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Extracts from General Secretary's Report  
to HMS' 8th Annual Convention (New Delhi, Feb.19-21,1960)

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I feel it my duty to report to this Convention a matter concerning the ICFTU and ourselves which appears to be leading to some complications. The HMS for a long time has disapproved of seeking or accepting any financial assistance from outside the country for its organisational purposes. On the other hand, it is well known that the INTUC has had no objection to seeking and accepting such assistance. In the past such assistance was obtained by the INTUC for running their publication, INDIAN WORKER, which frequently carried on publicity against the HMS and its affiliates. The HMS, however, took no particular notice of this.

Last year, it is understood, the INTUC approached the ICFTU with a request for substantial financial assistance from the International Solidarity Fund for extending organisational activities of the INTUC. It was argued that if the communists and their ATTUC is to be prevented from gaining a dominating position in the Indian labour movement, such assistance from the ICFTU on a large scale would be necessary. It is also understood that the ICFTU had agreed in principle to extend such financial assistance but has also laid down the condition that such assistance will not be utilised by the INTUC for carrying on activities in competition or rivalry with HMS-affiliated organisations.

During recent months, the INTUC has sponsored unions at, among other places, the new steel centres. The HMS has had its affiliates operating at Rourkela and Bhilai for over two years, and as stated earlier, we are making all efforts ~~we~~ ~~that~~ we can to strengthen them. The question, therefore, is: is the ICFTU assistance available for or utilised for sponsoring and running these unions of the INTUC which have obviously been sponsored in rivalry to our affiliates.

We have raised this matter with the ICFTU headquarters in Brussels. The ICFTU General Secretary has reiterated to us the assurance that their aid will not be available to the INTUC to engage in competition or rivalry with our unions. We are pursuing this matter further since there are obvious practical difficulties in the implementation of such an assurance. We shall have to watch out for developments not only in the steel centres but on all fronts. Any action by the INTUC in violation of the ICFTU assurance will naturally place the latter in a very difficult and awkward situation.

Apart from the ICFTU certain other international trade secretariats have also been taking considerable interest in the trade union developments in India. Among these with which the HMS or its affiliates have had some contact are the International Transport Workers Federation, the International Metal Workers' Federation and the International Federation of

Petroleum Workers. When the Dock Engineering Mazdoor Sabha of Calcutta was involved in a 2 month lock-out in April/May last year, the HMS headquarters appealed to the IMF for aid to the workers affected. The IMF responded generously by contributing a cheque for 10,000 Swiss Francs (approximately Rs.11,500). Unfortunately, by the time the amount could be realised after fulfilling the exchange formalities, the strength of the workers had been exhausted. Nevertheless, our grateful appreciation is due to the IMF for their generous contribution.



Copies  
need not underline in  
proceedings -

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8th Annual Conference of the Hind Mazdoor Sabha

The 8th Annual Conference of the Hind Mazdoor Sabha (HMS) was held at the Town Hall, Delhi, on 19th to 21st February, 1960. Com: S. C. C. Anthonij Pillai, M. P., presided over the Conference.

Com: Anthonij Pillai, in his presidential address, observed that "we are entering a crucial stage in the long-drawn-out struggle of labour for a need-based fair-wage and adequate social security." He devoted a great part of his speech to discussing the recommendations of the Pay Commission and the struggles of the Central Govt. employees. He said that the Pay Commission's Award and the reports of the wage boards for textile and cement industries have belied all expectations. The stand of the Finance Ministry on the 15th H.C. recommendations, was characterised by him as "a betrayal by Govt. of a solemn pledge, and a shameless retreating from Government's commitments." Criticising all the various recommendations of the Pay Commission on minimum wage, pay-scales, P.T.O.s, leave, and holiday, etc. he said: "Thus the objective laid down in the Plan, that Government would be a model employer has been shamelessly abandoned, except in the matter of retirement benefits." He called upon the HMS. 'to volunteer full support to the Confederation of Central Govt. Employees in its agitation that there should be no reduction in existing privileges, and that as for the traditions of in the West, the recommendations of the Pay Commission should be treated as the basis for negotiating a settlement of the wage issue.' Regarding other industrial sectors he called upon the HMS to announce unequivocally that they would be ready to participate in any struggle with other



the wage boards implemented. In those industries where capacity to pay is in doubt, he prescribed a minimum target for achievement, consisting of restoration of 1948 or 1955 standards of living, rates of DA. to neutralise fully the increased cost of living, annual increase of 5 to 10% <sup>in</sup> wages to reach Fair Wage Standards, equitable share of the saving in cost of labour where labour productivity is increasing, etc. He ~~resist~~ demanded a special meeting of the Indian Labour Conference to rediscuss National Wage Policy. After reviewing the working of various labour legislations, Codes etc. he concluded that without strengthening the fighting potential of the Unions, little advance could be registered.

Chairman of the Reception Committee, Shri. Suresh Malik, also took the Govt. to task for its failings with regard to the Pay Commission and other industrial and labour policies.

Com. Bagaram Tulpule, General Secretary, gave <sup>in his Report</sup> an exhaustive survey of the major political and economic events of the year under review, like the struggles of the South African peoples, <sup>Indo-Chinese border dispute</sup> ~~the Chinese aggression~~, Indo-Pak Boundary accords, Kerala elections, rising food-prices etc. The Report observes that the past year had been one of significant advance in the industrial sphere, though it did not materially relieve the upward movement of prices and the employment situation still continues to be grave. The Report claims a total membership <sup>for HHS on 31-3-1959</sup> of 324 ~~thousands~~ and 4,80,294 distributed in 324 Unions. The verified membership (by the Chief Commissioner) on 31-3-58 was only 1,92,948 in 151 Unions. This low figure, the Report says, is because of seriously defective procedure of verification and of the failure of affiliated Unions to fulfil the requirements. During the period a few Unions led by some members of the Communist Party of India especially from Bombay



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Ceased to belong to the H.M.S. The Report shows that a Research Section has been opened at the ~~the~~ headquarters of the H.M.S. and the ICFU has deputed Brother Ken Dallas from their Research Department. It ~~there~~ deals with the H.C., Standing <sup>Labour</sup> Committee, relations with ICFU etc. The Report devotes a great in its section under 'Pay Commission Report', criticises the recommendations and Comments: "The Govt. of India probably feels content that the recommendations of the Pay Commission have not imposed heavier burdens upon it than they actually have. It ought to realise, however, that this economy has been achieved through keeping the employees deeply disappointed, frustrated and resentful. Such economy is likely to prove expensive in the long run. In terms of employee morale the present situation is certainly no better than that prevailing before the appointment of the Pay Commission. Indeed, it may well be much worse." The Report also deals with Wage Boards, Code of Discipline, Workers' Education, National Productivity Council, etc.

On the opening day of the Convention fraternal delegates from the AFL-CIO, ~~the ICFU~~ and Steel Workers Union of U.S.A., ~~also addressed~~ the Convention. Shri. G. Mapara of the ICFU, ARD ~~also addressed~~ and Mr. Burgess, Labour Attache to the American Embassy, ~~also addressed~~ the Convention. The NFPTC was represented by Com: V. S. Menon, Secretary, as a fraternal delegate. Addressing the Convention he conveyed the greetings of the NFPTC and specially thanked the President for the call given to the H.M.S. to support the cause of the Central Govt. employees and the Confederation. He said that the greatest desire of the Central Govt. employees at this crucial stage was a unified understanding.



the struggle for better living and working conditions. He hoped that the <sup>various national</sup> U. C. Centres would also come together and pool their energies for fighting out with the Govt' and vested interests the basic issues that have been thrown up now as a result of the recommendations of the Pay Commission. He said that he was grieved to hear of certain moves for splitting ~~national industrial~~ <sup>labour</sup> organisations, specially of the Govt' employees, since such disruptions only helped the employers.

The convention adopted various resolutions ~~including~~ the one on Economic Situation which warns the Govt' that there is a widespread feeling among the people and especially the ~~workers~~ today that while industrial and economic development is taking place at a steady pace, the fruits of such development are being monopolised by a small class and are not being shared by the people at large. The operative portion ~~of~~ of the resolution calls upon the ~~trade~~ union movement to educate the workers about the realities of the economic situation in the country so that they may not permit themselves to be deprived of their legitimate share in the fruits of economic development. ~~The~~

The resolution on 'Code of Discipline in industry' charges the employers with gross violations of the various codes and takes the Govt' to task for not applying ~~the~~ <sup>these codes</sup> fully in the public sector. The resolution says that the codes are bound to become ineffective because of delays in implementation. It directs the Working Committee to collect factual information and data about cases of violation and present a memorandum to Govt', demands that machinery be independent of Govt', and warns the Govt' that unless the



The HMS ~~is~~ may have to <sup>be</sup> consider seriously its own obligations to the Code.

supported

the demand for <sup>the</sup> By another resolution the HMS ~~calls~~ for appointment of a separate Wage Board for the Railways. The mover of the resolution, Com: Basawan Singh, said that lumping of all Central Government employes of all Dpts is not correct. ~~The~~ The resolution says that one pay Commission for all services together is undesirable and unworkable.

The Council elects ~~the following~~ as the office-bearers for the coming year.  
Shri. Dewan Sen. M.L.A. (W. Bengal) as President & member  
Shri. Baparan Tulpore as Gen. Secy.

31 MAR 1960

## TRADE UNIONS

# BEWARE OF SECRET PACTS!

## AN ENCYCLOPAEDIA

From the Secret Archives of

Shri S. C. C. ANTHONI PILLAI

### JUDGE FOR YOURSELVES!

An AGREEMENT made this fifth day of November 1956 between Mr. J. S. GALLOWAY representing Gordon, Woodroffe & Co. (Madras) Private Ltd., and Shri S. C. C. ANTHONI PILLAI representing the Gordon Woodroffe Employees' Union.

Whereas Shri. S. C. C. Anthoni Pillai admits that the pressure brought to bear on the Company by means of demonstrations and strikes organised by the Gordon Woodroffe Employees' Union between 17-9-'56 and 29-10-'56 with a view to enforcing payment of an annual bonus for the year ended 30-6-'56 before the accounts for that year had been finalised and audited was unjustified, and whereas both the parties to this agreement are keenly desirous of restoring and maintaining in the future the good relations which existed between the Company and its employees in the past,

now this agreement witnesseth:

1. The Company will reinstate the 159 employees who were dismissed on 29-10-'56, treating their absence from 30-10-'56 to 5-11-'56, both days inclusive, as special leave without pay.

2. The Union will undertake in the case of any future dispute or disagreement with the management to seek all constitutional remedies for the settlement of such dispute or disagreement as provided in the Industrial Disputes Act or any succeeding legislation, and will not resort to any strike action before such constitutional remedies have been exhausted.

3. **The Union will not organise or conduct any demonstration or meeting or procession inside the Company's premises or within a distance of a quarter of a mile therefrom** without first exhausting all the said constitutional remedies, provided however, that no such demonstration, meeting or procession will in any circumstances be organised or conducted inside the Company's premises **or within a distance of a quarter of a mile therefrom during a period of three years from the date of this agreement.**

4. Office Rules or Standing Orders will be introduced along the lines of the model standing orders published in the Central Rules under the Industrial Employment (Standing Orders) Act 1946 and containing inter-alia the following provisions:—

(a) **Participation by any employee, individually or in concert with others, in any sort or kind of trade union activity on the Company's premises may be treated by the management as misconduct punishable by dismissal.**

(b) any employee who uses abusive or offensive language shall be deemed to be guilty of misconduct punishable by dismissal.

5. The management may issue a circular to all its employees reading as follows;



"It has been agreed between the Management of the Company and the President of the Union that there will be no form of coercion or intimidation designed to enlist any employee of the Company as a member of the Union, or to induce any member of the Union to continue as a member if he wished to resign his membership, or to coerce any member of the Union against his will to take part in Union activities, and that if there shall be any such coercion or intimidation, it shall constitute misconduct punishable by dismissal."

6. The Management reserves the right publicly to correct any incorrect statement published in connection with the dismissals, and the events leading up to the dismissals and will publish immediately the following statement in the Press :-

"The Management of the Gordon Woodroffe & Co., (Madras) Private Ltd., are pleased to announce that they have agreed to reinstate the 159 workmen who have recently been dismissed for misconduct connected with **an unjustified strike** and certain other incidents upon receiving from Shri S. C. C. Anthoni Pillat, President of the Gordon Woodroffe Employees' Union, satisfactory undertakings that there will be no resort to strike action in future without reasonable cause and without exhausting all statutory and constitutional remedies."

For and on behalf of  
GORDON WOODROFFE & CO. (MADRAS) PRIVATE LTD,  
(Sd.) J. R. Galloway,  
Managing Director.

GORDON WOODROFFE EMPLOYEES' UNION,  
(Sd) S. C. C. Anthoni Pillai.  
President.

\* \* \* \* \*  
No. L./20-60.  
The Senior Director,  
The B & C. Co. Ltd.,  
Madras - 12.

\* \* \* \* \*  
Dated, 23-1-1960.

Dear Sir,

The undersigned has on several occasions in the past urged that there should be an appreciation of the logical implications of the General acceptance of the principle, that sound and healthy industrial relations, in the final analysis depend on well organised Trade Unions. **In the west, the implications, have been drawn and many contracts, both written and unwritten provide for what is called Union Security,** so that Collective Bargaining becomes a reality instead of as in India nebulous and fictitious. Normally any contract implies both rights and obligation. **Few in India have paused to consider** how a Union could live up to the obligations implicit in contract when there is no provision for its remaining representation for the period of contract. Trade Unions in India has managed, almost inexplicably managed, to survive and grow despite the fact that it is required to bargain for both its members and non-members.

**The first productivity Team** which consisted of representatives of both employers and employees were forcibly struck by the circumstance that the bedrock of productivity in the West is good industrial relations, which again are anchored to **Union Security**. It was so obvious a phenomenon that **the team unanimously recommended that in India, too, the check-off system should be adopted.**

The Madras Labour Union has been in existence for forty years, and therefore I need not expatiate on its stability, representative character and traditions. We are

proud of the fact that both the Management and the Union pioneered a Grievance Procedure adopted to suit our conditions, from the Shop Steward System which has been commended by the Tripartite Labour Conference for general acceptance. I trust that you will be persuaded to extend this facility, in the spirit underlying the code advocating union recognition, based on a mutual appreciation of rights and obligations. **I now propose that you extend to this Union Check-off Facilities** viz., that on an authorisation given by a Worker you advance the sum stipulated by him and deduct the same from the wages earned or the bonus normally payable, and **forward the same to this Union.**

I am annexing the form of authorisation which, I suggest, a Worker should submit.

Yours faithfully,  
Sd. S. C. C. Anthoni Pillai  
President.

Lab/B. 18/19  
The President,  
Madras Labour Union,  
136, Strahans Road,  
Madras-12.

d/3-2-1960.

Dear Sir,

Your letter No. L. 20/60 d/23-1-1960.

We are in general agreement with your views as stated in the first paragraph of your letter. We agree that strong and healthy Trade Unions are essential for the development of industrial relations and that the growth of such Trade Unions largely depends upon their financial stability.

The Industrial Disputes settlement Procedure introduced by us in 1952 can be said to have worked satisfactorily. However, from time to time, we had occasion to draw your attention to the instances in which sections of workers had violated the terms of the procedure despite their attention being drawn to it. We appreciate that you for your part, have endeavoured to impress upon the Workers their responsibility to adhere to the procedure. Nevertheless, Violations of the procedure that have taken place from time to time have caused us serious concern. We consider, and we are sure you will agree that the successful working of the Procedure is to common advantage of both parties. We are therefore, anxious to take such steps as are necessary which will assist you in making the Workers realise the benefits they will derive by a strict observance of the procedure. With these thoughts we have come to the conclusion that we ought to give the system of Union check-off a fair trial.

