

## IS ORGANIZED LABOUR EXPLOITING OR EXPLOITED?

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1.0 PROFESSOR DANDEKAR'S "Nature of class conflict in the Indian Society" is highly provoking. The main thesis of the paper is that class conflict exists between organized labour plus capitalists on the one hand and the unorganized sector on the other and that the former are exploiting the latter. Though mercifully capitalists are included in the exploiting category the tenor of the paper is that the main villain is the organized working class. Prof. Dandekar is one with Marx in seeing the main problem as a conflict between two main classes of the society, the solution for which is overthrowing of the minority class by the majority class. The organized working force which is the vanguard for revolution for Marx is the main enemy for Prof. Dandekar. This is all the difference between Prof. Dandekar and Marx. Had Prof. Dandekar's modesty not stopped him he would have perhaps given a slogan "Disunite the workers".

2.0 All those who oppose exploitation should subscribe to the above slogan if the fact of the matter is that the organized working class is exploiting the unorganized sections, under the veil of class struggle. Prof. Dandekar nowhere defines what he means by exploitation and more surprisingly he does not adduce any evidence to show that the organized sector is exploiting. We propose to examine the available data on movement in the real wages of various sections of the organized working force to verify whether the organized sector is exploiting.

### 3.0 *Real wages of factory workers: 1939-64*

The movement of the real wages of the factory workers earning less than Rs. 200 p.m. from 1939 to 64 is given in Table 1. The index of real earning with base 1939 = 100 has fallen to 92 in 1951. The period 1939 to 51 shows a considerable erosion in the real wages of the workers. With 1951 as the base the index of real earnings increases to 124 in 1955 and then moves around 115 till 1963 and shows a further fall to 105 in 1964. Summing up the movement of wages of this period the National Labour Commission concludes "Thus during 1951-64 real wages have shown little improvement while in 1964 there has been a substantial decline" and adds in a footnote "Provisional data

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