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14th Session of the West Bengal State Committee,
All India Trade Union Congress.

REPORT OF THE
GENERAL SECRETARY

— Com. Indrajit Gupta —

CALCUTTA
Dec. 2nd, 3rd and 4th, 1960.

For Delegates only.

General Secretary's Report

Comrades,

Three years have elapsed since the last Conference of the BPTUC. During this period, the trade union movement in West Bengal has witnessed innumerable struggles and mass actions of various types and on various issues, unit-wise, industry-wise, and also on a state-wide basis. The BPTUC has naturally been involved in all these activities and movements, either as a central organisation or through its affiliated units directly concerned in each case. Consequently, the BPTUC Conference is a fitting occasion on which to make some assessment of the experience we have acquired during this period.

It is not possible to go into a detailed account of the individual struggles themselves. What is necessary and practicable, however, is to focus attention on the **main features** which should be accepted as our common and generalised experience, from which proper lessons can be drawn for better future guidance of the movement in all its aspects.

While taking note of whatever advances and gains the movement has registered, it should be the special concern of our trade union leadership to pin-point the principal weaknesses, failures and continuing defects without combating which no further substantial progress can be made.

Cost of Living & Employment Position :

The basic economic factors determining the day to day activity of the working class in its struggle against capital are the effect of prices upon its living standards and of capitalist production methods upon its level and security of employment.

From this point of view the position as prevailing in our State during the last 3 years may briefly be noted :

The available cost of living Index figures prepared by the Government and converted to the base of 1939—100, show the following results :

Year	Calcutta	Jagatdal	Howrah.
1957	368	393	364
1958	387	426	376
1959	387	—	—
1960	400		

(First 9 months)

From this it is clear that the working class cost of living has been moving from year to year on an upward rising curve and this tendency is likely to continue. Hence, in West Bengal particularly, where lakhs of workers in organised industries do not yet enjoy even the

limited protection of sliding-scale system of Dearness Allowance automatically linked to changes in the pricelevel, there is bound to be constant pressure upon the workers' real wages and a grim struggle to safeguard even their existing living standards from further deterioration.

As for the employment position, the dominant feature is continued stagnation. Average employment in registered factories in West Bengal during this period was as follows :-

Year	Employment
1958	6,70,993
1959	6,70,013
1960	
(First half)	6,67,300

With a vast and growing army of unemployed, including the influx of jobseekers from outside West Bengal, the industrial capacity of the State to absorb more workers is not developing at all. Even in the public sector, according to official figures, while the increase in employment during the period 1956-58 was 5.9% per year on an average, in 1959 it came down to not more than 2%.

It must be remembered that during this period a number of new factories have been coming up, particularly in the Durgapur area. Also, employment potential in the engineering industry is, on the whole, expanding. Despite this, when we find the total volume of employment remaining stagnant in the state it means that the pockets of growth are being neutralised by the simultaneous **shrinkage** of employment in other sectors.

This shrinkage is the result of various forms of retrenchment and rationalisation which are being carried out extensively and planfully by practically all employers. The Jute industry is the worst affected in this respect no doubt, but the pressure is being felt more and more in other factory industries also, as well as in the tea plantations, commercial and transport undertakings, and various Government establishments.

In the name of "productivity" and "economy" drives, a vast operation is being carried out to-day through such measures as introduction of modern equipment, reduction in complements through so-called "natural wastage", increased workload, refusal to fill up permanent vacancies and straightforward retrenchment.

In factory industries where women workers have generally been employed in substantial numbers, they are being retrenched on a large scale and on various pretexts. For example, about 20,000 women have been sacked from the coal mines after the publication of Colliery Tribunal's Award. In Jute mills, the number of women employed came down from 22,375 in 1955 to 11, 281 in 1958. Total number of women employed in all factories in West Bengal has declined by over 25,000 since independence.

All this not only aggravates the unemployment position. It creates and maintains a huge, standing army of unemployed persons which itself acts as a drag upon the organised movement of the employed workers and prevents their wage-levels and working conditions from being improved.

Government & Employers' policies :

During the period under review, the reactionary labour policies pursued by the State Government and the employers have continued to be complementary to each other. In the major industries of Jute, Cotton Textiles, Plantations, & Coal Mines, as well as in several big units of the Engineering, Steel and Public Utility sectors, the employers have been persisting in their usual game of violating tripartite agreements, awards and statutory provisions with impunity. They have reduced the Code of Discipline to a dead letter. In order to increase their profits from year to year, they refuse to part with the workers' legitimate share in the form of Bonuses or wage increase. Rationalisation and retrenchment have already been referred to.

Another growing feature is the employers' attack on Trade Union rights, carried out often with the connivance of local police officials. The right of peaceful picketing during strikes has virtually disappeared. Engineering of clashes between peaceful picketers and violent strike-breakers, assaults by employers' hired goondas on peaceful meetings and demonstrations and on trade union leaders & workers, followed by large-scale repression by the police against the union and workers led by it, is becoming a dangerously alarming occurrence. We have seen blatant instances of it in the Ranigunj coal belt, Sen-Raleigh factory, Kesoram Cotton Mill, and during such strikes as in Orient Fan, Bengal Enamel, Banga Luxmi Cotton and many others. Repeated representations to the Government at Ministerial level have failed to produce any salutary effect. Lawless, gangster elements are being encouraged to acts of greater violence by the collusion of the police with certain employers.

All this has to be seen in the background of the State Government's recent attempts to introduce legislation prohibiting meetings and processions in Calcutta and Howrah.

In this connection a major problem is that facing the lakhs of workers and employees in the State sector, which is slowly but surely expanding in West Bengal. Here, even a shadow does not exist of those trade union rights which are still enjoyed by workers in the private sector. The Government's service conduct rules represent a total suppression of the elementary rights of organisation, assembly, demonstration and strike which are guaranteed to others by law and by Constitution. Various security regulations and police measures are invoked to terrorise the State sector workers and to convert their work places and residential colonies into so-called "protected" areas. The recent disciplinary measures taken by the state Government against its employees for participation in peaceful processions and the repression unleashed against the Central Government employees, strike, have nakedly revealed the butchery of trade union and democratic rights in this sector.

As far as machinery for settlement of disputes is concerned, the position remains broadly the same as before. A weak and ineffective Labour Directorate, with a pronounced pro-employer bias, has failed completely to act timely and boldly for redress of the workers' grievances. Conciliation proceedings generally lead to no result. Even the Government admits, for example, that out of 7,470 disputes referred to it during 1959, only 5,419 could be disposed of and out of these only 32% were settled through the conciliation machinery and

13% were referred to adjudication. This means that nearly 5,000 pending cases remained unsettled in one year.

Refusal or delay to appoint Tribunals where demanded by the workers, and arbitrary selection of the issues to be referred, continue to be the main grievance of unions. The Government's policy, in its own words, is "to refer to Industrial Tribunals and Labour Courts only those disputes which are based on genuine grievances". Obviously this vague formula leaves ample scope for the Labour Department and its officers to exercise their discretion in a partisan and mischievous manner.

In the matter of non-observance and non-implementation of existing labour laws by the employers and Government's failure to take action against them, the position seems to be worsening. A glaring example of this is the mal administration of the Provident Fund Scheme & Employees State Insurance scheme. Workers are being put to endless trouble to get payment of their dues employers regularly fail to deposit with the Government the amounts due as statutory contributions; and huge sums of P. F. deposits are frequently being mis-appropriated and mishandled and there is no remedy except prolonged litigation.

A major factor which facilitates violation of labour laws and standing orders by the employers is the maintenance of a huge army of badli, casual and temporary workers in various industries. Their number is steadily growing as permanent workers are being replaced by them in the name of rationalisation, "economy", etc. These non-permanent workers have no security of employment, are liable to discharge and retrenchment at any time, enjoy practically no legal rights, and are subjected to the worst forms of exploitation. They act as a brake upon the movement and living standards of the permanent workers themselves.

In two respects, the State Government made deliberate modifications of existing rules in an openly reactionary and pro-employer direction. New "Model Standing Orders" were published on 28. 1. 60 making the existing Standing Orders much worse and extending the discretionary rights of the management to take disciplinary action on charges of so-called "mis-conduct" whose definition has been made wider than it was hitherto.

Secondly, new rules have been framed for procedure and formation of Works Committees. These, too, give new powers to the employers to control and supervise elections in a manner which would enable them to interfere in the elections, influence the results, and even victimise members of Unions not to their liking. Despite representations on behalf of BPTUC, the Labour Department has refused to reconsider these rules on the plea that they are in accordance with the rules framed by the Central Government.

Workers in Action :

The background briefly narrated above explains why "industrial peace" has become impossible to achieve and why the annual average of man-days lost in West Bengal is consistently higher than that of any other State in India. Our working class, if it is to survive against the combined onslaught of high prices, unemployment, rationalisation, and suppression of TU rights, is left with no alternative but to fight in defence of its living standards and its past gains as well as for new advances.

According to Government figures, the trend of struggles was as follows :

Year	No. of Stoppages	Men Involved	Man-days Lost
1957	221	1,06,471	9,98,820
1958	242	2,01,713	20,96,668
1959	318	1,35,654	14,93,698

It has to be remembered that these official figures do not take into account general strikes. In 1959, for example, there were 4 occasions when one-day, token general strikes took place : by nearly 10,000 Municipal workers on 20.3.59, by 200,000 Jute workers on 14.12.59 and twice (June and September) by workers and employees throughout the State on the Food issue. If the man-days lost in all these actions are calculated and added to official figures, 1959 would show a further rise in the curve over 1958 instead of a fall.

It is not possible within the scope of this report to discuss details regarding particular strikes or even to mention all of them. By and large we can say that practically all the major industries have been affected at one time or another during this 3 year period—plantations, jute, cotton textile, engineering, mines—and there have also been a large number of struggles, strikes and lock-outs, in small-scale industries and small units whose workers do not enjoy even the standardised conditions prevailing to some extent in the bigger and organised sectors.

A number of extremely prolonged and bitter strikes lasting from between 1 to 4 or 5 months, took place in which workers showed marvels of tenacity, unity, and capacity for self-sacrifice. Out-standing instances were the Tram, Bengal Chemical, Orient Fan, Presidency Jute Mill, Dunbar, M. M. C., Bengal Luxmi, J. K. Steel, & Bengal Enamel struggles.

A noteworthy struggle of an unusual type was the prolonged stay-in-strike by the India Fan factory workers when the Company wanted to close down the concern indefinitely due to financial mismanagement. But the workers virtually occupied the factory for several weeks & ultimately succeeded in getting the Central Government to take it over and resume production with all the workers.

Another feature of this period has been the growing trend towards mobilisation and action on an industry-wide basis instead of on a purely factory basis. This trend is still at a nascent stage and is more the product of objective pressure affecting all workers (in the shape of industry-wide Wage Boards' awards or recommendations of various tripartite committees or omnibus Tribunals) than of conscious planning and endeavour by us. Nevertheless, the great significance of the successful token general strike actions in the plantations, jute and cotton textile industries for wage increase, appointment of a Wage Board, and implementation of Wage Boards' Award, respectively, must not be overlooked.

Yet another positive development has been in the field of united action between the BPTUC and other central organisations and federations. The most important achievement in this field was that of the Tramwaymen who were able to unite 4 unions, including one of the INTUC, into a joint action committee which led their strike from first to last. The general strikes in jute, cotton, and tea could not have been 100% complete, as they were, had

it not been for the mobilisation of support by all the unions working in these industries, irrespective of affiliation.

Certainly, as far as our success in drawing even the INTUC unions into these joint industrial actions is concerned, this seem to be a feature peculiar to West Bengal, the only reported exception being in the case of the recent general strike of cashew-nut workers in Kerala.

On a more limited scale, and with a lesser degree of success, we may take note of the unity achieved in the Bauria Cotton Mill strike (eventually betrayed after 6 weeks by the Congress elements in the joint committee), and the strike in small engineering units of Central Howrah led jointly by BPTUC and UTUC unions.

Apart from these actions in specific sectors, another form of united movement through the mechanism of broad-based, coordination committees comprising the BPTUC, HMS (once), UTUC, and a number of independent trade federations of middle-class employees, on general issues has become a more or less traditional pattern in West Bengal. In this period, too, the main examples of such action have been the two token general strikes in 1959 on the Food issue, and the campaign in support of the Central Government employees' strike in 1960 culminating in the solidarity token strike of July 14th, called by the T.U. Relations Committee. Even after the strike, this Committee carried on for a time and organised protest demonstrations against the repression and victimisation of the strikers.

Gains of the Struggles :

Concrete gains in the shape of higher wages and better conditions can naturally be won only from employers of particular concerns or industries. As far as general issues affecting the whole working class are concerned, it becomes necessary to influence Government policies.

Workers in a number of the smaller industrial concerns have won concessions for themselves during this period, though it is not possible to give a complete report of these. This has been particularly so in the case of the engineering units employing 250 workers or less which fell outside the scope of the omnibus Tribunal; here, in many cases, workers have fought for and made some concrete gains in the direction of closer approximation to the main Award.

Workers of rice mills, oil mills, dal mills, flour mills, Bidi industry, cigarette factories, public motor transport, municipalities, leather and tanneries, bone-mills, lac industry, agricultural operations, stone-breaking & stone crushing, and cinema industry have succeeded in getting their minimum wages either revised or newly fixed under the Minimum Wages Act, 1948. Now the struggle in most cases is to secure effective implementation of the prescribed rates.

Among workers of the bigger-scale and more organised industries who recorded some concrete gains during this period mention must be made of the Calcutta tramway men who secured a basic wage increase of 5% and a retiring gratuity system of 15 days salary for each year of service; Cotton textile workers who got one wage increase through the 1958 Tribunal Award, and another of Rs.6/-p.m. through the Wage Board in 1960; Engineering workers

whose Tribunal award of 1958 brought them a small basic wage increase, a rise of Rs 8/- p. m. in D.A., and recognition of the very important principle of linking D. A. with cost of living; Burnpur & Kulti steel workers who got a Rs. 10/- p.m. increase in D.A. in 1958; and Tea plantation workers of Darjeeling, Dooars & Terai for whom new rates of minimum wages were fixed in 1959, giving increases from 8 to 12 np. per day. A bipartite agreement on Bonus for West Bengal tea gardens was also reached on 26.11.59.

The 2 lakh Jute workers, while still denied any increase in emoluments since 1955, succeeded in securing the appointment of a Wage Board in August this year. This gives them the opportunity of obtaining, as a first step, some cash interim relief within 2 months of the Board commencing its work.

Apart from these instances, there is another sector,—that of BPTUC-led unions formally recognised by their employers whose workers have been able to get considerable concessions in this period through negotiated collective, long-term agreements covering issues such as minimum wages, pay-scales and grades, bonus, leave facilities, grievance procedure, gratuity, production norms etc. Mention may be made in this connection of the agreements arrived at in Jay Engineering, GEC, Indoxco, Hindusthan Pilkington, Saxby & Farmer, Sen Raleigh, Bata (renewal of agreement), Ranigunj Ceramics, Gramophone Co, National Rubber and others.

As far as general questions of overall labour policy and legislation are concerned, there have been practically no gains to the credit of our trade union movement. In April, 1960, however, the West Bengal Maternity Benefit (Tea Establishments) Amendment Act was passed, giving female plantation workers an enhanced rate of Rs. 7/- per week as maternity benefit in place of the existing Rs. 5/4 -per week. The credit for this is due in no small measure to the BPTUC representative who raised the matter in the State Assembly and pressed for its acceptance.

In July, 1960, under joint trade union pressure, the State Government formally announced its "final decision" to have separate hospitals under the Employees' State Insurance Act for the insured workers, and postponed its earlier announced date for extension of the Scheme to 24 Parganas and Hooghly districts. Despite this, however, no concrete steps seem to have been taken for actual construction of the promised hospitals.

As against these advances, it must be remembered that small wage-increases or other forms of higher cash emoluments gained here and there are very soon reduced to nothing by the constantly rising cost of living. A more stable form of relief for the workers would have been a sliding-scale system of D.A., but it is a peculiarity of West Bengal that in the overwhelming majority of organised industries no such system exists as yet.

Also, while monetary gains have been recorded in several instances, it has been at a terrible price. The other side of the picture is the unrelenting pressure of threatened or actual closures, total or partial, lay-off, retrenchment and rationalisation, closing of shifts and looms, intensification of work load, etc.

In the field of Organisation ;

The only positive organisational result in this period continues to be the overall leading position of the BPTUC, in terms of membership, influence and prestige, as compared with

other central organisations in this State. This position has been maintained despite all efforts of the Government machinery to boost up the INTUC, inflate its membership, and give it undue representation on several of the tripartite committees and bodies. Our unions are undoubtedly the leading force in Engineering, Steel, Textiles, Jute, Plantations, Tramways, etc. In coal mines our position has been steadily improving. The majority of active unions in the mofussil districts (motor transport, bidi, rickshaw, municipal etc) are organised by us. The most serious lag so far has been on Calcutta's huge and vitally important water-front. It is to be hoped that the newly organised Calcutta Port & Dock Workers' Union soon will be duly affiliated to the AITUC, thus giving us a base in this sector also.

In the two years (1957-58 & 1958-59) that the new procedure of verification of trade union membership by the Labour Ministry has been introduced, drastic reductions were effected by the official verifying machinery in our claimed membership, viz.

Year	No. of BPTUC Unions & Membership claimed	No. of BPTUC Unions & Membership verified
1957-58	240/2,42,346	182/1,58,863
1958-59	216/2,38,955	155/1,45,002
1959-60	308/2,52,048	.....

Main lessons and Problems :

It is necessary now to attempt a generalisation of our experience, particularly with a view to pin-pointing the main weaknesses and defects revealed in our trade union outlook and organisation.

Facts and figures, and also our common experience, show that the main malady from which the trade union movement is suffering in West Bengal is **not** that there are not enough struggles by the working class. There may be particular unions or areas which are bogged in a sort of mass inactivity due to special factors. But taking the State as a whole, one cannot complain of a lack of strike struggles or of militancy among workers. On the contrary, labour in West Bengal has earned a reputation for being much more militant and restive than in other States. Nevertheless, all trade unionists feel dissatisfied with the results and admit that we are failing to advance as we should or to cope with the requirements of the situation.

The problem is, therefore, not one of simply launching or conducting strike struggles. Workers' discontent is growing all the time, and struggles are bound to take place. It is one of **outlook and organisation**, of how to prepare, unite and lead the workers in a new way, how to develop further their class consciousness, how to give the struggles a broader sweep, centralised direction, a more determined character, and how to tackle the increasing and intricate volume of day to day organisational tasks. It is precisely in these aspects that our failures are most glaring. Some manifestations are :—

(i) Localism & economism :

Our work is getting more and more bogged in purely day to day partial movements and localism. An outlook has developed which keeps individual unions isolated from each-

other, even within the same industry; from an appreciation of problems and issues of a general character affecting the whole working class; and from the central organisations like industrial federations and the BPTUC itself.

When we accuse ourselves of "economism", this does not mean it is wrong to base our T.U. movement on day to day economic grievances & demand. What is meant is that the level of the movement does not rise above local and factory issues, does not concern itself with the problems of the working class as a whole as against the policy of the Government and employees, and ignores political issues of general democratic character.

