-India Congress Committee (AICC), the Betul session of the Praja-Socialist Party (PSP), the recent meetings of the INTUC — all admit the need of doing something to cure unemployment.

SEVEN-POINT AITUC PROGRAMME FOR IMMEDIATE RELIEF

The AITUC has given its programme for immediate implementation to relieve the situation.

- Give Rs. 50 crores relief to the unemployed immediately in the form of cash and free rations;
- Reduce the prices of all consumer goods by 30 per cent;
- Ban all retrenchment and closure of factories;
- Reduce rents on the peasants and taxes on the people to enable them to buy goods and thus find markets;
- Break the big monopoly rings which cause high prices and unemployment for making maximum profits;
- Enforce eight-hour day and living wage for all;
- Try the famine-makers and punish them.

It demands relief in cash and kind to the unemployed. The most urgent question is to feed those who are actually starving and dying for want of work and wages. Everything else can wait but not the dying worker.

The AITUC has all along maintained that the Five Year Plan is not a plan to solve people's problems. Its stand has been vindicated by the fact that its framers themselves are realising it.

But no piecemeal revision will help. We demand the total scrapping of this Plan, and replacing it by a Plan for genuine relief of people, and undertaking schemes of production that should rely mainly on our own resources in men, money and technique and not on foreign capital that robs and enslaves us. All the big schemes of the Government under the Plan will have to be scrapped, if not today, at a later date; if not due to people's pressure, then due to financial robbery and bankruptcy.

In order to focus people's attention on the immediate need for relief measures, the AITUC called for 15th August being observed as Unemployment Day throughout India.

After our announcement was made, the HMS and PSP called for 8th to 15th August as Unemployment Week. It would have

been better if the HMS had joined with us on this issue. The INTUC has adopted a resolution on unemployment but not called for any action.

UNITED DEFENCE OF EMPLOYMENT & LIVING STANDARDS

The AITUC also gave the directive that all retrenchment and unemployment in any concern or industry should be opposed by positive action by the unions and workers. It has been found that in some cases the workers are spontaneously taking to action to defend themselves, while the unions have lagged behind. The splendid one-day strike of the Defence Industries workers on 30th June 1953, the solidarity displayed in Jabbalpur between the workers and citizens showed to the bourgeoisie and the Government that the workers cannot be treated as mere chaff to be thrown on the dunghill when capital, whether state or private, has had enough profits out of them.

The Social Security Conference organised by the WFTU and the Executive meeting of the WFTU this year have underlined this problem of unemployment, the growing attacks on workers' standard of living and the need for unity and action on these issues.

The AITUC therefore must increasingly explain to the workers the way in which the economic policies of the Government, led by the landlords and top rungs of the big bourgeoisie are leading the country, the working class and all people to ruin.

We must organise and lead the workers in defence of their interests against the attacks of the employers, with greater determination, timeliness and organisation.

The demands for unemployment relief must be won in cooperation with the employed workers and all working people, including the peasantry and the middle-classes.

Last year, when we were meeting in Calcutta, the Government had slashed subsidies on food in order to prop up the falling prices and to save the big trading houses and international speculators from losses. At that time, the Bombay workers decided to strike on 6th June 1952 to demand the restoration of subsidy and the AITUC convention endorsed their action.

One year after that, sections of the bourgeoisie are now demanding that the food subsidy be restored, because it will help industry to reduce their cost of production. The Government at that time did not accept that the subsidy cut would lead to starvation. But now it is admitted by Government surveys in Bombay, that food consumption fell drastically from the already low level, since subsidy was withdrawn.

The AITUC unions must demand and agitate for restoration of the food subsidy which will not require now more than Rs. 15 crores in the yearly budget.

The unions of the AITUC must come forward more and more not only in defence of their own workers, but also of the people as a whole.

The mighty struggle waged by the Calcutta people to oppose the increase in Tramway fares and giving Rs. 30 lacs more to the

British Company and the great General Strike of 15th July show how workers and citizens, men and women and even young boys can unite and defeat the Government's policies of robbing the people through taxes and high prices, and enriching the monopolists in this country and abroad. United Front of all trade unions, workers, political parties and mass organisations and militant action of the masses achieved success in defending people's interest in Calcutta. This unity must be preserved, cultivated and developed for still further gains.

