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Speeches.

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~~1960~~ - 61

(NR)

Long live GITUC!

Long live Indian
people

Long live the unity
of actions and
fraternal friendship
among the workers
of all countries ~~to~~
~~the name~~ in the
name of happiness and
social progress!

Long live world peace!

Dear Comrades,

Dear Friends,

First of all allow me
on behalf of the working
people of our country
~~and~~ ^{on behalf of} your Soviet trade
unions ^{and all other foreign delegations} ~~to~~ convey to
you and ^{here} through you
to all the working
people of India our
warmest fraternal greetings

Permit me from
the bottom of our
hearts to wish you
good health, happiness
and every success in
your activities.

Soviet speech
in the rally

The Soviet Delegation ~~as~~
^{together with many}
~~well as~~ other foreign
delegates attended the
26th session of the
All-India Trade Union Congress.

It was with a feeling
of great respect and
attention that we
have listened to the
reports and speeches
of the delegates of this
session, the best
representatives of the
working people of
India.

The delegates of the session discussed the important questions of the trade union activities, their tasks in the industrialisation and consolidation of the economic independence of India, in the struggle for peace, democracy and social progress.

With great interest we have followed the instructive report of the experienced leader of the All-India Trade Union Congress Com. S. A. Dange, in which he summarized the creative activities of the All-India Trade Union Congress during the period under review, described and marked the programme of actions for the future.

The participants of the 26th session payed high tribute to the fruitful activities of the All-India Trade Union Congress and its leadership, who while working in the complicated conditions correctly realized the recommendations and demands of the working people of India.

The Soviet trade unions highly estimate the activities of the All-India Trade Union Congress, its persistent struggle for the vital interests of the working people.

The Soviet trade unions together with the trade unions of other socialist countries are directing their efforts towards the further development and strengthening the friendly relations with the trade unions and working people of all the Countries. India included so that on this bases we can more actively struggle

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for the happiness of the
people;
for the social progress;
against colonialism;
for the total and
complete disarmament;
for the prohibition
of the nuclear weapons;
for the solution of
all world's problems
by peaceful means;
for the strengthening
of the principles of
peaceful coexistence;
for the lasting peace
the world over.

Now due to the change in
the balance of forces in
favour of peace and
progress the time has
come when it is possible
to forestall the attempts
of the imperialist
aggressors to unleash
a new world war,
to repulse the provocations
of colonialists against
the peoples' freedom and
independence;
to disrupt the offensive
of monopolies against
workers' rights and
interests

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Life itself urgently demands
further consolidation of the
forces of the workers' and
trade union movement,
of all the forces of peace,
democracy and progress
to struggle against
imperialism for national
independence, social progress
peace and friendship
among nations.

The millions of working people the world over voice a strong protest against the attempts of the imperialists to aggravate the international situation.

They condemn the aggressive actions of the American imperialists against the Cuban people; the attempts of the imperialist forces of NATO to force the colonial yoke on the people of Congo again;

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the unceremonious inter-
 ference of the United
 States and SEATO into
 the domestic affairs
 of Laos, interference
 which is directed
 against the freedom and
 independence of the
 Laotian people, against
 its inalienable right
 to pursue the policy of
 peace, neutrality and
 friendship with all the
 peoples.

The people of the whole
 world condemn the
 imperialists' actions
 who unleashed the
 war in Algeria.

The people of the Soviet Union, the people the world over demand an immediate stop to all interference into the domestic affairs of these countries, the abolition of military bases and the withdrawal of all foreign troops from alien territories so that the people of these countries can settle for themselves their domestic problems.

The Soviet Union, all countries of socialist camp ~~are preparing to accept~~ are struggling and will ^{consistently} struggle for peace and happiness of all nations.

For this purpose we develop and consolidate the friendly relations among the nations.

Like sincere friends we ^{are} widely developing the cooperation with the countries of the East India included, helping them to advance their national economy, their culture to train national intellectuals.

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We are glad to say
that good friendly
relations ~~ext~~ linked
the ^{working} people and
trade unions of our
~~two~~ countries

We sincerely hope
that this friendship
will ~~be~~ developed and
cemented day by day
for the benefit of
the workers of our
countries for the
benefit of the people
the world over.

The united actions
of the world working
class are the decisive
factor in the practical
solution of all the
questions of struggle for
peace and social progress.

The unity is the
base for victory.

Therefore we warmly
greet the speeches
of the delegates of
the 26th session
of the AITUC calling
for the united
actions of Indian
trade unions in
the fight for
the interests of the
working people,
for the unity
of the trade union
and labour movement.

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The Soviet trade union ^{delegation} ^{of ~~representatives~~} ^{with} the

All-India Trade

Union Congress, the
working people of

India great success
in the strengthening

trade union and
labour movement,

in the fulfilment
of the decisions

of taken by the

26th session, in the
struggle for the

economic and cultural
developments of

independent India
in the name ~~for~~ of

progress and prosperity
of the working people.

26th Session

.....
of the AITUC

.....
Coimbatore, Jan.5-12, 1961

P R E S I D E N T I A L

A D D R E S S

Dear Comrades,

After Ernakulam, we are meeting here in Coimbatore for the 26th Session of the AITUC. Three years have passed. We have assembled here after having gained rich experience in struggles, in building up trade unions and in entering into agreements for the benefit of the class.

2. We take this opportunity to salute the martyrs of the working class at Jamshedpur, Madras, Dohad and other places. Their memory and martyrdom will ever illuminate our path in times to come.

3. We mourn the loss of Comrade Shankarlingam whom I had known in Bombay for a number of years, both as a worker and a fighter for railwaymen. Throughout his life, he fought for railwaymen and built up a strong movement for railwaymen. In him, we have lost a great TU fighter. We deeply mourn his loss.

4. On behalf of all of you and on my own behalf, I welcome Brother Sugiri, the fraternal delegate from the mighty 101-million strong World Federation of Trade Unions - the bulwark of peace in the world and staunchest defender of working class interests.

Permit me also to welcome to this 26th Session of the AITUC, the fraternal delegates from the trade unions of USSR, Hungary, Poland, Rumania, Mongolia and Ceylon. We are very much grateful to them for their presence here and we hope that their fraternal message based on their rich experiences will be of unlimited help to us in our deliberations.

I also welcome fraternal delegates and observers from trade unions and federations not affiliated to the AITUC but which have demonstrated solidarity with us by participating in our Session. We hope their participation in the conference will be to our mutual benefit.

5. The historic five-day strike in July 1960 of the two million Central Government employees in defence of their living standards is still fresh in our memory. The AITUC, true to its glorious traditions, supported this struggle and many of our leaders and functionaries were placed under arrest. The call for sympathetic token strike on July 14 given by the three Central trade union organisations, namely, the AITUC, HMS and

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UTUC, was the first attempt at national level for expressing solidarity with the struggle. It was successful in centres like Calcutta, Coimbatore and Mangalore, though not in many other centres. The Government let loose repression by arresting nearly 21,000 employees and other workers, after promulgating the hated Ordinance. They are threatening to bring in legislation for banning strikes, which attempt, I am sure, will be firmly resisted by the Indian working class. Recognition of unions of Central Government employees was withdrawn and it is yet to be restored. The strike has focussed the attention of the Government to the problem of rising prices. Reduction in prices of cloth is being discussed. State Governments hurried their decision to increase the wages of their employees; men in uniform got increase in D.A., arrears of wages were ante-dated from July 1959 instead of from November 1959 and the amount of arrears paid without pre-audit; the decisions on pay scales and grant of PTO to industrial employees have been announced. The main issue of linking D.A. with cost of living index has however not been conceded yet.

6. The way in which the Finance Ministry of the Government of India rejected the norms of fixation of minimum wages agreed to by all - the Government, employers' and workers' representatives - in the 15th Indian Labour Conference, before the Dass Commission (Second Pay Commission) is likely to encourage other employers to flout tripartite decisions. This was evident to a certain extent when the unanimous report of the Textile Wage Board was not implemented by the millowners for more than six months until, under the leadership of the AITUC, the textile unions decided to protest and agitate and to go on a one-day token strike for its implementation. The Cement Wage Board's recommendations have remained largely unimplemented till now. The abnormal delay in submitting reports of the Wage Boards and decisions thereon taken by Government - three years and more - is most objectionable and highly detrimental to workers' interests. The Union Labour Ministry has not been successful in getting these recommendations implemented expeditiously. The latest and most damaging instance of callousness and delay was seen on the question of deciding the personnel of the Wage Board for Plantations Industry. The Government took over an year to constitute the Wage Board. Wage Board is being denied in other industries like engineering, transport, etc.

The utility of these Wage Boards will be very much restricted if the Labour Ministry is unable to move them quickly and ensure implementation of these decisions speedily.

7. In our last session at Ernakulam in 1957, we appealed to the working class to carry out the two-pillar policy of reconstruction of the country and defence of its rights and living standards. The Second Five Year Plan is nearing completion. The national income has gone up. Production and productivity have gone up. Profits are mounting. But prices are also soaring high. What has remained stationary and has even deteriorated is the living standards of the working class. Even to retain the present standard of living in some industries, workers had to fight bitter struggles against the combined strength of the employer and the Government. The Government of India is awakened to the necessity of investigating into where this national income has gone.

Even today, the Government of India has not accepted the principle of linking D.A. or wages with cost of living index, even in the public sector. Employers in the private sector are apt to make it an excuse to deny this demand of the workers. The trade unions will have to fight hard

battles to retain their present standards of living and to raise them wherever possible.

Tripartite agreements on rationalisation and prevention of closure of factories have also been violated by the employers with impunity. The few textile mills which the Government took over - though after sustained agitation by workers and long delay, resulting in forced unemployment of thousands of workers - have proved beyond doubt that the closures were mala fide and due to mismanagement by the employers for which workers have to suffer heavily. The procedure for taking over of the closed concerns is still too cumbersome and needs revision to enable the Government to move quickly in the matter. Lack of interest on the part of some of the State Ministers for Labour and Industry also caused avoidable delay. Exempting these concerns from the purview of labour laws, as was recently done in Rajasthan, amounts to paying a premium on inefficiency and corruption of the employers.

8. During the last four years, tripartite machinery comprising of meetings of the Indian Labour Conference, Standing Labour Committee, Industrial Committees, Development Councils, Wage Boards and informal and formal tripartite discussions have yielded some results in favour of the workers. These decisions give a moral backing to the working class in fighting for implementation of the tripartite agreements. There is still further scope for better functioning of the tripartite machinery, especially insofar as implementation of agreed decisions. There are elements both in Government circles as well as among employers who do not like the turn for the better in the functioning and decisions of the tripartite conferences and committees. Unless the Union Labour Ministry tightens up its supervision of the implementation of Acts, Awards, agreements and tripartite decisions in letter and spirit, the tripartites will not succeed in defending and furthering the interests of the working class.

The Code of Discipline and Code of Conduct adopted in the 16th Indian Labour Conference cannot be implemented faithfully and impartially in the conditions which exist today. Even some Ministers and Deputy Ministers exhibit deep-rooted prejudices and evince keen interest in the day-to-day functioning of certain TU organisations. Lack of effective sanctions against the employer violating the Code is another big weakness of the Code. While the workers and the trade unions suffer the penalty for alleged violation of Code then and there, the employers could continue violating the Code without any immediate loss whatsoever. Unless this position is suitably rectified, any attempt by the Government to impose either the Code of Discipline or sanctions under it through Governmental intervention will have to be resisted.

It would have been better if the Government of India and State Governments make up their mind finally about the Code before its enforcement. The present spectacle of the Code not being accepted in big public sector undertakings like the railways, defence industries, CPWD, Reserve Bank, State Bank, P&T and many units in the State Sector, is against the assurances given by the Union Labour Minister at the 16th Indian Labour Conference; this encourages employers in private sector to repudiate it in practice.

9. These three years have witnessed a number of attempts made both by the State and Central Governments to curb trade union rights. The attempt to extend the power of

Registrars to interfere in the affairs of the trade unions, amendment of State Labour Laws on the lines of the Bombay Industrial Relations Act, as in Madhya Pradesh, the new rules of recognition of federations in Uttar Pradesh, amendments to rules of Works Committees and move to ban strikes by hospital employees in W. Bengal, the proposed bill by the Union Government to ban strikes and 'outsiders' in "essential services" are some such measures. The militant working class movement has been subjected to heavy repression. In collieries, the lawlessness of employers aided and abetted by some State Government officials, specially in Raniganj belt, still continues. Police and court cases against trade union functionaries are still common. Cases in Gua mines, Raniganj collieries, Jamshedpur, Dohad, Secunderabad, Dewas, Faridabad, etc., are still going on.

10. Unity from below has been our slogan. It did succeed in many centres despite the deviations and attempts by rival TU organisations to create disruption. The Calcutta tramway strike and four General Strikes and the plantation workers' strike in West Bengal, Bombay General Strike of July 25, 1958, the united struggle of Central Government employees, bank employees' strike, are some of the precious landmarks of our trade union movement against the splitting and disruptive move of specially the INTUC in forming rival federations of workers in defence, bank and lately of P&T. The formation of a united textile union of Bombay and maintaining united unions at Indore, Kanpur, etc., are our positive achievements towards TU unity. In the circumstances that exist in our country, we have to continue to organise the unorganised workers - both in the existing unions as well as in new industries and regions and build unity of the working class from below, never missing a chance to unite at the top whenever opportunity affords. More and more day-to-day work, and developing class consciousness will help bring it about rather than mere exposure campaign.

11. Neither have I time nor do I desire here to discuss in detail the happenings and achievements of the trade union movement in the last three years. Our General Secretary, Comrade Dange, in his report and speech will do it. The chart at the end of the Struggle Diary of 1958-59 shows that AITUC unions have been in the forefront of struggles in defence of working class interests. In 1959-60 also, the trend in all probability will be the same. And, as you all know, this chart does not include the token strikes in which lakhs of employees have participated as also the struggles of independent federations and unions in which AITUC supporters were quite active.

