

Fighting Railwaymen Create History

Launch Unprecedented Struggle

8th May will ever be remembered as one of the glorious D-days in the history of the legitimate democratic movements of the working people of our country. From this day, two millions of Railway workingmen of different categories have begun their successful continuous strike throughout the whole country on a charter of their longstanding and legitimate common demands.

The struggle the railwaymen have launched this time is unique and unprecedented in the history of their movements for their great achievement in unifying the existing various different and divergent categories of workers and employees on the basis of a common charter of demands and their united massive participation in action. It is no doubt unprecedented also from the point of view that this time their struggle has received a huge massive support from the fighting people all over the country.

As the indiscriminate arrests of thousands of workers including the leaders on MISA, DIR, specific cooked up charges of violence or on this or that plea that have started before the beginning of the strike and are still continuing violating all principles and norms that are usually observed by any civil Government and even the brutal police oppression and torture that is being mounted upon the family members of the strikers have totally failed to damp the spirit and enthusiasm of the workers so also the Goebblian tactics that the Government has taken recourse to for misleading the people with airy-fairy tales of near normalcy in the Railways has completely failed to deceive the people who from all strata of social life have come forward to render their full and active support to the cause of the railwaymen and congratulate them for the heroic struggle they have led against the anti-people capitalist Congress (R) Government led by Indira Gandhi.

While rendering our full, active and sincerest support to the struggle of the railwaymen, we would like to observe that a time has come, when those among the public, the press in general and political parties in particular who on and often speak in favour of democracy, democratic rights and support of democratic struggle, would face a real test. If they are honest in their purpose, then it is the time when they should come forward, back the legitimate struggle of the railwaymen, stand firmly by their sides and frustrate all possible attacks and the fissiparous activities of the Government launched to smash such a unique and unprecedented struggle of a great section of working people of our country.

We however do not know if the leadership that is committed to lead such a momentous struggle to its logical culmination is thoroughly conversant with and alert on the motives and sinister designs of the Government. This is no doubt a serious and pertinent issue. For, the struggle against an enemy can not be led properly in the correct line and the victory can never be achieved unless one is fully conversant with the motives and designs of the enemy. We however on our own, after considering that it might be of some help to the railwaymen in leading their struggle successfully in the correct line, would like to observe something in regard to the calculated motives and designs of the Government which has already taken recourse to all possible nefarious

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Com. Chanda's Proposal On Rail Strike

[Comrade Pritish Chanda, Secretary, All India Committee, UTUC (Lenin Sarani) placed a concrete proposal in regard to the Railwaymen's struggle, before the meeting of Central Trade Union Organisations held on the last 12th May at Delhi.

We would like to publish the said proposal of Comrade Chanda.

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The Members of the Action Committee
NCCRS
New Delhi,

Dear Comrades,

As an organisation participating in the historic and heroic strike of the Indian Railwaymen, and having received reactions from large number of striking railwaymen from different parts of the country on the formula of negotiation which are currently being talked about, we have the following suggestions to offer for the active consideration of the Action Committee of the NCCRS.

At the outset let me convey to you that we fully agree with and endorse the decisions taken by the Action Committee in its meeting held on 11th May, the fourth day of the successful strike, in which the 3 point formula (communicated by the leaders of the opposition parties) was rejected, continuation of the strike declared and at the same time desire for resumption of negotiations was expressed,

1. The Action Committee must remain firm in the position that both strike and negotiation can continue simultaneously.

2. While insisting on the release of the detained leaders and workers before resumption of negotiation is an important issue, the Action Committee must emphasise the demands of the railwaymen and not release alone. Therefore, before resumption of negotiation the Action Committee should seek

from the Government the latter's offer, if any, on the demands having implications, at least on some, if not all.

3. While economic demands should form the primary basis for a negotiated settlement, the following issues should also be equally emphasised:

(a) Immediate unconditional release of all those leaders and thousands of workers, both railwaymen and others, railway trade union workers and other trade union and political

workers who are detained all over the country in view of or in connection with the railwaymen's strike, many of whom are detained under MISA, DIR and other various sections of IPC or Cr. P.C.

(b) The guarantee of no victimisation should be unconditional, i.e., there should not be any 'exception' clause with regard to those against whom charges of so called violence, intimidation etc. are pending. Since, it is common knowledge that in our country the law and order authorities always under similar circumstances falsely put fabricated charges of violence, intimidation, sabotage etc. against the arrested persons.

(c) Withdrawal of ban on strike of the railwaymen under DIR.

(d) Guarantee of full democratic and political rights of the Indian railwaymen.

(Note: The sub-clause (c) and (d) may not be covered by the original 6 point charter of demands; yet, since these matters are of vital fundamental rights of railwaymen, the point should be clinched this time).

Fraternally yours,
Pritish Chanda
Secretary
All India Committee
UTUC (Lenin Sarani)

DELHI MEETING OF LEFT AND DEMOCRATIC PARTIES

—A STUDY IN RETROSPECT

In our earlier issue published on 15th April we announced the decision of the Delhi meeting of left and democratic parties to organise All India Mass Protest Day on 3rd May against the anti-people policies of the ruling Congress(R) Government, protecting the interest of the monopoly houses, jotedars and all other sorts of vested interests.

Meanwhile, as decided the programme of Mass Protest Day was fulfilled in different forms in different states. In certain states after discussing on state level the parties decided to observe state wide bundh whereas in some other states where they agreed to organise civil disobedience movement, thousands of peoples courted arrest. The programme of Mass Protest Day was no doubt successfully fulfilled. But it might not be out of place to mention that as we apprehended these forms of limited programme of action could not inspire the people very much and raise their enthusiasm to any great extent. For how can an isolated programme of bundh or civil disobedience movement create enthusiasm among the people and inspire them who are mentally prepared for a sustained programme of action? Instead of encouraging them would it not help to water down their enthusiasm for participating into bigger and protracted form of mass action? For obvious reasons in the Delhi meeting we repeatedly urged upon all the participating parties that the people's intense discontent and fury against the ruling Congress (R) Government could only be channelised in the correct path if, with a view to developing a vigorous mighty struggle on their legitimate demands against the Congress (R) Government, we decided to launch a programme of sustained struggle for which the programme of the Mass Protest Day would be such as to act as the starting phase of a bigger movement. No such programme of building sustained struggle was however taken even after our repeated insistence.

