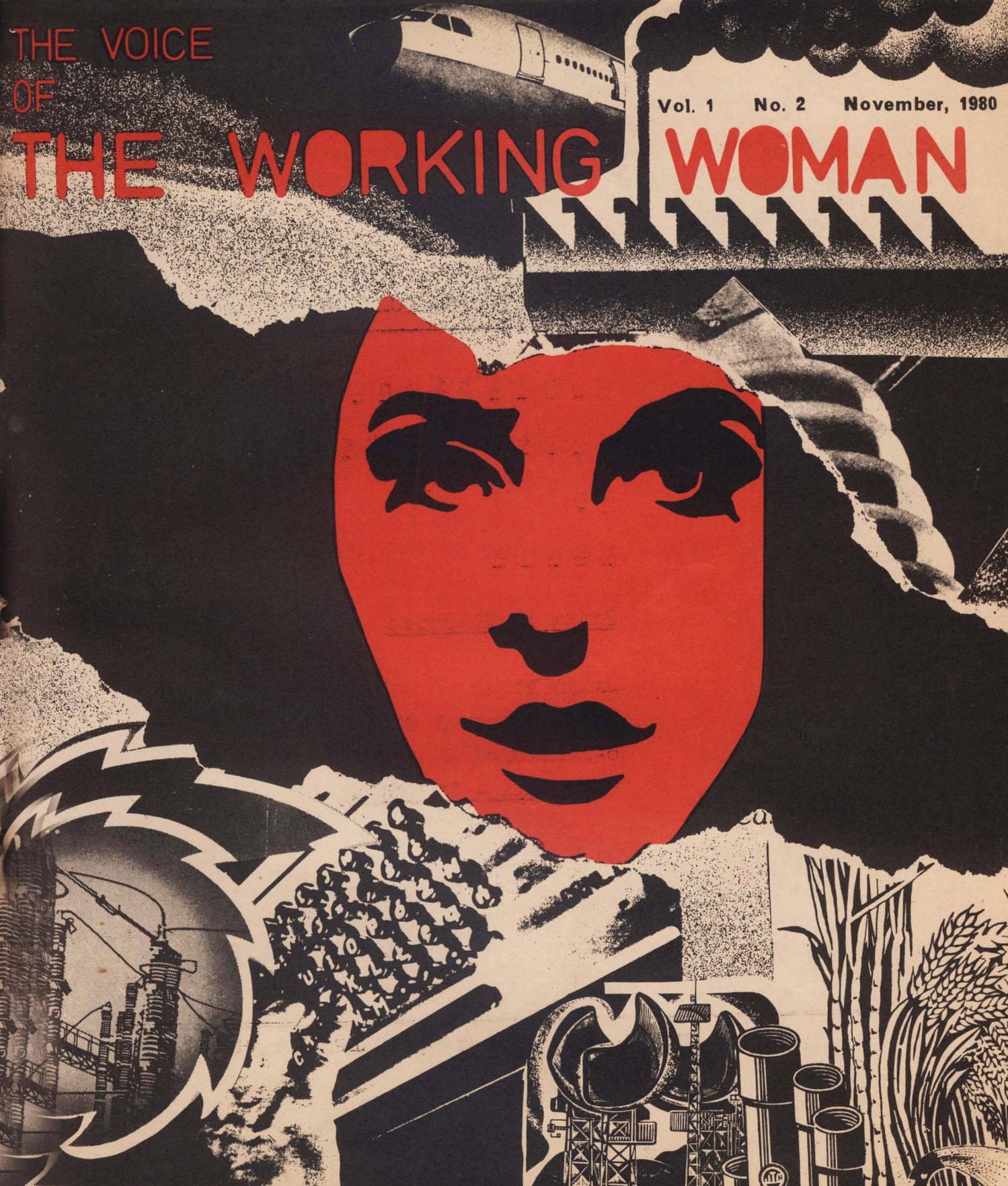


THE VOICE
OF

THE WORKING

Vol. 1 No. 2 November, 1980

WOMAN



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~~EQUAL PAY EQUAL PAY EQUAL PAY EQUAL PAY EQUAL PAY EQUAL PAY EQUAL PAY EQUAL PAY EQUAL PAY~~
~~EQUAL WORK EQUAL WORK EQUAL WORK EQUAL WORK EQUAL WORK EQUAL WORK EQUAL WORK EQUAL WORK~~

