



Ref. :

XS: IP/I, Gus, AA, Jack

COMMUNIST LEAGUE

Indian Section of The Fourth International,
Govind Rao's Dev's Wada, Pratap Road, Raopura, BARODA-390001.

Date : 8/12/ '79

To
IC Press
New York

Dear Gus,

Please find herewith the election manifesto of CL. Our candidate is com. Thakore Shah who was also the candidate during 1977 . Parliamentary election. His photographs and the manifesto was published in IC Press during 1977. The election is on 6th of Jan 80. Hence please print this in IC press in the next issue of IC Press.

I am going to write the detail report soon about the progress of the election campaign.

Yours


(Nagan Desai)

Gs of CL



FORWARD TO UNITY OF WORKING CLASS PARTIES .
 FOR WORKERS' AND POOR - PEASANTS' GOVERNMENT.
 FIGHT CAPITALISM TO FINISH COMMUNALISM AND AUTHORITARIANISM.

Election Manifesto of The COMMUNIST LEAGUE.

(Indian Section of Fourth International)

The recent mid-term poll is declared in the midst of rising class struggle of urban and rural masses, and the uncertainty over the outcome of the claims made by industrial and agricultural bourgeoisie on the national resources and their struggle for hegemony in the ruling power block at the central governmental level.

For more than one decade, the bourgeois parliamentary democracy in India has come under greater and greater stress. This political instability of the bourgeois democracy flows from the steady erosion of material as well as ideological resources at the disposal of Indian bourgeoisie. The recessionary economic crisis of late sixties, last Indo-Pak war, intensification of class struggle culminating into the railway workers' strike and mass struggles of Gujarat and Bihar, engulfment of Indian economy into world economic crisis of 1974 etc. brought staggering bourgeois democracy to its knees resulting into proclamation of emergency and the brutal suppression of the struggle of the masses. The last general election of March 1977 provided a new opportunity to Indian bourgeoisie to put its house into order within the frame-work of bourgeois democracy.

Since independence with a strategic aim to expand internal market and to promote capitalist mode of production with added vigour, the capitalist state power of India poured massive resources into Indian agriculture, with a resultant flourishing of the agrarian section of capitalist class i.e. rich peasants popularly called Kulaks. From 1960s, this agrarian section of bourgeoisie started its struggle to extend its domination over ruling power block. Till March 1977 they were successful in asserting their position at the regional or state level. March 1977 provided them a great opportunity to extend their tentacles at the central governmental level and they started a determined struggle for hegemony in the ruling power block at the centre.

From March 1977 the Indian bourgeoisie as a class incessantly tried with all its manoeuvrability and far sightedness to evolve Janata Party into a viable political party to ensure stability of bourgeois rule in India. But along with its internal squabbling the bourgeoisie faced a formidable challenge from the toiling masses of India. March 1977 triggered off a sustained wave of militant struggles of industrial workers, employees, Dalits, students, rural poor and oppressed nationalities of Eastern India. The efforts of Indian bourgeoisie to make use of the post recessionary moderate economic upturn by liberalisation of import policy, deficit financing, relaxation of credit squeeze thereby giving free hand to speculators and hoarders, resulted into spiralling of inflationary rate. The backward Indian bourgeoisie had no alternative but to launch a fierce attack on the living standards of the working class to maintain and boost up its rate of profit. The rationalisation of production method increased the industrial reserve army of labour to an unheard of scale. The year 1979 opened with an inevitable danger of economic recession triggered off by the acute shortage of power, raw material and the transport bottleneck. To defend their living standards and fight intensity of exploitation (work load) the working class and toiling masses took up battles in factories, fields, slums and streets. The massacre of workers in Kanpur, Pantnagar, Bailailla etc., mass strikes of the government employees of Maharashtra, strikes of Bank employees, jute, textile and dock workers and so on culminated into the spread of dissent in the very repressive apparatus of the state like Police, CRP, SFP, CISF etc. Starting in one State, it spread to almost all states taking on a countrywide character and a magnitude which made it the most serious example of breakdown in the bourgeois repressive apparatus since independence. It took long time with the help of Army, court, marshals and finally massacre of resenting police, CRP, SFP and CISF personnel to crush this movement. But the impact of it was such that yet there continues to take place sporadic incidences of dissension in the ranks of this repressive apparatus of law and order.

Without doubt this event has shaken up the bourgeois state in a way that no other event has since the Railway workers strike of 1974.