12. The AITUC unions also entered into several collective agreements including some long-term ones. Either through these agreements or awards and in other cases through struggles, money wages have gone up to some extent. Expansion of ESI and PF Schemes has been useful, though they are not functioning upto expectations. Industrial Housing Scheme, Bonus, holidays, fixation of minimum wages have been some of our gains.

13. Organisationally, the AITUC has increased its strength in newer industries and regions. We have laid the basis for unions in all the three steel plants in public sector. In mines and port and dock, we have extended our strength. This we have done keeping in view our policy of maintaining the unity of the workers in a particular industry and opposing the disruptive policy of the INTUC who have formed new "rival" unions and federations, just to claim a separate union and its membership. There has been marked improvement in the

functioning of our State Committees and the Centre also. The regularity of meetings and discussions on organisation has helped us. It is true that in the field of organisation at every level,--union, State Committee and Centre, - there is immediate need of more cadre, better office-functioning and coordination, towards which I hope this conference will pay due attention.

14. This year, the Second Five Year Plan will be completed and the Third Plan will start. The Union Labour Minister had already forewarned us that the backlog of unemployment in the Third Plan will be more than the Second. The labour policy is also the continuation of what has been done in the Second Plan. Wage policy continues to be: No increase in wages without higher productivity. The proposed bill banning strikes and outsiders, first in the 'essential services', is still pending with the Government. All Unions and Federations of Central Government employees, except those affiliated to the INTUC, stand derecognised. The ESI Scheme is still working very unsatisfactorily. The delay in construction of hospitals and expansion of the Scheme to families, is just alarming.

15. The working class has defended and is prepared to defend the Public Sector but a tendency towards 'de-nationalisation' is raising its head. Production is allowed to be hampered simply because the labour machinery does not move speedily and in time and employers and bureaucrats are allowed to suppress all demands of the workers and to make industrial disputes issues of law and order.

16. General elections to State Assemblies and Parliament are due to start in about a year's time. Representatives of the working class in these bodies have raised their voices in the legislatures in defence of the workers' interests, even though their limited number limits the scope of parliamentary action. The working class has through its own experience learnt to recognise its friends and enemies. The workers have to be told what is in their interest and organised for this purpose - of course, maintaining unity of the class in the TU organisation.

To face all these tasks, our own organisation has to be geared up.

17. These three years have seen far-reaching changes in the international field. The struggle for peace has moved millions into action and disarmament can no longer be shelved. The United Nations discussed this and total disarmament is no longer a debating point but a practical proposal initiated by the Soviet Union. Socialist countries have demanded convening of Special Session of the U.N. for disarmament. Pandit Nehru in Parliament spoke of disarmament as an issue which should have top priority. There have been protests from all the African States over the testing of Atomic Bombs in Sahara by the French imperialists. It is necessary that the Indian working class should actively campaign for peace and mobilise public opinion in favour of disarmament and banning of nuclear weapons.

18. The heroic struggle of the Algerian people for national freedom has evoked universal sympathy amongst the people of our country and our workers have not been lagging behind. Representatives of the Algerian National Liberation Front were taken to various TU Centres in India by the AITUC and workers expressed their solidarity with the fighting Algerian people.

19. The liberation of Cuba has evoked keen interest and the great leader of Cuban people, Castro, made history by his powerful, anti-imperialist 4-1/2 hour speech in the U.N. Indian working class should keep itself equipped with developments in Cuba and other Latin American countries.

20. In Africa, the freedom struggle has reached unprecedented heights and several independent States have been formed and have secured seats in the U.N. The manoeuvres of the imperialists in Congo have angered the people of India and the working class. The name of Lumumba has become a symbol of freedom, patriotism and integrity. The working class of India salutes this hero and we demand release of Lumumba and establishment of parliamentary government in Congo.

21. I have to mention here that the U.N. had to pass a resolution on colonialism which is a step in the right direction. I am mentioning briefly these few things to show the mighty changes taking place in the Afro-Asian and Latin American countries. We cannot be silent spectators to the beheading of democracy in Nepal and imposing royal autocracy or to the imperialist machinations in Laos.

22. The year ahead of us poses serious problems for the working class. The international situation places on them the responsibility for vigorous and more active campaign for world peace and support to the liberation struggles along with the world working class. Today the base of imperialism is narrowing down and the base of socialism is widening. Hence the struggle has assumed decisive importance. We have to actively support liberation struggles and also fight for peace and disarmament and also against the imperialist conspiracies to unleash a war.

23. I am sure with the past glorious traditions of 40 years that our organisation is proud of, we shall be able to face all problems and continue defending working class interests, playing our important role in national reconstruction work and international working class responsibilities.

LONG LIVE WORKING CLASS UNITY!

LONG LIVE INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY OF THE WORKING CLASS!

LONG LIVE AITUC!

S. S. MIRAJKAR

President, AITUC

Coimbatore:

January 5, 1961

26th Session of the AITUC

.....
Coimbatore

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January 1961
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Speech

by

COMRADE SUGIRI,
Secretary,
World Federation of Trade Unions

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I am very happy to have the opportunity to be with you at this 26th Session of the All-India Trade Union Congress. On behalf of the Secretariat of the World Federation of Trade Unions, I would like to express our deepest gratitude and convey to you our warmest fraternal greetings, and through you, to the working people all over India.

The present AITUC Session has a very important significance, insofar as it takes place in a situation of increasing struggle of the workers and of the trade union movement in India, for improving the living and working conditions and for democratic rights, a situation marked by a more vigorous battle of the people against the growing foreign monopoly capitalist exploitation.

In such a situation, the AITUC makes a very important contribution. We know the AITUC, since its foundation more than 40 years ago, as a militant trade union organisation which fights continuously in the defence of the interests of the Indian working people, for democracy, for national independence, for social progress and for peace.

Especially in the latest phase, the AITUC has shown more clearly its very important contribution in the struggle for unity in the working class and trade union movement in India.

Based on the rich and varied experiences in the international trade union movement, the question of unity has become a burning question of the day. Every aspect of the workers' and trade unions' struggle for economic and social demands in various countries, for wage increases, for defending and improving social security, for trade union rights - these are, in most cases, waged on the basis of unity.

As regards the question of unity, there are many forms. By unity is meant unity of action as well as unity of organisation, realised at different levels - unit, local, regional, national as well as international levels. The exact form of unity depends on the issue and on the concrete conditions existing in the ranks of the trade union organisations on international, national, local, regional as well as on a unit level. This kind of unity is very important for the achievement of greater successes in defending the workers' interests and heightening the role of the working class in political life.

.../...

A tremendous development is taking place, day by day, in unity of action. A giant strike of 500,000 workers is going on in Belgium for more than two weeks, supported both by the Communist as well as the Socialist Party. The WFTU recently issued a statement expressing support and calling for solidarity for this struggle on the part of all workers and trade unions throughout the world. Such a kind of unity of action is day by day becoming a common feature in many countries throughout the world. This unity of action is mainly based on the common interests of the workers in meeting their daily needs and followed by rank-and-file workers of various trends and trade unions of different affiliations.

Numerous experiences show that the achievement of unity on this basis brings important success to the trade union movement, no matter how small the result may be in terms of the benefit of the workers. But every success in the actions for unity, big or small, creates the conditions for consolidating and widening the scope of that unity.

In the further development of unity of action, the question does not only remain as how to consolidate and to widen the scope of unity, but also how to promote unity so as to increase the role of the working class in political life. So should the common programmes not only be always based on the defence and improvement of the workers' living and working conditions, but also on the struggles for national independence, democracy, freedom, social progress and peace.

The problem of promoting unity is interlinked with the problem of increasing the political consciousness and the role of the working class in political life in general. In this connection, it is of very great importance as to how to be always in close contact with the masses and not being lost from them. For this purpose, what is important to be done is, how to correctly handle the problems of putting reasonable economic and social demands of the rank and file workers so as to be able to mobilise them in as large a scale as possible, how to make organisational preparations so that the action to be taken will not end in failure because of the activities of reactionary elements, how to make use of every success, big or small, for increasing the workers' political consciousness, and how to cope with the situation correctly when the rank-and-file workers are in a mood to take action.

I think that with your rich experiences of long years of struggle, it may be nothing new in what I have just told you. But it seems necessary to speak on this problem, no matter if it is a repetition for you or not, because of certain reasons, especially to make clearer the WFTU principles and that of its affiliated national centres. It is because, based on the experiences drawn from the international trade union movement - developing unevenly according to the particular conditions of each country - one finds an aspect of activities of trade union organisations, which shows, on the one hand, some confusion about the difference between a working class political party and a trade union organisation, as a mass organisation, of course, based on working class principles. On the other hand, there is also another aspect which betrays tendencies of avoiding political activities and show themselves as reformist trade union organisations or trade union organisations based on class collaboration.

The WFTU, since its foundation, is an international federation of trade unions of a mass character, based on working class principles but a non-party organisation. Such is also the case with the AITUC, and other WFTU-affiliated national centres.

This principal character of our organisation forms an important basis in realising the line of unity of the working class and the trade union movement. It is very important to make clear the difference between the trade union organisations and the working class political parties. The mass of workers organised as members of trade unions have not the same level of political consciousness as the members of the working class political parties. They are more backward and in many cases, are following different political trends. We are not to go far beyond the capacity of the rank and file in following our trade union activities, nor are we to hamper their progress of struggle and keep them to the level of reformism and to surrender to class collaboration, which is against working class principles, which strives for freedom from any form of class exploitation.

There are still many obstacles in realising unity. On the international level, the organisational unity between the WFTU and the ICFTU is for the moment unrealisable, even on lower degrees, as the unity of actions. The ICFTU still refuses to do this and nullifies the approach of the WFTU. And just in opposition to the call of the WFTU for cooperation, it increasingly takes to splitting activities, particularly in Asia, due to its tremendous decrease in influence recently.

Because India is the centre of the ICFTU regional activities, I call your special attention in this regard so as to provide us, the WFTU and the other national centres particularly in Asia, better information, for the necessary steps to be taken in the future. Of course, there may be some splitting activities of a more important character in front of you, but your attention to the ICFTU activities will form an important contribution particularly of an international character.

Though we have made an approach for an action of unity with the ICFTU, it does not mean that we keep silent with regard to its splitting actions, with its activities undermining the WFTU, and demoralising the fighting spirit of the rank-and-file workers. We should clearly and resolutely unmask this kind of activities of the ICFTU in front of the rank-and-file workers, as also those of other trade union organisations having the same character of activities. It is therefore very important to follow with full attention the activities of the ICFTU and its International Trade Secretariats (ITS) and analysing such activities so as to be acquainted with its real nature.

There are still a lot of other obstacles confronting our struggle for the working class unity and the unity of the trade union movement. That is why we are fighting and not begging for unity. Our unity is based on the principle of unity of the working class the world over, marching forward to the same destination of being freed from all forms of class exploitation and the complete abolition of exploitation of man by man, for the happy future of mankind.

There are still elements in the world who take position in opposition to our principles of proletarian unity. The bourgeoisie of the imperialist countries are the main enemies of the proletarian unity. They spread so-called nationalism which is completely reactionary as regards proletarian unity. But there are also bourgeoisie in colonial and newly independent countries. Their principles of nationalism is, in certain cases, different from that of the bourgeoisie of the imperialist countries. With regard to the bourgeoisie of the imperialist countries, their nationalism is progressive and we can support them. At the same time, we should always resolutely fight against their attacks on our struggles defending the interests of the workers,

without hampering our cooperation in our fight against imperialism. In this connection, it is clear to us that our principle of proletarian unity is not in opposition to the national interest but just meets the need of the national interest, as far as this national interest is not against the interest of the working people and is directed against imperialism. And also based on this principle, was the resolution adopted in the IV World Trade Union Congress in Leipzig, supporting the claim of the Indian Government on Goa.

We are now living in a period showing the tremendous growth of the force and international influence of the world socialist system, the active process of the liquidation of the colonial system under the blows of the national liberation movement, the sharpening of the class struggle in the capitalist world, the decadence and deterioration of the capitalist world system. In the world arena, the balance of forces is in favour of the forces of socialism as against those of imperialism, and in favour of the forces of peace as against those of war.

In this period, our contribution to international activities attracts more attention. Under these conditions, the preservation and consolidation of peace remains a fundamental aim of struggle of the international trade union movement. I may recall that that is why the programme adopted in the last, 11th Session of the WFTU General Council held in Peking, laid down the following general lines of our common action:

- For the relaxation of international tension and peaceful co-existence;
- For universal and complete disarmament;
- For the elimination of military bases on foreign soil;
- For cessation of nuclear tests and a ban on nuclear arms;
- For national liberation and independence of the peoples;
- For democracy;
- Against the rebirth of German militarism and for its liquidation by the signing of a peace treaty with the two German States; for the transformation of West Berlin into a free, demilitarised city;
- Against the rebirth of Japanese militarism and for the abrogation of the Japanese-U.S. Military Treaty.

As is also stated in the resolution of the WFTU General Council, there is a close relation between the struggle for peace and the anti-colonial struggle for national independence. The success of anti-colonial struggle for national independence which roots out colonialism as a source of war, is of very great significance. We therefore support without reservation all the struggles of the peoples against colonialism, for national independence, as part and parcel of the struggle of the peoples for peace. In this connection, we should pay attention and be always vigilant to the manoeuvres of U.S. imperialism playing the role of neo-colonialism. The situation in Congo gives proof of how the U.S. imperialists step up their manoeuvres as neo-colonialists under the cloak of the U.N., to gain power in this country, putting aside the old Belgian colonialists. We should actively unmask this kind of manoeuvre before the people so as to expel the old colonialists and not to let in new ones, especially America.