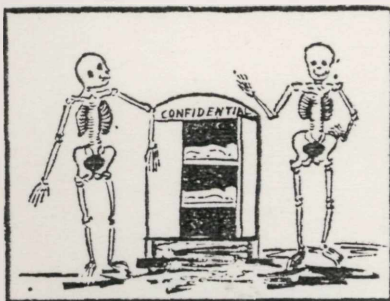
With effect from April 1960, as an experimental measure for a period of one year, we will extend to you an Union check-off facility, namely, that on an authorisation given by a worker we will advance to him the sum stipulated by him and deduct the same from the wages earned or the bonus normally payable and forward the same to you.



We will study the working of this experiment during the year of its operation and decide thereafter the question of its continuance or otherwise. In extending this facility we sincerely trust that you, for your part will use your influence with the workers to ensure that they will honour fully their obligations under the Industrial Disputes Settlement Procedure and in particular that they will not partipate in lightning Strikes or Disobey lawful and reasonable orders but will take up their grievances, if any, in a constitutional manner as laid down in the procedure.

We understand that the advance to be deducted from the next bonus referred to in the draft application form is the arrears of Union subscription upto 31-3-1960. We would have preferred to make subsequent advances either quarterly or half-yearly instead of every month in order to save a considerable amount of Clerical work, but, in the light of your Views conveyed to us orally, we will make the monthly advances during the next year when the scheme will be in operation on an experimental basis.

You will appreciate that in extending this facility to you we are taking what many may regard as an unusual step although the subsequent events may prove our action to be fully justified. In Coming years technological advances are inevitable if the standard of living of the Working Class is to be raised and such advances demand a new outlook on the part of Workers. Traditional Resistances to changes will have to be given up and long-term benefits that are likely to emerge from modern methods of working will have to be appreciated and tackled in a realistic manner. We trust that, in the interests of all concerned, you will use your influence to impress upon the workers to give us full co-operation in the successful working of such changes so that workers, the Management and the consumers may derive benefits from our joint endeavour.



Skeletons from the Cupboard

Yours faithfully,  
(Sd.) E. F. G. HUNTER

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✓  
July 4, 1960

DEVEN SEN  
PRESIDENT HMS  
CARE PRAJA SOCIALIST PARTY OFFICE  
TILAK ROAD  
NAGPUR

AGREE TO YOUR PROPOSAL ALL INDIA GENERAL STRIKE  
ON THIRTEENTH JULY SUPPORTING CENTRAL GOVERNMENT  
EMPLOYEES' DEMANDS

- SRIWASTAVA  
SECRETARY  
AITUCONG

.....

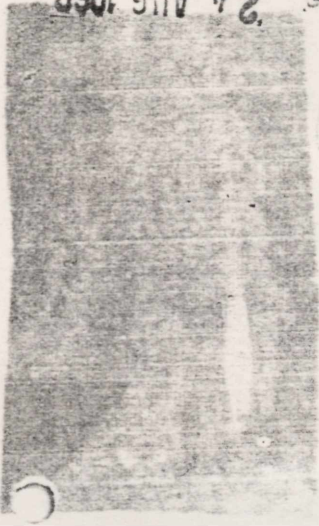
Copy by post for confirmation to:

Com. Deven Sen,  
President, Hind Mazdoor Sabha,  
C/o Praja Socialist Party Office,  
Tilak Road, Nagpur

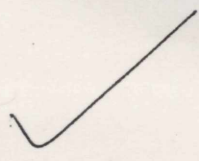
*K.G.*  
(K.G. Sriwastava)  
Secretary, AITUC



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# THE STRIKE

OF

## CENTRAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES

12th JULY TO 16th JULY, 1960

HIND MAZDOOR SABHA PUBLICATION

BOMBAY - 4

to show with...

64 AUG 1960

## FOREWORD

This little booklet is a modest attempt to place the strike of the Central Government Employees in its correct perspective; it is modest in the sense that it does not seek to compete with the propaganda unleashed by the Government of India previous to and during the period of strike. Since facts are always more important for the discerning reader than propaganda through the Press and the Government controlled Radio, this booklet has confined itself to a more objective approach to the developments of that period.

It is divided into three parts; the first deals with the justification and history of the formation of the Joint Council of Action; the second with the allegations by the Government and its spokesmen that it was a politically inspired attempt to subvert authority, and lastly with the attempt at negotiations and the anxiety to arrive at an accepted settlement.

DEVEN SEN

*President*

HIND MAZDOOR SABHA  
(All India Headquarters)

CAMP:  
New Delhi  
August 1, 1960



## I

When the disappointment with the recommendations of the Second Pay Commission became more understandable, the various organisations of Government employees (The Confederation of the Central Government Employees, All India Railwaymen's Federation, The National Federation of Post & Telegraphs Employees, and The All India Defence Employees' Federation) wrote separately to their respective Ministries for a discussion of those recommendations which were unacceptable to them. Some Ministries replied that it was not within their competence to discuss the basic recommendations, while others did not respond. When efforts were made to re-open these issues in Parliament the Finance Minister stated categorically that their would not be any consultation with the organisations of labour.

Faced with firm declarations of a refusal to countenance any discussions, the organisations referred to above, met together to consider ways and means for attempts to place their case before the Government of India. Hitherto they had no relations with each other, not even of a casual nature. But Government's action left them with no alternative but to forge sanctions for their case. This resulted in a common organisation—The Joint Council of Action (JCA) which was formed on the 2nd April 1960 in Bombay. Its constituents were the organisations referred to above.

In a letter dated the 10th June 1960, the Principal Private Secretary to the Prime Minister had stated that the "Prime Minister is distressed to learn that some of the Central Government employees should.....even organise some kind of a 'Council of Action', and stated further that "This action would further come in the way of his (Prime Minister's) meeting any deputation on this subject".

Did the Prime Minister alter his position of declining to meet representatives of the JCA? On the 1st and the 2nd July 1960 Shri G.L. Nanda, the Union Minister for Labour met the members of the Standing Committee of the JCA with the purpose of settling the issues through negotiations. That Shri Nanda negotiated officially on behalf of the Union Government Cabinet is obviously a belated attempt to correct a mistake—one of the many mistakes referred to by the Prime Minister in his broadcast to the Nation on the evening of the 7th July 1960.

## II

Government's attitude to the proposed strike was hostile. A strike is an inherent right of a trade union and recognised as such. Hostility on the part of an individual employer is understandable. It is possible to put up with it for the Government always affords a measure of protection to strikers. But in regard to Government's approach to this strike there was no appeal or protection.

There were three specific references that indicated Government's attitude towards the Strike. The first was in a letter addressed by the Prime Minister to Shri Peter Alvares on the 27th June 1960 wherein he stated that "it has nothing to do with normal trade union approach to such questions." Later in a talk to some Congress Parliamentary Members on the 11th July, the Prime Minister imputed political motives to the strike by asserting that it was an "attempt to upset civil authority by means other than democratic means" and that if the strike succeeded it "would mean the collapse of Government." At the same meeting he characterised it as a "civil rebellion".

In a broadcast to the Nation on the 7th July 1960, the Prime Minister contrasted the picture of "calm courage" on the frontiers of India with that of the threat of strike—"an attempt, deliberate or unwitting, which could only lead to "weakening of our defences and our country . . ." He also called into question the patriotism of the strikers, by inference, when he stated in the course of the same broadcast, that "there are some amongst us who, perhaps, feel little the passion that is called patriotism or nationalism, and who would even welcome the weakening of our country:"

It is natural that any attempt by the leaders of the Government, and particularly so by the Prime Minister, to place the strike in the perspective of "a civil rebellion" was bound to prejudice it in the minds of the public. The more so when Government made use of the Press and the Radio to vitiate the atmosphere, and carried on such measures as are commensurate with, and in order to convey the impression of meeting, the challenge of such a rebellion. Pitted against such a charge, that is backed by propaganda and quasi-military measures, the strike was forcibly removed from the plane of a simple trade union dispute, and the strikers were characterised as anti-national elements. As Shri Asoka Mehta stated in a statement on the 12th July 1960, "The strike cannot and should not last very long. The organised strength of Government can break a strike, particularly when strikers are determined not to break the Government . . . ." Can a trade union dispute survive against Government's measures on scale to suppress a civil rebellion?



The facts prove a story, other than one with a political purpose.

(a) All the demands were strictly related to working class conditions, and were within the context of relationship to the recommendations of the Pay Commission.

Every effort was made to settle them separately through negotiations with each respective ministry, and only when those efforts either proved unsuccessful, or were baulked by statements of the Finance Minister in Parliament, did the four organisations come together to form the Joint Council of Action.

(b) If a part of the leadership of the JCA reflected certain political associations it was merely accidental. In the totality of the unions the presidents of many unions belong to the Government Party. Three of the unions in the Post & Telegraphs have Congressmen as their Presidents, and two of the Presidents have no political affiliations.

(c) Again, in order to preserve the pure trade union character of the dispute, the JCA was anxious to avoid any association with political parties, and for this purpose it adopted a firm decision that the Local Councils of Action, or Area Organisations, should be formed and led only by such persons who are already in association with one or the other of the unions or federations. A prohibition was placed on the introduction of new personnel that is not already associated with the constituents of the JCA.

If there is an attempt to stage a "civil rebellion" and "upset civil authority" through the medium of a trade union dispute then it stands to reason that the terms of this dispute should be of such a character as is impossible for Government to concede, and that the efforts for a negotiated settlement must be conducted in such a manner as to make it impossible for the strikers and Government to find a common measures of agreement.

The facts are otherwise :

(d) After the abortive attempt on the 2nd July 1960 to arrive at a settlement through the mediation of Shri Nanda, the Union Labour Minister, Shri S. M. Joshi stated that he regretted that no settlement could be arrived at, and that he was "dying for a solution".

(e) In an effort to avoid the strike the JCA gave up its demand for an immediate and token advance towards the realisation of the "Minimum Wage" and even made some proposals that reduced the quantum in the dearness allowance originally asked for. (Those details are stated in full in Part III of this Booklet).

(f) Realising that certain services must be maintained, and that in other areas the normalcy of communications should prevail, the JCA decided on the 28th June 1960, that "in consideration of the vital national interest involved that it is advisable to exempt employees of the Government of India stationed in NEFA and other operational areas from going on strike.

Later on, this exemption was extended to all employees serving in Ladakh, the entire Assam State and the units serving the Defence Forces, and those engaged in the maintenance of Hospitals, water supply and electric lighting services.

(g) In its anxiety not to interfere with the discipline of the Defence Forces, Shri Peter Alvares, the Secretary of the JCA, issued a directive that "in regard to those (Government employees) called up by the Territorial Army. The JCA has no intention of interfering with discipline of a quasi-military service by asking persons to refuse. But if Government forces trade-unionists in the Territorial Army to work as Blacklegs in the Strike then I have to warn the Government in advance of its consequences. The Federations will then be obliged to ask its members to resign from the Territorial Army, and labour's co-operation in a vital and voluntary defence service will have to be brought to an end."

(h) Finally, in proof of its earnestness to arrive at negotiated settlement, and not to precipitate a crisis, the JCA resolved to defer the date of the Strike from the 19th June to the Midnight of the 11th of July.

The facts and purposes narrated to (a) and (h) above do not substantiate the charge by Government that the strike was a 'civil rebellion' or an attempt to 'upset the Civil Authority'.

### III

#### HISTORY OF NEGOTIATIONS

Injustice lies not merely in the denial of a just demand but also in the manner of approach to it. The Government of India used its influence over the Press and utilised its monopoly of the Radio to prevent the true picture of the demands of the JCA reaching the public, and so distorted their implications as to render their (demands) fair assessment impossible.

In the following paras an attempt has been made to trace the development of these demands and the trend in negotiations on each of them.

The demands are as follows :—

- 1) Payment of Dearness Allowance on the basis of the First Pay Commission's recommendations;
- 2) the grant of a National Minimum Wage for Central Government Employees in the light of the principles enunciated by the 15th Labour Conference, and the determination of differentials between Class IV, III, II and I, as well as between unskilled, semi-skilled, skilled and highly skilled categories on a rational and equitable basis;
- 3) the appointment of Ministry/Department-wise Standing Boards consisting of equal representation of organised labour and the concerned Ministries/Departments with a neutral Chairman, to settle disputes relating to scales of pay, and other service conditions commensurate with the diversity of occupation, responsibilities, risks and hazards connected with the duties of various categories in different departments and Ministries;
- 4) No curtailment of any existing amenities, rights and privileges;
- 5) (a) reference to arbitration of disputes referred by either parties; and  
(b) recognition of one Union/Federation in one Industry or Government Departments. Where more than one Union or Federation exists, the representative character should be determined through a referendum held once in two years;
- 6) (a) withdrawal of Rule 148 and Proviso to Rule 1708 of the State Railway Establishment Code, Vol. I, Rule 5 of the Temporary Civil Service Rules 1949, and Rules 4 (a) and 4 (b) of the Central Civil Service Conduct Rules;  
(b) judicial enquiry into all cases of arbitrary removal from service under the above Rules;  
(c) legislation of conditions of Service by Statutes; and  
(d) inclusion of Civilians working in the Defence Establishment along with other Central Government Employees for the protection given under Article 311 of the Constitution of India.



## DEARNESS ALLOWANCE

The demand for Dearness Allowance was that it should be paid on the basis recommended by the First Pay Commission, for the Second Commission had worked out a formula altering that of the first Commission and thus reducing the quantum and basis of neutralisation of the high cost of living. The demand of the JCA was justifiable because even the First Pay Commission had not given full neutralisation and the Second Pay Commission had further reduced this. Again, when the First Pay Commission had recommended an automatic revision on a 20 per cent variation, the Second Pay Commission had merely left it to Government's discretion to revise the present quantum.

Apart from this discretionary clause, the basis itself was disadvantages. 10 points worked out by Second Pay Commission equalled 35.6 per cent of the First Pay Commission. Whereas for every point of the First Pay Commission 14.24 annas was granted as neutralisation the Second Pay Commission granted 67 naya paise only (This is on the assumption that 15 points of the Second Pay Commission are compensated by Rs. 10/-).

On the basis of this justification, which in effect amounted to a mere attempt at protection of the real wage, or providing the maximum neutralisation, the JCA argued its demand. Government remained adamant on this issue and reiterated that it could only review the quantum of increased Dearness Allowance when it qualified for consideration, namely when the cost of living index rose 10 points and averaged thus for 12 long months. The only relaxation it made was to agree to grant 50% of the increased quantum when it qualified for review, and also to submit both the quantum and the period for which it should be given, to arbitration.

The JCA, on the other hand, originally submitted that the Second Pay Commission's formula was disadvantageous, and that to agree to it would be in effect to agree to a lowering of the real wage.

Nevertheless, with a view to arrive at a settlement the JCA dropped the original demand (by implication) of asking for D. A. on the First Pay Commission's recommendations when it asked Government to at least consider the grant of D. A. on the basis of the Second Pay Commission's but after the Cost of Living Index had averaged either 10 points for three months, or 5 points for 12 months. The JCA submitted that this was well within the context of the Second Pay Commission's recommendations, and the only variation was either the period of review or the number of qualifying points over 115, though the quantum would remain strictly proportionate to its recommendations.

