

# The Indian National Congress Policy Towards the Working Class Struggle in India, 1918-1927

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The broad spectrum of the Congress policy towards working class movement comprised three strands of thought. Sharing the same ideological orientation, these strands differed from one another in terms of tactics for handling the labour. They believed in restraining the workers' movement from growing militant and to keep it under the Congress control. **Congress and Labour 1918** - But this period was dominated by Gandhian ideology. An isolated incident like the formation of the Madras Labour Union, under B.P. Wadia in 1918, was away from the mainstream, though this was the first effort to formally organize the workers under a modern trade union. However, being a liberal constitutionalist who sincerely believed in the British sense of "justice" Wadia could not lead the workers on an independent path of struggle. The same year the workers of Ahmedabad Textile Mills went on strike. The reason of the strike was that the 'plague bonus' was being withdrawn by the millowners after the end of the war and the epidemic. The latter were offering a 20 per cent wage increase, whereas the workers wanted the increase to be 50 per cent to neutralize the hardship of price rise.