

सखिल भारतीय टेक्स्टाईल वर्कर्स फेडरेशन  
**ALL INDIA TEXTILE WORKERS' FEDERATION**

(AITWF)

President : Com. ARUN SEN

Gen. Secretary : Com B. D. JOSHI

Your Ref. \_\_\_\_\_

Our Ref. \_\_\_\_\_

Goshala Gate, Kishan Ganj,  
DELHI-110006

Dated 11/12

(2.45 PM)

Dear Com. Indrajit Gupta,

I regret that it has not been possible to furnish reports of the Text. Bureau meeting in Prague and <sup>the</sup> Bata workers' unions seminar at Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. This is due to the fact that the reports prepared by me could not be typed out in the office due to reportedly heavy typist work in connection with the Basoda confer. My report had been lying on the typists' table for the best part of 3 weeks.

I am now trying to get them typed on payment ~~from~~ in the market and it may perhaps be possible to give you a copy of the same before your departure for Basoda.

However, I am attaching a copy each of my <sup>own</sup> report on textiles in India as presented in the meeting of the Bureau at Prague, as well as as of the paper read by me (as ~~the~~ some sort of a "workshop-paper") in the Bata Union representatives' seminar in Kuala Lumpur. I am tempted to

do so because I would very much like  
to you to glance through, particularly the  
paper on Leather industry. Maybe this can  
be of some use to you in presenting your  
report to the Baroda session. I need hardly  
add that I have spent some time and  
effort to prepare this particular paper  
since I discovered that there is precious  
little material on the leather industry  
with us — an industry which is acquiring  
considerable importance in our economy.

With regards  
yours sincerely  
D. S. [Signature]

Sec. Indrajit Gupta,  
Gen. Sec., AITUC

The present state of the leather industry and the working and living conditions of leather workers.

The horrid legacies of grinding poverty, hunger and unemployment, resulting from ruthless plunder by the colonialists of the resources of the erstwhile subjugated countries, cannot be banished unless the newly-attained political sovereignty is resolutely used by the liberated countries as a lever for completely dismantling the colonial or neo-colonial structure of <sup>their</sup> economy. Only then can they attain real economic sovereignty enabling them to utilise all their resources in men as well as material for ~~the~~ rapid development of various branches of national economy on the basis of a genuinely people-oriented plan or strategy. The truth behind this assertion or proposition finds striking illustration in the travails through which the leather industry in India had had to pass and is, in fact, still passing. In order that the present stage of development of this highly important industry, along with the attendant working and living conditions of tens of millions workers engaged therein are critically examined, it is perhaps necessary to briefly present the ~~entire~~ historical background along with the general contours of the industry.

Considering its staggering span, the leather industry in India in its varied forms and levels of development, is the biggest after agriculture. It takes within its sweep every human habitation from the tiny hamlet to sprawling metropolitan cities. According to the last census figures nearly 20 million workers and artisans in this vast country are ~~comprised~~ engaged

in one operation or the other connected with the leather industry, from flaying to production and sale or distribution of leather and leather products.

The erstwhile British colonial rule saw to it that the Indian leather industry was not ~~or~~ permitted to develop except to the extent that it ensured to their own leather industry steady supplies of raw material at the minimum possible prices. Accordingly they encouraged sections of Indian mercantile capital to set up medium-scale tanneries with the capacity only to ~~produce~~ <sup>prepare</sup> semi-finished <sup>leather</sup> from raw hides and skins which could not be exported in raw state. The British leather industry provided these tanneries ready export market for their product. Owners of these tanneries in course of time built up ~~for~~ an apparatus through 'contractors' or commission agents for collection of hides and skins. The only exception to all this was, of course, the giant multinational BATA, which probably wielded sufficient influence with the British Govt. to ~~be~~ enjoy the privilege of setting up a fully mechanised tannery for meeting the requirements for finished leather of its large-scale footwear production units in some parts of India. In the near-total absence of leather processing and leather-goods production industry in a country possessing tremendous raw-material resources, raw-hides and skins could be got for a mere song. The middlemen or hide-collectors and skin collectors together with the semi-finished leather manufacturers - cum-exporters between them shared a portion

of the plunder of millions of cattle-owners and  
 slayers, with the British leather industry tycoons  
 appropriating the lion's share thereof. Bata,  
 naturally, remained behind none in this  
 mad race to rob the country of its precious  
 resources in men & material.

Amazing, and even incredible though  
 it might sound, this predatory pattern of  
 colonial trade in leather & continued for long  
 even after India attained freedom. For example,  
 till as late as 1970-71, eighty-seven (87%) percent  
 of our <sup>export</sup> ~~leather~~ trade in leather comprised  
 semi-finished leather, with finished leather  
 and leather-products accounting for only 13%.  
 And the vestiges of this expropriatory system of  
 production and trade still haunt the operations  
 of the industry, distorting its development.

This brings us to the developments in  
 the industry in recent past and the present. These developments  
 go to establish the validity of the stand of the working  
 class; that economic planning within the confines of  
 capitalist framework of society is incapable of  
 tackling the basic problem of integrating  
 economic and social policies in a unified  
 strategy, which is sine-qua-non for ~~topping~~  
 a harmonious development of productive  
 forces in the widest interests of the entire  
 community, as opposed to narrow interests  
 of a small minority of the exploiting class.  
 Since developing a modern leather industry

required application of substantial initial capital investment without guaranteeing quick and substantial profits, besides entailing pioneering zeal and organisational effort, the Indian bourgeoisie have taken their own time to attend to their task.

The big paradox

As already stated, India occupies pre-eminent position in the availability of raw-material for leather industry. It has the largest live-stock population, estimatedly comprising 179 million cattle, 58 million buffaloes, 68 million goats and 40.3 million sheep. In relation to the world total this livestock population represents 15.9% cattle, 46.6% buffaloes, 17% goats and 3.8% sheep, notwithstanding the absence of scientific animal husbandry in the country. The availability of hides and skins in 1984-85, has been officially put at 33 million & 74 million respectively, even after wastage of substantial proportion of hides due to prevalence of unscientific methods of flaying. ~~This~~ Even this, according to all reckoning constitutes a big share of the world's raw material supplies for the leather industry. Yet the average annual per capita availability of footwear in the country has continued to stagnate around 0.3 to 0.4 pairs, with vast mass of the population going barefooted. India's share in export in the international market remains fluctuating around the pitiable figure of 1%. As late as 1982-83, about 30 and odd leather footwear factories in the organised large-scale sector, including the Batas, were found to be

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producing around 13 million pairs annually, accounting for only 62% utilization of their installed capacity. Even after major changes in Govt. policies involving almost a total reversal of previous pattern of production and exports in favour of finished leather, made-ups or value-added products, organised factory production of footwear constitutes less than 8% of the total, the unorganised, cottage & small-scale sectors accounting for the rest of 92%. In 1984-85, according to official figures, export earnings of cottage and small-scale sector constituted nearly 80% of total national export of leather and leather-products valued at Rs. 5,837.7 <sup>million</sup> (ie. USD 463.31 <sup>million</sup>). With all the advantages, including ~~abundant~~ a strong raw-material base, excellent human material in the shape of large number of skilled leather artisans and workers, and immense potential of the domestic market for consumption of the products of the leather industry, organised footwear industry is not able to register expansion commensurate anywhere ~~with~~ with these decisive advantages.

The latest official figures of employment in regularly identified cottage and small-scale units, together with registered factories reveal that out of a labour force numbering over 1.2 million, large-scale organised factory employment accounts for about 50 thousand only.