Government refused to countenance any departure from the Second Pay Commission's formula. At the last moment on the afternoon of July 11th, 1960 Shri Peter Alvares, Secretary of the JCA, in an attempt to avoid the strike submitted a formula — that approximated more to the Government's formula, that DA should be paid when it average 7 points over 115 for 12 months. The Government rejected even this anxious attempt to reduce the margin of differences, and thus made consideration of settlement impossible.

A further justification of the JCA's latest compromise formula was provided in a statement issued by Shri Asoka Mehta, M.P. when he worked out the price schedule thus :—

The main issue in the strike of the Central Government Employees appears to be the question of increased dearness allowance to meet the rise in the cost of living. The difference between the Government and the employees is narrow and it should not be difficult to bridge it.

Both the sides accept the recommendations of the Central Pay Commission and take their respective stands on them.

The Pay Commission has recommended a review of the quantum of the dearness allowance when the cost of living goes up during the period of 12 months, on an average by 10 points above 115. Between May 1959 and April 1960 the cost of living index has fluctuated and the points totalled up come to 1,476 or 123 on the average. This indicates a rise of 8 points over the Pay Commission's base No. 115. The figures of wholesale prices of all commodities and of food articles which are available for recent weeks show a rising trend in the cost of living. The wholesale price of all commodities has gone up from 120.5 in April to 122.7 in May and to 123.8 for the week ending on 18th June. The parallel figures for food articles are 118.6, 119.9 and 121.4. If the cost of living figures for today are quickly checked up by the Government it will be found that the increase is of 10 points.

The Pay Commission has recommended no specific method or machinery for the review. Why should not the Government set up a negotiating committee with the employees' associations, consider the most up-to-date figures available (as distinct from the published figures which tend to be three months out of date) and agree to the revision of dearness allowance of a case for it emerges?

“As the Government's principal contention is that the recommendations of the Pay Commission cannot be altered. I do not know how they can suggest as has been done, just 50 per cent neutralisation in the rise of the cost of living and refer the

remaining dispute to an independent authority. Apart from the indefinite and dilatory character of the process, this approach appears to be inconsistent with the recommendations of the Pay Commission.

“The minimum wage fixed by the Second Pay Commission provides for 100 per cent neutralisation of the rise in prices for those getting the minimum wage in terms of the First Pay Commission in its report (page 96) observes, ‘But we do consider at the same time that a substantial and persistent rise normally creates a *prima facie* case for compensation, and to a greater extent in the case of employees in the low ranges of remuneration than of others and that it should be the Government’s endeavour not to allow the standard of living of such employees to fall.

“The cost of living has gone up by more than 8 points, possibly by 10 points, the case for 100 per cent neutralisation for those receiving the minimum pay is unanswerable in terms of the Pay Commission’s recommendations. The Government is fairly committed to implement those recommendations, then why is the conflict being allowed to drag on? An automatic annual review by the negotiating committee of the Government nominees and those of the employees’ representatives of the rise in the cost of living and appropriate alterations in the dearness allowance in terms of the Pay Commission recommendations provides the necessary bridge. Its immediate implementation cannot just end this strike but restore goodwill.

Prof. Mahalanobi’s has stated that real wages have lagged behind since Independence. The only way to regain their pre-independence status is by asking for neutralisation. In most industries in India neutralisation is calculated monthly. In the case of Government employees it has to average 10 points over 115 and await a whole year. If it averages 9 points for 12 months, or 10 points for 11 months then there is no qualification for neutralisation and the whole process has to work itself again for another year. The loss can be imagined.

While Government remained adamant on the grant of adequate neutralisation in High Cost of Living on the question of the demand for a minimum wage Government resorted to a tactic of so distorting this demand as to place it in a position of hostility to the fulfilment of the 5 Year Plans.

This demand, though of a general nature, really took off from the recommendations of the 15th Session of the Indian Labour Conference which was presided over by the Union Labour Minister Shri G. L. Nanda. At no time did the JCA ever ask for Rs. 125/-



as the Minimum Wage. Government repeatedly so raised the implication of this demand as to make it conflict with the resources of the Plan.

The facts are otherwise. When the All India Railwaymen's Federation (AIRF) met in its General Council Session in February 1960, it asked for a Minimum Wage based on the recommendations of the 15th Indian Labour Conference. The figure of Rs. 125/- was purposefully omitted from the resolution.

Again when the JCA formulated the demand, it further toned down its immediate quantum by asking for a minimum wage in the *light* of the principles of the 15th Indian Labour Conference, and in all the meetings that were publically addressed, and in the Press Conferences, Government was made to understand that the JCA had never asked for Rs. 125/-.

On the contrary, when the members of the Standing Committee met Shri Nanda on the 1st and 2nd July 1960, the leaders stated categorically that the JCA would be satisfied with a 'token advance and when asked for clarification, he was told that the quantum recommended by the Textile and the Cement Wage Boards would be acceptable. These Wage Boards have recommended about Rs. 8/- increase. In the face of this clarification Government still persisted in raising the total financial involvement of the JCA demands to the figure of Rs. 740 crores.

The refusal to consider even a token allowance towards a progressive realisation of the Minimum Wage goes to prove that Government have two labour policies, one for the employees of the Private Sector and another for its own employees in the Public Sector. That the policy for the former is more liberal and protective, while for the latter more authoritarian and conservative is obvious. Contrast the policy of the Minimum Wage in the two Sectors. While the Government rejected the recommendations of the 15th Session of the Indian Labour Conference and said that it was not bound by them as they were only recommendatory in character, in regard to the Wage Boards Awards in the Textile and Cement Industries it stood by them, and even threatened an Ordinance to compel the Textile Industrialists to implement it. In respect of the Cement award it went still further. Government promised to reimburse financially those units in the industry to the extent to which they were not in a position to bear the extra cost of implementation of the award.

It should be appreciated that in order to help bring about a settlement so that the strike could be avoided the JCA finally dropped this demand on Government announcing its acceptance in principle and assurance to move towards its progressive realisation.

## CONCLUSIONS

In the foregoing sections a bare statement of the positions taken by either party during the strike has been presented. An attempt has been made, in spite of obvious difficulties, to be as objective as possible. Only a very few cases have any comment been offered and that only to juxtapose relative positions or to explain the JCA point of view.

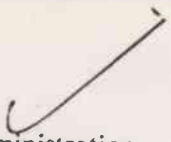
There is now no need to refute the charges of strike being the forerunner of a 'civil rebellion' or that it was an attempt to 'upset civil authority.' The charge of lack of patriotism of Central Government Employees (made in the Prime Ministers' Broadcast when he compared the two pictures, one of the frontier of India and the threatened strike) need not to be taken seriously except to lament that the Prime Minister can really think this possible of an important section of the working class. Nowhere in the world are people's loyalty to the nation so easily, and with impunity, called into question. Patriotism is taken for granted; and that should be so unless there is reasonable ground to think otherwise. If such serious allegations are made easily, then others can also reply in a similar vein. Here the working Class must register a protest against the Prime Minister's insinuation of lack of patriotism among the working class.

What is now necessary is to recapitulate those events which go to prove the anxiety of the leaders of the JCA to arrive at an acceptable settlement and thus to avoid the necessity of a strike.

On the 6 demands put forward it is necessary to understand that only the first two were of a nature involving financial expenditure. Of the two, the second one of the Minimum Wage was given up. This has been related in the relative section earlier.

In regard to the demand for DA the JCA tried its best to reduce the margin of difference, first by abandoning the demand for the formula of the First Pay Commission and secondly by progressively approximating to the qualifying conditions of the Commission. This constructive offer, and the anxiety in which it was made, went unappreciated.

What could have been the total financial implication of the final offer made by the JCA. In respect of the Minimum Wage it could have been settled at about Rs. 8/- and as for DA at about near the same figure. The total for all Central Government Employees would not have been amounted to more than 40 crores of rupees. It may be even less. Is this an amount too large to preserve the real wages of 20 lakhs families of Central Government

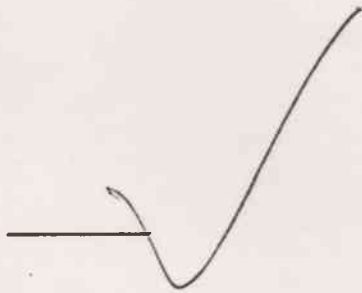


Employees, employees on whom the burden of the administration fall as principally ?

Finally a very relevant question can be asked ? What are the mistakes the Prime Minister referred to ? It is an admission that decisions on the Commission's Report took so many months to finalise—almost 11 months after it was first submitted.

How is it that for so many months no decision was taken on the wage scales and that only after the strike threat were scale announced hurriedly.

Why did not Government invoke section 10, of the Industrial Disputes Act and bring about a virtual banning of the strike, at the same time providing for redress through arbitration on the one issue left outstanding—the DA issue. It proves that Government wanted to treat this strike as a law and order problem. It, therefore, banned the strike in order to crush the movement.





80 North Avenue.

(162)

Dear Shri Pandhe,

I shall thank you if you will kindly give me a copy of the note submitted by Com. Dange to the Working Committee of the ~~the~~ AITUC on the Central Government Employees' Strike.

I am sending here— with HMS booklet on the Central Govt. Emp. Strike.

Yours Sincerely  
R Pradhan

H.M.S. STATEMENT

Shri Deven Sen, MLA, President, Hind Mazdoor Sabha, has issued the following statement to the Press on July 30, 1960:

"At no period in the history of the trade union movement of India was such a determined assault made by the Government on the trade union rights of the working class. More than 15,000 Central Government employees were arrested, and about 50,000 of them have either been suspended and dismissed. Strikers have been arrested, beaten, their quarters broken and the children and the womenfolk terrorised and thrown out into the streets. Recognition has been withdrawn from unions having the most representative character. To crown all, a legislation is sought to be introduced banning strikes of Central Government employees.

"Nowhere, in any democratic country of the world, does such a state of affairs exist.

"At this juncture, in the trade union movement, we cannot sit idle and remain indifferent. We must resist the sinister move of the Government unitedly and with determination.

"On behalf of the Hind Mazdoor Sabha, I therefore appeal to the working class in India to observe 2nd September 1960 as "Trade Union Rights Day" throughout the country.

"I am glad to announce that both the AITUC and the UTUC have agreed to this proposal.

"On that day, meetings and demonstrations should be held jointly throughout the length and breadth of the country, resolutions adopted condemning the Government's new offensive and copies sent to the Labour Minister and the Prime Minister, New Delhi."

(162)

H.M.S. EXECUTIVE'S CALL

The Working Committee of the Hind Mazdoor Sabha (HMS) which met in Delhi on August 13 and 14, considered the post-strike situation. In a resolution adopted by the meeting, the Committee "resolved to mobilise working class pressure to urge on Government to reorientate its policies." For this purpose, the Committee decided:

1. To call on the working class throughout the country to observe September 2 as Trade Union Rights Day through holding mass rallies and taking out processions, demanding the reinstatement of all strikers whether convicted or not, protesting against Government's proposal to ban strikes and calling for effective measures to bring down prices.

2. To call on all its affiliated Unions to organise a mass signature campaign for a petition addressed to the President of India on the <sup>said</sup> three matters.

3. To call on the State Councils of the HMS to collect funds to aid in the legal defence of those who have been prosecuted under the Ordinance and for all other measures to defend working class rights which are in jeopardy.

4. To call for a special convention of the HMS to meet at Bombay on October 8 and 9, to consider the steps that should be taken to dissuade Government from its current policy of vindictiveness and of seeking to curtail trade union rights and to emasculate the processes of genuine collective bargaining. A special session of this Conference will be devoted to fundamental rights relating to the working class and prominent fighters for civil liberties will be invited to participate in the discussions.

5. To call for a high-powered commission to be appointed to enquire into: (a) the causes of the discontent among Central Government employees; (b) the manner in which Government has handled the strike situation; (c) to review the punishment imposed on the strikers; (d) to make detailed recommendations regarding the restoration of cordial industrial relations in the public sector. But, if Government should fail to appoint such a Commission of Enquiry, to lodge a complaint with the International Labour Organisation alleging the violation by Government of the Convention relating to the Freedom of Association and Collective Bargaining.



# HIND MAZDOOR

Vol. XXII NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 1974 Nos. 11-12

## HMS 17th National Convention

The 17th National Convention of the Sabha  
will be held at  
Calcutta during December 20-22, 1974

*Very  
short  
abstract*

### PROGRAMME

**December 20 :** 3-00 p. m. Inauguration of the  
Convention ; Welcome address  
by the chairman of the Reception  
Committee ; Presidential address  
and presentation of General  
Secretary's Report :

**December 21 :** Delegates Session  
Discussion on  
General Secretary's  
Report :

**December 22 :** Delegates Session, Resolution,  
Election of Office-bearers and  
Members of Working Commi-  
ttee.

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**Embargo :** Not to be published before the Mid-night of Decem-  
ber 19th, 1974.

## GENERAL SECRETARY'S REPORT

### HOMAGE

1. This 17th National Convention of the Hind Mazdoor Sabha records with great sorrow and distress the death of our colleague and HMS Secretary Com. Vasant Kulkarni on Friday, the 6th September 1974. This sad and sudden death has naturally shocked his family, friends and associates in the labour and socialist movement. More than shock his death has created a void in the field of workers' education. As a member of the Secretariat he cheerfully and competently carried out our education programme and extended it to family planning and population control. In his death the HMS, film workers' organisation and labour education movement have suffered great loss. To the memory of this beloved colleague we pay our respectful homage.

The tragic death of Mohan Kumaramangalam and Satish Loomba in the distrarous aircrash of 31st May 1973 in Delhi dealt a heavy blow to the working class and socialist movements. As a Minister in the Government of India Mohan Kumaramangalam in one big stride nationalised the coal industry and lifted the steel industry from the morass of bureaucratic ineptitude and lethargy. The steel and coal industry had just about begun to show the results of the retrieval in production and industrial relations when he died. The country had seen the first few phases of a considered strategy of socialist development before the death of its author and architect. To the affectionate memory of this life-long friend of Indian workers we pay our respectful homage.

Satish Loomba was a fellow-member from the AITUC in many a national bipartite and tripartite over two decades. In

his death not only the AITUC but the Indian trade union movement have lost an articulate spokesman and a genial trade unionist. Earlier the Indian trade union movement suffered a grievous loss in the death of S. R. Vasawada, a doyen of the Ahmedabad school of trade unionism. Till his death he tirelessly worked for the inculcation of his beliefs and convictions. To these fellow trade unionists we pay our respectful homage.

## II

### BETWEEN COIMBATORE AND CALCUTTA

#### **Difficult Period**

2. It is three years and three months since we last met in Coimbatore and gave ourselves a policy and a perspective. Neither I nor the Working Committee whom you had elected and entrusted with the responsibility of carrying out this policy had imagined that it would be so long a time before we met again not only in a different geographical area but in a totally different political and economic milieu. My own limited abilities apart, time and circumstance have compounded the difficulty of summing up and sorting out the developments of the period from September 1971 to December 1974.

3. Even with this long period it should not have been difficult to record the events; accept some as outstanding achievements for the working-class and some as disastrous failures and reach a conclusion mixed with hope and despair. That our experience since Coimbatore does not lend itself to such a statement carries its own lesson for Calcutta. The lesson could well be of looking at our Manifesto and our Constitution which we gave to ourselves in this City in 1948 and to test their validity on the touchstone of our twenty-six year experience.

