

IT'S ORDINANCE RAJ AGAIN

People in our country are groaning under the impact of all encompassing capitalist crisis and ruthless exploitation, their sufferings and problems in every sphere of life are multiplying day by day in such gigantic proportions that people's endurance has reached a breaking point. In such a situation we find ordinances gallore throughout India. Some time back the Centre invested the President with the power to promulgate ordinances without having to obtain the sanction of Parliament, whereupon the President promulgated the Disturbed Areas Act Ordinance empowering the Centre to declare any area as 'disturbed area' in a State. By virtue of this ordinance the Centre imposed the Disturbed Areas Act in Assam though recently withdrew the same. Enforcing the Assam Disturbed Areas Act and Forces (Special Powers) Act in Tripura the CPI-(M) led Government of Tripura took the lead among the States to introduce preventive detention appealing to the Centre to empower it to introduce preventive detention with a detention period of two years—which the Centre fixed at 6 months. And in this connexion the Tripura Government set up summary tribunals, by-passing the law courts for the trial of the thus detained persons. One by one the other States followed the footsteps of the CPI (M) led Tripura Government. Similar ordinances, all with preventive detention measures were promulgated in U. P., Gujarat, Maharashtra, M. P. and Jammu and Kashmir. All these ordinances were imposed with the avowed aim to contain communal riots

and bring black marketeers and profiteers to book. Though at a Press Conference when the Chief Secretary of Jammu and Kashmir Government was asked why such an anti-communal ordinance had been introduced when by and large the State was free from communal incidents, he said: "it is time to lighten our own set up to meet any challenge in future". (Statesman 24.8.80). Voicing equal sentiments other States have already made known their intention to introduce preventive detention ordinances such as for example Karnataka and Bihar. A whole spate of ordinances throughout India have come and still are coming into force. Whatever the pretexts for introducing these ordinances and their technical details they all have one thing in

Disturbed Areas (Special Courts) Act to empower the Centre not only to declare any area in a State affected by 'communal or cast conflicts' as a disturbed area but to set up special courts for the speedy trial of offenders. But who are the real offenders and are they brought to book? The formation of groups and coteries among police and administration under direct patronage of the ruling parties and the involvement of the police and administration themselves in communal and cast riots and conflicts is steadily on the increase. Who does not know how communal and cast riots have become contrived affairs, nowadays, how they are engineered by the bourgeois parties with the help of police and administration and parochial forces? Mora-

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common: Any person can be arrested on mere suspicion and may be detained for 6 months. In the name of speedy disposal of cases the governments are empowered to set up Tribunal to by-pass law courts and a person will thus be denied the right to defense—a complete denial of civil rights and liberties. This increasing tendency to vest the bureaucracy and administration with more and more autocratic power at the cost of democratic rights and civil liberties is even more glaringly illustrated by the Centre's recent decision to assume unprecedented autocratic power by amending the

dabad is one such recent glaring and tragic example how these incidents are instigated as we have shown in our last issue. Many reports have appeared in the press which confirm the direct instigation and involvement of police and administration in Moradabad.

In reality against whom are these autocratic measures applied? People have learnt by bitter experience how it is applied against political opponents, against the toiling people participating in democratic movements and trade union workers organising legiti-

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Resist the Black Ordinance

—Comrade Nihar Mukherjee's Call

Calcutta, 23rd September '80:

Comrade Nihar Mukherjee, General Secretary of the SUCI, has issued the following statement:

"The Central Government's Ordinance in the name of National Security, aiming to detain any person without trial for a period of 12 months, is a matter of grave concern for all democratic minded people of the country, because it has been the people's experience in the past that similar ordinances or Acts, on whatsoever plea, have been invariably used against the opposition parties and participants in the democratic movements. Our party has consistently upheld the principle that no person should be detained without trial and we strongly condemn the ordinance promulgated by the Central Government.

"It has to be noted that as the crisis of the ruling capitalist class is accentuating more and more, the class is not only shifting the entire burden of its crisis on to the shoulder of the common people, it is arming itself more and more with anti-democratic draconian powers, as in this case. It exposes the design of the ruling bourgeoisie to crush the people's movements on legitimate demands against the ruling class's onslaughts.

"The Central Government's further move, in consensus with State Governments, to arm itself with powers to ban strike in any industry is another step in the same direction designed to snatch away the hard won democratic rights of the working class.

"We appeal to all democratic minded people and the Left and Democratic parties of the country to come forward to voice their protest and resist unitedly these anti-people, anti-democratic moves of the Central Government."

Rush help to Flood Victims

Comrade Nihar Mukherjee
demands relief work
to be taken on war footing

Calcutta, 22nd September '80:

Expressing his grave concern at the devastating flood situation in Orissa and Andhra Pradesh, Com. Nihar Mukherjee, General Secretary, SUCI sent the following urgent wire to the Prime Minister, Sm. Indira Gandhi:

(Contd. to page 7)

ON TO DELHI

PEOPLE'S DEPUTATION TO PRIME MINISTER

ON 4TH NOVEMBER

JOIN IN THOUSANDS

Those who disrupt most call others 'disruptors'

On July 28 last, Sri Biswanath Mukherjee, Secretary, West Bengal State Council of the CPI, addressed letters to the CPI(M) and other constituents of the 'Left Front' and the SUCI proposing that a one-day Bandh be organised in West Bengal under the auspices of the left parties of the state in protest against galloping prices and inaction of the Central Government in the matter. In reply, Comrade Sukomal Das Gupta, West Bengal State Secretary of SUCI, in his letter of 2nd August stated that the SUCI was always ready to discuss with left parties the urgent necessity of building up mass movements against price rise and other burning problems; in fact, the SUCI had been appealing again and again to the left parties for this, but in vain; in such a situation, the Central Committee of the SUCI had already taken a decision to launch an all-India movement against high prices, taxation policy, anti-people language policy, anti-democratic Acts and measures and such other policies pursued by the Central and the different state Governments.

But unfortunately, the CPI(M) and another constituent of the ruling 'Left Front' in the state, the Forward Bloc, did not react in a manner conducive to joint movements. The CPI(M) leader, Sri Saroj Mukherjee, told reporters in Calcutta on 28.8.80 "that it was the 'standing decision' of both his party and the 'Left Front' not to participate in any joint movement with the SUCI. He said this decision had been taken because of 'our long experience about the disruptive role of the SUCI.'" (Statesman, 3.8.80). Again, while briefing the press after the 'Left Front' Committee's meeting on 6.8.80, "Mr. Saroj Mukherjee made it clear that the 'Left Front' would not accept the Socialist Unity Centre as an associate in its movement against the price rise. He said that past experience had shown that the SUCI was the 'most disruptive force in West Bengal'" (Statesman, 7.8.80). Further, recent press reports on the prospect of joint left move for the coming municipal and civic elections in West Bengal show that the CPI(M) has ruled out any alliance with the SUCI.