The results of this narrow outlook are to be seen in many ways. The majority of BPTUC unions can no longer be mobilised to participate in centralised campaigns on general issues. This has been proved repeatedly; for example, in the 1958 mass signature campaign for T.U. recognition Bill; in the E.S.I. campaign also in 1958, in the signature campaign attempted recently by the T. U. Relations Committee against victimisation of Central Government employees; in the attempts to observe certain "days" or "weeks" on specific issues, including violation of tripartite agreements by the Government and employers, and even the annual observance of AITUC Foundation Day. The poor response to all these shows that the majority of unions have become indifferent to the need for such centralised action, and demonstrations.

An even more disastrous consequence of this outlook is its effect on solidarity movements. Workers of one factory or area are not mobilised to extend active support to workers of another factory or area who are engaged in bitter strike struggles or are facing repression and victimisation. This occurs even within one and the same industry, e.g. engineering, jute, etc. Failure to organise solidarity actions often leads to the defeat, in isolation, of individual struggles. It paralyses the working class in the face of more and more concerted and planned attacks by the employers.

The overwhelming majority of strikes conducted have had to depend entirely on the strength and resources of the local union concerned. Appeals for moral and material support generally go unheeded by other unions.

Yet another consequence of this outlook is the obstacle it creates in the way of developing industry-wide movement. Such a movement depends upon unity of outlook of the various individual units (unions) in a particular industry. If most or many of them refuse to give priority to all-industry problems and movement and remain sunk in purely local matters, they act as a drag on the whole movement and pull it down to a lower level.

(ii) **Legalistic methods : "Spontaneous" struggles :**

There is an increasing tendency towards stereotyped legalistic methods of day to day work in place of the mass forms which were prevalent some years ago.

This is not to say that the unions should ignore or neglect the legal opportunities open to them under various labour legislations, tripartite agreements, etc. But these should not become an obsession or a fetish, to the exclusion of everything else. Overdependence on conciliation, deputations, correspondence, tribunals, etc. has often gone so far that day to mass activity is practically ruled out. Now-a-days patient base work, bustee contacts,

gate meetings, group discussions with leading militants, formation of department committees, etc. are frequently neglected. Contact with working class life and problems thus becomes superficial.

Legalistic practices combined with "militant" agitation in mass meeting produces an unfortunate result—struggles and strikes break out spontaneously and take us by surprise. This is inevitable in conditions of deepening discontent among the workers. If our own contact with the masses is weak and our leaders are engrossed in "constitutional" forms of day to day activity the workers will act on their own, without leadership, according to their spontaneous reactions.

We must take serious note of the fact that a large number of struggles and stoppages have been arising out of "spontaneous" incidents like sudden "gberaos", lightning strikes, etc. The workers' anger may be perfectly justified and so too their urge to protest against some injustice or oppression, but why should the action be an unorganised and spontaneous one? It shows the union has failed to play its leading and organising role in time. Such spontaneous actions are very difficult to lead to a successful conclusion, and often involve us in prolonged and costly trials of strength.

The number of strikes which were consciously decided upon by the democratic verdict of the workers, adequately prepared for, and launched and led in an organised manner by the union are, unfortunately very few in number.

(iii) No. struggle for T. U. unity :

It is now an accepted axiom of the trade union movement, internationally as well as in every capitalist country, that united action by unions of different affiliations on specific issues is the most effective weapon for advancing the movement. It is also accepted that such unity must be built up, in the main, from below. Obviously, this implied a conscious struggle among the mass of workers between the pro-unity and anti-unity elements.

Are we conducting this struggle ?

Some achievement in bringing about united actions are undoubtedly there and have been referred to earlier. They show that great possibilities exist. But the fact remains that disruption and division are still the dominant feature of the movement. The INTUC and HMS leadership are, as a whole, bent on disruptive and splitting tactics. Although their mass base and organised strength in West Bengal are relatively weak, they are certainly not going to collapse automatically. As far as INTUC is concerned, the Congress party and the Govt. are seriously trying to regroup its forces in a planned manner. Its penetration in the Durgapur-Asansol area, employing a variety of tactics from utilising company patronage for securing jobs to open goondaism, should not be regarded complacently. The hand of the ICFTU is busy behind the scenes trying to forge INTUC-HMS unity against us.

Divisions are further accentuated by the existence of factions within the BPNTUC itself, by the emergence of two "rival" UTUC centres, and by the anti-unity stand of several independent unions.

In such a situation, can it be said that the BPTUC and its unions carry on a systematic and persistent campaign among the workers for arousing their initiative for united action and for isolating and exposing the anti-unity forces? The experiences of the Tram

like, and of the token general strikes in Tea, Jute and Textiles have demonstrated the tremendous, galvanising effect of all-in unity and the power it unleashes. But it must be admitted that many of our unions are still infected with sectarian ideas on this question ; and our attitude and behaviour towards other unions is such that we antagonise their followers instead of establishing links with them. None of us pursue unity tactics seriously or with initiative.

The stronger our organised base, the more effectively we can fight for unity. But the membership of our Unions remains more or less stagnant and lakhs of workers remain outside the BPTUC's fold.

One of the major sources of disruption is the existence of a huge mass of still unorganised workers in practically all the major industries, e.g. Jute, engineering, coal, plantations, water-front, etc. This provides a base for disruptive elements to secure a foothold, even temporarily, and to do serious damage by confusing and diverting the workers. The unorganised worker is a barrier to the unity of the class. Hence, a struggle for TU unity in our State can have no meaning without a serious drive to organise the unorganised workers to our unions. But trade union membership is not only not expanding, it is stagnating and even dwindling. This leaves a wide field open for the harmful activities of the enemies of TU unity.

Another factor adversely affecting working class unity in our state is the growing menace of provincial chauvinism. Apart from the impact of incidents like the recent Assam disturbances (our Unions played a praiseworthy role in maintaining peace in this connection), the question is arising concretely in the form of a share in employment opportunities. Reactionary elements are trying to incite Bengalis and non-Bengalis against each other over this issue. If we want to guard and strengthen the unity of the T. U. movement in West Bengal, we can ignore this problem at our peril. The BPTUC has so far failed to work out and put-forward a stand which would unite all sections of the working class behind a policy of increasing employment opportunities with a fair share for "sons of the soil" as well as others.

iv) Non political outlook in T. U. work :

Another major failing in our activity, it must be admitted, is the non-political and even anti-political attitude of many of our unions. Exclusively engrossed with day to day economic demands and that, too, mainly on a local level, unions have developed a tendency of utter callousness and indifference towards the political tasks enjoined upon by the WFTU and AITUC. Consequently, the level of consciousness of the workers led by us is generally at a very low level.

Workers' mass mobilisation on issues of Peace and War, international solidarity with struggles such as those of the people of Algeria, Japan, Cuba and Congo, anti-imperialist issues, disarmament, etc. is conspicuous by its absence. This is not because the union leadership does not raise them at all. In 1958, there was very poor response to our central (BPTUC) demonstration against the Anglo-US aggression in Lebanon and Jordan. In 1959, trade union participation in the Afro-Asian Solidarity Conference showed some improvement. But, subsequently, despite historic events on the international arena, we are completely inactive in educating and mobilising the workers on such issues.

The impact of bourgeois ideology and bourgeois labour legislations, preaching their concept of "non-political" trade unions, affects the workers and seems to be affecting our TU cadres also. Generally speaking, our unions do not react to any democratic issue affecting the people in general or any particular section, such as peasants etc. Big kisan demonstrations in Calcutta enthuse only a handful of unions for solidarity demonstrations and fraternisation. The only popular issue to which the trade union movement responded actively in this period was that of food last year, but this was after all a matter of direct concern to the working class also.

Even in industrial areas of Asansol, where the problems of the kisans in adjacent villages are interlinked closely with those of the colliery workers, our unions neglect the task of developing the worker-peasant alliance on concrete issues. A good job has been done by some unions, in sending out relief squads to flood-affected rural areas in 1959 and on earlier occasions also.

On questions of the Government's industrial policies, Planning etc. hardly any propaganda work is carried on by us. We have failed from our T.U. platform, either to expose and criticise concretely the effects of Government planning on the state's economy, or to advance any programme and slogans of our own for industrial development, profit control, nationalisation, curbing of foreign capital, etc.

(v) Organisational weaknesses :

(a) The BPTUC as the guiding, coordinating, and organising provincial Centre has failed to discharge its responsibilities. The primary reason for this has been its inability to handle so many complex problems and fronts, due to the failure to develop an effective team of central leaders.

Without adequate team work and proper division of central responsibilities the leading BPTUC organs like the Working Committee and Secretariat become a formal collection of individual leaders from different unions and areas, meeting from time to time for discussions. But the *key* problem—how to guarantee the practical execution of various decisions taken—remains unfulfilled, because there is no one to check up the execution and get the jobs done. Everything depends on the individual functions of the General Secretary and one or two other comrades. Instead of systematic and living contact between the BPTUC centre and the unions, their relationship is one of loose federation, with unions approaching the Centre only when they have some immediate or urgent "problem".

(b) There is a chronic shortage of trade union organisers in relation to the jobs to be done. The movement has physically expanded into new areas and industries, more and more new unions have to be formed under pressure of the workers concerned, day to day routine office works, correspondence, conciliation and adjudication, representation of cases, etc. is becoming more and more detailed and exacting—yet new TU cadres and organisers are not being developed or deputed to cope with these tasks. The burden of work on the existing older cadres has become so heavy that they have either to function superficially, or to neglect a part of their responsibilities altogether. In many cases, their physical and economic problems make it difficult to carry on as whole-timers, especially as the majority of unions

cannot maintain them adequately. Active workers, once thrown out of employment, cannot be utilised and are lost.

(c) The internal functioning of many unions shows development of unhealthy and undemocratic trends. The formal requirements of trade union democracy are sometimes subordinated to anarchic habits, individualism and indiscipline on the part of union leaders and functionaries. There are many lapses in the matter of holding regular executive body meetings and conferences, submitting regular accounts of funds, consulting the workers during negotiations and dealings with employers, carrying out collective decisions taken, etc. All such bureaucratic and irresponsible practices are extremely harmful for the unions' organisation.

(d) A glaring failure of the BPTUC and its unions, in such a situation, has been total neglect of trade union schooling. The root cause lies in lack of seriousness, and inability to fix up priorities for the most urgent jobs and get them done. Even elementary TU education regarding labour legislation, tripartite conventions, (code of Discipline etc.), conditions in various industries etc. has not been organised by us, though we supply lecturers for the Government's Workers' Education Scheme Course! The BPTUC should have taken the initiative in this matter, instead of waiting indefinitely for the AITUC's promised syllabus which is yet to come.

Trade Union training has become particularly essential for Works Committee members and for functionaries of recognised unions which have to follow certain agreed negotiations and grievance procedures. Works Committees are an important link in the structure of factory leadership; if they do not function effectively they can have very harmful effects on the Union. Similarly, if recognition is to be an effective instrument in the union's hands and not become a trap, a core of leadership must be properly trained and equipped. The BPTUC deserves severest criticism for its failure in this respect.

(e) We have generally failed also in developing multiple activities, such as cultural and educational facilities, sports, cooperatives, etc. A few unions pay some attention to this type of work but they are the exception. Such activities are not only necessary for broadening the union's mass appeal and strengthening its organisation: they provide "recreational" facilities, etc. which are being increasingly and planfully provided now-a-days by many employers and by official "Labour Welfare" centres. These become vehicles of bourgeois ideology and divert the workers from their real interests, unless our unions take a positive attitude towards them. This is all the more important at a time when the composition of the industrial working class in many sectors is changing, and the educated middle classes are taking up factory employment, e. g. in engineering and other technical trades.

It is deplorable that neither the BPTUC nor any of its affiliated Unions is able to publish a regular trade union journal. The majority of unions do not even bother to take or read the "Trade Union Record".

(f) The general standard of technical work—keeping of records and registers, prompt payment of dues, etc. is shocking. Union membership remains stagnant year after year.

Many of these weaknesses have been revealed through the Government's verification process. They cannot all be explained away by shortage of cadres ; careless and chaotic methods of work and hand-to-mouth functioning are mainly to blame. It must be remembered that as a result of the recent amendment to the Trade Union Act, all unions will henceforth have to prescribe a minimum membership fee of Rs. 3/- per annum, and their statements of Annual Returns will be regularly checked up by the T. U. Registrar's office. There is no escape from this.

FUTURE TASKS :

The tasks facing the TU movement in West Bengal follow from the review made above. They may be summed up as follows :—

(1) Consciously develop State-wide and industry-wide movements on the basis of general slogans and demands, such as wage increase, safeguards against rationalisation, development of West Bengal's economy and industrialisation in the people's interests especially for increasing employment opportunities, against retrenchment and closures, for defence and extension of TU rights and non-intervention by the police in legitimate trade union activities, etc. Our object should be to prepare, organise and conduct these struggles, as sustained, determined, united and broad based movements.

Special attention must be given to the burning question of adequate D. A. linked to the cost of living on a sliding scale system, at least for all the major and organised industries in the State.

This should be taken up immediately as a central issue for mass mobilisation in the coming months.

(2) Develop working-class consciousness to the need for active solidarity movements to assist those sections which are in the front line of struggle through mass mobilisations, financial relief, representation to Govt., sympathetic strikes and demonstrations etc.

The same applies to the duty of trade unions towards other democratic sections such as peasants, students etc. More systematic and planned use must be made of the parliamentary forum by our trade unions.

(3) Develop regular propaganda work and activity on questions of peace and war, anti-colonialism, international solidarity with struggling peoples of other countries, popularisation of achievements of socialism etc.

Popularise to keep the workers informed of the WFTU's activities.

(4) Strengthen the forces of unity by taking up concrete campaigns on specific issues for bringing about united action between BPTUC and non-BPTUC organisations. United workers fighting for justified demands must be our general line for strike tactics. Guard against unorganised, disunited and spontaneous struggles. Fight sectarian anti-unity trends. Fight provincial chauvinism.

(5) Launch an all-out drive to organise the lakhs of still unorganised workers and to bring about a marked expansion of membership of our unions. All unions should take

quotas for increasing membership. Complete affiliation of all unions which still remain un-affiliated for no good reason, or due to individualist whims of certain leaders.

(6) Pay more detailed attention to the problem of small industries and their workers. Here, as experience shows, it is very difficult to conduct prolonged struggles and impracticable to demand same conditions as in bigger industries. We should concentrate efforts on achieving bipartite settlements wherever possible, while trying to organise scattered units into federation.

(7) Check-up and ensure internal democracy in trade union functioning—regular E.C. meetings and annual conferences—proper accounting. Submission of all important decisions to workers opinion and approval—stop neglect of proper office maintenance, of registers, records etc.

(8) Development of cultural, educational, and similar other many sided activities including publication of TU bulletins, and journals.

(9) BPTUC must itself organise and help its unions to organise trade union classes for training the functionaries and leading workers. This is a key task.

(10) Develop BPTUC into a really effective central organisation capable of coordinating the various movements and ensuring implementation of central decisions. This has to be a two-way traffic—the BPTUC centre must organise a really effective functioning central team of functionaries and give more responsibility to Working Committee members; at the same time, the affiliated unions must give up their present “local” and callous attitude and help to strengthen the BPTUC and popularise it among the workers, actively participate in the central campaign etc., pay up their dues and so on.

(11) Depute more cadres, both wholtime and part-time, for manning the increasing number of unions and complexity of tasks.

(12) Pay more attention to all-round strengthening and development of all central organisations—AITUC, BPTUC and various industrial Federations—make determined effort to raise local, unit-wise struggles (which must, of course, continue) to higher level of centralisation and coordination. Set up zonal councils of the BPTUC where necessary.

Comrades,

Despite all failures and weaknesses the BPTUC occupies the leading place in West Bengal's working class life and enjoys great popularity and confidence because of its loyalty to the cause of the workers' struggles. The working class in West Bengal regards it as the most dependable, consistent champion of united struggle against the reactionary offensive of the monopolists and their Government, and for the defence and improvement of the workers' living standards and T.U. & democratic rights. The workers look to us to organise and lead them still better and better. This is a great responsibility for each and every one of us. We must prove ourselves equal to that responsibility. We must remember that we are part of the great and invincible army of the international proletariat which is marching forward in

all lands to victory. We must prove ourselves a worthy detachment of the AITUC and the great World Federation of Trade Unions. Let us vow to struggle hard to overcome our weaknesses and mistakes and to go forward confidently with renewed vigour and perspective. Great struggles lie ahead. True to the traditions of West Bengal's working class let us prepare to play a glorious part in them.

BPTUC Zindabad !

AITUC Zindabad !

WFTU Zindabad !

Workers' Unity Zindabad !

0961 010 8 21
8 DEC 1960

Bombay: 7th Dec. 1960

Dear Com. Shrivastava,

Your letter dated 25th November. I am sending herewith a note on the E.S.I. Scheme. I could not send it earlier since I was busy with Afro-Asian Solidarity Conference which was held on 3rd and 4th instant. Please excuse me for the delay.

Yours fraternally,

S. Y. Kolhatkar

(S. Y. Kolhatkar)

NOTE ON E.S.I. SCHEME

1. Extension of the Scheme:

At the end of the years 1957-58 the E.S.I. Scheme covered 13.36 lakhs of workers. During the years 1958-59 and 59-60 the scheme was further extended to about 2 lakhs more workers. The total number of workers now covered is 15.446 lakhs. The main industrial centres where the scheme is not extended are - Ahmedabad and Sholapur.

2. Extension to families of insured workers:

During the two and half years the scheme was extended to families of insured workers in various states such as Mysore, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Delhi and some centres in Assam. In the year 1958-59 about 2,26,000 family units were covered under the scheme and during 1959-60, 2,13,400 more family units were covered. The scheme is however, not yet extended to families of insured workers in big centres like Greater Bombay and Calcutta where nearly 40% of the insured workers are concentrated. The Corporation pleads non-availability of medical personnel(?) and higher dispensaries etc., as reasons for this nonextension. At present the families of insured workers get only restricted medical care i.e. outdoor treatment. This is now proposed to be enhanced at full medical care but excluding hospitalisation.

3. Construction of hospitals:

This question has been considered time and again in the Corporation but the ESI authorities continued to point out the lack of co-operation ~~with~~ and interest on the part of the State Govt. and its own inability to undertake construction of hospitals. However, due to the repeated demand made by the Labour representative the Corporation the following programme of construction of hospitals has been undertaken.

- a) 300 beds at Mahatma Gandhi Memorial Hospital at Bombay is under construction and is expected to be completed in 1961;
- b) Another 200 bed hospital at Worli-Bombay will start construction in near future -- the foundation stone has been laid;
- c) Site of another 100 bed hospital at Mulund-Bombay has been selected and estimates are under preparation;
- d) Similarly sites for construction of hospitals at Kanlur, Indore, Bangalore and Madras have been selected and State Govt. sanction has been obtained.