SET-BACKS DURING 1952

During the last year while the workers struggled to defend their wages, bonus and employment, and made gains as in Calcutta, there were some outstanding losses also. The one big loss was the defeat imposed on the **Tea plantation workers**, who were forced to lose their cheap grain wages and suffer a wage-cut of about 30 per cent. The planters succeeded in scrapping the Plantation Labour Act which tried to give the workers some sort of minimum wages and some hygienic conveniences. The conspiracy of the Congress Governments of Assam and Bengal with the big plantation owners smashed the gains made earlier.

In coal mining also, the robbery of the Welfare Fund by the owners, contractors and bureaucrats could not be halted nor the retrenchment and increase in workload. Our mining unions, however, have made progress and due to our movement, even the INTUC leadership has had to speak of action to defend the miners.

Attacks on the workers in **cotton textiles and engineering** are in the offing. In fact, the clamour for reduction of wages all round by way of freezing of dearness allowance first is being persistently put forward. If we are not vigilant and active, the bourgeoisie and Government will get bold enough to attack the workers' wages directly in order to make more profits.

The gain worth noting is the recent agreement at the Standing Labour Committee to pay the laid off workers compensation for 45 days in a year at 50% of wages plus D.A. A separate report is being made on this.

The Provident Fund scheme has been applied. The Sickness Insurance scheme has been extended to Punjab and is proposed for Calcutta and Bombay. But the fact that this whole scheme is being misused by various bureaucrats and employers' interests for their own selfish ends at the cost of the workers' money has been revealed recently by the squabbles inside the governing circles which found their way to the press because of the resignation of Dr. Katial, the Insurance Commissioner.

DEFEAT BOURGEOIS DISRUPTION ON NATIONAL QUESTION

During the last year the working class in various States has shown increasing interest in the movement for linguistic provinces. Workers have participated in Andhra in a determined manner to secure the Andhra State. This question is also agitating workers in Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Kerala etc. In this

movement it is the task of the trade unions to see that while supporting the demand for linguistic provinces, the workers of one language and nationality do not trail behind the bourgeoisie of their language or nationality and break with their working class brothers of another nationality or be unfriendly or hostile to them. The workers of one nationality must guarantee the rights of the workers of another nationality and the whole working class composed of several language and national groups must unitedly fight for the linguistic states of all. Thus alone can we all have our democratic linguistic states free from mutual rivalries. Else the shrewd bourgeoisie will divide us on these issues and having disrupted our class-unity and action, it will impose defeat on us even in matters of our wages and working conditions and ultimately of all our rights and liberties.

It is the task of our trade unions, as pointed out already by our Calcutta Convention, to carefully study the situation in each province and so conduct themselves that the national-linguistic aspirations of the working-class as part of a particular linguistic people do not divide and disrupt the trade unions and the solidarity of workers as an exploited class irrespective of their linguistic and national differences. The nationalism of the worker must not be allowed to destroy his internationalism as a class. As the problem is becoming acute and urgent everywhere, it is necessary that our Trade Unions again look into the question carefully and campaign correctly.

INTERNATIONAL SITUATION—EFFECTS OF MARSHALL PLAN & GROWTH OF WFTU

It is necessary to say here a few words about the international situation as it affects particularly the workers and the trade union movement. Just as the Five Year Plan here has failed to solve the problem of the crisis in our economy, the Marshall Plan has failed to solve the crisis in the economy of Europe including Great Britain and America. At the end of the Marshall Plan this year, the European working class has realised that the Plan was only a measure to enrich the American monopoly capitalists and their henchmen in the West European countries. They have realised that the Marshall Plan, in spite of its promises, has failed to raise their standards of living. On the contrary it increased their tax burdens, depreciated their standard of living, created unemployment and all-round deterioration in the conditions of all countries of Western Europe. Today we are hearing news of the struggles that are now being launched on a vast scale by the workers of France and Italy against the policies of those sections of their bourgeoisie which have become totally anti-national and have joined hands with foreign imperialism to rob their own people.