E Q U A L P A Y F O R E Q U A L W O R K

THE EQUAL REMUNERATION ACT was passed in 1976. Amongst other things the Act provides that:

- (a) no woman worker shall be paid wages at rates lower than those paid to men workers, for doing the same or similar work in the same establishment;
- (b) no discrimination should be practised against women at the time of recruitment;
- (c) an Advisory Committee should be set up to suggest to the Government different ways of increasing women's employment;
- (d) another authority should be constituted for hearing complaints and appeals arising out of non-implementation of any provisions of the Act.

The Government has made no attempt whatsoever to see the Act is enforced. On the contrary, even after ratifying the corresponding ILO Convention on Equal Remuneration, repeatedly Government Tripartite Committees, Wage Fixation Committees, Wage Tribunals, have continued recommending different rates of wages for men and women for the same work in, for instance, plantations, building construction, mines, beedi, public sector undertakings, the C.P.W.D. In like manner, the Minimum Wage Advisory Committees at the Centre and in the States continue to discriminate against women.

Differences in Wage-Rates

The differences between male and female wage rate varies from industry to industry, and State to State. In the plantations, differences range from 18 paise to Re.1.58 per day; in mines, women receive Rs.12.70 per day against Rs.13.29 for male workers. In the beedi industry women get between Rs.2 to Rs .3 less than men for every 1,000 beedies rolled. Similarly, in agricultural operations, the daily wage for women comes to Rs.3.50 to Rs.5 per day, whereas the men draw Rs.6 to Rs.7 a day. And as we point out elsewhere in this issue, more and more of the agricultural work is now being carried on by women.

Flouting the Act

Employers have found various ways of flouting the Act, and depriving women of their legitimate wage. In railways, for example, where prior to 1976, the difference in wage was 25 paise per day, the Equal Wage Notification was used as an excuse to retrench all the women mazdoor employees in the Vijayawada Division of the South Central Railways. In plantations, the workload for women workers was arbitrarily increased on grounds that women should now work more for the higher wage. In beedis, largely an unorganised industry, not only do employers continue to pay the lower wage, the women are further cheated. A sizeable proportion of their rolled beedies are regularly rejected as inferior, for which they are paid nothing, whilst these same 'rejected' beedies are sold at market price.

In periodic conferences held in Delhi, the Union Labour Ministry always deplores the situation in respect of implementation of the Equal Remuneration Act, but never owns up to its own responsibility for this state of affairs and, of course, never

seriously suggests any measures to ensure employers' compliance with the law, even in Government undertakings.

Trade Union Intervention

There is no doubt that where women are organised in their unions, and the trade union movement is comparatively strong and takes up this issue, the degree of discrimination in the matter of pay is less. However, in general, this issue has not received the attention it merits, by the trade union movement. Overcoming this weakness is not only in the interest of working women - fighting for and achieving equal pay for equal work for women will both broaden the base of the trade union movement, and give it added strength.

All women wherever they work, must press their unions to demand:

- (a) plugging of all loopholes in the Act;
- (b) compulsory punishment for violation of the Act, and
- (c) association of workers in the enforcement machinery.

Equally, we appeal to all Central Trade Unions to unitedly pursue these demands.

Susheela Gopalan, M.P. and
member of the All-India Co-
ordination Committee of
Working Women, has been appoin-
ted on the CENTRAL ADVISORY
BOARD FOR CHILD LABOUR

Ahilya Rangnekar member of
the All-India Coordination
Committee of Working Women
has been appointed on the
CENTRAL ADVISORY BOARD FOR
EQUAL REMUNERATION.