The major causes underlying this paradoxical situation would appear to be as follows:—

Firstly it is the failure of the ruling circles representing the Indian bourgeoisie to allow the predominantly export-oriented operation of the industry

in favour of the priority task of expanding the domestic market on the basis of providing footwear to hundreds of million people going bare-footed. Secondly, faced with fierce competition in export trade from FTZ-based transnationals in East & South-East Asian regions, the ruling class has been repeatedly falling back on the totally outmoded, gross expropriatory system of 'decentralised' production, which in practice means exploitation of labour of millions of under-employed, skilled but resourceless artisans and workers engaged in production of leather products in the home-based, small scale and cottage sectors of the industry. Thirdly, the failure to bring about the long overdue technological upgradation of the industry with a phased programme of expansion has naturally resulted in negligible growth of indigenous industry for manufacture of tanning, finishing, footwear & components machinery. In such a situation the industry finds itself hopelessly dependant on foreign sources. Fourthly failure of the ruling class to eliminate a transnational like Bata, entrenched in the footwear industry with formidable manufacturing as well as distribution organisation comprising a vast network of ~~retail~~ sale-outlets, has naturally resulted in this notorious transnational capturing the bulk of the urban market in the country. Instead of building up parallel footwear industry, if not eliminate Bata, important sections of the ruling class have entered into collaboration arrangements with it.

and relations A broad idea as regards the mode of production, and of distribution can be had from the recent (March 1986) findings of an officially set-up Committee, ~~arranging~~ following



a survey of the working of the industry in two of the major regions producing the bulk of finished leather and ~~of~~ footwear & components thereof. These findings are based on ~~the basis~~ the outcome of survey of the 42 registered tanneries besides 9,611 unregistered tanning units operating in the first region, employing altogether over 20,000 and about 30,000 workers respectively. The report reveals that a large number of establishments deliberately show on their records less than 20 workers in order to circumvent legal ~~provisions~~ <sup>safeguards</sup> in respect of factory employment. On working conditions the Committee observes that "... The Committee has found that even in case of regularly registered tanneries legal provisions relating to working hours, rest intervals, maintenance of service and attendance records, supply of protective clothing, washing and rest-room facilities, <sup>besides</sup> clock-rooms and cèches for women workers, are not being observed. .... Safety and welfare measures simply do not exist". Regarding housing, the report says, "most of the workers are living in thatched huts, without ventilation, or lighting" .... "Deprived of security of service these workers in unregistered factories enjoy no paid leave or holidays facilities .... social security measures or sickness benefits are totally non-existent".

Regarding the earnings of leather workers in this region (South India) the report says that even after steps taken by the state (Provincial) Govt. following agitation by workers' unions, wages ~~generally~~ in most cases range between Rs. 6.60 per day in case of unskilled workers to Rs. 10.20 per day in case of skilled workers (ie. from USD. 0.50 to 0.89 ~~per~~ per day).

Commenting on the mechanism of procuring raw-material for these tanneries

The report says, "..... So the workers engaged in collecting hides are not employed wholetime. In the vast countryside, which accounts for the bulk of the hides, the flayers enjoy hereditary rights on the carcasses of fallen animals. The flayers have long-term standing arrangements with local hides collectors and they sell raw hides to these collectors at prices almost dictated by them. Whatever official or non-official efforts have so far been made to eliminate the middleman's hold on poor flayers have been unsuccessful till now". The earnings of a carcass-flayer hardly come to about Rs. 687.00 per annum. (i.e. about U.S.D 55.00 p-a. or U.S.D. 4.35 per month).

Results of the Committee's survey of working of mechanised footwear manufacturing units in the other major region of the industry employing a workforce of over 50,000, are summarised thus: "It was found that the principal employer had engaged small so-called 'Contractors', who were responsible for particular jobs and engaged a band of workers including children below 12 years (twelve years) of age ---- No hours of work are fixed for these piece-rated workers, who are totally denied the benefits of various labour laws, including those relating to paid leave and holidays, hours of work, sickness benefits, etc. Most of these "Contractors' workers" enjoy no security of employment whatever. They are compelled to float with different employers when the contractor has fulfilled his contract in one factory". Regarding the wages of these workers the Committee's findings are that they range between Rs. 5.50 to Rs. 12.60 per day (i.e. U.S.D 0.44 to 1.00 per day). As regards the system of production

and of payment and relations of production prevailing in the 4500 so-called cottage units <sup>in this region</sup> with a workforce of 30-35 thousand, the report states that—"The conditions in which the cottage or family units of leather artisans work are in fact appalling and they are ruthlessly exploited by the middlemen who operate as wholesale buyers on behalf of chain of well-known shoe-stores. A large number of such 'cottage units' are also run by a single artisan with his family members ~~forming~~ <sup>assisting</sup> him. This category of artisans are not given spot-payment for the shoes purchased by the middleman, and instead a sort of 'chit' is issued which is encashable after 90 days. Since the artisan cannot afford to wait for 90 days to realise his payment, he is forced to discount his 'chit' immediately for less than the promised amount. And the people who discount these 'chits' are the representatives of the very same middleman who has purchased the footwear from the artisan against this 'chit'.

Thus the benefits of the new policy of the Govt. to step up the production of leather footwear and other leather products continue to be reaped by mercantile capital in the form of ~~some~~ 'contractors' or commission agents and owners of big shoe stores besides a few big business houses without doing much for organisation and development of a modern leather industry.

No doubt in the recent past the rulers have taken some radical policy decisions in order to bring about a qualitative change from outmoded forms of production and colonial pattern of foreign trade to ~~modern~~ modernised

large-scale production of finished leather and leather-products, including footwear and components, offering substantial relief in levies, taxes & custom-duties for export of made-up/value added items. However, these decisions fail to impart a people-oriented direction to the development of the industry, prompted as they are by narrow considerations of the interests of the ruling class. Therefore the positive features of the policy are more than counter-balanced by its "liberalisation" and 'open-door' aspects, designed to assist the monopoly houses to import high-tech. machinery and equipment to enter the international market in a big way against the cut-throat competition from the FTZ-based transnationals. In the absence of an infrastructure, including leather-processing chemicals & leather-products manufacturing machine industry, the country is being flooded with offers of tie-ups in trade, manufacture and supply of these items by transnationals and their subsidiaries. Already heavy imports of chemicals and footwear and other leather-products manufacturing machines have started in a big way. Among some of the well-known suppliers of these items are a number of big firms of French, Italian, American or F.R.G. origin. Some giant USA, France and F.R.G.-based transnationals in the field of leather and footwear industry are reported to be seriously negotiating ~~with~~ collaboration deals with some Indian monopoly-houses. The Thailand-based subsidiary of U.S. transnational Diamond Shamrock is engaged in negotiations with an Indian Company to set

up an Indian subsidiary. A French Company Toujours Mient Amoville has already started production of Bonetting machines in collaboration with an Indian Company. Indian subsidiaries of Transnationals like ~~Shaw Wallace~~ <sup>Lever's</sup>, Ponds & Brooke Bond, etc. ~~have~~ <sup>are</sup> also reported to be working out arrangements ~~for entering~~ to enter the leather and footwear industry in collaboration with Indian ~~social~~ Capital. The most alarming of all is the recent collaboration agreement between Bata and the giant transnational ADIDAS for manufacture of high quality leather and leather products in India.

These highly negative features emerging from the new leather policy of the Govt. have to be seriously guarded against by the Indian working class in general and the workers in the leather industry in ~~India~~ particular. Positive features have at the same time to be utilised for mounting a campaign in favour of building up a genuinely indigenous, technically advanced and people-oriented ~~new~~ leather industry.

The positive features of reorientating the industry away from a supplier of raw-material to the advanced capitalist countries, to production and export of made-up or value-added products ~~to~~ has been stimulated to a large extent by mutually advantageous terms of trade in leather goods offered by the socialist countries, in particular by the Soviet Union and U.S.S.R. The Soviet Union, for example has become the largest single buyer of Indian leather products, including shoe uppers. Its total imports from India in 1984-85 are valued at Rs. 1125.00 million (USD 90 mill.). Thus the imports of leather products by Soviet ~~at~~ Union alone

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currently constitute nearly 20% of our total exports of leather & leather products. This is a striking example of how international trade on terms of equality and mutual benefit advocated by the socialist states directly assists developing nations to build up an independent industrial economy, provided it is ~~so~~ utilised for this purpose.

The leather workers in India have before them the difficult, yet imperative task of building up a strong and well-knit national organisation of leather workers in order to wage a relentless struggle for bringing about radical transformation in the course of development of the leather industry, away from the stranglehold of transnationals and their local collaborators. The premier national organisation of the Indian working class, the All-India Trade Union Congress has already taken up this challenging task.

### Struggle of Bata Workers

No account of developments in leather industry and of leather workers' struggle in India ~~in~~ defence of their working and living conditions and trade union rights can be complete without presenting a brief report on the current operations of the Bata Company and the combative activities of ~~Bata workers~~ Bata workers' movement directed by the All-India Bata Employees' Federation.

As the appended statistical table graphically illustrates, that taking the year 1981 as the base (=100) while the index of equity-capital and of gross fixed assets had merely gone up by 39% and 29% ~~in 1985~~ between 1981-85, the index of gross profits, profits after tax and dividends has registered an increase by 264.85, 538.42 and 580% respectively. On the other hand according to the latest figures obtained by the Federation for the latest period (i.e. 1985), the percentage of wages to total sales has declined

from 25.90 in 1984 to 22.90 in 1985.

Bata Company continues to indulge in all manner of illegal dealings and corrupt practices, flouting the laws of the country. Last year it was charged by the Govt. for infringing Foreign Exchange regulations and evading payment of millions of rupees ~~by~~ due on account of taxes. Recently (August, 1986) it has again been proceeded against for pursuing illegal and unfair trade practices by floating a fraudulent so-called "Bubble Gumers' Contest" in order to cheat the public into purchasing high-priced shoes.

