

Budget—False Picture, False Promise

Deeply pained at gross unethical conducts in public life, Comrade Shibdas Ghosh warned the people: "politics devoid of ethics is devil's workshop". Today, unethical political conduct gets its best reflection in budgeting whether the exercise is undertaken by Congress(I) Government at the centre or by a CPI(M) led ministry as in West Bengal. Hypocrisy abounds, false hope and false promise are held out, false picture is presented all to save the crisis-ridden bourgeoisie and conceal the glaring reality of deep seated crisis in the capitalist system which is bursting forth. To hoodwink the people and to please their real master, the ruling bourgeois class, all these bourgeois and social democratic parliamentary parties are in a competition in the matter of deceptive tricks, and manoeuvres. People are therefore left absolutely with no other alternative than to respond to the earnest call and initiative of our party for developing a mighty democratic movement which alone can open up the path of emancipation. Only the heroic souls deserve the glory, cowardly submission to fate and injustice writes a history which is inglorious.

Budgeting principle given good bye

Even in bourgeois democracies some principles were once acclaimed in budgeting. A government based as it is on the basic inequality born out of class division and exploitative capitalist system though not capable of changing the law of exploitation and therefore this basic inequality, while presenting a budget had at least tried to follow the minimum norms that it i) would state clearly and not conceal the facts, ii) would not give false

picture by quoting false figures, iii) would maintain equity in the matter of distribution of burdens, iv) would utilise the resources at its disposal to attend to and improve upon the minimum and basic needs of citizens particularly of those who deserve most the help and support and v) finally budgetary resources collected from people's money would not be used to further add to the basic inequality and injustice or in wasteful expenditures that actually obstruct growth instead of helping

it. What do we find instead? These norms and principles written in books on public finance were given good bye since long and budget has become a fearsome object to the common people as they know from bare experience that it is nothing but a device to rob them further and distribute the spoils among different sections of the ruling bourgeois class who according to respective share they receive express their reactions. And this is done in the name of fiscal management, people's welfare, country's progress!

False Picture

Take for example, this year's central budget. Stating about the health of the economy, it holds out an assuring picture of recovery and growth whereas the pre-budget Economic Survey and various analyses in economic papers and journals not only do not share this worked out optimism but indicate a further gloomy prospect of halted agricultural and industrial growth, high rate of inflation, infrastructural bottleneck and larger foreign trade (Contd. to page 2)



50th anniversary of martyrdom of BHAGAT SINGH Commemorate befittingly

The 50th anniversary of the martyrdom of Shaheed Bhagat Singh falls on 23rd March 1981. It is a day of great historic significance, a day when every Indian must pledge to rededicate himself or herself to carry forward the struggle initiated by the martyrs like him for the emancipation of the people of our country to its logical culmination. Shaheed Bhagat Singh, by his heroic struggle with uncompromising zeal has placed himself among the front ranking revolutionaries of the Indian independence movement. He will ever remain a source of inspiration to the millions of the fighting people of our country. As long as mankind will exist martyrs like him will be remembered with solemn reverence by the freedom loving people all over the world. We call upon the people to observe the 50th martyrdom of

Shaheed Bhagat Singh in a solemn and befitting manner. But this is surely not for any ritualistic purpose. We seriously feel the necessity of developing higher proletarian culture and morality for successful conduction of the working class movement. But this higher proletarian culture must have firm root in Indian soil. Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, one of the foremost Marxist thinkers of the world, the departed leader and teacher of our party, the SUCI, showed that proletarian culture is torn by way of exhausting the humanist sense of values and it will come into being in continuity of the dominantly uncompromising, youthful and revolutionary trend in the nationalist movement though there will also exist a break in it, owing to the inevitable law of history. We must (Contd. to page 4)

Gujarat—dangerous portent of caste war

Caste feelings and caste hatred are running high in Gujarat. The agitation by the medical students against seat reservation for the scheduled castes and tribes in the post-graduate medical course is spreading with students and employees of different sectors demanding abolition of seat reservation in all fields.

What sparked off the agitation against seat

reservation by the medical students was the failure to secure a seat, in the absence of sufficient seats and opportunities for the students. What will the students do? Will they raise demands for creating additional seats and better opportunities for all sections of students, or scramble for the few seats available and turn against each other? Today, capitalism in the phase of

decay, beset by all-out crisis in the economic, political and cultural field, is casting its shadow of crisis over the entire education system and continuously restricting the scope for higher education and job opportunities. In this situation what course should the student community with their glorious tradition of struggle against British imperialist (Contd. to page 4)

33RD ANNIVERSARY SUCI MASS MEETING

24th APRIL

Shaheed Minar Maidan : 5 P.M.

Main Speaker :

COMRADE NIHAR MUKHERJEE

President :

COMRADE SANKAR SINGH

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(Contd. from page 1)
deficit. Which of these views is true?

The government claims that the economy is now pulling out of the morass of stagnation and that the growth rate is predicted at 6.5 p.c. But this rosy picture seems to be statistical only and yet there is a big flaw. Government statisticians admit that due to statistical error the fall in Gross National Product (GNP) was shown less at 3 p.c. for the year 1979-80 when it was actually 5 p.c. Therefore the growth rate claimed by the government comes to nothing if inflationary erosion of money's worth is taken for the miserly rate of growth of remaining 1.5 p.c. Yet on the basis of that purely wishful figure of growth is worked out the Sixth plan growth target!

What about the inflationary trend? The government claims that inflation has been controlled and 'stabilised'. Yes stabilised no doubt, but that stabilisation is of a two-digit rate of inflation! And this year's budget, notwithstanding the assurances to the contrary, is definitely going to trigger a new wave of high rate of inflation due to pre-budget hike in administered prices of essential ingredients to agriculture and industry e.g. oil, coal, pig iron, steel as also freight charges and more of such increases to come in fertilisers, cement, paper etc. Over and above more than two thousand crores of rupees (Rs. 2,200 crores in rough estimate) that the government has arranged for collecting through this means, it has proposed rise in excise duty on cloth and matches as also customs duty to add Rs. 300 crores further to its coffer. So, the falsity of the claims that it is imposing minimum fresh tax burden as also that there will be no spurt in inflation is clear and simple.