Sri Ashoke Ghosh, the Forward Bloc leader, said in Calcutta on 4th August after a meeting between Forward Bloc and CPI

leaders in Calcutta "that from past experience inside and outside the legislature it was clear that the SUCI opposed unity of left parties and did not honour any code of conduct necessary for organising a joint movement. It was, therefore, not possible to respond to the CPI's appeal for a joint struggle with the SUCI." (Statesman 5.8.80)

Some issues have thus been raised which need to be discussed. We are confident that anybody who has some knowledge of affairs in West Bengal or has followed the course of events in this state will give no credence to statements that the SUCI is a 'disruptive force' or does not follow any code of conduct. However, we like to say a few words just to set the record straight. We do not want to burden this discussion by citing numerous examples, but let us take up just one or two instances and see what the actual events were, who was the disruptive force and who did not follow code of conduct in the left movement in West Bengal.

The spectacle of the Forward Bloc raising an accusing finger at the SUCI for non-adherence to code of conduct is wondrous indeed! We do not want to go into the numerous instances of violations of code of con-

duct, norms and even the minimum political ethics by the Forward Bloc. Let us recall just one instance. When the second U. F. Ministry in West Bengal fell in 1970 as a result of the sectarian policy of the CPI(M) of murderous assaults on the fraternal constituent parties of the Front, there were all indications that the CPI and the Forward Bloc would veer towards the Congress in a political realignment. In order to resist this and to keep such parties arrested within the ambit of left politics, the SUCI took initiative to form the ULDF with the CPI, the Forward Bloc and others and fought the 1971 state assembly elections from this platform. When the poll results were out, it was clear that the Congress, the CPI(M)-led ULF or the ULDF—none was in a position to form a ministry singlehanded. In order to prevent the Congress from forming a ministry with the help of defectors, the SUCI immediately proposed a coalition between the ULF and the ULDF as the only means of forestalling a Congress comeback to governmental power. In such a situation, what did the Forward Bloc do? It crossed over to the side of Congress and formed the PDF ministry in league with it! Was this as per any norm or code of conduct? Was such conduct worthy of a party calling itself leftist? Would it be wrong to conclude that the Forward Bloc, for the sake of parliamentary gains, self and power, joins the side which appears to it best suited for the purpose, be it leftist or rightist?

But in spite of this, the CPI(M) did not find any difficulty in subsequently forming political alliance and ministry with the Forward Bloc.

Take the case of another constituent of the present ruling "Left Front" in West Bengal, the RSP. When the Congress made

a clean sweep of West Bengal assembly elections in 1972 through massive centralised administrative rigging in the first of the totally rigged elections in the state, the alliance of the left parties which at that time included both the CPI(M) and the SUCI, took a decision to boycott the assembly set up through the rigged elections. Accordingly, all left parties boycotted the assembly. But after some time, the RSP flouted the decision of the Front and unilaterally joined the assembly. Was this as per any code of conduct or political ethics? Was this not a disruptive activity?

Yet the CPI(M) found no difficulty in subsequently working jointly with RSP in a front or ministry.

Regarding the CPI(M), we could cite many an instance, but shall confine ourselves to discussing just one or two. Let us recall the days of 1973. The Indira Congress, in alliance with the CPI, had "swept the polls" in 1972 elections to the West Bengal state assembly through all-out centralised administrative rigging. The leftists in the state had formed an eight party combination (EPC) which included both the CPI(M) and the SUCI and were trying to develop mass movements. The CPI was outside the mainstream of left movement and even opposing the same, not to speak of its collusion with the Congress. The EPC had adopted a programme of mass movements including general strike, directed against the State and Central Governments, both run by Indira Congress. The CPI(M) was not inclined to participate in any struggle directed against Smt. Gandhi and her governments but had to agree to the programme of the EPC unwilling. They had also pledged that they would not do anything which went against unity of the combination. Against this background, the CPI gave a call for a one day bundh on the 27th July, 1973. The CPI did this in order to frustrate the programme of the EPC

and to ensure that mass-resentment, instead of being channelised into a sustained movement by the EPC, got pent up through the one-day show of movement. In order to dilute and misdirect the mass resentment, the CPI proposed the bundh to be anti-capitalist generally and not against Indira Congress Government! This was God-sent to the CPI(M). The CPI(M), pursuant to the so-called convergence theory formulated by the revisionist Soviet leadership, all on a sudden tore asunder the unity of the EPC and unilaterally joined the bundh called by the CPI, totally disregarding the objection of our party, Forward Bloc and RSP—all constituents of the combination. Thus they frustrated left unity by breaking the pledge they had given and by disrupting the EPC, destroyed the instrument of movement.

Again, it is history that in 1974, the CPI(M) disrupted the unity of the then left parties which was then a nine party combination including the Socialist Party just for the sake of holding a one-day convention jointly with Sri Prafulla Sen. Some of the constituents of the front including the SUCI objected to this. The considered opinion of the SUCI was that such joint move in association with a force headed by Sri Prafulla Chandra Sen whose anti-people character had already been exposed and who stood discredited before the people, would only help to confuse the masses and give a new lease of life to the reactionary forces represented by Sri Sen that had earlier been rejected by the masses. We pointed out that in a left-oriented state like West Bengal for the movement to be meaningful and purposive, it was the leftist forces who had to build up united struggles against the authoritarian forces. But the CPI(M) paid no heed to this and went ahead with the proposed convention with Sri Prafulla Sen, without caring for the objections of fraternal (Contd. to page 3)

CPI(M)'s long history of disruption in mass movements

(Contd. from page 2) parties, disrupting the unity of the front. The irony is that, to-day the CPI(M) is crying itself hoarse denouncing the same Prafulla Sen!

Was all this done by the CPI(M) to create a mighty upsurge of movements? Not at all. The CPI(M) had earlier not joined the movements in Bihar and Gujarat. Now it confined itself to only the one-day show of "movement" through a convention and did not participate in any anti-authoritarian movement prior to or following the convention. Later on, the CPI(M) was to accord tacit support to the hated Emergency and take up a conciliatory attitude towards Smt. Indira Gandhi. Again, although the CPI(M) had kept away from Bihar and Gujarat movements on the plea that these were led by reactionary and communal forces like the Jana Sangh, when the Emergency was lifted, Lok Sabha Elections were announced for March 1977 and fall of Smt. Gandhi's Government became imminent, the CPI(M) unhesitatingly struck opportunistic electoral alliance with the newly formed Janata Party of which the same communal Jana Sangh was a major constituent! It seems that the CPI(M) has no qualms about joining hands with even reactionary and communal forces for electoral gains, its sole objection being towards peoples' movements! Viewed in this context, is it a mere accident that the CPI(M) today says that it cannot have movements jointly with the SUCI?