In 1948, some sections of the working class could be misled by the leadership of the British TUC, the American Federation of labour and the CIO, into splitting away from the World

Federation of Trade Unions and forming a separate organisation called the ICFTU. Those leaders split away on the ground that the WFTU was not supporting the Marshall Plan to build a prosperous and democratic Europe. The attempt to weaken and split the unity of the working class of the whole world as symbolised by the World Federation of Trade Unions failed miserably. The ICFTU, no doubt, did succeed in taking the British TUC and CIO to its fold, but the squabbles of the imperialists and the trade union bosses under the influence of these imperialists would not allow even that working class which was attracted towards the ICFTU to realise its demands for better standards of living. The ICFTU failed to split the French and Italian Trade Union movements and thus failed to break the strongest base of the World Federation of Trade Unions in Western Europe.

The successes and growth of the working class in China and the People's Democracies led by the Soviet Union strengthened the unity of the working class inside the WFTU, which from its standpoint of international solidarity, rendered great help to the working class of the backward and semi-colonial countries. The WFTU as the symbol of world working class unity is going to hold its Third World Congress in October 1953. The WFTU has appealed to the ICFTU and its trade unions to join in this Congress in order to forge a common front against the bourgeoisie which is attacking the working class in all capitalist countries. But the appeal still remains unheeded by the leadership of the ICFTU. It is however to be noted that many trade union leaders and trade unions, owing allegiance to the national centres affiliated to ICFTU, have shown willingness to participate in the work of the Third World Congress without committing themselves to any affiliation with the WFTU.

GROWING URGE FOR TU UNITY

The desire for unity in the working class ranks has grown on a tremendous scale in the last one year throughout the world. United actions in defence of peace and standards of living attacked by warmongers have been taking place in many countries of Western Europe. Desire for unity has also gathered strength in India. Though the four national centres in India, i.e., the AITUC, INTUC, HMS and UTUC, have not come together on a united platform, still unity in action in the factories is taking place among workers owing allegiance to the different national centres. But this unity expressed in united strike struggles has not yet led to the organisational unity of the four national centres.

The AITUC has always shown readiness to unite with all the other national centres. It has expressed its willingness to work on the formula that was put forward by Comrades N. M. Joshi and M. K. Bose a few months back. It is, however, regrettable to note that even the Coordinating Committee visualised in that formula could not come into existence.

Apart from this, organisational unity has taken place in

trade federations. For example, the Defence unions have formed a united federation in which unions of all shades of opinion have come together. The Federation of Unions of Bank Employees has grown into a powerful body. Various unions in the petroleum and oil industry have formed a united federation and the same kind of unity has taken place in the cement unions also. Thus unity of trade federations is slowly growing and it has been found that this unity has assisted the workers in these united federations to fight with greater success the attacks of their employers.

KOREAN & CHINESE PEOPLE UPSET IMPERIALIST WAR PLANS

In the field of international trade unionism, the imperialists had calculated that by fomenting war, they would be able to stall the crisis and thus neutralise the unity and action of the working class to realise their demands for better wages and living conditions. They hoped to foment war against the Socialist and People's Democratic countries. But the defeat which the imperialists suffered in Korea at the hands of the Korean and Chinese people and the strength of the peace movement led by the people of the Soviet Union and the democratic masses in other countries have now created conditions in which the working class and the trade union movement can take the offensive to defend themselves against unemployment and worsening of their conditions of living. The signing of the peace in Korea has defeated all those who wanted to create war tensions and thereby mint money in the speculative markets and rising prices. Conditions have now been created for developing trade between the People's Democracies, Soviet Union, China, on the one hand, and the countries which do not trade with the democratic economy of these countries. The policies pursued by the Government of India in supporting peace in Korea, of opposing war against China, of opening trade talks with Pakistan, are policies which if consistently pursued would develop markets for Indian goods and thereby guarantee continuity of production in our factories. Thus the problem of peace is directly linked to the solution of unemployment in our country. The trade unions of the AITUC therefore must demand the continuance of a policy of peace and the policy of developing trade with China, Soviet Union and People's Democracies so that the problems of our economy may be solved with the help of the democratic and stable economy of these countries.