The most conspicuous feature of the struggles of industrial workers was the militancy shown by the working class and at some places like Kanpur, Poona etc. These militant workers temporarily even crossed the prescribed limits and boundaries of traditional trade unionism. At such places workers themselves took up the initiative in their own hands brushing aside the traditional bureaucratic leadership. Though they were not able to sustain their independent struggle committees for a long time, they were able to show a new way to a large mass of workers.

In agriculture, the sweeping agrarian capital ran amok in suppressing agricultural poor to maintain its drive towards appropriation of greater and greater surplus value. Wide-spread caste atrocities to suppress Dalit agricultural poor were combined with the suppression of rural labour as such by terrorising them. The atrocities on Dalits in Maharashtra (Marathwada), Tamilnad, Rajasthan, Bihar, U.P., etc., have revealed the intensified class struggle in the rural areas.

The disintegration of Janata Party, declaration of Mid-term poll, and fragmentation of bourgeois political party framework, thus, cannot be explained in a sequential chain of events nor through the power greed of individual or ambitions of any one of them only. They do play a part in their own way, but are inadequate to explain the whole complexity of the present situation.

ISSUES IN THIS ELECTION:

For the ruling class, especially under the guise of bourgeois parliamentary democracy, election is a strategic arena to consolidate and strengthen its order. Elections act as a safety valve to vent the grievances of the opposition to maintain the status quo. The recent mid-term poll was come at a time when bourgeois democracy in India has already entered a period of prolonged crisis and instability and when there has been a complete fragmentation of bourgeois political party framework. Objectively the bourgeoisie as a class wants to stabilise, strengthen and continue parliamentary democracy before opting for any other extreme and naked measure to stabilize its rule.

The very strategy in these elections is to reconcile various sections of bourgeoisie and at the same time side-track the real issues of the toiling masses and persuading them to refrain from struggle under the pretext of elections and if necessary clamp down on their movement through draconian preventive measures. Silence on the draconian preventive detention ordinance and busy in forming alliance with one or another bourgeois party the Stalinist parties like CPI, CPM, some Maoist party and groups; the Centrist parties like BSP, RCP etc., and the reformist parties like Forward Block and Socialist groups, are aiding in making the bourgeois strategy successful.

The issue of authoritarianism is taken up by some bourgeois parties and Stalinist, Centrist and Reformist working class parties. But their presentation of this issue is devoid of its class nature. Authoritarianism stems from the backward capitalist social system prevalent in India. Emergency was only one of the naked shows of authoritarianism. The undivided Janata Party and its leader (now with Janata party or outside it), with all their democratic pretensions not withstanding, are equally if not more, guilty of bayoneting workers and toiling masses on massive scale from Kanpur to Marathwada, attempting to impose Industrial Relations Bill and MISA on the organised working class movement in India. Preventive Detention Ordinance issued by Charansingh government and his threats to ban strikes are also a pointer in this direction. These events since March 1977 have proved that it is not correct authoritarianism with any particular group, individual or bourgeois political formation. Authoritarianism cannot be combated by aligning with any particular bourgeois party, group or individual. Roots of authoritarianism can be removed only with the overthrow of this backward capitalist state and social system by a victorious proletarian revolution establishing workers state in India.

Similarly communalism as a class weapon to drive a wedge in the unity of struggling toiling masses is employed by the ruling class in India since independence itself.

Communalism satisfies the needs of the capitalist state and social system in India. It is an ideological and oppressive weapon of the ruling class. It is not monopoly of one or another bourgeois party. In fact all the bourgeois political parties and groups whether popularly branded as communal or not, are directly or indirectly instrumental in the communal violence perpetrated on minorities in India. Thus, it cannot be fought by fighting only one or another bourgeois party. It cannot be simply fought by forging an alliance, electoral or otherwise with any particular bourgeois political party or group. In any case, it cannot be fought effectively politically by subordinating the independence of working class politics and its movement to the needs of any particular bourgeois political party or group or individual. It can be fought only and only through the united movement of working class and toiling masses against all forms of oppression and exploitation generated by the capitalist social system in India.

Hence, the major issues all the way debated in these elections by bourgeois parties as well as Stalinist, Centrist and Reformist left parties are devoid of their class content. The issues of authoritarianism or communalism or stability at the centre or the question of law and order etc., raised by bourgeois parties, Stalinist, Centrist and reformist working class parties as well, are nothing but pawns in the bourgeois chess game of electoral politics.