Which is the anti-movement and disruptive force, the SUCI or the CPI(M)?

Those who are acquainted with the history of left movement in West Bengal, know that unlike the CPI(M), the SUCI has never utilised united front of the leftists just

as a tool for gaining advantages in parliamentary politics but has all along considered the front to be an instrument of struggle for the masses. The SUCI has always stood for norms and ethics in politics and unflinchingly fought for this purpose. When in 1970, the second United Front Ministry in West Bengal was about to fall due to the disruptive and fratricidal policy of the CPI(M) of physically attacking the constituent fraternal parties, it was the SUCI that, through a concrete detailed proposal urged reconstitution of the Front on the basis of definite code of conduct and procedural safeguards so that unity of the Front might not be destroyed again. Even before the Front broke up, we published a pamphlet embodying this concrete proposal, circulated it to the CPI(M) and other left parties and hawked it from door to door in West Bengal in order to avert break-up of the Front and to arrest the process of Bangla Congress, CPI and Forward Bloc gravitating towards the Congress. Unfortunately, this effort failed due to the rigid, sectarian attitude of the CPI(M).

Those who are trying to brand the SUCI as a disruptor or levelling the charge of violation of code of conduct against the SUCI—can they cite even a single concrete instance when the SUCI disrupted left unity, acted contrary to norms of conduct and political ethics or flouted the decision of joint body of left parties of which the SUCI was a constituent? No, they cannot, for the simple reason that there has been no such instance. Yet the CPI(M) persists in systematic vilification of the SUCI. What are the underlying reasons for this?

By again and again calling the SUCI "disruptor", the CPI(M) has adopted the notorious tactics of Goebbels, the

propaganda minister of Hitler, of making a falsehood sound credible by stating it repeatedly. The CPI(M) may do this in order to anyhow discredit the SUCI so that its own anti-movement, anti-people character is not exposed before the people, but we are afraid this will cut no ice. Today, united struggle against rising prices and other attacks on the people, against authoritarianism, is a burning necessity. If the CPI(M) and its associates really develop a mass movement on these issues, we would welcome the same and join in it. If they want to exclude the SUCI from it, we would still welcome the movement. But the point is, is the CPI(M) serious about organising movements? During the past three years, the CPI(M) has been time and again telling the people that the policies and measures of the Central Government are responsible for the people's misery, and lack of power in the hands of the State Government does not allow it to achieve anything tangible for the people's benefit. If they had really meant this, would they not have taken the people into confidence, explained to them how Central interference or lack of power in the hands of the state had obstructed West Bengal Government's efforts on specific issues and organised the people against the anti-people policies of the Central Government? Has the CPI(M) done so? Shorn of sustained people's movement, do not such talk about "movement" against the Central Government boil down to mere squabbles in parliamentary politics, to verbal duels designed to confuse the masses and washing off own responsibility for people's well-being?

The recent move of the CPI(M) and its associates, in conjunction with reactionary bourgeois forces like the Lok Dal, to hold a convention at Delhi against price rise is one such "movement", a "move-

ment" of one-day convention, a show of movement and to frustrate real people's movement.

The Left Front Committee in West Bengal has announced that it is launching a movement demanding take-over of wholesale trading in essential commodities by the Central Government and a deboarding operation by the State Government to unearth hoarded stocks. It is our considered opinion that mere taking over the wholesale trade cannot even touch the fringe of the problem of hoarding, profiteering and galloping price escalation because the moment wholesale trading is taken over, the unscrupulous traders would, directly or through numerous agents, operate as countless retailers and would continue to hold the people to ransom by unabated speculation and hoarding through the thousands of retail outlets formed by them. Therefore, if a government is serious about curbing hoarding and profiteering and holding the price line, it would have to introduce total state trading in both wholesale and retail sectors. We have time and again shown by detailed analysis the correctness of this. When Sri Jagjivan Ram, as union food minister, introduced wholesale state trading in wheat in the early seventies, it was a failure because of the reasons stated above. Right from when we were conducting food movements unitedly with the other left parties in the fifties, we have repeatedly pressed for adoption of total state trading, both wholesale and retail, as a policy of the joint forum of the left parties, but in vain. We have seen in West Bengal over the years how attempts at controlling the rice-market through levies on producers, restrictions in food movement, cordoning etc. have been adopted as government policy during the regime of both Sri Prafulla Sen and during the last three years of "Left Front" rule and have proved to be utter failure. It is true that deboarding

movement has some limited utility. Such movements have been there in the past too. Our party participated in these. Whatever its objective or standpoint might have been, the CPI(M) also participated in these. But in view of the vicious chain formed by close links between the jotedars, unscrupulous traders and the corrupt police and local government agents and officials through whom procurement is done, government procurement policy is doomed to fail if the retail trade continues to be in private hands. The only way in which people's sufferings can be mitigated is by taking over both wholesale and retail trade, breaking this vicious chain by simultaneously organising procurement and deboarding through the pressure of mass movements and by reducing dependence on the corrupt police and bureaucracy.

In the circumstances, putting forward the demand for only wholesale trade takeover by the centre, as the Left Front has done, can only serve to confuse the masses and objectively boils down to accepting the status quo vis-a-vis hoarding and profiteering while lulling the people with the false hope that something tangible is being done. It is also pertinent to ask what the "Left Front" Government, which is suddenly so very vocal today against hoarding, was doing while the hoarders were stockpiling commodities? Were they not silent spectators then? Why did they not invoke the existing Essential Commodities Act against offending traders? Would it be wrong to conclude that their present sudden concern about hoarding is just a defensive action in the face of widespread public resentment calculated to confuse the people? Or else, was it sheer incompetence on the part of the State Government? Or was there connivance with unscrupulous traders? The people have a right to know.

Another aspect of the matter needs examination. Is there any chance at all
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A just solution of Assam Problem brooks no delay

The week-long talks on Assam question in New Delhi between the AASU and AGSP leaders and the Government stand postponed till 6th October. Nothing tangible has yet come owing to, as per newspaper reports, wide divergence of opinion on both criteria for detection of 'foreign nationals' as also modality to be used in deporting those identified.

Our party SUCI, along with other parties are of the firm opinion that 4-factors e.g. (i) the constitution, (ii) relevant laws on citizenship rights, (iii) international pacts and (iv) national commitment should set the guideline in the matter of identification of 'foreign nationals'.