K O Z H I K O D E
D I S T R I C T
K E R A L A

ANTI-PRICE RISE
TRANSPORT
HOSTELS

THE COORDINATION COMMITTEE has taken up a number of issues concerning women in this district of Kerala.

- Hundreds of women rallied to a protest meeting jointly organised by different women's and students' organisations, On September 22, to protest against the SHARPLY INCREASING PRICES of essential articles.
- The agitation for BETTER TRANSPORT FACILITIES in peak hours, exclusively for women, has resulted in permits being sanctioned for running extra buses on two of the three 'heavy' routes and conversion of one of the buses already running on the third route into a Ladies Special.
- On the demand for CRECHES, one creche has been secured on the premises of the NGO quarters, which is running satisfactorily. It has a full complement of 20 babies, one teacher and one ayah. The demand is for three more such creches in Calicut.
- Lack of proper residential and HOSTEL ACCOMMODATION is particularly acute for ladies - only some privately-run hostels are there in Calicut. The Committee is pressing for immediate construction on the plot acquired by Government for this purpose.
- Placement and transfer of P & T TRAINEES. Women trainees are protesting their placement after training, to the more remote posts in the Wynad (hill) areas. No adequate hostel facilities or protection for the women are available. For example, in one hostel run by a convent in Sultan Battery, five inmates have to share two beds, and one girl was even forced to share the post-

K A N P U R

CONTRACT LABOUR

K A N G A R

CONTRACT LABOUR

M A H I L A

CONTRACT LABOUR

S A M I T I

CONTRACT LABOUR

EMPLOYED AS CONTRACT LABOUR in the textile mills in Kanpur, women textile workers are finding it increasingly difficult to fight retrenchment or the low wages they receive. The New Victoria Mills is a typical case. After the onset of the monsoon, when the mills went back to normal functioning, the women workers demanded an increase in their daily wage to Rs.8/- while this was agreed to by the Chairman of the National Textile Corporation which runs the mill, it was refused by the contractor. After waiting eight hours at the mill gate in torrential rain, they gheraod the mill manager and faced a lathi charge by the security guard. The women have been barred entry into the mill and now are replaced by young boy workers. The Labour Department and Minister refuse to intervene.

In the Swadeshi Mills also contract labourers have been fighting a struggle for the last four months. Even in the Cawnpore Textile Mills, despite the three month dharna reported in our last bulletin, and assurances by the Labour Commissioner and Mill management, while the women workers were reinstated, they had to go back without getting redressal of any of the demands such as weekly holidays, ESI and other health provisions, Provident Fund, etc.

JUTE WORKERS CONFERENCE

The All-India Jute Workers' Conference was held in Kanpur on Sept. 28 and 29, to form the All-India Jute workers Federation. It is a matter of pride for us that Dr Lakshmi Sehgal, President of the Kamgar Mahila Samiti, was elected President of the newly-formed Federation, the first time in the history of the trade union movement that a woman leads an All-India trade union federation.

The Kamgar Mahila Samiti played an active part in the preparations for the conference, in the collection of funds and as volunteers during the conference. It is significant to note that hardly any women workers remain in the Kanpur jute textile industry - from 1500 in 1947, there remain only 8 today, and they too are due to retire shortly. Thus, their ousting from the industry has been total.

The victimised women workers of the Victoria Mills gave a reception to the two women fraternal delegates from the USSR, Maria Nevzgodina, Secretary, Central Committee, Textile and Light Industry, and Nina Bondar, interpreter. The workers listened with interest and envy to the report of the conditions of women workers in the USSR, who form 70% of the textile labour there.