Bata is also deriving maximum benefit out of the exploitative system of 'Contractors' or Commission Agents prevailing in the small-scale and cottage/home sectors of footwear production industry. In order to circumvent provisions of the law governing the operations of Foreign-based companies, it is clandestinely floating <sup>called "satellites"</sup> footwear manufacturing units in different parts of the country in the name of its reliable contacts. Enjoying a number of facilities and concessions & tax exemptions, including exemptions from the operation of some of the labour laws, these fake owners are able to produce footwear and accessories at a much lower cost than large-scale factories. Their production is ~~fully~~ totally tagged to Bata Sales organisation, which, using the brand name of 'Bata', is able to market them at prices several times higher than the cost price. These illegitimate gains swell the Bata Company's profits.

small scale

In recent years Bata has started developing the concept of assembly process rather than of composite product in one factory. The modus-operandi consists in getting components manufactured on a cottage or home-work scale under the ~~etc~~ smokescreen of assisting the Govt. schemes of "ancillarisation" aimed at providing part-time employment to poverty-stricken families.

Besides being instrumental in minting profits by ruthless exploitation of tens of thousand artisans and cottage workers, & all these nefarious schemes also pose a serious threat to the jobs and service conditions of workers in Bata factories and establishments. The logic flowing from them burst out in the open in a concrete shape in the recent period when on the expiry of their last 3-year collective settlement, Bata workers' unions in its 4 major factories and marketing <sup>or sales</sup> organisation served a demand charter on the Company, containing some basic demands <sup>and issues</sup> formulated by the Bata Employees' Federation. ~~These~~ Among these common demands were those ~~dem~~ relating to wage & allowance increases, beside one calling for scrapping of the system of 'contract farming out', or getting components manufactured from outside. In the negotiations that followed, the company offered to favourably consider financial demands provided the unions fully recognised the ~~to~~ unfettered right of the company to get footwear components manufactured from outside. This precondition was rejected outright by the various constituents of the Federation in accordance with the guidelines approved by the Federation, as it was ~~correctly~~ a prelude to large-scale reduction in working strength in various factories and sales organisation. The idea was to reduce the workforce by about 4000, including 2000 in sales organisation alone.

Following the Federation's call employees of Bata Company all over the country, numbering over 20,000 including those in the sales-organisation staged a one-day protest strike on the 3rd August, 1986, to demonstrate their solidarity and determination to defend their jobs. This unprecedented action was followed by a call for indefinite strike for settlement of the common charter of demands of all employees of the Company. Faced with this unprecedented challenge from the workers, the

with effect  
from 28-8-86



Company came to a negotiated settlement of the demands in three of its major factories either a few hours before the commencement of the strike or after the strike had lasted barely 24 hours. While <sup>serious</sup> negotiations were on ~~foot~~ with the sales organisation employees' union, ~~the~~ workers in one of the factories near New Delhi are continuing their strike ~~on~~ due to refusal of the Company to resolve a local issue of crucial importance to the workers of that factory. Undoubtedly the strike decision of the Federation will be renewed unless the Company comes to a reasonable settlement with the remaining units of the Federation. As a consequence of settlement in the three major factories, over 12000 workers have already gained wage increases averaging to about 18-19% over their existing earnings.

Besides continuing their vigilance against the designs of Bata Company to reduce employment and impose unilaterally decided work-norms and speed-ups, the <sup>Bata</sup> workers, ~~of Bata~~ led by their Federation, are also called upon to play a leading role in bringing about coordination <sup>in</sup> of activities and programmes of a large number of fragmented organisations of leather workers in different sectors of the industry. This is a very difficult and complicated task in the present situation.

In this connection I also take the opportunity to convey the appreciation of the leadership of the <sup>AI</sup> Bata Employees' Federation of the persistent efforts being made by the TOI Sectt. to disseminate useful information among various national organisations of Bata workers regarding each others' activities. This goes a long way in creating awareness among them of the necessity to build up a global movement against this transnational's plunder of the working-people in different regions and countries.

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Statistical table analysing important aspects  
of the operations of Bata Company (Subsidiary)  
in India - (INDICES)

Base year → 1981 = 100  
Amounts in millions of Rs.

ITEM	1981		1982		1983		1984		1985	
	Amount	Index	Amount	Index	Amount	Index	Amount	Index	Amount	Index
1. Sales & other income	1312.37	100%	1454.08	110.80	1535.81	117.03	1758.22	131.19	2054.11	154.06
2. Gross Profits	23.10	100%	36.62	158.53	62.40	270.13	94.41	408.70	84.28	364.85 (364.85)
3. Profits after tax	5.18	100%	11.42	220.45	19.49	376.25	32.50	627.41	33.07	638.42
4. Dividend	3.75	100%	5.63	150.13	7.50	199.99	10.50 @	279.99	10.50 ⊕	279.99 ⊕
5. Value of fixed assets	250.21	100%	269.23	107.42	293.93	117.28	323.85	129.22	353.99	141.24
6. Paid-up equity capital	37.50	100%	37.50	100	37.50	100	52.50 @	139.99 @	52.50 ⊕	139.99 @

Notes

@ The increase in paid-up equity capital in 1984 by Rs. 15.00 mill is not due to any amount having been actually contributed by the Directors or shareholders of the Company, nor by the public. The Capital has been increased by issuing Bonus-shares out of the accumulated profits, so-called Reserves of the Company.

⊕ The actual rate of dividend works out to a much higher figure than is sought to be revealed: In this year the amount received by the limited circle of Company's shareholders is not actually Rs. 10.50 mill., but Rs. 10.50 ⊕ plus Rs. 15.00 mill. = 25.50 mill. The index of dividend in 1985 ~~is 100%~~ thus works out to 680%. The actual <sup>index</sup> in subsequent years will also go up. The actual rate of dividend on actual paid-up capital works out to 68% in the year 1985 - It will also be higher in subsequent years.

The fantastic increase in profits and dividends without appreciable or significant increase in turnover, fixed assets or paid-up capital would indicate intensified exploitation of workers + consuming public

SITUATION IN TEXTILE, CLOTHING AND LEATHER INDUSTRIES IN INDIA

/ B. D. JOSHI - INDIA /

Comrade President and Coms. of the A.C.,

I begin by recording my full agreement with the broad analysis contained in various documents of the TUI (including the draft Policy Document for the 8th International Trade Conference) which continue to highlight the grave social and economic consequences of the arms race for the whole humanity. It is by now more than manifest that this arms race triggered by the imperialists is directly responsible for deepening the global economic crisis, seriously aggravating the situation in various sectors of economy, particularly in the Textile, Clothing and Leather Industries in the capitalist countries, and more particularly in the developing countries like India. The disastrous allround effects of militarisation of economy on the economic development of countries like ours, as manifested in worsening of working and living standards of mass of the working people, particularly those belonging to our branches of the industry, are becoming too glaring to be ignored any longer. It is well that our TUI continues to repeat and highlight the grave danger posed by the production, stockpiling testing and perfection of nuclear arms to the very existence of mankind. Since with each day that passes, the struggle for Peace and against the arms race, for reduction of military expenditure, and against the danger of a nuclear holocaust gets inextricably linked with the struggle for jobs, for improvement in working and living conditions of the mass of the toiling humanity on the basis of all-sided development and expansion of civilian production for which unlimited scope exists everywhere. The repeated Soviet peace-initiatives, which receive the support of the peace-loving people throughout the world on ever wider scale, provide a dependable and mighty moral weapon to the working people to broaden and intensify this struggle. It is in such a situation that almost all sections of Indian working people engaged in different sectors of industry including our industries have observed September 1st as Day of Action for Peace with greater mobilization of their forces.

In this context the <sup>7</sup>sole of national monopolies and transnationals in relocating and restructuring our industries in sole pursuit of superprofits, seriously thwarting and distorting in the process the development of the Textile, Clothing and Leather industries deserves to be viewed with the utmost concern by the workers engaged in our industries, particularly

by these in the developing countries.

Comrade President; Even at the risk of making a seemingly unnecessary repetition of the well-known positions of the working class the world and the role of transnationals as the newest form through which imperialists and their camp-followers in the developed capitalist world seek to and maintain the essentials of their economic domination thereby continue to yield decisive political influence in the erstwhile colonies, I am prompted to carry out such repetition. I do so in order to substantiate and confirm the main formulations and conclusions contained in the TUI documents on the strength of concrete experience of the Indian working class.