Our party told the Government of India, much earlier in last year's All-Party talks in New Delhi that for a rational solution, the constitutional recognition of Assamese language as the state language as also 'package' economic measures for speedy development of the state should immediately be given effect to. Had our suggestions been accepted then, the people of Assam would not have to pass through the nightmarish experiences which have still not ended.

Agony of the people of Assam

We need not dilate on the upshot of discussions recently held in New Delhi except in nothing that they have come at least as a welcome relief to the people who earnestly desire an early end of their ordeal. This pressing urge of the people has certainly made impact on the agitation leadership as also for a seeming change in their rigid stand. Let us now give cursory glance at what is happening to the people of the state.

The year-long agitation in Assam over the question of 'foreign nationals' has brought in its wake dangerous consequences. A sense of uncertainty and fear psychosis prevails in the minds of all sections and more particularly of the people belonging to minority communities. The economy of the state is in shambles. If the price rise is phenomenal in other parts of the country due to severe crisis in capitalist economy, it is simply astronomical in Assam. The state has become, so to say, a paradise for the blackmarketeers and profiteers who are merrily fishing in troubled waters. The plywood industry has ground to a halt; the lock-out has thrown some 20,000 people out of employment.

Agriculture, industry, trade and commerce, transport and communication all are in doldrums. Educational life is paralysed. Students have lost already one full academic year and are threatened with still more.

Going through these traumatic experiences, the people of Assam are searching desperately for a breathing space, for immediate restoration of normalcy in civic life. In the background of this general urge for a solution, the harrowing incidents at Margarita, Gauhati and Barpeta, revealing the ugly face of communal content, point at still more horrifying future to which the political situation in the state may drift, if not checked right at this moment.

Seven Party Combination

Side by side with this development, when the agitation leaders, unmindful of the great harm that their myopic attitude was causing not only to the people of Assam but also in other states, were threatening for further continuation of their agitation in utter disregard to people's sincere desire and wishes, seven political parties in the State, SUCI, Congress (U), Lokdal, CPI, CPI(M), RCPI and RSP came to a

combination to release concrete programme of movement, offering a sensible guideline to solve the main issue. This combination was in response to the urgent need of protecting communal harmony, goodwill and amity. There was then serious threats to all these by the parochial and communal forces, fostered and patronised by some parliamentary parties who were inciting different communities against one another to take advantage of in furthering their interests in filthy parliamentary politics. Confusion among the people due to agitation was worst confounded. In such a situation, need was felt most for bringing clarity to whole question and for that matter in concrete and precise terms.

The combination took the programme of political campaign in the districts starting from a convention at Nabin Birdoli Hall in Gauhati on 5th July. The agreed stand of seven parties to the issue of sorting out and deporting 'foreign nationals' was spelt out in a leaflet distributed to the people in thousands. It said that in deciding the question 4 factors are to be set as guideline e.g. (i) the constitution; (ii) relevant laws on citizenship rights; (iii) international pacts; and (iv) the national commitment.

The guideline got enthusiastic response from the people, drawing support even from those who had support for the agitation. This was manifested in the massive gathering at the convention as also large attendance in public meetings held later in the districts, despite threats and coercive tactics adopted by the agitation leaders and supporters. This hopeful signs indicate what our party has been persistently trying to impress on the leaders of other parties that sanity can not be totally lost in a society, there may be confusion in the minds of

the people due to consistent one-sided propaganda and projection of distorted picture of reality but it is temporary and the agonies of the people can best be ended by courageous countermove to bring home to them the untainted reality. That is why, when the grounds were being prepared for the holocaust with never-ending prospect, our party was persistently making efforts to bring the opposition parties in a broad platform to channelise people's genuine grievances to the right course—the democratic mass movements. Had our efforts been fruitful then, surely the people belonging to all communities in Assam might be saved from the harrowing experiences they have been passing through and possibly they would not have to live in nightmare as they are to do, even now. However, no use crying over the spilt milk, let us hope that we will all take appropriate lessons from past experiences.

To resume the thread, the mass meeting programme started in Goalpara district where public meetings were held at Dhubri, Bilasipara, Golokganj, Kokrajhar. All these meetings were largely attended by people from all communities. As we have mentioned earlier, at all the places, the parochialists and vested interests tried to disturb the meetings by all heinous means. At Lakhimpur, they prevented the leaders from entering into the town by coercive tactics.

In the second leg of the campaign in upper Assam, meetings were held at Sibsagar, Tinsukia, Dibrugarh. Despite various foul means to obstruct the meetings, they were held with massive attendance. At Dibrugarh, a prominent leader of AASU had to lick the wound of mortification.

The enthusiasm among the people and their response to these meetings show their eagerness to come out of an impasse created by a self-defeating ill-directed move. No doubt they were involved in it but voice of reason

was attracting them. This is the reason why the agitation forces were also getting panicky and doing everything to disturb the meetings where the people were getting correct picture of the problem as also a way out.

Prominent leader of seven political parties, Ashit Bhattacharjee (Secretary, Assam State Committee, SUCI), Sarat Chandra Sinha, Ex-chief minister, Congress (U), Nandeswar Talukder (CPI-M), Banewar Swaikia (RCPI) and Paresh Barua (RSP) addressed.

Our Viewpoints

Reiterating the viewpoints of our party SUCI, Comrade Ashit Bhattacharjee, spoke to the people in different mass meetings. These views while giving an unbiased, scientific analysis of the issues as also exposing the hollowness of the propaganda let loose by the parochialists, chauvenists, provided the real course through which a lasting solution can come.

Saner and sober sections of the people of all communities very much appreciated our stand and congratulated Comrade Bhattacharjee at many places, openly.

While sympathising with the woes and sufferings of the people of Assam belonging to all communities, Comrade Bhattacharjee appealed to them to ponder the very causes that agitated their minds so deeply. He said, there was no two opinion about the necessity of sorting out and deporting foreign nationals who had infiltrated in the state in recent times. In fact, the national consensus was in its favour.

But the point to be noted from the struggles and experiences against the foreigners, meaning foreign rule and exploitation, in other countries as also in our country during the freedom movement that they all cemented the unity of the people who were struggling against those. How come then, that in Assam, instead of

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ASSAM PROBLEM

(Contd. from Page 4) bringing unity, the agitation against 'foreign national' brought division and disunity, communal disharmony and animosity? Is the agitation then really against the 'foreign nationals' as the agitation leaders have been claiming? Why did they not and even now condemn outright the cowardly attacks against the minority communities? Do they not thereby vitiating even the legitimate demands? Could they not see that the venom of parochial and communal sentiments generated out of their agitation afflicted not only the people in this state but also of other states, Tripura, West Bengal etc? The people in those states who are raising parochial slogans and have engaged themselves in fratricidal strifes owe their inspiration, openly from the Assam agitation. And Comrade Bhattacharjee said 'venom breeds venom'. That is why political forces were not wanting who instigated the people of minority communities to make counter-attacks as if solution lay these. But we all know, solution does never come from fratricidal strifes. They help the capitalists and vested interests to break the unity and cohesion among the working people of all communities.