4) Apart from the above, some improvements have been made during these three years in benefits granted to insured workers. These are as follows:

- i. Formerly, T.B. patients were given extended cash medical benefit upto a period of one year at reduced rates. During this period this extended benefit was made applicable to workers suffering from leprosy, mental and other patients suffering from malignant diseases. The benefit has been further improved at half-daily wage for six months and 1/4 daily wage for six months.
- ii. Under the Act and regulation an insured worker is protected against discharge by employer upto a period of six months while he is ~~in~~ ~~medical~~ ~~treatment~~

in the case of T.B. as well as other patients suffering from leprosy, mental or malignant disease;

- iii The corporation has now agreed to provide artificial limbs free of cost to workers who are injured while on duty. Similarly, artificial dentures are also provided to injured workers. The Corporation now supplies spectacles at the cost price to workers who suffer eye injury in the course of work.
 - iv The maternity benefit has been enhanced from June 1958 to full daily wage 6 weeks before confinement and six weeks after. In the past this benefit was paid at half daily rate or As.12. whichever is higher.
 - v. The Corporation has now agreed to pay conveyance charge and/or compensation for loss of wages to insured persons required to appear before medical board, medical referee or at hospital.
 - vi The Corporation now sends cash benefits by money order at its own cost to the address given by the insured worker.
5. The Government of India had appointed a one-man committee consisting of Dr. Mudaliar to study the operation of the scheme and suggest improvements. The Committee has now submitted its report to the Government and the Corporation will consider the same at the next meeting.
 6. The Corporation had appointed another committee to study the various procedures for attending to complaints and payment of cash benefits to workers and suggest improvements to avoid delays. The Committee has now submitted its recommendations which will be discussed at the next meeting of the Corporation.
 7. The next meeting of the Corporation will also consider the question of amendments to the various provisions of E.S.I. Act, 1948 and the regulations thereunder.

MD. - 19. XII. 60.

Dear D,

Thank you for wages proposed by us.

3 The charts have already been sent to you.

3 The note on Tripartite will become too big if we have to incorporate all that you want.

However I am sending copy of 'Sixteenth Tripartite'.

3 Repairs will not present any difficulty for your accommodation with the duplex.

Yours truly

SOCIAL SECURITY

.....

The Indian TU movement has been since quite some time past, demanding a fullfledged social security system, without any contribution from the employees. Except for the Workmen's Compensation Act and ~~like~~ lay-off, closure and retrenchment benefits under the Industrial Disputes Act, such social security^{as} is there is on the basis of payment by workers as well as contribution by employers. Thus so long as the worker~~s~~ pays and is in employment, he can claim sickness, medical and a few other benefits. Even these schemes are full of defects and the AITUC, though welcoming even such meagre provisions as have been enacted, has all along been pointing out the various defects and demanding changes.

The details of each of these measures (ESI, PF, maternity benefits, workmen's compensation, etc.) and their working is familiar to all trade unionists and it is not the purpose of this note to discuss these or to point out in detail their merits, drawbacks and shortcomings. Here we shall focus attention only on developments since the Ernakulam Session of the AITUC.

I. E.S.I. SCHEME

The ESI Scheme now covers 17,13,650 workers in 13 States. The details are as follows:

	<u>No. of workers</u>	<u>Families covered in</u>
1. Andhra Pradesh (10 centres)	... 48,000	9 centres
2. Assam (4 centres)	... 4,150	4 centres
3. Bihar (7 centres)	... 25,000	4 centres
4. Maharashtra (Greater Bombay)	... 590,000	...
5. " (Vidarbha - 3 centres)	... 35,000	...

6. Delhi	... 66,000	Families covered
7. Kerala (9 centres)	... 52,000	...
8. Madhya Pradesh (8 centres)	... 80,000	" in 8 centres
9. Madras (12 centres)	... 180,000	...
10. Mysore (2 x centres)	... 66,000	Families covered
11. Orissa (5 centres)	... 23,000	...
12. Punjab (7 centres)	... 46,000	7 centres
13. Rajasthan (10 centres)	... 30,000	10 centres
14. Uttar Pradesh (15 centres)	... 165,000	15 centres
15. West Bengal	... 300,000	...
.....		
TOTAL	... 17,13,650	4,47,550

Since Ernakulam session, two reports have been presented on the ESI. The first was the Report of the Government of India's Study Group which dealt not only with the ESI but also with PF, Workmen's Compensation Act, etc. The ~~second~~ second is the Report of Shri A.L.Mudaliar, the one-man commission appointed by the Government to report on the working of the ESI Scheme.

The General Council of the AITUC, in its meeting at Bangalore, on January 14-18, 1959, discussed the Report of the Study Group on Social Security and passed the following resolution:

"The AITUC has repeatedly demanded a comprehensive system of social security but the report of the Government of India's Study Group on this subject unfortunately confines its study to the integration of some of the existing schemes.

"Though the recommendations of the Study Group to integrate some of the existing schemes of social security and conversion of the Provident Fund scheme into a pension scheme_x is, in principle, unobjectionable, the ~~workers'~~ workers' ^{bitter} experience of the unsatisfactory working of the

Employees' State Insurance Scheme and lack of response to the suggestions for improvement are bound to evoke spontaneous opposition from them.

"Before any scheme of integrating the existing benefits into a pension scheme is discussed, the Government must first carry out in full, the measures promised under the ESI, viz., giving medical benefits to the families of the insured, realising the full contribution from the employers, building hospitals, etc. Unless this is done, there can be no question of the workers consenting to allow the Government and the employers to play with their provident funds and contributions.

"Hence the AITUC urges upon the Government ~~and~~ to take immediate steps to fulfil these demands and restore confidence among the workers."

The same meeting of the General Council also discussed in detail the working of the ESI and reiterated its criticism and demands namely that "During the last few years, the AITUC, from time to time has repeatedly demanded (a) extension of the scheme to the families; (b) construction of hospitals for insured workers, at the centres; (c) reduction of workers' contribution, and (d) removal of administrative defects."

Since then certain developments have taken place which partially meet these demands and the Mudaliar Report has considered the points raised and made certain recommendations.

The major developments are firstly the extension of the medical benefits to families of the employees in nine States. This, in principle, concedes a longstanding demand of workmen and now the trade unions are continuing to demand that in the case of the remaining workers also, their families should be immediately covered.

The arrangements for the treatment of families are however far from satisfactory and this is true of the Panel areas as well as the Service areas. In the Panel areas, there still is no provision for lady doctors

and, in the absence of this, are to all practical purposes yet outside the purview of the benefits.

The second major development is the decision of the Government~~s~~ concerned and the Corporation to change over from the panel system to the Service system at a number of places. Through the Panel System has its own shortcomings and drawbacks and has therefore aroused considerable discontent among the insured workers, still compared to the service system, it is on the whole better. The AITUC has repeatedly declared itself in favour of the Panel system. At the Madras Session of the Indian Labour Conference, it was agreed that the Government will consult the workers as to which system they wanted in a particular area. In the Punjab, the workers have especially expressed themselves in favour of the panel and both the INTUC and the AITUC has supported this. Still the Government and the Corporation have switched over to Service system at one city and plans are afoot for the rest. The Madras tripartite agreement is sharing the fate of the other tripartite agreements. The answer given by the Punjab Government is typical of the attitudes of all bureaucracy - the agreement provides only for consultation and that has been done. The decision rests with the Government!

The Mudaliar Report has made a scathing criticism of the Panel System and has recommended the setting up of polyclinics, each having panel doctors and at least two service doctors, one of whom should be a lady doctor. This suggestion is worth considering. At the same time, the criticism of the AITUC against the~~s~~ Service System has to be borne in mind that in this system, the insured worker will have no choice of or control over his doctor.

The Mudaliar Report has at the same time expressed itself against extension of the scheme to families so long as suitable improvements have not been made for the treatment of workers themselves. This argument is quite weighty and merits serious thought. However, the legitimate demand of

workers for extension of medical benefits to families should not be held back on the plea of improvements. As a matter of fact, inclusion of families will increase the pressure for rapid improvement of treatment.

The third point to be noted is regarding the provision of hospitals. Though conceded in principle since years, construction of separate hospitals has been long delayed. Now, in a few places like Kanpur, Madras City and Bangalore, separate hospitals have been provided while wards and annexes exist at Delhi, Hyderabad, Nagpur and Coimbatore. ^{on} But/the whole, the demand still remains unfulfilled. Even the number of beds provided under the Scheme is ~~is~~ very inadequate.

The Mudaliar Report has sharply noted this failure and has advocated priority for this work. The trade unions should similarly take it up and demand immediate steps.

The following are the figures regarding the number of beds provided under the Scheme, whether in reserved beds or beds in wards constructed:

TABLE

Sincerely take it up & demand immediate steps.

The following are the figures (as on 31st March 1959) regarding the no. of beds provided under the scheme, whether in removed beds or beds in which constructed :-

States	No. of Beds			Total
	General Beds	Mental Beds	T. B Beds	
1. Andhra	25	7	16	48
2. Assam	1	2	-	3
3. Bihar	15	-	3	18
4. (a) Guwahati Branch	389	-	250	639
(b) Vidya Dham	56	10	30	96
5. Delhi	50	-	30	80
6. Kerala	44	17	22	83
7. Madhya Pradesh	82	11	45	138
8. Madhya	138	23	126	287
9. Mysore	80	-	16	96
10. Punjab	24	-	-	24
11. Rajasthan	7	-	-	7
12. Uttar Pradesh	-	-	-	-
13. West Bengal	200	15	120	335
Grand Total	1116	85	658	1859

~~For further~~

Workers have demanded revision of the scale of contribution by raising the exemption limit, reducing the percentage charge and by making up the actual earning instead of average earning the basis of calculation. The Mudaliar Report has recommended that deduction should be made on monthly averages on the slab system. The arguments advanced are firstly of economy because lesser staff, etc., will be required for calculation and secondly that it will not on the average make much difference in the incidence of deductions.

This suggestion is against the interests of workers because in each slab, unless the rates are revised, the lowest paid will have to pay more and though the average will remain the same, the incidence on the lowest is bound to increase. At present, the workers are contributing far more than the employers towards the cost of the Scheme. For the year ending March 31, 1960, the employers' share of the contributions amounted to Rs.3,18,53,731 while that of the workers was Rs.4,08,04,251. There was a proposal to enhance the rate charged from the employers from $1\frac{1}{4}$ per cent to $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent in implemented areas and from $\frac{3}{4}$ per cent to $1\frac{3}{4}$ per cent in non-implemented areas. However, so far this has not been done. Though there are plenty of funds with the Corporation, yet if the decision about building hospitals is to be seriously and speedily implemented, and if medical and sickness benefits have to be improved, then the enhanced rates must be enforced. At the same time, the genuine demand of the workers about reduction in their share can then be easily met.

A recommendation made by the Mudaliar Report which merits full support of the workers is regarding provision for industrial housing. The Report points out that unless adequate housing facilities, with provision for playgrounds, schools, etc., are provided, health schemes lose much of their benefits. The suggestion is made that permission for new industrial ventures should ~~be~~ not be given unless a satisfactory method of provision for housing for labour is also forthcoming.

PROVIDENT FUND

The Report of the Study Group on Social Security, mentioned earlier, posed the question of merging the ESI and PF together and of substituting PF with pensions. The views of the AITUC on this as expressed by the General Council at its Bangalore Session have been noted above.

Two important developments have taken place in connection with provident fund. The first is the extension of the Act to all factories employing 20 or more workers as against the earlier limit of 50 or more and to all transport undertakings employing 50 or more workers. The TUs have been demanding that the Act should cover all registered factories and all transport undertakings. Thus the extension has practically conceded our demands. The second development is that permission has been given to raise the contributions to 8-1/3 per cent instead of the previous 6-1/4 per cent. But this has been left to the wishes of the employers and employees and thus deprived of much meaning. The TUs must continue to demand that the larger rate of contribution must be made compulsory and not left to the sweet will of the employers.

1002.23

To
The Secretary
Ministry of Defence
Govt. of India
NEW DELHI.

Subject:- DISCIPLINE INDUSTRIALS - 505 ARMY BASE WORKSHOP
MEHTA CANTI-10

Sir,
Most respectfully I beg to submit the following painful facts for your kind consideration.

On 12th Jul 60 when I was coming to the workshop I saw many Police men and Officers at the gate of the workshop and Colonel D.A.MEHTA, Commandant 505 Army Base Workshop, standing along with rival Union leaders/workers.

As soon as Col Mehta saw me he directed the Police officers to arrest me and I was arrested.

This action of Col Mehta pained me very much as I committed no offence. I gave a note of this action of Col Mehta in the office copy of the suspension order while accepting the same on the same day in the police station.

I remained in Jail up to 21st Jul 60 when I was unconditionally and honourably released by the orders of the Chief Commissioner.

On my honourable release from the Jail, I reported for duty on 22 Jul 60 but was not allowed to resume my duty.

On 4th Aug 60 I received a charge sheet served by the Comdt 505 Army Base Workshop alleging that I persuaded the workers not to go to the workshop and raised slogans at the gate of the workshop on 12th Jul 60, *in spite of the fact that the Police had no proof against me and therefore withdrew the case from the Court of law and I was honourably released!*

In reply I informed the Commandant that the charges levelled against me are totally false. I also stated that copies of relevant documents be supplied to me for submitting my defence with particular reference to the specific charge and its support of the defence.

Vide Commandant's letter No PF/18/EST(IND) dated 5 Aug 60 I was asked to report for duty on or before 11th Aug 60, and accordingly when I reported for duty at the gate of the workshop, I was again served with a fresh suspension order.

Vide Comdt's letter No PF/18/EST(IND) dated 16.8.60 I was asked to be present in the Company Commanders office in Military Lines for an oral enquiry on 20th Aug 60.

prepared to

In reply I requested the Commandant that I do not want and have never requested any oral enquiry but I am produce witnesses in my support and therefore this notice of oral enquiry is not understood. I also requested him that I am a civilian industrial worker and therefore my personal hearing in connection with the charges should be in the workshop.

On 20th Aug 60 I applied for some more documents for replying the charge sheet, but the documents have not so far been supplied to me.

As such I appealed to the Brig EME, HQ Westcom SIMLA, about Commandant 505 Army Base Workshop being prejudiced against me as the above incident will prove.

I requested him to instruct the Commandant to supply the documents and proper facilities to hold proper enquiry in accordance with AI 17-5.

Pending this I requested the B.E.M.E to suspend further action by the Commandant against me.

On 23rd August 60 I submitted a list of witnesses which I wish to produce at the time of enquiry and also reminded the Commandant about reply to my request of 19th Aug 60 referred to above.

On 6 Sept 60 I was served with a show cause notice by the Commandant proposing to award me the punishment of dismissal from service.

From the above it is very clear Sir, that my Commandant is prejudiced against me and bent upon punishing me by any means ignoring all the prescribed procedure.

It is most unfortunate that my Commandant who is prejudiced against me and a party in the case is also the Officer or his direct subordinates who have to enquire and to decide the award of the punishment, if any.

It may not be out of place to mention here, Sir, that my Commandant has in previous several occasions tried to harm me. With effect from July 1959 he kept/in confinement during working hours inside the workshop. He is also against me as I being the Secretary of the Mazdoor Panchayat used to be one of the delegates in all the official meetings with the higher authorities and he has been against the officials and workers of the Mazdoor Panchayat, about which correspondence will be available in 505 Army Base Workshop, D.E.M.E., Chief of the Army Staff and the Ministry of Defence. There are several cases in which Col Mehta tried to harm and harrass the active Union officials of the Mazdoor Panchayat. There are instances to prove that I was manhandled by him and he clearly declared that he would never spare any official/active worker of the Mazdoor Panchayat whenever he would get a chance. The case which has now been framed against me has also been done with the same intention.

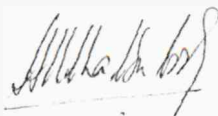
Under these circumstances I have every fear that my Commandant Col Mehta is out to dismiss me from service on any pretext as is evident from the above.

I therefore request you to kindly intervene and order a fair enquiry into my case by impartial Officers.

In conclusion I also like to request you Sir, that Col Mehta who is said to be a God fearing man, if asked personally in the name of God, his "SAIN BABA", or his children and wife, I hope the fact will come out that I have been falsely implicated only because of his rivalries with the Mazdoor Panchayat of which I am an official and he had grudge against me.

ADDRESS:
H.K.CHAKRABORTY
1/288 Sadar Bazar
DELHI CANTT-10

Yours faithfully



Dated 22nd Sept 1960

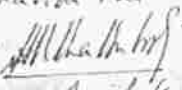
NOO

Copy to:

1. Hon'ble Defence Minister, N.Dellhi
2. DEHC, AHC, New Delhi

(H.K.CHAKRABORTY)
T.No 18, Inst Mech
UNDER SUSPENSION WITH
EFFECT FROM 12 Jul 60

for information & necessary action pt.



4/25/60

here with.

on 11th July 1960. T No 583 Shri Mohan Lal

Singh the Convenor of Council of Action Delhi Defence Employees addressed the workers of 505 Army Base workshop at about 08.30 hours. He strongly criticized the union Home Minister, Shri G. B. Pant & Ex-Congress President, Smt. Indira Gandhi who had volunteered themselves to work in the event of the strike. He remarked that Shri Pant

cannot even sign a letter, then of what use he will be volunteering. Smt. Indira Gandhi could not do a fine man's job. He also exhorted the workers to condemn the ordinance. He declared that workshop gate will remain closed on 12th July and that no body should slip in. If any body did, he will have to go over his body. He also stated that if fell to the bullet of the police, there will be many to take his place.

He disclosed that CID (Intelligence Branch) source had revealed that the Govt was not yet ready to effect the arrest of leaders. In the afternoon at the lunch time at about 13.00 hours Shri

Mohan Lal Singh again he addressed the gathering inside the workshop criticized Shri Gopal Ballal Pant & Smt. Indira Gandhi for volunteering themselves and declared that no body should

come to the workshop on 12th July. He told them that if they did, they will have to walk over his dead body. on 9th July 1960 Shri Mohan Lal

Singh at Mustering Time at 08.20 hours addressed the workers outside the gate.

Copy of the letter from Col. D. H. Mehta.

Tel. No 39251/3

O. P. Immediate

No 21211-X-505

Army Base Workshop

To

The S.H.O. Police Station - Delli Cantt

Delli Cantt. - to

Subject: - Report on unlawful and Subversive activities by T. No 883 Shri Mohinder Singh

Details of the Subversive activities of T. No 883 Shri Mohinder Singh who is the Convener of Council of Action, Delli Defence Employees are enumerated in this letter.

He has been actually participating in the recent strike which has been declared illegal and is inciting the workers of the Defence installations in Delli Cantt especially 505 Army Base Workshop to refrain from attending their duties during the strike and threatening those individuals who attend duty during the period 12th July 1960 on 12th July 1960 he moved in a taxi all the day actively inciting the defence workers not to attend their duty & join the strike. A statement from two of such individuals, i.e. 422 Mohi Ram & 467. Gourdhan Dass who were asked by Shri Mohinder Singh to join the strike is attached as an annexure to this report. In addition various leaflets have been issued under the name of Shri Mohinder Singh in his capacity of the Convener of the Council of Action, Delli Defence Employees. Copy of one of ~~such~~ leaflet which has been distributed on 11th July 1960 i.e. after the promulgation of the ordinance prohibiting the ~~national~~ strike is attached

of arrest has been issued by the police for Shri Mohinder Singh since last 4 to 5 days.

He has been successfully evading arrest by changing his residence & towns at regular intervals.

(3) In view of the above you are requested to take prompt & immediate action to restore confidence amongst the workers of this installation by taking suitable action against Shri Mohinder Singh.

(Col. D.A. Mehta)

Comdt.