The technique now being followed, though nothing ingenuous but only revealing typical unethical conduct, is that financial burden is imposed on the people by instalments both before and

after the budget. In the name of reducing or wiping out the loss in public sector bodies and consequent swelling figure of subsidies, prices of government administered product prices and service charges are being enhanced which affect the people doubly: first, due to direct increase in the cost of consumption of the articles or services and secondly, due to general increase in prices particularly of consumption articles that follows immediately on the plea of increased cost. Governments both at the Centre as also in the States are resorting to this trick to show less the figures of both increase in taxes through budget as also the deficit in budget. This is why the addition to tax impost in the Central budget is not Rs. 300 crores by way of rise in excise and customs duty only as the government would have the people to accept but really six or seven times the figure. Again the avowed object of bringing down loss of public sector industries that is made a plea for hike in price or charge of their products and service does not find reflection in actual achievement. Subsidies do not come down rather increase. This is true both about the Central and State Governments. Just to show the similarity in this sort of trick, mention may be made about West Bengal's 'Left Front' Government's decision to raise bus and tram fares just a few weeks before the budget session. The objective was the same, same is also the performance. The glaring case in point is the instances of the railways and West Bengal's state buses and trams. In West Bengal the State Transport Minister while shamelessly defending the rise in fares of state buses and trams was arguing that due to this rise for the second time within a brief spell of about six months, incomes had substantially increased and that it was indicative of people's 'acceptance' of fare rise.

False Picture, False Promise

People were accustomed to hearing this kind of argument from Congress ministers. Be that as it may, when the state budget was presented it was found that the loss incurred by the State buses and trams taken together reached the record figure of Rs. 22 crores. So the performance of CPI(M) led ministry in West Bengal in administering state buses and trams can really match for the performance of Congress ministry in administering the public sector enterprises like the railways.

Befooling the People

In fact both the Congress(I) and CPI(M) seem to be in mutual competition in the art of befooling the people by newer and newer ingenuities, budget tricks being one of them. That is why they are in mutual praise for each other, notwithstanding the rhetorics and invectives to make a show of opposition in parliamentary game in bourgeois politics. No wonder therefore that Mr. Namboodiripad the CPI(M) General Secretary also joins in the chorus of praise for the Central Government as in his opinion, it has given a "sigh of relief" to "disillusioned" middle class by raising the tax exemption limit to Rs. 15000. Mr. Namboodiripad is therefore helping to create illusion of relief to the middle class salaried people when this is no real relief but a clever device to create the grounds for the wage restraint that the government has decided to thrust upon them. Anybody having modicum of knowledge about bourgeois fiscal tricks will not have difficulty to understand that while the much trumpeted income tax relief to the middle class will only save a few hundred rupees, the inflation to be generated by steep rise in the prices of almost all commodities will rob them more. And fascist device, as Comrade Shibdas Ghosh warned umpteen times, was more

dangerous because of its deceptive dual tricks—persuasion and repression. Had it been simple repression, it could be met more easily by people's resistance. But no, fascism tries to disarm the people by its apparent innocent posture behind which it sharpens its weapon for its deadly use. Not that the 'Marxist' General Secretary is unaware of the fact that the miserly saving from reduced income tax will be more than offset by the high rate of inflation that is to follow the government's fiscal steps and measures nor is he expected to be innocent about the government's motive of thrusting wage restraint, the crudest example of which is the LIC ordinance. But reciprocation is the rule of the game in parliamentary politics. So, the Congress (I) leaders in the State of West Bengal too along with leaders of BJP, Janata etc. have praised 'Left Front' Government's Budget for writing off 'taccavi' or short-term loans of the agriculturists to the tune of Rs. 40 crores. And behind this 'big concession' for the 'peasantry', the Finance Minister allows plethora of concessions to the jubilant capitalists. His act and pleading are the same as those of the Central Finance Minister. That is why a daily not unfriendly to CPI(M) and its ministry could not but record in its editorial comment: 'In fact there is striking similarity of approach in the basic reasoning behind both the Central and West Bengal budgets. Mr. Mitra told the State Assembly that the concessions proposed by him would lead to 'substantial expansion in industrial activity!' It also notes that when Mr. Mitra, the State Finance Minister, himself admitted that the proportion of recovery of agricultural advance in the State improved from 32 percent to 41 percent over the period 1975 to 1978, the 'Left Front's

"liberality is...misdirected more so in view of the fact that according to rural credit studies, most defaulting farmers come from relatively affluent section." (Statesman March 4, '81).

Central budget— concessions to the capitalists

As against the marginal concessions in income tax for the middle class salary earners, the Central Government gives plethora of concessions to the capitalists both rural and industrial. From the long list of such concessions, let us mention just a few. Tax holidays for five years have been given to export-oriented industries located in free trade zone, 14 groups of industries have got tax concessions by their exclusion from 11th schedule of Income Tax Act. Surcharge rate on income tax payment by companies has been reduced by 5% from existing rate of 7.5%. By allowing depreciation allowance on machines connected with renewable energy resources raised from 10% to 30% tax concession has further been given. For similar purpose giving concession, interest rate on debentures from 12% to 13.5% has been allowed. Estate duty exemption has been raised from Rs. 50,000 to Rs. 1.5 lakh. Land development allowance for tea gardens per hectare has been raised from Rs. 12,000 to Rs. 40,000 in the hilly areas and for plains from Rs. 10,000 to Rs. 30,000 and exemption of 20% profit for assessing income tax liability of book publishing houses. Let us end this rather lengthy list by mentioning that more than Rs. 2000 crores (though shown less in the budget estimate) will be spent on subsidies the major items of which are food, fertilizer and export.

Side by side with this bagful of concessions to the capitalists the government announces through the budget that additional excise duties on the textiles is to be raised from 10 to 15% as also on matches by Rs 5.00 per

(Contd. to Page 6)

ON THE RECENT NON-ALIGNED FOREIGN MINISTERS' CONFERENCE

A Conference of the Foreign Ministers of the non-aligned countries was held in New Delhi from 9th to the 13th February last. Foreign Ministers of over 90 countries converged to the Indian capital and conferred. At the end of the deliberations, a joint declaration was issued summing up the consensus reached on a number of international issues and problems affecting the non-aligned countries.

On the eve of the Conference, it was common knowledge that there was serious divergence of view among the non-aligned governments on a number of questions like Afghanistan, superpower build-up in the Indian Ocean region and Kampuchea. There was apprehension that the non-aligned countries would fall out on such issues. In the event, however, the Conference managed to evolve consensus on the thorny issues and maintain the facade of unity. The Indian Government played a prominent role in working out such compromise consensus.

The bourgeois press has tried to trumpet that this non-aligned meet has been a notable achievement for the Indian Government and the country. They are doing this with the motive of diverting the attention of the people and filling them with false pride when, groaning as they are under the crushing burden of capitalist onslaughts, the exploitative capitalist system has little else to offer them. To the people the whole thing may seem baffling. What really happened at the Conference?