Breaching the unity of working peoples, they need today to stem the tide of working class movement against unbearable capitalist exploitation.

Comrade Bhattacharjee then one by one analysed in brief, the illmotivated propaganda that were let loose to cause fear and apprehension among the people of majority community as a result of which, if not a mass upsurge but wide spread restiveness among people in Assam.

Taking the point of protection of the Assamese language and the distinct identity of Assamese culture, Com. Bhattacharjee said that it was a just demand. But who is responsible if apprehension

still persists among the Assamese speaking people that they may be swamped by the language and culture of minority communities? Are the people of minority communities in anyway responsible? Whatever might have been the past mistakes and misunderstandings, after living for generations in Assam, have they not only adopted Assamese language but contributed much for its development and enrichments? It is the bourgeoisie and vested interest who neglected the cause so long but are now backing up the agitation. But what for this sudden awakening on their part? Solution lies not only in the constitutional recognition of Assamese language as the state language but also in its further development through exchanges and intermixtures with the language and culture of other communities. This is the scientific process of development of language and culture that history testifies; conservatism and insular thinking will do only harm to the very cause.

Comrade Bhattacharjee then showed the falsity as also the underlying motive of the propaganda of 'Greater Bengal'. By this propaganda, apprehension was injected in the minds of Assamese speaking people that the Bengalees were out to swallow Assam in their plan to cut out land areas stretching from West Bengal to Bangladesh including Assam to form a separate state. What more preposterous idea there can be! West Bengal and Assam are two separate states within the Indian union, and so how can it be possible that one will swallow the other?

If anybody preached this senseless idea, the real motive could not be otherwise than to attack left democratic ideas that alone can unite the toiling people of all communities in the common struggle against capitalist exploitation.

Again, the propaganda that Assam will one day be converted into a

SUCI Organises Mass Demonstration at Bhubaneswar

Bhubaneswar, 26. 9. 80 :

In spite of heavy flood and dislocation of rail and road communications thousands of flood stricken people and others, organised under the banner of Socialist Unity Centre of India, Orissa State Committee, from different districts of the State demonstrated before Bhubaneswar Secretariat demanding adequate flood relief, economic help for the flood stricken people, curbing of price rise, employment to all, industrialisation of the State, restoration of Civil liber-

Muslim state integrated with Bangladesh is simply meaningless when one compares the respective strengths of Indian state and Bangladesh. Danger in this sort of propaganda is to stir up communal sentiments. It also does immense harm to those secular political forces in Bangladesh who have been striving hard, since emergence of this new state, to bring the people of that country out of communal conservatism. These senseless thinkings and ideas divested of logic and history seem to be the 'guiding philosophy' of the agitation leaders. The four-point guideline evolved by the seven parties can provide the solution for the present to the thorny problem of 'foreign nationals'. People will have to fight for its acceptance.

Lasting solution, Com. Bhattacharjee reminded the people, however lies in repairing the bond of unity and good feelings among the people of all communities that have suffered most to fight on common burning problems of life under a united platform of democratic forces against the real enemies of the people, the capitalist and their agents of different hue. This is the way by which the people of Assam can not only wrest their legitimate socio-economic demands from the Central Government but also step forward towards emancipation.

ties and democratic rights and repeal of all black acts and ordinances like P. D. Act, and National Security Ordinance, withdrawal of 10+2+3 educational scheme, withdrawal of train fare, postal tariff and proposed bus fare rise, containment of parochial, communal and other divisive forces, banning of obscene films and literatures, etc.

Thousands of demonstrators were detained at Nirgundi and lathi charged by police and twelve SUCI organisers were arrested. The procession starting from new station road covered the main routes of the Capital and finally came to the P.M.G. Chak where it was cordoned by the Police.

A memorandum addressed to the Chief Minister was read out to the public. The meeting was addressed by SUCI leaders Binapani Das, Jagabandhu Baral, Udhav Jena, Balaram Sahoo, DSO leaders Chitta Behera, Daurjati Das, etc. A three men deputation submitted the memorandum containing 23-point character of demands.

Mass Meeting

After the demonstration a big mass meeting was held in the parade ground at 4 P. M. More than fifteen thousand people attended the meeting. Com. Tapas Dutta, an eminent mass leader of Orissa and Secretary of SUCI, Orissa State Committee, was the main speaker and Comrade Raghunath Das presided over the meeting. Other speakers were Com. Dwarika Nath Rath, and Com. Mayadhar Nayak. A resolution on flood was moved by Com. Chitta Behara.

Speech of Comrade Tapas Dutta

The main speaker Com. Dutta in his speech strongly condemned the brutal police lathi-charge on peaceful demonstrators at Nirgundi Rly. Station. He said thousands of demonstrators coming to join the demonstration were

detained and lathi charged by police, 12 leading SUCI organisers were arrested. He said, "At this moment our country is passing through an unprecedented natural calamities. More than two thousand people died in Uttar Pradesh and about forty lakhs of people has been victim of recent flood in 9 districts in Orissa. The flood has also seriously affected the life of Andhra Pradesh and West Bengal. Although the Orissa State Government is advertising that they are facing the disaster on war footing but the fact reveals just the opposite. In Gunpur, relief operation started after four days. Even in the adjacent area of Bhubaneswar no help was extended to the flood victims who took shelter in the Buddha temple in Dhauli. Almost from all districts the reports of administrative callousness are evident. Village touts, unscrupulous businessmen in connivance with the government officials at different levels, are trying to use the people's suffering as an advantage to make money out of the flood relief fund and materials contributed by the government and raise prices of essentials commodities and thereby add more to the miseries of the common people already hard hit by over taxation, price rise and unemployment."

Regarding high price he said that the ministers are saying that the problem of price rise can be solved by increasing production. But during last thirty four years the production has increased many fold but prices of all the items of mass consumption have also increased simultaneously.

Regarding un-employment problem and industrial backwardness of the state he said that the cause of these problems lies with prevailing crisis-ridden capitalist system which is the main obstacle on the way of un-interrupted development of industries.

While discussing about (Contd. to page 8)

Press Clippings

'Wave of Terror in Kerala Alleged'

"Arrests of writers, journalists, cultural activists and labourers have been made by the Left Front Government in Kerala.