THIRD WORLD CONGRESS OF WFTU

In this situation therefore the participation of the AITUC and the Indian trade unions in the Third World Congress of the WFTU acquires great importance from the point of view of not only the interests of the workers in India but also from the point of view of the workers of the whole world and of all working people.

The AITUC accepts the platform of the Third World Congress as enunciated in the Appeal issued by the Executive Bureau. We have taken steps to issue a bulletin named "Towards the Third World Congress" which conveys to our trade unions news from all over the world regarding the participation of the trade unions in the Third World Congress. From this month we have also undertaken to publish the Hindi Edition of the fortnightly organ of the WFTU. The Hindi edition will appear every month under the title "Vishwa Mazdoor", the first issue of which is already out. It should be considered as an important task for all trade unions to circulate the copies of this Hindi journal.

The AITUC Secretariat since the last Convention issued three issues of the "Trade Union Record". It was expected that the new format in which the "Trade Union Record" was being published would better serve the needs of the movement than the old format. The Secretariat, however, finds that it has to bear very heavy losses on the TUR in its present form. Hence its publication has to be discontinued.

This year we have been able to issue in printed form the answers to the questionnaire issued by the Government of India on the problem of Labour relations which form the subject matter of the Nainital Conference. We are glad to find that the publication has been completely sold out. We also issued the Hindi translation of some of the reports which were made to the Calcutta Convention. These editions have also been sold out. Recently we have brought out in English a study on 'Capital and Labour in Jute Industry' by Com. Indrajit Gupta. It is proposed to publish similar studies on cotton textiles, tea, etc.

This year, many provincial offices have been functioning regularly. But we still find difficulty in getting comprehensive reports regarding affiliated unions. Since the Provincial TUCs began to get reorganised from June 1952, almost all provinces have held their Provincial Conferences and reorganised their State Committees. The State of Uttar Pradesh however has yet been unable to hold its State Conference of Trade Unions.

Trade conferences have taken place on provincial scale but all-India trade conferences as such have not yet been held. In Bengal, a very successful trade conference of the engineering trades was held, in Madras the Social Security Conference received very good response. Anti-retrenchment Conference in Bengal also was a great success. Though unemployment has become very acute, conferences of the unemployed, demonstrations, token strikes in sympathy with the retrenched and unemployed have not yet gathered sufficient force. But the demonstrations planned for 15th of August have set in motion the trade unions on this front also.

AITUC ACTIVITIES IN 1952

A rough estimate of the membership of the unions shows that the present membership of unions affiliated and associated and those seeking affiliation runs to over seven lakhs. The

state of finances of the AITUC has not yet improved despite the reorganisation of the trade unions and the growing strength of the AITUC among the masses of the workers. This is mainly due to the fact that the trade union leaderships in the various States have not yet taken care to realise the growing strength of the trade unions in the organised form of paying affiliation fees and union dues. Compared to the mass rallies and strike struggles that take place under the flag of the AITUC, the reorganisation of cadres and finances is lagging very much behind. Some unions have cared to pay affiliation dues in this year. Some are in arrears for the last four or five years. It is therefore proposed that arrears for this period be written off by the Working Committee and dues realised for the current year in strict conformity with the Constitution of the AITUC.

In this period the World Federation of Trade Unions rendered great help to the various struggles that were being conducted by the workers in defence of their wages and working conditions. Help to give relief to the strikers, victims of firings and prosecutions was rendered in several cases. Help was received in order to defend the workers and peasants prosecuted in Telengana, Tamilnad, Assam, Basti, Ballia, Calcutta and other places. Help was also received for the defence of the workers in Mithapur strike, the strike of the cotton textiles, engineering and of other workers. The international solidarity shown by the WFTU and its affiliated centres in other countries with the cause of the Indian working class has been of great help in defending the interests of our working class against the onslaughts of reactionary profiteers.