In order to understand this, the situation in which the non-aligned Foreign Ministers met should be perceived. The leader of the world imperialist camp, the USA, had become isolated from the bulk of the developing and non-aligned countries but is at present trying to stage a comeback. On the one hand, it is engaged in

increasing its military preparedness, while on the other, taking advantage of the interferences and armed interventions by the Soviet Union and its allies into the affairs of other countries which have given rise to serious apprehension among the non-aligned countries about the Soviet Union, it is trying to regain lost foothold in such countries. In the middle-East and the Arab countries, the US have made some headway and gained vis-a-vis the Soviet Union in the nefarious game of superpower rivalry and power politics of extending respective spheres of influence.

The Soviet revisionist leadership, in pursuance of their hegemonistic policy, are perpetrating interference and even armed intervention, directly or by proxy, in affairs of other countries on bigger scale and in wider spheres than before. The two most glaring recent instances are Kampuchea and Afghanistan. As a result, bulk of the Afro-Asian nations, the non-aligned countries, who once regarded the Soviet Union as a natural friend and a strong guarantor of freedom are now apprehensive of the Soviet Union and look upon it as a blatantly interfering superpower that is out to extend its sphere of influence at any cost.

The non-aligned countries are themselves torn by a number of disputes and dissensions, at least some of them created by superpower interference and the resultant tensions and apprehensions: Iraq-Iran conflict, Afghanistan problem and the Kampuchean question, just to name a few. There are contradictions among the Arab countries. Egypt, one of the founders of non-aligned movement is now being censured by Arab countries over the Israel Peace Treaty.

In this background of intense superpower rivalry which shows signs of a

reversion to the cold war of yesteryears and the numerous contradictions and conflicts among the non-aligned countries, the ruling Indian bourgeoisie through their mouthpiece the Indian Government, are trying to utilise the international situation in furtherance of their class aims. We have repeatedly shown in past articles that, the Indian bourgeoisie have acquired distinctive imperialistic traits and how these have manifested themselves through exports of commodities and even finance capital to many a country and through participation in collaboration with multinationals of advanced imperialist countries in joint ventures in third countries. These interests represent a growing stake for the Indian bourgeoisie in non-aligned and Afro-Asian countries and especially in the regions surrounding India. The aspirant Indian bourgeoisie have come to regard these regions as their sphere of influence and are exercising more and more leverage in the affairs of these areas in their quest for regional ascendancy. This class urge for gaining regional paramouncy dictates the policies of the Indian Government and is behind all its moves. In its dealings and moves, when it takes up a pro-US stance during a particular phase it does so with the objective of furthering the interest of Indian capital. When, in another particular phase, it takes up a pro-Soviet stance, its objective remains the same. In the bid for extending and consolidating their sphere of influence and sometimes for economic compulsions, the Indian bourgeoisie may move in collusion with this or that superpower for a time and support them on this or that issue, but before long their class urge of asserting leading position in what they consider to be their domain manifests itself, and

their displeasure in superpower involvement in such regions is expressed in no uncertain terms. The stand of the Indian Government on issues like Afghanistan and Kampuchea have revealed this.

India suffered in the esteem of the non-aligned and especially the ASEAN countries by not condemning the Vietnamese armed intervention in Kampuchea and by recognising the puppet Heng Samrin regime propped up by the Vietnamese there. Again, at the time of the Brezhnev visit, the Indian Government, in spite of its clearly expressed opposition to foreign troops in Afghanistan, and by implication, in Kampuchea too, could not stick it out and insert its opposing view point in the joint Indo-Soviet declaration but because of economic compulsions, used the issue as a strong bargaining point to extort substantial Soviet economic and military assistance instead. Now the non-aligned Foreign Ministers' Conference provided a good opportunity to the Indian Government to regain its credibility, position and leverage vis-a-vis the non-aligned countries. Its objective at this Conference was to restore its status among the non-aligneds, but not at the cost of its manoeuvrability in relation to the Soviet Union.

A scrutiny of the deliberations of the Conference and the finally adopted declaration show how cleverly the Indian Government, representing the interest of the ruling bourgeoisie, went about the task. The Indian Government prepared a draft for the declaration, to be discussed and finalised at the Conference. Through deliberations, parleys, lobbying and behind the scene persuasion in which the Indian side played a major role, consensus on the knotty issues were arrived at and although open rift on some of these were apprehended even till the closing stages, in the end the differences were patched up and the facade of unity maintained. As a rule, the Indian draft avoided taking extreme position on any of the

contentious issues so that neither the contending nations, nor any superpower might be displeased. As a rule, again, the Indian side allowed the opposing view points on such issues to act and interact and gradually let the deliberations lead to a consensus acceptable to itself and agreed to the same, ostensibly for the sake of maintaining unity, even when such consensus on a particular issue was likely to displease this or that superpower. While the onus for such a stand displeasing to a superpower lay squarely on the nations initiating the change of draft, the Indian Government enhanced its reputation as the moderator, the mediator, the restorer of unity! The additional advantage was that stands on particular issues which, while in consonance with the aggregate interest of the Indian bourgeoisie, were likely to displease a superpower, were now projected as the consensus of the large body of non-aligned nations.

There were heated clashes between Iraq and Iran at the Conference and it seemed no compromise was possible. But India kept on advising moderation, counselled that continued hostility could only endanger regional stability and provide opening for direct superpower involvement and interference. Finally it was possible to make Iraq and Iran agree to negotiate a settlement making use of the good offices of a non-aligned mission to be formed comprising of India, Cuba, the PLO and Zambia. It should be remembered that both Iraq and Iran are good markets for Indian commodities, suppliers of petroleum to India and areas where Indian capital is being invested. Significantly, at the time of the Conference, it was announced by the Iraqi Foreign Minister in New Delhi that Iraq had resumed oil supplies to India, and it was reported in the press that an Iranian delegation in New Delhi had sought Indian help in developing engineering industries in

(Contd. to page 6)

A Dangerous Portent

(Contd. from page 1) oppression for independence and upliftment of society, choose? Have they forgotten that during the independence struggle some of the foremost demands upheld by the students included universal education and opening up unhindered scope for higher education for all? Today should they not demand more and better opportunities for all sections of students and people, and press their demands for opening up of new avenues and widening the scope for higher education with improved facilities and standard? If they stand for progress, then they will highlight these demands and unite students and people from all sections irrespective of caste or creed to conduct a movement on these demands and against the wasteful expenditures of the Government who is further and further cutting down on the already ridiculously low spendings on education while wasting ever higher resources on administration, police and military budget for which the people have to pay. Such a movement will draw the support and help from all sections of democratic minded people. But unfortunately the students have not chosen this path. In the scramble over the few seats available they have lost sight of the true nature of the problem and the broader social perspective and are demanding abolition of seat reservation for the backward castes and tribes in the name of improvement of educational standards which, they say, have been eroded by the reservation system. And from this approach of the students, one section turning against another, the scheming parliamentary parties who have vitiated the political atmosphere in our country with their caste, communal and parochial politics, are getting the opportunity to play their dirty game of parliamentary politics to the full, one party playing