#### **HMS Convictions**

4. HMS has been the organisational expression of a conviction. The conviction was so firm as to be elevated to a quintessential principle embodied in the Manifesto as



absolute necessity of maintaining the freedom of the trade unions from domination of any government, employer or political party." HMS Constitution answered the need for harmonising its conviction and principle of the Manifesto in its functioning. With this Manifesto and this Constitution we have all these twenty-six years held fast to (a) the autonomy of the trade union movement and (b) to the supremacy of the will of its members, democratically ascertained and collectively expressed. Autonomy has been central to HMS trade union philosophy. Equally central, in consequence, to its trade union programme has been the right of collective bargaining and the right to strike.

### **Hazardous Initiative**

5. We adopted the hazardous course of dialogue without conditions with the then existing major trade union centres in 1967 to find out if they could come together on the common ground of the autonomy of the trade union movement and respect for its democratic functioning. Traversing the long, far from straight and often arduous and frustrating course of this dialogue we realised at Coimbatore, against the backdrop of changes that had happened and appeared to be happening, the necessity of providing "a firmer basis and wider ambit to our dialogue." We expressed ourselves in favour of the more hazardous course of unification of the trade union movement. In doing so we armed ourselves with the safeguards inherent in the principles and convictions enshrined in our Manifesto and Constitution: democratic functioning, independence from employers, political parties and government, commitment to democracy, socialism and economic development with a leading role for workers in its management. The 17th Calcutta Convention of the HMS has to examine the legitimacy of HMS principles and convictions, the legitimacy of its Manifesto and Constitution based on these convictions and principles, the legitimacy of the assessment of the developments of 1967 and 1971 which provided the spring board for our initiatives, the legitimacy of these initiatives and of the conclusions we may have to draw from our experience of trying to achieve concert of thought and action with other trade union centres. Re-

wof HMS from Coimbatore to Calcutta would be incomplete if it did not include question of its legitimacy at different levels. The 17th National Convention of HMS is, therefore, in a very real sense its Legitimacy Convention.

### III

#### HMS IN A PERIOD OF CHANGE

##### 1st Phase: Dialogue

6. HMS began its dialogue with the other trade union centres according to carefully considered guidelines. Behind the beginning of the dialogue was the frank admission that (a) by itself no central trade union organisation, whatever its aims and whatever its certificate of claimed and verified membership, was big enough and strong enough to be the sole legitimate representative of the Indian working class or the sole legitimate defender and promoter of its interests; (b) the inadequacy of every single trade union centre had led to the devaluation of the trade union movement and the Indian working class as a participant in the formulation and implementation of the country's development plans; and (c) to obtain for the working class the meagre gains which the development plans formally conceded the trade union movement would have to acquire a style of working which did not undermine and weaken trade union centres on the one hand and to acquire concert and union in their organised efforts to secure the rightful claims of the Indian workers.

7. The dialogue sought by the HMS was accepted by the INTUC. The HMS and the INTUC made a joint declaration on the 30th May 1971. A joint statement by the HMS and the INTUC was made on the 23rd August 1971. At Coimbatore therefore, we had before us the acceptance by the INTUC as well as the AITUC of their inadequacy and consequent inability to meet by themselves in isolation the challenges of contemporary developments.

8. In itself this was not entirely new. Following the pathetic outcome of the 26/27th Indian Labour Conference

(1969) and the 29th Session of the Standing Labour Committee (1970) the Government of India had set up the Inter-Organisation Working Group of HMS, AITUC and INTUC. They had been grappling with the problems of industrial relations and trade union policies, albeit unsuccessfully, at the time of the Coimbatore Conference. What was new, as we saw it at Coimbatore, was the acceptance by INTUC and AITUC of the need to approach working class problems without the trammels of ideology or political affiliation. HMS saw in this the hopeful prospect of moving nearer its Manifesto objective of freeing the trade union movement from the domination of political parties, government and employers. Nor was it wishful thinking. For the organisations which had set conditions for dialogue with HMS had not only shed those conditions but had themselves come forward to specify their reasons for wanting the dialogue and the purposes they sought to achieve through it.

### **Second Phase: Beyond Dialogue**

9. Fortified by the two formal declarations with INTUC and AITUC it was natural and logical for us to conclude, as we did at Coimbatore, that the trade union movement was poised for a significant breakthrough. After decades of fragmentation we felt that dialogue had prepared the ground for a purposeful effort to mitigate and minimise rivalries, to find workable solutions for the issues which gave rise to rivalries and to formulate common approaches on important issues. The next step of providing a firmer basis and wider ambit to the evolving dialogue by leading it towards the creation of a platform of unification of the three central organisations was taken by us when we adopted at the 16th Convention in Coimbatore our resolution on 'Trade Union Perspective.' In terms of the mandate given to it the Working Committee carried forward the process and we eventually succeeded in reaching an agreement between the HMS, AITUC and INTUC to establish a National Council of Central Trade Unions. (please see Appendices I, II & III).



## Unification on the Agenda

10. Nobody has questioned the relevance and urgency of having unification on the agenda of the Indian trade union movement. Or else the creation of the National Council of Central Trade Unions would not have been followed up immediately by the creation of the United Council of Trade Unions under the sponsorship of the Centre of Indian Trade Unions (CITU). Nevertheless, the bonafides of the HMS in sponsoring the National Council and in agreeing to work in it have been questioned. It is true the National Council had HMS, AITUC and INTUC as its initial members. But HMS did not close its door to other trade union centres. The beginning was made with these three primarily because ever since their formation INTUC and HMS along with the much older AITUC have been the members of the Indian Tripartite structure of the Indian Labour Conference and have been accepted nationally and internationally as constituting the core and corpus of the trade union movement of the country. When the Government thought of referring to the trade union movement the problems of industrial relations and trade union policies in the politically convulsive period of 1969-1972 it had invited these three organisations to constitute the Inter-Organization Working Group. It was this Working Group which was revived and re-entrusted the formulation of an appropriate industrial relations and trade union policy appropriate to an era which began with the Fifth Parliament and was seemingly motivated by a commitment to growth with social justice. It was the group of these three trade union centres which had voiced at international forums the agonies and oppressions suffered by the workers of Bangladesh as their struggle for liberation. It was this group again which was invited to participate in the Working Party of Employers and Workers representatives which was set up in the wake of Indo-Pakistan War of December 71. Some of the trade union centres were not even born when the dialogue was started by the HMS. Some which were there had not cared to respond to the HMS initiative for the dialogue. Viewed in the circumstances of the period when the HMS embarked on the policy of dialogue without conditions or viewed in the circumstances

in which this dialogue proceeded and the manner in which it was conducted the formation of the National Council of Central Trade Unions was not only legitimate but historically inevitable.

### **Moribund National Council**

11. Though the National Council took a long time in coming into being it took far less time in going into nothingness. It became moribund before it acquired any form or structure or purpose. It has not met for over a year. And as we look back at it from the vantage point of the 17th National Convention at Calcutta in 1974 HMS would have great difficulty in visualising a time at which and the purpose for which it could be convened and in which it would participate.

12. The principal reason for the collapse of the National Council and the pitiful petering out of the bright hopes of 1971 and 1972 was the atavistic reversion to attitudes and habits behaviour of those trade union centres which constituted the mainstream of the Indian working class movement. The only basis on which the National Council could have worked was the principle of equality amongst the member organisations, respect for their organisational independence and integrity and of approaching the problems of workers without being in awe of the government and ministers of the day. The functioning and success of the National Council was inconceivable if member organisations simultaneously wanted to establish and retain position of special relationship with the government and ministers of the day. In fact the formation of the National Council was delayed for many months because of the reluctance of some member organisations to accept each other's equality or ensure their complete independence of government and political parties. On the morrow of its formation these member organisations sought and secured special relationship with the government and the ministers and thereby wrote the epitaph of the National Council.

### **From National Council To Consultative Committee**

13. The National Council having gone into deep desuetude

the HMS initiative has reverted from the platform of unification to the earlier phase of dialogue without conditions. The INTUC has reiterated its interest in the dialogue. But there are several reasons for circumspection. The initiative of INTUC President Shri B. Bhagwati in August 1973 for the reactivation of the HMS-INTUC Joint Consultative Committee was curiously enough, projected in the newspapers as a prolude to the merger of HMS with INTUC. So premeditated and calculated was the effort that the HMS President had to issue a public rejoinder: "A report has appeared in a section of the press to the effect that talks for merger of HMS with the Indian National Trade Union Congress are taking place. I am extremely surprised at this report. I want to make it clear that there is no truth in this and that no talks are being held for the merger of the two organisations." Likewise, the Working Committee in its Delhi meeting of August 73 had to reiterate, among other things, the basis on which the dialogue could be resumed: "The overriding consideration in developing a relationship with the other trade union organisations would be the protection and projection of the integrity of HMS as an independent national trade union organisation ruling out merger in any form at any time with any other organisation."

14. Unfortunately misapprehension has always persisted at policy-making levels in INTUC about HMS policy of dialogue without conditions. Thus, the General Secretary of INTUC after signing the Joint Declaration but without convening a single meeting of the Joint Consultative Committee felt in no compunction in making an astounding statement: "Already INTUC was working for unity between HMS and INTUC. This new development of HMS leaders joining the Congress has brought their unity move near to fruition. It will be quite incongruent if politically these colleagues in INTUC and HMS are one but function as rivals in the trade union movement. On behalf of the INTUC I deem it a privilege to invite all friends from HMS who have joined the Congress also to join INTUC where I can assure them they will be received with all honour and dignity." The HMS response to this was one of stunning silence. But the HMS did bring



to the notice of the INTUC President and its Working Committee that its General Secretary's statement was not only unfortunate and uncalled for but amounted to interference in the HMS and constituted an attack on its integrity. Most serious of all was the presumption in the mind of the INTUC General Secretary that HMS policies and HMS perspectives were formed on grounds of political expediency. The whole thinking behind the INTUC General Secretary's formulation was alien to HMS philosophy of independence from the domination of political parties.

#### **Varied political Pressure in HMS**

15. Without condoning the impropriety of the INTUC General Secretary's political overtime one could overlook it to as an indiscretion and as an automatic reflex of a politically oriented trade union functionary. HMS could also remonstrate with the INTUC as one trade union centre to another. But for some period now on the ground of its political presence in the HMS one political party or another might be tempted to interfere in the decision-making and functioning of the HMS. But unlike the INTUC it might not even have a trade union organisation as an excuse for its interference. Nor for that same reason would the HMS have a forum of protesting or a form of giving expression to its protest except in the General Secretary's Report to the Convention.

16. Time and time again it has been emphasised that HMS philosophy of the freedom of trade union movement from the domination of political parties and its functioning on the basis of internal democracy have been protected in its Constitution which recognises trade unions as entities and, therefore, as its members and not individuals. Individuals are members of parties but that does not make the unions of which they are members automatically members of their parties. Therefore, no party can evoke the loyalty of its members to dictate to their unions a policy or a line of action and at one remove to dictate to the HMS. A party that does evoke such loyalty of its members to cast trade union policies in party moulds is certainly, as far as HMS is concerned, causing a great deal of

embarrassment to its own members and detracts from the effectiveness as trade unionists and diminishes their contribution to the formulation and implementation of HMS policy. I feel extremely unhappy to have to say this in my report to the Convention. But I feel even more unhappily that I have no alternative but to say it in the interest of preserving the autonomy, self-respect, independence and integrity of the HMS as an organisation with political presence of a great variety. We are unique in reflecting the political changes in the country in our organisation. We have survived the changes in the political complexion of our leadership without impairing our integrity, independence and unity of the HMS. We welcome this presence. We are proud of this presence. We want to retain this presence. One political presence is as precious to us as the others. But HMS has not permitted and would not permit one presence to submerge or edge out the others. No such efforts had ever been made in our long history. We have had experience in the matter and I do hope we will neither lose this experience nor feel the need to acquire it.

#### IV

### GOVERNMENT POLICIES AND ADMINISTRATION

#### Out of Cabinet

17. An unfortunate development, much deplored and regretted by the working class and the trade union movement has been the precipitate decline in the importance, influence and authority of the Union Labour Ministry. For the first time since 1971 the Union Labour Minister has not been included in the Central Cabinet. Since 1973 erosion of its authority has gone further and the Union Labour Minister, now holding the subordinate position of a Minister of State, has been deprived of policy-making role even in matters which concern industrial relations and trade union policies. It might be that the political weight, ability and aptitude of the incumbent has been responsible for this present denouncement. HMS, however, cannot but record its unhappiness, particularly because it runs counter to its untiring effort of securing for workers

class a place of honour and influence in the formulation and implementation of the development plans as well as in the management of the economy in all sectors and at all levels.

### **Initiatives Under Shri Khadilkar**

18. The incumbency of the Union Labour Ministry provides a specific and natural criterion for dividing the period and evaluating its stewardship. The stewardship of the Union Labour Ministry from March 71 to December 72 was fruitful and beneficial for the workers. It began with the firm declaration by the Union Government that consultation with accredited representatives of the workers would be the cornerstone of its policies and their administration. The declaration was immediately followed by a National Conference in May 1971 to which all trade union centres were invited. The Labour Minister in his summing up correctly reflected the crystallisation of thinking that had taken place in the trade union centres with exception. Even so to ensure universal acceptability and consensus behind his initiative for a new pattern and law of industrial relations the Labour Minister facilitated the process of further discussion inside the trade union movement.

19. HMS appreciated and accepted it for what it was a democratic approach and a democratic method. It had the immediate impact of muting rivalry in the trade union movement and of rallying it with unprecedented unity behind the workers' demands for (a) extension and strengthening of the public sector; (b) replacement of third party intervention by direct collective bargaining; (c) improvement in the law of bonus; (d) legislation for gratuity; and (e) regulation and settlement of inter-union disputes by the trade union movement itself without recourse to or interference of the government.

### **27th Indian Labour Conference:**

20. On all issues on which the entire trade union movement was unanimous it received support from the Union Labour Minister and together they succeeded in making rapid advance. One such issue was bonus. After the infructuous attempts

of the previous tripartites Mr. Khadilkar not only convened the 27th Indian Labour Conference to act on this issue but succeeded in establishing an agreed machinery for its review in the form of Bonus Review Committee. On the question of minimum bonus Mr. Khadilkar succeeded in persuading the Government of India to respect the unity of the trade union movement and secure the enhancement of the statutory minimum bonus from 4 per cent to 8.33 per cent. Likewise on the question of gratuity for the workers, on which again the working class as a whole was united irrespective of their trade union affiliations, Mr. Khadilkar was able to act swiftly and enacted legislation adding a new statutory right for the industrial workers.

#### **Public Sector:**

21. Coking coal mines were nationalised in October 1971 followed by the nationalisation of the non-coking coal mines. On the issue of nationalisation of the coal mining industry the working class was united and was responsive to the Labour Ministry's efforts of securing the workers' cooperation during the initial difficulties of coal nationalisation. Efforts also got under way for reviewing the functioning of public sector undertakings with a view to secure more willing and conscious participation of workers in their management through an open policy and structure of industrial relations.

22. But on the issue of industrial relations and the role of workers in the management of the public sector unfortunately the trade union movement failed to achieve unity and to act unitedly. In consequence the deliberations of the two working groups of trade union organisations not only handicapped Mr. Khadilkar's efforts but in fact gave rise to controversy. The controversy spilled over from group deliberation and extended to his proposal for the new industrial relations law. It was in the midst of this controversy that Mr. Khadilkar left the Labour Ministry even if this controversy might not have been the cause of his leaving it.