Confidential

in 1960 - he said he criticized the Government's
policy, which he said gave no hope of
settlement. He also criticized the promulgation
of the order on banning the working
class from taking part in the proposed strike. He
said that Govt has to bow down to the popular
movement. He also said that the ~~was~~ weakness
of the Govt stood expressed to the General
Public and the day was not very far, when
the Govt met his fate. He appealed to all
the workers for strike and asked those willing
to take part in the strike to raise their hands.
Everyone raising a few raised hands. About
300 workers heard the speech. 6th July 1960
again at the meeting in time Sri Mohandas
Singh exhorted the workers not to enter the
workshop on 12th morning. If anybody did, he
would do so after crossing his body. On 5th July 1960
at the meeting in time T. NO. 883 Sri Mohandas
Singh addressed the workers and declared that
no body shall attend the workshop on 12 July 1960
and if anybody did he would have to cross over his
body. He referred to the propaganda being carried
out by the Govt through Radio & newspaper & stated
that a scheme to combat this is in hand. He
said volunteers with leaflets were being detailed
in DTU bases to distribute them to the public.
The leaflets will indicate their charter of demands
& thus educate the public to get their support &
Sympathy (2) It is also understood that a warrant

ORGANISATION OF STATE COMMITTEES: ✓

Emphasise the necessity to organise the State Committees on a proper basis. They should function more effectively and intervene more on different problems, to ensure strong coordination between unions and the all-India centre. The STUCs. should become the functioning and guiding centre of the working class in their respective States. They should function with an assessment of each factory and give proper leadership.

To set apart in each State cadre whose primary responsibility should be to look after STUC centre's work. The General Secretary of the State Committee should also take upon himself the work of the STUC as priority work.

Regular STUC Conferences, Working Committee and General Council meetings should be held.

Reports should be made to the Central Office of all the Tripartite Committees' meetings and Conferences at State level as well as on Working Committee and General Council meetings of the STUC. The Reports should be sent preferably in English. Copies of all circulars sent to unions and press releases and statements should be endorsed to Centre.

Monthly reports should be sent regularly to the Centre.

There should be regular visits by STUC Secretary, along with trade union Secretaries to factories, trade union offices and check up and --2

(2)

(Organisation of State Committees....contd.)

periodical reports and should be sent to the Centre.

The STUC Secretary should make his own studies of the All India movement in the TU and industrial field.

Every STUC should try to organise a TU school.

MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

&

VERIFICATION

Verified figures of membership of Central TU organisations are the determining factor for representation in tripartite committees at the Centre and States, ILO and its Committees and in Wage Boards. Moreover, removing the gap between our influence and active membership and bringing more and more workers within the orbit of the organised TU movement is necessary.

Therefore, the STUCs should ensure and pay special ~~more~~ attention to the work of enrolment of membership by the trade unions. In this connection it would be helpful if a month each year is observed as "MEMBERSHIP ENROLMENT DRIVE MONTH".

The STUC should fix up one of the Secretaries to particularly look after the work of verification. The state may be distributed in four or more zones and office-bearers of the STUC allotted to each zone

(4)

with utmost strictness so that the authorities may not take advantage of possible failings in union functioning.

TRIPARTITE COMMITTEES, CODE OF DISCIPLINE ETC.

A stage had come ^{long ago} when each State Committee, in relation to the State body of employers and the State Government, should have such a position as the All India Centre holds. Our weightage in the tripartites, with the ministries, etc., at the Centre should have its reflection in the States.

STUCs and unions should fully utilise and invariably send reports and cases of non-implementation of awards, agreements, labour legislations, violation of tripartite ~~agreement~~ decisions on rationalisation, equitable distribution of gains accruing from rationalisation, etc., to the Evaluation & Implementation Division of the State Labour Department and later to the Central E & I Machinery through AITUC. While Government and employers are always on the alert to raise their accusing finger at us for the alleged violation of Code of Discipline and Code of Conduct, and in so many cases they have manipulated 'sanctions' against us under the Code, our STUCs and unions are not so prompt and serious in reporting ~~suchxxxxx~~ the cases of breach of the Code to the State and Central E & I Divisions and the AITUC Centre.

(5)

The employers claim that in majority of industrial undertakings, Grievance procedure as stipulated by tripartite agreement on Code of Discipline exists. Grievance Procedure is a part of the Code of Discipline. This aspect also deserves our serious consideration.

STUCs, with the help and cooperation of the affiliated unions, should prepare detailed memoranda on the cases of non-implementation of awards and agreements, etc., breaches of the Code by the employers and the Government, and submit the same to the State Labour Ministers with a copy to this office.

Similarly, STUCs should also compile reports on the establishment of Grievance Procedure in industrial undertakings in their respective states and send the same to the Centre. STUCs and unions should demand establishment of the Grievance Procedure in the undertakings where it does not exist.

STUCs should also prepare reports on cases of Non-recognition of trade unions by the management (giving reference when recognition was requested). Unions which are not recognised by the employers and have not applied for recognition so far, should do so in terms of the Code of Discipline (Clause 6-under the head 'Management Agree').

BUILDING FUND AND C.G.F. RELIEF FUND:

Campaign for collection of AITUC Building Fund and Central

and Central Government Employees Relief Fund should continue.

AFFILIATION FEES:

Prompt payment of affiliation fees to the AITUC Centre and the STUCs by the unions should be ensured so that these organisations are able to discharge their responsibilities efficiently. The tendency not to pay till reminders are sent and to wait till annual conferences to pay up the dues should be discouraged.

TRADE UNION RECORDS

Sales of "Trade Union Records" among the middle class and English knowing cadre of affiliated ~~unions~~ and non-affiliated unions should be organised. STUCs and unions should run campaigns for enrolment of larger number of annual subscribers.

STUCs should also work for better sale of other AITUC publications, published from time to time.

T A S K S (for STUCs)



1. To develop working class consciousness- a general consciousness of class-solidarity, the need to feel and act as a class, beyond his industry or trade, striking in solidarity as a class; assisting those sections which are in the front line of struggles
2. To prepare for an action against the coming attacks on the trade union rights- ban on strikes in the essential services. To prepare to take some step on class basis when this most dangerous attack is to take place.
3. To consciously develop state-wide and industry-wide movements on the basis of general slogans, such as wage rise / safeguard against rationalisation, closures and retrenchment; for defence and extension of TU rights.

adequate TA

Our object should be to prepare, organise and conduct these struggles as sustained, determined, united and broad based movements.

4. To prepare, organise and conduct united actions by unions of different affiliations on specific issues; to campaign systematically and persistently amongst the workers for arousing their initiative for united action from the below and for isolating and exposing the anti-unity forces.
5. To strengthen our organised base in order to fight more effectively for unity, therefore, to bring larger and larger number of workers in our fold and organise, the organised workers into our unions.

Huge mass of unorganised workers still exist.

In 1958, the number of workers in various employments was as below:

Factories .....	....	...	34,12,849
Mines .....	....	...	6,49,360
Plantations...	....	...	12,02,273
Shops & Commercial Establishments .....	....	...	17,00,879
Railways .....	....	...	11,18,848
Posts & Telegraphs....	....	...	3,08,618
Central Govt. establishments (excluding Railways, armed forces, embassies & Missions) ..	....	...	<u>7,14,259</u>
TOTAL .....	....	...	<u>91,07,126</u>

were

In 1957-58, there in all 9,644 registered trade unions. 5,719 unions which submitted annual returns

had a total membership of 29,07,443. If we take it on the basis of average membership of unions submitting annual returns, the membership of 9,644 unions would come to 52,66,268.

Thus in 1957-58, out of about 9 million, only about 5.2 million were organised in the unions. Out of this total, only about 3.3 million were affiliated to the Central TU organisations, our part being only about 1.4 million.

The wide chunk of unorganised workers provides a base for disruptive elements to secure a foothold, even temporarily, and to do serious damage by confusing and diverting the workers. The unorganised workers is a barrier to the unity of the class.

Hence the urgency to organise the unorganised workers into our unions.

6. To fight against provincial chauvinism and communal disruption.

7. To work for mass mobilisation of workers on the issues of fight against imperialism, for ~~Kaxaxx~~ international solidarity with struggles of national liberation and World Peace.

To fulfil the political tasks enjoined upon by the ~~XXXXXX~~ ~~XXXXXX~~ ~~XXXXXX~~ ~~XXXXXX~~ ~~XXXXXX~~ workers WFTU and AITUC.

8. To enlighten the workers on the question of our attitude towards the Governments Industrial policy, Planning etc. To expose and criticise concretely the effects of the Government planning on the state's economy, and to advance programme and slogans of our own for industrial development, profit control, nationalisation, curbing of foreign capital, e tc.

9. To play a leading role in the broad-based democratic struggles of the masses, such as, against rising prices of essential commodities, etc.

Re. Struggles for Wages, etc.

.....

While statistics show that there has been a decline in real wages over the last three years (since Ernakulam session), it would not be correct to formulate the trend in this manner since it would lead to mistaken tactics.

It has to be seen that on the wages front, industrially and, to a larger extent, on plant or local level, workers have made positive advance in obtaining monetary gains. The fact that this rise in wages has been offset by rising living costs should be seen in the national context.

Let us examine the position in major industries.

In cotton textiles, the Wage Board recommendations have been a positive advance - something the workers achieved by dogged struggle, first for the constitution of the Wage Board, secondly for its early recommendation and thirdly, for its implementation. The average wage increase obtained was to the order of 5%.

In coalmining, while there was no wage revision during ~~except improved grading through arbitrator~~ the three years, the workers have obtained two instalments of Rs.4.14.0 each due to increase in D.A. By amendments to Mines Act, leave facilities and other conditions of work have improved. The Arbitrator's Award also came during this period giving a graded scale to the miners which signifies a slight advance in wages too.

In Cement, the Wage Board recommendations have constituted an advance, though these have not been enforced in all centres.

In port and dock, the Choudhuri Commission has awarded some benefits.

In iron and steel, the wage revision in TISCO is quite significant. In the Public Sector plants also, the minimum wages have been revised upwards after workers' struggles.

In metal and engineering, in the different centres, the wages trend shows an upward curve.

In sugar, the Wage Board award will mean an increase of about 10% in wages.

In jute, there has been a slight increase in D.A. during this period.

In plantations, in W.Bengal, Kerala and Tamilnad, there have been wage revisions, after workers went into action.

The Pay Commission has also awarded some increases. On plant level, in different centres, concessions have been won after dogged struggles.

We may thus conclude that the policy of "wage freeze" ~~which was attempted~~ attempted by the bourgeoisie has been defeated by the united action of the workers. The 15th Indian Labour Conference formally accepted the case for wage revision demanded by the workers. The decisions of the 15th ILC however have not been implemented in ~~most~~ its entirety and the Government have gone back on it. The struggle for its implementation will therefore assume a sharper form in the coming period.

Does it mean therefore that while we are successful in industrial actions for wage demands on plant and industrial level, were we able to make an advance in real terms?

We could not. Because prices rose so sharply, more than offsetting whatever gains we made. And we are still to make up against the rising living costs. Hence, the fall in real wages.

Therefore, we have to conclude that united action on wages front however much it may succeed must reckon with the phenomena of prices and resolute action planned to bring down prices becomes the most urgent task.

In the Working Committee held in August 1959, Comrade Dange explained that the main struggle will be the struggle against rise in prices. The struggle for rise in D.A. to compensate the price rise can have only limited use since there is a galloping trend in prices.

Therefore, united action of the class as a whole on a national plane alone could bring the desired results, to protest the wages against the price trend. Barring the Central Government employees' strike and the token strike in solidarity by other sections of the workers in July 1960, we could not mobilise the working class and trade unions to take positive action against rising prices, on a national scale.

Apart from the strictly economic nature of this struggle, the action against price-rises has considerable political significance. The unified action of the class on this national question has its political impact but more than this would be the effect on planned development itself and sharing of gains.

The economy has decidedly advanced. But through the inflationary trends which became a part of planning, the

bourgeoisie has cleverly robbed the workers of their share in the gains: in fact, the workers' standards have been further pushed down by the rising living costs created by the inflationary policies. By the rising prices, the only gainer is the bourgeoisie, they have enriched themselves unprecedentedly, their rate of profits has gone higher and higher and their grip on the economy (particularly of the monopoly sections) ^{which is fairly amazing} has been strengthened. ~~Thus~~ Therefore, in the class struggle on sharing the gains of planned development and even in the scales as between Public Sector and Private Sector, the monopolists have thrown the working class and other sections into the defensive. The actions to tilt the balance against them are now to be decided upon.

The implications of the above development on TU organisation ~~are~~ should also be noted. Inability to move the class into class actions on national plane would be the most deterrent factor in the further development of the TU movement in India. As Comrade Dange pointed out, discussing the Central Government employees' strike and the token strike in support, while we have been able to forge unity and conduct united actions on industrial plane, we were unable to move the class as a whole on class issues. The tasks to overcome this lag have been laid down by our Working Committee and these have to be further carried forward.

ed. Arundel

15-12-60

The struggles and the last three years of working have rich experiences for us in organisational matters. During this period, the AITUC has increased its influence still further. In steel plants, engineering coal and iron ore mines, port and dock, sugar, AITUC has expanded its base. In plantations, textiles, we have either recaptured or consolidated ourselves. There is still further scope in these industries. In others, there is some sort of stagnation for various reasons.

Even according to the verified figures, AITUC is a majority force in six States and ten industries.

As compared to INTUC, our biggest weakness~~xx~~ is in Assam plantations, Ahmedabad textiles, Railway transport, sugar industry in U.P. and Bihar and pockets of collieries. INTUC during this period formed more rival unions in Maharashtra State (in petroleum, soaps and chemicals, etc.), Andhra, Punjab and Kerala and in defence and P&F. The increase in the claimed and verified membership of the INTUC reflects this. INTUC did not make any headway as such in any particular industry or State.

The HMB continued shrinking. It has inflated its claimed and verified membership by affiliating united railway unions of AIRF.

The UTUC was split into two wings and both are functioning with the same name, though the group led by Biswanath Dube has very very restricted following in Calcutta docks. Government of India has recognised for tripartite conferences, the other group with Srikantan Nair as President and Mrs Sudha Roy as General Secretary. It expects to reach the figure of one lakh verified membership this year, to retain the all-India character of the TU centre.

In certain trade federations, AITUC has no affiliated unions, though AITUC elements are working in them along with others. This step was taken to keep them united. There are certain unions specially in textiles at Bombay, Kanpur, Indore, Nagpur, etc. etc.

The INTUC had intensified ~~their~~ ^{their} disruptive activities in such unions and federations by setting up rival organisations. In Petroleum, Bank, Defence and now P&T, rival federations and unions have been formed though not with any spectacular success. It has been possible for the AITUC elements to keep these federations/unions united with other HMS, UPUC and independent elements. Nonetheless, the rivalry will affect these organisations to some extent because of the support of the ruling party and the Government.

At the same time, there have been united struggles of workers also. Calcutta tramway and W.Bengal plantation strikes are examples where along with other unions, even INTUC unions participated. General strikes in Calcutta during 1959 and 1960, Bombay General Strike on 25th July 1958, Central Government employees' strike, strikes in connection with the implementation of Textile Wage Board in Rajasthan and W.Bengal, among others, were led by all other elements except the INTUC. The AITUC is still the leading force in struggles in the defence of the working class as will be clear from even the Government figures though these do not include token strikes and Central Government employees' strike.

The understanding that HMS, INTUC and other independent unions do not fight and always betray is not correct. It is true that the policies and class relations of these elements more often make them betray struggles of working class. Nonetheless, in particular circumstances when forced by the workers, these elements also lead strikes and sometimes with gain to the working class. If we do not

struggles in time; not only working class interests and movement suffers but this may result in our isolation.

Another important feature of the struggles during this period was a strike by the Bombay municipal workers for higher wages against the Municipal Corporation where as President of the Samyukta Maharashtra Samiti, the majority party in the Corporation, our General Secretary, Com. Dange and as a Mayor, our President, Com. Mirajkar, had to fight against the political strike by Lonia Socialists. True to our traditions, the Corporation did not invite police to ~~break~~ break the strike, paid workers the wages for the strike period, made no attempt to break the TU organisation - on the other hand, forced them to see reason at the earliest and come to an agreement with the union giving them their due increment in wages.

During this period, we discussed organisation in the various Working Committee and General Council meetings held in between. Decisions to strengthen the STUCs, improve functioning of the TUs, specially with reference to maintaining records, etc., payment of affiliation fee regularly, democratic functioning at all levels, working of Code of Discipline and Code of Conduct, tours and better contact between the Centre, STUC and unions were taken. Though all decisions in all respects have not been implemented at all quarters, there is distinct improvement in all these respects as the enclosed reports will clearly bear out. It must be said that the progress is at a very slow pace and not with the speed and attention the movement demands. If the stagnation is not to be desired, more serious and concerted action will have to be taken to fulfil those tasks.

We continued publishing our fortnightly organ, the Trade Union Record regularly and the size has also been made bigger. But our efforts to make it a weekly which is the need of the movement could not materialise due to the lack of active support of our unions in enrolling more subscribers.

Some of our STUCs made an attempt to issue periodicals in the State languages. Tamilnad, Punjab and Delhi did bring out. MAZDOOR JANATA of Delhi in Hindi, after a few months, had to be closed for financial reasons. Others started bulletins and still others have a decision to take out TU papers. Some of the unions continued and started publishing their own organs.

These ~~XXXX~~ periodicals may be ~~x~~ for short duration in the local language are very helpful in training and education of trade union cadre, which is really a serious problem today with the AITUC.

Conscious and deliberate attempts have to be made to educate and train larger number of TU cadre to take up responsibility of their own trade unions as well as work in the unorganised sectors. Utilization of paid employees for office and technical work by unions is the only way to reduce the pressure of work of wholetime TU organisers to enable them to pay due and more careful attention to the consolidation and expansion of our work in newer regions and industries.

This brings us to the multiplicity of unions and Federations in certain States and industries. There are too many small unions, e.g., in Kerala and District, State and then all-India ~~organisations~~ organising committees/councils of the AITUC often cut across each other and none of these can function efficiently with reasonable sound finances unless it be at the cost of one or the other.

Collection of quarterly, half-yearly and the best is yearly subscription on the new rates as amended in the Indian TU Act will help the union to lessen avoidable paper and field work and make them financially more sound. Unless some of these Federations are united ones, it would be advisable to function them as trade departments of the State or Central TU organisation.

We have been able to build up a Centre from where replies to letters is assured. Efforts to build up a team at the centre having a grip over the situation and render effective guidance without delay have not yet succeeded simply because our office-bearers could not be spared from other centres, states and industrial commitments in which they are immersed to the neck. Though some of the office-bearers of the AITUC toured various States, attended their conferences and Working Committee and General Council meetings, touring in such a big country is still inadequate. Contact through regular monthly reports and letters though improved from what it was earlier is still not satisfactory.

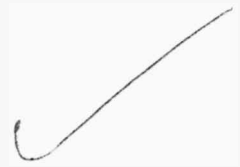
Similar is the situation of the STUC. All States yet do not have one General Secretary or Secretary of STUC where primary responsibility is STUC work.

We plead guilty to the charge of not having been able to publish the syllabus of TU School. The detailed report about it is given in another note on the subject of workers' education. Some of the STUCs, U.P., Andhra and Punjab had TU Schools - some unions also arranged classes and in some of them, centre helped them with lecturers.

