

SUCCESSFUL SATYAGRAHA

7 SEP 63
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NEW AGE

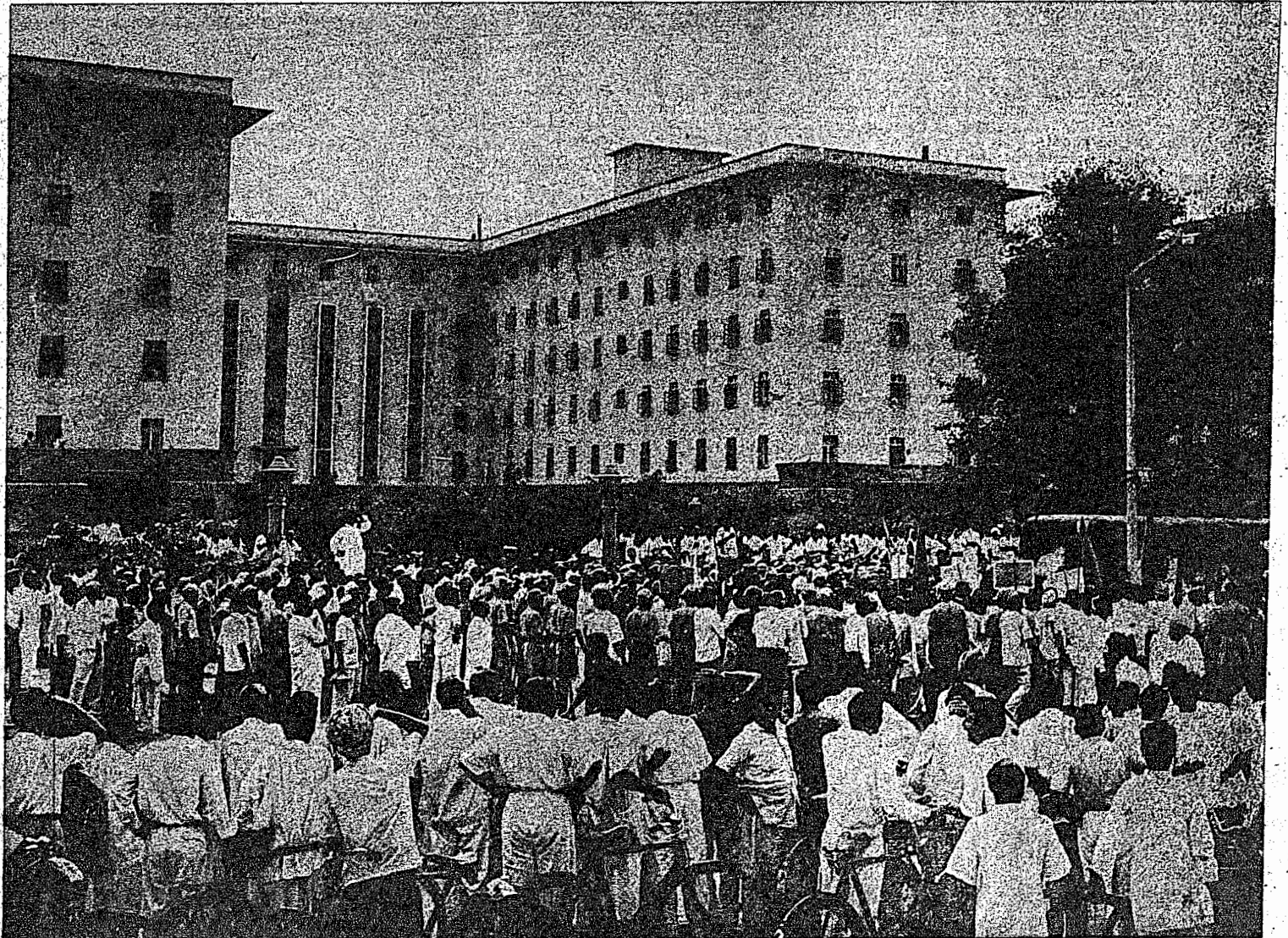
CENTRAL ORGAN OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF INDIA

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Thousands Court Arrest



NEW AGE greets the satyagrahis, volunteers and sympathisers who, in their thousands, responded to the call of the Communist Party for the Great All-India Satyagraha for food from August 24 to 28 and made it a grand success. By the time this issue of NEW AGE reaches the hands of the readers, the satyagraha campaign will be over. On Wednesday midnight as we go to press, we have only a partial picture of the sweep of the satyagraha movement. But even this partial picture is quite heartening. The reports received by us indicate that thousands have already courted arrest and there were many many others who stood by in reserve to court arrest if situation so demanded. In a number of places, police resorted to brutal repression, unleashing wanton attacks against peaceful satyagrahis. But the satyagrahis have stood their ground. The battle for people's food has gathered greater momentum; our attack against the three seats of power—government, hoarders and banks—has pinpointed the attention of the people to the real cause of food crisis. The struggle is not over; after the Great Satyagraha yet other phases of the struggle for food are to come.