### **Support for Unity:**

23. The efforts and initiatives of the Union Labour Ministry during Mr. Khadilkar's stewardship were inevitably helped or hindered according to the strength and weakness of the unity in the trade union movement. But in all fairness it must be conceded that Mr. Khadilkar was conscious of this relationship. Being conscious he gave orientation of the Labour Ministry which was intended to create conditions favourable for trade union unity and, where such unity already existed for strengthening it. His appreciation and awareness of the importance of trade union unity was evident in the skilful and purposeful use of the official consultative practices and procedure of the bipartite and tripartite structures of the Indian Labour Conference and its associated organisations. Not that he was not conscious of the constraints of formalism and artificial structure from which they suffered. Here too his effort to restructure them on realistic basis so that they could become more representative of the workers and could become more effective and less ritualistic in advancing their interests was frustrated by those who had acquired vested interest in their formalism and artificial structure.

### **Second Incumbency 1973-74:**

24. The transition in the Labour Ministry from Shri Khadilkar in 1971-72 to Shri Raghunatha Reddy in 1973-74 was not merely a change in the stewardship but a change in style in the orientation and administration of its policies. There can be no manner of doubt that it has been a change for the worse. For the style and orientation of the Labour Ministry in 1973-74 have weakened the voice of labour, have undermined and reversed the trends towards unity in the trade union movement, have played havoc with industrial peace and production in the public sector and have, in consequence of all this, ousted the Labour Ministry from its appropriate area of policy and functioning and have deprived the Labour Minister of his proper role as the promoter and protector of workers' interests.

### Contrast in Styles:

25. Where Shri Khadilkar's approach was open and consultative Shri Raghunatha Reddy's approach, in stark contrast, has been secret and manipulative. Shri Khadilkar used the instruments of bipartite and tripartite structures to build up public opinion in favour of progressive measures that fitted the workers. Shri Raghunatha Reddy in trying to manipulate tripartite and bipartite processes denied to himself thereby to the workers the forum and the possibility of carrying public opinion in their favour. Shri Khadilkar encouraged dialogue between different points of view as a means of building about relationship of mutual trust. He then used the improved climate for introducing flexibility in the application of the rigid practices and procedures of the established tripartite and bipartite structures. Shri Raghunatha Reddy on the other hand encouraged direct personal representation of himself in place of open dialogue between the parties and thereby aggravated suspicions and erected barriers in communication between them. The unhealthy climate thus created then made an excuse for substituting arbitrary and ad hoc decisions in place of logical conclusions flowing from accepted policies. By moving away from Government moorings in part towards expedients based on partisanship Shri Reddy pushed in the direction of total suspension of bipartite and tripartite machinery. In the few meetings that he had had to hold Shri Reddy himself was inarticulate and the deliberations in these meetings were inconclusive. Above all these meetings were convened and the composition decided without reference to any criterion. This must have been exceedingly embarrassing to the permanent bureaucracy in the Labour Ministry which sought relief for itself by dispensing with the records of these meetings altogether.

26. It has been Shri Raghunatha Reddy's boastful claim that he has evolved imaginative bipartism in place of the legalistic and formal variety which he had inherited. His experiments in imaginative bipartism have given us bipartite wage negotiating machinery for the (1) public sector heavy electrical industry; (2) cement industry; (3) coal industry; and (4) steel industry.

industry. All these industrial bipartites were formed in answer to the workers' demand for steel wages and steel pattern of negotiations. They were all expected to conclude their work and give lasting agreements within a period of six months. The heavy electricals bipartite decided interim relief by an "Agreement" which was not subscribed to by the representatives of workers from the most efficient and productive unit of the heavy electricals industry. The cement bipartite failed to reach an agreement and was held to ransom by a threat of strike. Shri Reddy paid the ransom in the shape of writing an award for the bipartite. So wonderful has been the award that the cement workers even after one year have not been able to work out a wage structure and are seething with discontent. The coal bipartite which was constituted in September 73 has not only not given agreement to the workers and management in the public sector coal industry but has given the country two strikes in 1973, a third strike in 1974 and the threat of a fourth one in December 74. Disenchanted with Shri Raghunatha Reddy's imaginative bipartism workers and management in the sugar industry have stopped looking towards Delhi and have already reached agreement at the State level in UP.

27. Shri Raghunatha Reddy's adventures in imaginative bipartism have completely immobilised even the normal functioning of the Union Labour Ministry. The result has been total inaction at a time when workers in all the major industries covered by the wage board recommendations of the late 60's are demanding wage revision. The workers' distress on account of stagnation in wages has been aggravated by the galloping inflation of the last two years. Having rendered his Ministry ineffective in its primary responsibility of protecting the workers' trade union rights and standard of living Shri Raghunatha Reddy has invited for himself the role of a policeman and a prosecutor.

28. With so much groundwork having been done by the Ministry under Shri Khadilkar it was expected that Shri Raghunatha Reddy would lose no time in bringing before the Parliament the much talked about legislation on industrial relations. The Bill, such as it is, is nowhere on the agenda of

Parliamentary business. For that matter one does not even know where the bill is or what it's about. It passes our comprehension that a bill on industrial relations should be conceived in secret and should be sat upon by the Union Government without the organisations of workers having the slightest inkling of its scope and contents. In this situation the HMS does not know whether to decry the delay or to welcome it as a reprieve.

29. HMS has little faith in the present law of industrial disputes and its administration. It has made comprehensive formulations on the subject and has demanded enactment of new legislation based on them. At the 17th National Convention on behalf of the HMS I would like to reiterate those formulations as also to reiterate our demand for immediate enactment of new law consistent with them.

- (a) HMS does not believe that the role of the Government in industrial relations has been or could be beneficial and conducive to the growth of healthy industrial relations; hence Government's role should be minimised to the farthest possible extent, if not eliminated all together;
- (b) consistent with this view of industrial relations HMS fully and unconditionally opts for collective bargaining in preference to third party intervention by way of adjudication or arbitration of industrial disputes whether by Industrial Tribunals or by Industrial Relations Commission;
- (c) the cornerstone of collective bargaining could only be as it necessarily should be, a strong trade union able and wiling to join the collective bargaining process on the basis of equality with the employer/management;
- (d) such a trade union should act as a sole collective bargaining agent of the workmen in all aspects of collective bargaining in so far as it affects the workmen's relations with employer/management;



- (e) a sole collective bargaining agent can only be clothed with this authority if it is freely selected by all the workmen through secret ballot; and
- (f) to facilitate the change over in industrial relations from the framework of third party intervention to direct collective bargaining, law and administration of industrial disputes should be replaced by law and administration of industrial relations. Such law and administration should provide for an independent machinery which would conduct secret ballot and certify a union selected thereby as a sole collective bargaining agent.

30. Even more urgent than the enactment of the new law industrial relations is the amendment of the various social security legislation. Because of the tremendous rise in prices and the consequent rise in money wages the current remuneration of workers has pushed a very larger section outside the purview of social security legislation like the Employees' State Insurance Act, the Provident Fund Act, the Workmen's Compensation Act and others. In this respect also the Labour Ministry has failed to protect the interests of the workers inspite of repeated representations made to it. The HMS Working Committee was thus forced to adopt a resolution on this subject in October 74. I am voicing the feelings of the working class as a whole in demanding amendment by Ordinance of these Acts so as to raise the ceilings of remuneration under the definition "workman" that would be more appropriate to the falling value of the rupee. (Please see Appendix IV).

**Verification:**

31. Negativism and factional bias in the administration of Labour Ministry under Shri Raghunatha Reddy have manifested themselves most blatantly in the routine verification for termination of representation of various trade union centres bipartites and tripartites. The Working Committee brought this out in its comprehensive review in the Madras meeting in January 74 in relation to coal, cement heavy electricals and

sugar. As the facts of the relative membership of the different trade union centres did not admit of uniform application of a fair, acceptable criterion he circumvented the facts which his own Ministry placed before him. The facts in ports and docks not being amenable to this kind of manipulation he made desperate attempts to alter them by indefensible exercise of ministerial authority. In Paradeep Port Shri Raghunatha Reddy kept on ordering one verification after another because the emerging picture of verification did not permit him the composition that could make a dent in the exclusive right of our affiliate, Paradeep Port Workers' Union, to nominate the workers' representative on the Dock Labour Board and the Board of Trustees. Similar attempts were also made at Madras, Kandla and Vizag Ports in undisguised violation of the practices and procedures of verification which have been evolved by tripartite agreements since 1957. Given this experience HMS has no alternative but to opt out of verification as on December 1972 when it was decided on by the Labour Ministry under Shri Raghunatha Reddy. So complete has been the loss of faith of HMS in the Labour Ministry under Shri Raghunatha Reddy that our Port affiliates have refused to hold discussion concerning manner and method of wage revision not only under the auspices of but even in association with the Union Labour Ministry.

## V

### RAILWAY STRIKE

#### Massive Action on Divided Base:

32. The strike from 8 to 27 May this year by the railway workers has been the most massive trade union action in our country in recent years. It has to be viewed in conjunction with the lock-out in Indian Airlines preceding it and the strike and lockout of pilots in Air India following it. These developments exclusively concerned the public sector transport industry. They brought into sharp focus the role of public sector management and the Government of India in the field of employer-employee relations. Their repercussions have influ-

enced and will continue to influence the total trade union scene in many ways. Trade union assessment of these developments and their repercussions would be woefully inadequate if it did not take note of the state of unity or otherwise in the working class movement and the strength or weakness of the collective action of the trade union movement in support of the workers' demands. In its handling Government has certainly made its hardheaded assessment of the extent of united action which the constantly bickering trade union centres are capable of mounting and sustaining in a period of acute economic hardship.

### **HMS Position:**

33. When the Working Committee met in Madras in January 74 it took serious note of the developments then taking place in the Life Insurance Corporation and the Indian Airlines. Although HMS had no direct affiliates in these two public sector undertakings it unequivocally condemned the use of the weapon of lockout without wages by public sector management. The Committee expressed its anguish and strong resentment against the callousness showed by them which "has no parallel in the industrial relations history of India." It deplored the new practice of demanding undertakings from individual workman before allowing them to resume work" the worst example of trampling upon human dignity." In the same meeting the Working Committee unanimously resolved "to extend its support to the strike of the railwaymen and Central Government employees in support of the demands for bonus and need-based minimum wage."

### **Bonus and Ballot:**

34. HMS position was reiterated at a special conference on Labour Relations on Indian Railways held in Delhi on February 4, 1974 in which, besides the Central Trade Union Organisations and the two railwaymen federations, the Minister for Railways, the Minister for Planning and the Minister for Labour also participated. HMS position was formally presented in the form of a resolution which the Railway Minister

who was presiding at the meeting did not allow to be moved or to be considered at the Conference. The resolution referred to the link between the deterioration in the industrial relations on the railways and the delay in the settlement of the railwaymen's demands concerning job evaluation, wage parity with public sector undertakings, bonus, decasualisation of labour, dearness allowance linked to the cost of living index, subsidised food-grains. The resolution went further and demanded determination of the railwaymen's collective bargaining agent through secret ballot and participation of the railwaymen's chosen organisation in the administration of the railways. (Please see Appendix V).

#### **HMS Moves ARO:**

35. HMS extended its consistent support to the railwaymen's demands in the meetings that HMS representatives had with Mr. Raghunatha Reddy on the 8th April as well as in the meeting of the representatives of the Central Trade Union Organisations and railwaymen's organisations on the 11th April 1974. The strike became inevitable in our view when the issue was joined after a series of meetings in which we did not participate. The railwaymen's organisations gave notice of strike on the 23rd April 74. What we had apprehended came to pass when the representatives of the railwaymen in the negotiations were arrested on 2nd May and the strike began from 8th May 74. In the meeting of the Executive Board of the Asian Regional Organisation of the ICFTU which was held in Hong Kong in May 74 HMS representative acquainted the members with the demands and the developments in the railwaymen's strike. The Executive Board after examining the matter in great detail sent a cable to the Government of India and to the railwaymen's organisations suggesting resumption of negotiations and settlement in congenial conditions without victimisation.

#### **Review In July:**

36. The Working Committee which was to meet in April and could not meet till July because of the intervening :



way strike considered at length the strike and its aftermath. The Committee recalling its Madras decision of January 74 reiterated HMS support to railwaymen's demands and in the situation created in the aftermath of the strike demanded (a) release of all the arrested railwaymen; (b) reinstatement of all the railwaymen who had been dismissed, discharged or suspended for participation in the strike; (c) rescinding the order of break in service for participation in the strike and (d) resumption of negotiations by the Railway Ministry and Railway Board with the accredited organisations of the railwaymen.

The Committee decided that HMS position taken up in the January meeting and reiterated in this meeting should be explained to the railway affiliates and action should be taken by the Secretariat on the basis of representations received from them.

The committee also decided that the demands should be pursued on behalf of and through the railway affiliates and relief to railway workers should be routed through the railway affiliates.

#### **To The ICFTU:**

37. In pursuance of the decision of the Working Committee a meeting of the representatives of railway affiliates was called in Bombay on 16th August 74. In furtherance of the assurance extended to the railway affiliates by the Working committee representations were made to the ICFTU explaining the situation of the railwaymen, the variety of punitive action taken against them for participation in the strike and the need for rectification and relief that they had conveyed to us. ((Please see collective Appendices VI (a) to (d).

38. HMS position has been clear and consistent. It has been clearly and consistently expressed in all forums where its representatives had a chance to project it. HMS affiliates throughout the country acted before, during and after the strike according to this policy. But it needs to be reiterated that in relation to the railwaymen's movement HMS was the first to

extend its support and kept it up at all levels and at all times. But in this matter HMS acted on its conviction and on the principle of working class solidarity. HMS, representing through its railway affiliates the biggest single block of railway workers, was at no time consulted in the formulation of the demands and the strategy of mobilising maximum effectiveness for their realisation. Being outside the councils which spoke and acted for the railwaymen in all phases of the struggle and its aftermath HMS has had only an outside view of railway developments and in consequence has had no opportunity of influencing events.

39. Being at the periphery of things was indeed an handicap for the HMS. But the greater limitation to the possibility of HMS initiative was set by (a) the extremely tentative communication between the HMS and its railway affiliates and (b) the absence of common approach to and assessment of the various phases of their movement among the HMS railway affiliates. It was indeed unusual for the railway affiliates to go into action on the scale on which they did without enjoying substantial HMS support. In the event HMS substantial support, though it did come forward, could not come at the time and in the manner which could have altered the final outcome. Nor did the differences between the railway affiliates make it easy for the HMS to decide whether it should take initiative and what was the right time for such initiative. The differences between the HMS railway affiliates dominated the deliberations in September 73 when they decided the time and strategy of their struggle. These differences persisted, though they remained muted, till February 74 when the National Council for Railwaymen's Struggle was formed and an Action Committee was created to carry out the railwaymen's struggle.

40. These differences apart, the sponsors of the Railwaymen's Struggle continuously talked of an impending strike by railwaymen without committing themselves to a time for it. Similar ambiguity enveloped the demands till the actual notice of strike was served on the 23rd April 74. This ambiguity helped the railway administration as they involved the railwaymen's representatives indiscriminately into negotiations.

before the basis and scope of negotiations could be defined by those who eventually led the railwaymen in and out of the strike. The differences surfaced during the first few days of the strike, again in muted tones so as not to harm the struggle, on the issue of accepting the 3-point formula as a basis for calling off the strike and resuming negotiations with the Railway Ministry. The differences not only persisted but became public towards the end of the strike as also in the final decision by which the strike was called off and railwaymen were asked to resume work from the 28th May 74.