The INTUC has started organising agricultural labour. We also discussed this issue at the Bangalore Session of the General Council in January 1959 but could not make any headway. This is vital and deserves due attention.

The General Council meeting of the AITUC gave a call for collection of Rs.2 lakh Building Fund and quotas were fixed. A sum of Rs.63,000 has been collected and the details for each State is given in the Appendix. It will be seen that some of the States where we are major force have not taken it up at all. We have been able to secure a plot of land in New Delhi and erection of building will depend upon further collections as and when received. Our own office with good library is an immediate necessity for the organisation.

1. Sense of class consciousness and class solidarity
- TU classes.
2. Nation-wide struggle against rise in prices and
attack on TU rights
3. For peace and against war, anti-colonialism and
international solidarity
4. Unity, specially from below and our own strength.
5. Unorganised workers - membership drive.
6. Recognition - Utilise code - Remember Ballot
7. Democratic Functioning - keeping records, sending
returns, etc.
8. State Committee organisation
9. Utilisation of Tripartite Committees, Code, etc.
10. Fight against provincial chauvinism and communal
disruption.



INDUSTRIAL UNIONS OR PLANT UNIONS?

Satish Loomba

The time has come when the trade union movement must take serious stock of the pattern of organisation and structure of unions. In India, generally, unions are organised separately for each plant or industrial establishment. In some places, industrial unions at local level have also come into being. The result is that there are a large number of unions, a few 'big' unions and the majority 'small'. Each of these unions is separately registered, has to maintain a separate office, funds and functionaries. With the paucity of cadres, often the same functionaries work in many local unions. Efforts have been made to organise federations on industrial basis both at State and Central level.

This pattern of structure creates organisational problems at all levels.

First, let us take the simple question of finance. Each union must have funds to pay its dues to the State Federation, to the National Federation, to the State TUC, to the AITUC and the WFTU. In some places, there are also local federations and local trade union councils. Actually, what happens in practice is that most of the dues are never paid and arrears accumulate for years. Then you can either write off the money or the union!

Apart from dues to central bodies, a small union cannot even meet all the expenses of its own. Rent for office, wages to wholetime cadres, money required to fight cases in conciliation, courts and tribunals, correspondence - all are necessary expenses and are reaching levels beyond the possible resources of smaller unions.

There are many problems which are of an industrial nature and can best be tackled at an industrial level, either

locally, on a state-wide basis or nationally. Unless we have a corresponding industrial organisation, it is difficult, if not impossible to effectively deal with such problems. An industrial consciousness and an industrial organisation is necessary for this purpose. We have tried to achieve this through industrial federations. But that is hardly the best way.

Apart from industrial problems and organisation, an organisation uniting all workers is essential. The STUCs and the AITUC are the organisational vehicles of working class unity uniting all workers, ~~of~~ irrespective of the industry to which they belong.

This poses squarely the question of cadres. Cadres are needed to run each plant union, State federation, national federation, State TUC and AITUC. Splitting up such cadres as are available prevents specialisation at any level.

Besides the purely organisational question, the theory behind this practice, if there is any theory, is also faulty. The old debate in Europe and America was between craft unions and industrial unions. The industrial unions won the day because they were based on the real need of the working class. Here, in India, the local plant pattern has risen historically. In places where this pattern was not evolved, for example, in Bombay textiles, or Ahmedabad, the local industrial union is the pattern. In Punjab, local industrial unions are the general pattern. Now in some places, local federations on industrial basis have been organised but not industrial unions.

The net result is that today, the AITUC has over 1600 ~~xxx~~ affiliated unions, the INTUC, over 1200, and so on. On the other hand, in USSR there are less than 10 unions, in Japan (SOHYO), about 30 and so on. Whether in socialist countries or the capitalist countries or the newly liberated countries or the colonies, this is general

I am not arguing that we should follow the generally prevalent pattern blindly or in its totality. Nor that we should change from our structure because the national industrial structure is the practice. Conditions here are different and the history is different too. But my thesis is that real advance in organisation is possible only if we break through the old and existing pattern of local plant union and go forward to industrial unions.

We have already discussed the question of funds and cadres. Take now the question of membership, i.e., how many of the total workers are organised. If you compare the total number of workers in factories, mines and plantations with the total of AITUC membership or even the combined membership of all central trade union organisations, the glaring contrast ~~exists~~ will come out. The AITUC has been and is aware of this and has repeatedly advanced the slogan of "organising the unorganised". But the impact has been negligible. One of the reasons is the existing structure of unions. It is easier to organise the unorganised, to enroll them as members and to draw them into the movement when there is a large industrial union already functioning than to build separate unions for each plant as it becomes organised.

Today, many problems of workers are common to all in an industry. The policy of the Government is common at least inside each State and the employers are increasingly following agreed policies. Thus all these require coordinated action which becomes easier on the basis of a single powerful industrial union rather than small, multiple ~~and~~ plant unions.

Briefly, therefore, whether you approach the problem from the practical viewpoint of membership, funds or functioning; or from the point of view of building up a coordinated movement to secure redressal of grievances and reversal of State policy or employers' policy; or, from the theoretical angle of creating class consciousness and

solidarity, industrial union is a more effective form of organisation than the plant or establishment pattern.

However, we must realise that there are many real difficulties in the way of reorganising our unions on such basis. First of all, due to the huge distances in our country and the multi-lingual character of our peoples, industrial unions at the national level seem to be out of the question at present. Secondly, we cannot solve today the problem of effective, centrally-functioning leadership for such national unions. But it is my firm opinion that we should immediately orientate ourselves ~~xxx~~ towards industrial unions on State level. One State-wide union for each major industry should be our slogan.

Today, some of the unions are not ready to amalgamate and form themselves into one industrial union even at local level. The strange spectacle exists of many plant unions in the same place, in the same industry - all owing allegiance to the same central organisation. At some places, local federations of unions in one industry have been organised. Apart from personal factors, the real ~~xxxx~~ resistance springs from the fact that some of these unions have saved comfortable funds, while others eke out a hand to mouth existence. And, as everywhere, here too, the "rich" do not want to willingly share their money with the "poor"! Again, at certain places, there do exist separatist tendencies among a section of the workers who want to keep their own plant union as a distinct entity and do not want to merge with others. Unfortunately, all these difficulties are reflected in, or are reflections of, personal attitudes as well.

These difficulties are there and they are real difficulties. But I am sure that if the AITUC were to take a firm decision to change the structural pattern and build industrial unions, the change will be carried through. Education of workers, constitutional sanction and firm

dealing with personal factors can pave the way towards this pattern. As a first step, industrial unions at local level must be set up. Existing unions must be forged into one powerful central organisation and new unions must be organised from the beginning on this pattern. In some places, such unions already exist and in others, beginnings can surely be made.

In some places, it may be possible in the very near future to change over from local unions to State-wide industrial unions. This should be worked for. Then at the 27th Session of the AITUC, after two years, we can reassess the situation and work out the programme for a nationwide changeover to State industrial unions in all major industries.

However, two things are immediately required - a firm decision to work towards State-wide industrial unions and an immediate shift-over to such unions on local level.

The AITUC, pioneer of the working class movement in our country, should boldly step forward and give the lead in this much-needed direction.

Section 120(2)(b) of the Industrial Disputes Act amended in such a way that the protection afforded to workmen under Section 33 of the Act would be available to them even during the interval between the date of receipt of the conciliation officer's failure report by the appropriate Government and the date of reference of the dispute under Section 10 of the Act or the date of any final order passed by the Government refusing adjudication.

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THE ORGANISATIONAL POSITION AND
WORK OF THE AITUC IN THE VARIOUS
STATES & INDUSTRIES:
FEBRUARY 1960

In the General Council meeting held at Bangalore in January 1959, it was stated that 1958 was an year of rapid advance in terms of increase in membership and in expansion to new areas and new industries. Simultaneously it was pointed out that attack from both the sides, viz., employers and the INTUC, supported by the Government at various levels, are mounting and in facing it, organisation of the trade unions, State Committees and our Centre is to be given special attention. Membership drive, activation of State Committees so as to make it the functioning and guiding centre of the working class movement in the State, collection of Building Fund, training of cadre, planning work by fixing priorities, effective functioning in the tripartite committees, etc., were some of the tasks enjoined.

In the Working Committee meeting held in August 1959, we discussed the organisational position State by State and in relation to some industries and reiterated the tasks mentioned above.

1959 is a period when the rapid advance made during the past year was to be consolidated, steady advance to be made in certain industries and areas and in the face of onslaught, we had to defend our positions. I think we have succeeded partly in our efforts.

We called for organisational reports from the State Committees in July 1959 to prepare an organisational report. None of the State responded. From the press releases on the General Council or Working Committee meetings of the STUCs which we received, we often hear that organisational report was submitted to such meetings or discussed. But may be due to the difficulty of the STUCs to obtain translations of these reports from their local languages, we have never received any copy of organisational reports from the States. So this report is based on the material received in the centre either from the STUC, press or during visits of our office-bearers.

In the beginning of the report for each State, we have given the total number of workers in three sectors of industry, viz., factory workers, miners and plantation workers as per data available for 1957. Our membership during 1957-58 (both claimed and verified) as also of INTUC, HMS and UTUC (wherever they function) along with claims made for 1958-59 are given. This will give us an idea of the campaign for more membership enrolment drive in each State.

The membership claimed for each State covers not only workers employed in factories, mines and plantations but other sectors of employment also. The number of factories and workers employed in them have also increased since 1957 in many States. Nevertheless, these figures give an indication of the immense lag between the total working force

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and the organised strength of the AITUC in that State and/or industry.

In 1957-58, there in all 9,644 registered trade unions. 5,719 unions which submitted returns have a total membership of 29,07,443. If we take it on the basis of average membership of unions submitting returns, the membership of 9,644 unions comes to 52,66,268. This includes workers over and above those covered by the Factories Act, Mines Act and Plantation Labour Act (These three totalled 53,33,339, comprising of 34,79,445 in factories, 6,51,321 in mines and 12,02,273 in plantations.

The claimed membership in 1957-58 of all trade union centres was 33,35,227 in 2,996 unions. There are many trade unions which are not affiliated to any central TU organisation.

The verified membership of these organisations in 1957-58 was as under:

	<u>CLAIMED</u>		<u>VERIFIED</u>	
	No. of Unions	Membership	No. of Unions	Membership
I.N.P.U.C.	1066	13,80,249	698	8,98,527
A.I.T.U.C.	1409	14,00,141	768	5,17,306
H.M.S.	236	3,57,859	145	1,84,084
U.P.U.C.	285	1,96,978	176	80,345

The claimed membership for 1958-59 is as under:

	<u>No. of Unions</u>	<u>Membership</u>
I.N.P.U.C.	1269	15,03,605
A.I.T.U.C.	1589	10,86,646
H.M.S.	324	4,80,290
U.T.U.C.	285	1,97,587

Thus our claimed membership as percentage of the total labour force employed in factories, mines and plantations in 1957-58 will be 26%. For 1958-59 this figure will be 20%. If we take into account the workers engaged in other than factories, mines and plantations as on 1957 and the increase in all industries around in 1958-59, this percentage will still go down.

During the verification of 1957-58, we lost membership mainly because the office work of our trade union was weak. Neither the STUC nor the Central Office had full and upto date corrected lists of affiliated union what to say of this latest membership. The claims were more or less approximate. Even after due notice, the unions did not take the verification seriously in time and did not prepare for it. In large number of cases, returns were not submitted. In Rajasthan, out of 28 unions, 27 were scored out in preliminary scrutiny because registration number of these unions could not be furnished. To bring information upto date, we sent representatives to Kerala and Assam by air. Among the States where we suffered big losses are Kerala and Bombay. Details of reasons for these are given in the enclosed statement.

The stipulated principle, i.e., counting as members only those who paid membership dues during the three months of the last six months period, also acted against us.

In iron and steel industry in Bihar and W.Bengal, verification could not be done properly as workers were afraid of the representatives of employers before whom spot and physical verification was carried out.

It must be stated that some of our unions/very irresponsibly in this verification process and AITUC should take a stern view if such acts are repeated in future. behaved

The Working Committee discussed the results of 1957-58 verification. As the verification for the year 1958-59 began, we say no point in raising further objections to the results for the earlier year and prolonging it in arbitration, etc., though we were not fully satisfied with the replies of the Labour Ministry to our objections. We were also successful in making the Labour Ministry take some steps for giving our unions enough notice and a better procedure of verification. The stipulated principle has also been given up this year.

Though it is a fact that membership enrolment drive and extension of area of our functioning was taken up by certain units only and we have improved in these sectors as will be evident from the detailed reports of the States; in general, this was not taken up very seriously by all our unions. The net result is that though the number our unions has increased, a good number of new affiliations have been secured; our total membership has gone down from about 15 lakhs to 10,86,646. There is a possibility even with the existing number of unions to reach 15 lakhs membership and with new industries and unions even to go beyond this figure. In each State and industry, work should be undertaken immediately for the year 1959-60, if already not done.

Experience during the past years has shown that monthly collection of union subscription involves a lot of physical and office work in keeping proper records, which at the moment is beyond the capacity of our trade unions. Machinery for collection of subscription every month specially in the big unions does not exist. No doubt, we have to train more cadre, expand our base and keep our organisation active but this work can also be achieved if yearly/half yearly/quarterly collection of subscription is resorted to instead of monthly. Though other TU and social and cultural activities, contact can be maintained with the workers and monthly collection of dues is not the only way for the same.

The changes in the procedure of verification has been intimated to all unions through our circular dated November 16, 1959 and it should be possible for us to increase our verified membership this year.

FUNCTIONING AT THE CENTRE

A functioning Centre - with a team of AITUC officials, with headquarters at Delhi and attending to the day-to-day work at the Centre and available for tour whenever the situation demands and an efficient apparatus to deal with the correspondence and inquiries from the trade unions, should be our immediate aim. With the reduced Secretariat meetings and only one resident Secretary, this is not possible.

We have a functioning office dealing with correspondence and the routine work. Our library and research section is weak - one of the reasons being lack of space to arrange the library properly.

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More Working Committee meetings for discussion of particular issues well prepared and certain aspects of organisation will improve our functioning. General Council meetings for longer duration and arrangements for some Industrial Committee meetings will help paying due attention to their problems. Certain Commissions can also be appointed by the Working Committee and these can meet a few days before the General Council meeting to discuss and prepare the notes.

Some of the Commissions and Sub-Committees which were appointed in the past years could not function because the members were too much engrossed in the local affairs and could not devote time for attending to the work Commission.

Our comrades at each level have multifarious responsibilities and are overworked. Some more comrades have to get relieved from some of their existing responsibilities to be able to pay attention to the TU responsibilities at Centre and States. Often for important meetings, conferences or for investigation of industrial accidents, we are unable to depute comrades from the Centre.

TRIPARTITE COMMITTEES

Our experience in the past has been that though it would be incorrect to expect that we can win our demands through these committees alone, the importance of our presence and effective participation in the discussion helps in two ways. Often, with added weight we can extract some concessions in these Committees in favour of workers in the course of discussion, if the Government side is with us. Secondly, we are often able to oppose and delay such measures which are anti-working class. The employers unlike earlier years are now more vocal and try for maintaining status quo, oppose or try to delay measures benefitting the workers. They get easy support from some State Governments.

We must train some comrades in this Committee work which require study and devoting some time. New comrades should be brought in to work in this sphere.

"TRADE UNION RECORD"

We have been able to publish the TUR regularly. The decision to increase its sales was not acted upon, except in case of Hyderabad. Efforts to sell it through STUC at Bombay, Madras and Calcutta failed. The agency system is also not working well. In Bangalore where the sale had gone up to 100, it is now down to 20.

The figures of TUR being sent to affiliated unions in each State are based on those who paid affiliation fee at the time of the Ernakulam Session and after. Those unions which are in default of affiliation fees have been cut out from our mailing list. The list has not been revised every year except adding the names of the union which paid affiliation fee since Ernakulam.

The movement and the prestige of the AITUC demands that we should have a weekly paper and also change its present character of just being a record to one which leads the movement. But this cannot be done unless and until: (1) persons to take responsibility come forward to devote to TU work in the Central Office and in important TU centres, and (2) subscriptions are raised to at least 3,000.

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PARLIAMENT AND WORK/T.U. M.P.s.

From the report of the work in Parliament, given in the folder, it will be seen that our MPs have been active in Parliament, raising workers' demands and fighting for their betterment.

The method of their work as far TU is concerned is still individual and is not coordinated at any level. In the tripartite meetings specially, we have been nominating as Adviser, our TU MPs so that they can keep in touch with current TU problems, discussion and decision in these meeting. Also they are invited to Working Committee and General Council meetings as special invitees, for the same purpose.

Our efforts to coordinate work in the Consultative Committee for labour (of Parliament) have not yet succeeded.

Very often we get demands for MPs for various odd jobs from the STUCs and the TUs. Due to the lack of coordination - and to achieve the same is not so easy in the present circumstances - we fail in our attempts.

We could be more effective in TU work in Parliament if there could be coordination in the work of our TU MPs.

T.U.SCHOOL

An important task we undertook in Bangalore was to prepare syllabus and start N.M.Joshi Memorial School. We just failed in this task and have not been able to move an inch forward.

We have applied for a grant from the Government under the Workers Education Scheme. The application is pending.

As far as we have reports, only the General Engineering Employees Union, Bombay, arranged a TU school this year. We helped in the organisation of a School run by a union not affiliated to us in U.P.

This task has to be given priority and taken by the Secretariat more seriously.

I.L.O.

We protested against the selection of workers' nominees from India to the 44th Session of the ILO held in June 1959.

Discrimination against the AIPUC still continues in respect of delegation to ILO and its industrial committees.

Except in Building and Construction Committee, when this year again, but with difficulty, our nominee was sent, we are not represented anywhere. We protested in each case.

PASSPORT

In respect of passport also, the policy of discrimination continues. Our delegations for attending the International Miners Conference, Conference on Safety in Mines held in Moscow, Conference of Workers in Commerce, Conference of Building and Building Materials TUI, and other conferences as of oil workers, public employees, etc., were denied passports.

DISCRIMINATION

In tripartite committees at the Centre, we always protest
whenever we find.....

whenever we find discrimination being meted out to AITUC. We boycotted the Industrial Committee on Building & Construction because the ratio of representation between INTUC and AITUC was 6:1. The Committee did not meet so far.

We walked out from the meeting of the ESI Corporation when our nominee was not taken on the Standing Committee this year also.

We walked out from the National Productivity Council meeting because on the objection raised by TCM, our nominees were not accepted for the productivity teams sent abroad by the NPC.

In States, this discrimination is still widespread and has been dealt with in the reports of States.

Delegates from Soviet Union, representing the Agricultural Workers' Trade Unions, were not given visa by Government to participate in the AIKS Conference held in April/May 1959.

In Textile, Sugar and Cement Wage Boards, none from AITUC was taken. In plantations in the North where we are a force, we are not given seat on the Wage Board for this section. In jute we are a majority.

BUILDING FUND/JAMSHEDPUR FUND

Response to call for collection of Fund is not so encouraging especially from some centres and States.

In Jamshedpur the cases are still going on and are expected to be over in the first stage, next month. In the year 1959, collection of Jamshedpur Fund was very poor.