on one section of people and one side of the reservation issue and another party the other side. In this way each and every party, starting from the ruling Congress(I) itself to the entire opposition are in one way or another engaged in both the agitation for and against seat reservation creating ever deeper division among the students and people on the basis of caste, with the sole aim to gain some parliamentary advantage for their own petty party interests. While the portent of these agitations and the ensuing violence has left sober, democratic minded people deeply apprehensive about the prospect of a destructive caste war, Mr. Jagjivan Ram, Congress(U) leader, commenting on the Gujarat situation has openly declared: 'Let there be a caste war. It would settle once and for all the issue'. (Statesman, 83.81). That he could make such a statement testifies to the depth of vulgarity parliamentary politics has sunk in our society. Of course, it also reflects the general attitude of parliamentary parties, today. For example, the role of the dissident faction of Congress(I) in stirring up and organising the pro-reservation agitation is well known. What is more, press has pointed out that some Congress (I) legislators are involved in aiding the anti-reservation agitation too. According to some press reports the involvement of RSS has been established. So far the BJP is openly denying to have any hand in the agitation, yet a BJP legislator is openly fanning up the grievances and resentment among medical students against seat reservation by false propaganda. Does this leave any room for doubt about their true role, then?

The agitation for and against the scrapping of reservation has whipped up deep caste hatred and frenzy. But when the time comes for assessment of losses and gains will

the students and the people find any gains on their side? They will find all the losses on their side as happened in each and every incident of caste, communal or parochial flare up and strife. The only ones to gain are the parliamentary parties for their own petty party interests and the ruling capitalist class who is faced with ever growing all-out crisis of capitalism and apprehensive of people's uprising in mighty militant movement because of mounting unemployment, spiralling prices among others and the ever increasing burden of unbearable hardship and problems in every sphere of life and the consequent danger to their class rule. Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, our beloved leader and teacher, and one of the foremost Marxist thinkers of the era, analysing the root cause of the caste and communal problems in our country, has shown that in their desperate bid to cling to power and save the tottering capitalist system from the increasing wrath of the people the ruling bourgeoisie are trying to create dissension and division among the people with the help of vested interests and parliamentary parties by fanning up caste prejudice, jealousy and rivalry in the socio-economic field and all other backward sentiments and obsolete values in culture which remain as hangover from the old feudal society, due to the failure of the national leadership to carry out the task of social and cultural revolution during the freedom struggle essential for democratisation of society. Again, after attainment of independence when historically it devolved on the left and democratic forces to integrate these unaccomplished tasks with democratic movement, the parties like CPI and CPI(M) etc. did not even recognise this necessity, much less take any attempt to this end. And in the present phase of decaying, crisis-ridden capitalism when the ruling bourgeoisie has grown out and out re-

Shaheed Bhagat Singh

(Contd. from page 1) first of all properly evaluate and assimilate the highest moral and ethical values created in the nationalist movement and after exhausting these values we shall be in a position to transcend to higher proletarian cultural and ethical values. In our country the uncompromising revolutionary trend in the nationalist movement could not come to the forefront owing to the bankruptcy of the pseudo left parties and also for other reasons. The reformist compromising section after usurping the leadership not only suppressed and belittled the patriotism of these revolutionaries of the nationalist movement but even tried to malign them. And these masquerading as main stream of the Indian independence move-

ment and at a certain stage even opposed it. So these so-called communists were incapable of assessing these national heroes. But strangely it is observed that those who wish to suppress these martyrs are now coming forward with a show of honour to them. But what is this due to? This show of honour is surely not due to any genuine reverence for these revolutionaries on their part. These martyrs did not go uncrept and un-sung in spite of the attempt of the reformist compromising leadership of the nationalist movement as well as of the pseudo lefts, but what was lacking was a proper scientific evaluation of the historic role of these martyrs. Comrade Shibdas Ghosh in whom the thoughts of Marxism-

actionary in their desperate bid to cling to power and prevent the growth of democratic movement they are exploiting this weakness in lack of democratisation and even aggravating the same by increasing use of these backward sentiments and divisive forces as a camouflaged weapon for their own class exploitation turning one section of the people against another to divert their attention from the root cause of all problems; to this end they even make use of police and administration most nakedly as we have shown in some writings before. That even the parties like CPI and CPI(M) have joined the fray of communal politics is proved again and again. How otherwise could workers in Gujarat divide themselves along caste lines. Our party, guided by the invaluable teachings of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh has fought against this virus of casteism, communalism etc. all along and has highlighted again and again before the people that only by gaining an understanding of the root cause of their lack of opportunity and their growing miseries and by

conducting a militant democratic mass movement against the oppression of the ruling bourgeoisie can they hope to find some relief. In forging the broadest unity of all sections of oppressed masses and conducting democratic movement on the correct political line of anti-capitalist socialist revolution on the basis of proletarian class consciousness alone and higher cultural standard can the people defeat these conspiracies afoot and move towards true emancipation.

The movement of the medicos in Gujarat had great possibilities. If they had upheld the correct and legitimate demands of all sections of students and oppressed people what a mighty democratic movement fully supported by all democratic minded people they could have launched! But due to the lack of a true leadership they have been led astray.

We appeal to the students and people of Gujarat to deeply ponder over these issues and seek out the true leadership and move ahead on the way illumined by the great teaching of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh.

(Contd. to page 8)

The Eleventh March Strike

On March 11, '81 the employees in nationalised and government undertakings like LIC, Bank, GIC etc. observed one day's all India strike in support of the 77 day long strike of 75,000 employees in Bangalore and Hyderabad based public sector bodies like BEL, HAL, ITI, HMT and BEML. The strike was in general against the government's wage restrictive policy and repressive measures against democratic trade union movement. The demands highlighted by the strike were: immediate settlement of issues of public sector employees who have been on continuous strike since December 26, '80, withdrawal of GIC Gazettee publication through which wage restraint was imposed on GIC employees, withdrawal of LIC bill and implementation of Supreme Court's verdict on bonus, reinstatement of victimised locomen. The call of strike was given by the Joint Action Front (JAF) composed of representatives from striking unions under the advice and guidance of leaderships of four central trade unions — CITU, HMS, AITUC, BMS.

Not even twentyfour hours passed when the 77 day long strike of Bangalore based public sector bodies was called off on the "assurance" of Karnatak Chief Minister to whom the leaders of political parties represented in the JAF pleaded to intercede with the Central Government for an amicable settlement. The strike has been called off without clinching the basic issues.