41. Differences and controversies among the HMS railway affiliates on the one hand and between the various politically oriented trade union clusters in the NCCRS on the other have not unhappily helped the railwaymen to eliminate the negative consequences of the strike that has failed and to rectify the consequences of massive victimisation which has been its aftermath. HMS salutes the railwaymen. HMS is fully aware of the magnitude of their magnificent struggle. HMS assures the railwaymen of their support in their efforts to overcome the setback suffered by them. Such assistance as the railwaymen stand in need of the HMS will give unhesitatingly; distressed though it is by the contradictions injected into the railwaymen's struggle by those determined to use the trade union movement in general and the railwaymen's movement in particular as a convenient springboard for their politics of confrontation

## VI

### LOOKING AHEAD

#### In retrospect:

42. The validity of the position and policy decided by us at Coimbatore rested for square on the readiness for adjustment and cooperation among the organisations which we thought formed the core of the trade union movement. The possibility then envisaged rested in turn on the expectation that the government would give up its habitual bias in the administration of trade union policies in favour of a particular

brand of trade unionism. It was also expected that the trade unions would realise the debilitating consequences for the movement of relying on and perpetuating this bias. It has been our experience that the government has grown more aggressive and less concerned about its bias. It has assumed new dimensions and has resulted in unprecedented arbitrariness in administration which in the process has become totally ineffective in its purposes and irrelevant to the needs of Indian workers. Nor have the beneficiaries realised the unity by the government and growing tilt towards greater bias.

43. This unsettling conclusion is not the result of hindsight. It is writ large in the objective evaluation of events. However, the conclusion nevertheless supports the considered view about the incompatibility of unification and cooperation in the trade union movement with the continuation of the relationship with government and political parties. It inevitably compels HMS to re-examine the trade union scene. Trade unions do not appear to accept the necessity or legitimacy of preserving the independence of the movement and keeping clear of alignment with political parties. There is on the other hand increasing evidence of the trade union movement being influenced by the prevailing climate of confrontation. The changing complexion of politics and the more curial stance of the political mentors of the trade unions are affecting the course and quality of relationship between Government and the movement. Even in a period of stable trade union action cannot be solely dependent on the uncertain course of this relationship. But stability is giving place to turbulence ushering in a period of politics of intensifying confrontation. This relationship and trade union action dependent on it would be subjected to unpredictable swings in the balance that lies ahead. The situation is admittedly difficult. Particularly difficult for the HMS which has a tradition built up to, a conviction to abide by, a philosophy to project in a style of working that sets limits to adventurism and all an organisation that has not only survived unscathed but has been sustained and strengthened by increasingly difficult political presence. This 17th National Convention is called upon to lay down a line of policy and action which would



compromise or call in question the legitimacy of HMS concept of trade union freedom and democracy or endanger the integrity and unity of HMS organisation.

### **Crisis in the Economy:**

44. The cutting edge of confrontation is provided by the crisis that has overtaken development in Indian economy. We have been told, and we ourselves can see this, that symptoms, not dissimilar, are discernible in the economies of many other countries. Trade unions in those countries as well as international trade union organisations have, as have Indian trade unions, expressed concern about inflation, rising prices, increase in working class cost of living, inadequacy of neutralisation rates and fall in real wages. The concern is natural and is forcefully expressed because the situation has been impinging harshly on the workers and has cruelly cut into their standard of living.

45. As the economic crisis develops and deepens the prospect of sharing the gains of development has disappeared. Growth rates begin the downward slide. Figures of unemployment begin to mount. Plant expansion ceases. Plant closures increase. Still prices do not come down. Inflation does not abate. But sure enough the vision of development gives place to the haunting nightmare of recession. Equally inexorably disparities widen. Social injustice sinks deeper. Is it any wonder then that the strains in the economy become the tensions of politics?

46. Whether expressed in rhetorics of trade union platform or in tables of statistics the reality remains ugly and in desperate need of immediate change. The per capita income of an Indian for the year 1972-73 was Rs. 337.5 at 1960-61 prices or Rs. 637.6 at current prices. The working class cost of living index which was 100 in 1960 is 300 today. In consequence the per capita national income in 1972-73 rose by 14.5 per cent over 1969-70 but declined by 1.3 at constant prices. Our fellow countryman in flesh and blood had less to eat, to wear and to house himself than he had in 1969-70.

47. Against the Fourth Plan target of 5.7 per cent of annual growth rate the actual increase in national income in real terms for the Fourth Plan period has been in the range of 3.1 to 3.5 per cent.

48. Total domestic saving in 1973-74 increased by 15.4 per cent compared to the previous year. The increase in money incomes was of the order of 27.5 per cent because of sharp increase in commodity prices. The result was that the domestic saving as a proportion of net national product declined from 11 per cent in 1972-73 to 10 per cent in 1973-74. Similarly domestic investment as a proportion of national income would decline to 10.8 in 1973 from 11.8 in 1972-73. The index advanced from 198.8 in June 1972 to 241.5 in June 73 (an increase of 42.7 points) and reached 303.9 in June 74 (an increase of 67.4 points). The increase of 55 per cent in two years at an average monthly rate of 2.3 per cent has been described by the Reserve Bank: "Price increases that characterised the Indian economy were very large, very rapid, persistent and all pervasive." The Reserve Bank itself provides an appropriate footnote in recording a sharp increase in the number of educated unemployed from 26 lakhs in June 72 to 35.29 lakhs in June 73. It did not have the heart to specify the number of educated unemployed in June 74.

### **Policies and Consequences:**

49. Workers are not the authors of this tragic denouement of our development endeavour. They cannot and do not, therefore, accept even as unfortunate necessity the logic or the legitimacy of compulsory deposit of their wages and dearness allowances. HMS Working Committee meeting in Bombay in July 74 characterised the promulgation of Compulsory Deposit Ordinance by the Government as arbitrary and inconsistent with the tradition of consulting labour on legislation affecting it. It was not even convinced of the validity of the Government's contention that the Compulsory Deposits of increase in wages and dearness allowance would curtail currency expansion and thereby contain inflationary pressures in the Indian economy. On the other hand, it felt that compulsory deposit

might be used by the Government, because of its difficult resources position, to escape the obligation of implementing the accepted recommendation of the Third Pay Commission of adjusting dearness allowance of its employees according to increases in the cost of living index. The fact is that even after the enactment of compulsory legislation Government has not paid to its employees the monthly increases that have become due according to the Third Pay Commission's formula. The legislation notwithstanding the cost of living index which was 277 in June 74 stands at 297 in October 74. Compulsory deposit in effect, therefore, has been more than wage freeze, it has been wage erosion.

50. There is no logic nor fairness in rebutting the workers' claim for wage revision, urgent and imperative to protect their standard of living from the ravages of inflation, on the ground of wide disparities in the prevailing wage levels in the Indian economy. Such wage levels as we have, have flowed from the policy of administered wage determination of the last twenty-five years. Direct administration of wages through third party adjudication in the 50's proceeded on the application of the criterion of the Fair Wages Committee report. Indirect administration of wages in the 60's through Tripartite Wage Boards proceeded on the application of the concept of need-based, minimum wage. And wage determination in both periods proceeded in the cosy perspective of price fixation and the application of cost plus formula.

51. The workers, let it be repeated, were not authors of either the policy of administered wages or administered prices. They did not benefit from either. Hence the consensus in the labour union movement for direct collective bargaining.

52. On the other hand, these policies gave rise to manipulation of production, diversion of rupee and foreign exchange resources and imported raw materials, disregard for quality and priorities in production, fabrication of accounts and evasion of taxes. The perpetrators and abettors of these economic crimes were the only beneficiaries of these policies. These similar policies have given rise to black money and corruption. Workers' co-operation is not sought in fighting these

who have hamstrung development by establishing the parallel and now the dominating black money economy. That it would be available should be clear from the reaction to the extension and application of MISA to smugglers. The resolution passed by the HMS Working Committee in its Delhi meeting in October 74 demanding firmer and more wide-ranging action by the Government in this direction indicates the unexplored areas in which workers' cooperation would be forthcoming in defence of development. (Please see Appendices VII & VIII).

53. Administered wage determination and price determination have gone hand in hand with the policy of administered industrial relations which has encouraged industrial disputes and has subsequently sought their settlement without reference to the workers. Administration of industrial relations has in consequence become a parallel, autonomous process unrelated to the needs of production. The all pervasive political bias emanating from the government has given it an orientation that has limited the possibility of making the economy more productive. One has only to look at the performance of the public sector to see how soon this limit is reached. Inter-union rivalry is just one aspect of this orientation. Unhealthy climate of impending conflicts is another. Unexpected eruption of actual conflict and stoppage of production is still another. If the reference to industrial relations as an element of the present crisis is seriously and sincerely meant the effort to restructure it to be successful should be equally serious and sincere. As for the urgency it could not be a whit less than the urgency of other efforts to lift the economy from its paralysing crisis.

#### **TU Consensus:**

54. The workers and the trade union movement have been drawn into the vortex of the economic crisis. That is the reality. Having accepted it it behoves them to come together to find out practical ways of protecting the workers and their organizations against the attempts to break them in the guise of overcoming the crisis. Once again HMS would take the initiative for inviting the trade union centres for collective stock-taking whose most important agenda would be the de-



ference of workers gains and trade union rights. HMS invitation for this dialogue would be open and unconditional. By the same token HMS would expect that no conditions would be set for participation in this dialogue. The strategic objective of this dialogue would be trade union consensus on the nature of the current crisis, its causes and its cure.

55. The achievement of consensus would be a turning point in the history of the Indian trade union movement and in the history of Indian economic development. For the next step would be a national bipartite between the Government and the united trade union movement on (a) the nature of recurrent crisis in Indian economic development; (b) policies and measures to protect the weak sections including the workers during the crisis situation; (c) retrieval of planning (d) resumption of the development process; and (e) assignment and acceptance of the correct role for workers and the trade union movement in the creation, augmentation and distribution of national wealth. If the major premise of this dialogue is growth with and for social justice trade union actions as well as governed policies could converge into a national compact on agreed goals and agreed methods of achieving them within an agreed time-frame.

## VII

### **Hind Mazdoor:**

56. Besides his laudable work in the field of workers' education Vasant Kulkarni had assumed the responsibility of bringing out Hind Mazdoor. His death has certainly affected the publication of Hind Mazdoor. But even before that Vasant himself had to cope with the difficulties of paper scarcity and its soaring prices. There was also a change in the printers. Nevertheless it has been our endeavour to regularly bring out Hind Mazdoor primarily to record the activities of the affiliates as and when reported to us and to put forward the policy of the HMS as reflected in the actions of our affiliates and the decisions of the Working Committee. Hind Mazdoor has con-

scientifically carried out its part of the work and hence I have eschewed their reiteration in this report.

### **Wage Movements:**

57. Wage structures in major industries as recommended by their respective wage boards had become due for revision in 1972, 1973 and 1974. Wage boards had lost their attraction for the workers as earlier adjudications had. Following the success of the bipartite negotiations in the steel industry the general demand was for the formation of bipartite negotiating committees. The bipartite negotiating committee for the steel industry was the result of new thinking and conscious attuning of its structure to this thinking. Unfortunately, as already commented upon earlier, the Labour Ministry under Shri Raghunatha Reddy failed to perceive this. Hence its maladroit interventions landed the bipartites formed by him or under his advice into blind alleys. From the workers' point of view the most regrettable aspect of this exercise in wage revision of the last two years has been the total lack of publicity, authenticity, and authority of the decisions reached and of the credentials of the parties reaching them. Workers do not know the nature of agreements reached on their behalf, the instruments for their enforcement and the forum for presenting their complaints regarding non-implementation. I am, therefore, in no position to repeat to the Convention about the wage movements in the few industries in which they have been supposed to have taken place or are under consideration. I have had similar difficulty in answering queries from our affiliates. From reports wholly unofficial and some times tendentious it is possible to infer about the nature of discussion regarding wage revisions that have taken place or are taking place in cement, electricity, sugar and certain public sector undertakings. What they actually are I am in no position to report to the Convention. Our efforts to secure information from official sources have met with failure. The official reply is that being bipartite they cannot be published in Gazette. The organisations and individuals representing workers on these bipartites also lack confidence and competence to officially publish them. They are not sure of the workers' response on the one hand and their

ability to ensure full implementation as they lack both the sanction of working class support as well as of statute. The unfortunate situation in cement, sugar sugar and coal bring out this dilemma of the bipartite process that has been aborted under the current dispensation.

#### **Bonus:**

58. The amendment of the Payment of Bonus Act also falls in two distinct phases. The first phase under Shri Khadilkar when the trade union movement was united and secured the enhancement of minimum bonus from 4 per cent to 8.33 per cent in one swift, significant stride on the strength of its unity. The second unfortunate and prolonged phase under Shri Raghunatha Reddy when the unity of the trade union movement was consciously undermined by official actions and interventions and had unhealthy impact on the deliberations and decisions concerning bonus. In this second unfortunate phase the trade union movement could not even project its demand unitedly and hence has failed to secure the extension of bonus to the much larger section of the working class which today is denied bonus. The formula for computation of bonus remains loaded against workers and operates to their detriment. The Bonus Review Committee has presented its report to the Government of India which has not released the conclusions of this Committee. It should re-assure the delegates at this Convention that at all stages of the Bonus Review Committee HMS position consistently presented to it and in fact has been (a) that minimum bonus should be progressively raised from 8.33 per cent to 10 per cent and thereafter to 12 per cent (b) the statutory minimum bonus as a matter of right should be available under the amended bonus law to all sections and all categories of workers irrespective of the nature, character, size or age of the employing unit; and (c) bonus above the minimum level should be left to be decided by the parties concerned through collective bargaining.

#### **Workers' Education:**

59. This was the special area of our activities over which I have presided and hence it is with deep feeling that I refer

to it. There are three innovations which Vasant had introduced in this field. First was the extension of workers' education activities to the rural/agricultural workers. On request from our affiliate, Maharashtra Shetkari Shetmajoor Panchayat, he had arranged a series of educational courses for them. Out of six courses four have already been carried out. It was as part of our awareness of the importance of educational and organisational work in the rural/agricultural sector that we had organised a National Workshop on "Education and Training Programmes for Rural Workers" in September 74 in Bombay. Though the preliminary work had been done by Vasant he died before the Workshop was held on schedule. The discussion in the workshop has been recorded in a statement which though concise is very comprehensive in its recommendations.

60. The second new area which we entered was that of workers' education on family planning and population control. In co-operation with the Area Office in Bangkok and the Sub Area Office in New Delhi of the International Labour Organisation HMS has so far held four programmes: in Coonoor for plantation workers in November 73, for textile workers in Bombay in February-March 74, for mine workers in Dhanbad in August 74 and for steel workers in Bhilai in November 74. We hope to complete our schedule with a fifth programme for port and dock workers in December 74 in a port on the east coast.

61. We began our work in this field with considerable caution. However, we have been heartened by the response from the workers and the demand for more such programmes from them, particularly women participants. A suggestion came from the women participants in the mine workers' course in Dhanbad that they would prefer exclusive programmes for women workers. Although education work for family planning and population control also forms part of our national policy HMS has to record with regret the indifference and unresponsive of official agencies in this field. The Ministry of Health and Family Planning itself, although it has a special Advisory Committee with workers' representatives on it, has been unable to appreciate the effectiveness of trade union



anisations to act as executive agencies for family planning programmes and as disseminators of new thinking on population problems. On the other hand I would like to record our deep appreciation and sincere gratefulness to the ILO Directorates in Bangkok and New Delhi for their continuous interest in and encouragement to our efforts.