* * * * *

NEW

NEW HOPE FOR

NEW HOPE FOR THE WOMEN

NEW HOPE FOR THE WOMEN OF TRIPURA

TRIPURA IS A VERY SMALL, extremely backward State, with no industry, not even a railway. Women, a large number of them tribals, work mainly in the big tea and rubber plantations, construction work, where for the first time, equal wages are being enforced by the Left Front Government - Rs.4 per day for male and female labour in the tea gardens, and Rs.7/day minimum wage in agriculture and in the Food-for-Work-Programme.

CRAFT TRAINING CENTRES

To raise earning capacity, craft-training centres have been set up in each sub-division, to impart training in weaving, cane and bamboo work, and tailoring to needy women. Two new children's homes at Agartala, and nine homes in nine sub-divisions, together with six hundred new balwadis (children's centres) throughout the State, give employment to over twelve hundred women. In addition the numerous adult literacy centres have been started all over the State. The reconstituted State Social Welfare Advisory Board has extended its work to cover remote places of the hill areas, for the first time. It has funded five new creches in different tea gardens run by the Bamutia Samaj Kalyan Mahila Pratisthan, as well as Balwadi centres which have increased in number from 64 before 1978 to 185 today. Full responsibility for administering these activities is shouldered by the women.

Maternity services have been extended to reach women in distant rural areas, and fifteen new social welfare centres have been opened in the border areas.

FOR THE DESTITUTE AND DESERTED

For the upliftment of the destitute and deserted women of society, different agro--or industry-based economic programmes have been started for them, along with the opening of seven schools where 200 adult destitute women receive education upto high school level.

NEW AND EXCITING HOPE has dawned for the women of Tripura, and they are reaching out to grasp it.

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~~ANDHRA BANDH ANDHRA BANDH ANDHRA BANDH ANDHRA BANDH ANDHRA BANDH ANDHRA~~

.... continued from page 5

Similarly, in Palakal and Elura of West Godavari District, women members went round in groups asking the shops and offices which had remained open, to close their doors.

Thus the contribution of women in making the bandh a success, marked a major step in the women's movement in Andhra.

* * * * *

RISE TO FIGHT
WORKERS RISE TO FIGHT
WOMEN WORKERS RISE TO FIGHT
YOUNG WOMEN WORKERS RISE TO FIGHT

FOR OVER TWO AND A HALF MONTHS now a struggle has been waged by twenty young women workers of the Hindustan Computers Limited - a company jointly owned by a U.P. Government undertaking, the U.P. Electronics Corporation, and a private firm, Microcomb - employing 400 workers, mainly women. The twenty women and their one male colleague, were dismissed from the Delhi unit of the company when it was arbitrarily closed down and the work transferred to the Microcomb plant in Gurgaon (Haryana). Originally there was only one HCL factory located at NOIDA, Ghaziabad, but after a militant and successful 30 day strike in July 1979, against suspension of the Union secretary, and for bonus and house rent allowance, the plant was divided up into three units. Eight male union members were transferred to a small workshop in Okhla, and twenty, among them the most militant women workers, were transferred to Greater Kailash, New Delhi. These women workers are all educated, skilled and trained operators in the highly delicate work of assembling calculators. After dismissal, they were asked to make fresh applications for jobs at Gurgaon. The workers refused to accept transfer to a unit 30 Km. from their homes, when re-employment was not guaranteed, nor that their skills would be needed and utilised, nor that their past services would be recognised. Even earlier, after a pay of just Rs.175/- per month consolidated during training, as confirmed workers they received a pittance of only Rs.200 (basic) plus a production incentive of Rs.70/- - a device to get more work from them, at

the same time avoid paying a minimum wage and, after the July strike, Rs.50 house rent allowance, plus bonus. Overtime, often demanded of them, was always unpaid. Instead, the workers decided on an indefinite dharna, demanding re-opening of their unit, reinstatement of all workers, fixation of a minimum wage, opening of a creche, and maternity leave facilities. Despite goondas sent against them by the management, and attempts to prevent their dharna through court orders, these young workers have come daily to sit on dharna since the unit was closed on July 28.