Re. Building Fund also, in spite of issuing posters, reminders, letters, offer of tour by office-bearers, except from Tamilnad and Kerala, the response cannot be stated to be reassuring. In no State was the collection of the Fund taken in time. But some made up the gap - others could not. Except Gujerat and Punjab, no State availed of the offer of tours by officer-bearers for the campaign - some said positively they don't want.

AFFILIATION FEE AND CERTIFICATES

New affiliation certificates, as was decided at Bangalore, have been issued to unions who have cleared their dues.

During this period, there has been improvement in receipts of affiliation fees in time but still a lot remains to be done in this respect.

State Committee collect and do not remit in time.

ORGANISATION AT S.T.U.C. LEVEL

This has been discussed in detail in respect of each State

Efforts have been made in some States (Punjab, Bihar, Kerala, U.P. & M.P.) to put an office secretary who devotes, if not full, major portion of his time to STUC work. This has in these cases improved contact with the Centre on the one hand and with the unions on the other.

In other respects, this situation remains the same. Orissa, Delhi, M.P., and Bombay are still without a proper functioning office.

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Reports of General Council and Working Committee meetings of STUCs whenever sent are still the copies of press releases and not full reports.

Response to circulars from the Centre calling for reports or information is still poor, e.g., Circulars dated 23.5.59 (reports for Working Committee); 1.6.59 (State legislations on industrial relations); 16.6.59 (Amendment of EPF Act); 13.6.59 (Building Fund), 17.9.59 (local productivity councils), 20.11.59 (on verification), 23.11.59 (Memo on ESI) and 24.12.59 (State E&I Committees).

Some State Committees did not send even objections to the claimed lists of INTUC, HMS and UFUC unions, with the result that this year we have about 2,500 objections against us out of total of 4,000 against the four central TU organisations. Very few cases of violation of Code of Discipline and Code of Conduct are received from our STUCs and unions. On the contrary we are being reported against more by employers as well as by other TU centres.

It is suggested that STUCs should:

(i) Send copies of their reports - organisational and other, if any, to the Centre - preferably in English.

(ii) Copies of all circulars sent to unions should be endorsed to the Centre.

(iii) Copies of all press statements and releases be endorsed to the Centre.

(iv) Circulars from the Centre calling for reports should be responded to; otherwise the Centre cannot send replies to Government on such issues.

INDUSTRIAL FEDERATIONS

Industrial Federations are usually independent. But some of these Federations have only AITUC affiliated unions and as such can be discussed here.

Indian Mine Workers Federation: There is no organisational report about this Federation. It held its Conference in Sept. 1958.

It is active as far as Tribunal and Government tripartite committees are concerned. The position of our organisation in the industry has been dealt with in the industrial report.

The General Secretary went to Assam.

The President toured most of the coal mines in connection with the Gorakhpur Labour Inquiry. He also visited mines in M.P.

We have no report of its executive or general council meetings. Its office is also always on the move. No copies of circulars issued to the unions has ever been received in AITUC office.

Road Transport Workers' Federation: Com. Satish Chatterjee who was looking after this Federation from the AITUC office was on leave in China for some months.

It held an extended working committee meeting in Simla in June 1959.

As it was functioning from Delhi itself, we were getting reports and copies of circulars, etc.

Com. Satish Chatterjee has, on election as Secretary of the TUI Transport, gone to Czechoslovakia.

In his absence nobody looks to its work.

An important Federation - should be looked after regularly.

Federation of Metal & Eng. Workers: This Federation was formed in July 1959. This is also stated to be functioning from Delhi.

After observing 'Demands Day', nothing has been heard from this Federation.

The Executive Committee is now meeting this month.

The General Secretary went to Bombay for the State Engineering Workers Conference, and to Prague to attend the Metal & Eng. TUI's Administrative Committee meeting.

In this growing industry and organisation, a wholetime office secretary is the immediate need of the Federation for regular functioning.

P.T.O.

POSITION IN STATES

1. ANDHRA PRADESH

In 1957, the total number of workers covered by Factories Act and in Mines was 2,42,305 in 3,765 factories. Our membership claimed for the year 1957-58 was 85,028 members in 89 unions and we got verified membership of 36,669 for 39 unions. For the year 1958-59, we claimed a membership of 79,758 in 89 unions. INTUC, the second largest organisation in the State claimed a membership of 52,323 in 67 unions for 1957-58 and membership as verified was only 4,645 in 18 unions. For the year 1958-59, they have claimed 82,400 members in 92 unions. We are the biggest TU organisation in this State.

We have improved in our membership in jute, road transport and building industries; maintained in sugar and coal mines. In Cement and Tobacco, our membership seems to have gone down. In port and dock and textiles, formation of united unions not affiliated to any central TU organisation has brought down our membership.

INTUC has claimed biggest membership in transport (25,768), Textiles (8,736), Building (10,264) and Port and Dock (4,923). HMS has claimed 8,000 in Sugar and 4,150 in cotton textiles.

In the year 1957-58, we lost 40 unions with a membership of 26,008 for not submitting annual returns and 8 unions with a membership of 5,819 for showing incorrect affiliation. This year, the position as regards submission of annual returns has improved to some extent.

The State Committee held its annual conference at Guntur in May 1959. Com.Dange, General Secretary, AITUC, attended it. The State TUC Working Committee met in July and again in November 1959. A meeting of the General Council was held in December. Reports of these meetings come to the Centre very late and that too, in the form of press releases.

The protest strike called on July 21, against the undemocratic action of the Central Government in intervening in Kerala was very successful. Another call for strike against the sharp rise in food prices, on 31st August 1959 did not succeed.

The employees of the State Government observed "Quit Work Day" on 27-2-59 as a protest against the report of the Pay Committee.

The whole year has been a period of offensive from the Congress Party and the INTUC in which the former Chief Minister Shri Sanjeeva Reddy and the then Labour Minister (now Chief Minister) Shri Sanjeevaiah were active. In Singareni Collieries and in Sirpur Kaghaznagar, there were violent clashes provoked by the INTUC. In the State-owned Road Transport undertaking at Hyderabad, where an independent trade union is functioning for long, attempts were made by the Congress to set up a rival union.

In the tripartite committees on State level, the AITUC is represented but with much less representation, considering the verified membership of the different TU organisations. No reports of these tripartite meetings, when held, have been received in the Central Office. Similarly, cases of non-implementation of awards, agreements and labour enactments, received in the Central Office were very few.

In Hyderabad, Com.Satyanaarayana Reddy enrolled nine subscribers for the TUR early in 1959, after the Bangalore session of the General Council. From no other centre, reports

of any such efforts have been received. 51 copies of TUR are sent to affiliated unions in the State.

Rs.1,154 out of a quota of Rs.21,257 have been received from the State on account of Building Fund.

It will be no exaggeration to state that there is no STUC centre worth the name. It was decided in the last Working Committee (Delhi) meeting that Com.Parvathi Krishnan, Vice-President and Com.Raj Bahadur Gour, Secretary, will meet the Secretariat of the STUC to discuss about this weakness. Com.Raj Bahadur Gour and Com.Vithal Rao (Treasurer), by virtue of their being members of the Committee, have been attending the STUC Committee meetings. Com.Parvathi Krishnan could not attend the meeting as dates mutually agreed and suitable to both could not be fixed. The General Council of the STUC is said to have discussed the toning up of the organisation. But the Centre is unaware of the steps taken in this direction.

With the offensive of the INTUC on, vast field of unorganised sections of labour still available, the membership drive of unions not taking strides, the State Committee has important and urgent work to attend, if it has to maintain its lead over INTUC in verified membership.

Other issues before the STUC relate to unions of agricultural workers and rise in food prices in a 'surplus' State.

2. ASSAM

According to figures available for 1957, Assam State had 1,050 factories employing 72,415 workers. 5,29,528 workers are engaged in plantations and 4,721 in mines. Thus total labour force in the State aggregates 6,06,664.

We claimed in the year 1957-58, a membership of 22,439 (in 10 unions) and the verified membership in 9 unions was 8,400. We have claimed 11,859 members for 1958-59 in 13 unions.

INTUC is the largest force in the State, with a verified membership of 2,17,246 (in 24 unions) in 1957-58 and has claimed for 1958-59, 2,42,617 in 18 unions, HMS obtained nil verified membership and UFUC has claimed 6 unions with 1,105 members. INTUC's biggest membership is in plantations (2,10,358) and transport (28,839). HMS has for 1958-59 claimed a membership of 6,854 in plantations.

The State TUC held its conference in March 1959 at Dibrugarh. The STUC General Council met on September 11-13. Reports of these meetings in the form of press releases have been received. The Central Office has not received the report made by the General Secretary to the STUC's General Council.

The State Committee decided to have one union of plantation workers on State-basis, and also to observe "Demands Week" from September 26, to raise the powerful voice of the tea plantation workers. It is not known how far we have progressed in tea plantations and if we succeeded in building a unitary organisation for the plantation workers in the State.

We are also unaware of the implementation of the STUC's decision to publish a Bulletin.

In Assam collieries, our union was bigger than the INTUC affiliate. However, the management not only did not recognise our union but bypassed it in negotiations and agreements. The State and Central Governments were active on the side of the

management. The area was kept out of the LAT Award on Coal Dispute and separate agreement, very defective, was negotiated with the INTUC union. Our union had to go on strike from January 15, 1960, to assert their right as representative union. The Labour Ministries of the State and the Centre refused to intervene and repression was let loose on the workers.

At the time of the State Conference, meetings of Working Youth and Working Women were also organised by the STUC. No report on this is however available to us.

The State TUC also decided to take certain steps to reorganise its central office. How far these decisions have been implemented is not known.

Nine copies of TUR are sent to affiliates in Assam.

A sum of Rs.80 out of the quota of Rs.5,610 has been received from the State towards Building Fund.

We have our nominees in the State level tripartite committees and reports of meetings have been received.

Special attention should be given to the plantations and transport industries.

The Centre should take up the work in plantations directly under it with coordination of the STUC.

3. B I H A R

In Bihar State, according to 1957 figures, the total number of daily employment in 4,511 factories was to the tune of 1,80,260 workers. 2,40,863 workers were engaged in mines and 1,083 in plantations - 4,22,206 in all.

We claimed the organised strength of 82,915 members in 52 unions (including mines) in 1957-58 and the verified figure was 10,914 in 34 unions. Seven unions with a membership of 23,566 did not show records, while 9 unions with a membership of 8,895 did not submit returns and therefore excluded from our lists. In 1958-59, we have claimed a membership of 72,390 in 53 unions.

In the State, our membership campaign has been weak in almost all the industries, notably in iron and steel and mines.

We are nowhere in sugar industry in the State, which is second only to U.P. in the whole of India.

INTUC, HMS and UTUC are all active in Bihar. The verified claims for 1957-58 were: INTUC - 94,479 (50 unions); HMS - 11,828 (nine unions) and UTUC - 16,248 (40 unions).

In 1958-59, the INTUC has claimed a membership of 1,37,693 in 83 unions. Their membership is bigger in mining (66,012); iron and steel (28,768), metal (12,748) and sugar (6,779). HMS is strong in sugar with a membership of 6,797 and has claimed a membership of 28,154 in mines. UTUC has claimed a number of small unions, the largest among them being in Murulidih mines (9,056), Motipur sugar factory (1,022) and Patna Corporation (2,553).

During the year, there was a strike by 3,400 workers engaged on the Ganga Bridge Project, on January 31, against retrenchment.

In the collieries, there were a few strikes, e.g., in Kusunda (March 6-31), Kirkend and New Marine Collieries (March - June) against victimisation and violation of Mines Act, etc.

The Fifth Conference of the STUC was held at Jamshedpur in April 1959. A working women's conference is also said to have been organised but we have no reports.

The biggest organisational problem of the State Committee was to manage the Jamshedpur Mazdoor Union, after the arrest and detention of the leading comrades in the so-called "conspiracy case", since May 1958 and a large number of criminal cases in that connection. The arrest of the majority of the leading comrades was a serious blow to the whole TU work in Bihar and the defence of the cases has imposed a ^{very} heavy burden on the State TUC and the centre.

A meeting of the STUC Working Committee was held on August 16-17.

The Committee had decided to participate in the "Food movement", against rising prices which began on September 14.

Earlier, we were getting regular reports from this Committee but the situation has deteriorated in 1959, specially in the latter half. It was reported that a comrade has been entrusted with the main responsibility of STUC work but things do not, however, seem to have improved.

Coms. Indrajit Gupta and T.B.Vithal Rao were to visit the State in connection with reorganisation of work but it has not been possible for them to go there in August, and after that, to our knowledge, no meeting of the Working Committee or General Council has been held. Com.Vithal Rao had also agreed to tour some centres for the Building Fund campaign but the STUC failed to take advantage of this offer.

Since Ernakulam Session, no comrade from Bihar attended the working Committee and General Council meeting of the AITUC. Coms. Kedar Das, Ali Amjad and others are in jail and those not in jail are too busy.

15 copies of TUR are being sent to affiliated unions in Bihar.

A sum of Rs.181 has been collected from the State for the Building Fund, out of its quota of Rs.20,279.

The Committee had at one stage decided to publish a TU weekly.

Now that the Jamshedpur cases (first round) is over, the STUC should meet again and discuss, in the presence of AITUC representatives for its reorganisation and priorities of work.

4. BOMBAY (MAHARASHTRA)

Bombay State including Gujerat had in 1957, 10,626 factories employing 10,75,944 workers. 33,350 workers were engaged in mines, being the total to 11,09,294.

We had claimed in 1957-58, a membership of 2,62,137 (in 132 unions) and got verified membership of 52,161 in 63 unions. Four unions with a membership of 81,869 did not show records; in case of 35 unions with a membership of 30,391, registration was cancelled and 19 unions (membership 9,978)

could not prove affiliation with AITUC. In 1958-59, the membership claimed is 94,969 in 109 unions and in Gujerat separately, a membership of 12,764 in 44 unions. Our Bombay textile union having merged in the new Independent union, we lost its membership of 65,000. It is now reported that the registration of our affiliate has also been cancelled as no returns were sent.

INTUC claimed in 1957-58 the affiliation of 241 unions (membership 3,37,161) and got a verified claim 208 unions with membership of 2,23,706. In 1958-59, they have claimed 252 unions with 3,52,609 members.

INTUC strongholds are in textiles (2,32,982), transport (53,232), engineering (8,005) and Chemical (8,229).

HMS claimed in 1957-58 63 unions having 1,35,368 members and got verified membership for 53 unions with 79,701 members. In 1958-59, they have claimed 1,67,323 members. Their strongholds are in Railways (62,000), engineering (16,636), port and dock (21,047), textiles (silk - 14,338); (cotton - 14,924).

Our membership has gone down particularly in silk and woollen textiles, cement and engineering to some extent, sugar, ship-building and ship repairs and printing presses. We have maintained in Petroleum, chemicals. Membership campaign generally is weak.

In Bombay City, a long-drawn struggle was the strike in the National Electrical Industries from April 24 to June 10 and again from June 20 to 26 and then followed by lock-out. The strike was called off on August 5. The issue involved was the change in the wage structure and retrenchment of 20 workers.

The conference of the STUC was due to be held in 1959 but is now expected to be convened in February, 1960.

There is every month a letter or two from the General Secretary of the STUC to the Centre Office but no reports of any General Council or Working Committee meetings have been received by us. Therefore we are not aware at all as to what decisions were taken and whether these were implemented or not.

66 copies of TUR are sent to affiliated unions in Bombay.

Rs. 13,948,75 have been collected as Building Fund, out of a quota of Rs.65,534.

It seems the STUC is not functioning at all. It has no control over the TU movement even in ~~Bombay~~ City, what to say of the State as a whole.

The General Secretary of the AITUC, Com. Dange has been paying some attention to this STUC lately and to Engineering and Textile industries in particular. But basically the situation remains the same. The AITUC has suffered a setback in the city in some sectors, while in one or two, it has held its own or advanced slightly. The organisational problems of this biggest centre of trade unionism in India, as far as the AITUC is concerned, are grave and for the present at least, defy any solution. The State TU Conference is due to meet this month (February).

5. D E L H I

Delhi State had 834 factories and 57,737 workers in 1957.

Our Membership claimed in 1957-58 was 41,292 in 17 unions and the verified figure was 14,238 in 13 unions. Two unions

with a membership of 16,973 did not show records. In 1958-59 we claimed a membership of 37,904 in 28 unions. We are the biggest TU force in this City.

INTUC, the second largest, submitted a list of 35 unions with a membership of 10,263 and got verified figure of 7,901 in 20 unions. In 1958-59, they claimed a membership of 14,644 in 32 unions. Their major claims are in textiles (4,932), salaried employees (2,898), printing (1,342), metal trades (1,187), and transport (1,028).

HMS claimed a membership of 10,263 in 6 unions but the verified figure was only 850 members in one union. HMS claim for 1958-59 was 46,439 members of which 43,296 is the claim for their union in Northern Railway alone.

The UTUC with 5 unions claimed a membership of 4429 and got 2,041 verified. UTUC has a good union in the printing industry.

In Delhi City, our membership has gone down in municipal and local bodies and building industry. We have had the affiliation of the petroleum union. Textiles have more or less maintained the position. There is yet vast scope in engineering and building industries, to being in the unorganised into the movement. Certain other unions which are under our influence but not yet formally affiliated should also be drawn into the organisation.

On June 7, 1959, thousands of workers went in procession to the Prime Minister's House under the auspices of the Delhi TU action committee to voice their protest against the mounting offensive of the employers.

The struggle of the Ajudhia Mill workers, which has been reported full in the "Trade Union Record" was a remarkable struggle in Delhi.

The INTUC during this period has made special efforts to disrupt our unions and set up rival TUs. They were helped by the central labour relations machinery and this helped them to increase the number of their affiliates. HMS has not grown but with the formal affiliation of the Northern Railway Union, has swelled its membership. The situation demands constant vigilance and hard work not only in the existing unions by increasing our membership but also entering into new fields.

It is to the credit of the STUC to have been able to collect a sum of Rs.3,000 (the call was for 5,000) for publishing Hindi-Urdu TU weeklies. Hindi weekly, Mazdoor Janta is being published for the last six months.

The State Committee has representation in tripartite committees. Attempt is always made by the administration to put INTUC, and at some places HMS, representatives also in these committees, though in some, according to their verified membership, they should have no place.

The Secretariat of the AITUC met comrades of Delhi State Committee and discussed in detail the tasks as well as organisation. No report of its implementation or otherwise has been received. The STUC centre as such does not exist, though on City basis, as and when required, coordination on a particular issue is obtained. There is no one comrade whose main responsibility is STUC centre.

16 copies of TUR are sent to affiliated unions in Delhi.

Rs.918 were collected for Building Fund, out of the quota of Rs.10,320.

6. K A R N A T A K

Karnatak (Mysore) had a total labour force of 2,91,093 in the year 1957 - 1,12,618 in 1,278 factories; 52,048 in mines and 1,26,427 in tea, coffee and rubber plantations.

We claimed a membership of 47,926 in 36 unions in 1957-58 and the verified figure was 25,092 in 23 unions. In the year 1958-59, we claimed a membership of 35,883 in 39 unions.

There is a general tendency in the State of membership going down in all industries, except in Kolar Gold Fields. More attention has to be paid to membership drive. The gap between unorganised labour and our membership is too wide in all sectors.