62. The third area in which we have made a firm beginning is of specialised education and research. Com. Vasant Gupte, General Secretary of the Mill Mazdoor Sabha, Bombay, has voluntarily come forward to help us set up a Research and Education Centre. The subject of research and its relevance to trade union activities was examined in a special Symposium at Singapore in May this year in which Com. Gupte participated as HMS representative. In various ways our affiliates have also expressed their interest in research and their readiness to cooperate in building up a Research and Education Centre which would enable the Indian workers to meet the challenges of economic development hobbled by inflation, unemployment and the spread of the power of multinationals.

#### Secretariat:

63. Nothing brings back to mind the stunning blow of Vasant's death as his absence in the Secretariat which worked as a team throughout the period from the 16th to the 17th Convention with growing personal trust and warmth among its members. From distant Coimbatore President Com. A. Subramaniam kept a watchful eye on the working of the Secretariat and gave able advice and guidance on all important issues and occasions. The Secretariat continued the practice of reviewing its working every few weeks in the Secretariat meeting of the General Secretary, the Secretaries and the Treasurer. To our Treasurer Com. Kisan Tulpule we owe a word of appreciation for being always available on call and without consideration for his personal convenience. For efficiency in functioning and competence in communication the Secretariat wants to record its appreciation of the services unstintingly rendered by Com. Kamalakar Potdar and Com. T. Ganapathi Rao.

64. The period from the 16th to the 17th Convention, from Coimbatore to Calcutta, has been unusually long and has been marked by unusual and at times unexpected developments. Had it not been for the guidance and cooperation from the Working Committee it would have been difficult to cope with the events of this period. It was the confidence of the colleagues of the Working Committee that helped the HMS steer its course along bends that had not been foreseen. It is with the expression of deeply felt gratitude to them that I conclude this report.

## APPENDIX I

WHEREAS THE INDIAN NATIONAL TRADE UNION CONGRESS and HIND MAZDOOR SABHA have been anxious for establishing better mutual understanding and closer co-operation between the two organisations in the larger interest of the trade union unity and solidarity;

WHEREAS the representatives of the two organisations had several rounds of discussions between themselves in this regard;

WHEREAS in the changed circumstances obtaining in the country the representatives of the two organisations felt that the need for such an understanding and cooperation had assumed a sense of urgency;

WHEREAS the Working Committee of the two organisations have approved the idea of setting up a Consultative Committee of the representatives of the two organisations at the national level

The representatives of the two organisations have agreed to set up accordingly a National Consultative Committee consisting of the following members:

The two General Secretaries shall be the Joint Convenors of the Committee.

### INTUC

1. Shri G. Ramanujam
2. Shri V. V. Dravid
3. Shri Gopeshwar
4. Shri Kali Mukerjee
5. Shri N. S. Deshpande

### HMS

- Dr. Shanti Patel
- Shri Mahesh Desai
- Shri Bagaram Tulpule
- Shri S. R. Kulkarni
- Shri A. Subramaniam

The National Consultative Committee will meet on the eve of all national tripartite meetings to understand and appreciate each other's point of view on the subjects covered by the agenda and try to take a common stand on issues affecting the working class in particular and economy of the country in general. Otherwise, the National Consultative Committee will normally meet once in a quarter, or oftener if necessary.

The representatives of the two organisations declare that great as the significance of this historic move is, they are aware of the several difficulties likely to come up at the national, State and plant level.

The representatives of the two organisations will address their respective affiliates to explain the significance of this move and sincerely offer the good offices of the National Consultative Committee in resolving the problems that already exist or might come up from time to time in different regions and industries.

The representatives of the two organisations express the hope that the working class of the country will realise the significance of this big step forward and will respond enthusiastically to make the move a success, thereby paving the way to its solidarity.

Bombay. Dated 30th May, 1971.

**Sd/- Dr. (Mrs.) Maitreyee  
Bose**  
President, INTUC

**Sd/- Dr. Shanti Patel**  
President, HMS

**Sd/- G. Ramanujam**  
General Secretary,  
INTUC

**Sd/- Mahesh Desai**  
General Secretary, HMS



## APPENDIX II

Joint Statement Issued By the H.M.S. And A.I.T.U.C.

at New Delhi on 23 August 1971

HMS and AITUC had worked in concert in support of central government employees before and after their strike in September 1968. Conscious of how effective their concern-ation had been in reversing the anti-labour stance of the Government of India in the aftermath of the strike, AITUC and HMS have ever since maintained close contacts and have engaged on continuous dialogue on questions of reducing trade union rivalry and developing common approach of labour problems. As a result, AITUC and HMS have also acted in concert on many trade union questions in different industries in different parts of the country.

But, in the changed context the scope and nature of the dialogue as well as the content of concerted action have to be re-examined. HMS and AITUC are deeply concerned about the division in the trade union movement and its dangerous consequences for the working class. AITUC and HMS share a common experience that it is because of this division in the working class that, in spite of its sharpened awareness of the need to take part in economic development, its claims continue to be frustrated. Such economic development as has taken place has brought nearer the working class objectives of fair wages and full employment. HMS and AITUC, therefore, share the common conviction that the present pace, priorities, direction and methods of planning will have to change away from monopoly and concentration of economic power if working class interests are to be protected and promoted. It is in this perspective that the AITUC and HMS have decided to constitute a consultative committee from amongst the members of the respective national executive committees of which the General Secretaries of AITUC and HMS shall be the joint con-

**Dange)**

General Secretary AITUC

**(Mahesh Desai)**

General Secretary HMS

## APPENDIX III

This meeting of the representatives of the three Central Trade Union organisations, namely, the HMS, the INTUC, the AITUC, held on May 21st 1972 at New Delhi agreed to establish a National Council of Central Trade Unions consisting, to begin with, of these three organisations, for the purpose of promoting understanding, co-operation and co-ordination in the activities of the Central Trade Unions, to defend the interests of the working-class and the Trade Union movement, to advance the interests of the working people and help forward the development of the national economy on a democratic, self-reliant and non-monopoly basis and to overcome Trade Union rivalry and bring about Trade Union unity for common objectives and action.

The first meeting of the National Council will be held on May 30th 1972, in which the three organisations will be presented by their respective Presidents and Secretaries.

Decisions of the Council will be taken by consensus.

The Union Minister for Labour & Rehabilitation, Shri R. K. Khadilkar, was present at the meeting.

NEW DELHI, 21st May 1972

I.N.T.U.C.	A.I.T.U.C.	H.M.S.
(B. C. Bhagwati) President	(S. A. Dange) Gen. Secretary	(Mahesh Desai) Gen. Secretary
(N. K. Bhatt) Org. Secretary	(Satish Leemba) Secretary	
(R. L. Thakar) Asstt. Secretary		
(H. D. Mukherjee) Asstt. Secretary		

## APPENDIX IV

### ESI.—SALARY LIMIT TO BE RAISED

A tripartite ESIC Review Committee had made unanimous commendations for amending the present legislation. These commendations have been under the consideration of the Union Labour Ministry for a long time.

The present Union Labour Minister has made repeated promises to amend the ESI Act but has not yet done so, with the result that large sections of industrial workers still remain outside the purview of this progressive social legislation.

In the meantime, the increase in the monetary emoluments of workers consequent upon the rise in prices and dearness allowance has deprived and continues to deprive a very substantial number of workers and growing numbers of workers eligibility under the Act as they cross the monetary ceiling.

In addition to the erosion of their real wages, this inflicts an additional burden of medical expenses on the workers. The ESIC is contributory in character; and with the growing number of workers being pushed out of the Scheme, large funds which could be saved and invested for socially beneficial purposes are allowed to be frittered away.

The HMS Working Committee strongly condemns the deliberate dilatoriness of the Labour Ministry in effecting necessary amendments in the ESI Act and demands that those amendments be made by an Ordinance.

The ESI Act is not the only legislation which operates to the detriment of the workers because of the low monetary ceiling in the matter of eligibility. The very low ceilings under the Workmen's Compensation Act, Payment of Wages Act, Industrial Disputes Act etc. have become entirely irrelevant in the context of galloping prices and the consequent rise in the monetary emoluments of the workers for whose benefit and protection the various Acts had been passed. A comprehensive review of these ceilings had been demanded by the M.S. and the Working Committee, while reiterating this demand, urges immediate action by the Labour Ministry.

## APPENDIX V

### RESOLUTION

"The Conference of Labour Relations on Indian Railways having deliberated on the various aspects of the recent deterioration in the industrial relations on the Railways:

Expresses the view that the Railways play the most significant part in the planned economic development and prosperity of the country and for this purpose all-out efforts have to be made by all concerned parties to prevent as far as possible any break-down in industrial relations on the railways;

Is distressed at the frequent work-stoppages on the Indian Railways and the consequences of such work-stoppages, and views that these work stoppages are essentially because of the frustration prevailing in the minds of railwaymen due to inordinate delay in the settlement of their day to day problems and more because their demands relating to job evaluation, wage parity with public sector undertakings, bonus, decasualisation of casual labour, dearness allowance linked to the cost of living index, adequate and subsidised foodgrains, etc. have not been settled satisfactorily;

Urges the Railway Administration to open bilateral talks with the representatives of railwaymen and bring about a speedy settlement of all outstanding disputes including the demands recently raised by railwaymen on wages, etc.;

Is of the firm opinion that the Railwaymen should be taken out of the purview of the Central Government Pay Structure as laid down by the Pay Commission, and their wages and service conditions should be decided through the regular collective bargaining processes;

Believes that strong and united trade unions are essential to maintain industrial peace and democracy, and for this purpose one union in one industry is absolutely necessary;

Suggests that through a process of secret ballot the majority status of the Railwaymen's organisations be decided and the majority union be made the sole bargaining agent;



and recommends that the Railwaymen's unions provide adequate safeguards to all categories of railwaymen to participate in decision-making within the unions and to represent the views of all categories;

And recommends that Government take immediate steps to change the administrative structure of Railways and set up a corporation to own and administer the railway system."

#### APPENDIX VI-A

COPY OF THE CABLE SENT ON 23 MAY 1974 TO  
MR. L. N. MISRA, MINISTER OF RAILWAYS,  
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.

TU-ARO EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HONGKONG  
WITNESSED WITH CONCERN STRIKE ON INDIAN RAILWAYS  
DUE TO ARREST OF SEVERAL THOUSAND RAILWAYMEN  
THE BOARD SUGGESTS RELEASE OF ARRESTED  
LEADERS RESUMPTIONS OF NEGOTIATIONS AND SET-  
TLEMENT IN CONCESSIONAL CONDITIONS WITHOUT VIC-  
TIAMENTS.

KARAYANAN PRESIDENT

MATHUR ASIAN REGIONAL SECRETARY

#### APPENDIX VI-B

HIND MAZDOOR SABHA  
(National Headquarters)  
Bombay

No. 475/74

August 3, 1974

General Secretary  
International Confederation of  
Trade Unions (ICTU)  
41 rue Montagne aux Herbes  
Sages, B-1000  
BRUSSELS (Belgium)

Dear Brother,

I am writing this letter to you to inform you about the decisions taken by the HMS Working Committee as regards the struggle of the railwaymen and their problems. The Working Committee met at Bombay on 19-20 July, 1974. The meeting could not be held earlier on account of dislocation in communications. The Committee reviewed the railway strike and its aftermath. It reiterated its support to the railwaymen's demand for an honourable settlement with its accredited organisations, release of all railwaymen still under detention, reinstatement of all railwaymen who are either dismissed, discharged or under suspension.

At present over 1.1 million railwaymen have been given a break in service, about thirty thousand permanent and fifty thousand casual workmen have been dismissed or removed from service, thousands of active trade union workers have been transferred from their workplace to distance spots. Several hundred railwaymen are reported to be still in police custody. Cases are pending in several law courts against about twenty five thousand railwaymen.

Considering the present plight of the railwaymen the HMS Working Committee decided to give every possible assistance to the railwaymen through its affiliates. The Committee also decided to keep away from the National Coordination Committee for the Railwaymen's Struggle and its Action Committee. I must point out to you that a number of railwaymen's unions in various zones have been HMS affiliates and we have always supported them in their struggles.

In pursuance of the decisions taken by the Working Committee at its Bombay meeting we have started taking action to actively assist railwaymen through our railway affiliates. With a view to assess the present situation and examine the manner in which we could render such assistance to the railwaymen we have called a meeting of representatives of our railway affiliates in the third week of August 1974. At this meeting we will endeavour to come to some broad outline about the assistance to be given to the railwaymen through

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liates. We will certainly do everything within the  
of resources available to us. In taking such decision  
ld like to know if the ICFTU would be willing to assist  
way affiliates.

n, therefore, writing this letter to you to let us know  
is any possibility of ICFTU rendering help to our affi-  
We would appreciate if we had your reply before the  
gust 1974. That would enable us to discuss the subject  
r railway affiliates.

h fraternal greetings,

Yours sincerely,

**Sd/- Ram Desai**  
Secretary

Secretary  
an Regional  
anisation ICFTU  
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ension  
v Delhi-16

**APPENDIX VI-C**

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LETTER CONCERNING ASSISTANCE TO RAILWAY-  
UST RECEIVED STOP WHILE IN SYMPATHY WITH  
F OF RAILWAYMEN TO ENABLE CONSULTATION  
GOVERNING BODIES REQUIRE FURTHER IN-  
ATION AS TO WHAT ASSISTANCE OR ACTION  
D REQUIRED

INTERCONFED

APPENDIX VI-D

HIND MAZDOOR SABHI  
(National Headquarters)  
Bombay

Ref. No. 528/74

August 21, 1974

Mr. Otto Kersten  
General Secretary  
International Confederation of  
Free Trade Unions (ICFTU)  
Rue Montagne Aux Herbes  
Potagers 37-41  
1000 Brussels (Belgium)

Dear Brother Kersten,

Re: (1) Our letter No. 485/74 of August 3, 1974.  
(2) Your telegram of 19-8-74.

Thank you for your telegram conveying ICFTU sympathy with the plight of Indian Railwaymen. To enable presentation to the ICFTU Governing Body we give you such information as is available with us.

In the course of the Government's reply to the questions on the no confidence motion moved in the Indian Parliament in the current session (July 27 to September 4, 1974) the Railway Minister Mr. L. N. Mishra gave the following information concerning action taken by the Indian Railways against the railwaymen for participation in the strike. Our allies assert that the number of workers who have fallen victims to the fury and vindictiveness of the railway management of the Government of India is much larger. But the extent of victimisation and the extent of sufferings and hardships inflicted on the workers on the Government's own admission are staggering enough even if you overlook the Government's effort to underplay the members.

Assistance and relief which the railwaymen need fall into the following order of priority:

- (i) Release of railwaymen under detention;
- (ii) Setting up of nation-wide legal machinery to secure release and then to secure acquittal in the prosecution of the cases against them in different courts in different States;
- (iii) Rescinding the orders of punishment passed against the railwaymen;
- (iv) Withdrawal of orders of suspension against railwaymen;
- (v) Rescinding the orders of dismissal or termination of services; and
- (vi) Rescinding the orders affecting break in service.

Assistance in securing release of those in detention as also defending the railwaymen in the prosecution launched against them would need the employment of lawyers. Assistance to the railway unions in rescinding the orders of punishments of various kinds passed by the zonal railway managers would require partially the assistance of lawyers and partly the assistance of a large number of trade union representatives of the railwaymen themselves. Free or concessional legal facilities available to the representatives of our railway unions as recognised unions have been withdrawn after the strike.

The financial assistance to ensure effective action which would cover the staggering number of railwaymen spread throughout the country would be colossal. To this has to be added the other necessary burden of giving the minimum financial assistance to those thrown out of employment.