NEIGHBOURHOOD HOSTILITY

These girls have also had to fight on another front. Most of them come from families where female members are working outside their homes for the first time. While the extra income is welcomed, and often crucial, any indications of greater independence or participation in trade union struggle is not. Nevertheless, these girls have faced this hostility from family and neighbours and given a rebuff to the management when they used this to try to bring pressure on them.

SOLIDARITY ACTIONS

In their struggle these women have received splendid support from their union and the workers, particularly the women of the other units. Their case has also been taken up by the Delhi Co-Ordination Committee, in the form of demonstrations organised by the union, the Delhi Co-ordination Committee, the Delhi Janwadi Mahila and the Delhi CITU and a delegation to the Managing Director. The Union office-bearers at the Okhla unit have been suspended, along with two leading women workers at NOIDA

The steadfastness and determination of these young women workers has ultimately achieved success in as much as the Labour Commissioner, before whom the matter went, has ruled that the unit was illegally closed, retrenching the workers. Orders are to be passed for re-opening of the unit and reinstatement of all workers, barring five of the leaders, against whom dismissal notices are pending. What the HCL management will in fact do, has yet to be seen.

WHO ARE THESE YOUNG FIGHTERS?

MADHU "I am the major earning member of my family. My mother has now started to work, but earns only Rs.150 per month. My brother is a printer. My elder sister is married and she too works at the HCL unit at NOIDA, and though she says that my participation in the struggle may affect her job, she also knows that I have to fight to defend my job. Everyday when I leave my house to come to our dharna, the neighbours taunt me. Sometimes it really upsets me."

PRAKASH "When my father died I was working at the NOIDA unit. Though a message was sent to the factory, I received the message only at the end of the day. We live in Old Delhi and have sublet two rooms, but we do not get the rent regularly. The neighbours are a problem, so I cannot tell them that I am active in union activities. My mother always encourages me, and I, too, am determined to fight against the management."

MAYA "My father is a government employee. My income is important for my family. I am engaged to be married to a Government employee: he is a stenographer. The fact that I earn is important for his family also. My father is anti-management and that helps a lot. At the calculator unit we used to work very hard: we did not sit idle for a minute. Sometimes we assembled 20-25 calculators a day. Therefore it makes me angry to think that after having made too much profit, we are thrown out of work so callously by the management. The laws are all in favour of the capitalists. I am proud to be an experienced person in our union activities."

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air hostesses
challenge
marriage bar

A SECOND BATCH OF 50 air hostesses of the Indian Airlines moved the Supreme Court on October 9, to challenge the service rules which restrict their right to marry, and provide for compulsory retirement at the age of 30.

With the Court's admission of this new batch of writ petitions (a report of the first appeal to the Supreme Court was published in our last Bulletin), nearly 20 per cent of the 400 air hostesses in the air line have been granted stay of the service rule regarding age of retirement, including the Chief Air Hostess, Miss La Touche.

/ / / / / / / / and now doctors

TEMPORARY JUNIOR LADY DOCTORS in the Government-run medical institutions and hospitals of Delhi, are not only placed in the same category as ward attendants - Class III - but are also being subjected to the indignity of a six-monthly pregnancy test. Those found pregnant are asked either to quit or undergo abortion. The Medical Superintendent of Lady Hardinge Hospital for Women has admitted to the dismissal of doctors on this account.

By what right does any one - man or woman - decide that if a woman works, she cannot also be a mother, that she must be subjected to the indignities of such an investigation. Such a policy against the dignity and rights of women, that makes conceiving a child a crime, must be condemned by all.

kerala

C O N F E R E N C E

September, 1980

N.G.O.