In spite of our repeated attempts we could not

prevail upon others for deciding in favour of any programme of sustained struggle, as most of them including the CPI and the CPI(M) were united in the purpose of keeping the movement restricted within the sphere of isolated agitational programmes solely designed to realise their narrow interest of parliamentary politics.

In the Delhi meeting we also failed to make the other parties like the CPI (M), CPI to realise the necessity of building up of political united front of left and democratic parties with a minimum common agreed programme based on the greatest common measure of agreement between the parties as the instrument to lead the vigorous and mighty struggle of the people. Nor could we agree with those parties on two other pertinent issues.

Though the proposed programme of mass action for the protest day even as a starting phase of struggle was inadequate to put any serious protest against the growing ruthless oppression and exploitation that were being mounted upon the people by the ruling Congress (R) Government and though the proposed issue-based combination of the parties as the instrument of struggle of the people was inadequate for developing a mighty and vigorous left and democratic movement still for certain reasons, after putting out note of dissent on the issues where we differed from the others while reserving our right to ventilate our opinion from the joint platform of action, for the sake of unity we decided to remain with the combination.

Though we strongly opposed the idea of forming an issue-based alliance in the present situation on the

ground that such types of alliances would act as a brake in the process of emergence of a political united front of left and democratic parties with a minimum common programme based on greatest common agreement among the parties as the adequate instrument of struggle in the present phase of democratic struggle which was strongly opposed by the CPI, CPI(M) and others, still we think it to be imperative to carefully utilise and successfully realise the scope, however insignificant it might be, that would be created for developing democratic mass movement even under the issue based alliance of left and democratic parties, based on particular issues. We are of the considered view that even within this available scope that would no doubt become very much limited due to the weakness and limitation of the instrument of struggle, attempts would have to be made to create situation as far as possible in favour of resolving the problems that our people are facing at present. Moreover, this would furnish one with the opportunity to launch wide and extensive campaign among the fighting people centring round the question of the urgent necessity of building up of a political united front of left and democratic parties with a common programme and thereby mobilise their opinion in its favour. With this end in view we decided to remain with the combination even after putting our note of dissent on certain issues where we found the others' views to be fundamentally different from that of ours.

In view of the fact that the issue of developing all embracing democratic movement throughout the whole country under a united left and democratic leadership on All India plane could be seriously posed before the left and democratic parties, the Delhi meeting with its out-

come, even with all of its limitations, was no doubt significant.

Main Issues

In reality we decided to participate in the Delhi meeting with a view to realising three important objectives among others. Those were to make a correct political analysis of the present situation, to make the others agree to build up the political united front of left and democratic parties with a minimum common programme based on the greatest common agreement among the parties, vis-a-vis, Socialist Party's proposal of developing a viable alternative to Congress and last but not least to decide in favour of organising a programme of sustained mass struggle including the programme of Bharat Bundh. It was no doubt significant that among all parties the CPI(M) most strongly opposed our views and tried all possible ways to keep the discussion restricted within the issue of deciding if there would be at all any Bundh and to fix up the date in case the decision was taken in favour of holding Bharat Bundh. However, in spite of its stiff opposition, ultimately all parties succeeded to place their respective view points in regard to the present political situation of the country.

Political Situation

It is a glaring truth and we tried to impress upon other that the growing economic and political crisis of the country enveloping every aspect of life of the people has created a well nigh explosive situation in the country. Thanks to the so called 'progressive', 'radical' socialistic measures that are being adopted by the Congress (R) Government, with days passing on, more and more the monopolists, Jotedars, hoarders, black-marketeers, profiteers, speculators are being allowed to enjoy full liberty to adopt all possible ways and means to exploit

and oppress the people. Unprecedented spiralling rise in prices is being noted in case of all materials including food. The anti-people pro-monopolist, pro-jotedar policy of the present Government led by the Congress (R) serving the aggregate interest of capitalism in our country coupled with extensive corruption in the administration including the Ministry, all these are aiding to aggravate the sufferings of the people. In such a situation it is quite obvious that peoples' discontent will burst forth with increasing fury in this or that part of the country. The alternative bourgeois parliamentary parties, the communal and regional parties, with a view to dislodging the Congress (R) from the governmental power and putting themselves in its place by defeating it in coming election battles, are trying to capture people's imagination, utilise their anti-congressism and give leadership to the outbursts of the people. The different fractions in the ruling Congress (R) party are also trying to utilise the situation in their advantage, use it as a lever against their rival ruling groups and thereby ultimately grasp governmental power. With a view to obstructing the growing possibility of the discontented people being led in mass struggles in a well trained and organised manner by the working class leadership, the ruling Congress (R) party with its different mass organisations are trying to build up ostentatious movements and on the verge of their being removed from leadership are trying to restrain even these pretentious movement.

United Front—Need of the hour

Now it is quite obvious that the people want a radical change in the economic and political condition that can only be achieved by establishing scientific socialism through

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Give Correct Shape To Peoples' Discontent On The Firm Basis Of Political Consciousness And Organisational Consolidation

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a revolutionary overthrow of the present capitalist state. As a revolutionary party we fully understand that these mass upsurges, whatever may be their intensities and however strong may be the yearning of the people seeking a radical change, are not identical with battles for realising revolutionary changes, that are to be fought and won under the leadership of the proletarian united front. But as the genuine Marxist-Leninist party on our soil, we take note of the fighting spirit of the people and feel that the present situation where the people having a strong yearning for a change, on and often are participating in anti-government movement has provided the parties professing revolution (whether all of them sincerely believe it or not) in spite of the existing differences on the question of strategy and tactics of revolution with ample opportunity to transform these unorganised outbursts into organised mighty left and democratic struggle capable of ameliorating the sufferings of the people, to the extent possible in a capitalist state and in the process educate the fighting people in the revolutionary working class ideology. For it is only through the development of vigorous mighty left and democratic movement throughout the country in the correct path, that one day after the exhaustion of the present phase of democratic struggle it would be possible to lead well organised people educated in working class ideology with a revolutionary political consciousness, in the path of revolution leading to the establishment of socialism after the overthrow of the present capitalist state. For obvious reasons, in the present historic phase of democratic struggle, what needed at the moment to give correct shape to people's discontent, to organise and lead them in mighty left and democratic