The AITUC has not been able to participate fully in the many international conferences to which it was invited. This was due to the policy of the Government which refused to give passports to many of our delegations. The Members of Parliament belonging to the progressive parties have protested on the floor of the House against these policies of the Government but as yet there are no signs of change in this policy. The Government seems to have no definite line with regard to the granting or refusal of passports. But on the whole we find that passports are granted to the delegations of the INTUC and HMS when they visit the conferences of the ICFTU. But the same facilities are refused to the delegations of the AITUC when they wish to participate in the Conferences of the WFTU. This is nothing but blatant discrimination against the AITUC because it refuses to help the reactionary policies pursued by the Government of India and their advisers in relation to the interests of the working class.

It has also been found that the Government refuses to give the AITUC any representation in the conferences and committees of the ILO. In the Tripartite Conferences in India, the AITUC receives less number of seats than the INTUC against which policy we have lodged protests several times with the Government. The HMS also gets smaller representation in the Indian tripartite and it has also lodged protests against this policy of the Government. It was promised at the Nainital

Conference by Government spokesmen that the Labour Ministry would follow the policy of equal representation for all, but this promise has not been kept.

I need not report on the large number of subjects that have been handled by the AITUC central office by means of circulars and statements. Those are all in the hands of the members of the Working Committee. The AITUC has had to express itself on various problems and it can be stated that its statements on vital problems have received sympathetic hearing in the journals of the country and have been well received by the democratic masses.

On many international questions the AITUC could not intervene effectively on a scale commensurate with the importance of the problems. But it is to be noted that the trade unions of the AITUC mobilised the workers in India against the barbarous murder of the Rosenbergs by the American fascists. The demonstrations have been staged with the participation of the AITUC trade unions in cooperation with other progressive parties and organisations.

From this short and not a very complete report, comrades of the Working Committee will get an idea of our organisational strength and weaknesses and of our tasks and duties. The crisis that has gripped our country is moving the whole working class into action. It is the duty of the trade unions of the AITUC, of every worker owing allegiance to the Red Flag of the AITUC to take the lead in these struggles in defence of wages and working conditions, in defence of employment and against retrenchment, in defence of peace, democratic liberties and the well-being of all the working people, of all trades and industries in our country.

The AITUC is in a position to give an effective lead in these struggles only if our various State Committees, their leaderships and their rank and file bring about disciplined organisation and democratic functioning in their day-to-day work, directly in the factories and the mohallas, directly in link with the masses themselves. The principles that should guide us in bringing about an all-in unity which alone in the immediate future is the lever of our success have been laid down by the WFTU in its Preparatory Report to the forthcoming World Congress. We hope all unions will guide their work on these principles.

I close my report with the mention of the saddest event in world history, the death of Comrade Stalin, the founder and builder of the first Socialist Workingmen's State in the world. Comrade Stalin's death is a loss not only to the Soviet people but to the whole world. Comrade Stalin took great interest in the well-being of the Indian workers. The great demonstration of friendship and sorrow that all Indian people showed on hearing the news is a proof that our people feel for the Soviet people and their successes in building Socialism in their country and defending peace in the world.

Calcutta,
August 17, 1953.

S. A. DANGE,
General Secretary.

RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED AT THE MEETING OF WORKING COMMITTEE OF THE AITUC

1. TRIBUTES TO STALIN

This meeting of the Working Committee of AITUC expresses its profound grief at the sad demise of Com. Stalin, the leader and teacher of the working class, the leader of the first socialist state in the world and the inspirer of all peace-loving mankind. After Lenin, Stalin was the chief architect of the victories of the Soviet working people who, inspired and guided by him, long ago abolished unemployment from their country, raised the living and cultural standards of all people and built a strong socialist democracy that crushed all imperialist invaders and restored peace to mankind. This meeting, while saluting the sacred memory of Comrade Stalin, sends out fraternal, heartfelt and deep sympathies of the Indian working class to the Soviet working people in their grievous loss and expresses firm confidence that they will achieve their cherished goal, with their path emblazoned by the teachings of Comrade Stalin. This meeting finally assures the Soviet people, that the Indian working class stands by them in their common struggle for the final victory of Peace, Democracy, Freedom and Socialism in the world.