A CONFERENCE OF WOMEN NGO'S was held in Calicut, on September 13, 1980. Organised by the Kerala NGO's Union, which since 1975, has had its women's wing at the State, district and taluka level, the conference was attended by 1038 delegates, and 300 fraternal women delegates from other T.U. and the Mahila Federation Central Government employees and the Kerala Mahila Federation.

The Conference was inaugurated by Vimal Ranadive, Secretary of the All India Co-ordination Committee of Working Women, and addressed among others, by the General Secretary of the Kerala NGO Union and Smt.K.R. Gouri, Minister for Agriculture and Social Welfare of Kerala.

CHARTER OF DEMANDS

Charter of Demands was debated concerning demands on separate facilities for the women in their work places, women's hostels, provision of proper housing facilities, increased facilities for maternity leave. In short, the facilities for fulfilling the obligations of motherhood and to the family as well as the duties and responsibilities in their work should be incorporated as part of service regulations. Special emphasis was laid on the plight of women employees in rural areas, in the health services in particular, and better conditions and adequate protection demanded for them. Discrimination of all kinds against women must be stopped, especially in terms of employment and pay. A colourful and militant demonstration was held at the end of the Conference.

BREADMAKERS and THE BREADWINNERS
 MAKERS S L o s e r s
 MAKERS L o s e r s

ON THE BASIS OF DIFFERENT INVESTIGATIONS the International Labour Office (ILO) has come to the conclusion that "women and girls are about half the world's population but do two-thirds of the world's working hours".

Cooking, washing, shopping, cleaning, sewing, mending, looking after the old and bringing up the young, a women's work is as tiring as a man's. In addition, a growing number of today's women also have an outside job. "This dual responsibility for home and job places an immense physical and emotional burden on women", resulting in one of the most ignored health problems in the world today - millions upon millions of women suffering from chronic exhaustion.

In Europe and North America, 40 per cent of the paid labour force is made up of women. But it is the shoulders of the 1600 million women in the underdeveloped Third World that the incomparably greater and heaviest burden of the 'double job' falls. Their work-day commonly begins at 4.30 or 5 in the morning and goes on till anything upto 8 and 9 at night, as they struggle to meet the basic needs of their families.

In these largely agricultural countries, it is women who do most of the agricultural work, 50 per cent at least, of all food production, and in the African continent 60 to 80 per cent of all the agricultural work, plus 50 per cent of all the work of looking after the animals, and 100 per cent of the food processing. In Tanzania, the word 'to marry', literally means 'the man gets a hoe'.

1234567890 ABCDEFGHIJ +*=()_ 1234 ABCDEFG
 oooooooooo ooooooooo

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. PUNCH OPERATOR
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THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA, in the Ministries of Defence, Labour Home, etc., employ a number of punch operators, of whom a significant proportion are women. They train for this technical job at their own expense, and the only promotional avenue for them is a supervisory post. These punch operators are now in category B, whilst LDC's and UDC's and senior computer workers are category A. The promotional posts normally go to category A. Any vocal person in category B, who may raise work problems is denied legitimate benefits and promotions.

THE QUOTA SYSTEM - 80 COLUMNS

Punch operators work on a quota system: 4-5 hours of intensive and concentrated work, without lifting head or hands, can give about 450 cards depending on the number of columns to be punched. The highest number of columns is 80, the average number punched is about 40. Obviously, the output will vary according to the number of columns. The officers, however, demand the maximum output of 500, even though Defence Ministry projects require punching of 80 columns in a card.

The nature of technical work is such that it causes extreme mental and physical fatigue. After punching the day's quota, punch operators feel so exhausted that they are unable to handle home and family tasks. Every two weeks they take casual leave to have a break from this monotonous and taxing work.