After the formation of the JAF under advice and guidance of four central trade unions mentioned before and the action programme including one day's joint strike was announced, Comrade Pritish Chanda, General Secretary, UTUC (Lenin Sarani) in statements issued to the press from New Delhi on February 12 and March 3 held that in view of the all-out attack at this stage of dire crisis of moribund capitalism,

on wages and basic trade union and fundamental democratic rights of the working class, when to suppress brutally the democratic struggles authoritarian acts like the National Security Act, Essential Services Maintenance Act, series of Ordinances etc. are being freely used, a broad-based unity with a correct leadership free from parliamentary opportunism and a sustained movement covering vital sectors, were the very essential things. Instead of being guided by this working class outlook and a correct appraisal of the situation if any movement, however big, is conducted by sectarian interest or for capitalising it to reap dividend in petty parliamentary politics then the movement will not only fail to achieve the desired result despite tremendous sufferings and sacrifices of those in struggle but will rather help the bourgeoisie and its governments by exposing the weakness of the movement. Comrade Chanda deplored that no effort was made, to broaden the unity from a sectarian outlook. However when the programme of action including one day's strike was announced he welcomed it and urged upon the working people to take it with all seriousness, warning at the same time that learning from past lessons, the struggling employees would do well to be alert against any opportunist attempt to surrender the basic issue which in the instant case was the demand for parity of wages with that of BHEL employees as also to defend and guard the gains already achieved by them in the past through hard struggles.

After the success of one day's strike on 11th, Comrade Chanda, while congratulating the employees reiterated the need of utmost caution against the forces of compromise i.e. social democratism. Comrade Chanda was uttering this caution again and again for some solid reasons. We will deal

with the matter later on more elaborately. Suffice it to mention in passing that the principal issue e.g. parity of wages with that of BHEL was surrendered surreptitiously along with other demands long before the strike on 11th although the demand was in slogan.

Be it noted with sorrow, behind the stage parleys were going on to call off the strike and 11th March strike was as if contrived for that. An "Economic Times" (13th March '81) report says that a resolution moved by JAF joint convenor, D. Rajagopal said that the strike was being called off "without prejudice to an honourable settlement of pending issues such as victimisation of employees and payment of advances." The resolution did not refer to the demand for the obvious reason that it was no longer a demand. It may be mentioned in this connection that according to the same paper's report Mr. Gundu Rao hinted at improvement of terms of settlement if the strike was withdrawn forthwith unconditionally. And it was heeded. Now the speculation is going around that the lumpsum amount of Rs. 700 may be raised to Rs. 1000 and the advance which is to be negotiated may also be raised to Rs. 600, while the principal issues would be referred to arbitration, offered by Mr. Stevens, the Central Minister on 8th February. Most revealing is the fact that just on the eve of strike, 10th March opposition parties led by Mr. Urs approached Mr. Gundu Rao and he gave all the assurances and the opposition leaders appealed to JAF leaders to withdraw the 77 day long strike unconditionally and it was heeded. Thus came the end of a brave and heroic struggle. Meanwhile numerous court cases are hanging against employees, many are suffering serious injuries, three lives were sacrificed due to firing on 21st January.

If the struggling employees learn any hard lesson it is the one which Comrade Shibdas Ghosh imparted on the working

Language Movement in West Bengal

The third phase of the movement of the Siksha Sankochan Birodhi O Swadhikar Raksha Committee (Committee to resist curtailment of Education and encroachment on Autonomy) which covered a programme of 3 days' Street Corner meetings and signature campaign and which concluded on the 11th March last once again revealed the tremendous support of all sections of the people behind the Committee in its struggle against the anti-people language-cum-educational-policy of the 'Left Front' Government of West Bengal.

On the 9th March, a meeting was held at the crossing of Chowringhee Road and Rani Rashmoni Road.

Addressing a huge gathering Dr. Arabinda Bose, the ex-Vice

class long ago and appealed to them again and again to grasp. Comrade Ghosh warned that at this stage of third intense general crisis of capitalism all the bourgeois and social democratic parties who stand in defence of moribund capitalist system capitalise peoples' struggles to reap dividend in parliamentary politics. They do neither stand for a consistent struggle nor do they guide the movement as complementary to the basic struggle for emancipation. So long therefore the working people fail to isolate these forces of compromise from their struggle and so long they themselves remain prisoner to opportunism, then despite, their courage, sacrifices and sufferings their movements will inevitably go astray. That is why the importance of correct leadership in struggle which UTUC (Lenin Sarani) alone carrying the great revolutionary teachings of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh represents in our country. We appeal to our struggling brethren not to give way to despondency but to grasp this all important truth.

Chancellor, Jadavpur University enlightened the people about the disastrous effects of the language policy of the State Government.

Sri Manik Mukherjee, one of the Vice-Presidents of the Committee congratulated the people for their unique participation which earned a partial victory for the movement. He said that the People would have to develop a mightier movement to permanently forestall the anti-people policy of the State Government.

Sri Sankar Prasad Mitra, the ex-Chief Justice of the Calcutta High Court charged the Government with falsifying truth regarding the curriculum of language study at the primary level in socialist countries, namely the USSR and People's Republic of China.

On the 10th March, while addressing a huge gathering at the Gariahat Junction in the southern part of the city, Sri Premendra Mitra, an eminent litterateur and the President of the Committee expressed his pride over the partial victory of the movement. In his speech, Sri Pramatha Nath Bishi, an eminent educationist and litterateur stressed the necessity of teaching English from the primary level side by side with the mother tongue.

Sm. Bani Roy, a notable litterateur, called upon women of the state to raise their voice of protest.

Dr. Shyamaprosad Banerjee, General Secretary of the Committee criticised the government for the misrepresentation of facts regarding the curriculum of language study at the primary level in different states of the country.

Prof. Sudhir Bhattacharya, a Joint Secretary of the Committee, remarked that the Left Front Government, in reality was aiming at implementing the anti-people language cum education policy

(Contd. to page 8)

Non-aligned Foreign Ministers' Conference

(Contd. from page 3)
Iran and Indian participation in turnkey projects.

The Indian draft on the Indian Ocean condemned US military presence in Diego Garcia and other bases in the region but made no mention of the Soviet incursions including the armed intervention in Afghanistan. About two-thirds of the countries assembled led by the ASEAN nations and Pakistan, strongly opposed mentioning only the US build up without any reference to the Soviet armed presence and incursions in the region. India yielded to the majority consensus, and the finally accepted draft expressed grave concern over the increasing build up of superpower military presence in the Indian Ocean region and warned of the dangers of any action that would provide pretexts for involvement of or intervention by the great powers in the region. It is to be noted that this stand against superpower involvement and intervention is in consonance with class aspirations of Indian bourgeoisie.