2. ON COM. S. V. DESHPANDE

This meeting of the Working Committee of AITUC is deeply grieved at the death of Com. S. V. Deshpande at Bombay on May 25th 1953, after a period of prolonged illness. Com. S. V. Deshpande was one of the builders of our Trade Union movement. After the arrests of prominent Trade Union leaders in March 1929, in connection with the Meerut Conspiracy Case, he had to shoulder heavy responsibilities in those critical days of the Indian T. U. movement, when he was elected the General Secretary of the AITUC at the Nagpur Session in 1929. He devoted his energies to the education of the working class by progressive journalism, translation of classical works on socialism and conducting study classes. His death has removed a good educator of the working class from our ranks. This meeting while paying its homage to the outstanding services of Com. S. V. Deshpande to the working class sends its heartfelt condolences to the members of his family.

3. ON COM. SHANTA MUKHERJEE

This meeting of the Working Committee of AITUC expresses its profound sorrow at the untimely death of Com. Shanta Mukherjee, Vice-president of AITUC, at Vienna, on August 12, 1953. This meeting gratefully remembers the services which Com. Shanta Mukherjee rendered to the Indian working class. She had worked as the Editor of "Trade Union Record", the organ of AITUC, had represented AITUC on the State Insurance Corporation as well as in the International Conference of Social Insurance and Social Security. The devotion, energy and attention

which she brought to bear on any task entrusted to her, has always been an asset to the AITUC. This meeting, while deeply mourning the death of Com. Shanta Mukherjee, sends its heartfelt sympathy to her husband Com. Bankim Mukherjee, and other members of her family in the bereavement they have sustained by her death.

4. RESOLUTION ON POLICE FIRINGS

This meeting of the Working Committee of the AITUC salutes with pride and sorrow those working class leaders who fell victims to the brutal firings resorted to by the Government with a view to forcing into submission the workers, who were conducting peaceful struggles for the improvement of their working and living conditions, at various towns and places, such as Calcutta, Jabalpur, Burnpur, Madras, Sirpur, etc.

While expressing its indignation against such inhuman violence against the working people, this meeting demands that proper and adequate compensation be given to the injured and families of the deceased besides taking action against those who are responsible for such firings.

This meeting expresses its profound sympathy with the bereaved families of those who have been shot dead.

5. THIRD WORLD TRADE UNION CONGRESS

This meeting of the Working Committee of AITUC heartily endorses the Appeal of the WFTU for the Third World Trade Union Congress, a great unity congress of the workers of all countries. It congratulates the various trade unions whether affiliated or not to WFTU and the workers throughout the Indian Union for responding to the call of AITUC to hold WFTU Week from 3rd to 10 August 1953 for popularising WFTU principles, methods, programme and aims. It feels confident that the preparations started by various trade unions and State TU Committees for the World Congress will be fully carried out with same vigour and enthusiasm.

The WFTU Appeal has called upon us all to fight for raising the living standards of the workers, against unemployment, for improving and extending Social Security, for defending the trade union rights and democratic liberties and above all to fight for Freedom and Peace. It has repeatedly emphasised that Unity of Action, local, national and international, is an essential condition for victory. This meeting therefore calls upon all trade unions irrespective of whether they belong to INTUC, AITUC, HMS, or UTUC, and the workers of all trends, opinions and faiths to unite in their fight for common economic and social demands, and participate enthusiastically in preparations for the Third World Trade Union Congress by electing and sending delegates and observers to it. This meeting finally calls upon its affiliated trade unions to popularise the idea of unity of action, ensure the participation of all the workers and their organisations, irrespective of their affiliation and make the Third World Trade Union Congress a great unity Congress of all workers in all countries.