movements, is a political united front of left and democratic parties having a minimum common agreed programme based on the greatest common measure of agreement among these parties. It is quite obvious that at the moment the task before the genuine revolutionary party is two-fold. On the one hand it would have to expose the real motive behind the attempts of the Congress (R) party to develop so-called 'movements' and frustrate the heinous well designed attempts of the alternative bourgeois parliamentary, conservative and regional parties representing all sorts of vested interests to usurp the leadership of the growing movement and on the other sincerely attempt to build up the political united front of left and democratic parties that would transform the unorganised outbursts of the people into organised mighty left and democratic struggles. In fact if such a united platform of action acting as a weapon in the hands of the people, can be developed into a strong powerful weapon and correctly handled, then with the exhaustion of the present democratic phase, the movement can be lifted to a higher level, the different petty bourgeois parties, their roles being exhausted can be isolated from the masses and then with the establishment of the leadership of the real working class revolutionary party over the masses, the emergence of a new and higher form of united front, the proletarian united front, the instrument for achieving socialist revolution can be guaranteed.

Now it is only for this reason that we placed our concrete proposal for building up of the political united front of left and democratic parties in the Delhi meeting.

Our attitude towards CPI

In regard to the question of the relation between our proposed

united front and the CPI which, due to its existing alliance with the Congress (R) would not be able to join the front, we clearly stated that we would welcome its inclusion in the front provided it decided to break its existing alliance with the ruling party. Otherwise, even without being a partner of the front it might join the struggle that would be mounted up under the leadership of the said united front of left and democratic parties. In that situation the joint movement with the CPI would develop to the extent the CPI would join the struggle organised and developed under the banner of the political united front of left and democratic parties.

Issue based combination—a worse substitute for UF

But we are constrained to note that this most urgent task of building up of a political united front of left and democratic parties having a minimum common agreed programme based on the greatest common measure of agreement among the parties was by passed in the Delhi meeting of left and democratic parties on this or that plea and instead of that most of them including both the CPI and the CPI(M) who masquerade themselves as Marxist-Leninist parties decided to form issue based combinations from time to time. It was argued that through actions the issue based combination would develop into a united front. It was also observed that attempts to develop united front would be made simultaneously with the formation of the issue based combination. The proposal of forming issue based combination is not anything fundamentally new to us. We are conversant with the idea of issue based unity that was earlier proposed by the CPI(M) and we earlier repeatedly put forward our considered view.

then would there be any further necessity of making simultaneous attempt to build up issue based combination? We are of the considered view that this is tricky attempt to by pass the issue of developing a political united front of left and democratic parties which at present can be developed into the most powerful weapon in the hands of the people to characterise and isolate their enemies, direct protracted struggle against these enemies, develop mighty democratic struggle and ultimately lead the struggle to its logical culmination.

In the Joint Communique that was issued after the Delhi meeting, while observing on the issue based combination that was to be formed for steering up the programme of Mass Protest Day, the urgent issue of the necessity of developing a broader unity among greater section of the people through their united struggle was raised, of course without putting forward any definite guideline for organising such struggles and developing the necessary instrument to lead the same.

The argument in favour of developing united front out of the issue based combination through actions does not stand on scrutiny.

The issue based combination precludes the existence of any political and ideological leadership within itself. For obvious reason, such a combination lacking in a leadership perspective can never develop sustained struggle of the masses against the main enemy Congress(R) as well as capitalism. It is therefore obvious that such a combination can not release the process of the emergence of the political united front that possesses the leadership necessary to develop protracted struggle of the people against their enemy at the present stage of democratic movement. The idea of launching simultaneous attempt to develop political united front along with issue based combination we apprehend is a tricky attempt made to deceive the people.

The left and democratic people understand it well that the political united front of left and democratic parties is a more advanced and higher form of instrument for leading mass struggles than the issue based combination. So if one seriously thinks to participate in the struggle for building up of the political united front,

then would there be any further necessity of making simultaneous attempt to build up issue based combination? We are of the considered view that this is tricky attempt to by pass the issue of developing a political united front of left and democratic parties which at present can be developed into the most powerful weapon in the hands of the people to characterise and isolate their enemies, direct protracted struggle against these enemies, develop mighty democratic struggle and ultimately lead the struggle to its logical culmination.

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The issue is no doubt very urgent, and we feel that the proposed task can only be achieved provided we build up the necessary instrument i.e the political united front of left and democratic parties for realising this objective.

We are constrained to note that our concrete proposal of building up of the political united front, being not accepted in the Delhi meeting that was dominated by the big left parties like the CPI and the CPI(M), the fulfilment of the task alluded to in the Joint Communique would ever remain as reduced to wishful thinking.

Again, in the Joint Communique a caution was raised urging all to carefully guard so that the communal, regional alternative bourgeois parliamentary parties could not succeed to mislead the

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Government provoked strike to realise sinister motives and designs

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Means and activities to smash the struggle.

The whole issue when viewed superficially might appear to be confusing to a common man. For if the Government had really a serious mind to resolve the crisis which it often proclaimed before, then for what underlying reasons, when the leaders came and sat for a negotiated settlement the Government through its calculated unwarranted and deliberately provocative actions, cancelled four hundred passenger carrying trains arrested leaders and a huge number of workers in a most preposterous manner, led brutal tortures on the workers and their families, in this way slammed the door of negotiation and thereby pushed the railwaymen to a position where they were left with no other alternative but to go on strike?

But anyone, if he performs a concrete analysis of the concrete situation, would realise that the issue is not at all confusing. It would then become clear as day light that the Government in a calculated manner, with a view to realising its certain sinister motives and designs provoked or rather invited and inaugurated the strike and now are trying to put the entire blame on the striking railwaymen.