The Government of India has also stated in the Indian Parliament that the railways incurred direct loss of 660 million rupees as a result of the strike and the Indian economy incurred indirect loss of 6,000 million rupees as a result of the strike from 8th to 27th May, 1974. However, it is beyond our competence as well as competence of our railway affiliates to compute the actual loss suffered by the railwaymen as a result of



the punitive action taken by the railway management against those who participated in this strike. We in the HMS as also our railway affiliates are conscious that it would be impossible for any single organisation to undertake the colossal relief operation. The assistance that HMS has requested the ICFTU to consider for our railway affiliates through the HMS would at best be in the nature of an act of solidarity and sympathy with the Indian trade union movement which even without the Government's vindictive action is called upon to face the increasing burden of unchecked inflation.

Regards,

Sincerely.

**Sd/- Mahesh Desai**

General Secretary

cc: The Secretary  
ICFTU-Asian Regional Organisation  
New Delhi

Encl: one

<i>RAILWAY ZONES</i>	<i>No. of Workers Employed</i>	<i>affected by break in service for participation in the Strike</i>	<i>No. of Workers arrested for participation in the strike</i>	<i>charge or removed from service for participation in the strike</i>	<i>suspended from service for participation in the strike</i>	<i>punished otherwise than by suspension, dismissal, termination</i>
Central Railway	1,91,000	65,602	1,573	1,701	984	183
Eastern Railway	2,10,000	1,15,268	1,196	2,585	316	56
Northern Railway	2,10,000	38,453	2,465	1,389	1,208	68
North Eastern Railway	1,00,000	17,506	822	826	860	27
North Frontier Railway	90,000	65,000	730	3,336	97	4
Southern Railway	1,50,000	65,115	2,138	530	212	35
South Central Railway	1,00,000	43,748	1,466	707	...	3
South Eastern Railway	1,85,000	78,869	1,978	2,089	1,935	49
Western Railway	1,80,000	72,581	6,922	3,507	3,431	252
Chittaranjan Locomotive Works (West Bengal)	12,947	10,483	49	44	...	...
Diesel Locomotive Works (Banaras, Uttar Pradesh)	6,000	5,934	411	11	402	...
Integral Coach Factory (Madras, Tamil Nadu)	11,000	2,000	133	24	107	...
<b>T O T A L</b>	<b>13,45,947</b>	<b>5,63,653</b>	<b>19,883</b>	<b>16,749</b>	<b>9,552</b>	<b>677</b>

## APPENDIX VII

### ACTION AGAINST ECONOMIC OFFENCES

The HMS Working Committee welcomes the utilisation of the Maintenance of Internal Security Act against economic offences such as smuggling and the announcement of the Government that the provisions of the said Act will be used against hoarding of foodgrains and other essential commodities. The Working Committee notes also with satisfaction that the Government has been endeavouring to resist the pressure of the Kulak lobby which has been clamouring for fixing such high prices for agricultural commodities that would stoke the raging fires of inflation.

The Working Committee would however urge:

(a) that in respect of hoarding, under and over-invoicing, adulteration and other malpractices of the industrialists, businessmen and traders, the government passes from issuing of mere threats to stern and deterrent action;

(b) that administrative machinery be set up and steps be taken with the greatest expedition for imposition of levies on the rich farmers and for monopoly procurement and State distribution of food-grains and other essential commodities including cotton; and

(c) that in the matter of fighting social indiscipline and to tax rural rich, the Government should mobilise the support of the working class and the rural poor.

## APPENDIX VIII

### ADDITIONAL EMOLUMENTS (COMPULSORY DEPOSIT) ACT

The HMS Working Committee, while reiterating its view that the Additional Emoluments (Compulsory Deposit) Act is a hasty and ill-conceived piece of legislation, calls the Government to suspend the convening of the Indian Labour Conference to be held for evolving a social compact for dealing with the menace of runaway inflation and the evolving of a rational and equitable policy for prices, incomes and wages, that the Government should issue immediate clarification under the said Act that the following are excluded:—

non-permanent employees such as casual and temporary workmen as also those employed in sweated and low-wage industries.

allow for specific increases in emoluments to encourage productivity and fuller utilisation of capacities, particularly in core industries.

# HIND MAZ

## *Income and Expenditure Account for the*

( On Cash

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EXPENDITURE	Rs. P.
To Salaries :	15,290.00
„ Rent :	2,386.89
„ Telephone Charges :	2,616.70
„ Postage and Telegrams :	1,647.32
„ Travelling and Conveyance :	
(Including Boarding and Lodging Expenses)	3,364.55
„ Printing and Stationery :	2,660.97
„ Electric Charges :	307.60
„ Audit Fees :	400.00
„ Miscellaneous Expenses :	2,691.87
„ Expenses in connection with the 16th Annual Convention of the Sabha held at Coimbatore :	3,390.21
„ Quota of Affiliation Fees paid to a State Unit :	4,626.40
„ Publication Expenses of 'Hind Mazdoor' :	4,265.86
„ Donation :	150.00
„ Advances written off as Irrecoverable :	2,558.00
„ Depreciation :	627.00
„ Surplus carried to Balance Sheet :	20,180.53

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Total Rs. 66,913.90

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# DOOR SABHA

Year ended 31st December 1971

(asis)

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## INCOME

Rs. P.

Affiliation Fees Received :	47,831.70
Subscription to the 'Hind Mazdoor'	355.00
Advertisement Receipts :	
Advertisements in special issue of the 'Hind Mazdoor'	13,487.50
Miscellaneous Income :	64.00
Interest on Saving Bank Account :	366.70
Donations :	2,300.00
Delegate and Observation Fees in respect of the 16th Annual Convention of the Sabha held at Coimbatore :	2,509.00

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Total Rs. 66,913.90

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of our letter of even date :

ay, June 12, 1972.

Sd/- N. E. MERCHANT & CO.

Chartered Accountants.

# HIND MAZ

*Balance Sheet as at*

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<b>LIABILITIES</b>		Rs. P.
<b>General Fund :</b>		
Balance as per last Balance Sheet		14,977.51
<b>Special Fund :</b>		
Balance as per last Balance Sheet		41.40
<b>Donations for Typewriters :</b>		
Balance as per last Balance Sheet		2,957.16
<b>Sundry Loans and Credit Balances :</b>		2,000.00
<b>Income and Expenditure Account :</b>		
Surplus as per annexed Income and Expenditure Account	20,180.53	
Less : Debit Balance as per last Balance Sheet	4,161.72	16,018.81

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Total Rs.     35,994.88

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# FOR SABHA

December 1971

ASSETS		Rs.	P.
<b>Land and Fixtures :</b>			
Balance as per last Balance Sheet	2,612 00		
Less : Depreciation	262.00	2,350 00	
<hr/>			
<b>Typewriters :</b>			
Balance as per last Balance Sheet	1,030 00		
Less : Depreciation	103.00	927.00	
<hr/>			
<b>Calculator Machines :</b>			
Balance as per last Balance Sheet	978 00		
Less : Depreciation	98.00	880.00	
<hr/>			
<b>Recorders :</b>			
Balance as per last Balance Sheet	1,046.00		
Less : Depreciation	106 00	940.00	
<hr/>			
<b>Strip Projectors :</b>			
Balance as per last Balance Sheet	131.00		
Less : Depreciation	13.00	118.00	
<hr/>			
<b>Library Books</b>			
Balance as per last Balance Sheet	448.00		
Less : Depreciation	45.00	403.00	
<hr/>			
<b>Telephone and Electricity Deposits :</b>			
Telephone Advance :		785.00	
		800.00	
<hr/>			
<b>Current and Bank Balances :</b>			
Current Account with the			
State Bank of Bikaner and Jaipur,			
Mumbai Bunder Branch Bombay			
	10,032.45		
Savings Account with the Bank of			
Maharashtra, Parel Branch, Bombay			
	13,842.39		
Saving Account with the Bank of			
Maharashtra, Parel Branch, Bombay			
	4,565.57		
Cash in hand	351.47	28,791.88	
<hr/>			
	Total Rs.	35,994.88	

For letter of even date :

Mumbai, June 12, 1971.

Sd/- N. E. MERCHANT & CO.

Chartered Accountants.



# DOOR SABHA

year ended 31st December 1972

Basis )

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INCOME	Rs. ₹.
By Affiliation Fees Received :	33,205.50
.. Subscription to the 'Hind Mazdoor'	468.90
.. Advertisement Receipts :	
Advertisements in 1971 special issue of the 'Hind Mazdoor'	2,925.00
.. Miscellaneous Income :	105.00
.. Interest on Saving Bank Account :	828.60

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Total Rs. 37,533.00

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per our letter of even date :

Mumbai, February 12, 1973.

Sd/- N. E. MERCHANT & CO.  
Chartered Accountants.





# DOOR SABHA

31st December 1972

ASSETS		Rs. P.
<b>Furniture and Fixtures :</b>		
Balance as per last Balance Sheet	2,350.00	
Less : Depreciation	235.00	2,115.00
<b>Typewriters :</b>		
Balance as per last Balance Sheet	927.00	
Less : Depreciation	93.00	834.00
<b>Duplicator Machines :</b>		
Balance as per last Balance Sheet	880.00	
Less : Depreciation	88.00	792.00
<b>Reel Recorders :</b>		
Balance as per last Balance Sheet	940.00	
Less : Depreciation	94.00	846.00
<b>35mm Strip Projectors :</b>		
Balance as per last Balance Sheet	118.00	
Less : Depreciation	12.00	106.00
<b>Library Books</b>		
Balance as per last Balance Sheet	403.00	
Add : addition during the year	155.95	
	558.95	
Less : Depreciation	55.95	503.00
<b>Post, Telephone and Electricity Deposits :</b>		
		785.00
<b>Cash and Bank Balances :</b>		
Current Account with the State Bank of Bikaner and Jaipur, Bikaner Bunder Branch Bombay	1,446.31	
Savings Account with the Bank of Maharashtra, Parel Branch, Bombay	17,062.78	
Saving Account with the Bank of Maharashtra, Parel Branch, Bombay	13,121.87	
Cash in hand	7.62	31,638.58
	<b>Total Rs.</b>	<b>37,619.58</b>

For letter of even date :

For, February 12, 1973.

Sd/- N. E. MERCHANT & CO.  
Chartered Accountants.



# DOOR SABHA

Year ended 31st December 1973

(continued)

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INCOME	Rs. P.
Affiliation Fees Received :	51,997.55
Subscription to the 'Hind Mazdoor'	442.63
Advertisement Receipts :	175.00
Miscellaneous Income :	160.50
Interest on Saving Bank Account :	1,336.10

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Total Rs. 54,111.78

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For letter of even date :

May 2, 1974.

Sd/- N. E. MERCHANT & CO:  
Chartered Accountants.







## APPENDIX IX

### RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ORGANISATION OF RURAL WORKERS

Refer Para 59.....Page 31

The participants reviewed the impact of the Five Year Plans on the rural poor and also tried to identify the rural groups which need to be organised. It was emphasised that the issues faced by the rural poor are very much complicated. It was pointed out that the number of landless labourers and marginal farmers was increasing both in numbers and in proportion. This vast numbers of rural poor are underemployed and live below the poverty line. The participants pointed out the various manipulations through which the small farmers are being deprived of their land.

There was agreement among the participants that, despite some schemes being organised for the marginal farmers and landless labourers, these sections have not benefited from planned development of the last two decades. It was felt that the bureaucratic, centralised nature planning and lack of organisation and leadership among these weaker sections are among the reasons for this. As a result even after so many plans, the conditions of the rural poor have not improved and in fact in the case of a large number of agricultural workers, their real wages have fallen and the number of their working days has gone down.


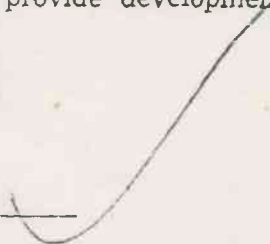
The so-called green revolution, has largely helped to strengthen the economic and political power of the rich peasants. The rich peasantry with its newly acquired political and economic power and the traditional social dominance are exploiting and suppressing the landless labourers and marginal farmers.

It was agreed that the trade union movement in the country, which is at present mostly confined to urban areas will have to extend its activity to this vast working force in the rural area.

The participants, discussed the scope, nature and functions in regard to the organisations of the rural poor. In the course

of the discussion Com. Sanat Mehta, Com. B. N. Rajhans and Com. V. Kabra narrated their experience in connection with the work of the Khedut Khet Major Parishad in Gujarat; Shetkari Shetmajor Panchayat in Maharashtra and the Sahajeevan Audyogik Sahakari Society near Poona. The task of organising the rural workers was vast and very difficult. Inadequate funds; lack of cadres, the large numbers and their scattered nature, were some of the difficulties which needed to be overcome. As a result of the discussion the following recommendations were made:

- (1) The target groups of the organisation should be the landless labourers and marginal farmers.
- (2) The marginal farmer should be defined not on the basis of the size of the holding; farmers whose income is below the poverty line should be considered as marginal.
- (3) The type of the organisation shall be trade union and membership should be restricted to landless labourers and marginal farmers.
- (4) Their organisational activities will be both agitational and developmental.
- (5) On the agitational side, the unions will have to work for the implementation of the minimum wages and fight for their upward revision. The unions should also agitate for the effective implementation of schemes like the Employment Guarantee Scheme in Maharashtra and for their introduction in other states. Such schemes will provide work to landless labourers and marginal farmers during off seasons.
- (6) In regard to marginal farmers, the unions will have to adopt a developmental approach with a view to see that technical, financial and other assistance is made available to them in adequate measures for increasing their production. For this purpose the unions may sponsor developmental institutions for its members like cooperatives or may seek assistance from other sympathetic organisations.

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- (7) The structure of the organisation may vary from area to area, but should provide representation at village, Taluka and District levels.
  - (8) The village, Taluka and District units should be so organised as to act as effective agencies to protect and promote the interests of their members from their supporters among officials.
  - (9) These organisations should be affiliated to national Trade Union centres.
  - (10) Industrial unions, the National Centres and International trade organisations should contribute a portion of their resources to cater to the needs of rural workers' unions and should take initiative for the formation of rural workers' organisations.
  - (11) The National centres should take active interest in this work by providing technical expertise, research and training facilities and leadership in the initial stages.
  - ((12) The affiliation fees and other levies for the rural workers unions should be at concessional rates,
  - (13) The National centres should work as a link between these unions and different Government and other agencies which can provide developmental assistance to them.
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HIND MAZDOOR

Regd. No. MH By South 408

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*Noted 9/12/60*

**HIND MAZDOOR SABHA**  
( All India Headquarters )

**ANNOUNCEMENT**

The All India Headquarters of the Hind Mazdoor Sabha is being shifted to the following address with immediate effect:

**HIND MAZDOOR SABHA**  
Nagindas Chambers (2nd Floor),  
167, Frere Road,  
BOMBAY 1 - India

Telephone: 262185

Telegrams: HINDMAZDUR-BOMBAY

All communications to the Hind Mazdoor Sabha may be addressed as above.

Bombay,  
3-12-1960

*Bagaram Tulpule*  
**Bagaram Tulpule**  
General Secretary

PRAJA SOCIALIST PARTY

IN PARLIAMENT

November 14, 1960

80, North Avenue

~~NEW DELHI~~  
NEW DELHI

Telegrams PARLSOC  
Telephone 45952

Dear Shri. Pandhe, (162) ✓

I have to acknowledge with thanks receipt  
of a copy of your publication ' Five Glorious Days '  
- the story of the Central Government Employees  
Strike.

With greetings,

Yours sincerely,

*R.C. Pradhan*  
R.C. Pradhan