Real Issues of the Working Class:-

For the working class movement in India, real issues which confront it in these elections relate to its very existence as a producer class. The defense of their standard of living and the defense against the brutal assault on their democratic rights and atrocities on toiling masses are their fundamental issues. The threat of the Industrial Relation Bill, a frontal assault of bourgeoisie to snatch away fundamental democratic rights of the working class is not going to be swayed away through this election. The recognition of Bonus as a deferred wage and other such demands on a lasting basis cannot be achieved through elections.

These issues have posed a need for self-defense of the working class and toiling masses and their organisations. Lock outs, closures, retrenchment of workers etc, have worsened the problem of massive unemployment. Spiralling inflation has rendered the problem of living and minimum wages very acute. For the pauperised masses of rural areas, these elections are not going to bring back their lost land or their emancipation from wage-slavery. The way election campaigns are taken up by the bourgeois parties, the Dalits are going to be victim of more and more cast atrocities. Their real issues are radical land reforms, better living and working conditions, right to organise and strike, their religious rights and real abolition of untouchability, segregation, abuse, oppression, exploitation and so on, inflicted upon them for centuries.

For the working class and all toiling masses of India the elections have brought draconian preventive detention ordinance, ready to fall under the guise of essential commodities act and so on. This is a portent of trend to come after elections. Whether these elections produce a stable government of one party or a coalition of parties, whether the party or parties forming government are Janata, Cong(I), Cong(U) or Lok Dal, whether it is supported by Stalinist, Centrist and Reformist working class parties or not, there are ample reasons to believe that a crack down on the democratic rights of the working masses is going to be one of the earliest measures of the new regime.

The Electoral Policy of the Communist League:-

While the Communist League, the Indian section of Fourth International, does not believe that elections can solve such issues specific to the toilers. It says that the election is a medium through which above mentioned real issues of working class politics can be posed sharply so as to help mobilise the working class politically and organisationally to take up revolutionary fight against the bourgeoisie.

When Indian bourgeoisie is pushing forward its overall political strategy in elections, the traditional left of India - Stalinists, Centrists and Reformists - are again putting forward their class collaborationist programme to save bourgeoisie from political crisis. They do not believe in the independent mobilisation of the working class and its toiling allies for the Socialist Revolution.

The concept of "Left and Democratic Front" put forward by these parties is nothing but one of the forms of political class collaboration with the bourgeoisie. The task of socialist revolution and thus the capture of state power by the working class is relegated to some ~~xxx~~ indefinite period in future.

Class collaborationism in any form and under any guise has always proved harmful for the independent working class politics and movement. In these elections it is presented to us in the name of fighting authoritarianism and communalism. It is to be totally rejected.

In these circumstances, independent proletarian politics continues to be the need of the hour. Working class should put political confidence only in their own united organised strength. Not elections, but the mobilisation of workers and their allies around their real issues at work place, in fields, slums and streets can only solve their problems by establishing their own rule. The overall aim of the communist league is the independent mobilisation of the working people to establish their own rule in order to begin the construction of socialism. The Indian working class and toiling mass must liberate themselves from the ideological and the political spell and influence of the bourgeoisie and its reformist tendencies in the working class movement. The forge the united front of all the left forces represented by all the working class parties for the programme of the workers' and poor peasants' government is the pre-condition to realise this perspective. Such politics must have the perspective of mobilising and uniting the working class, toiling and poor masses against all the exploiting classes, their parties and their socio/political system, around democratic-democratic and transitional demands for establishing a workers' state.

Elections is one of the arenas for conducting class struggle, where masses could be educated on all these aspects through proletarian methods of propaganda and participation. With such a strategic perspective, the Communist League is participating in this elections and asks all the workers and toiling people to vote for its candidates.

The election policy of the Communist League is placed in this frame work. We ask all the workers and toilers never to vote for any capitalist candidate or parties no matter how left they talk.

The Communist League DOES NOT call for a vote for electoral or governmental blocks (The left and democratic front or any such front) of capitalist and any Stalinist, Centrist or reformist left parties, called popular front since 1930s when that is the name Stalin gave to this form of class collaborationism. To do so under any pretex would be to say that it is not necessary to overthrow capitalist class rule and replace it with workers' political power but to say that the capitalists and workers together should rule-which always means in reality continued capitalist power.

Wherever Communist League is not able to put forward its own candidates, but where some independent working class candidate or candidates of above mentioned class-collaborationist working class parties and tendencies are contesting, We ask the working people not to refrain from voting.