It was a fact that due to the dearth of sufficient number of steam engines coupled with administrative inefficiency, the goods transport system of the railways came on the verge of a total collapse. Movement of coal and raw materials of industries became highly irregular and uncertain. Huge products of steel industry were dumped in the factories for want of railway transport. This created much inconveniences to the business houses and for obvious reasons the monopoly houses including Tatas and Birlas started increasingly questioning the efficiency of the railway administration and even criticising it. The only means that was left to the Government to come out

of this impasse was to find a suitable number of steam engines so that proper arrangements could be made for the transport of damped goods, coal and raw materials of the industries. This again necessitated the cancellation of passenger carrying trains running on steam creating much inconveniences to the public and that for obvious reasons could not be achieved in the prevailing normal condition, for then the Government would have to face serious criticisms from the public. Meanwhile when the issue of railwaymen's legitimate justified demands cropped up before the Government that does not possess the least scruple, it engineered to realise its motivated designs. It cancelled a huge number of passenger carrying trains running on steam to divert steam engines for running goods trains to the much inconvenience and sufferings of the common people and along with this calculated move started largescale arrests of the leaders and workers with a view to pushing the railwaymen to a position where they would have no other alternative but to go on strike. The cancellation of such a huge number of passenger carrying trains running on steam long before the actual strike broke out that would not have been feasible in the normal condition but could now be performed under the pretext of arresting the impending strike of the railwaymen, palpably exposes the motive of the Government behind this move. Moreover it was further viewed that the expected strike would also provide the Government with a plea it was searching to cover up the utter inefficiency and callousness of an administration that was highly corrupt at the top. For then the whole responsibility of the prevailing chaotic situation in railways could be shirked off from the shoulder of the administration on to the head of the

striking workers.

Apart from this there was another crucial side of the issue. It was being felt that the growing economic crisis, intolerable ruthless exploitation and oppression of the people at the hands of monopolists, jotedars and all other vested interests protected by the Government coupled with widespread intensive corruption in the administration including the Ministry created a well-nigh explosive situation in the country. The Government was apprehensive that in such a situation an all out massive upheaval might break out at any time in the near future. Before that eventuality would become a reality the Government wanted to break the fighting moral of the railwaymen controlling the entire artery of the national life expecting that the railwaymen would not again be able to mobilise and close up their ranks and organise struggle within the coming next ten to fifteen years.

This explains why the Government violating all norms and democratic principles precipitated conditions for the strike and now are out to smash the fighting moral of the railwaymen by taking recourse to all sorts of repressive measures. In this regard they have gone to the extent of even criminally using the unemployed youths as goondas against the striking railwaymen.

Now in such a situation, the railway workers and the leadership have got only one bounden duty and that is to give a proper reply to the Government for its motivated and calculated designs engineered to realise heinous objectives at the cost of the suffering railwaymen and the common people of the nation.

Such a befitting reply would only be given and the Government would be taught an adequate lesson, when the railwaymen would register a complete and all out victory of the heroic

struggle they have launched against the Government.

Now we would like to draw the attention of our readers to some other relevant issues. Attempts are being made particularly by a powerful section of the leadership to free Mrs. Gandhi from the entire responsibility of the Governmental motivated manoeuvre of the whole issue and put all the blame over the shoulder of the Railway Minister and Home Minister. It is amazing enough that this people could not still shun their soft feeling towards Mrs. Gandhi! How can one ignore the fact that both the Railway and Home Ministers are part and parcel of the administration and the Government led by Mrs. Gandhi? Apart from this how can one presume that Mrs. Gandhi was not conversant with the attitude of the Government that was reflected in the way of tackling of the issues by her cabinet colleagues or that the latter acted in ways contrary to Mrs. Gandhi's intentions? So under no circumstances Mrs. Gandhi can shirk off her responsibility for it was she and her Government that through the unwarranted actions provoked and invited the strike. Moreover facts would be revealed indicating that it was Mrs. Gandhi who before leaving for Iran advised her Government on the tactical line that would have to be followed for manoeuvring the issue of railwaymen's struggle on their legitimate demands. Mrs. Gandhi has recently given a sermon by stating that all of us should earnestly try to come out of the present impasse which in reality is nothing but a well designed attempt to cover up the heinous and nefarious activities of her own Government.

The role of the opposition leaders and the manners in which they have started behaving after the beginning of the strike also deserve serious criticism from the fighting

people. The opposition leaders, most of whom belong to the party or parties that are playing major roles in the leadership of the railwaymen's strike are behaving as if the entire responsibility of bringing in normalcy and resolving the present impasse lies on the shoulder of the railwaymen. When it is the bounden duty of the opposition leaders to speak to the Government in unequivocal terms that the sole responsibility for resolving the present impasse lies with the latter, for it was the Government that alone was to be blamed for inviting the strike with a view to realising its motivated sinister designs, they have begun to and fro motion like a shuttle between the striking workers and the Government with this or that so-called formulae in the name of resolving the present deadlock. It is an experience of history that the social democratic force, which in normal time when there is actually no movement engage themselves in high sounding tall talks on struggle, in the crucial and actual hour of struggle always behave as a compromising force between the labour and capital. Our humble submission is, are the opposition leaders anxious to establish their social democratic character?

Or what may be the other earthly reasons behind such behaviour on their part? By this we do not of course mean to say that no attempt should be made for settlement of the issue.

We are of the considered view that as it was the Government that through its not only unwarranted but also deliberate high-handed provocative actions slammed the door of negotiation and invited the strike, negotiation with the Government under the present circumstances can never begin till the pre-strike condition is restored back by the Government by releasing

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HISTORIC MAY DAY

Calcutta, May 1—On the historic May Day, a big meeting was organised at Saheed Minar Maidan by four Central Trade Union Organisations, namely, the CITU UTUC (Lenin Sarani) UTUC (Bow Bazar Street) and TUC. The meeting was presided over by Mr. Mohammad Ismail (CITU).

Mr. Jatin Chakraverty (UTUC, Bow Bazar) moved the resolution which expressed fraternity with the international working class and renewed the pledge to carry on uncompromising struggle against imperialism and capitalism. It condoled the death of the martyrs in different countries who had laid down their lives for national independence, democracy and socialism and paid respectful homage to the memory of Muzaffar Ahmed and those who were killed in the democratic movements in our country. It noted the all-out crisis in the life of the working class and other toiling masses of the people in India, condemned the mounting attacks on them by the capitalist class, the administration, the police and the anti-social elements patronised by the ruling Congress party. It called upon the people to join in thousands the mass law violation movement on 3rd May next and make the Bangla Bandh on 7th May next a complete success. It urged upon the toiling people not to be misled by the sinister propaganda by the Government to malign the railwaymen's proposed indefinite strike from 8th May next and to make it victorious by all means.