INTUC claimed a membership in 1957-58 of 22,251 in 23 unions and its verified membership was 12,651 in 16 unions. In 1958-59, they have claimed 30 unions with a membership of 22,622. Their largest membership is in textiles (9,353), mining (4,024) and sugar (4,254).

HMS has claimed in 1958-59 a membership of 11,905 out of which engineering accounts for 4,495; cotton textiles 1,220; sugar 1,369 and tobacco (1,800). UTUC does not exist.

The engineering unions in Bangalore, viz., in Hindustan Aircrafts, Hindustan Machine Tools, Bharat Electronics and Indian Telephone Industries, have united unions not affiliated to any central TU organisation. INTUC has recently set up rival unions in Machine Tools and Aircraft factory.

There has been some improvement in our activities among plantation workers in the State.

Early in 1959, about 100 copies of TUR were sold in Bangalore every fortnight. However, in recent months, this has come down to 20. 33 copies are sent to affiliated unions in the State.

A sum of Rs.3,687 was collected for Building Fund, out of the quota of Rs.11,681.50.

Com.Raj Bahadur Gour and Com.Parvathi Krishnan visited the State and attended the STUC Executive Committee meetings. Decisions taken to reorganise the STUC have not been implemented. There is neither any STUC office nor a person whose main responsibility is STUC work.

South Kanara region which used to be very prompt in reports, correspondence, etc., earlier, has not been so this year.

No report about State-level tripartite meetings has been received nor are we aware of the representation our STUC has on these bodies.

The Executive Committee which met on November 1, decided to reorganise the STUC collect Building Fund, have a strike on December 4 against rise in food prices and agitate for a uniform legislation for the whole State as against the diverse legislations prevailing in different parts of the State as vestiges of the period before States reorganisation.

Special attention has to be devoted to the large number of workers, now unorganised, in manganese mining in the State as well as in intensifying organisational work in coffee plantations.

7. K E R A L A

Kerala had a total working force of 3,30,655 workers in 1957. Of this 1,54,741 are employed in plantations and 1,55,305 in factories - more or less equally divided in both.

We claimed in 1957-58, a membership of 2,32,690 in 486 unions and got verified claim of 76,453 members in 200 unions. 103 unions with a membership of 36,515 did not submit returns, 43 unions with a membership of 32,833 did not show records and in the case of 70 unions (m.24,500) affiliation could not be proved. Registration of 51 unions (m.16,271) was cancelled. We have claimed in 1958-59, a membership of 2,21,912 in 454 unions.

We have largest number of small unions in the State so much so that membership in this State though only 21 per cent of our total claim, the percentage of number of unions is 33 per cent. In the year 1959, there was the general tendency of membership campaign not being speeded up. In plantations, there is still a wide gap between the employed workers and those organised in our unions. In textiles, road transport and port and dock, our membership has gone down this year.

The UTUC, second largest force, claimed in 1957-58 fifty unions with 28,961 workers and got verified claim for 30 unions having 6,180 members. They lost 17,357 members for not showing records of four unions. In 1958-59, they have claimed 59 unions with a membership of 34,467. They have claimed 3,736 members in tea plantations, 3,918 in mines other than coal, 12,881 in cashewnut processing industry and 2,486 in Chavara port.

INTUC claimed 27,687 members in 36 unions (1957-58) and the verified figure was 12,726 in 21 unions. They also lost 7,581 members in 8 unions for not showing records. In 1958-59, they have claimed 40 unions with a membership of 42,740, which has, in the preliminary scrutiny, been reduced to 35 unions with 26,445 members. Their claims are biggest in plantations (13,459) textiles (4,102), and port and dock (3,744).

HMS had only one union with 421 members, as per verification done for 1957-58. For 1958-59, they have claimed 5,390 members in 4 unions, the largest being in plantations (4,000).

The conference of the STUC was held at the time of our Ernakulam Session. With most of our leading comrades busy in the legislature work during this period, the conference could not be held. The Working Committee and General Council of the STUC met in February and August 1959.

A good number of unions, specially of agricultural workers remain unregistered. For the smaller unions, it also becomes difficult to pay all dues to local council, STUC, AITUC, the trade federation, besides functioning the union itself. In fact, in the General Secretary's Report to the STUC, it was pointed out that often the unions bypass the STUC in favour of their trade federations. The net result is that AITUC loses its verified membership, to the extent of 68% in this

State.

The AITUC has got influence over the workers and this fact was shown during this period time and again and lately in the general strike on August 1, 1959, against the Central intervention in dissolving the legislature and dismissing the Ministry. The STUC has allocated one person as office secretary of the STUC and since then there is slight improvement in office contact between the STUC centre and the AITUC. But for lack of a team of comrades to look after the STUC work, this gap between not only the organised and unorganised but also between the loosely organised and those who could prove their claims in verification, cannot be filled in. The positive side of the picture is the existence of District TU councils everywhere.

Steps should be taken wherever possible to merge smaller unions and may be, on district or taluq basis, have a bigger union in the same industry.

The STUC has submitted a memorandum to the Government regarding implementation of the labour policy which the Communist Ministry was following since 1957; demanding setting up of tripartite Plantation Board to discuss bonus, for the defence of agricultural workers who were being attacked for political reasons, for maintaining cooperatives of toddy tappers and reopening of Sitaram Mills. On the last two issues, a deputation of Com. Chadayammuri, Secretary of the STUC and Com. T. C. N. Menon, M.P., met Union Ministers at Delhi in December 1959.

In tripartite bodies, INTUC is given equal seats with the AITUC though its verified and claimed membership is only 20% and 11% respectively of ours. We do not get reports of the tripartite meetings.

It is to the credit of the unions in the State that busy as they were in the fresh elections, they collected a sum of Rs. 7,030.50 for Building Fund against the quota of Rs. 58,172.

113 copies of TUR are being sent to affiliates in the State.

8. MAHARAJASTHAN

The Maharajasthan STUC came into existence in a conference held at Surendranagar on March 7-8, 1959.

As yet, we do not have separate figures about the labour force in Gujarat. These figures are included in Bombay State. In 1958-59, we claimed separately for Gujarat, a membership of 12,764 in 44 unions.

Our unions are in textiles (cotton and woollen), transport mines, cement, oil mills, building, and municipalities - specially in the area of Saurashtra.

The INTUC and HMS have claimed a membership of 463,101 in 137 unions and 10,582 in 10 unions respectively in this part of Bombay State for 1958-59.

Ahmedabad is our weakest base and INTUC's strongest.

The STUC since formation is functioning and keeping constant touch with the Centre.

Com. Raj Bahadur Gour, Secretary, AITUC, attended the STUC Working Committee meeting and also toured centres in connection with the Building Fund campaign. He was to visit

the State again for the Working Committee of the STUC, which had to be postponed due to floods in Surat.

The STUC endorses to the Central Office copies of all circulars it issues to the unions in Gujarati language.

A sum of Rs.1,563.75 was collected towards Building Fund out of the quota of Rs.4,000 for the State.

35 copies of TUR are sent to affiliated unions in the States.

9. MADHYA PRADESH

In 1957, there were in all 2,30,722 workers in Madhya Pradesh, comprising of 1,54,738 in 1743 factories and 75,989 in mines.

We had claimed a membership of 25,216 in 30 unions in 1957-58 and got a verified figure of 4,534 in 10 unions. Our fiasco was due to 15 unions with a membership of 18,294 not having submitted annual returns. In 1958-59, we claimed a membership of 20,183 in 45 unions. The union of textile workers in Indore in which our comrades are working along with HMS and others, is an independent union, not affiliated to any central TU organisation.

INTUC claimed a membership of 59,826 in 51 unions and their verified figure was 34,423 in 23 unions. They also lost a membership of 27,505 in 23 unions for not submitting annual returns. In 1958-59, they have claimed a membership of 65,343 in 35 unions. Their largest unions are in textiles (33,380), mines (17,550) and cement (3,791).

HMS claimed a membership of 6,194 including 3,121 in cotton textiles, 1,700 in iron and steel and 1,377 in coal mines.

UTUC has no union in this State.

The Working Committee of the STUC, to our knowledge, met twice in the year - once in July and again in August 1959. In accordance with the decision of the Working Committee, Com.K.G.Sriwastava, Secretary, AITUC attended the August meeting.

During this year, in this State, there has been two State-wide movements - one against the M.P.Industrial Relations Bill, in September 1959, and the other, the strike of State Government employees from December 10 to 20, 1959. In Rajnandgaon, as a result of closure of textile mill and for revising rates of beedi workers and iron ore miners there was a good agitation. As a result of agitation, workers in iron ore mines have got partial victory in wage increase.

Workers of Bhilai also started pay strike in protest against the cut in wages in October and were supported by employees of Hindustan Steel Ltd., at Rourkela and Durgapur.

Besides manganese mines and coal mines nearabout Nagpur, we have spread in coal mines in Vindhya Pradesh Area and iron ore mines in the State.

Coms. Vithal Rao M.P., Treasurer, and Raj Bahadur Gour, M.P., Secretary, AITUC, visited the State and toured mines area.

A review and closer coordination of our work in mines area of this State is overdue.

While we have entered into new regions during this period and there the membership is an asset, in tobacco and engineering industries our membership has gone up, in sugar and transport, we have just maintained, in textiles and in general, there is enough scope to intensify membership drive.

In the Working Committee meeting held in August 1959 a plan of reorganisation of STUC centre was chalked out. Com. Diwakar, who had returned from the WFTU was entrusted with work at STUC centre along with the present team. Functioning of State Federations has also to be revitalised.

Comrades from the Centre had offered to tour M.P. for Building Fund drive. The STUC informed us that it is not necessary. Rs.554 has been collected from this State on account of Building Fund out of a quota of Rs.6304.

6 copies of TUR are sent to affiliated unions.

In fact, contact with the STUC has been further reduced since August meeting of the STUC.

10. O R R I S S A

Orissa State had 343 factories employing 24,730 workers in 1957 and 50,491 work in mines.

Our membership in the State in 1957-58 was 27,489 in 19 unions and the verified figure stood at 6,696 in 11 unions. Claim for 1958-59 is 11,470 in 14 unions. Both in textiles and mines other than coal, our figures are low this year.

INTUC claimed 16,006 members in 13 unions and its verified membership is 10,692 in 10 unions. In 1958-59 it has claimed 13 unions with 19,096 members, out of which 17,872 are from mines.

HMS claimed 10 unions with 6,406 workers and in verification, the figure increased to 9,749 in 8 unions. In 1958-59, the HMS claim is 13,389, with 1700 in iron and steel, 3,414 in coal mines, 2100 in cement and 4,600 in paper.

UTUC does not exist.

We are represented on tripartite committees in the State and we get reports of such meetings from the STUC sometimes.

In the past, efforts were made to reorganise our work in mines but not with much success.

This State Committee is very weak and in reports, has always been foremost to be paid special attention. Last Working Committee meeting of AITUC decided that Com.K.G.Sriwastava should visit the State, after iron and steel and mines trade meetings. Both these decisions could not be carried out.

Except for a meeting in February, this year there is no other report of activity from the STUC.

In Barbil area, due to retrenchment of over 5,000 miners, there was a big agitation.

With Rourkela steel plant and the mines area around it, this State is becoming a big centre of industry and working class and hence deserves special attention.

11. PUNJAB

Punjab, a State of small-scale industries, nonetheless had 99,147 workers in 2,307 factories besides 1,565 workers in limestone and slate mines and 6,766 in tea plantations. The total comes to 1,07,478 in 1957.

We claimed a membership of 48,233 in 61 unions and our verified figure is 17,585 in 39 unions. In 1958-59, a membership of 47,801 in 65 unions has been claimed.

INTUC claimed a membership of 27,239 in 74 unions and got it verified for 16,653 in 49 unions. In 1958-59, the INTUC claim is 30,893 in 94 unions. They claim as their stronghold in textiles (6,118), Transport (3,259), building (7,885) and paper (2,283).

HMS and UTUC are almost non-existent in Punjab.

In this State, our membership in textiles, engineering, and motor transport has gone up, while in sugar and building industries, it has gone down. In plantations, we are ^{almost} nowhere.

This is one State with a proper STUC and a functioning one. The Working Committee and General Council meet very often. However, as the reports except press releases, are in Urdu, we are not in a position to summarise the same here. There is a team for STUC work and recently it has been further strengthened to cope up with the large number of small unions and their day-to-day tasks. The unions being small and the local leadership not yet fully trained in the complicated legal and TU machinery of day-to-day functioning, they have to rely on the State Committee more than what ordinarily should be.

The State Conference was held in December 1959. Com.Parvathi Krishnan, Vice President and Com.K.G.Sriwastava, Secretary, AITUC, participated in it.

The State TUC also held for the first time a State-level conference of metal and engineering workers. Com.Mohd.Elias attended it on behalf of the AITUC.

All-India Woollen Textile Workers Conference was held in January 1960 at Dhariwal. Coms. S.S.Yusuf, Vice President, Raj Bahadur Gour, Satish Loomba and K.G.Sriwastava, Secretaries participated in it.

The State Committee runs a TU journal in Urdu.

It has representation in tripartite conferences but discrimination is shown in the sense that though this Committee has larger membership, the INTUC is given larger representation.

On 30th and 31st August 1959, protest days were observed against the discriminatory policy of the Punjab Government.

20th December was observed as protest day against the anti-labour policy of Punjab Government and against rise in food prices.

Retrenchment of 5,000 workers of Bhakra-Nangal is a big issue in the State along with the fragmentation of units engaged in production of woollen textiles, to save excise duty and deprive workers of benefits under labour laws.

For Building Fund drive, Com.S.S.Yusuf, Vice President, AITUC, under took a tour important centres. He also attended the State Motor Transport Conference.

The State has collected a sum of Rs.1,748/- towards Building Fund, out of their quota of Rs.16,058.

26 copies of TUR are sent to affiliates in the State.

12. R A J A S T H A N

Rajasthan is an industrially backward State with only 49,199 workers in 545 factories and 20,464 workers in mines and quarries.

We claimed a membership of 13,613 workers in 18 unions and the verified figure was only 1,739 of one union in Beawar.

The rest of the unions were scored out as none could supply us their registration number. In 1958-59, a membership of 12,120 workers in 35 unions has been claimed.

INTUC claimed 12,150 workers in 24 unions and got verified claim of 4,384 in 13 unions. In 1958-59, they have claimed 17,473 membership in 42 unions, the larger membership being in textiles (3,670), mining and quarrying (2,801), cement (2,010), local bodies (1,495), agriculture (1,150) and chemical (1,208).

Our membership has gone up in road transport and building industries. It has gone down in textiles, may be due to closures and lockout, in engineering, mines and quarries.

In Beawar, the closure of Edward and Krishna Mills and similar trouble in Pali resulting in 13 days' strike, kept the TU leaders engaged.

Recently, the nationalisation of certain routes of road transport has created the problem of employees at present engaged in the undertaking.

The STUC centre was reorganised in a meeting of activists held on May 24 and 25 at Beawar. Com.Raj Bahadur Gour, Secretary, AITUC, attended this meeting. He also toured certain important TU centres. But things did not improve.

Another STUC working Committee meeting was held at Jaipur on October 25 and 26, 1959. In accordance with the decision of the last Working Committee meeting, Com.Satish Loomba, Secretary, AITUC, attended it. Thorough discussion on the organisation took place and certain decisions taken. It was decided to take out a Hindi Bulletin 'Sramik Sandesh' and also to form a State Federation of Miners and Quarry Workers Unions.

Still there is no STUC centre.

No amount has been collected in the State towards Building Fund. The quota is Rs.3,403.

14 copies of TUR are being sent to affiliated unions in the State.

13. U T T A R P R A D E S H

Out of a total labour force of 2,86,711 in this State in 1957, the big chunk of 2,82,987 are workers in 1977 factories and 3,596 plantation workers.

A membership of 29,827 with 66 unions was claimed in 1957-58 and the verified figure came to 5,074 in 17 unions. 39 unions (14,475) did not submit annual returns; 3 unions (4,198) could not prove affiliation. In 1958-59, the claimed membership is 20,971 in 78 unions. Textile union in Kanpur being a united union, is not affiliated to any central TU

organisation.

INTUC claimed a membership of 60,456 in 161 unions and their verified claim was 40,800 workers in 99 unions. 13,959 members were lost for failure to submit annual returns by unions and 2,553 in 6 unions lost on account of failure to show records. In 1958-59, it has claimed a membership of 76,642 in 196 unions. It has claimed strong position in sugar (33,138), salaried employees and professional workers (8,405), textiles (7,300), engineering (4,790), Building (4,403), printing (3,321).

HMS had claimed 20,946 members in 36 unions and its verified claim for 1957-58 was 5,072 in 17 unions. In 1958-59, it has claimed a membership of 25,540, comprising of cotton textiles (4,100), jute (2,000), iron and steel (1,894), engineering (1,363), railways (1,852), roadways (1,800), sugar (7,044), chemicals (1,706).

UTUC had also claimed 6,359 members in 18 unions, though the verified figure is only 1,847 in 3 unions. It has claimed in 1958-59, a membership of 12,553 in 29 unions, sugar being the largest with 8,342 members in 14 unions, and local bodies with 1,071 members in 3 unions.

While our membership in sugar, building and engineering, chemicals and printing, has gone up, maintaining status quo in tobacco and plantation industries, it has gone down in textiles, glass, printing and leather industries. The organisation of handloom weavers - 'Bunkar' - has totally collapsed. Out of 6,195 workers in leather, we have a membership of only 981. In sugar, another important industry, the opportunities and possibilities are immense though during the four month season, we are not able to move as fast as situation demands due to lack of resources and organisation. In sugar, out of 55,557 workers, we have a membership of 4,660 only.

In early this year (1959), there was stir for the demand of increase in wages in sugar industry and a struggle in Rampur sugar factory. The grant of an interim rise in pay granted by the Sugar Wage Board was a success. In textiles, the process of rationalisation is going on in Kanpur. In Swadeshi mills, Allahabad, there was a strike from June 9 to July 4, 1959.

A conference of workers engaged in hydro-electric projects in the State was called in Meerut last year and a State Federation was formed.

In the five important towns of the State, viz., Kanpur, Allahabad, Benaras, Agra and Lucknow - called 'KABAL' towns, our position is not satisfactory. In Banaras, it is reported that TUs are functioning but they have no link with the Centre, no TUR copy is purchased, no affiliation fee paid. In Allahabad in none of the important industries we have affiliates. In Kanpur, the textile union remains independent; and we are weak in leather, chemicals and engineering. In Lucknow, we have no affiliated union. Agra's leather industry is not organised. This weakness was manifest most in the call for the State-wide strike, given by us in support of the peasants' struggle, which did not materialise.

We are 'registered federation' in the State, according to the rules framed by the State Government. INTUC and its Sugar Federation are also registered. HMS is not. However, INTUC and HMS get representation in tripartite committees. Recently, in some of the newly-formed committees, our STUC has also been given representation. In other Committees, the same situation persists.

The State Committee office has been reorganised and as far as office work is concerned, functioning well. We receive copies of all circulars sent to the unions as well as replies to our letters. Our link with the unions in this State is very weak.

The Working Committee of the STUC met in May 1959 and then again Com.S.A.Dange, General Secretary, AITUC, met TU functionaries in a meeting in Lucknow on December 4-5, and discussed priorities of work and organisation. On December 16-18, comrades working in sugar industry met at Mansoorpur. Com.Dange and Com.K.G.Sriwastava from the centre attended.