HIGH FATIGUE AND SERIOUS DANGERS

Even basic working facilities like maintenance of machines, insulation of high voltage wires, protective covering on floors, proper lighting (since numbers are in very fine print) and colling systems, are not provided. When there is pressure of work even unfit machines are used, causing serious dangers due to electric shocks, for which no compensation, or even leave, is sanctioned. Women are even pressurised into working overtime to complete rush jobs, and since the fatigue factor is so high, they prefer to take casual leave or medical leave than do overtime. After a lifetime of such work they will get only a small pension, since their whole working life is spent in that one grade - punch operator.

Now these women are wanting to organise and fight this exploitation, and have come to the Delhi Co-ordination Committee to give them support.

WHAT GOVERNMENT'S LABOUR BUREAU SAYS:

"The cost of providing extra welfare amenities like creche, maternity benefits, toilet and other welfare provisions to women workers was found to be very low and formed 0.02 to 1.80 per cent of the total wage bill. However, most of the employers were reluctant to incur even this small expenditure unless they were convinced about usefulness of women workers." -

Quoted in "Conditions of Women Workers in Mines"

(See advertisement on second cover page).

 * F O U R T H M E E T I N G *
 * ALL INDIA COORDINATION COMMITTEE *
 * JAIPUR - AUGUST 9-10 *

ATTENDING THE FOURTH MEETING of the All India Coordination Committee, were representatives from Maharashtra, Tamilnadu, Kerala, Bhilai, Rajasthan and Delhi. Members from Andhra, Karnataka, Gujarat, West Bengal and Kanpur, were unable to attend. The Secretary, Vimal Ranadive, had unfortunately met with an accident, and was also unable to come. Susheela Gopalan chaired the meeting.

REPORTS FROM STATES

Reports from the States showed that wherever Co-ordination Committees have been set up, they have found a good response. It is common experience that there are long-standing problems which need to be tackled, and women have shown themselves prepared to back up any initiative we take in helping them to raise their demands. The issues range from the economic demands concerning conditions of employment, against the contract labour system to questions of transportation, working facilities, dowry, rape and atrocities against women, trade union rights and civil liberties, against high prices and inflation. In Kerala and Tamilnadu, it was found that through the Co-ordination Committee it has been possible to reach and activise new sections of working women, which in turn, is strengthening both the trade unions and the women's organisations in these States.

LIVELY DISCUSSION ON AGENDA TOPICS

Subsequent discussion, lively and instructive, centred on: the bulletin, the organisational position of the Coordination Committees, the issues pertaining to Protective Legislation, on the growing atrocities against women, and greater representation of women on T.U. committees.

Whilst welcoming the first issue of the bulletin, 'WORKING WOMEN', it was felt that with a little more effort, the sales could be increased so that the bulletin can be printed instead of cyclostyled as at present.

On the ORGANISATIONAL QUESTION the co-ordinating character of the working women's committees, which should be as representative and broadbased as possible, was stressed by Susheela Gopalan and Ahilya Rangnekar. Their main function is to encourage and initiate the activities of working women within their own unions and associations. There can be no question of any separate working women's organisation, but only the fullest co-operation with the strengthening of existing trade union, women's and other organisations. The working woman must be encouraged to become active on her particular demands as a woman worker, as well as participate in the struggle for general democratic demands affecting all women and all workers.

Initiating the discussion on PROTECTIVE LEGISLATION, Susheela Gopalan highlighted three points: i) how government and the private sector were using such legislation to retrench women workers, ii) the need to win over unions where there may exist a hostile or contrary attitude towards such protection for women, and iii) the need to explain to, and win over, those working women who, out of economic necessity, may be agreeable

to the violation of the legislation, e.g. in the case of night work. It was decided that detailed information must be gathered on the extent and coverage of all protective legislation, and the degree of its implementation state-wise, paying special attention to the very large numbers of small scale units in the unorganised sector.

On the question of ATROCITIES, the effectiveness and usefulness of protests was pointed out, as for example, in the acceptance of amending the Dowry Bill, which will come in the next session of Parliament. Pointed attention was drawn to the responsibility of women's organisations to help in the social acceptance into society of the victims of atrocities, as well as demanding that Government accept the responsibility for their rehabilitation.