On the Afghan question, the Indian draft stressed the need for a political settlement through peaceful means without calling for Soviet troop withdrawal from that country. As was to be expected, this was opposed by a large number of countries headed by Pakistan, Iran and the ASEAN nations. Now, stationing of Soviet troops in Afghanistan is contrary to the class-interest of the Indian bourgeoisie who have a growing interest and stake in the countries of the region including Afghanistan in the form of export of commodities and investment of capital. But they also understand that mere condemning the Soviets would not get them out of Afghanistan and since militarily confronting the Soviet was out of question, the only way was to put joint diplomatic pressure on the

Soviets through evolving a common approach, a consensus among the countries in the region against Soviet armed presence in Afghanistan. The Indian Government, as the mouthpiece of the ruling bourgeoisie, has been assiduously carrying on diplomatic activities, consultations and parleys at different levels with governments of these countries for the last one year or so with this aim. Now the Delhi Conference provided a good opportunity. The Indian Government went along with the majority consensus embodied in the finally accepted draft which called for withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan. This served to place the demand of withdrawal of Soviet troops as the consensus of the large group of non-aligned nations and is in consonance with the objective of Indian Government's diplomatic activities in the matter for so long. That the Indian side, skilfully using this issue as a lever, gained manoeuvrability vis-a-vis Pakistan is reflected in the manner in which India and Pakistan came close to each other in steering the Afghan issue to the finally accepted consensus.

To keep the ASEAN nations antagonized over Kampuchea is not in the aggregate interest of the Indian bourgeoisie. If consideration for the Soviet is a major factor with them and Vietnam a good market, the ASEAN nations too provide a very big market for export and capital investment. The first discernible shift in Indian position came at the last meeting of the Commonwealth Heads of Governments in New Delhi, where the Indian Government agreed to the consensus that foreign troops should get out of Kampuchea. During the Brezhnev visit both the Indian President and the Prime Minister asserted that foreign troops should quit from wherever they were. For the New Delhi

meet, India firmly took the position, against stiff Vietnamese opposition, that neither of the two Kampuchea should represent that country at the Conference. In doing so, India was ostensibly sticking to the decision taken at the non-aligned Foreign Ministers' meeting of Colombo reiterated later at the Havana Summit, as if as a matter of principle. This, when the Indian Government had recognised Heng Samrin regime as the lawful government of Kampuchea! Height of duplicity indeed!

The Indian draft for the declaration had made no direct reference to Kampuchea even, not to mention Vietnamese armed intervention in that country. Anticipatedly, this drew forth sharp reaction from a large number of countries led by the ASEAN nations which the pro-Soviets like Vietnam, Cuba, Somalia and Angola could not fend off. India took a neutral, conciliatory stance which objectively boiled down to going along with the majority. The draft finally adopted despite Vietnamese objection and reservation called for a comprehensive political solution of the Kampuchean problem which would provide for withdrawal of foreign troops from that country.

The inescapable conclusion is that behind the smokescreen of high sounding non-aligned principles, the Indian Government, with skill and even duplicity, made use of the non-aligned platform to further the class interest of the ruling bourgeoisie in their bid to extend sphere of influence. None of the thorny problems were solved, but the apparent unity of the non-aligned countries was projected. This is what the Indian Government had sought to achieve at any cost by playing the role of the mediator and by trying to accommodate different viewpoints on particular issues. It is not difficult to understand why. It is in the interest of the Indian bourgeoisie that

False Picture, False Promise

(Contd. from Page 2)
gross of matchboxes. Telephone call rate will be raised to 40 paise from present rate of 30 paise. Auxiliary customs duty will also be raised on all imported items other than edible oil, kerosene, highspeed diesel and steel for buffer stock purpose. CDS will also continue for further two years. By means of additional excise and customs duties the government will fetch additional revenue of Rs. 3000 crores. The most obnoxious feature of tax

proposals is 15% duty imposed on newsprint. Rightly it may be termed as a tax on knowledge and an invisible censorship. The whole idea is to obstruct dissemination of informations and analyses about government's wrong policies and disastrous proposals. This will mean the small and medium papers and journals will have to wind up and political parties who do not thrive on government advertisements will have to bear tremendous (Contd. to page 7)

the government moves with the non-aligned nations in a bloc with India as one of the leaders so that maximum advantage may be had and leverage gained by manoeuvring between the two superpowers in the context of the contradiction between them. The conference also showed how, in the interest of the ruling class, the Indian Government skilfully tries to take advantage of the contradictions between the non-aligned countries and also between the non-aligned countries and this or that superpower.

All these confirm the correctness and significance of the teachings formulated long back by our beloved leader, teacher and guide and one of the foremost Marxist thinkers of the era, Comrade Shibdas Ghosh through deep study and insight of the world situation and brilliant analysis of developing trends.

Comrade Ghosh cautioned as far back as 1960 about the growing reactionary character of the resurgent nationalist countries and the developing imperialistic traits of the relatively advanced countries among them like India.

Comrade Ghosh taught us that the increasing political affinity of the national bourgeoisie of resurgent nationalist countries like India with imperialism is as such no

indication that they are satellites to foreign imperialist powers, just as their growing antagonism with foreign imperialists for economic reasons is no sign of progressiveness of theirs. These are two different expressions to the same complex contradiction of a developing imperialist country with traditional imperialist countries.

These teachings of Comrade Ghosh have been proved on the anvil of history, have been proved correct again and again and gained force through the events of the last twenty years.

The leaderships of the pseudo-left parties like CPI and CPI(M) masquerading under the name of communist in our country have all along characterised the foreign policy of the Indian Government serving the aggregate interest of the ruling bourgeoisie as progressive, a policy of peace. In this way, they have bred illusions about the exploitative capitalist social order in the country, shielded the nefarious imperialistic character of the ruling bourgeoisie and served them by trying their utmost to prevent mass movements to grow on anti-capitalist line. Will the honest cadres, the rank-and-file, supporters and sympathisers of these parties deeply ponder as to whither their leaderships are leading them?

(Contd. from page 6)
pressure to sustain their party journals. But the impost will be on the poor and toiling people. They will have to pay much higher prices for every item of their consumption but the additional revenue will go to fill the pockets of their exploiters. What more cruel joke can be conceived of!