Releasing the copies of a report prepared by a PUCL (People's Union for Civil Liberties) team which visited Kerala, Mr. Gobinda Mukhoty, Chairman of the organization... alleged that the assistant public prosecutor, Kattayam, while opposing the bail application of four people arrested on 'flimsy' grounds had told the court that bail should not be granted because they had spoken about Mao's thoughts.

Mr. Mukhoty said that the 'Wave of Terror' in the state began with the arrest of 135 Harijans in Nadavarambu, Trichur district. Four people—a Malayalam writer, the editor of a Malayalam monthly, an advocate and a student—all of whom live in the same area protested against the arrests.

They themselves were arrested later on July 10, Mr. Mukhoty said. He asked why they had not been arrested for 48 days when the charge sheet against them had said that they were indulging in sedition.

Mr. Mukhoty claimed that the Superintendent of Police, Trichur had told the PUCL team that the Harijans who were arrested on May 21, for having indulged in violence had, in fact, been peaceful.

Asked to comment on the reasons for letting loose the so-called wave of terror, Mr. Mukhoty said that his team had found reason to suspect that the *Left Front Government* wanted to convince the centre that it was capable of tackling the law and order problem in the state and thus avoid a possible imposition of President's rule.

He said that a Congress(I) sponsored demonstration had turned violent and caused, as the

Left Government itself admitted, a damage of Rs. 50 lakhs to State Transport buses on September 1. *That the government took no preventive action and made no arrests proved his points, he added.*

[The Statesman September 21, 1980:

Emphasis ours—P. Era.]

The Kerala Scene

"On July 15, fifteen people including the prominent poet, Sachidanandan, editor of the literary journal *Prerana*, K. S. Sadasivan, another known writer, Karthikeyan and Advocate Meghanathan were arrested in Trichur, Kerala. According to the police, they were taken into custody for raising slogans to promote ill feeling and enmity between classes and sections of the general public and government officials whose duty is to safeguard the security of the state and to maintain peace.

"The notable writer, P. T. Bhaskara Panicker, issued a statement: "...Is there no right for our youths to urge the need for changing today's rotten system and to ask people to come forward? I hope that at least the Chief Minister does not believe in solving all problems by distributing lottery tickets and pensions. Therefore the Home Minister should frankly describe the reasons for arresting the demonstrators. Does not the Kerala history itself teach that no one can prevent revolutionary ideas under the guise of 'extremism'? Only when our youth oppose the present system—only then there will be a growing feeling that there will be change in the country.

.....Justifying the arrests, the CPI(M) Malayalam weekly, *Chintha*, wrote, "Let it be a poet, a critic or an editor or however big a personality he may be, who is behind these activities the government will have to take action against him."

(Contd. to page 7)

Country at the cross-roads—people's organised movement can alone defeat threat of fascism

(Contd. from page 1)
mate movements. The Karnataka Chief Minister Mr. Gundu Rao clearly indicated this design on the part of the ruling parties when recently he announced that his Government is contemplating to introduce preventive detention ordinance "to deal with profiteers and which would also cover Trade Union workers who incited workers' (according to a report published in Statesman). The message or rather the threat is clear. And Mr. Antulay, the Maharashtra Chief Minister clearly voiced the feelings and policies actually pursued by all the ruling parties in the different states—whatever their signboards—when he demanded the curbing of the judiciary, reintroduction of MISA and abrogation of civil liberties, as recorded in the press.

Moreover, Essential Service Maintenance Ordinance has been introduced by the Government whereby the State Governments are empowered to declare any industry or service essential and detain for two years and fine upto Rs. 2000 anyone for participation in strike or any form of democratic movement and even for refusal of overtime work. Even persons helping in any way or contributing money to such movement will be liable to penal measures. This ordinance has already been applied in three states—Maharashtra, Gujarat and U.P.

And whenever any disturbances break out, at the slightest pretext the government calls in military and para-military forces to deal with the situation. That this practice has assumed menacing proportions has been pointed out even in the bourgeois press. One such article draws attention to the phenomenal increase of paramilitary forces: "The Central

Reserve Police Force (CRPF) had a total strength of 870 in 1947 and the Central Industrial Security Force had a strength of 6,062 in 1969-'70. But increasing use began to be made of these forces and by 1979 the CRPF strength had increased to 23,742 and the CISF strength to 39,660. The present strength of the Border Security Force is 75,551.

Tracing the heavily increased use of paramilitary forces to maintain 'law and order' and similar increasing use of Border Security Force and army to deal with disturbances and communal incidents and meet other contingencies of the States, the article warns about the danger this spells out for a democratic set up. Talking of parliamentary parties the article says: "Their shortsighted preoccupation with power has led to the weakening of administration in particular at the district level where it matters most. An unholy alliance exists between politicians, anti-social elements and the bureaucracy, leading to a virtual free-for-all in the villages".

The question is are we living today in a civilised society? How can a civilised society allow such a sordid state of things to run? These are indeed the signs of growing danger of fascism—the greatest enemy of mankind and civilisation—trying to get the country in its deathly grip. Today there is an undeclared emergency rule by consensus in force. If there is any difference with the past it lies in the absence of any protest which is far more dangerous. There is no need for formal declaration even, because the social democrats, the so-called left parties, have themselves joined hands with the ruling bourgeois parties in this. As capitalism is getting deeper and deeper enmeshed in all out crisis

and people's sufferings, hardships and deprivations grow more unbearable with every day, one black act after another comes into force, and repression on the people is growing more and more menacing. At the same time hoarders, black-marketeers and profiteers are thriving as never before, day by day their criminal acts are increasing and surpassing all records, playing havoc with prices and holding people to ransom. And the bourgeois parties and social democrats are engaged in the most filthy competition for parliamentary gains. They are aiding and abetting the rabid parochial and fissiparous forces to engineer communal riots and themselves even instigate communal and cast riots with the help of police and administration, to break the solidarity of the working people and divert their resentment from the growing capitalist exploitation. Using these instigated incidents and riots as a pretext the ruling class have armed themselves with unprecedented autocratic power to convert the country into a virtual prison house, trampling all democratic rights and civil liberties.

People do not want this fascist rule. They want a change. But does change come by cowardice, indifference or frustration? A change can come only through courage and the revolutionary audacity to create a counter current by building up and joining in organised movement of the people, based on correct political line and higher cultural standard. Our party, SUCI, reared by the great proletarian leader, Comrade Shibdas Ghosh has taken up the historic task of initiating and giving leadership to organised movements of the people through the concrete programme of All India movement. Our party appeals to the people cast away all fears and hesitations and join in these movements with full strength.