Another international task to which I draw your attention is, how to take initiative on your own in preparing for the forthcoming Vth World Trade Union Congress, taking place at the end of this year. That is, how to make it popular among the masses, how to take advantage of the preparatory work for strengthening and widening unity for the success of the Congress.

That is all what I would like to say here and I am concluding with the hope for every success of this AITUC Session. I am convinced that the time is with us, workers and all oppressed peoples. Unity within our reach, unity in the trade union movement and the working class movement as a whole, with the forces of the socialist camp as its bulwark - these give us the sure guarantee for our victorious struggle in defence of the workers' interests, for democracy, freedom, social progress and peace.

Long live the AITUC and the Indian working class unity!

Long live the unity of the working class throughout the world!

Long live democracy, freedom, social progress and peace!

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Besides, I would like also, on behalf of the WFTU to present here to the AITUC a simple and modest gift as a living proof of international working class solidarity. (Comrade Sugiri presented a crystal glass vase.)

26th Session of the AITUC

.....
Coimbatore

.....
January 5-12, 1961
.....

Speech by

COMRADE ANDREI I. SCHEVCHENKO,

Secretary,
All Union Central Council of Trade Unions,
USSR

Dear Friends and Comrades,

Allow me, on behalf of the Central Council of Soviet trade unions and the factory and office workers of the Soviet Union, to extend to the participants of the 26th Session of the All-India Trade Union Congress our most sincere fraternal greetings and wish every success in your activities for the benefit of the Indian working people.

The Soviet trade unions, all industrial and office workers of our country pay high tribute to the noble activities of the All-India Trade Union Congress aimed at raising the working people's standard of living, at consolidating the independence of your country, at strengthening fraternal ties with the trade unions of different countries in the interests of peace and social progress. We, Soviet people, greatly appreciate the big contribution which the All-India Trade Union Congress is making to fostering the friendship between the working people of India and the Soviet Union.

The friendship and cooperation between the peoples of our countries have in recent years grown stronger and broader, they have become an important factor in the struggle for a stable peace in Asia and the whole world.

The Soviet people are engaged in peaceful creative work to implement the majestic programme for the all-out building of communism in our country which was mapped out by the historic 21st Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. This programme is based on the seven-year plan for the economic development of the USSR in 1959-1965; its implementation will enable the Soviet people to achieve further considerable economic progress, and raise the material and cultural standards of the population. Industrial output under the seven-year plan will increase by more than 80 per cent and the real wages of the working people will go up by more than 40 per cent.

The past two years, during which the Soviet people have worked on the seven-year plan, show that this majestic plan will be fulfilled ahead of time and greatly exceeded. During 1960 alone, the steel production increased in our country by 5 million tons thus making the total figure of steel output about 65 million tons per year.

The output of electric power went up by nearly 30 billion kilowatts having reached the annual figure of about 295 billion kilowatts.

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During the first two years of the Seven Year Plan, the industrial output in our country has increased by 23 per cent instead of 17 per cent as it was scheduled.

The output of consumer goods in 1960 showed an increase of 8 per cent.

As a result of the heroic efforts of the Soviet people, the progress of the economy, culture, science and engineering is very rapid, and the standard of living is steadfastly rising.

In accordance with the programme for raising the people's standard of living, all industrial and office workers have now been switched over to the shorter 7 and 6 hour working day. And average wages, far from decreasing, have gone up - from 13 to 26 per cent in the different industries of our economy.

In 1964, we shall begin the transition to the 6 and 5 hour working day, or 35-30 hour working week. And wages will go up further.

A considerable contribution to raising living standards was made by the recent decision of our parliament - the Supreme Soviet of the USSR to abolish the taxation of industrial and office workers. This means that the wages of millions of working people will go up by practically the entire sum of taxes. No such example can be found in the entire history of capitalist society. Only when socialism has triumphed can a State think of abolishing taxation.

The Soviet people enjoy the benefits of free medical aid, free education and professional training, and many other benefits which are paid for by the State. Social insurance of industrial and office workers in our country is also paid for by the State without any deductions from wages. The Social Insurance Fund is run by the trade unions. They use it for benefits on temporary disablement, maternity benefits, for pensions, for carrying out educational and health work, for the organisation of the summer camps for children, etc. Every year, more than four million workers are sent to the sanatoria and rest houses and more than 3.5 million boys and girls are going to the summer pioneer camps. The majority of the passes to sanatoria and rest houses is given free of charge and some at the expense of only 30 per cent of the total cost.

The social insurance fund and State expenses on pensions, stipends to students, free education, free medical services and other benefits provided to the working people are increasing year by year. In 1960, the State spent for these purposes about 250 billion roubles or about one-third of the total budget of the country.

Very great attention is paid to housing construction, which is also at the expense of the State. In the years of the Seven-Year Plan, 15 million flats will be built in the cities, and about 7 million homes in rural areas. The housing programme is being accomplished successfully. In the first two years of the Seven Year Plan, about 3.5 million flats were built already in the towns and workers' settlements, and more than one million new homes in rural areas.

The trade unions have always played and play today an important part in all the glorious deeds of the working class of the USSR. At all stages of socialist construction, the trade unions conducted and are conducting a broad organisational and educational work among the working people.

The trade unions take an active part in the economic and cultural life of the country. No law, no decision of the legislative bodies in the country concerning the working and living conditions of the Soviet people can be adopted without the trade unions.

The Soviet trade unions are constantly concerned with the needs of the working people, with bettering their life, their housing conditions, their rest and leisure, medical aid and carrying out a big cultural-educational work.

The economic and cultural progress of the one-time backward national outlying areas of tsarist Russia, whose fate in tsarist times resembled that of colonies, is immense. Only as a result of the Great October Socialist Revolution, did the peoples of the Transcaucasus, Kazakhstan and Central Asia win national independence, and with the help of the other peoples of the Soviet Union they made rapid economic and cultural strides.

The Soviet Union gladly shares with all peoples its experience in economic and cultural development, in solving the national problem. The working people of our country regard it to be their international duty to support the struggle of the economically under-developed countries and colonies against colonialism, for the right to solve for themselves the questions of their country's development in the interests of peace and social progress. We are linked with the people of these countries by a mutual desire for peace, by a common wish to strengthen friendship and cooperation on the basis of the principles of peaceful coexistence.

Like sincere friends, the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries are widely developing their cooperation with the countries of the East, helping them to advance their national economy, their culture, to train national intellectuals.

Friendship and cooperation between India and the Soviet Union develop and strengthen in the interests of the two countries as well as for the benefit of all other peoples of the world.

The Soviet working people are greatly pleased that the ties between the trade unions of our countries are growing wider and stronger. All the activities of the Soviet trade unions on the world arena are directed at expanding ties with trade unions of other countries, at strengthening the unity and fraternal solidarity of the working class in the struggle for peace, democracy and socialism. In 1960, we were pleased to welcome in the USSR, the representatives of the AITUC who attended the May Day celebrations, the delegation of the National Federation of Metal and Engineering Workers of India and some leaders of Indian trade unions. On our part, we were also glad to accept the invitation of the leadership of the All-India Trade Union Congress to come to your wonderful country and take part in the work of the 26th Congress of the AITUC as a fraternal delegation.

We are deeply convinced that these friendly relations between the Indian and Soviet trade unions will develop and strengthen, they will become an important factor in the people's struggle for peace, democracy and social progress.

As a result of the victorious national-liberation movement of the peoples of the East, almost all of Asia and two-thirds of Africa, one-time colonies and semi-colonies, have won their freedom. The new States of the East are exercising ever greater influence on the course of historical development,

they are making a major contribution to the common struggle for peace and friendship among peoples, for the triumph of the principles of peaceful co-existence in relations between States. The further development of the national-liberation struggle enhances still more the role of these countries in the struggle for a universal and stable peace, for the complete abolition of the hated colonial system.

The historic proposals of the leader of the Soviet delegation to the 15th Session of the United Nations General Assembly, the Prime Minister of the Soviet Union, Nikita Khrushchev, on the complete and total abolition of the colonial regime in all its forms and manifestations correspond wholly to the interests of all of mankind, which does not want to tolerate any longer the disgrace, barbarism and savagery of colonialism. The wide support given to the Soviet proposals by the Governments of different countries, India included, their wholehearted approval by progressive-minded people the world over and the UNO decision on colonial question illustrate strikingly that the task of the complete eradication of the hated colonialist system is a realistic task which must be accomplished right now, without any delay.

The abolition of colonialism would open the way to a radical improvement in the life of millions of people, to further economic and cultural progress of the world, to progress and prosperity for all of mankind.

The imperialist reaction led by its most aggressive unit, the United States ruling circles, seek to prevent by every means the triumph of the great principles of peaceful coexistence. The imperialists' actions are founded on their wish to delay historical development, to extend the sphere of imperialist domination by means of aggression against the freedom-loving peoples.

But times have changed. The imperialists are having to retreat and manoeuvre more and more often, to go back in their tracks. In our times, the balance of forces on the world arena has changed considerably. The struggle for peace is now being waged by the countries united in the mighty socialist camp, by many countries of Asia and Africa that have thrown off the colonial yoke. Peace is being defended by the international trade union movement, by the working class - the most progressive and organised class of our times - organised into trade unions.

The Soviet working people and their trade unions will continue to work steadfastly for peace and disarmament, to support the peoples who have thrown off the political rule of the colonialists in their struggle for social progress and prosperity.

In the present circumstances, the question of disarmament assumes special significance. The head of the Soviet Government, Nikita Khrushchev pointed out: "All the peoples, irrespective of the social system of their country, want peace, and the Soviet Government, in the interests of ensuring peace, is sparing no effort in the struggle to achieve agreement on disarmament and for the practical implementation of disarmament. This is essential in order that the peoples could live peacefully and solve all their domestic State problems as they themselves wish, without interference in their domestic affairs from other countries, with the complete recognition of the sovereignty and inviolability of all States."

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The Soviet trade unions wholeheartedly support the consistent peaceful policy of the Government of our country. We believe that the policy of peaceful coexistence is the only correct policy. The international working class and its trade union organisations must work more actively for the establishment and implementation of the principles of peaceful coexistence in relations between States, for general and total disarmament, as this is the decisive factor for success in their struggle for peace, democracy and social progress.

Dear Comrades,

I should like to thank the leadership of the All-India Trade Union Congress for inviting a delegation from the Central Council of Soviet trade unions to attend this Congress, for the cordial and friendly welcome given to us by the working people of your country. I wish all of you good health, happiness and great success in your activities for the benefit of the working people.

In conclusion allow me to read the message of greetings from the Central Council of Soviet Trade Unions to the 26th Session of the All-India Trade Union Congress.

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TO THE 26TH SESSION OF THE ALL-INDIA TRADE UNION CONGRESS

On behalf of the industrial and office workers of the Soviet Union, the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions extends its heartfelt and fraternal greetings to the participants of the 26th Session of the All-India Trade Union Congress and through them to all the working people of India.

The Indian trade union movement, in the front ranks of which is the militant organisation of the Indian working class, the All-India Trade Union Congress, has in a short historical period developed into an immense force, which plays an important part both in the life of the country and in the international trade union movement. The whole world knows of the struggle waged by the All-India Trade Union Congress for the interests of the Indian working people, for consolidating the independence of their country, for peace the world over. The All-India Trade Union Congress takes an active part in the work of the World Federation of Trade Unions, it is developing fraternal ties with the trade unions of different countries, steadfastly seeks to unite all forces of the world trade union movement in the struggle for peace, democracy and social progress.

The unity of the working class is the decisive factor to achieve success in this struggle, and particularly, for ensuring a stable and lasting peace.

The Soviet trade unions which are constantly working for peaceful coexistence, for relaxation of world tension, against militarism and revanchism, for cooperation and friendship among nations, firmly believe that the unflagging and united efforts of all peace-loving forces can secure peace and deal a decisive blow to the policy of war.

The Soviet working people sincerely rejoice at the achievements of the Indian people in building up their peaceful and independent country, and they wholeheartedly share the Indian working people's desire to strengthen peace and friendship among nations.

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The relations between the peoples of our two countries are marked with sincere friendship and fraternal cooperation in the economic and cultural field. This cooperation promotes the development of India's national economy and culture, consolidates her sovereignty and independence.

Now, when the American imperialists and their accomplices seek by every means to delay the historical process of the steadfast development of the national-liberation movement, the people's struggle for peace and social progress, when they provoke intrigues against the peace-loving nations, the cooperation between the peoples of the USSR and India, between the peoples of all countries, assumes ever greater significance.

The All Union Central Council of Trade Unions wishes the All-India Trade Union Congress further great achievements in its noble activities in the interests of the Indian working people, in strengthening the solidarity of the labour and trade union movement, in the struggle for the triumph of the cause of peace and friendship of nations.

Long live the unbreakable fraternal friendship between the working people of India and the Soviet Union!

Long live the unity of the working people of all countries in the struggle for peace and social progress!

Long live the All-India Trade Union Congress!

ALL-UNION CENTRAL COUNCIL
OF TRADE UNIONS

January 5, 1961

26th Session
of the
All-India Trade Union Congress

.....
Aituc Nagar, Coimbatore (January 5 to 12, 1961)

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Conf/3

January 6, 1960

PRESS COMMUNIQUE

ILO DIRECTOR GREETES AITUC SESSION

Shri V.K.R.Menon, Director, International Labour Office (ILO), India Branch, today addressed the 26th Session of the All-India Trade Union Congress.

Shri Menon greeted the Conference on behalf of the Director-General, ILO, Geneva, as well as on his own behalf and wished the conference all success.

The ILO, Shri Menon said, has a membership of 95 countries and he hoped within a year, the figure would reach 100. The ILO has no power of sanctions but with its tripartite character, the workers, employers and governments having equal representation on it, the ILO has been able to render valuable service.