In such cases, the first choice should be the independent working class candidate or a party having a clear cut programme of independent political action by the working class against all forms of ~~exploitation~~ exploitation, oppression and class collaborationism.

In absence of such independent working class candidate, Communist League asks the working people not to recognise, but to totally reject the class collaborationist programme of the candidates of Stalinist, Centrist and Reformist parties and to cast a critical vote, a vote without accepting their programme in favour of such parties. This is because their class composition is different from capitalist parties. They are historical currents in the working class movement. Their base is in the mass organisations of workers. A vote for them without accepting their programme is for advancing the concept of the need to counterpose class against class amongst the working people. The call for a critical vote is meant to help draw the dividing line in the electoral arena between the working class and the capitalist class without giving any support

whatsoever to their class collaborationist programme but in fact all time thoroughly criticizing it.

Whatever possible, the Communist League will prefer its own state of working class candidates and participate in these elections for revolutionary propaganda and agitation with the above mentioned revolutionary Marxist perspective and with a following programme of demands :

WORKING CLASS AND TRADE UNION :

- 1) Recognition and restoration of minimum bonus as a deferred wage for all wage earners and salaried employees. Restore 8.33 per cent as minimum bonus immediately and remove all ceiling on bonus. Delink bonus from productivity and any type of intensity of exploitation.
- 2) No to Industrial Relations Bill.
- 3) No more wage freeze and compulsory deposit scheme. Immediate payment of arrears alongwith interest of the CDS (Compulsory Deposit Scheme)
- 4) Effective legislation and its implementation against lay-off, lock-outs and closures.
- 5) Reopening of sick mills under Workers' Control to be financed by the State.
- 6) Opening of books of accounts including secret dealings, of the employers . by and before the workers.
- 7) Right of workers to elect and recall representatives of their choice in trade unions, other working class councils and committees through secret ballot as well as the right of workers to decide questions of strike, demonstrations, withdrawal etc.
- 8) No repression and/or terrorisation of workers, toilers, employees, nationalities, Dalits etc. and their struggles by legal or extralegal means and methods from all quarters.
- 9) Organise workers' and toilers' groups and committees of self-defense to fight assaults on their organisations, meetings, agitations etc.
- 10) Nationalisation without compensation of all means of production, transport and communication under workers' control.
- 11) Right to work with a sliding scale of hours of work.

LANDLESS LABOURERS AND POOR PEASANTS:

- 12) Full trade union and democratic rights for landless labourers and poor peasants.
- 13) Guaranteed minimum wage to agricultural and landless labourers through their own elected committees.
- 14) Guaranteed bonus, provident fund, gratuity and pension benefits to agricultural and landless labourers.
- 15) Provision for subsidised agricultural inputs such as seeds, fertilizers pesticides, tools etc. for poor peasants and marginal farmers.
- 16) Speedy implementation of land reform through and under the control of democratically elected poor peasants' and marginal farmers' committees.
- 17) Nationalisation of plantations, farms, cooperatives owned and/or controlled by rich farmers.

WOMEN :

- 18) Right to work and reservation in jobs of all kinds for women and end of discrimination against them.
- 19) Free education to girls till highest stage.
- 20) Reduce working hours and relieve women from onerous duties.
- 31) State creches, child care centres and cheap clean mess (eating places) for the working women.
- 22) Right to divorce without any restrictions and their maintenance till employment by the husband. Full freedom to marry and divorce.
- 23) Equal pay for equal work.
- 24) Complete freedom for abortion without any restriction to all women and effective real campaign against stigma around it in the society.
- 25) Women's vigilance committees to tackle the cases of rape, wife-beating and all forms sexual and other violence against women of prostitution at work place.
- 26) Abolition of prostitution, devdasis system etc. with decent guaranteed jobs.

POLITICAL :

- 27) Scrap emergency provisions from the constitution of India. Scrap all draconian measures like mini-MISA, Preventive Detention etc.
- 28) Right to strike as a fundamental right of the workers.
- 29) Right of nationalities to self-determination.
- 30) No brutalities and military operations against Nagas, Mizos and other tribes and nationalities.
- 31) An end to atrocities on dalits, national and religious minorities.
- 32) Release all political prisoners, including Nagas, Mizos, Naxalities etc.
- 33) Right to recall elected representatives of the people from Panchayats to parliament.
- 34) Abolition of private property in production, distribution and exchange.