It is a fact of the history that political decolonisation in the erstwhile colonial countries generally preceded economic decolonisation. It was the combination of national liberation movements in Asian and African countries and the emerging might of the socialist countries led by the great Soviet Union, that ultimately compelled the imperialists to retreat bringing to an end in vast majority of cases direct colonial rule. On the other hand having won political freedom these countries found themselves confronted with urgent problems of social and economic transformation, like removal of abysmal poverty, colossal unemployment, elimination of hunger and want and eradication of rampant illiteracy and allpervasive diseases. It was, and still is, possible to tackle these dark legacies of colonialism, since notwithstanding the fact that almost 70% of the world's population, i.e. over 1500 million people, live in these liberated colonies, they share among themselves almost 75% of all raw material and energy resources, including oil, uranium, lead, iron-ore, copper, nickel, zinc, platinum, diamonds etc. Gaining mastery over these invaluable resources imply the extension of logic of political independence to the entire field of economy, leading inevitably to the decisive break from the colonial past in all its forms. It was exactly to block such a development that new forms of economic domination and consequential political hegemony were developed and perfected by the imperialists. The transnationals thus became the main vehicle of this neo-colonialist penetration.

As the experience of India and its neighboring countries shows, varied have been, and are, the modes through which these transnationals have been operation to accomplish this nefarious task of neo-colonialist penetration. Some open forms with which we and our neighbouring countries have become familiar are:

- 1/ Export of capital, for entangling national monopolies and rising sections of the bourgeoisie in so-called joint enterprises with the object of subverting nationalisation programmes launched by many of our countries and siphon off huge amounts from the host countries in the garb of repatriation of profits-/dividends;
- 2/ ~~The~~ <sup>the</sup> equal terms of trade through various forms of non-equivalent exchanges - under pricing the raw materials exported by our countries and overpricing finished goods, machinery etc. imported by us;
- 3/ Establishment of production and sale subsidiaries thus contriving to establish monopoly over raw materials etc.
- 4/ Aid, which is tied to conditions under which the so-called donor countries are able to carry out large-scale economic and political subversions in the receiving countries;
- 5/ Export of technology which in most cases turns out to be obsolete and for which the developing country concerned is made to pay colossal amounts on various accounts, e.g. patents, licenses, trade marks, so-called technical-know-how, etc. This form is also utilised to stifle the growth of indigenous research and development.

The need for restating these known facts arises because our experience in India, particularly in recent period, is that taking full advantage of so-called liberalisation Govt. policies dictated by national monopolies, transnationals have considerably stepped up their inroad into our economic system. The extremely adverse economic conditions, in several cases leading to expensive political situations, have naturally compelled the third-world countries to almost unanimously call for a radical restructuring of economic relations, for a new International Economic Order. The complete and repeated endorsement of this demand by the TUI fully corresponds to the wishes and interests of hundreds of million workers engaged in our branches of the industry.

#### Situation in India

In order that the worsening situation in the premier national industry of India, the textile industry, could be correctly analyzed and understood, it is also necessary that the general scenario or backdrop of social and economic developments in our country in their major aspects is kept in view. These could be enumerated as follows:

- out of a total population of over 700 million almost 37% (i.e. about 259 mill.) live on or below the poverty-line;

- a stagnant and erratic economic growth-rate with gross national product registering an annual increase ranging between 3% and 7% during the last 5 years;
- ave. ~~for~~ per capita income rising at the av. annual rate of only 2%, standing presently at Rs.772.00 (around US \$ 61 per annum)
- as against this, consumer prices have been rising at an average annual rate of 8% during the past 5 years (These are official figures which are known to deliberately underestimate the rise in prices);
- as ~~pro~~ Govt. Employment Exchange records which admittedly reveal only a fraction of the reality, the present number of job-seekers registered with the Exchanges stands at 27.26 million. While this number has been increasing at the average annual rate of 2.14 mill., the corresponding rate of placements (putting in employment) is barely 0.41 mill. Add to this colossal underemployment prevailing in the rural areas when almost 70% of people live.
- Despite full-blast export driven by the govt., deficit in balance of foreign trade has been persisting at an average figure of Rs.60952.00 million (US \$ 4,837.5 million) at the end of every year. A substantial part of export earnings is swallowed by interest that we have to pay on borrowings from international agencies like IMF and World Bank;
- Continually increasing incidence of closure of industrial units in large scale, medium small-scale sectors. This number rose from 22,336 at the end of December 1979, to 60,147 at the end of Dec.1982, reaching the shocking figure of 99668, with capital estimated at Rs. 38051,7 million (approx. US \$ 3,590,00 million) locked up therein.
- As against this dismal economic background a persistent and phenomenal growth in the assets, turnover and profits of major monopoly houses. For example the total asset of 83 giant companies rose from Rs. 131707,00 million to Rs. 148667,00 million. That is by 12,9% in one single year between 1983-84 and 1984-85. Net sales of these companies rose by 14,3% and their gross profits rose by 18,3%.  
But even this rise would appear to be small as compared to the fantastic rate of earnings of some of the so-called subsidiaries of Transnationals like BATA which has acquired a firm foothold in our leather and footwear industry. For obvious reasons a detailed statistical table is being appended to this document in order to provide fuller idea as to the dimensions of profit-hunting spree being enjoyed by this notorious transnational in India.

- Unable to tackle within the limits of capitalist system the <sup>best</sup> ~~best~~ of problems of far reaching import thrown up by the situation, the ruling bourgeoisie are increasingly embarking on the path of further liberation of economic policies under the dictates of national monopolies. This is opening flood gates to the entry of transnationals through collaboration agreements of various types with the national monopolies. The NO of these collaborations, even though under certain conditions, has of late been going up disconcertingly, involving as it does, some of the giant transnationals from U.S.A., Japan, F.R.G. and France. As would be later explained the danger of transnationals entering the Textile and Leather industries is now very real.

#### The state of Textile Industry

The social and economic backdrop in which our industries are compelled to function already imposes limitations in respect of expansion of the domestic market for their products. Still the Indian Textile mill industry with its gigantic dimensions, occupying an almost crucial position in the economy of the country, could play a vital role in tackling partially some of the more serious distortions in our economy, which have been referred to in the foregoing paragraphs. Instead of playing such a positive role the top monopoly houses owning and operating this industry have been involving it into repeated crises <sup>more</sup> particularly during the past two decades. The main features of characteristics of this man-made crisis have been, and are:

- 1/ Substantial, often calculated, underutilisation of installed capacity, frequently touching the bottom of 64% of spinning capacity and dipping even lower in respect of loomage utilisation.
- 2/ Frequent lay-offs, partial closures, closures and lock-outs and consequential loss of jobs on a large scale;
- 3/ Starving the industry of its capital investment needs due to overt or covert siphoning of its fantastic profits and reserves to other industries or commercial ventures promising quicker and easier windfall returns;
- 4/ Intensification of operations leading to substantial shedding of weaving and allied processes and organised underhand transfer of weaving operations to the so-called decentralised sub-sector of the industry known as "power-loom" where wholesala

evasion of labour as well taxation laws can, and is, being practised, reducing labour overhead costs to the very minimum and maximising illegal profits.

5/ Complete unwillingness of the owning monopoly houses to produce reasonably priced fabrics in discharge of the obligation of a national industry enjoying a sheltered home-market towards the clothing needs of mass of the semi-clothed Indian people; insistence instead of producing highly priced "quality" fabrics for the limited elitist market in order to make maximum profits with minimum production;

6/ Stubborn opposition to increase wages or improve working and living conditions of textile workers, unless forced through long and bitter struggles to part with any reasonable concession by way of wage-increase or other benefits;

7/ Recurring destabilisation of the cotton and yarn market by deliberately engineered crises, or speculative ventures hitting hard hundreds of million cottage scale handloom weavers and cotton growers.

The havoc caused by such anti-social and anti-people strategy and practises of the textile monopoly houses could best be illustrated, though inadequately revealed by the following facts and figures, which the Textile <sup>Ministry</sup> industry of the Govt. of India was forced to disclose in the last (summer) session of the Indian Parliament.

End of Period	No.of mills closed	No.ofspindles involved (in millions)	No.of looms involved (Nos.)	No.of employees effected (Nos.)
Dec. 1980	17	0,05	4,797	26,517
Dec. 1981	37	1,21	18,088	78,397
Dec. 1982	28	0,63	5,540	32,387
Dec. 1983	63	1,68	19,420	94,431
Dec. 1984	77	1,79	18,424	99,592
Dec. 1985	78	1,96	19,256	107,221



Govt. statement further admits that the loss of production of yarn due to these closures between April 1984 and March 1985 has been of the order of 10,92 million kgs. The corresponding figures of loss of production of cloth have been put at 36.56 mill. meters. The Govt. has also been compelled to admit that this monopoly mill-controlled industry has never been able to fulfil the production targets set by the successive 5-year plans.