He conveyed his warmest greetings to the delegates and said that he would watch with close interest, the successful outcome of the Conference.

Shri S.S.Mirajkar, President, AITUC, thanked Shri Menon for his participation in the AITUC Session and for his message of greetings on behalf of the ILO.

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Shri S.A.Dange, M.P., General Secretary, AITUC, addressed the AITUC Session today, presenting his report. (Summary of Shri Dange's report has been separately circulated).

Among the messages read at the Session were from: the All-China Federation of Trade Unions, Peking; and from the General Confederation of Labour, Paris. (Texts circulated separately).

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Earlier, the 26th Session paid its homage to V.Chakkarai Chettiar, former President of the AITUC. Following is the text of the Condolence Resolutions adopted:

COMRADE CHAKKARAI CHETTIAR

The 26th Session of the AITUC expresses its profound grief at the demise of Comrade V.Chakkarai Chettiar, the former President of the AITUC. Comrade Chakkarai Chettiar had served in the Indian trade union movement for nearly four decades, being one of the founders of the very first organised trade union in India, the union of textiles workers in Madras City. He stood by the Indian working class through thick and thin all these forty years. While the AITUC faced severe repression in the years 1947 to 1952, Comrade Chettiar, in spite of his age, stood by the AITUC and tried to preserve

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the unity of the Indian workers. Comrade Chettiar was a profound scholar, respected by the people of India, particularly of Tamilnad and a devout Christian. He was an asset to the AITUC at a period when the AITUC had to face attempts at disruption. The 26th Session pays its homage to the memory of Comrade Chakkarai Chettiar and pledges to carry forward the great traditions of militant trade union movement which he consistently upheld."

The Session also adopted the following condolence resolutions:

"The 26th Session of the AITUC mourns the death of numerous workers and trade union members, who have lost their lives in firings and attacks by police and employers in various parts of the country during the last three years. These include two Hindustan Aircraft workers of Bangalore; 3 workers at Jamshedpur during the 1958 strike; 5 at Madras during the All-India Port and Dock strike, 4 workers of Chandanathope and Munnar; four workers at the Rihand Dam, two at Katihar jute mills, 5 at Faridabad and 5 railway workers of Dohad during the recent Central Government employees' strike. The AITUC pays homage to the memory of all these martyrs and pledges to defend the interests of the working class for which they gave their lives.

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"The 26th Session of the AITUC deeply mourns the sad and premature demise of Com. Shankarlingam, a bold and fearless fighter in the cause of the working class and of the railway workers in particular.

"Com. Shankarlingam who was an assistant foreman in the Central Railway workshop in Bombay, was dismissed from service in 1952 for his trade union activities. He took a foremost part in organising the G.I.P. Railwaymen's Union, of which he was the General Secretary for a long time. For his union activities, he was arrested and detained thrice, once in 1940, then in 1950 and again during the recent strike of Central Government employees.

"In his sad demise, not only have the railwaymen lost a great friend and fighter, but the entire working class of our country has lost a valiant leader.

"The AITUC pays its homage to the memory of Com. Shankarlingam and conveys its condolences to his bereaved family."

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"The 26th Session of the AITUC expresses its profound grief and indignation at the death of Comrade Hassan Nasser in mysterious circumstances while under detention in Lahore Fort. It is reliably reported that Com. Nasser, an active trade unionist and political worker of Pakistan was tortured to death and the Pakistan authorities connived at concealment of his body which was not even handed to Com. Nasser's relatives for burial.

"The AITUC unequivocally condemns the brutality and repressive methods of the Pakistan Government which resulted in Com. Nasser's tragic death at an early age. This Session pays respectful homage to his memory as a courageous fighter for the working class who fell at his post, in the difficult conditions of military dictatorship."

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CONDOLENCE RESOLUTIONS (CONTD.)

"The 26th Session of the AITUC expresses its deep sorrow at the deaths of Comrades P.D'Mello, Bombay dock workers' leader; Binode Mukherjee of Bihar; Nanubhai Desai of Gujerat; Gaddam Babiah of Singareni coalfields; Somnath Dave of INTUC; M.V.Wadhavkar of Bombay engineering; Badal Dev of Jamshedpur; Sisir Roy, General Secretary of UTUC; Krishna Chatterjee of Colliery Mazdoor Sabha, Asansol; A.Dass of Praga Tools, Secunderabad, and other leaders and organisers of the working class movement who have passed away since the last session of the AITUC. It also regrets the passing away of Shri Feroze Gandhi, a sincere friend of democratic and progressive causes in Parliament."

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"The AITUC records its profound grief at the passing away of outstanding leaders of the world working class movement like Harry Pollitt, Chairman of the Communist Party of Great Britain; Wilhelm Pieck, President of the German Democratic Republic; Lai Jo-yu, Chairman of All-China Federation of Trade Unions, Aneurin Bevan of the British Labour Party and trade unions and Aissat Idir of the Algerian Trade Unions who was tortured to death by the French colonialists. The working class of India salutes the great contributions of these comrades to the cause of international proletarian solidarity, national independence, peace and socialism and resolves to carry forward the noble causes to which they devoted their lives."

26th Session of the AITUC

.....
Coimbatore

.....
January 1961

Speech of

COMRADE Z. DAGWA,
Vice President of the
Central Council of the Mongolian Trade Unions

Dear Friends,

It is indeed a great pleasure for me to extend brotherly and warm greetings of the working people and the trade unions of the Mongolian People's Republic to the 26th Session of the All-India Trade Union Congress and through this Session to the glorious Indian working class, and also to express our heartfelt thanks to Comrade S.A. Dange, General Secretary of the AITUC, for the kind invitation extended to the representatives from Mongolia enabling us to participate in this great gathering today.

I am equally happy to convey our deep thanks and appreciation to the working people of Coimbatore and the Chairman of the Reception Committee as well as to all those who have made this wonderful preparation for this conference and welcomed us to your glorious city.

The Mongolian trade unions always have had fraternal feelings towards the AITUC and have watched with admiration the heroic struggles waged by this militant organisation for the good of the toiling workers in this country and rejoiced at its success and achievements. Today, we feel happier still to attend this conference for the first time, as representatives of the Mongolian trade unions and be in your midst, the leaders and members of the militant trade unions of the AITUC. It is, I believe, will no doubt be of immense help to the further strengthening of the brotherly relations between the working peoples of our respective countries.

We have gone through and heard with attention the reports, including that of Comrade S.A. Dange, on the activities of the AITUC. We hope your deliberations and the decisions taken at this session will help further strengthen the struggle for trade union unity, for improving the working and living conditions of the Indian workers and for peace.

Since its inception in 1920 at the largest industrial city of Bombay, during these forty years, the All-India Trade Union Congress has made great advance in uniting and organising the forces of the working class in this sub-continent, to defend the interests and rights of the toiling workers and fought for the national independence of India.

Thanks to the heroic struggles for the liberation of the country from the yoke of foreign imperialists and for improving the standards of living of the working class, the AITUC has become a mighty and militant organisation, fighting for the interests of the toiling masses.

The AITUC, we know well, is playing an important part in the national and international trade union movements. It is an active member of the one hundred and one million strong World Federation of Trade Unions and firmly supports the progressive activities of the WFTU.

The Mongolian Trade Unions, being a member of this

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lofty world organisation - the WFTU, the centre of the coordination of the international trade union movement, - are in full support of the noble activities of the AITUC and hope that the AITUC will achieve greater successes in the struggle for strengthening unity of the working people in this country and for the defence of their interests.

Today, under the circumstances of the increasing aggressive activities of the imperialists threatening the fate of humanity, the Mongolian trade unions actively favour the further cooperation among our sister trade unions. The Mongolian working people and their trade unions, together with all the progressive forces throughout the world, strongly condemn the shameful acts of the colonialists and imperialists in Algeria and in interfering in the internal affairs of the Congo, Laos and other countries and the attempts to bring their freedom and independence to naught.

Dear Friends, - May I take this pleasant opportunity of being present at your Session here, to say a few words about my country and about our working class and its trade unions at large? I think this would help, at least to some extent, in knowing something of each other's activities in this particular field.

Forty years back, in 1921, there was a people's revolution in Mongolia, which put an end to the internal oppressive forces and drove out the foreign colonialists and, thus, freedom and independence were brought to our country.

As a result of this Revolution, drastic changes took place in Mongolia. New branches of socialist industry and agriculture, equipped with modern techniques have come into existence and a new working class was born. Trade unions were organised. As you know, the conditions in which trade unions were organised and grew in our country were naturally different. And we work and labour in different conditions too.

At present, over 90% of the industrial and office workers are organised in trade unions. The trade union organisations are a mighty factor in the life and the development programme of the whole nation.

Trade unions in our country are always in support of the government policy and stand for carrying out every steps taken by it, because our government policy is aimed at raising the living and working conditions as best as possible.

Owing to the joint efforts of the working class and the people of Mongolia, the feudal backwardness in which we lived 40 years ago was done away with within a short historical period. Today we are building socialism, having escaped the capitalistic stage of development. We can say that socialism is making good progress in every field of life of the country.

Various branches of national industry, modern means of transport and communications are advancing today in our country. Now, 50% of the gross national product is output from industry alone. It may be mentioned that the active participation of the trade unions in these fields was an important factor in effecting the rapid transformation.

As far as agriculture is concerned, veterinary science, mechanised farming and modern agricultural techniques are now in common use in our country as against the nomadic animal husbandry which predominated formerly. The settlement of the nomadic rural population has started. The herdsmen

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are entirely different today. Until recently, in our agriculture, private ownership predominated but it has now been turned into big collective farms or cooperatives formed on a voluntary basis. In view of this change, in the field of animal husbandry, great progress has been made and the animal wealth of the country has increased. Now there are 27.9 heads of animal per capita in our country. Also the area under grain crops have been greatly expanded.

Thanks to 40 years of the tireless labour and efforts of our people, Mongolia has become an agrarian and industrial country.

There was a cultural revolution too and illiteracy among the adult population in the country was eliminated. Elementary and middle schools, specialised colleges and higher educational institutions were set up everywhere. Seven-year education and four-year schooling system has been introduced in towns and in villages respectively. Free education is provided to all. The higher educational establishments in our country turn out specialists for various branches of the national economy and culture. At present 137.6 people out of every 1,000 are able to study at one or another educational institution in Mongolia.

National arts, literature and science have advanced rapidly for the good of the people.

Every year witnesses an increase and advance in the well-being of the people. And public health service is organised well and medical science is in progress. There is hardly any corner or part in the country where no hospital or dispensary is functioning in Mongolia today. Medical service is free to all, and at present, there is one doctor for every 1,000 people of the population.

I must say that the disinterested and sincere assistance from the Soviet Union and other socialist countries was and is an important factor in the realization of these achievements attained by our country. With the further increased assistance from our friends, the Mongolian people are determined to advance their country in the direction of further development and prosperity. In the next five years, it has been stipulated that the advance in agriculture and industry should be at a tempo of rapid development, with a view to raise industrial output twice and the area under grain crops by three times. As a result, Mongolia will make great advances as an industrial and agrarian country.

The Mongolian trade unions organise the working people for the progress and advance of the nation and educate them in the spirit of high productivity and are responsible for further raising of the living standards and the cultural level of the people and in defence of their interests.

The trade unions in our country take an active part in the economic planning, and in introducing new production methods in industry and elsewhere. They participate in everything that might affect the interests of the workers, either directly or indirectly, such as fixation of working hours, wage level, or securing better living and working conditions, leave facilities, etc. Without the consent of the trade unions, no overtime work or work during holidays is allowed.

In our country, the duration of working hours in light or food industries is limited to 8 hours. Special food and clothing, and shorter working day of 7 hours, are provided

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for the workers engaged in hard labour. Duration of the working time on the days before public holidays is limited to 6 hours. Social insurance is run by the trade unions in the country. Industrial and office workers are granted 14 to 26 days of paid leave every year. There is 80% discount in the cost of having rest at State-owned sanatoria or rest homes provided for the industrial and office workers. In case of maternity, three months' leave before and after the delivery is granted, with wages paid in full. And, in the case of old age or disablement, 100% of wages are paid to industrial and office workers.

The Mongolian trade unions, in cooperation with the All-India Trade Union Congress and other sister organisations, affiliated to the World Federation of Trade Unions have tirelessly fought for international unity of workers, for peace throughout the world and against imperialism and the colonial yoke.

Our trade unions consider it essential to further strengthen the unity and solidarity of the workers the world over, for achieving universal disarmament, for a lasting peace and for peaceful coexistence, and in support of national independence movements, for protecting the interests of the working people and their trade unions.

Dear friends and comrades! In conclusion, I take the liberty, on behalf of the Mongolian trade unions to wish the All India Trade Union Congress every success in their work in defence of the interests of the glorious working people of your country and for peace throughout the world, and for the activities aimed at insuring the solidarity of international trade union movement.

Long live the friendship between the peoples of Mongolia and India!

Long live the brotherly cooperation between the trade unions of India and Mongolia!

26th Session of the AITUC

.....
Coimbatore

.....
January 1961
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S p e e c h o f

COMRADE NJONO,
President, National Council,
All-Indonesia Trade Union Centre (SOBSI)

FOR AN UNBREAKABLE FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN
THE INDIAN AND INDONESIAN WORKERS

Dear Comrades,

I consider it a great honour in getting this excellent opportunity to represent the SOBSI for attending this 26th Session of the AITUC in Coimbatore. On behalf of the National Council of SOBSI and on behalf of the more than 2.7 million Indonesian workers affiliated to SOBSI, I anxiously hope that tremendous successes will be obtained by this Session.