The State is quite a big one and therefore it has been decided to set up a regional office for the Western Part in Meerut. This office has started functioning.

Conference of the STUC is overdue.

A sum of Rs.176.25 has been received from the State on account of Building Fund out of a quota of Rs.7,457.

24 copies of TUR are sent to affiliates in the State.

14. TAMILNAD

Tamilnad (Madras State) in 1957, had 3,24,617 workers in 4,956 factories; 11,902 in mines and 1,49,376 in plantations - thus totalling 4,85,895.

In 1957-58, we claimed a membership of 2,47,733 in 169 unions and our verified figure is 98,888 in 129 unions. We lost 11,459 members for not submitting returns and registration being cancelled. In 1958-59 we claimed 1,45,005 members in 206 unions.

INTUC claimed 72,346 members in 53 unions and in verification, the figure came down to 54,784 in 44 unions. In 1958-59, it has claimed a membership of 74,862 in 59 unions. Its largest unions are in plantations (35,802), textiles (25,381), transport (5,781) and cement (3,480).

HMS had claimed 27,240 members in 17 unions and in verification, the figure went up to 29,729 in 14 unions. This year it has claimed 32,518 members out of which claim in cotton textiles is 25,892, engineering 1,555 and port and dock 2,000.

UTUC had claimed 24,127 in 41 unions in 1957-58 but in verification the figure came down to 1,918 in one union. Incorrect affiliation, non-submission of returns resulted in loss of 20,166 members. In 1958-59, it has claimed 13,673 members in 33 unions, including mines (4,273), transport (1,217), local bodies (1,174) personal services (2,107).

We are strong in textiles in Coimbatore & Madurai but weak in Madras City. Our membership in building, chemicals, sugar, electrical engineering and mines other than coal has gone up. In handloom, transport tobacco, petroleum and plantations, it has gone down.

In textiles, leather, mines and plantations, there is still scope for progress. With the formation of a State-wide union in plantations, it is hoped the situation may improve. The only railway union affiliated to AITUC is in this State - the S.R.Labour Union.

In the State, the struggle of 22,000 Harvey Mill Workers at Madurai, Tuticorin and Vikramasingapuram, against rationalisation; of textile workers in Coimbatore for the reopening of Kaleeswarar Mills and of the Indian Express workers are worth mentioning in this year.

The STUC has a centre and a small team also for STUC work. Contact with the Centre is regular though we cannot be benefitted fully because of the reports being in Tamil. The TU paper in Tamil is also being published. We have to rely on the press releases.

The STUC conference was held in February 1959. Com.Mirajkar, our President, attended it.

A General Council meeting of the STUC held on 25th July 1959 was addressed by Com.S.A.Dange, General Secretary.

A Conference of the District Mill Workers Union was held at Tirupur.

In between Working Committee meetings have also been held.

The State TUC and unions in Tamilnad did commendable work in organising relief in connection with the struggle in Coimbatore, Madurai, Tuticorin and Vikrasingapuram.

This State has upto this time collected the largest amount for Building Fund, viz., Rs.18,641.37nP, out of its quota of Rs.61,933. The unions in Coimbatore district have been in the forefront of the collections along with the Dockers in Madras. Comrades in this State have assured us that they will complete the target of Rs.25,000 in the not so distant future.

The unions in this State also pay affiliation fees in larger numbers.

96 copies of TUR are sent to affiliated unions.

15. WEST BENGAL

This highly-industrialised State in 1957 had 3,432 factories with 6,88,092 workers besides 1,14,069 workers engaged in mines and 2,02,446 in plantations, i.e., 10,04,607 in all.

Our claim in 1957-58 was to the extent of 2,42,346 in 240 unions and when verified was reduced to 1,58,683 in 182 unions. In 1958-59, we have claimed a membership of 2,38,956 in 216 unions.

INTUC claimed support of 3,01,553 in 167 unions in 1957-58 and the verified figure was 1,57,125 in 102 unions. In 1958-59, it has claimed 2,79,377 workers in 169 unions - transport alone claiming 67,774; plantations 34,503; textiles 42,460; iron and steel 14,289; local bodies 21,970; salaried employees 18,721; port and dock 17,964 and engineering 11,677.

HMS claimed 65,726 members in 49 unions and got in verification 39,035 workers in 19 unions. In 1958-59, it has claimed 80,338 workers - 16,198 in engineering, 22,600 in plantations, 6,636 in jute and 18,000 in coal mines.

UTUC claimed 87,015 members in 97 unions and got 47,298 in 80 unions. In 1958-59 it has claimed 98,102 members in 114 unions, with 30,615 in textiles, 20,129 in plantations, 3,342 in cement, 4,921 in printing and 14,975 in port and dock.

Our membership in this State among jute, water transport, road transport and building workers has gone down. It has gone up in engineering, plantations, chemicals and leather. In cotton and woollen textiles and mining, membership has been maintained. Though our influence is wide, organisation is lacking. Despite the one day strike in jute industry which was

united and complete, organisational gain is little. We have some very fine unions in engineering, still the unorganised belt is quite big.

There was a State-wide general strike in protest against rise in food prices on June 26 and September 3, 1959. The unions also participated in the movements in this connection.

Another notable and memorable strike was the one-day protest strike by two lakh jute workers demanding increase in wages, on December 14. The call for the strike was given by all the unions affiliated to INTUC, HMS and UTUC along with AITUC. Special efforts should be made to consolidate the gains of this united strike, in gaining new bases and increased membership in this industry.

20,000 municipal workers went on strike^{on} March 20, 1959 against non-implementation of the recommendation of the Minimum Wages Advisory Committee.

90,000 teachers of W.Bengal went on strike on April 30, for wage increase.

In M.M.C., Calcutta, there was a strike against retrenchment which began on June 29 and lasted for months.

Dooars and Terai plantation workers got a wage increase of Annas two per day, by a settlement, following a strike notice served by unions affiliated to all Central TU Organisations.

An attempt was made by the State Government to enact a bill banning strike in hospitals. This was against the decision of the 16th Indian Labour Conference and it was withdrawn.

The new Bill introduced in the State Assembly to curb the right of taking out processions has been described as a Black Bill and is being opposed by the working class vigorously, as it is intended for restricting all democratic movements generally and TU movement in particular.

The STUC has opposed extension of the ESI scheme to new areas in 24 Parganas unless the demand for its improvement is fulfilled. The STUC has also submitted a memorandum to Dr. Mudaliar, the one-man commission to review the working of the ESIC.

An All-India Conference of Engineering Workers was held in Calcutta in July and a National Federation of Metal and Engineering Workers was formed.

Workers employed in Burnpur and in nearby mines went on a one-day strike for grant of 65 days' bonus. The strike was called and led by INTUC. Our union in Burnpur and in mines did not support the strike call, as it was reported to be only a stunt to recover the lost influence of the INTUC.

The STUC actively participated in the flood relief work.

In this state, we are represented in all tripartite committees but still INTUC is given more seats, though their verified membership is less than ours. Reports of some of the Committee meetings are received by us.

Agreement regarding payment of bonus to tea plantation workers was arrived at this year for the years 1957 and 1958.

The STUC conference was held in August 1957.

The STUC Working Committee was convened on February 23 and 24 and again on 24th September and 6th October. The General Council met on 14-15th March. We received resolutions passed at the General Council meeting. No report of General Secretary presented to any of the meetings has been received and the usual press release is received.

The STUC centre is active as far as coordinating movements in Calcutta is concerned. It has not yet been able to build up a team of comrades who take the STUC work as their primary work, and pay due towards the organisational work in the State as a whole.

A sum of Rs.1,797 only has been collected from this State towards Building Fund out of a quota of Rs.60,586.

79 copies of TUR are sent to affiliated unions. Efforts to push the sale of TUR through the STUC did not bear fruit.

16. HIMACHAL PRADESH

There are 1,175 factory workers in 4 factories, 129 miners and 133 plantation workers - in all 1,437 according to 1957 figure.

This unit of ours is functioning under Punjab STUC. It has got a good TU in road transport and FWD.

INTUC has claimed a membership of 861 in 8 unions in 1958-59 - plantations 207; building 226 and printing 254. HMS and UTUC do not exist.

Our membership claimed in 1958-59 is 864 in 5 unions.

Com.Raj Bahadur Gour, Secretary, AITUC, toured this area twice during the year.

17. ANDAMAN-NICOBAR

This territory had in 1957, seven factories employing 2,808 workers.

No central TU organisation has claimed any membership from this region and nothing is known about the condition of the workers.

18. JAMMU & KASHMIR

We have no trade union affiliated to us.

INTUC claimed one union with 1,040 members but the claim was not substantiated.

19. TRIPURA

Tripura had 60 factories with 1,933 workers and 8,153 plantation workers - 10,086 workers in all.

We have no union in this region.

INTUC claimed 3 unions in 1957-58, with a membership of 6,097 and got a verified claim for 2 unions with 5,952 members. In 1958-59, they have claimed 2 unions with 6,107 members.

20. MANIPUR

We claimed one union with 65 members, although in verification this was not taken into account, as the union was not registered.

Since then the situation has improved in the State and we have three unions. We have claimed a membership of 1,315 in 2 unions in 1958-59.

Other central TU organisations do not exist in this territory though there are one or two unions under the influence of Lohia Socialists - yet independent of any central TU organisation.

Recently the local trade unions have decided to form a Manipur TU Congress which will have affiliation from six unions.

P. T. O.

POSITION IN SOME INDUSTRIES

We had decided in the last General Council meeting held at Bangalore in January 1959 to give attention to certain industrywise federations.

IRON & STEEL

The most important news this year in the private sector of iron and steel industry was the completion of the expansion programme of TISCO and the new wage agreement in this installation. Following the strike of May 12, 1958 and subsequent agitation, the Company and the INTUC negotiated a new wage-agreement, effective from March 1959. Though the increases are not satisfactory when seen in the light of doubling of production, they represent an advance on the old position.

In Kulti, almost all the workers rendered surplus due to closure of furnaces were absorbed in Burnpur and in the undertakings of Hindustan Steel Ltd.

Sir Biren Mukerjee in his annual meeting gave a suggestion that industrial relations in this industry, both in private and public sectors, be managed by the Union Government. AITUC has supported it.

The strike cases in Jamshedpur are still going on. The hearing of witnesses is over. Our efforts to get the discharged workers of May strike back in the job have not succeeded.

This has been an year of depression in the organisational work in both these centres.

The three steel works in Public Sector have in the course of the year gone into production. While at Rourkela and Durgapur, arrangements are being made to keep the revised schedule for completion and full functioning, Bhilai is thinking in terms of expansion programme for doubling production.

Workers employed by the Hindustan Steel Ltd., in the three State Sector plants conducted an agitation in the month of August 1959 and subsequently when construction allowance was withdrawn.

Construction workers in the Plants were worried over the working conditions as well as the prospect of impending retrenchment and unemployment.

In the iron ore mines of the Bhilai Steel Project, run by contractors, there was an agitation and representation regarding scales of pay, which partly succeeded.

Some attention was paid to the organisation in these regions and survey has been made. One of our organisers has gone round these areas and his report has been received. Main difficulty is about cadre situation, specially in Bhilai and Rourkela.

A meeting of comrades working in iron & steel industry should be held to work out the detailed slogans in each centre.

ENGINEERING

Conferences of engineering workers on State-level were held in Punjab and W.Bengal, in preparation for the National Conference. The National Conference was held in Calcutta from July 10 to 12, 1959 and the National Federation of Metal and Engineering Workers was formed. Com. Jean Marillier, Secretary, Metal and Engineering TUI, participated.

After that there was a Bombay State Conference of Engineering Workers on August 20 and a State Federation was formed.

Among the more important struggles during 1959 were the strike of workers in National Electrical Industries, Bombay - a prolonged one from April 24 to June 10 and again from June 20 to June 26, then lock-out and final withdrawal of strike on August 5; the struggle against retrenchment and lock-out in the Machinery Manufacturers' Corporation, Calcutta, from June 29 onwards and the token strike by Godrej factory workers on December 17 against the disruptive policies of the management.

In Hindustan Machine Tools, Bangalore, though programme of increase in production has been undertaken, the relations between the management and the workers have worsened. The union is not being recognised, victimisation is on, rival union has been set up and acceptance of demands of workers regarding wages, etc., is being delayed. The programme of labour participation in management has, it seems, been given up. New curbs on TU activities and use of goondaism by the authorities seem to be the order of the day now.

The demand for Wage Board which emerged from the national conference has been rejected by the Union Labour Ministry.

In the organised section of the engineering industry, the level of minimum wages is very low and need upward revision. Also D.A. should be linked to the cost of living index and present D.A. merged with pay.

The same demand cannot be insisted upon in the case of small-scale sector of this industry. A committee of comrades from certain States such as Punjab, U.P., Delhi, should be formed to go through the position of the industry and chalk out slogans for the movement, which may help betterment of the living and working conditions of the workers and, at the same time, help the industry to grow and maintain.

RAILWAYS

In the Bangalore session of the General Council, it was decided that we should strengthen AIRF and unity in Southern Railway should be achieved.

Efforts to unite Southern Railway affiliated to AIRF and our affiliate, S.R.Labour Union, did not succeed nor are any efforts at the moment under way for the same.

In between, once an effort was made to coordinate the work in Railways and evolve new organisational methods suiting the present situation.

We have no reports as to how far the new method has been implemented and whether it succeeded or not.

Due to the methods adopted by the AIRF leadership to victimise our active TU workers in the Northern Railway, there was, in certain sections, opposition to the main line of strengthening the AIRF and its unions. Comrades from this region were called at a meeting and they were convinced of the correctness of our policy.

In Central Railway, Com. Joglekar, a member of the Working Committee, toured a number of Centres.

In South-Eastern and North-Eastern sections, there is some coordination.

The AIRF leadership monopolised by the PSP continues to behave in a manner seeking to oust us from whatever position we have got and victimise our functioning in the unions. Some of the zonal unions have been affiliated to HMS this year, without reference to the rank and file workers.

The report of the Central Pay Commission has affected railway workers adversely in a particular manner, over and above the average Central Government employee, in that the free railway travel passes have been

reduced considerably. There is widespread dissatisfaction.

Attempts are being made to form a joint committee of AIRF, AIDEF, NFPTE and unions affiliated to the Confederation of Central Government Employees, to move jointly for suitable modification of the Pay Commission report and lead this movement.

SUGAR

We had thought of giving Sugar the first priority in U.P., and second in Bihar. Such is its importance.

In fact, in U.P., already efforts were under way to pay attention towards this sector, as a result of our earlier discussions. Except touring certain regions and becoming active in the United Chini Mill Mazdoor Federation, nothing could be done in the season ending March 1959. A strike in Rampur sugar Mills (Feb.2 to March 8) and the hunger strike by the General Secretary, UCMMF (Shri G.D.Bajpai) against a new agreement at unit level between the INTUC union and the management took lot of our time and energy.

On December 4-5, in the meeting of UPTUC comrades, work in this region was again emphasised. Another meeting of comrades working in sugar industry in West U.P. was held at Mansoorpur from December 16 to 18, attended by the General Secretary, AITUC, when details of work and tactics were worked out. Work has already begun with a regional office in Meerut.

A delegation of the AITUC led by Com.K.G.Sriwastava, Secretary, appeared before the Sugar Wage Board and gave evidence on September 16-17, 1959.

Slogans demanding early publication of Sugar Wage Board report, or alternately grant of another instalment of interim relief, the acceptance of demands regarding bonus and retention wage raised last year, and opposition to the increase in workload and the practice of giving work to contractors, were agreed. It was decided to collect figures as to how many workers have been benefitted by the interim relief granted in February 1959 by the Wage Board.

Efforts are to be made to call an all-India conference of sugar workers, under the auspices of the United Chini Mill Mazdoor Federation.

A few new unions of sugar workers have been affiliated from U.P.

In Bihar, the situation remains as it was, i.e., no work in this industry. With the Janshedpur case still going on, the comrades there could neither think of nor pay any attention towards this industry.

PLANTATIONS

In plantations, out of a total number of 12,02,273 workers, our membership as verified as on 31.3.58 was 62,616. INTUC had 2,70,082 and HMS 15,321. The break-up of the figures State-wise is given below:

State	Total No. of workers	A.I.T.U.C.		I.N.T.U.C.		H.M.S.	
		57-58 Veri- fied	58-59 claim- ed	57-58 Veri- fied	58-59 claim- ed	57-58 Veri- fied	58-59 claim- ed
Assam	529,528	5,109	7,496	214,361	210,353	nil	6,854
W.Bengal	202,446	32,059	40,388	17,057	34,503	14,900	22,600
Madras	159,376	15,467	16,800	26,287	41,922	nil	nil
Kerala	174,741	6,926	33,799	5,936	28,642	421	448
U.P.	3,596	nil	1,040	nil	nil	nil	nil
Punjab	6,766	nil	250	114*	207*	nil	nil
Karnatak	125,332	3,055	8,428	825	1,361	nil	nil
Tripura	8,153	nil	nil	5,502	5,657	nil	nil

*In Janshedpur

The gap is obvious.

In Assam, a State-wise union was to be reorganised. No progress is known.

In W.Bengal, the improvement is obvious though it leaves still a lot to be done. The united strike last year has helped the growth of unions. Now Com.Monoranjan Roy is giving his whole time to this front.

In Tamilnad, the formation of a State-wide union, removing the earlier deadlock, is likely to improve our position.

There is no report from Kerala. In Kamatak region, there is a slight improvement, especially in Coorg.

Agreement on bonus for Assam and W.Bengal plantations is a welcome settlement. Though this could not be achieved in the plantations Industrial Committee and employers preferred to sign a separate agreement with the INTUC union, the settlement is in the interest of workers.

Setting up of a Wage Board for Plantation Industry has been decided. It is one Board with two sections, one for North and another for South. In South section, the Government has accepted to take one representative of the AITUC. We are still trying for representation on the Northern Section.

The formation of the all-India Federation of Plantation Workers is immediately on the agenda in this industry. The struggle for a minimum wage in accordance with the norms of the 15th Indian Labour Conference and D.A. linked with cost of living index, TU rights and better housing, is to be continued vigorously along with the effort to increase membership and capture new fields.

AGRICULTURAL WORKERS' UNIONS - Organisation of agricultural workers' unions and their affiliation with AITUC as associate member, has been delayed as the talks with the All-India Kisan Sabha are not yet over.

WIMCO WORKERS - A federation of workers engaged in Western India Match Company's factories in U.P., West Bengal and Bombay, has been formed in a conference held at Ambernath on October 3, 1959.

WOOLLEN TEXTILE WORKERS - A Committee to coordinate the activities of unions in woollen textiles has been formed with Com.Shantilal Vasa (Jamnagar) as convener, in a conference of unions in the industry held at Dhariwal (Punjab) in January 1960. Unions represented were from Punjab, W.Bengal, U.P. and Gujerat. Slogans raised were: wage board, wage increase of 25% and D.A. to be linked with consumer price index; retention allowance for seasonal workers; minimum bonus; prevention of fragmentation of units; protection of women workers, etc.

MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEES - Comrades in the municipal union in Udaipur had taken initiative to hold an all-India conference of municipal workers but the proposal did not materialise.