False accounting

Mr. Venkataraman has applied lot of cosmetics for a facelift of government finances. But cosmetics cannot replace the reality. The growing inconsistency between what is presented at the budget and the reality challenges the very utility of the exercise other than hoodwinking the masses. In every vital aspect of the accounting, truth has been distorted or suppressed. Take for example the figure of deficits either shown as the revised estimate for 1980-81 or for what is estimated for the coming year. Both these figures do not say the real position. If account is taken of the additional income raised by imposing higher excise duty on kerosene, diesel, petroleum etc. previous to the budget, the IMF loans shown as capital receipts and on top of everything government's heavy dependence on RBI credit and by a broader definition on banking system's credit support, the position is really alarming. As the Economic Times (February 16, '81) writes: "The RBI credit to the centre so far in the current year (1980-81) was as high as Rs. 1,700 crores as against Rs. 1,032 crores last year". It also writes that measured by the broader definition of credit support from the banking system as a whole, 'the budgetary deficit of the Central and State Governments so far in the current fiscal year amounts to as high as Rs. 3,360 crores as against Rs. 2,192 crores during the same period of 1979-80'. An important reason for this increasing deficit financing is increase in government subsidies from Rs. 1,655 crores estimated in the

budget to more than Rs. 2,000 crores. Again, the budget for 1981-82 although makes a bigger allocation to subsidies to Rs. 1,700 crores it will in reality exceed Rs. 2000 crores. A point to be noted in passing is that while the Sixth plan summary insists that these subsidies should be kept within the reasonable limits in order to release resources for development, and the plan outlay has been calculated on the assumption that Rs. 3,250 crores will be available by way of reduction of subsidies, fact is otherwise. The amount of subsidies is increasing alarmingly and will continue to do so for the remaining period of the Sixth Plan. Besides the incorrect figure shown as total subsidy, the budget also calculates a receipt of Rs. 800 crores from the Bearer Bond which is deliberately placed at such a high figure. Then again, the government's finance will be definitely strained when it will have to bear the increasing prices of oil, coal, iron, steel, railway freight charges for its public sector undertakings. Naturally reduction in deficit financing is not only in sight but what is more nearly 70% of the total deficit financing calculated to be resorted to during the entire plan period has already been done within the very first year. Naturally, the figure of deficit estimated at the budget for coming year to be of the order of Rs. 1599 crores is a deliberate attempt to show a false picture? The Central Government's, desperate effort at window dressing the deficit figure reached the realm of absurdity by not making any provision in the budget for the additional dearness allowances payable to Central Government employees in the coming months because of inflationary trend in prices. Only parallel to this feat can be so found in Ashoke Mitra's budget in West Bengal where no provision been made for the addi-

False Picture, False Promise

tional cost to be incurred (Rs. 80 crores at least) in implementing the pay commission recommendations, nor Rs. 28 crores out of the declared exemption of loans for the agriculturists to the tune of Rs. 40 crores has been taken into accounts of the budget. Budgetary acrobatics indeed! Added to the dismal picture is the fear of overall trade deficit exceeding Rs. 4,000 crores in 1980-81 against Rs. 2,262 crores last year. What picture emerges out of these facts? A high rate of inflation, severe balance of payments crisis combined with stagnating economy bedevilled by swelling unemployment, further miseries and destitution of the common people is the prospect that looms large. What for? Have not the people paid heavily for the country's development? Are they not bearing the back-breaking burden of taxation? Have not their standard of living instead of improving fallen to the standard of subhuman species? Then why this drudgery, why this abominable existence of common man?

Moribund capitalism living on subsidies, growing strength of military, police, and bureaucracy

The answers to all these relevant questions are to be found in some solid facts. The combined budgetary outlay of the Central and the State Governments has increased nearly four fold from Rs. 8,352 crores in 1970-71 to Rs. 30,365 crores in 1979-80. Bulk of this financial resources has been procured by increased taxation and deficit financing i.e. Bank's credit and printing of notes. About the tax revenue collected it is to be noted that 80 p.c. of it has come from indirect taxes which have been borne by the poor and toiling people. The tax revenue as percentage to Gross National Product (GNP) has reached 20 p.c. surely the highest among the developing countries

and probably has few parallels even among the advanced capitalist countries. But to what purpose thousands of crores of rupees have been spent? Most distressing feature is that bulk of the budget resources has gone for government's own house keeping. Deficit in revenue account has been dangerously increasing. That is to say major percentage of the resources has been used not for development purposes but to meet the increasing cost of defence, police and administration.

Even in the name of development, expenditure is being incurred on those items. Development in this country means not meeting the bare necessities of the people—food, shelter, clothing, nutrition, medical care, education, employment, protected average standard of living etc. It means on the contrary, high rate of profit for the capitalists by means of tax reliefs, subsidies and other concessions, strengthening of military, para-military and police forces, wasteful expenditures on top heavy bureaucracy, looting of public money, so on and so forth. That is why when larger and still larger percentage of toiling common people has been pushed down the 'poverty line' awaiting physical extinction, the gross fixed asset formation in the private sector has been, in the very modest estimate, Rs. 1,000 crores a year since the seventies. And let us note in passing that the government could only provide 17.4 p.c. for plan outlay. This is the fate of the sixth plan. Even this percentage net of price increase will mean nothing. Stagnation looms large.

This year too, the government could provide additional Rs. 600 crores for defence but it could not find money to arrange for taking over private trade in essential commodities so as to supply them through public distribution system to the people at fair and steady prices. This is at a time when

people are being fleeced savagely by the black-marketeers and hoarders the price of all essential items shows menacing upward trend. Budget which the bourgeois economists at one time at least proclaimed and tried to use as a useful instrument in collecting, distributing and financing resources in such a manner that they go in favour of those who need help and protection most, who are robbed and exploited by the very capitalist productive system. It was an instrument to meet the basic requirements of a civilised society. Today, at this hour of dire crisis, the mark of welfare state has been thrown out. Poor, toiling people are being attacked with fiscal savageries with the sole object of sustaining moribund capitalism. People are being doubly robbed—once by the capitalists themselves by raising prices, and lowering of real wages and then by the governments moving at their command, in the name of giving fiscal incentives.

Some basic questions

The basic question therefore is whose country is this? Is it of the capitalist looters, black-marketeers, political brokers and social criminals or of the millions upon millions of common people who toil hard to create wealth and resources? And then will it be accepted as *fait accompli* that common people will go on feeding the unsatiable lust of profit motive of the capitalists till poverty and hunger hasten their extinction? Hundreds of thousands crores of rupees have been collected by fiscal coercion only to push more than 70 p.c. of the populace to die in hunger and dishonour. Will the people accept this 'law' of capitalist exploitation for eternity? Will they not rise to bring order and justice by removing this worst kind of disorder? Can they do so by fuming and fretting in despair? Will it not require of them the courage and character that a revolutionary party on

(Contd. to Page 8)

SHAHEED BHAGAT SINGH

(Contd. from page 4) Leninism have been concretised in the highest form in our country was the first to make proper evaluation of the historic role of these martyrs who represented the uncompromising revolutionary trend in the nationalist movement and illumined the path of the Indian working class movement by indicating that the proletarian cultural movement has got its continuity with the high cultural standard attained during the days of our freedom movement through it can not stop there. This evaluation of Comrade Ghosh has already created a great impact throughout the length and breadth of the country and these revolutionaries of the nationalist movement have been placed in the heart of the people with renewed glory. Those who once maligned these martyrs are now trying to usurp this glory for their petty party interest for gaining dividend in parliamentary politics. With this aim in view they are even distorting the role played by the martyrs like Bhagat Singh. So the people must be alert against this design of the parliamentary parties.