Through you, dear comrades, I convey the most fraternal greetings of the Indonesian workers to the working people of India. Everything has been and will be done by us, in the past as well as in the future, to strengthen our international friendship. And it is only the imperialists and the reactionaries who wish to thwart the unbreakable solidarity between the Indian and Indonesian workers. But since our solidarity is based on a strong basis, i.e., the spirit of proletarian internationalism, it is not possible to smash it down. Besides, many factors are there also which give us the impetus and inspiration for further strengthening of our common battle.

During past several ages, we had to face the same unbearable living as a result of colonial exploitation. The Indian people were exploited by the British imperialists while the Indonesians were pressed under the heel of Dutch imperialism. And now, since our respective countries have won their independence and sovereignty, we are now faced with the same problems, viz., the construction of a democratic national society, fully liberated from imperialism and from the remnants of feudalism, as a base for the construction of a socialist society in the future.

In consolidating our respective national independence, we have to face our most dangerous common enemy, the U.S. imperialism, dragging the newly-independent countries into its military blocs and put under its economic domination.

But the world has already changed its face. We have not only the most dangerous enemies of mankind, but we have also the most reliable friends and comrades-in-arms of our own. These comrades-in-arms are the socialist countries, headed by the Soviet Union.

Socialism has already outstripped imperialism and this fact strengthens once more our conviction that the hour has struck to counter the forces of the die-hard imperialists.

(Contd.)

Dear Comrades,

To maintain the colonial system, which is facing its absolute downfall, chaos has been brought about by the U.S. warmongers in Laos, Algeria, Congo and other countries. Further, by threatening the national independence of Cuba, and at the same time, by launching armed race, which is of great danger for our world peace.

Under the banner of the World Federation of Trade Unions, we fulfil noble tasks, with the strengthening of international solidarity, with the struggle of oppressed nations for national independence and the broadening of the international front against colonialism and for peace.

To maintain world peace, the workers in India and Indonesia, and together with us the workers and the peoples of the whole world, fully support the proposals of the Soviet Government for liquidating colonialism and for general and complete disarmament.

In this connection, I am of the opinion that AITUC and SOBSI are able to take common steps in this direction, with the purpose that Prime Minister Pandit Nehru of the Republic of India and President Soekarno of the Republic of Indonesia - in conformity with the principles of the neutral foreign policy in our respective countries - to take an important role in obtaining an international agreement on disarmament, at least in prohibiting the use of nuclear weapons and in establishing Atom-Free Zones.

Dear Comrades,

The present struggle of the AITUC is, as seen from the General Report of this Session, to make, among others, the implementation of the Third Five Year Plan beneficial for the development of the national economy, and in improving the standard of living of the Indian working people. Just the same is done by the workers in Indonesia.

The Provisional People's Consultative Assembly, i.e., the highest Council in the Republic of Indonesia, in its first session on November 10 to December 7, 1960, unanimously adopted two most important decisions, which will have their great influence on the political developments in Indonesia. The first of these two decisions was the decision on the Political Manifesto of the Republic of Indonesia, adopting the Broad Lines of State Policy. The second decision was on the Eight Year Plan for national construction.

In the Political Manifesto of the Republic of Indonesia, as the broad lines of State policy, is explained that the basic enemies of the Indonesian Revolution are imperialism and feudalism, that the main tasks of the Indonesian Revolution is not to establish the political power of one class, one group or one party, but to establish the political power of the entire people, a "Gotong-Royong" (mutual help) power to oppose autocracy or dictatorship, both military and personal dictatorship; that the moving force of the Indonesian Revolution is not one class, one group or one party, but the entire Indonesian people who are consistently anti-imperialist and anti-feudal, with the workers and peasants as the basic force; that the character of the Indonesian Revolution is national-democratic; and that the perspectives of the Indonesian Revolution is Socialism and not capitalism.

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The Eight-Year Plan for national construction in Indonesia is based upon the above-mentioned Political Manifesto of the Republic of Indonesia, including the economic, political, social and cultural construction.

The SOBSI supports the National Construction Plan, due to the fact that this Plan is in keeping, within certain limits, with the features of the national and democratic, the anti-imperialist and anti-feudal features of the Indonesian Revolution. The above-mentioned Construction Plan does not pay attention to foreign capital investments; it pays attention to land reform and agriculture; it pays attention to industrialisation and heavy industry and it places the State Sector of the economy in a leading position in the country's economy.

The SOBSI fights with all its might, together with the other democratic forces, for the implementation of the broad lines of the Construction Plan, so as to develop the Indonesian economy. The SOBSI does not close its eyes over the fact that the living conditions of the Indonesian workers are worsening, more and more as a result of the increases in prices and the rates and greater unemployment. Besides, the Indonesian workers are also confronted with several restrictions on democratic rights. That is the reason why SOBSI's support to the implementation of the Construction Plan is given without abandoning the actions for better living and for the implementation of democratic rights. Thus, to ensure successful implementation of the National Construction Plan, the SOBSI puts forward the following demands:

First: There must be a strong revolutionary national unity, with the unity of the nationalists, the religious sections and the Communists as its core.

Second: To bring the entire State apparatus in conformity with the decisions adopted by the Provisional People's Consultative Assembly, by wiping out reactionary elements.

Third: To promote the State Sector of the economy, to nationalise the Dutch enterprises that have already been taken over as well as those which have not yet been taken over, the implementation of the Land Reforms, with the objective of liberating the peasants from feudal production relationships and the participation of the representatives of the trade unions in the Enterprise Councils.

Fourth: By guaranteeing the democratic rights of the people and by raising the purchasing power of the workers, the peasants and the rest of the Indonesian working people, by means of preventing increases in prices and rates and by raising their earnings.

In the struggle for implementation of these demands, SOBSI educates the workers that their reasonable demands can only be won, if seriously based on the actions of the masses. Class actions are urgently needed, since it is known that the influence of imperialism and feudalism on the economic field is still there; since it is known that the State apparatus is not yet cleansed from corrupt and reactionary elements, while loyal representatives of the workers are not to be found in the Government.

Comrades,

On behalf of the National Council of SOBSI, I hope for better cooperation and an improved mutual help between the

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peoples of India and Indonesia, in the struggle for the liberation of Goa and the struggle for liberation of West Irian. As is known, West Irian is an integral part of the Republic of Indonesia, up till now occupied by the Dutch colonialists. To preserve its occupation of West Irian, the Dutch colonial government is conspiring with the U.S. imperialism, by strengthening its armed forces, by carrying out persecutions, large-scale massacres and burning down villages. The aggressive steps taken by the Dutch colonial government are endangering not only the Indonesian national independence but also threatening world peace, especially in South East Asia.

In conclusion, dear Comrades, I convey my heartfelt gratitude to the honage and warm welcome paid by all of you to the SOBSI delegation with such a sincere and profound feelings of international solidarity.

Long live the unbreakable friendship between the workers of India and Indonesia!

Long live the mighty struggle of the peoples of the world for national liberation, democracy, social progress and world peace!

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Long live the mighty struggle of the peoples of the world for national liberation, democracy, social progress and world peace!

S p e e c h

b y

COMRADE HANKE,
Secretary,
Central Council of Polish Trade Unions

Dear Comrades, Friends and Delegates,

Permit me to express the feelings of the entire Polish working class and to convey, on behalf of the Central Council of Trade Unions, to you and to all the members of the great militant trade union organisation of the Indian working class - the AITUC - and to all the working people of your country, most cordial, fraternal greetings and the best wishes for success in your struggle for the consolidation of national sovereignty and the development of your beautiful great fatherland, India.

The Polish working class is perfectly well aware of the difficult road, full of self-sacrifices which your people covered, a people with an old culture and rich historical traditions, of struggle against the foreign rule.

The Polish trade unionists want to express their feelings of sincere friendship and, at the same time, their deep respect for your militant trade union organisation which, being a member of the World Federation of Trade Unions, serves indefatigably the cause of the consolidation of unity of the international trade union movement.

We fully appreciate the great merits of your trade union organisation and of the entire Indian working class and their contribution to the struggle of all the progressive forces of the Indian nation, which adhere to the principle of fighting for an easing of international tension, for peaceful co-existence of countries with different social systems, who are in favour of the complete and universal disarmament, the preservation of peace, who actively oppose the cold war, colonialism and imperialism.

Dear Comrades,

Among the many important problems on which concentrates the attention of the working people in our country and throughout the world, that of lasting peace has been given priority. Today, the very existence and the future of mankind depends on peace. The Polish people suffered the most terrible losses during the last war, started by the Nazi invaders. More than six million human beings lost their lives in our country during this war. Thirtyeight per cent of the durable national property was destroyed. That is why our people are fully justified in watching with uneasiness the danger inherent already today in the reborn forces of aggressive militarism in West Germany, equipped with modern destructive weapons supplied by the Western Powers belonging to NATO. Five years ago, the Paris Treaty limited this army to the conventional weapons only; today rockets and all sorts of guided missiles are being produced in the German Federal Republic. Voices are

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Aware of difficult Rd sacrifices

Progressive Indian Natn stands for co-existence Disarmament Peace

Peace priority - 60 lakhs died - 38% national property destroyed Hence secure German Rearmament - 4 men rockets Hence hopes Peace unlikely

raised more and more frequently about the transformation of NATO Army detachments into a so-called "fourth atom power". So you can see how meaningless the assurances of the peaceful intentions of the West German Government are and why our people are convinced that it is their duty to arouse the vigilance of the entire world in regard to this serious danger to peace, namely the West German militarism.

Our people, our working class and with them, the whole progressive public opinion of the world, most determinedly protest against the acts of lawlessness committed by abusing the United Nations flag by the defenders of the colonial regime in Congo. With indignation, we condemn the new adventurous armed acts in Laos, committed by the right-wing rebels, enjoying the armed help of the USA. The Polish working class most determinedly condemns colonialism in its classical, today already obsolete, form, as well as all types of neo-colonialism, combining the economic dependence of economically less developed countries with political dictation. We are of the same opinion as stated by Comrade Dange in his report that the times of colonialism are gone, once and for ever and that there can today no longer be any nation on earth deprived of the right of being a sovereign State.

Disarmament and a guarantee for lasting peace is the guiding line for all the countries of the powerful camp of socialism. This policy encounters the full support of all the progressive forces in the world. The Indian people also make a great contribution to the cause of peace and cooperation among nations and the attitude adopted by India in regard to many key problems of international policy gained recognition throughout the world and strengthened its authority among the peoples of the Asian continent.

Our people who are building socialism, our working class and its trade unions consider the struggle for the consolidation of peace as the most important task in their efforts to bring about the development of the productive forces and to raise the economic potential of the country. This is, after all, in the conditions of our system, free from exploitation, the only road to raise the standard of living of the community and thereby, a road leading to the deepening of the superiority of the forces of peace over the imperialist forces of war. In this peaceful competition between two different systems participate all socialist countries, including Poland, a country which, after having thrown off the yoke of exploitation of native and foreign capitalists, has entered the road of a rapid all-round development. During the twenty years of the rule of the bourgeoisie and landlords after the first world war, the production of the main industrial articles in Poland was unable to surpass the level of 1913. Today, after 15 years of the rule of the people's power, the per capita industrial production in Poland has increased eight times. This was possible due to the fact that today the working people is the master in its country. The people are working for their benefit, and this means that everyone in Poland has work and earns his bread, and also has free access to education. Side by side with the growth of production, improvement of the living conditions can also be noticed from year to year. During the last five years, real wages of workers increased by 28-29 per cent. The rapid rise in the standard of living is possible as a result of the rapid increase in the national income whose dynamic force can be best illustrated by the way it grew during the last ten years. If we accept the 1949 level of the

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national income as 100, then it increased by 1959 to 226. This growth bases itself on the tremendous development of the fundamental branches of our economy. During the current year, our mining industry passed 100 million tons in the extraction of hard coal annually, while the highest coal output before the war amounted to 38 million tons. We are at present at the threshold of a new Five Year Plan which will be a plan of the fundamental technical alteration of our economy, the expansion of our raw material base and the further increase in the well-being of the population. Having in mind our demographic situation, we provide in our Plan, the proper conditions for our youth entering the labour market, by creating approximately 800,000 new work-places during the coming Five Year Plan. These are no easy problems but we are solving them successfully, because the entire working class, every working person, is personally interested in the best possible economic results of the establishment in which they work. The socialist countries not only develop their own economy at a rapid rate, but they also grant, to a much larger extent, disinterested help to less developed countries, to raise themselves from backwardness and to liberate themselves from economic dependence from foreign monopolistic capital. The cooperation between socialist countries and all other countries regardless of their political and social structure, including the cooperation between Poland and India, is proof of the economic and political relations of a new type which is taking shape, relations to which no strings are attached. I can assure you, Comrades, that our working class ardently desires a further development of this cooperation for the mutual advantage of our peoples. Love of peace, the joint efforts to consolidate the unity of the working people throughout the world, to bring about progress throughout the world, the deep consciousness of international solidarity - this is the firm foundation on which our cooperation is based.

Dear Comrades - Delegates,

Please receive our assurance that just as until now, we shall continue to watch your daily work and your achievements with cordial feelings of friendship and fraternal solidarity on the part of the working people of People's Poland. We wish you, Comrades, that the deliberations of your conference may be most fruitful and from all our heart, we wish you new successes in your struggle and hard work for the benefit of the working class of India, of the people of India, for the victory of peace throughout the world.

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O N G O A

The 26th Session of the AITUC reiterates the demand of the Indian working class for the early liberation of Goa, Daman and Diu and the return of these territories to the motherland. At a time when colonial liberation is on the order of the day and the United Nations Organisation as a whole is unanimously committed to the ending of colonialism, the continued existence of the Portuguese possessions on Indian soil is more an anachronism than ever before.

The AITUC pays homage to all the martyrs who gave their lives for the liberation of Goa and all those freedom fighters who are languishing in Salazar's jails. The AITUC is confident that the day is not distant when not an inch of our country's soil will remain under foreign domination.