These figures however even according to reliable official sources do not tell the whole truth. They conceal the colossal loss of production resulting from gross under-utilisation of the installed capacity of the industry resulting in the loss of job or lay-off of tens of thousands workers. Among the reasons trotted out by the ruling class for this economic sickness in this premier national industry are "sluggish demand, accumulation of stocks of cloth, labour unrest, and power-cut" etc. Through talking of labour unrest the Govt. spokesmen stop short of revealing the major causes of this so-called "unrest". An official study on the subject reveals that with large-scale "rationalisation" (retrenchment) of labour force and failure to carry out upward revision of wages to neutralise persistent price-rise, labour costs in relation to the value of production have been constantly going down in the textile industry. From 19.2% in 1980-81, labour costs went down to 16.3% in 1981 and at the end of 1983-84 stood as low as 15.9%-

Under continuing blackmail practised by the Textile monopolies in the shape of large-scale closures, lay-offs and calculated gross underutilisation of capacity, accompanied by corresponding illegitimate transfer of cloth-production to self created "decentralised" sector, the Govt. has at least been compelled to adopt a monopoly - dictated "New Textile Policy". The new policy in its essence amounts to endorsement of the development strategy for the industry as conceived and already put into practice by the Textile monopolies. As already stated the two major pillars of this strategy are <sup>(1)</sup> to transfer the weaving operations to the so-called decentralised sector deliberately fortified by the tycoons of this industry and (2) to carry out large-scale modernisation of selected units of the industry oriented almost entirely towards catering to the needs of limited elitist market besides the export market. As a logical outcome the giant mill industry washes its hands of production for the mass of the people and concentrates on piling up profits, in the process dismantling a big chunk of the industry resulting in loss of hundreds of thousands jobs.

An idea of the drastic shift in the respective share of production among the three sectors of the industry brought about by the structural changes referred to above can be had from the latest figures officially disclosed in the Indian Parliament. While barely 1,5 decade back the mill industry produced above 60% of the cloth in the country, <sup>while</sup> the cottage/unorganized handloom and the "decentralised" powerloom sectors <sup>accounted</sup> for less than 40%, by 1985-86 the share of the mill industry in the total production of cloth has fallen as low as 27%, while the share of the so-called "decentralised" powerloom sector alone has risen to 47% with the unorganised/cottage scale handloom sector accounting for the rest of 26%.

By calculatedly fostering the growth of the "decentralised" powerloom sector, wherein the number of looms has now reached well-nigh a million, the Textile monopolies have succeeded in depressing labour and overhead costs of production in this sector. Besides being able to circumvent factory and labour laws and avoid taxes and levies etc., these fragmented units are able to derive additional concessions available to small scale units. Despite this the prices of cloth in domestic market go on increasing. This is so because in majority of cases the cloth produced in this sector at almost half the cost in mill sector, finds its way back to the owners of the mills, who <sup>after</sup> ~~are~~ processing the same in their modernised processing houses, transfer it to the chain of retail outlets operated directly or indirectly by them. With their firm control over price-fixation, the resulting high profits are appropriated by the mill tycoons, with a small share going to their agents operating these outlets.

As for the conditions of work and employment of the near one million workforce engaged in this sector, a semi-official survey recently carried out records that there is no limit on working hours which may extend to 15-16 hours a day. They enjoy neither paid leave or holidays, nor any social security benefit. Besides near absence of security of service, leave alone trade union rights, safety, health or sanitary measures do not exist. Struggling for bare existence under such unbearable conditions, an average powerloom worker is hardly able to earn less than half of his counter-part in the organized mill industry - i.e. approximately Rs. 450 all-told (about US \$ 36,-) for a full month's work.

Strongly opposing these negative aspects of the monopoly-dictated new Textile Policy of the Govt., a near unanimous platform for united action is being currently evolved by the representatives of Textile workers' organisations with differing orientation. Initiated by the AITUC affiliate, the All India Textile Workers' Federation, the platform proceeds on the basis of complete and radical reorientation of the operations of the Textile mill industry and its restoration to its natural status as pivot of the giant Textile manufacturing system of India, with all its sub-sectors. The platform calls for the industry to be developed with the twin major national objectives of fulfilling the clothing needs of a vast poverty-stricken and scantily-clothed population and safeguarding and further extending avenues of gainful employment in the entire Textile manufacturing system. While accepting the need for technological upgradation, renovation and rehabilitation of the Textile-mill industry, along with the handloom sector, the platform firmly maintains that workers must be fully involved in the entire process of choice and introduction of new technology, so that it leads to appropriate improvements in the working and living conditions of workers in the entire Textile system.

Experience has amply proved that such people-oriented strategy of development of the Textile mill industry is not possible within the existing monopoly-ridden ownership pattern of the industry. The demand for nationalisation of the entire mill industry therefore forms the focal point of the common platform. This has assumed further urgency in view of certain negative features of the new "liberalisation" economic policies of the Govt. Foreign collaboration in Textile machine manufacturing industry are likely to multiply besides those in chemical fibres industry.

The unity on these major issues of policy and strategy is being reinforced by increasing number and dimensions of Textile workers' struggles for their immediate economic demands including defence of jobs against indiscriminate introduction of technology.

During the last one-year mighty united battles have been fought by over 0,5 million Textile mill workers in different Textile centres and regions in the country. About 150 thousand Textile workers in the major centre of industry, Bombay, last year won an <sup>interim</sup> intensive wage increase as a consequence of united agitation. 75000 Textile workers in and around the major textile centre of Coimbatore in South India successfully conducted a 2-month long strike to win a similar wage increase. 22,000 Textile wor-

kers in the capital Delhi, doggedly conducted a 101-day long bitter strike struggle to win a similar <sup>intensive</sup> wage increase. 25,000 Textile workers in the up-country centre of Kanpur have laso been able to win a wage-increase following a strike-notice. These wage-increase range between 7% - 9% over the existing total wages of workers in these centres. The collective settle-ments in all these cases provide for further negotiations on the issue of wage-increases.

A common issue involved in all these struggles was the workers' uncompromising attitude vis-à-vis the mill-owners stand that every wage increase must be linked to productivity. However the employees were ultimately compelled to give up this pre-condition.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'H. S. J. Singh', is written in the lower right quadrant of the page.

*Jute (W. Bengal)*

Jute

- i) Please refer to the statements of the Prime Minister in Lok Sabha on the 18th July '86 and the Textile Minister in Loksabha & Rajyasabha on the 22nd & 23rd July respectively.
- ii) The minimum price fixed by the Central Govt. for Jute is unremunerative. But still the JCI (Jute Corporation) is not purchasing the full quantity even at the existing support price.
- iii) The Textile Minister & the Chairman of JCI has said that the Corporation will purchase 7 lakh bales only till October '86 and the Prime Minister has said that the JCI will buy all the Jute offered to it at support price at all times and till such period it is so available.
- iv) The Criteria is to buy full Jute at support price and not to have any time and quantity restriction till it is so available. There is a malafide motive of JCI in connivance with the Jute Mills to fix a quantity ceiling till October '86. The peak arrival period of Jute is from August '86 to October '86 and if a quantitative restriction is done then the Jute throughout this period will be available at below the support price and JCI officials & Jute Mills will make black money by showing the purchases at support price whereas the actual buying will be at much below than that.
- v) The Textile Minister had Committed in Loksabha on the 22nd July that JCI will start purchases from the next week i.e. which starts from 28th July '86. JCI has failed to start and at few Centres where it has started the buying is negligible leaving the major portion to be sold by the growers much below the support price and causing loss Crores of rupees.
- vi) The total number of Centres of the JCI as stated by the Textile Minister in Loksabha on the 22nd July is - Department Centres - 125, Sub-Centre 72, Purchase Centre 380 Plus Through the Co-operatives of the State Government. Enquiry should be made to name individually the centres at which JCI has started operation and what is the daily arrival and daily purchase at each Centre.
- vii) The Prime Minister along with his Cabinet Ministers is visiting West Bengal during the 2nd week of September '86 and is reported to tour the districts for 2-3 days. The issue must be raised at each place that the Prime Minister has not been able to keep his Commitment either before the Public or Parliament to purchase Jute through JCI even at the support price.
- viii) Before the Parliament session ends the above facts must be brought to the notice of the Government through call attention notice and in other ways.

Ordinary

Shri Rajiv Gandhi  
Prime Minister  
Khursed Alam Khan  
Textile Minister  
Parliament House  
New Delhi

Telegram

P. Upendra  
Madhu Dandwate  
A. B. Vajpayee  
Sharad Yadav  
Saifuddin Choudhary  
Hanan Mollah  
Basudeb Acharya  
Narayan Choubay  
Dipen Ghosh  
Gurudas Dasgupta  
Chitta Basu  
Indrajit Gupta  
K. Mohanan  
Members Parliament  
Parliament House  
New Delhi.