Satyagraha before Krishi Bhawan: Above Bhupesh Gupta and M. Farooqi after arrest

(Photo: Virendra Kumar)

CALCUTTA'S MASSIVE SATYAGRAHA: WOMEN PARTICIPATE IN LARGE NUMBERS

FROM OUR CORRESPONDENT

CALCUTTA: West Bengal started the GREAT SATYAGRAHA in a big way on August 24 when 163 volunteers including 133 women offered satyagraha and courted arrest in Calcutta alone.

THE satyagraha was under the leadership of Somnath Lahiri MIA, Renu Chakravarty MP and Geeta Mukherjee. The satyagrahis included the president of the Calcutta Corporation Clerks Union and the assistant secretary of the Bengal Chakal Mazdoor Union.

About one-third of the women satyagrahis were peasant folk who came from the rural areas of 24 Parganas district. Working women from factories, refugees, students and middle-class housewives, grandmothers, mothers with babes in their arms—such was the composition of the women's batch.

Among the men volunteers were many jute mill workers. The demonstrators, as announced earlier, assembled at Raja Subodh Mullick Square shortly after noon and from there marched towards the Raj Bhavan through Dharmatala Street.

Before the procession started, Bhowani Sen addressed the gathering at the Square. The satyagrahis then placed garlands on the Shaheed Bedi, erected in honour of the martyrs of the 1959 food movement.

Among the slogans shouted by the satyagrahis and supporters were "Hang The Hoarders", "Nationalise Banks" and "Give Us Food, Else Resign".

Stopped At Esplanade
The satyagrahis were stopped by the police at Esplanade East near the eastern gates of the Raj Bhavan. When they tried to proceed, the Police arrested them.

In many other parts of West Bengal also, satyagraha

was offered by Communist volunteers on August 24. They included centres in 24 Parganas, Midnapore, Bankura, Howrah, Hooghly, West Dinajpur and Asansol.

In Asansol, fifteen volunteers including thirteen colliery workers offered satyagraha. The batch was led by Haridas Chakravarty MIA. The satyagraha was before the court.

Participation Of Workers

The satyagraha in Asansol was preceded by a demonstration of over a thousand workers from the collieries, the Sen Rallegh factory and the Kulti and Burnpur Works of Martin Burn.

In Barasat 23 volunteers including eighty-five-year-old Haricharan Chakravarty and his wife offered satyagraha. In Bangaon the number of satyagrahis was 21, in Basirhat 32 and in Chandanagore 11.

As many as 184 satyagrahis were arrested in various parts of West Bengal on the second day of the Great Satyagraha. Out of this, 76 persons were arrested in Calcutta itself.

In Calcutta, the satyagrahis were led by Bhowani Sen, secretary of the state council of the CPI. Others arrested included A. R. Khan, Gholam Qudus and R. Dasgupta.

A public meeting was held later in the day to protest against the arrests. It was addressed by Indrajit Gupta and Mohammed Elias, Members of Parliament.

Other areas in West Bengal where arrests took place were Barrackpore, Bankura, Bongaon, Midnapur and several other district centres.

All those arrested have been given class three in the prisons.

The satyagraha will continue till August 28 when the West Bengal government's food department will be picketed. On August 26, the Calcutta Stock Exchange and on August 27 the wholesale grain depot at Rathala will be the scenes of satyagraha.

More than 2500 people have enrolled so far as satyagrahis while the number of those who have offered themselves as volunteers is more than 20,000.

The response to the Communist Party's call for a nationwide satyagraha has been wide and enthusiastic. The

only criticism heard has been the question, "why so late?" There has been added reason for the people's wrath to express itself in Calcutta.

Common salt, the one item of food to which there can be no substitute at all, suddenly disappeared from the market on August 21. Unscrupulous traders minted several lakhs of rupees in one single day by creating a panic about salt scarcity and charging as much as one rupee and even Rs. 1.25 for a kilogram normally costing 14 paise.