(Contd. from page 3) that the CPI(M)-led "Left Front" will organise serious movement against the Central Government, not to speak of coming into confrontation with it? Although the CPI(M) rent the sky with anti-Indira slogans before the 1980 parliamentary polls, have not subsequent events shown that such anti-authoritarian row was just a device to catch votes in the polls and the "fiere" anti-Indira tirade merely reflected the clash of interest with Congress(I) in parliamentary politics, especially in West Bengal? Where has all that staunch anti-authoritarianism gone now, we like to ask. Has the CPI(M) tried to organise any movement against the authoritarianism represented by Smt. Gandhi. Is it not a fact that when Smt. Gandhi most undemocratically dissolved the assemblies in nine states to pave the way for installing Congress(I) ministries in those states, we appealed to the CPI(M) to start joint movements against the authoritarian measure but there was no response from the CPI(M)? Is it not a fact that ever since the CPI(M) has felt there is no imminent danger of the Centre toppling the West Bengal ministry, there has been a growing accord and closeness between the CPI(M) and the Congress(I)? For sometime past, it has been no secret that there is wide agreement between the Central Government and the CPI(M)-led West Bengal Government on almost all major issues. Quite often, there are consultations between the two governments to evolve common approach on policy matters. Smt. Gandhi called a meeting at Delhi on July 1, 1980 with the leaders of all central trade unions with the objective of getting the working class committed to tightening belts, giving up demands and working to increase production in "national interest". The CPI(M)-led CITU accorded support to Smt. Gandhi at this meet! On recently returning from Moscow, Sri Jyoti Basu clearly in-

SUCI's principled working class politics CPI(M) fears most

dicated that there would be no movement against the Centre. At the recently held meeting of National Development Council, Sri Jyoti Basu, instead of confronting the Centre by putting up the counter proposal which had been framed, simply dittoed the line of the Centre and came back. Not to speak of a confrontation, the CPI(M) is today doing everything to avoid any conflict with the Centre. In their party organs there is now no criticism against Smt. Gandhi and her government. On the Assam question, they have given full support to Indira Government. Although CPI(M) cannot have joint action with the SUCI, it had no difficulty in organising a bundh in West Bengal on the Assam issue in association with the state Congress (I)! In Tripura, on the plea of curbing disruptive elements, the CPI(M)-led government has, with connivance of the Centre, concentrated autocratic power in its hands by amending the criminal code to make provision for detention without trial and even without a chargesheet. They wanted to provide for such detention for a period of two years at a stretch, but had to settle for six months at the counsel of the "authoritarian" Indira government! Taking cue from this, the Congress (I) Government adopted a similar measure in U. P. Now, preventive detention has been adopted on All-India scale through an Ordinance. Thus the CPI(M) and the Congress (I) are seeing eye to eye in administrative matters in safeguarding bourgeois law and order!

All these show that the Congress (I) Government at the Centre and the CPI(M) led State Governments are complementary. Both are part and parcel of the establishment with appointed roles in the bourgeois design of stabilising the system, of confining the people's resent-

ment within the bounds of two party parliamentarianism. It is very indicative that the Congress (I) now no longer talks of a confrontation with the West Bengal Government but says that it would, of course, criticise the wrong policies of the CPI(M)-led ministry in the state! Following the same rule of bourgeois parliamentary etiquette, the CPI(M) also can now reciprocate by organising a "civil" movement against Smt. Gandhi's Government in a "confrontation by permission"!

Today the people see in the SUCI the only force of mass movements upholding leftism, the noble banner of Communism. Is it not now imperative for the CPI(M) to engage in some sort of "movement" as a show, even if just to divert the masses and arrest their gravitating towards the SUCI? The CPI(M) must now anyhow belittle the SUCI, its increasing strength and growing stature in the people's eyes as a strong force of mass movement. This they are trying to do by repeatedly calling the SUCI "disruptor" and refusing to have association with it so that the people may get an impression that the SUCI is not a big force, is an isolated force. The SUCI is a living challenge to the anti-people politics being practised by the CPI(M). By conducting united movements with the SUCI, the CPI(M) runs the risk of exposure of the hoax of its so-called dehoarding drive, of its policy of striking opportunistic alliances with bourgeois, communal and parochial forces like the Lok Dal, the Akali, AIADMK, Muslim League etc, in different parts of the country, of its social-democratic politics of disarming the toiling people before the onslaughts of the ruling class, of its endeavours to emerge as an alternative in the bourgeois scheme of two party parliamentary system in the country and

of its politics of developing closeness with Smt. Gandhi's party and government. Today, the CPI(M) has left the course of mass movements and is actually crushing movements wherever it is in governmental power. Has it any option but to brand the SUCI as disruptive and avoid joint action with it?

It is not as if the SUCI is pleading for association with the CPI(M) with a begging bowl in hand. Even so, the CPI(M) leadership is off and on calling the SUCI disruptive as if they are trying to justify the policy of having no alliance with the SUCI. Whom they are trying to answer by these? Is it not that many a question is being raised within the rank and file of the CPI(M) about the role of the SUCI in mass movements and the CPI(M) leadership's attitude towards the SUCI? As the crises in the people's lives are deepening and as the

CPI(M)-led "Left Front" Government is totally failing in tackling the same, more and more intense are becoming the questions from the honest ranks of the CPI(M) towards the leadership stuck in the morass of parliamentary politics: There can be alliances with even reactionary and discredited authoritarian, bourgeois, communal and parochial forces but not with the SUCI, a time-tested genuine force of mass movements? Why?

We appeal to the cadres, supporters and sympathisers of the CPI(M) who cherish revolution, people's liberation and the noble ideal of communism: Will you continue to remain spectators and allow the situation to drift like this? Is it not your sacred duty to the working class and the cause of revolution to force your leadership to shun the anti-people path and return to the fold of mass movements, stop the vicious tirade against the SUCI and develop mighty, united mass struggles, the sole guarantee for the future of the people?

Comrade Nihar Mukherjee's Appeal for help to Flood Victims

(Contd. from page 1)

"Unprecedented flood stricken Orissa and Andhra Pradesh people urgently need food, shelter.

"SUCI is gravely concerned and demands prompt rescue, relief, rehabilitation on war footing by Central Government mobilising all civil and military resources"

At the same time he has called upon the people of our country to help the flood victims in every possible way.

Press Clippings

(Contd. from page 6)

A CPI(ML) journal wrote—Mr. Ramakrishnan (Home Minister—Ed. P. Era) is provoked by the Internationale, by the slogan 'Revolution is the festival of the masses', 'Down with reactionaries' etc. We know that you will be provoked. The Internationale had provoked the murderers of Paris communards. The poet

Eugene Potier was prosecuted for composing this song. In Tsarist Russia it was on the banned list. And Hitler's police arrested those who sang this war cry of the world proletariat. If it provokes you also, we can't help it, your Marxism is.....in words, in practice you are fascists".