The AITUC urges upon the Government of India to take all possible steps, inside and outside the UNO, to complete the liberation of Goa. The AITUC also demands that the former Portuguese possessions of Dadra and Nagar Haveli, now liberated by their inhabitants, be fully integrated in the Indian Union without further delay.

O N A L G E R I A

The 26th Session of the AITUC extends its fraternal greetings to the heroic people of Algeria who have been conducting their armed struggle for national liberation for over six years against the military might of the French imperialists backed by their NATO partners.

The war of national independence, waged by the Algerian people, despite terrible sufferings and sacrifices, is a just war and an integral part of the worldwide struggle for banishing colonialism from the face of the earth. It is, therefore, the duty of all those who cherish freedom, democracy and peace to support the cause of Algeria's freedom and express active solidarity with it.

The AITUC greets the formation of the Algerian Provisional Government led by Premier Ferhat Abbas as a historic landmark in the successful development of the Algerian struggle. It is conclusive evidence of the failure of the imperialists to beat down the victorious upsurge of the national liberation forces, despite all their modern weapons and overwhelming military superiority.

The AITUC demands that the French Government abandon its slogan of a "French Algeria", order an immediate cease-fire and open negotiations with the Algerian Provisional Government for concrete implementation of the principle of national independence which must be unconditionally recognised.

The AITUC urges upon the Government of India to reinforce its good work in the UNO on this issue by extending diplomatic recognition to the Algerian Provisional Government - a step which would give tremendous moral and political support to the cause of Algerian independence and help to expedite its realisation.

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The AITUC is proud to be a member of the International Trade Union Committee for Solidarity with the Workers and People of Algeria. This Session calls upon the AITUC unions to intensify their work of mobilising all sections of the Indian working class in manifestation of support for the national liberation struggle of the heroic Algerian people.

O N C O N G O

This Session of the AITUC views with grave concern the deterioration in the Congo situation, which has resulted in the total suppression of the Congolese Parliament and of the elected Lumumba Government by the armed violence of pro-Belgian agents led by Col. Mobutu. Thus, the national freedom of the Congolese people and the sovereignty of their new-born Republic are sought to be wiped out by the Belgian colonialists who had earlier been forced to recognise the independence of their former empire of Congo.

The AITUC expresses its indignation at the manner in which the flag of the UNO has been permitted to shield the crimes and atrocities of the Belgian imperialists and their agents against the Congolese people, including the brutal arrest, torture and illegal detention of Premier Lumumba. The NATO Powers who command the majority in the organs of the United Nations have not only succeeded in crippling the Lumumba Government and the Congolese Parliament; they have encouraged the come-back of the old colonialists by conferring UN recognition on President Kasavubu while denying it to Mr. Lumumba's representatives. They have even suppressed the official report of the UN General Secretary's representative, Shri Rajeswar Dayal, which was known to be strongly anti-Belgian.

The Soviet Union and other socialist countries in the UN have stood firmly for Congo's independence and against foreign imperialist intervention in the garb of the U.N.

The AITUC considers these events in Congo, culminating in the establishment of the Belgian-inspired military dictatorship of Mobutu, as a serious threat to the independence and sovereignty of all Afro-Asian nations. The AITUC declares its firm support for the patriotic ideas, democratic principles and lawfully elected authority symbolised in the person of Premier Lumumba. It calls upon the workers and their trade unions to mobilise in solidarity with the Congolese people and to demand the early fulfilment of the following:

- 1) Release of Mr. Lumumba and all political prisoners from detention;
- 2) Creation of conditions for reconvening of the Congolese Parliament;
- 3) Immediate and unconditional withdrawal from Congo of all Belgian personnel without exception;
- 4) Disarming of the armed gangs of Mobutu by the U.N. forces.

.../...

O N C U B A

The 26th Session of the AITUC sends warm fraternal greetings to the Government and people of Cuba whose revolutionary actions have sounded the death-knell of Yankee imperialism in the Latin American continent.

The working people of India have been enthused and inspired by the bold measures of the Castro Government for defence of Cuba's national sovereignty, consolidation of her national independence and democratic reforms aimed at liquidating the grip of feudal landed interests and foreign monopoly capital over the Cuban economy. In particular, the nationalisation of U.S.-owned oil refineries, sugar estates and factories, and banks, has dealt a mortal blow at the basic sources of imperialist plunder and has shown the way forward to other under-developed countries faced with similar problems.

The AITUC strongly condemns the frantic attempts of the U.S. imperialists to bully and intimidate the heroic people of little Cuba and their revolutionary Government into submission. Threats of military intervention, economic boycott, breaking-off of diplomatic relations, provocative naval manœuvres, employment of agents trained in subversion and sabotage, slanderous propaganda about Communist 'infiltration', etc., are some of the familiar weapons being brandished by the desperate rulers of Washington.

The AITUC is confident that all these conspiracies and attacks will crumble against the rock-like unity and determination of the Cuban people, and the Cuban revolution will march forward in triumph. The AITUC assures the people and Government of Cuba of the firm solidarity and support of the Indian working class and calls upon the United Nations Organisation to ensure the safeguarding of Cuba's independence and sovereign rights.

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

I. EMPLOYEES' STATE INSURANCE SCHEME:

The Study Group on Social Security appointed by the Government of India suggested in its Report made in January 1959 that some of the existing schemes of social security should be integrated and that the P.F. scheme should be converted into a pension scheme. Though welcoming some of the suggestions in principle, in view of the bitter experience of the unsatisfactory working of the ESI Scheme and the continuous refusal to concede legitimate demands of the workers, to extend the scheme to the families, to construct separate hospitals for insured workers, to reduce workers' contribution and to remove administrative defects, the AITUC at its General Council meeting in January 1960 declared its unwillingness to agree to the suggestion till confidence was restored by fulfilling these demands.

Since then restricted medical benefits to families of insured workers have been extended in a few centres in nine States out of fifteen where the Scheme has been so far implemented. This, in principle, concedes a longstanding demand of the workers but early steps must be taken to cover families in the case of all workers in the ~~case of all workers in the~~ remaining States also, and particularly in Maharashtra and West Bengal which together account for nearly nine lakh insured workers.

The arrangements for the treatment of families are, however, far from satisfactory and this is true of the panel system areas as well as the service system areas.

Dr. A.L. Mudaliar, the one-man commission, appointed by the Government of India to report on the working of the ESI Scheme has expressed against the extension of the scheme to families so long as suitable improvements have not been made for the treatment of insured workers themselves. This argument is weighty but the legitimate demand of workers for extension of medical benefits to families should not be held back on this plea. As a matter of fact, inclusion of families will increase the pressure for rapid improvement of the scheme.

The position with regard to provision of hospitals continues to be very unsatisfactory. Separate hospitals are being constructed in some major centres like Kanpur, Madras City, Bangalore and Bombay, while annexes or wards have been provided at Delhi, Hyderabad, Nagpur and Coimbatore. The number of beds provided is extremely inadequate. The Mudaliar Report has sharply noted this failure and has advocated priority for this work.

v) No changeover from panel to service system or service to panel except with the prior approval of workers.

vi) Implementation of the recommendations made in the Mudaliar Report regarding provision of polyclinics and industrial housing.

vii) Waiting period of two days for payment of cash benefit should be dispensed with.

viii) Increase in the cash benefit to 75% from 50% and increase exemption limit from Re.1 per day to Rs.100 per month.

ix) The scheme should be extended to employees drawing Rs.500 per mensem instead of the present level of Rs.400.

x) Right to continued employment in cases of partial and partial-permanent disablement, as also in cases of workers who have recovered from serious and prolonged illnesses like T.B., etc.

xi) The provision for cash benefits available at present to T.B., Cancer, etc. patients, should be extended to cover cases of other prolonged malignant and chronic illnesses and of injuries received outside employment.

xii) In units where existing benefits are as good or better than those under the Scheme and workers ask for exemption, such exemption should be granted.

xiii) Adequate representation to the AITUC in the E.S.I. Corporation, Standing Committee of the Corporation, the Regional Boards and local committees under ESI; abolition of the present discrimination made against the AITUC.

The AITUC further demands that industrial employees of the Central Government should be provided with the same medical facilities and benefits as are available to non-industrial employees, as have been recommended by the Second Pay Commission.

II. PROVIDENT FUND.

The Employees' Provident Fund Scheme, as on 31st March 1960, covered 27 lakhs of workers in 45 industries.

The Employees' Provident Funds Act has recently been extended to cover all factories employing 20 or more workers as against the earlier limit of 50 or more workers, and to motor transport undertakings and mica mines, as well. This concedes in part of the demand of workers to bring within its purview all registered factories and transport companies.

Provision has also been made in the Act to raise the contribution to 8-1/3% instead of the previous 6-1/4%. But it has been deprived of much of its practical value by making it dependent upon the so-called "financial capacity" of each industry.

The AITUC, therefore, demands that:

1) The Employees Provident Funds Act should be extended to all registered factories, all transport undertakings, all shops and establishments, cinemas, hospitals, hotels, etc.

ii) The rate of contribution should be compulsorily raised to 8-1/3%.

iii) Benefit should be extended to employees drawing upto Rs.1000 per mensem.

iv) No exemption to newly-established units.

v) Interest should be at 4% and in both exempted and non-exempted factories.

vi) No forfeiture of the employers' contribution in case of workers dismissed or discharged from service.

vii) Extension of the Scheme to seasonal factories and works-charged staff.

viii) ~~simplicity~~ Simplification of the procedure for granting of recoverable loans from the Provident Fund; no restriction on such loans.

ix) Adequate representation to AITUC in the Board of Trustees of the Employees Provident Fund.

III. MATERNITY BENEFITS.

The Maternity Benefit Bill 1960, now referred to the Select Committee of Parliament has some good provisions. These are: (a) The benefit period is retained at six weeks before and six weeks after confinement; (b) the cash benefit is fixed at a sum equivalent to the average daily wage or 75 NP whichever is higher; (c) in addition, a bonus of Rs.25 will be given at the time of confinement; (d) depending upon the doctor's report, full wages will be paid for one month.

The rate of cash benefits is too low and should be a minimum of Rs.2 per day. The bonus, meant as lump sum relief is also low and should be raised to at least Rs.100 and period should be reduced to 150 days.

In the Bill, the State Governments have been empowered to extend the provision of the fact to commercial establishments.

While these provisions are good, they do not go far enough. At the same time, the Act has certain retrograde features:

(a) Only those workers who are in continuous employment for 240 days in the 12 months before the date of confinement will be eligible for benefits. This qualifying period should be reduced to 150 days, as in the existing provisions of the Kerala Act.

(b) The State Governments have been empowered to exempt seasonal factories. Such exemption should not be permitted and the minimum qualifying period should be waived in the case of seasonal workers.

IV. GRATUITY.

Gratuity is a benefit to be given to the workers at the time of retirement in a lump sum for past services rendered and for the retirement period. This is quite different from other benefits like Provident Fund, which is in the nature of compulsory saving with incentive. This view has been expressed by the Madras Industrial Tribunal. The AITUC demands that a legislation should be brought fixing gratuity at the rate of one month's wages for every year of service.

V. WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION:

It is necessary to have suitable and long-overdue amendment of the Act to dispense with the waiting period of three days, enlarge the schedule of occupational diseases, simplify the procedure for establishing the disease and double the present rates of compensation.

VI. UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFIT:

There must be statutory provision for an employment relief scheme, which should be drawn up after full consultation with the workers' organisations.

RESOLUTION
ON
COIR INDUSTRY IN KERALA.

The Coir Industry is the most important industry in Kerala. More than 12 lakhs of people depend entirely upon it for their livelihood.

The industry which began to establish itself on an organised footing in the town of Alleppey about the year 1859 and which recorded steady progress for a pretty long time, is now on the decline. It had at one time an annual out-put to the tune of 15-17 crores of rupees. This is now reduced to 10-12 crores of rupees.

The industry has two sectors, a spinning sector and a manufacturing sector. Spinning sector consists of various processes such as retting of coconut husks in water, extraction of fibre from retted husks and the spinning of yarn from the fibre. These processes are being done largely on an un-organised fashion throughout the coastal belt of Kerala. The manufacturing sector also consists of various processes such as weaving of mats, mattings, carpets etc., stencilling, colouring, shearing, sorting, pressing and other ancilliary work. These are carried on entirely in well established factories. There has been no change worth-mentioning in the spinning sector ever since the inception of the industry.

The picture of the manufacturing sector is deeply disturbing. It is so completely upset that the coir industry is now on the verge of collapse. The production of coir goods is dwindling at an alarming rate and it is gradually migrating from this land to European countries like Holland and Belgium. Countries like Australia, New Zealand and France which used to buy our manufactured coir goods have gradually sliced down their import and instead they are now purchasing raw fibre and yarn. These European countries are starting their own manufacturing establishments with the coir yarn that they import. They make coir goods prohibitively dear and get down yarn cheaper. Also the freight rate for sea-borne coir goods is nearly five times that for yarn. Our country is actually degenerating to the level of a colony supplying raw materials for the industries of Europe. Between 1946-47 and 1953-54, the export of yarn rose from 4,76,891 cwts. to 7,60,523 cwts. while the export of manufactured coir goods shrank from 3,66,820 cwts. to 2,43,688 cwts. It must be borne in mind that in 1937-38, the export of manufactured coir goods by far exceeded that of coir yarn. It is sad that the Central Government and the State Government are not realising the fact that our country is losing heavily on account of this state affairs.