JUTE - PRIME MINISTER RAJIV GANDHIS COMMITMENT IN LOK SABHA 18th July (.) Khursed Alam Khan Textile Minister in Lok Sabha 22nd July and Rajya Sabha 23rd July (.) Sri K. Mohanan M.P. questioned who is supreme The Prime Minister or the JCI Chairman (.) Prime Minister says JCI will buy all the jute offered to it at support price whereas Textile Minister and JCI Chairman says it will buy not more than seven lakh bales till October '86 even offered at support price (.) Is this not a breach of privilege before the Parliament when the Prime Minister says JCI will buy all the Jute offered to it at support price at all times and till such period it is so available whereas Textile Minister has contradicted and fixed a ceiling of Seven lakh bales only to be purchased till October (.) Whether the Criteria is to buy full quantity offered at support price or with quantitative restriction (.) There is a malafide motive of JCI behind fixing the quantity ceiling of purchase so that during the peak arrival period which starts from August and continues till October to keep the prices below support price and make Black Money (.) JCI should purchase the full quantity of Jute offered to it at the support price from the very first day of its starting operation as promised by Prime Minister (.) JCI has still not started purchases at its centres from the week starting 28th July as promised by Textile Minister in Parliament on 22nd July and Jute is sold by the growers at Rupees seventy per Quintal below the support price thus causing Crores of Rupees loss to the growers (.) There is a connivance between the JCI and Jute Mills to keep the prices of Jute below its minimum support price and make Black Money (.) Government should send a team of Members Parliament to investigate and report (.) Member Parliament should raise the issue and ask Government to name individually the Centres at which JCI has started operation and what is the daily arrival of Jute at each of these Centres and what is the daily purchase of Jute by JCI at each Centre (.) The figures of all Centres should not be clubbed by the Govt. to misguide the members (.) The number of total centres as stated by Textile Minister in Parliament are 577 Five hundred seventy seven besides Co-operatives of State Government Addressed Rajiv Gandhi Prime Minister Khurshed Alam Khan Minister Textile Secretary Textile Ministry Chairman Jute Corporation and Jute Commissioner (.) Member Parliament Saifuddin Choudhary Hanan Mollah Basudeb Acharya Narayan Choubey Dipen Ghosh Gurudas Das Gupta Chitta Basu Indrajit Gupta K. Mohanan P. Upendra Madhu Dandwate A. B. Vajpayee Sharad Yadav From Biman Mitra General Secretary West Bengal Socialist Party

Not to be telegraphed -

*Biman Mitra*  
Gm

(Biman Mitra) General Secretary  
West Bengal Socialist Party  
86A, J. C. Bose Road,  
Calcutta - 700014.

# संसद में कपड़ा मिल मजदूरों की आवाज

भारतीय कम्युनिस्ट पार्टी के सांसदों के माध्यम से

भारतीय कम्युनिस्ट पार्टी के प्रतिनिधियों ने लोकसभा तथा राज्यसभा में जिस जोरदार तरीके से दिल्ली के हड़ताली कपड़ा मिल मजदूरों की न्यायोचित मांगों के समर्थन में आवाज उठाई है, उसका जीता-जागता सबूत वह भाषण तथा प्रश्न हैं जिनकी एक झलक नीचे पेश की जा रही है।

एटक के महामंत्री तथा भारतीय कम्युनिस्ट पार्टी के केन्द्रीय सचिवमंडल के सदस्य का. इन्द्रजीत गुप्त ने लोकसभा तथा पश्चिम बंगाल के नौजवान कम्युनिस्ट सांसद का. गुरुदास दासगुप्त ने राज्यसभा में, इन सदनों के वर्तमान सत्र में हंगामा पैदा करने वाली जो बहस की है उसके कुछ अंश मजदूर साथियों की जानकारी के लिए नीचे पेश किये जा रहे हैं :—

लोकसभा में का. इन्द्रजीत गुप्त के प्रश्न नं. ४२, दिनांक २१-७-६६ के संबंध में श्रममंत्री महोदय द्वारा दिये गये बयान पर का. गुप्त द्वारा उठाये गये कुछ प्रश्न तथा टिप्पणी।

“अध्यक्ष महोदय ! मैं एक विशेष विषय पर प्रश्न पूछना चाहता हूँ। बिड़ला तथा डी. सी. एम. मिल मालिकों द्वारा उत्पादकता की दुहाई देकर उसे अन्तरिम राहत से जोड़ने पर इतना आश्चर्य नहीं। अन्तरिम राहत का अर्थ तो अन्तरिम राहत ही है। वे लोग तो इसे उत्पादकता से जोड़ने की बात कहें सो कहें। लेकिन हड़ताल-ग्रस्त मिलों में एक सरकारी मिल है, जो किमी की निजी संपत्ति नहीं है। अजुध्या मिल की मालिक भारत सरकार है। एक अत्यंत आवश्यक प्रश्न यह उठता है कि क्या इस भारत सरकार के स्वामित्व में चलने वाले मिल के प्रबंधकों की ओर से भी निजी मालिकों के दृष्टिकोण को अपनाया जाना उचित है ? सरकारी मिल बिड़ला और डी. सी. एम. जैसे लोगों का साथ क्यों दे ? मुझे पता नहीं सरकार इस बारे में क्या सोचती है। यदि सरकार ने भी मिल मालिकों की यह बात मान ली तो यह पूरे देश में औद्योगिक सम्बन्धों में बिगाड़ पैदा कर देगी।

राज्यसभा में दिनांक २६-७-१९६६ को कम्युनिस्ट सांसद का. गुरुदास दासगुप्त द्वारा दिये गये भाषण के कुछ अंश।

“जहां तक मुझे पता है, यह हड़ताल २८ मई से चल रही है। २० हजार कपड़ा मजदूर हड़ताल पर हैं। ५ मिलें बन्द हैं। इनमें से चार मिलें निजी क्षेत्र तथा एक मिल राष्ट्रीय कपड़ा निगम के स्वामित्व में है।.....

इस सम्बन्ध में महत्वपूर्ण बात यह है कि कपड़ा मिल मजदूर देश भर में वेतन वृद्धि के लिए आंदोलन कर रहे हैं। और कहीं भी उन्हें अपनी मांगें पूरी करवाने के लिए इस प्रकार की हड़ताल की आवश्यकता नहीं पड़ी। केवल दिल्ली में ही कपड़ा मजदूरों को हड़ताल का सहारा लेना पड़ा है। वास्तव में यह उन पर थोपी गयी है। इस हड़ताल का संचालन सभी राष्ट्रीय मजदूर संगठन मिल कर कर रहे हैं।”

बम्बई, कानपुर, कोयम्बतूर आदि केन्द्रों में अन्तरिम वेतन वृद्धि की मांग की पूर्ति का ब्यौरा देते हुए आगे का. दासगुप्त ने कहा :

“महोदय ! यह बेशक देश की राजधानी में ही मजदूरों को हड़ताल का रास्ता पकड़ना पड़ा। जबकि यह देश की राज्य सत्ता का केन्द्र है, जहाँ देश के प्रधानमंत्री तथा सरकारी अधिकारी निवास करते हैं और देश का कारोबार चलाते हैं।.....मेरी राय में दिल्ली की यह हड़ताल देश की दूसरी हड़तालों से अलग चरित्र रखती है। ऐसा इसलिए है कि इसका कारण सरकार के कुछ विभागों—जिनमें टेक्सटाइल विभाग शामिल है—के अनुचित आचरण में निहित है। आपकी आज्ञा से मैं टेक्स-टाइल मंत्रालय पर, विशेष तौर पर उसके सचिव पर यह अभियोग लगाता हूँ कि उनके गलत रवैये के कारण ही इस हड़ताल का समझौता नहीं निकल पा रहा है।.....“महोदय, यह अचम्भे की बात है कि हमारे जनप्रिय प्रधानमंत्री इन दो महीनों में भी हड़तालों मजदूरों से मिलने का समय नहीं निकाल सके। जबकि वे उनके निवास से कुछ मीलों पर रहते हैं। श्री राजीव गांधी उस लाल डेंगा से वार्ता चला सकते हैं जो हमारे देश के विरुद्ध हथियारबंद लड़ाई लड़ता आया है। किन्तु वे हड़ताली मजदूरों से मिलने का समय नहीं निकाल पाते।”.....

“अध्यक्ष महोदय ! क्या मैं यह पूछ सकता हूँ कि ऐसा तो नहीं कि इन मिलों के एक जाने-पहचाने मालिक की श्री राजीव गांधी से मित्रता के कारण वे इस मामले में उनसे प्रभावित दृष्टिकोण अपना रहे हैं। मुझे बताया गया है कि श्री विनय भरतराम या उसी कुनबे के एक सज्जन उनके सह-पाठी थे। जबकि श्री गांधी मजदूरों से मिलने का समय नहीं निकाल सके। फिर भी वे तीन बार उक्त सज्जन से अपने निवास पर मिल चुके हैं।.....