Supporting the resolution, Com. Subodh Banerjee, President, West Beagal State Committee of the UTUC (Lenin Sarani), recounted the history of the May Day as the day of expressing solidarity of international working class and the glorious achievements made by the revolutionary working class throughout the world. While appreciating the establishment of socialism over one third of the world, attainment of national independence by most of the peoples in the dependent and colonial

countries, considerable weakening of world imperialism and superiority of the forces of peace over forces of unjust war the results of revolutionary working class movement, Com. Banerjee deplored modern revisionism, which remained still today the main trend of and main danger before revolutionary working class since Khrushchev usurped the leadership of the CPSU. He warned the working class to remain vigilant against modern revisionism appearing under revolutionary phraseology in our country.

Com. Banerjee elaborately discussed to establish the fact that all vital problems in the life of our people from unemployment, grinding poverty to food problem, retrenchment, lay-off, etc. were the inevitable outcome of the present capitalist system in our country. He explained why capitalism was incapable of uninterrupted industrialisation, mechanisation and modernisation of agriculture and overcoming economic backwardness of the country and solving the burning problems of the masses. He stressed on the necessity of making the anti-capitalist socialist revolution in India which alone could ensure the emancipation of the working class and other sections of the people.

He urged upon the working class to realise that to formulate the correct base political line of anti capitalist socialist revolution with a correct programme of action, from a united front of the left

and democratic parties and forces on the basis of an agreed common programme and establish leadership of the revolutionary working class through its revolutionary party over the people and their struggles against the ruling bourgeoisie, the Congress and its governments were *sine qua non* of leading the united mass movements to their logical goal and hastening the day of emancipation of the exploited masses. He showed with reference to recent movement in Gujarat how in the absence of these conditions rightist forces, so called left parties and pseudo-revolutionaries exploited the genuine indignation of people against the Congress misrule for their election politics.

Com. Banerjee called upon the people to defeat the vile propaganda of the ruling bourgeoisie and their agents against the railwaymen's proposed strike and make it successful. He reminded the people that the enemy was none other than the reactionary bourgeois class and the Congress governments, armed to the teeth with repressive measures, that are taking the country along fascist path. To defeat such a fascist force, very strong organisation was necessary. That should be built up. He also appealed to the people to make the mass law violation movement on 3rd May and the Bangla Bandh on 7th May successful.

Messrs Jyoti Basu (CITU), Chitta Bose (TUCC) and Bimalananda Mukherjee (CITU) also addressed the meeting.

No Negotiation till Government Restores back Pre-strike Condition

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all those who have been arrested so far in connection with the railwaymen's struggle, no matter under whatsoever pretext and under what charges the arrests have been made. Only then the proper atmosphere for sitting at the negotiation table would prevail and unless the demands of the railwaymen, at least their major demands are conceded to by the Government at the negotiation table no question of the withdrawal of their strike can arise at all.

We urge upon the opposition leaders to behave in a sensible manner and if they cannot show the proper wisdom the situation demands then it would be better on their part not move at all. Or otherwise they might jeopardise the cause of the railwaymen and whether they do it knowingly or unknowingly that would matter little for the result would be the same disastrous one. We are constrained to note that some of the leaders while expressing their sympathy with the railwaymen in their talks and writings are at the same time hobnobbing with Mrs. Gandhi and her Government behind the back of the railwaymen. So, we urge upon the

fighting people and the striking railwaymen to be alert in time of this kind of double dealing on the part of some of their leaders.

Lastly before concluding, we would like to urge upon the railway workers, to keep an eye of vigilance so that none should get any opportunity whoever he might be, to weaken their united action. They should realise that both the Government and the interested circle would not leave any single stone unturned for spreading propaganda against them alleging that they, by their action have created a national crisis and threatened to wreck the economy. This would however fail to create any dampening effect on their struggle if they can keep their unity firm, close their ranks and lead their struggle in the correct path. They have created a history through their vigorous mighty and momentous struggle. If they can keep themselves firm and united in their purpose on the face of any possible onslaught from the Government, which we firmly believe they will be able to realise then they will again create history by successfully winning the glorious struggle they have launched to achieve their legitimate demands.

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—Shibdas Ghosh

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—Shibdas Ghosh

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“Issue Based Combination” is unable to clinch the fundamental issue of giving all movements a positive lead forward, overthrow of the present capitalist set-up of the country

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peoples' growing discontent in a wrong path with a view to realising their narrow interest of dislodging the Congress(R) from governmental power and substituting themselves in its position. It is a fact, that to the extent the ruling Congress(R) being more and more exposed as the bourgeois party serving the aggregate interest of capitalism is getting isolated from the people, the conservative communal, regional alternative bourgeois parliamentary parties are attempting to fill up the vacuum created thereby.

It is no doubt a fact that the virus of parochialism, regionalism, communalism etc, that has permeated the mental make up of a vast section of the people is congenial to the growth of influence of the communal and regional forces over the people. In such a situation the caution raised in the Joint Communique would fail to create any effect unless serious and uncompromising political, ideological and cultural battles are launched to eradicate this evil virus from the mental complex of the people. This, however can only be achieved and the attempt of the communal, regional reactionary forces can be frustrated provided the unfulfilled social and cultural tasks of the democratic revolution are included in the programme of the left and democratic movement to be led by the political united front of left and democratic parties. For this purpose again the first and foremost task is the building up of the political united front of left and democratic parties. So we apprehend that the caution raised in the Joint Communique after refusing the very proposal of building up of the instrument that could make it effective, would tantamount to a pious wish.