[Frontier, August 30, 1980]

Students' March to the Universities

Calcutta, 28th Sept. 80:

The movement of the West Bengal students against the anti-people language and education policy of the 'Left Front' Government reached a new height through the programme of student marches to the Calcutta, Burdwan and North Bengal Universities on the 26th September—the day of Vidyasagar Anniversary—under the auspices of the All Bengal Student Struggle Committee. In all the three separate rallies, held at three corners of the state—the students displayed the same sort of enthusiasm, the same spirit of determination to organise and carry on protracted movement to resist, at whatever cost, the anti-people language and education policy of the 'Left Front.'

This programme was announced immediately after the historic ever-biggest all-Bengal students' procession at Calcutta on the 12th last. The 'Left Front' Government is going to abolish English from the primary level from the next year. It has already made English and mother tongue optional at the Degree level, a student is required to opt any one of the six approved languages, as one additional paper of 100 marks; in this paper pass mark is lowered to 20, failure in it would not affect the degree, and what is more, this language paper does not include any literature—Rabindranath, Sarat Chandra, Nazrul or Shakespear, Milton, Bernard Shaw and others are banished from the course, only grammar and composition will be taught. This is the sort of importance the LF rulers are attaching to the teaching of language. This is also the sort of tribute they are paying to our mother tongue. In order to pursue their language policy unopposed from any

quarter, the LF has superseded the governing bodies of seven universities of the state including Calcutta carrying the tradition of glorious battle for defence of its autonomy since the British days during the Congress misrule. Each university has been crowned with a nominated council, most of the members of which are committed to the 'Left Front' Government policy. These councils are taking one after another drastic decision and measure to curtail the scope of higher education further, to curb the democratic rights of the students and teachers. In such a critical hour the All Bengal Student Struggle Committee decided to launch student marches to the three Universities—Calcutta, Burdwan and North Bengal on the same day.

Calcutta: The students of the districts of Calcutta 24 Parganas, Nadia, Murshidabad, Howrah, Hooghly and Midnapur, participated in the march to the Calcutta University. One after another, processions from different schools and colleges and three universities of this region, assembled at the Subodh Mullick Square till this morning. After a brief meeting held there, a big well decorated and disciplined procession of more than 15 thousand students proceeded through College Street towards the university and reached the campus at about 3 p.m. Comrade Dipankar Roy, the Chairman of the Committee led the march. The demonstrators tried to reach the office of the Vice-Chancellor, but he, informed of the programme earlier, kept the main entrance of his room locked and guarded by police. He was sent a request to come down, accept the memorandum and address the gathering explaining the reasons to implement their language and education policy ignoring and defying all public opinion,—which he refused to do, for he was

'busy' with other 'more serious' matters. The students burst into utter indignation at this cowardly and bureaucratic attitude of a man posted in so important a chair in education. Com. Dipankar Roy called upon the students to carry on the struggle with undaunting courage and determination. Comrade Bhaskar Gupta, a member of the committee also spoke.

Burdwan: About five thousand students coming from the districts of Burdwan, Bankura, Birbhum and Purulia joined the march to the Burdwan University, under the leadership of Comrades Rabin Samajpati, a member of the struggle committee. Earlier, the students assembled at a brief meeting held at Golapbag. Then a very well decorated and disciplined procession marched to the university campus and the demonstrators stayed before the Vice-Chancellor's Office. Comrades Rabin Samajpati, Hassan Siddique, Siraj Abu Sufian and others addressed the gathering.

North Bengal: Here also more than ten thousand students from Maldah, West Dinajpur, Darjeeling, Jalpaiguri and Coochbihar took enthusiastic part in the march to the North Bengal University, led by Comrade Sanjit Biswas, a member of the All Bengal Student Struggle Committee. The students first rallied before the Arts Building in a short meeting held there. Then they proceeded in a big and disciplined procession to the Vice-Chancellors' office and stayed there for about three hours. The administrative offices were deadlocked. After a prolonged staying, the Vice-Chancellor being compelled, told the demonstrators that he would put the question to the council for reconsideration in accordance with the students' demands. The students were very much inspired at this success.

NINETY THOUSAND IN PRISONS WITHOUT TRIAL

"In what the legal experts describe as a gross violation of human rights, nearly 90,000 people are being held in Indian jails without trial. On the government's own admission, only 41.5% of all prisoners in the country in June 1979 were convicts—the remaining 58.5% being undertrial prisoners.

Since then their number has risen sharply following large scale arrests under the Disturbed Areas Act and the preventive detention laws enacted by several States. According to unofficial estimates, they account for over 65% of the country's jail population...

"It is stated that in the majority of cases, people have spent more years in jail than they would have, if they had been convicted.... A study recently showed that in Bangalore 50% of those tried were acquitted, 75% were sentenced to less than six months each and only 63.8% were sentenced to more than one year's imprisonment.

"Jails in almost all States are said to be full of men, women and children who have been languishing for years—awaiting trial for petty offences. Among them are many who happened to be mere witnesses to a crime. To save themselves the trouble of tracking them later, the police chose to detain them....

"A non-official committee of legal experts is studying the jail condition in the country. Its members say that they have "shocking" revelations to make.... The committee is concerned over widespread complaints of torture." (Statesman, 23. 9. 80)

SUCI Organises Mass Deputation at Dhanbad

In observance of Central Committee's call for "All India Protest Day" a big demonstration was organised by Dhanbad District Committee of our Party at Dhanbad, Bihar on 3rd September. Workers, miners, peasants, students, youths, middle class employees joined in

this big rally. Comrade Hem Chakravorty, led a deputation to the Deputy Commissioner, Dhanbad and handed over a memorandum containing 10-point demands, supplemented by local demands. Party's initiative to organise movement on burning issues has created great enthusiasm among the people.

MASS DEMONSTRATION AT BHUBANESWAR

(Contd. from page 5)

the repressive measures taken by the Government at the Centre and the state, Comrade Dutta said that Indira Gandhi's Government started its innings by reviving the notorious P. D. Act, of which the Charan Singh's Government took the initiative and before that Morarji Desai gave his approval. Being not satisfied with this she has gone further to issue the black ordinance—National Security Ordinance.

Lastly Comrade Dutta recalled the teaching of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, the great leader of the

proletariat that the crisis-ridden capitalist system must be replaced by socialist system, for which an anti-capitalist Socialist revolution is the call of the hour and to make this revolution successful people's political power must be built up through conscious and organised people's movement under the leadership of a genuine revolutionary party, the SUCI.

This is the only way to live—this is the only way to pave the way for revolution. He also called upon the people to mobilise volunteers and collect money for relief to flood affected people.

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