“महोदय ! यह बड़े दुःख की बात है कि राष्ट्रीय कपड़ा निगम जो कि एक सार्वजनिक संस्थान है, वह बिड़ला और चरतराम के कधे से कंधा मिला कर चल रहा है।.....

“महोदय ! मेरी राय में यह हड़ताल मिल प्रबंधकों, कुछ नौकरशाहों तथा कपड़ा मंत्रालय द्वारा मजदूरों का मनोबल तोड़ने के लिए उन पर थोपी गई है। प्रबंधकों के अड़ियल हल के कारण हड़ताल लम्बी होती जा रही है। और उसकी आड़ में डी. सी. एम. मिल बंद करना चाहता है। मंत्री महोदय से मैं जानना चाहता हूँ कि क्या यह सत्य है कि डी. सी. एम. प्रबंधकों ने मिल बंदी का नोटिस दिया है। जिसे दिल्ली प्रशासन ने रद्द कर दिया है। जबकि दिल्ली हाई कोर्ट में मामला विचाराधीन है, लेकिन डी. सी. एम. उस जमीन को बेच रहा है जिस पर मजदूरों के क्वार्टर बने हुए हैं। यह लोग मिल के धन्धे को बन्द करना चाहते हैं। इस कारण भी हड़ताल को लम्बा किया जा रहा है। मंत्री महोदय बतायेंगे कि सरकार ने डी. सी. एम. प्रबंधकों द्वारा भूमि की गैर-कानूनी बिक्री के विरुद्ध क्या कदम उठाये हैं ?.....

“उत्पादकता से वेतनों को जोड़ने का परिणाम यही होगा कि आप उत्पादकता के नाम पर मिल मालिकों को मजदूरों को दबाने की छूट दे देंगे।.....

“इसलिए मेरा कहना है कि वेतन को उत्पादकता से जोड़ने का प्रश्न ही नहीं उठना चाहिए।

“मेरा अन्तिम प्रश्न कि सरकार इस विवाद में उत्पन्न गतिरोध को तोड़ने के लिये क्या करने जा रही है।.....

**एन. एन. मन्ना, कार्यवाहक मंत्री**

भारतीय कम्युनिस्ट पार्टी, दिल्ली प्रदेश द्वारा प्रकाशित



*Mr. [unclear] [unclear] [unclear] 11/7*

*File  
Textile Federation 15*

COMMENTS ON THE DRAFT REPORT OF THE  
TRIPARTITE STUDY-GROUP FOR THE WORKERS IN  
THE LEATHER INDUSTRY.

.....

While agreeing with the contents of the draft report so far as they go, I consider it necessary to press for modification of certain portions thereof. The incorporation of these comments/suggestions in the report is necessary in order that its contents reflect, to some extent at least, the views of vast majority of leather workers vis-a-vis the main terms of reference, which enjoins on the Group " to have an indepth study of the working and living conditions of workers in the decentralised leather sector as well as in the leather footwear industry in the organised sector."

1. Considered in its totality the draft report is too general and even vague to subserve the real purpose behind setting up of the Study-group. It fails to indicate in concrete terms measures required to be adopted to lift the millions of leather and footwear workers, artisans or self-employed cottage workers, from the abyss of abject misery and grinding poverty, compelling them to time and work under primitive conditions. Facts elicited in the course of enquiries made by the two-subcommittees and reports submitted by ~~some~~ some other agencies like the KVIC, unambiguously reveal the existence of such state of affairs. The draft report must, in my opinion, high-light these facts with sufficient forthrightness and express itself strongly and unhesitatingly against the apathy & indifference, verging on dereliction of duty, which has all along marked the attitude of various state Governments besides the Central Government itself, towards the plight of millions of leather and footwear workers and artisans in the country.

Contents of para 2.14 of the Report of the sub-committee which studied the conditions of leather workers and artisans in Tamil Nadu, abundantly support my foregoing observations. As is well-known this state alone accounts for more than 50% of the total production of leather and leather products in the country.

..... contd.....2/-

2. The dismal record of various state Governments in safeguarding the vital interests of leather and footwear artisans and workers is fully reflected in their failure to prevent <sup>n</sup>unbridled violation of almost every labour enactment. Considering that these labour laws by themselves, offer minimal protection to workers, no reasonable person can have doubt that matters can no longer be left to the existing corrupt and bureaucratic set-up of factory inspectorates in different states. A SPECIAL TASK-FORCE MUST, IN MY OPINION, BE CONSTITUTED TO CLOSELY OVERSEE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LABOUR LAWS. Such a task force must include a representative of major workers' organisation<sup>s</sup> in the state/region concerned.

3. The report of the sub-committee on Tamil Nadu reveals that the minimum wages fixed by the State Government, besides being revoltingly low, are in fact far below those the leather workers are actually getting. More or less similar situation exists in other states too. Besides, the minimum wage rates fixed in all the states <sup>body</sup> bear no relation whatever to even the bare human requirements of leather workers. The draft report must lay considerable stress on fixation of minimum wages on the basis of recognised norms, which ensure a reasonable standard of living to every workers.

4. Reports of the two sub-committees, besides all the material made available to the Study-group by various agencies, including the Khadi & Village Industries Commission, vividly <sup>p</sup>portray ruthless exploitation of artisans, and workers in cottage as well as small scale manufacturing units of the leather & footwear industry by the middlemen. The evil has been persisting for decades and instead of showing any signs of abatement is in fact spreading fast and striking deeper roots with the development of the industry and phenomenal improvement in its fortunes. There is no denying the fact that unless this abominable system of middleman in the leather & footwear industry is eliminated, bulk of the labour force/artisans, etc. engaged in the unorganised/decentralised sector of the industry, which accounts for over 90% of the total production in the leather & footwear industry, would continue to reel under unmitigated exploitation and misery. While laying considerable stress on this vital aspect of the problem, the draft report must suggest a crash-programme in every state to organise the unorganised leather and footwear workers and artisans into

cooperatives. Sufficiently attractive all-round assistance must be assured, through legislation, if necessary, to the cooperative movement in this industry. Representatives of organised leather workers or unions may also be assisted whenever necessary to take a hand in organising such cooperatives.

5. It is regrettable that the Group has not been able to undertake adequate study of working and service conditions of workers in the organised leather and footwear industry, which includes giant manufacturing concerns like the multinational BATA. My personal experience is that the workers in these industries too are undergoing considerable exploitation. Their wages and other conditions of service/work are totally unsatisfactory having regard to the phenomenal prosperity enjoyed by the employing companies. Further these companies, including the multi-national BATA, are increasingly ~~ex~~ utilising the abominable institution of 'middleman' to procure footwear and other leather products at cheap rates. These products are then marketed with the stamp of the brandname of the Company at prices several times higher than those at which they were acquired from the artisan or small-scale or cottage manufacturer. With the latest Governmental policies on development of leather and footwear industry, many major multinationals like ADIDAS are entering the Indian Leather and footwear manufacturing industry. Despite my repeated attempts to draw the groups' attention to the dangerous implications of the entry of giant multinationals on the working and living conditions of millions of leather & footwear workers in the unorganised sector, the draft report totally ignores it. POINTED ATTENTION OF THE GOVERNMENT AT ALL LEVELS MUST BE DRAWN TO THESE DEVELOPMENTS WHICH ARE BOUND TO LEAD TO INTENSIFIED EXPLOITATION OF THESE WORKERS. Legislative measures to prevent such exploitation may perhaps be necessary.

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5 JUL 1986  
A.I.T.U.C.