WOMEN'S REPRESENTATION IN T.U.COMMITTEES.

Lastly, the meeting, reiterating the importance of women's representation in trade union committees at all levels, decided that an appeal should be made from the All India Co-ordination Committee to all central T.U.'s and Federations, urging them to seriously pursue this matter. Simultaneously, special committees should be set up within unions, to take care of the specific problems of their women workers.

Resolutions were adopted on 1) Price-rise, 2) Implementation of Equal Remuneration, 3) Growing Unemployment among women, and 4)

Atrocities on Women.

TREMENDOUS POSSIBILITIES FOR RAPID EXPANSION

Summing up, Susheela Gopalan emphasised that, with greater coordination at the all-India level, and proper attention by the State Committees to the work at the district level, there are tremendous possibilities for rapid expansion and popularisation of our work.

oppression and torture

DOWRY DEATHS

-15-
In 1978 209 dowry deaths, or women dying under suspicious circumstances occurred in Delhi. But in only nine cases were challans filed in court. Only one conviction took place. In 1977, there were 2,917 dowry death cases in the country. In more than 80 per cent cases, challans had not been filed in the Court.

PRESSMAN'S WIFE RAPED AND KILLED

Naba Kishore Mahapatra is the Correspondent in the Biridi Block in Cuttack District of Orissa, of the Oriya daily Pragativadi, published from Bhubaneswar. He reported the black marketing in cement by a business man of Biridi, and also the misuse of the Block Office jeep by local Congress (I) leaders for party purposes. Mahapatra's wife, Chabbirani (aged 24) has been made to pay for this, with her life, after being raped.

WOMEN VICTIMS OF SUPERSTITION

Scores of women are killed every year in rural Madhya Pradesh on suspicion of practising so-called witchcraft. Hundreds of others, most of them Harijans and Adivasis, are beaten up, maimed and humiliated because they are held responsible for all types of calamities, ailments, deaths, epidemics, loss of cattle or property, and other troubles. In a particularly gruesome incident last month, the Rajnandgaon police arrested the father, uncle, cousin and close relatives of a Congress (I) legislator for torturing two women. The women were mercilessly beaten up and paraded naked - all because they were held responsible for the illness of the newpew and grandmother of the legislator. Both were reported to be suffering from jaundice.

RAPED, BLINDED, MUTILATED - AT 15 YEARS

A 15-year-old Harijan girl was raped, made blind and one of her breasts chopped off in village Khanpur Guraila in Lakhimpur Kheri district (U.P) on September 28 last. This startling revelation was made in the Vidhan Sabha today by Mr. Pradeep Kumar Yadav, leader of the Janata (S) Group who said that the condition of the girl was very serious in the hospital and the police had not made any arrests so far.

M A D R A S special transport
C I T Y facilities for
women commuters

THE SUBURBAN TRAIN FACILITIES for commuters in metropolitan cities are extremely inadequate. For the women commuters, hundreds of whom travel daily in cities like Bombay and Madras, the ordeal is worse. More burdensome than the actual physical wear and tear is the tension and mental exhaustion, the indignity of having to fight like animals, just to get in and get out, that makes travelling a daily ordeal.

The Co-ordination Committee of Madras City took up this issue in March 1980. Repeated letters and delegations proving ineffective, a dharna was ultimately organised before the office of the Southern Railway General Manager, on July 2, 1980. Nearly a hundred women from the P & T, Railways, State and Central Government employees, Banks and private establishments participated. A delegation presented a memorandum to the General Manager.

The demands have finally been conceded. Additional reserved compartments have been provided, for two hours in the morning and two and a half hour in the evening, together with the additional facilities of fans, lights, strapholders, etc.

* Issued by the All India Co-ordination *
* Committee of Working Women, (C.I.T.U.), *
* 6-Talkatora Road, New Delhi - 110001. *