The annual report of the Travancore Chamber of Commerce points out that in 1954-55, 11,05,459 cwts. of coir yarn and 4,49,695 cwts. of coir goods were shipped from the Cochin Harbour and the port of Alleppey. The average price realised is Rs.49.7 per cwt. for coir yarn and Rs.75.6 per cwt. for coir products. Calculating on this basis, the total price of 11,05,459 cwts. of yarn is approximately Rs.5,50,000 and that for 4,49,695 cwts. of finished products like mats and mattings, carpets etc., is roughly 37,00,000. From this, it will be seen that raw yarn and fibre has fetched 52% more than the price of coir goods. On the other hand, if the entire

export consisted only of finished goods, the total amount would have been nearly three crores and fortytwo lakhs of rupees. Unrestricted export of raw yarn and fibre to European countries in increasing quantities and the gradual migration of the production of coir goods from this land is no doubt, the major cause for the decline of this industry; but there are other ~~many~~ causes also for it, like the undesirable competition among the industrialists for securing more foreign orders and the various questionable practices adopted by them for compensating the loss occasioned thereby such as the debasement of the quality and standard of goods, the export of inferior stuff against orders for superior quality and deception of foreign buyers. All these factors have contributed in no small measure to the ruin of this industry which is in fact now on its last legs.

Already as many as 46 coir factories have been closed in Kerala.

No. of factories closed at each centre.

Alleppey	-	21
Shertallai	-	16
Quilon	-	4
Cochin	-	3
Calicut	-	2

Thousands of workers have been thrown out of employment. There were more than 50,000 workers engaged in this industry in Kerala at one time. The corresponding figure at present is 17,000.

The following table gives one an idea of the huge proportion that unemployment has assumed since the post-war period of 1947-49.

Before	1947-48.	No. of workers	1959-60.	No. of workers thrown out.
Alleppey	23000	6500	16500	
Shertallai	16000	4500	11500	
Cochin	5000	3000	2000	
Calicut	2000	1500	500	
Paravoor a)				
Vakkom)	1000	500	500	
Vaikom	1300	1000	300	
Quilon	3000	Nil	3000	
	<u>51300</u>	<u>17000</u>	<u>34300</u>	

In Messrs. Darragh, Small & Co., Alleppey, where there were 1600 workers in the year 1947-48, only 464 workers are working at present. The Pierce Leslie & Co., had at one time 1200 workers at their Alleppey factory, but now they have only 186 workers. Even these 186 workers are under notice of retrenchment. These facts and figures clearly show how disquieting the situation is. On a modest estimate, more than 34000 workers have been thrown out of employment as a result of the crisis in the coir industry. What is more disquieting is that mass retrenchment of workers is still going on and that even the workers who are engaged in the industry at present are getting only 3 to 4 days' work a week.

The A.I.T.U.C. regrets to point out that neither the Central Government nor the State Government nor the Coir Board are realising the seriousness of the situation that has developed in the coir industry, the gravity of the problems that it is facing and the abject poverty and privation that the workers engaged in this industry are enduring as a result of the present crisis.

The A.I.T.U.C. urges the Central Government, the State Government and the Coir Board to declare the Coir Industry as a declining industry and to take immediate and effective steps to provide employment to the workers who were thrown out due to closure of manufacturing establishments and other reasons.

At present the attention of the Coir Board is in the main, taken upon with spreading the industry over other regions. The Board appears to take no interest in solving the crisis that the industry is facing or finding a remedy for the acute unemployment that is prevailing in the coir industry. The A.I.T.U.C. desires to point out that it is incumbent on the Board to look into these matters as well and find solutions for them.

It places the following suggestions and calls upon the Central and State Governments to adopt necessary measures for the implementation of :-

- (1) The Coir Industry be given a reasonable share from the allocation made under the 3rd plan for the regeneration of declining industries.
- (2) New industries be started to absorb workers thrown out of employment.
- (3) A Trading Corporation for the Coir Industry be set up with a view to reorganising the industry on a sound footing.

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Speech of

COMRADE ALECU COSTICA,
Secretary,
Central Council of Trade Unions
of the Rumanian People's Republic

Dear Comrades,

Allow me, on behalf of and entrusted by the Central Council of Trade Unions in the Rumanian People's Republic to extend to your Congress and to all Indian working people, warm fraternal greetings.

The trade unions and the working people in our country, inspired by proletarian internationalism, entertain warm feelings of friendship and solidarity towards the Indian working people, towards their struggle for better working and living conditions. Having attended your Congress, we have had the opportunity to get better acquainted with the important role that the All-India Trade Union Congress - which not long ago has completed 40 years of activity - has played and is playing in this struggle.

The working people in our country support the struggle of the Indian working people for liquidating the economic and social backwardness left behind by the British colonialists. During the bourgeois-landlord regime, in spite of her great natural and human resources, Rumania also was held in a state of complete backwardness, as a source of raw materials, cheap labour and as market for British, American, French and other monopolies.

"Our mountains are full of gold, but we beg from door to door," - said a folk song in those times expressing the misery, hunger and unemployment endured by the working people, while the foreign monopolies in compact with native capitalists and landlords were squeezing fabulous profits out of them.

But on the 23rd of August 1944, the broad popular masses under the leadership of the party of our working class, the Communist Party, have won the freedom with arms in their hands, thus breaking the military-fascist dictatorship and the Hitlerite yoke. Rumania broke off for good from the chains of capitalist countries, confidently and courageously started on the path of liquidating the exploitation of man by man, on the path of building socialism.

During the bourgeois-landlord regime, Rumania had to import 95% of the industrial equipment, while today, the output of our socialist industry not only covers the greatest part of the domestic needs, but also creates reserves for export. We are glad that among the countries which import the products of our socialist industry is also your country, towards which the Government of the Rumanian People's Republic, within the existing agreements, promotes a policy of continuous development of trade and cultural exchanges in the interest of both our peoples.

Striking the balance of the achievements of the working class in alliance with the working peasantry, in June 1960, the IIIrd Congress of the Rumanian Workers' Party, an event

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of historic significance in the life of our country, appreciated that in the Rumanian People's Republic, the basis of socialism has been set up and that we are entering a new stage of development, which opens up to our people bright prospects for the complete victory of socialism and for the gradual transition to communism.

As a result of the multilateral development of our national economy, the wages and salaries and pensions have been increased and the taxes and prices have been reduced, which in 1959 resulted in an increase of 33 per cent in the real wages of the working people, as compared to 1955.

The development of economy provided by the Six-Year Plan (1960-1965) will lead to a further new increase in the real wages by 40 to 50 per cent, as compared to 1959. The people's democratic State, which considers the permanent improvement of the living and cultural standards of the working people as a matter of prime importance, allocates ever greater funds for social, cultural expenditures. This made it possible to develop a large network of schools of all grades. In 1933, over one million children had no possibility to attend schools; thus adding to the number of illiterates which in 1944 was over 4 million. In the years of our regime, the illiteracy was wiped out and primary education is now compulsory and free of charge. Beginning with this school-year, all the pupils from 1 to 7 form are receiving the text books completely free of charge. Numerous clubs, houses of culture, cinema halls and other cultural institutions, polyclinics, hospitals and maternity homes have been built throughout the country. In 1938, there was one physician for 1895 inhabitants, while today there is one physician for only 760 inhabitants. Pellagra, pulmonary tuberculosis, malaria and other diseases caused by misery and undernourishment, which in the past played havoc among the workers and peasants, have today disappeared or are extremely limited; the average longevity has increased from 42 as it was in the past, to 63 years today.

Considerable funds from the State budget are allocated to social insurance, for sickness allowances, for maternity, for old age and invalidity pensions, for sending working people to health-resorts and spas for medical treatment. The working people do not pay any contribution for social insurance. Since 1949, the social insurance is run by the trade unions. For housing construction, the State also allocates considerable funds. In 1960 alone, 31,000 flats have been built and given and by 1965, approximately 300,000 flats would be built with State funds. The rent which in the past was a heavy burden for the working people, amounting to over one-third of their wages, today is only 3 to 5 per cent of an average wage. The distribution of the new flats for the working people is made with the active participation of the trade unions.

The IVth Congress of Trade Unions of the Rumanian People's Republic held at the end of October 1960, underlined the role the trade unions play in solving the problems connected with the ever-increasing satisfaction of the economic, social and cultural interests of the working people, in elaborating and putting into practice, the measures concerning the improvement of the standard of living. They are ensuring the participation of the working masses in the planning, organising and running of production and are watching over the improvement of the working and living conditions.

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The trade unions in our country will untiringly struggle for further strengthening of the fraternal relations which have been set up between the trade unions of the Rumanian People's Republic and the trade unions of India, in the interest of the cause of the unity of the working people all over the world, for a better future, peace and social progress.

Thanking whole-heartedly the All-India Trade Union Congress, the Reception Committee, 26th Session of the AITUC, and all the delegates for the warm reception and the fraternal love showed to our delegation, we wish you full success in the proceedings of the Session. We wish that its decisions should lead the AITUC to new successes in the fight for unity of action of the working people in your country, for a better life, for peace in Asia and the world over.

Long live the friendship between the working people
in the Rumanian People's Republic and India!

Long live the international solidarity of the
working people in the fight for peace and social
progress!

S p e e c h

b y

COMRADE HANKE,
Secretary,
Central Council of Polish Trade Unions

Dear Comrades, Friends and Delegates,

Permit me to express the feelings of the entire Polish working class and to convey, on behalf of the Central Council of Trade Unions, to you and to all the members of the great militant trade union organisation of the Indian working class - the AITUC - and to all the working people of your country, most cordial, fraternal greetings and the best wishes for success in your struggle for the consolidation of national sovereignty and the development of your beautiful great fatherland, India.

The Polish working class is perfectly well aware of the difficult road, full of self-sacrifices which your people covered, a people with an old culture and rich historical traditions, of struggle against the foreign rule.

The Polish trade unionists want to express their feelings of sincere friendship and, at the same time, their deep respect for your militant trade union organisation which, being a member of the World Federation of Trade Unions, serves indefatigably the cause of the consolidation of unity of the international trade union movement.

We fully appreciate the great merits of your trade union organisation and of the entire Indian working class and their contribution to the struggle of all the progressive forces of the Indian nation, which adhere to the principle of fighting for an easing of international tension, for peaceful co-existence of countries with different social systems, who are in favour of the complete and universal disarmament, the preservation of peace, who actively oppose the cold war, colonialism and imperialism.

Dear Comrades,

Among the many important problems on which concentrates the attention of the working people in our country and throughout the world, that of lasting peace has been given priority. Today, the very existence and the future of mankind depends on peace. The Polish people suffered the most terrible losses during the last war, started by the Nazi invaders. More than six million human beings lost their lives in our country during this war. Thirtyeight per cent of the durable national property was destroyed. That is why our people are fully justified in watching with uneasiness the danger inherent already today in the reborn forces of aggressive militarism in West Germany, equipped with modern destructive weapons supplied by the Western Powers belonging to NATO. Five years ago, the Paris Treaty limited this army to the conventional weapons only; today rockets and all sorts of guided missiles are being produced in the German Federal Republic. Voices are

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raised more and more frequently about the transformation of NATO Army detachments into a so-called "fourth atom power". So you can see how meaningless the assurances of the peaceful intentions of the West German Government are and why our people are convinced that it is their duty to arouse the vigilance of the entire world in regard to this serious danger to peace, namely the West German militarism.

Our people, our working class and with them, the whole progressive public opinion of the world, most determinedly protest against the acts of lawlessness committed by abusing the United Nations flag by the defenders of the colonial regime in Congo. With indignation, we condemn the new adventurous armed acts in Laos, committed by the right-wing rebels, enjoying the armed help of the USA. The Polish working class most determinedly condemns colonialism in its classical, today already obsolete, form, as well as all types of neo-colonialism, combining the economic dependence of economically less developed countries with political dictation. We are of the same opinion as stated by Comrade Dange in his report that the times of colonialism are gone, once and for ever and that there can today no longer be any nation on earth deprived of the right of being a sovereign State.

Disarmament and a guarantee for lasting peace is the guiding line for all the countries of the powerful camp of socialism. This policy encounters the full support of all the progressive forces in the world. The Indian people also make a great contribution to the cause of peace and cooperation among nations and the attitude adopted by India in regard to many key problems of international policy gained recognition throughout the world and strengthened its authority among the peoples of the Asian continent.

Our people who are building socialism, our working class and its trade unions consider the struggle for the consolidation of peace as the most important task in their efforts to bring about the development of the productive forces and to raise the economic potential of the country. This is, after all, in the conditions of our system, free from exploitation, the only road to raise the standard of living of the community and thereby, a road leading to the deepening of the superiority of the forces of peace over the imperialist forces of war. In this peaceful competition between two different systems participate all socialist countries, including Poland, a country which, after having thrown off the yoke of exploitation of native and foreign capitalists, has entered the road of a rapid all-round development. During the twenty years of the rule of the bourgeoisie and landlords after the first world war, the production of the main industrial articles in Poland was unable to surpass the level of 1913. Today, after 15 years of the rule of the people's power, the per capita industrial production in Poland has increased eight times. This was possible due to the fact that today the working people is the master in its country. The people are working for their benefit, and this means that everyone in Poland has work and earns his bread, and also has free access to education. Side by side with the growth of production, improvement of the living conditions can also be noticed from year to year. During the last five years, real wages of workers increased by 28-29 per cent. The rapid rise in the standard of living is possible as a result of the rapid increase in the national income whose dynamic force can be best illustrated by the way it grew during the last ten years. If we accept the 1949 level of the

national income as 100, then it increased by 1959 to 226. This growth bases itself on the tremendous development of the fundamental branches of our economy. During the current year, our mining industry passed 100 million tons in the extraction of hard coal annually, while the highest coal output before the war amounted to 38 million tons. We are at present at the threshold of a new Five Year Plan which will be a plan of the fundamental technical alteration of our economy, the expansion of our raw material base and the further increase in the well-being of the population. Having in mind our demographic situation, we provide in our Plan, the proper conditions for our youth entering the labour market, by creating approximately 800,000 new work-places during the coming Five Year Plan. These are no easy problems but we are solving them successfully, because the entire working class, every working person, is personally interested in the best possible economic results of the establishment in which they work. The socialist countries not only develop their own economy at a rapid rate, but they also grant, to a much larger extent, disinterested help to less developed countries, to raise themselves from backwardness and to liberate themselves from economic dependence from foreign monopolistic capital. The cooperation between socialist countries and all other countries regardless of their political and social structure, including the cooperation between Poland and India, is proof of the economic and political relations of a new type which is taking shape, relations to which no strings are attached. I can assure you, Comrades, that our working class ardently desires a further development of this cooperation for the mutual advantage of our peoples. Love of peace, the joint efforts to consolidate the unity of the working people throughout the world, to bring about progress throughout the world, the deep consciousness of international solidarity - this is the firm foundation on which our cooperation is based.