After repeated radio announcements that there was no scarcity and special arrangements have been made by the state government to supply salt to retailers, the prices did come down the next day but not to the old level—salt now costs 16 paise a kilo. Only one wholesale trader and six retailers have been arrested for this robbery.

In such a situation, when every ordinary citizen feels the need for united action, the Tenali "revolutionaries" have

decided to divide the people's forces by launching a parallel mass movement. The third day of satyagraha, August 26, was observed throughout West Bengal as Students Day. In Calcutta, a 2,000-strong students procession marched the streets. About 83 students have been arrested while they were trying to picket the stock exchange. Among them were student leaders like Pratul Lahiri, joint secretary of the AISEF; Nandagopal Bhattacharyya, general secretary of the EPSF; Parthasarathy Sengupta, joint secretary of the EPSF and Gurudas Dasgupta.

There were students strikes in Hooghly, Behala, Dum Dum, Midnapore and several other places.

News of arrests have also been received from Chinsura, Midnapore, Ranaghat, Bongaon (30) and Barackpore (20), though exact figures are not available till the time of reporting.

RAJASTHAN'S PROTEST Satyagrahis Court Arrest

FROM OUR CORRESPONDENT

JAIPUR: Amidst torrential rains which have virtually paralysed Jaipur, a batch of 35 satyagrahis led by Swami. Kumarand MIA courted arrest before the Assembly House on August 24.

THIS marked the beginning of the four-day satyagraha movement planned by the Rajasthan state council of the Communist Party as part of the Great Satyagraha from August 24 to 28 against hoarders and blackmarketers and for people's food.

In Alwar 125 persons led by Haroomal Tolani, secretary of the district council of the CPI, courted arrest by offering satyagraha before the collectorate.

A procession of more than 500 people was taken out before the satyagraha.

In Rajasthan, the second day of the satyagraha saw the banks being picketed by the Communist volunteers. Arrests were made all over the state.

Alwar again took the pride of place by sending 79 satyagrahis to court arrest. This made

the total number of arrests in Alwar in two days to 204.

The number of arrests in other places on the second day were: Jaipur 14, Jodhpur 13, Bharatpur 17, Beawar 36 and Udaipur seven.

Reports received till the evening of August 25 show that more than 350 satyagrahis have been arrested in various parts of the state.

According to the plans drawn up by the state council of the CPI, satyagraha would be offered before the grain markets on August 26.

The programme in Rajasthan will conclude with the satyagraha before the State Assembly on August 27. The satyagrahis will be led on that day by H. K. Vyas, secretary of the Rajasthan state council of the CPI.

The response from the public to the Communist Party's satyagraha campaign has been very favourable.

Nearly two thousand Party members and sympathisers have already enrolled themselves as volunteers and as the satyagraha has been launched, more are coming forward to join it.

The satyagraha movement itself is the high point of a campaign conducted by the Party against hoarders and blackmarketers and for cheap food for the people.

August 23 saw 121 people led by H. K. Vyas observing token hunger strike at the Ramhila Grounds in Jaipur. The hunger strikers included Gafferai, secretary of the Jaipur city committee of the Party.

Hungerstrikes were undertaken in many other places also as a prelude to the Great Satyagraha campaign.

In Alwar the district council organised a marathon hunger-strike from August 16. Batches of five volunteers at a time observed fast, each batch for three days.

In Udaipur, the local unit of the CPI has launched a hunger-strike programme from August 22.

PALMIRO TOGLIATTI

From OUR CORRESPONDENT

ROME: The death of Palmiro Togliatti has been condoned by every Communist Party in the world as a great loss to the international Communist movement.

CONDOLENCE messages of all Communist Parties, now published in UNITA, placed Togliatti at the highest position of the international working class movement, especially acknowledging his outstanding contributions in outlining the new perspective for world revolutionary process in the present world situation in which world socialist system is a decisive force.

Tributes are paid for his outstanding contributions to enrich Marxism-Leninism. Communist Party organs and several non-Communist papers in Europe reported on their front pages the sad news from the Crimea with befitting obituaries.

The Secretary-General of the Italian Party, the strongest Communist Party in the capitalist world, died in Yalta on August 21, after eight days of struggle be-

latti's widow Comrade Leonilde Jotti: "his name will remain enshrined in our hearts for ever."