CPI(M) opposes UF— prefers issue based combination

The Delhi meeting again glaringly testified the validity of our observation that we repeatedly put before that though the CPI(M) on the face of the people's urge for the united front was being forced to publicly state of the necessity of the formation of the united front, still instead of really attempting to develop such a front it was actually aiming at entering into issue based combination with other parties including even the Congress (O), DMK, Pragati party etc. The CPI (M) leaders have taken recourse to some nasty dual tactics. Of late in their Central Committee resolution they stressed the need of formation of the political united front of left and democratic parties. But when we raised the issue in the joint meeting of left and democratic parties they vehemently opposed our proposal of building up of the political united front and along with others stuck to their old idea of issue based combination solely with a view to pursuing their opportunistic 'catch-as-catch-can' policy of entering into any sort of opportunistic alliance with any political party whoever it might be, to realise their petty, sectarian narrow and pragmatic objective of emerging as a big petty-bourgeois parliamentary party alternative to the Congress(R). In fact, their opposition to our proposal of building up of the political united front of left and democratic parties which they revealed in the Delhi meeting was nothing fundamentally new. In the past also they opposed our same proposal that we placed in a meeting of the nine party combination in West Bengal.

Now in this background, the CPI(M)'s strong objection raised against

our proposal of making a political assessment of the country's situation, vis a-vis its refusal to place any such assessment on its part is understandable. If it would have to make any political review of the situation then the CPI(M) had to label those parties with whom it often enters into opportunistic alliance out of sheer political exigencies and pragmatic considerations as communal, regional reactionary and conservative forces, which for obvious reasons the CPI(M) would not like to do.

Mr. Sundariyya in an article published in the People's Democracy dated 14. 4. 74 has stated that his party 'has been fighting for a left and democratic alternative in the country.' It is no doubt astonishing that he has kept silent over the character of such an alternative. Is it a political united front of left and democratic parties? What ever may be the character of the said alternative, how can such an alternative evolve out of the unity of left and democratic parties when the definite proposal of building up of the political united front placed by us in the Delhi meeting was not even approved for discussion? The same nasty dual tactics is being pursued upon again. While in the meeting it was the CPI(M) which played a major role in frustrating our repeated attempt to bring the issue of the formation of the united front of left and democratic parties into discussion, now from the CPI(M) leader's observation it would appear as if the CPI(M) was in favour of building up of a left and democratic unity! Tactics of fraud and deceit should at least have a limit.

CPI(M)'s self-deceptive stand against right reaction.

Now in this connection, we would like to draw the attention of our readers to another relevant issue. Mr. Sundariyya in his

article has criticised the Socialist party which according to him 'were not seeing, the danger posed by the parties of the extreme right.' It appears therefore that the CPI(M) feels the necessity of fighting against the danger posed by the right parties. But how can they fight against this danger without building up the necessary instrument of struggle? And who can disagree that at present such necessary instrument of struggle is the political united front of left and democratic parties? For obvious reasons we would like to observe that though Mr. Sundariyya has criticised the Socialist party, in reality his party also behaved like the former. For had it realised the urgency of fighting against the right reactionary forces then it would have come forward to support our proposal of building up of the necessary instrument of struggle, adequate enough to combat the threat posed by the right reactionary forces. So, any sensible man can easily understand that although the CPI(M) often publicly pledges to combat the right reactionary forces, but in reality it does not seriously mean it. For how can it fight against the very forces with which it often enters into pragmatic opportunistic alliance for winning election battles?

CPI (M) is apologetic towards Congress(R), the main-enemy

The Delhi meeting among other issues atleast revealed two things. It glaringly testified our contention in regard to two issues, namely the attitude of the CPI(M) towards the Congress(R) and the former's policy regarding the issue of building up of a serious protracted form of left and democratic struggle against the Congress(R) Government. We have repeatedly observed earlier that there is no basic difference between the

CPI and the CPI(M) in regard to their attitudes towards the Congress(R). Like the CPI, the CPI(M) also does not consider the Congress(R) as the main enemy posing a real threat of developing fascism in our country. We have repeatedly observed that the right reactionary forces though pose serious danger and one has the bounden duty to fight against them, still it should be remembered that they lack in the necessary weapons to pose the threat of developing fascism in our country. These forces representing individual monopolists are conservative in their nature-while history has repeatedly proved that it is the militant social democratic force wearing a so-called progressive radical cloak and representing the aggregate interest of capitalism that poses the real threat of fascism. In our country, at present it is the ruling Congress(R) party representing the aggregate interest of capitalism, which in reality through the merging of private monopoly capital with state capital, by implementing the so called social democratic 'radical' measures is giving birth to state monopoly capitalism, gradually making the state subservient to the interest of monopoly capitalism and in the process developing fascism in the economic field that would act as the rock bottom foundation for developing a total and all out fascism in the country.

Not only that the CPI(M) does not consider the Congress(R) as the main enemy of the people posing a real threat of fascism, many recent facts and incidents have revealed that it is no longer a secret that the CPI(M) welcomes the growth of understanding with the Congress(R) and desires to come closer to Indira Gandhi.

Though it often publicly criticises the Congress (R) to pose its anti-Congress stance with a view to usurping the growing anti-Congress attitude of

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The CPI(M) Like The CPI, Does Not Consider That It Is The Congress(R) That Is Posing A Threat of Fascism In India

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the people and thereby emerge as the big parliamentary party alternative to the Congress (R) yet in close door meetings which lack in peoples direct source of knowledge it most often reveals its soft apologetic attitude towards the Congress (R). It was therefore not unusual that in the Delhi meeting when the CPI raised the proposal of including the so called 'progressive' section of the Congress (R) in the fold of the issue based combination, the CPI(M) welcomed the proposal. But in his article Mr. Sundariyya with a view to keeping alive their left image among their own cadres and people has stated the fact partially, 'the right (C)P is for unity with the so called progressive section of the Congress(R)', and for obvious reasons surreptitiously avoided the other part of the fact that it was his party that welcomed the said proposal of the CPI. There is a well known proverb 'half-truth is synonymous with un-truth'. Perhaps Mr. Sundariyya is not acquainted with the proverb or he would have completely forgotten to mention even the 'half-truth' as he has forgotten to state another incident which in a similar manner revealed their soft attitude towards the Congress (R). In the Delhi meeting the Socialist party once raised a proposal of criticising Indira Gandhi's slanderous attempt to malign the growing left and democratic movement of the people by labelling it to be designs engineered by right reactionary forces. The CPI for obvious reasons opposed it, but the CPI(M) did not utter a single word in favour of the proposal raised by the Socialist party.