Dear Comrades - Delegates,

Please receive our assurance that just as until now, we shall continue to watch your daily work and your achievements with cordial feelings of friendship and fraternal solidarity on the part of the working people of People's Poland. We wish you, Comrades, that the deliberations of your conference may be most fruitful and from all our heart, we wish you new successes in your struggle and hard work for the benefit of the working class of India, of the people of India, for the victory of peace throughout the world.

26th Session of the AITUC

.....
Coimbatore

.....
January 1961
.....

G r e e t i n g s

f r o m

CEYLON TRADE UNION FEDERATION

Dear Comrades,

It gives me great pleasure to convey to you and through you to the entire working class of India, fraternal greetings of the working class of Ceylon, in particular the Ceylon Trade Union Federation.

It is with great pleasure that our delegation has attended your sessions because you are our closest neighbours with whom we have had historical connections for over 2500 years. We look forward to closer relations and friendly ties with your great country and its working class movement. The working class of our two respective countries face almost similar problems. We are faced with the problems of eliminating the imperialist stranglehold over our respective economies and to build up our national economy in our respective countries within a shortest possible time, so that we can solve the common problems of hunger and unemployment and low standard of living.

Since the reactionary forces in our country were dealt a serious blow by the victory of the progressive forces in the 1956 elections, the working class and the trade union movement of our country have been able to take many strides forward because of the greater democratic and political rights available to them.

During the last four years, the trade union movement of our country has won several important wage demands for many sections of our workers.

Alarmed at the advance of the progressive forces, the forces of reaction banded themselves to attempt to turn the clock back. They did not even hesitate to assassinate the Late Prime Minister, Mr.S.W.R.D.Bandaranaike, who was a symbol of the progressive movement. But the calculations of the reactionaries misfired. The progressive forces rallied and in the elections of July 1960, brought about a united front in which were represented the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (the Party of Late Mr.S.W.R.D.Bandaranaike), the Lanka Sama Samaja Party and the Ceylon Communist Party. This inspiring unity which had the backing of the entire working class and trade union movement was able to achieve victory in the elections which enabled Mrs Bandaranaike to head the new progressive government which has the backing of the left and trade union movements.

Thus the workers of Ceylon are today carrying on their fight under favourable conditions and with greater democratic rights than in other capitalist countries. We realise today that in order to make any further advance, the unity of the working class is essential.

Recently, while celebrating our 20th Anniversary, the General Council of our Federation made specific appeals for unity and that all existing trade unions in the country must come together inside a single Joint Council while retaining

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their separate identity and autonomy. Such unity was for the purpose of fighting for economic demands. We have also appealed for a joint May Day celebration in 1961. The Ceylon Trade Union Federation has decided that the realisation of trade union unity is the most essential demand before the working class today and it has decided to exert all its energy in the coming year towards this end.

Our joy at attending your sessions is all the more greater because of our consciousness that along with us, you are members of the great international family of trade unions, the one-hundred million strong World Federation of Trade Unions. It is our hope that the coming year will see the further strengthening of the world organisation and thereby strengthen the working class fight for peace.

The working class of Ceylon has always watched with admiration the progress of the trade union movement in your sub-continent. The militant struggles that you have waged for the cause of the working people and the preservation of democratic rights have always been a source of inspiration to us.

We are aware of some problems that exist between our two countries and that they have to be settled in the near future. The organised working class is the most progressive and patriotic section of any country and it is therefore our bounden duty to see that our movements help to find a solution to these problems in the mutual interest of both countries, without allowing the vested interests to set one country against the other.

We take this opportunity of thanking your organisation for having extended an invitation to attend this historic session which was both very instructive and inspiring to us. We have also to thank you from the bottom of our hearts for the lavish hospitality that was showered on us from the moment we stepped in Coimbatore.

We greet your Congress once again and express the hope that your deliberations will lead towards the solutions of the problems that beset your country.

Long Live the friendship between the working class of Ceylon and India!

Long Live the All-India Trade Union Congress!

Long Live the World Federation of Trade Unions!

Long Live International Working Class Solidarity!

CEYLON TRADE UNION FEDERATION

A. Jayasuriya
K.A.D. Gunaratne
V. Ponnambalan

January 8, 1961

(C-9A)

R e s o l u t i o n

ON SOCIAL SECURITY

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

I. EMPLOYEES' STATE INSURANCE SCHEME:

The Study Group on Social Security appointed by the Government of India suggested in its Report made in January 1959 that some of the existing schemes of social security should be integrated and that the P.F. scheme should be converted into a pension scheme. Though welcoming some of the suggestions in principle, in view of the bitter experience of the unsatisfactory working of the ESI Scheme and the continuous refusal to concede legitimate demands of the workers, to extend the scheme to the families, to construct separate hospitals for insured workers, to reduce workers' contribution and to remove administrative defects, the AITUC at its General Council meeting in January 1960 declared its unwillingness to agree to the suggestion till confidence was restored by fulfilling these demands.

Since then restricted medical benefits to families of insured workers have been extended in a few centres in nine States out of fifteen where the Scheme has been so far implemented. This, in principle, concedes a longstanding demand of the workers but early steps must be taken to cover families in the case of all workers in the ~~cases of all workers in the remaining~~ in the remaining States also, and particularly in Maharashtra and West Bengal which together account for nearly nine lakh insured workers.

The arrangements for the treatment of families are, however, far from satisfactory and this is true of the panel system areas as well as the service system areas.

Dr. A.L. Mudaliar, the one-man commission, appointed by the Government of India to report on the working of the ESI Scheme has expressed against the extension of the scheme to families so long as suitable improvements have not been made for the treatment of insured workers themselves. This argument is weighty but the legitimate demand of workers for extension of medical benefits to families should not be held back on this plea. As a matter of fact, inclusion of families will increase the pressure for rapid improvement of the scheme.

The position with regard to provision of hospitals continues to be very unsatisfactory. Separate hospitals are being constructed in some major centres like Kanpur, Madras City, Bangalore and Bombay, while annexes or wards have been provided at Delhi, Hyderabad, Nagpur and Coimbatore. The number of beds provided is extremely inadequate. The Mudaliar Report has sharply noted this failure and has advocated priority for this work.

A major development is the attempt of the Government concerned and the Corporation to change-over from the Panel System to the Service System at a number of places. The changeover is being effected in the face of clearly expressed opposition of the workers and in gross violation of the unanimous recommendation of the Indian Labour Conference session at Nainital, that workers should be consulted as to which system they prefer.

The Mudaliar Report has made a scathing criticism of the working of the Panel System and has recommended the setting up of polyclinics, each having Panel doctors and at least two Service doctors, one of whom should be a lady doctor. This suggestion will be worth considering provided the polyclinics are equipped with X-ray plants and are combined with diagnostic centres and specialised treatment.

Workers have been demanding revision of the scale of contribution by raising the exemption limit, reducing the percentage charge and by making the actual earning instead of average earning the basis of calculation. The Mudaliar Report has recommended that deduction should be made on monthly averages on a slab system, instead of the present method of computing on weekly averages.

At present, workers are contributing more than the employers. For example, in the year ending 31.3.60, workers' share of the contribution was Rs.4.08 crores and that of the employers Rs.3.18 crores. The proposal of the Labour Ministers' Conference to enhance the employers' contribution from 1-1/4% to 3-1/2% in implemented areas has not been enforced though in principle, the Corporation has accepted it. If this is done, the decision about building hospitals and clinics can be more speedily implemented and medical and sickness benefits improved. At the same time, the genuine demand of the workers, about reduction of their share can be easily met. Of course, this is not a precondition for construction of hospitals, etc., since Rs.18 crores has already accumulated in the ESIC's Reserves.

A recommendation made by the Mudaliar Report which merits full support of the workers is regarding provision for industrial housing. The report points out that unless adequate housing facilities, with the provision for playgrounds, schools, etc., are provided, a health scheme loses much of its benefits. The suggestion is made that permission for new industrial ventures should not be given unless a satisfactory method and provision for housing for labour is also forthcoming. Besides, the dual control exercised by State Governments and the Corporation causes hindrance to the efficient working of the Scheme.

The AITUC, therefore, demands:

- 1) Immediate extension of the scheme to all registered factories, including the seasonal factories;
- ii) Immediate extension of the scheme to families of insured workers with provision for full medical benefits including hospitalisation.
- iii) Immediate construction of hospitals in all major centres and adequate reservation of beds in places where there are no ESI Hospitals.
- iv) Raising of the employers' contribution to the statutory limit of 4-3/4% in implemented areas.

v) No changeover from panel to service system or service to panel except with the prior approval of workers.

vi) Implementation of the recommendations made in the Mudaliar Report regarding provision of polyclinics and industrial housing.

vii) Waiting period of two days for payment of cash benefit should be dispensed with.

viii) Increase in the cash benefit to 75% from 50% and increase exemption limit from Re.1 per day to Rs.100 per month.

ix) The scheme should be extended to employees drawing Rs.500 per mensem instead of the present level of Rs.400.

x) Right to continued employment in cases of partial and partial-permanent disablement, as also in cases of workers who have recovered from serious and prolonged illnesses like T.B., etc.

xi) The provision for cash benefits available at present to T.B., Cancer, etc. patients, should be extended to cover cases of other prolonged malignant and chronic illnesses and of injuries received outside employment.

xii) In units where existing benefits are as good or better than those under the Scheme and workers ask for exemption, such exemption should be granted.

xiii) Adequate representation to the AITUC in the E.S.I. Corporation, Standing Committee of the Corporation, the Regional Boards and local committees under ESI; abolition of the present discrimination made against the AITUC.

The AITUC further demands that industrial employees of the Central Government should be provided with the same medical facilities and benefits as are available to non-industrial employees, as have been recommended by the Second Pay Commission.

II. PROVIDENT FUND.

The Employees' Provident Fund Scheme, as on 31st March 1960, covered 27 lakhs of workers in 45 industries.

The Employees' Provident Funds Act has recently been extended to cover all factories employing 20 or more workers as against the earlier limit of 50 or more workers, and to motor transport undertakings and mica mines, as well. This concedes in part ~~of~~ the demand of workers to bring within its purview all registered factories and transport companies.

Provision has also been made in the Act to raise the contribution to 8-1/3% instead of the previous 6-1/4%. But it has been deprived of much of its practical value by making it dependent upon the so-called "financial capacity" of each industry.

The AITUC, therefore, demands that:

i) The Employees Provident Funds Act should be extended to all registered factories, all transport undertakings, all shpps and establishments, cinemas, hospitals, hotels, etc.

ii) The rate of contribution should be compulsorily raised to 8-1/3%.

iii) Benefit should be extended to employees drawing upto Rs.1000 per mensem.

iv) No exemption to newly-established units.

v) Interest should be at 4% and in both exempted and non-exempted factories.

vi) No forfeiture of the employers' contribution in case of workers dismissed or discharged from service.

vii) Extension of the Scheme to seasonal factories and works-charged staff.

viii) ~~Simplify~~ Simplification of the procedure for granting of recoverable loans from the Provident Fund; no restriction on such loans.

ix) Adequate representation to AITUC in the Board of Trustees of the Employees Provident Fund.

III. MATERNITY BENEFITS.

The Maternity Benefit Bill 1960, now referred to the Select Committee of Parliament has some good provisions. These are: (a) The benefit period is retained at six weeks before and six weeks after confinement; (b) the cash benefit is fixed at a sum equivalent to the average daily wage or 75 nP whichever is higher; (c) in addition, a bonus of Rs.25 will be given at the time of confinement; (d) depending upon the doctor's report, full wages will be paid for one month.

The rate of cash benefits is too low and should be a minimum of Rs.2 per day. The bonus, meant as lump sum relief is also low and should be raised to at least Rs.100 and period should be reduced to 150 days.

In the Bill, the State Governments have been empowered to extend the provision of the fact to commercial establishments.

While these provisions are good, they do not go far enough. At the same time, the Act has certain retrograde features:

(a) Only those workers who are in continuous employment for 240 days in the 12 months before the date of confinement will be eligible for benefits. This qualifying period should be reduced to 150 days, as in the existing provisions of the Kerala Act.

(b) The State Governments have been empowered to exempt seasonal factories. Such exemption should not be permitted and the minimum qualifying period should be waived in the case of seasonal workers.

IV. GRATUITY.

Gratuity is a benefit to be given to the workers at the time of retirement in a lump sum for past services rendered and for the retirement period. This is quite different from other benefits like Provident Fund, which is in the nature of compulsory saving with incentive. This view has been expressed by the Madras Industrial Tribunal. The AITUC demands that a legislation should be brought fixing gratuity at the rate of one month's wages for every year of service.

V. WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION:

It is necessary to have suitable and long-overdue amendment of the Act to dispense with the waiting period of three days, enlarge the schedule of occupational diseases, simplify the procedure for establishing the disease and double the present rates of compensation.

VI. UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFIT:

There must be statutory provision for an employment relief scheme, which should be drawn up after full consultation with the workers' organisations.