6. ON BURNPUR

This meeting of the Working Committee of the All-India Trade Union Congress strongly condemns the unwarranted police firing and bayonet charge on the workers of Burnpur, which resulted in the death of at least eight persons including a boy of eleven and serious injuries to several persons and demands that a public inquiry should be held regarding this matter and due compensation paid to the family members of the deceased persons and to the injured.

The Working Committee is of the opinion that the demands viz.

- (1) Public inquiry regarding the firing and due compensation;
- (2) Withdrawal of cases against all;
- (3) Reinstatement of all the discharged workers;
- (4) Withdrawal of section 144;
- (5) Election of the union on the basis of voting right to all;
- (6) Hot Bonus, Revision of Bonus Scheme and Shift work etc.,

made by the workers of Burnpur are just and legitimate.

The Working Committee greets the workers of Burnpur for the heroic struggle they are conducting with unprecedented unity and exemplary courage and tenacity.

The Working Committee conveys its wholehearted support to the struggle of the Burnpur workers and assures them that it will exert its utmost to rally the working class of our country behind the demands of the Burnpur workers and authorises the Secretariat of the A.I.T.U.C. to take suitable measures to implement this.

7. ON RETRENCHMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT

The Working Committee of the AITUC declares its solidarity with the vast millions of the unemployed workers, belonging to all industries, trades and professions, with the millions of landless trekking to the towns in search of work and bread.

Every political party including that of the Government recognises the existence of this unemployment and slow starvation of millions of men and women, who are ready to work to win bread but are nowhere provided for, either with work or bread.

The economic policies pursued by the Congress Governments both at the Centre and the Provinces, the policies of landlords and profiteers, are the main cause of the growing unemployment. While there is no doubt that so long as landlordism and capitalism exists, there is bound to be unemployment, the aggravation of the misery of these millions and the present high level of unemployment is the result of the present policies of the ruling circles of landlords and big business, who refuse to mitigate even the worst inhuman features of their system.

The Government as one of the biggest employers has itself taken the lead in causing unemployment through retrenchment in its own factories and establishments. By encouraging through its labour department importation of "producti-

vity experts" of the ILO, it helps private profiteers to introduce retrenchment and increase of work loads. By allowing imports of foreign goods to compete with Indian manufactures, it has helped the closure of several factories, mainly medium and small. Governmental circles of big officers, experts and even certain ministers take active part in putting state power and resources at the disposal of their own pet circles of foreign and Indian monopolists to the detriment of genuine manufacturers and thus ruin many producing units and cause unemployment.

The wordy solicitude shown by the Government and big business for the unemployed, their schemes of revising the Five Year Plan or giving so-called aid to small and cottage industries are no solution of the problem, nor render any relief to the unemployed millions. They only go to enrich a few, who worm themselves into the ruling apparatus, at the cost of the people.

Hence the AITUC holds that nothing but the united action of the working-class and the peasantry to oppose unemployment, to demand relief and to enforce the measures outlined in its platform given below will lead to the immediate mitigation of existing misery of the unemployed workers, peasants and middle-classes.

The AITUC demands immediate relief in cash and free rations to the unemployed. To guard the future of the present employed workers, it demands social security, including unemployment insurance, at State and employers' cost. The present Provident Fund Act cannot take the place of full unemployment insurance and social security.

The AITUC calls upon all the employed and unemployed to forge a solid united front and to take positive and effective action through their unions, conferences and committees to realise the seven point programme put forth on the Anti-Unemployment Day of 15th August.

[Note 1: In the clause of 8 hour day in the seven point programme the Working Committee decided to demand forty four hour week].

Appendix A

Resolution of the UTUC General Council

(Adopted on August 17, 1953 and communicated to the AITUC in the joint meeting on 18th.)

After a careful consideration of all the facts and the difficulties in the way of an immediate merger and in the background of high hopes that have been raised for Trade Union Unity by the recent united movement all over the country and in view of the earnest desire for Trade Union Unity expressed by all the members in the interest of the working class and to smooth the way to a merger of as many central organisations as possible on the

... broadest basis, this meeting of the General Council resolves that an earnest effort be made to have a Joint Committee consisting of representatives of three central organisations of labour, viz., AITUC, HMS, and UTUC in order to organise joint actions on all important issues all over the country and to co-ordinate the activities of all the three organisations on a common front in general.