We urge for the observance of the 50th martyrdom of Shaheed Bhagat Singh by wearing portrait badges of Shaheed Bhagat Singh, by garlanding the portrait of Shaheed Bhagat Singh, by taking pledges to accomplish his unaccomplished task of emancipation of the Indian people, by organising group discussions on the life of the martyrs and also by central rallies wherever possible.

On this occasion a 'Mashal Rally' by the students, youths and the exploited masses started from Red Fort at 9-30 A.M. on March 12, 1981. After a marathon march through various villages, important towns and cities of Haryana and the Panjab, the rally will reach Shaheed Bhagat

Singh's Samadhi at Hussainiwalla (Ferozepur) on 23rd March morning to pay homage to the martyr in a solemn and befitting manner. Arrangements for public meetings have already been made at many places en route to greet the marchers, where the historic role of Shaheed Bhagat Singh and other revolutionaries will be explained and pledge will be taken to fulfil their dreams of freeing Indian people from injustice and exploitation.

On the eve of this rally Comrade Gyan Singh, Secretary, State Organising Committee, Haryana on behalf of the SUCI in a press conference in New

Language Movement in West Bengal

(Contd. from page 5) of the Congress which served the interest of the ruling capitalist class of the country.

Among the other notable personalities who were present on the occasion were, Dr. Nihar Ranjan Roy, an eminent historian and educationist, Sri Sailesh Dey, a notable litterateur, Sri Saibal Gupta, Sri Manik Mukherjee, Vice-President of the Committee.

The 11th March was the last day of the announced programme. Despite heavy rain and a stormy weather thousands of people attended the street corner meeting which was held at the Shyambazar crossing in the northern part of the city.

Dr. Sukumar Sen, the eminent educationist and linguist of all-India fame graced the occasion. Dr. Pratul Gupta, the ex-Vice Chancellor of the Rabindra Bharati University, in his speech, drew attention of the people to the practice of worst type of falsehood by the government.

Sri Sailesh Dey cautioned the people about the danger of the evils of regionalism, sectarianism, chauvinism etc. that might become strengthened by the way the government

Delhi put forward the following demands for immediate implementation to the Central Government.

DEMANDS

1. The 23rd March be declared a National Day.
2. Statue of Shaheed BHAGAT SINGH be installed near the Parliament House in Delhi and at all other important places of the country.
3. The 'Uncompromising Trend' in the Indian Freedom struggle should be given due recognition in the history of the country.
4. In the School text books in all languages, the life and role of BHAGAT SINGH and other old revolutionaries should be incorporated.

was playing on the narrow regional sentiment.

Others who spoke on the occasion included Sri Amiya Chatterjee, Secretary, West Bengal Lawyers' Association and Sri Dipankar Roy, the Chairman, Students' Struggle Committee.

AN APPEAL

We appeal to our readers and subscribers to clear their dues which have accumulated much. This is urgent.

Manager
Proletarian Era

False Picture, False Promise

(Contd. from page 7) the soil, SUCI can alone instill? Will it not require of them to respond effectively to the call of united and mighty democratic movement, that this party alone has been earnestly appealing them to do? They will have to grasp the simple but sterling truth that it is only the brave and audacious who can write the history of glory by their sweat and blood, and cowardly submission to savage exploitation and injustice adds only to shame and dishonour.

UTUC (LENIN SARANI) ON 11th March's Token Strike

Comrade Fatick Ghosh, General Secretary, West Bengal State Committee of UTUC (Lenin Sarani) issued the following Statement to the Press on 11th March 81

'Following today's All India Token Strike in the Public Sector Undertakings the police with a motive to break the strike has lathi charged and tear-gassed indiscriminately on the striking workers of M A M C factory at Durgapore. As a result, 50 workmen were injured seriously and hospitalised.

'The Police thereafter, motivatedly went at the gate of Eastern Biscuit Company, the Director of

which is the son of the Chief Minister of West Bengal and brutally lathicharged the struggling workers of that factory without any provocation. At this, one of the important organisers of the union has been injured seriously and had to be sent to the hospital. It is to be mentioned here that there is no connection with the movement of the workers of Eastern Biscuit Company and to-day's Token Strike directly.

"We strongly protest against such police atrocities of the 'Left Front Government and demand full compensation for the injured persons."

Police savagery in Sambalpur (Orissa)

While the toiling people, both inside and outside the State of Orissa, still nurture the indomitable spirit unflinching militancy and dedication of the recent historic Orissa student movement, now four months over, the Congress (I) Government of Orissa, in order to brutally suppress the tide of democratic mass movements, has unleashed a reign of terror by resorting to brutal police repressions.

In the night of 18th February a police force led by the SP, Sambalpur, entered all on a sudden the three hostels situated on the campus of G. M. College and pounced upon the students. Earlier, in the evening on the same day, the police had forced open the gate of the G. M. College Boys' and Girls' hostels and indiscriminately lathi-charged and tortured the students, inflicting indignity to the protesting girl students. Students were pulled out and were severely assaulted. Thereafter, all the boarders were forcibly made to vacate the hostels and were asked to stand in the open field throughout the night. After rampaging the boys' hostels the police-hoodlums rushed to the ladies' hostel and asked them to stand outside. The SP,

hurling abusive languages at the girl boarders, threatened them that the 'Bagpat incident' would be repeated and all the girls would have to face the fate of 'Maya Tyagi'. The next day too, 19th February, the same police force entered the College premises and turned it into a police barrack. They assaulted whoever came in their way and made arrests on a massive scale. Similar tortures were inflicted on the girl students of Sambalpur Government Women's College. At Bolangir, another target of of the police atrocity, Comrades Gobinda Manna of AIDS O and Kapil Mishra, an organiser of the party, were arrested and tortured in the police lock-up. Comrade Pradip Mahapatra, organising secretary of the party's district unit, was also arrested and prohibited, along with many others, to enter Bolangir. On the 21st, Comrade Gobinda Maharana and several others were arrested and tortured. On the 23rd February, Comrade Chhabirani Mahanti of AIDS O and Students' Action Committee was arrested while leading a dharna near the State Assembly. Dozens of other members of the Action Committee, including Nihar Ray and Dilip Senapati were taken prisoners. In protest against the police barbarity March 6 was observed as 'Black Day' throughout the State.

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