Forgetfulness is a heavenly blessing if it helps one to safeguard his position! But we do doubt for what length of time and to what extent our CPI(M) friends would be able to safeguard their

position. Truth will be revealed one day and none, not even the Goebbles of the history would succeed to keep it concealed for ever from the people.

CPI(M) refuses to build up protracted struggle

Now let us review the attitude that was expressed by our CPI(M) friends in the Delhi meeting in regard to the question of building up of a sustained mass struggle against the Congress(R) Government. It is quite evident that the CPI(M) with its present soft and apologetic attitude towards the Congress(R) would refuse to build up a mighty protracted struggle against the Congress(R) Government. It was therefore not unexpected that when we repeatedly urged to view the programme of Bharat Bundh as a part and parcel of a sustained programme of mass action against the anti-people, pro-monopolist, pro-jotedar policies of the Congress(R) Government, the CPI(M) did not take our proposal into due cognisance and only proposed to fix up the date of the proposed Bundh. This is also not a new feature. We have earlier experienced that the CPI(M) never likes to participate in a mighty and vigorous movement against the Congress(R) Government as this might disrupt its growing understanding with the Congress(R) and Indira Gandhi. But at the same time when situation urges all to develop anti government mighty struggle of the people it cannot remain completely aloof from the masses as this would lead to its isolation from the fighting masses. Moreover, the realisation of its sole objective of emerging as the big parliamentary party alternative to the Congress(R), necessitates the creation of some sort of agitational form of movement against the government. Now with a view to realising both the ends, it participates in the struggle,

while at the same time tries utmost to obstruct its possible growth into mighty challenging form of sustained struggle against the Congress(R) Government and thereby keep itself restricted only within the agitational form of movement that would help the party to usurp the anti-Congress sentiment of the people to win the election battles. The same attitude was also reflected in the Delhi meeting. For obvious reasons it refused to accept our proposal of building up of a sustained challenging form of struggle against the Congress(R) Government and only insisted to fix up the date of Bharat Bundh. Moreover, during discussing the programme of action the CPI(M) along with another 'Marxist party' the CPI, clearly stated its unwillingness to participate in any form of action that might appear in the form of a challenge put up against the Congress(R) Government and create a sense of misunderstanding about its attitude among the so-called 'progressive' section of the Congress(R). With this end in view, when the question was raised whether the Railwaymen's coming programme of movement would be included in the programme of action of the left and democratic forces that was under discussion, the CPI(M) opposed it on the plea that in that case the Congress(R) Government might consider as if we were going to put up a challenge against it. And in no case the CPI(M) was ready to participate in any form of programme that might appear as a challenge put up against the government. No doubt the question whether the coming Rail strike would be included within the programme of Mass Protest Day was important and debatable too. For, as there were so many issues involved in the Railwaymen's programme of action not directly linked up with the issues

and demands of the Mass protest action, the question deserved deep and thorough thoughtful discussion for arriving at a conclusion. But the manner in which the CPI(M) refused its inclusion in the programme and the reason that it put forward to defend its stand on this issue once again clearly revealed its negative attitude towards the question of building up a mighty protracted form of struggle against the Congress(R). The CPI(M)'s English Organ Peoples' Democracy have so far published two articles on Delhi meeting, its decisions and their significances one of which has been written by Mr. Sundaraiyya that we have already referred to before. But none of these articles have mentioned even a single word in regard to the stand taken by the party and the underlying reasons with respect to the question of including the Railwaymen's strike programme within the programme of Mass Protest action.

The revelation of truth is often a danger to those who are afraid to face it. Are the CPI(M) friends afraid to face the naked truth? If not, then what other reasons there might be behind this surreptitious attempt to conceal the truth from their cadres, rank and file and the people at large?

Issues on which we differed from others

Now let us review those two pertinent issues on which, as we differed from the others in the Delhi meeting we put our note of dissent while reserving our full right to ventilate our opinion from the joint platform of action.

Most of the left and democratic people throughout the country are perhaps acquainted with the fact that in the Delhi meeting we categorically opposed the demand of taking over of only wholesale trade in foodgrains and other essential commodities. It is our firm

opinion that all out state trading both in wholesale and retail trade should immediately be introduced in all essential commodities including the foodgrains. As most of the parties including the CPI(M) did not agree to our proposal, for the sake of unity we decided to remain with the combination after recording our note of dissent while reserving our full right to ventilate our view from the joint platform. We are of the firm opinion that in the present situation in our country where blackmarketeers, wholesalers, hoarders, dishonest businessmen, gang of anti-social elements centring round foodgrain business and corrupt government officials are enjoying full liberty to fatten their bellies at the cost of the exploited and oppressed toiling people, the taking over by the state of only wholesale trade in foodgrain is sure to fail. Because in such a case retail trade being allowed to continue, the wholesalers in connivance with the corrupt police and administrative machinery would succeed in carrying on their anti-social business with the help of thousands of *benamder retailers* appointed by them for the purpose. Both the CPI and the CPI(M) on various pleas oppose all out state trading. We clearly elaborated earlier that all their excuses stand on no ground but only one and that is to serve the interests of the jotedars, wholesalers blackmarketeers and other anti social elements engaged in food trade at the cost of the retailers and the consuming people under the smokescreen of anti wholesalers, pro-retailer high sounding utterances.

Mr. Sundarayya in his article has sarcastically, qualified our demand as 'fantastic leftist'. It is not unusual on his part. Can it appear otherwise to a leader of a party whose policy on this issue, whether it likes it not, only serves the interest of the jotedar, whole salers, black

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Free the Movement from the Spell of Parliamentary Politics

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marketeers and similar other anti socials at the cost of the ill-fed, famine-stricken people of the country? We would have, however, appreciated if Mr. Sundariyya had put forwarded the underlying reasons for which our demand of all out state trading has appeared to him as 'fantastic leftist'. We always welcome criticism of our stand from anyone whoever he might be but at the same time we expect that such criticism should be based on sound logic, objective facts and reasons. But any sensible man would not fail to note that Mr. Sundariyya has behaved like that irresponsible man who often makes a sweeping comment on this or that without hardly feeling the necessity of basing it on logic and reason.