2. If the HMS agrees to participate in the formation of this joint committee, the general secretary is authorised to take immediate steps for its formation.

3. If the HMS does not agree to set up a joint committee, the UTUC 'Joint Action Committee' comprising of Sri Mrinal Kanti Bose, Sri Sudhin Pramanik, Sri Jat n Chakrabarty, Sri Biswanath Dubey and Sri Khemesh Chatterjee is authorised to organise united action with either HMS or AITUC or both as they think fit, on the basis of majority decision on working class issues.

Appendix B

UNEMPLOYMENT IN PARLIAMENT—GOVERNMENT REFUSES RELIEF

A resolution on unemployment was moved in the House of People on 22nd August 1953 by A. K. Gopalan, leader of the Communist Party in the House. The resolution read:

"The House is of the opinion that immediate steps should be taken to arrest the growth of unemployment in the country and to provide relief for the unemployed."

In his speech Com. Gopalan put forward the demands of the AITUC in the matter of relief.

The Finance Minister, Mr. C. D. Deshmukh moved the following alternative resolution. It says:

"This House is greatly concerned over the growing unemployment in the country and is of the opinion that with a view to increasing employment opportunities in the country Government should take steps to revise the Five Year Plan suitably and to adopt immediately such measures as are necessary for the purpose."

This Government resolution obviously refuses to consider the question of relief to the unemployed.

It is necessary to record here some of the opinions expressed by the leaders of the Government on this question.

VIEWS OF PREMIER NEHRU

At the Congress Party meeting, Nehru said:

"We should plan to give work rather than doles. I do not believe in giving doles to the unemployed; it is entirely a wrong policy."

"Our people should be given productive work. We must produce our own goods even at a higher price rather than import them from outside."

Economic Review — AICC, September 1953.

VIEWS OF THE FINANCE MINISTER, MR. DESHMUKH

Expressed in the Parliament on September 22, 1953.

"Any proper assessment of the magnitude and character of the problem was handicapped by lack of adequate data."

"The aggravation of the unemployment situation with which they were now concerned was mainly an urban phenomenon."

"It did not appear that aggregate employment in organised industries had gone down though it should be conceded that in some industries and some units of certain industries difficulties had been and were being experienced, but in trade and ancillary services, employment opportunities appeared to have declined."

"The real problem of the country was their inability to utilise their resources to an optimum extent."

"Banning of imports by itself would not also lead to an increase in domestic output, but in some cases might merely create monopoly profits for the favoured producer."

"Talk of confiscation of British capital and its transfer to Indian hands would not, by any means, increase employment. India was lacking in capital resources and they had to attract outside capital. Talk of confiscation was certainly not a method of attracting outside capital."

Replying to the questions posed by Mr. Muzumdar, the Finance Minister gave a categorical "no" to the demand for setting apart Rs. 50]- crores for unemployment relief. He also negated the suggestion for compulsory re-investment within the country of profits by British capital. As regards stopping retrenchment by an ordinance, Mr. Deshmukh said: "My answer is no, subject to what I am going to say."

The remedies suggested, he continued, would only aggravate the problems of unemployment and not relieve the situation. The remedies were all unproductive and likely to be looked upon as political.

"In the short run it was difficult in an under-developed economy to increase the supply of consumer goods and this necessarily limited any advance towards full employment."

In short, all it means is—no relief, no production, no work, no hope, so far as the benign Government is concerned. That is what the debate revealed.

[Note 2: WHY 50 CRORES ONLY? In answer to the query, why the AITUC put the demand for relief at Rs. 50 crores, it is stated as follows:

The number of the urban and semi-urban unemployed is taken roughly at two million (twenty lacs). Giving them a pound of rations and eight annas a day would cost not more than Rs. 50 crores per year.]