STUDENTS AND EDUCATION:

- 35) Nationalisation without compensation of all education institutions, ^{which should be} under control of students and teachers.
- 36) Management of such educational institutions by students and teachers.
- 37) Right of organisation and political association to all students and teachers.

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HOUSING AND MEDICAL SERVICES :

- 38) Provision for standard residential space with all amenities for everybody. Take over of all surplus space by Workers' and poor peasants' government for distribution to those families who have less than the standard space.
- 39) Nationalisation without compensation of medical services, under the control and supervision of the residents of the area.

FOREIGN POLICY :

40) The foreign policy of the workers' and poor peasants' government would be based on revolutionary proletarian internationalism moral and material support to all the struggles of oppressed nationalities and oppressed nations for independence, to the proletarian struggles for socialist revolution in all capitalist countries, whether colonial, semi-colonial or imperialist Unconditional defense of all deformed and/or degenerated workers' States against the imperialist military and bureaucracy of such states. Supporting the struggles for political revolution by working masses of bureaucratized workers' state against their bureaucratic mis-rule in order to usher into socialist democracy in Russia, China, Eastern Europe etc.

- * VOTE FOR THE COMMUNIST LEAGUE
- * FOR UNITY OF WORKING CLASS PARTIES
- * FOR WORKERS AND POOR PEASANTS GOVERNMENT
- * FIGHT CAPITALISM TO FINISH COMMUNALISM AND AUTHORITARIANISM .
- * FOR SOCIALIST REVOLUTIONARY IN INDIA UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF THE WORKING CLASS.

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Appendix :IIStatement of the C.C. on Unrest in Eastern Regions of India.

Communist League expresses its great concern to the recent unrest in Eastern India, especially Assam and Meghalaya. Under the slogan of "Assam for Assamese" students have attacked non-Assamese, especially Bengalis. In Meghalaya also many attempts to intimidate and terrorise Bengalis, have been made. Their main demands are guaranteed jobs for Assamese, rapid industrialisation of those regions, throwing out of "infiltrators" - those Bengalis who have crossed the border between India and Bangladesh and resided in Assam - from Assam etc. Roots of the problem lies here

These areas have been relatively economically backward in the development of capitalism in India. Regional disparity is an inevitable phenomenon in the capitalist economic development worsening general economic situation has resulted into high level of unemployment, poverty, inflation and has given rise to sectarian violence and the emergence of provincial chauvinist organisations. Intervention of police or CRP won't solve the problem. On the contrary it will increase the complexity of the issue by creating more confusion regarding who are the infiltrators and lead to blackmailing of innocent muslim; Assamese also and corrupt practices. Whenever Assamese landlords wanted cheap labour of Bangladeshi muslims they did all they could to prove that these Bangladeshi refugees were Indian inhabitants.

Unfortunately political patterns of S.F.I. and C.P.M. who instead of struggle for workers state are collaborating capitalist and communal forces in India. S.F.I. has also joined bandwagon of "Assam for Assamese". C.L. believes that, only class of working class struggling for socialism and resulting in working state can guarantee jobs, economic development and removal of region disparity.

Appendix: IIIStatement of the C.C. on Productivity linked Bonus to Railway workers.

The Communist League strongly condemns the announcement by the Government regarding Bonus to the Railway workers. This agreement is not the victory for the Railway workers. It links Bonus with productivity and does not regard Bonus as deferred wage. The agreement negates/nullifies the right of workers to get Bonus as deferred wage and to claim a minimum of 8.33 % Bonus which was won after hard fought struggles. Moreover the Railway workers must show atleast the same performance as the base year 77 - 78 to claim Bonus. Now this was the year of highest performance. If in any year the performance falls below 90 % of the base year, there will be no Bonus. Shortfalls in performance resulting from cyclones, floods or any other natural causes would not be accepted as an alibi. The Railway workers will be compelled to make good their shortfalls during the rest of the years by extra efforts. This announcement was made under constant threat of general strike by the Railway workers. Railway workers will have to fight continuously, for delinking Bonus from productivity. Acceptance of this agreement by the recognised unions is to be condemned.

This agreement constitutes one of the most brutal attempts to intensify exploitation of workers. It also constitutes a frontal attack on the right of workers to claim Bonus as a deferred wage.

This is merely a taste for Indian bourgeoisie to find out how it succeeds. If allowed to go unchallenged this attack will cover all industries. The C.L. therefore appeals to all working class parties, trade unions to forge a united front on this issue and fight for repeal of this agreement and for recognition and restoration of Bonus as a deferred wage.