Secondly, the issue on which we differed from the others and on which also we had to put our note of dissent is the question of distribution of land to the landless peasants and the agricultural labourers. The issue is no doubt important and the demand of the landless peasants and agricultural labourers for land is legitimate. Now during the distribution of land to the increasing number of poor, landless peasants and agricultural labourers one should take note of the fact whether the area of land given to a landless peasant or agricultural labourer is adequate enough to maintain his family i.e. whether the holding would be economic and whether he would be able to retain it. But the area of land that is available throughout the country for distribution among the landless peasants and agricultural labourers is far below than that is necessary for economic holding, for the maintenance of their families and moreover on the face of growing deep economic crisis, they will not be able even to retain the small area of land that

each of them will share out of the total area of land distributed among them. In such a situation, when sufficient area of land are not available for distribution among the landless peasants and agricultural labourers the question of finding alternative means of livelihood for them is highly important.

So, particularly in the case of agricultural labourers, when the land available for distribution among them is not sufficient for their maintenance, ways and means should have to be found out to guarantee job for them on statutory minimum wage throughout the year. For this reason, in our note of dissent we put more emphasis on the need of ensuring job for the agricultural labourers throughout the year, and the introduction of statutory minimum wages for them.

A significant achievement

We would like to draw the attention of our readers to one significant outcome of the Delhi meeting. While putting our note of dissent on those issues on which we differed in views from that of the others, we reserved our full right to ventilate our opinion even from the joint platform of action. This is no doubt a significant event in the history of democratic struggle in our country and may be recognised as a step forward in the democratic movement. In the past we repeatedly pressed that any party whoever it may be should have the right to place its own opinion if it differs from that of the others before the people from the same united platform along with others. For, any reasonable man should agree that any difference between the parties even in a front should be brought before the people inviting them to participate in the polemics that may develop centring

round different views of the parties on political and ideological questions and they should be given proper scope to make them well conversant with the views of the different parties, compare them, assess the actual position and stand of each party, judge what is right and what is wrong and ultimately lend support to the correct views and thereby help to develop their own movement in the correct path, under the correct leadership.

Our sole task

Lastly we hope that the sincere, active and conscious workers of our party, our sympathisers and supporters would themselves realise, take active initiative to make the people understand and moreover we urge upon rank and file and supporters of the CPI and the CPI(M) to ponder over the fact that the leaderships of the CPI and the CPI(M) are utmost trying to keep the growing movement restricted within the compromising bourgeois agitational forms—the sole purpose of which is to gain cheap popularity out of the agitation created by them on the legitimate demands of the people by utilising their growing discontent with a view to gaining advantage in future elections and if possible capturing the governmental power.

Our sole task is to make the people conscious of this reproachable attempt on part of the leaderships of the CPI and the CPI(M) to keep the movement restricted within the arena of parliamentary politics and organise them in thousands to develop mighty protracted struggle on their just and legitimate demands. For it is only through the participation of the conscious people that the movement can be freed from the spell of parliamentary politics and ultimately successfully led to its logical culmination.

All India Mass Protest day

Kerala Bandh

As the CPI(M) and its allies called for a Kerala Bandh excluding SUCI, a constituent and one of the sponsors of the 3rd May All India Protest Day and thus violated the decision of the Delhi Meeting of the left and democratic parties, the Kerala State Organising Committee of the SUCI independently called for Kerala Bandh on 3rd May against food crisis, spiraling price rise, growing unemployment etc. and particularly against the anti-people capitalist policies of the Government.

The State Organising Committee of the SUCI organised intensive posterings, street corner meetings and public meetings at different places to make the Bandh a success. People at large responded to the call of the SUCI and all the meetings were largely attended. In these meetings the SUCI leaders analysed the present situation and said that a well organised and sustained movement alone could force the Government to concede to the demand of the people and at this phase of democratic movement only a united front of the left and democratic parties

on a common agreed programme could take such a programme of a sustained movement. The people, who attended the meetings, took active interest in the SUCI line and expressed their condemnation against the petty sectarian attitude of the CPI(M) to avoid SUCI, a constituent and a sponsor of the 3rd May All India Protest Day.

Seeing the growing interest among the people in SUCI line the CPI(M) workers in different places tried to disrupt the meetings, organised by the SUCI. But in all cases the people drove them out. Kerala Bandh was a success.

Arrests in Connection with Rail Strike

ASSAM

In Assam, Com. Probat Khatnjar, Secy. Assam State Committee UTUC (Lenin Sarani), Com. Saradindu Biswas, Secy., Gauhati Dist. Committee, SUCI, Com. Indu Bhowmik, member, State Committee, UTUC (Lenin Sarani) Com. Kantimoy Deb, D.S.O. Assam State Committee and Com. Abdul Hakim Sarkar member, SUCI Goalpara Dist. Committee were arrested under the DIR in connection with the rail strike. Arrest Warrant have been issued against many other organisers of the SUCI, the UTUC (Lenin Sarani) and the DSO.

Com. Asit Bhattacharjee, Secretary SUCI State Committee has in a statement demanded immediate release of all those arrested in connection with the rail strike. A similar statement has been issued by Com. Fatik Ghosh on behalf of the UTUC (Lenin Sarani) All India Committee.

ORISSA

On 2nd May, 1974, on the eve of railwaymen's

strike on 8th May, Com. Banabehari Jena, Secretary, Orissa State Committee U. T. U. C. (Lenin Sarani) and one of the members of SUCI Orissa State Committee has been arrested under D.I.R. Com. Jena is the secretary of Rourkela Workers Union, Rourkela Engineering Workers Union, Orissa Cement Workers Union (Rajgangpur) Lathikata Refractory Workers Union, Orissa Ceramics Workers Union. His arrest created commotion amongst the workers particularly the Railway workers of Bandamunda, Rourkela and Jarsuguda.

Com. Mayadhar Nayak, one of the members of the Executive Committee of Orissa State Committee of U. T. U. C. (Lenin Sarani) has also been arrested on 2nd May under MISA.

Com. T. Dutta, President of the Orissa State Committee of U.T.U.C. (Lenin Sarani) in a press statement has strongly condemned the undemocratic action of the Government and demanded immediate release of Com. Jena and Com. Mayadhar Nayak.