File  
Textile  
Federation

30 प्र० टेक्स्टाइल वर्कर्स फेडरेशन  
=====

नेहरू नगर, जेल रोड,  
रायबरेली

24-06-86

प्रिय साथियो,

प्रदेश सरकार द्वारा उपेक्षा के कारण उच्च स्तर पर वार्ता होने के पश्चात् भी समस्या का समाधान नहीं निकल पाया । दिल्ली में सूती उद्योग की हड़ताल अभी चल रही है । इन हालात में लगता है कि हमें भी हड़ताल पर जाना पड़ेगा क्योंकि प्रदेश सरकार दूसरी भाषा नहीं समझती । आप अपने संगठन की ओर से नोटिस तुरन्त जारी करके एक प्रतिलिपि मेरे पास भेज दें तथा 16 अगस्त की हड़ताल की पूरी तैयारी करें । इसमें सभी संगठनों को शामिल करें । हम प्रदेश स्तर पर अन्य संगठनों की बैठक बुलाने जा रहे हैं ताकि भारी पैमाने पर तैयारी की जा सके । इस बीच दौरे भी किये जायेंगे । आप अपना संघर्ष फण्ड रु० 500/- तुरन्त भेज दें अन्यथा हमें मजबूरन आपके गेटवर्क पर इस सम्बन्ध में वक्त करनी पड़ेगी । नोटिस जारी करने के बाद दिनांक 13 जुलाई 1986 को 22, कैसरबाग, लखनऊ भारतीय कम्युनिस्ट पार्टी के कार्यालय में 12 वजे होने वाली बैठक में उपस्थित हों ताकि भावी कार्यक्रम पर विचार किया जा सके ।

भवदीय

डी० पी० पाल  
मंत्री

नोटिस अन्तर्गत धारा 6 एस -उ०प्र०आयोगिक विवाद अधिनियम 1947

श्रीमान मुख्य अधिशाषी / महाप्रबन्धक

प्रिय महोदय,

60 रुपये की अन्तरिम वृद्धि को लेकर 15 व 16 फरवरी 1986 को मिल के गेट पर 48 घण्टे का क्रमिक अनशन किया गया। पुनः 15 मई 1986 से श्रमायुक्त कार्यालय कानपुर पर 10 दिन का क्रमिक अनशन विभिन्न मिलों के संगठन द्वारा किया गया जिस पर श्रमायुक्त, उ०प्र० ने लिखित आश्वासन दिया कि इस सम्बन्ध में राज्य सरकार से सम्पर्क किया जा रहा है। श्री राजेन्द्र सिंह, उपाध्यक्ष, उ०प्र० टेक्स्टाइल वर्कर्स फेडरेशन के साथ श्रीमान मुख्यमंत्री तथा श्रममंत्री, उ०प्र० सरकार से लम्बी वार्ता हुई। उसके बाद उ०प्र० टेक्स्टाइल वर्कर्स फेडरेशन के अध्यक्ष का० रमेश तिन्हा, श्री गुरु प्रसाद, भू०प्र० एम०एल०सी०, श्री रामचन्द्र बक्स सिंह, एम०एल०ए० के साथ श्रीमान मुख्यमंत्री की वार्ता हुई जिसमें मुख्यमंत्री जी ने इस सम्बन्ध में जाँच करके कार्यवाही का आश्वासन दिया लेकिन अभी तक इस सम्बन्ध में कोई संतोषजनक प्रगति नहीं हुई। फेडरेशन द्वारा दिनांक 15 जुलाई 1986 को सांकेतिक हड़ताल का नोटिस दिया जा चुका है लेकिन इन वार्ताओं के फलस्वरूप पुनः एक बार हम राज्य सरकार तथा आपको अन्तरिम वृद्धि के निर्णय हेतु तथा टेक्स्टाइल उद्योग का तृदलीय सम्मेलन बुलाने के लिए 15 जुलाई 1986 की सांकेतिक हड़ताल स्थगित कर दिनांक 16 अगस्त 1986 को सांकेतिक हड़ताल पर जाने का विधिवत नोटिस प्रेषित कर रहे हैं। उपरोक्त विवरण से स्पष्ट हो गया है कि हमने शान्तिपूर्वक समझौता की मेज पर बैठकर समस्या का समाधान करना चाहते हैं तथा टेक्स्टाइल उद्योग में संकट के निवारण के लिए रास्ता खोजने में मदद करना चाहते हैं क्योंकि प्रदेश में हजारों श्रमिक सूत की खपत कम होने के कारण काम से वंचित किये जा रहे हैं परन्तु राज्य सरकार तथा प्रबन्धकगण उपेक्षापूर्ण रुख अपनाये हुए हैं। प्रदेश स्तर पर टेक्स्टाइल उद्योग में कार्यरत श्रमिक संगठनों की मिली-जुली बैठक बुलाकर समस्या का निराकरण किया जाना चाहिए।

यदि राज्य सरकार तथा प्रबन्ध-मण्डल द्वारा समस्या का निदान नहीं किया तो निम्न माँगों को लेकर दिनांक 16-8-1986 को प्रातः 6-00 बजे से 24 घण्टे की प्रतीक हड़ताल की जायेगी।

माँग:-

- 1- 60 रुपये की अन्तरिम वृद्धि 1.10.1985 से कानपुर के बाहर के सूती उद्योग में कार्यरत श्रमिकों को दी जाय।
- 2- सूती उद्योग का प्रदेश स्तरीय तृदलीय सम्मेलन बुलाया जाय।

भवदीय

मंत्री  
उ०प्र० टेक्स्टाइल वर्कर्स फेडरेशन

प्रतिलिपि:-

1. राज्य सरकार द्वारा श्रम सचिव, उ०प्र० सरकार, लखनऊ
2. श्रीमान श्रमायुक्त, उ०प्र०, कानपुर
3. सम्बन्धित उप-श्रमायुक्त

File  
Textile Federation

SECRET

June 24, 1986.

To

The General Secretary,  
Bata Mazdoor Union,  
P.O. Batanagar,  
District 24 Parganas,  
(West Bengal)

Dear comrade,

I am in receipt today of your registered letter dated 20.6.86.


It would NOT be feasible to make arrangements for fooding and lodging at Ajoy Bhavan, the headquarters of the Communist Party of India, for your team coming for the Federation meeting.

While the meeting will take place at 2 p.m. on 6th July at the AIRUC Office, 24 Canning Lane, I am told, accomodation has been arranged at the Hindu Mahasabha Bhavan at Mandir Marg (near Gol market)

I have conveyed your arrival date and train to the shopmanagers union in Delhi and they would arrange to receive you at the station on the 5th.

Greetings,

Yours fraternally,

  
( T.N. Siddhanta )  
Secretary.

# BATA MAZDOOR UNION

REGD. NO. 681

P. O. BATANAGAR, Dist. 24 PARGANAS,  
WEST BENGAL, INDIA.

President : SANTOSH KUMAR GHOSH

General Secretary : RABINDRA NATH SINHA

Date.....20. 6. 1986.

To  
Com. T. N. Sidhanta,  
Secretary,  
A. I. T. U. C.  
24, Canning Lane,  
New Delhi-110 001.

Dear Comrade,

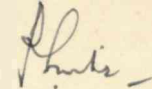
The representatives of Bata Mazdoor Union, Batanagar to the All India Bata Employees' Federation consisting of 11 heads will be started from Howrah Station (Calcutta) on 4th July, 1986 by Rajdhani Express to attend the All India Bata Employees' Federation Meeting which will be held on 6th July, 1986 in Delhi.

As such you are requested to arrange food & Lodging at Ajay Bhawan for our team.

Please confirm.

With greetings,

Yours Comradely,



( Rabindra Nath Sinha )  
General Secretary.



# INFORMATIONS

UNION INTERNATIONALE DES SYNDICATS DU TEXTILE, DE L'HABILLEMENT, DES CUIRS ET PEaux  
TRADE UNIONS INTERNATIONAL OF TEXTILE, CLOTHING, LEATHER AND FUR WORKERS  
UNION INTERNACIONAL SINDICAL DE TRABAJADORES DEL TEXTIL, VESTIDO, CUERO Y PIELES  
МЕЖДУНАРОДНОЕ ОБЪЕДИНЕНИЕ ПРОФСОЮЗОВ ТРУДЯЩИХСЯ ТЕКСТИЛЬНОЙ, ШВЕЙНОЙ, КОЖЕВЕННОЙ И ОБУВНОЙ ПРОМЫШЛЕННОСТИ

**RECEIVED**  
30 JUN 1986  
A. I. T. U. C.

Opletalova 57 110 00 Prague 1 Tchecoslovaquie

## 20,000 INDIAN TEXTILE WORKERS ON STRIKE

*File  
Textiles*

Nearly 20,000 textile workers in 5 mills in New Delhi are on indefinite strike in support of their 11point Charter of Demands relating to wage rise, regularisation of jobs, full neutralisation of the rise in the cost of living, house rent allowances, end to victimisation practices etc.

Instead of accepting legitimate demands of the workers the textile mills owners started imposing preconditions of higher workloads which prevent any reasonable settlement.

All the Central Trade Unions have jointly supported the strike which is gaining wide backing by workers in other cities of India.

Trade Unions International on behalf of 12 million members expresses its full support of the just struggle courageously led by textile workers and greets the unity of actions displayed by all Central Trade Unions, it appeals to the parties concerned to immediately intervene and help to settle the legitimate workers demands.

TUI TCLF appeals to all affiliated and friendly organizations throughout the world to express their full support and solidarity with the striking workers.

JUNE 20TH, 1986

TUI SECRETARIAT