Son of a government servant born in Genoa on March 26, 1893, Togliatti studied history, philosophy and jurisprudence in University of Turin and received his doctorate. He was a close friend of great Italian socialist, Anton Gramsci.

On the eve of world war I Togliatti joined the Socialist Party in Turin, then the biggest industrial centre in Italy. In 1917 Gramsci became the secretary of Socialist Party and Togliatti joined the editorial board of its organ AVANTI.

When social democracy failed to fulfil its revolutionary role, Togliatti with Gramsci founded in 1919 a weekly journal LORDINE NOUVA which became the centre of the Marxist group within the Socialist Party. This group founded the Italian Communist Party in 1921 in Livorno.

In 1922 Togliatti was elected to the Central Committee of the Party and appointed as the Director of Communist Daily IL COMMUNISTA in Rome.

He was a delegate to Fifth Congress of the Communist International and was elected to its executive committee. In 1935 he became a secretary of the Third International. Together with Dimitrov, Togliatti played a leading role in preparing the Seventh Congress thesis on united front



of the counter-revolutionary Trotskyites, who are bold enough to claim that the Communists stand for war. They put their hopes in war and believe that only in war a situation would arise which makes the struggle for the revolution and for the conquest of power possible."

Since Seventh Congress Togliatti was engaged in correcting the mistakes of several European parties. He took a leading part in the Brussels Congress of the illegal Communist Party of Germany (KPD) in establishing the

to take revenge on him, made an unsuccessful assassination attempt on Togliatti on June 14, 1945.

In the post-war era Togliatti's most important work is the thesis on Italian road to socialism which visualises peaceful transition to socialism and for which the Chinese leaders hated him most. In recent writings Togliatti brilliantly polemised with Chinese leaders and blasted their erroneous political line. He frontally denounced Chinese attempts to split world Communist movement.

Togliatti saw always the new in the situation and led the Party along a path avoiding unnecessary sacrifices and waste of human efforts. He said communism is the greatest of humanism. His speech in the Tenth Congress of the Italian Party in December 1962 in Rome was a landmark in this respect.

In this Congress the Chinese representative attacked the Italian Party Programme. Togliatti invited them for bilateral talks but the CPC leaders declined to discuss differences. Instead, they indulged in character assassination of this great leader in a number of articles and pamphlets the most disgracing one being their "More on the Differences Between Comrade Togliatti and Us" published by the editorial department of HONGQI in March 1963, four days before the Chinese attacked the Communist Party of India in "A Mirror For Revisionists".

CPI'S CONDOLENCES

The following message of condolence on the sad death of Comrade Palmiro Togliatti, General Secretary of the Italian Communist Party, was cabled by the National Council of the Communist Party of India:

National Council, Communist Party of India, deeply mourns demise of Comrade Palmiro Togliatti, founder of great Italian Communist Party, one of outstanding leaders of Communist International and world Communist movement.

Indian comrades remember with gratitude the great role he played together with Comrade Dimitrov at Seventh Congress of Communist International in shaping the policy of united front against fascism and war.

His creative contribution to world Communist movement in recent times in forging general line of fighting for world peace, national liberation, democracy and socialism is highly valued by us.

In his departure working class and people of Italy have lost a great fighter and world Communist movement a veteran leader. Convey our condolences to Party and his family.

new political line of Peoples Front against fascism and war.

Togliatti's speech in the Seventh Congress (July to August 1935 in Moscow) is even today a valid guide for Communists all over the world. Togliatti said "let us close our ranks, let us struggle together for peace. We have to build the united front of all those who are ready to defend and maintain peace. We don't defend peace because we are weak or pacifists, but because we do every effort to secure favourable conditions for the victory of the revolution."

The Central Committee of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany sent their message to the Italian Party which said: Togliatti had a great share in establishing fraternal proletarian bonds and close cooperation between working classes of Italy and Germany.

The message recalled that in the thirties he took a decisive part in working out the policy of a broad peoples' front against fascism and gave valuable advice and brotherly help to illegal Communist Party of Germany. Walter Ulbricht wrote to Togliatti: "it is a serious loss for Communists, for the whole people and the country."

Secretary General of the Socialist Party of Italy Martino, wrote: "his personality and his work in half a century are part of the Italian and international working class movement as well as of glorious anti-fascist struggles. Even the Vatican Radio broadcast: 'only those who know him more closely can assess the pain and the grief that has been evoked by his death.'"



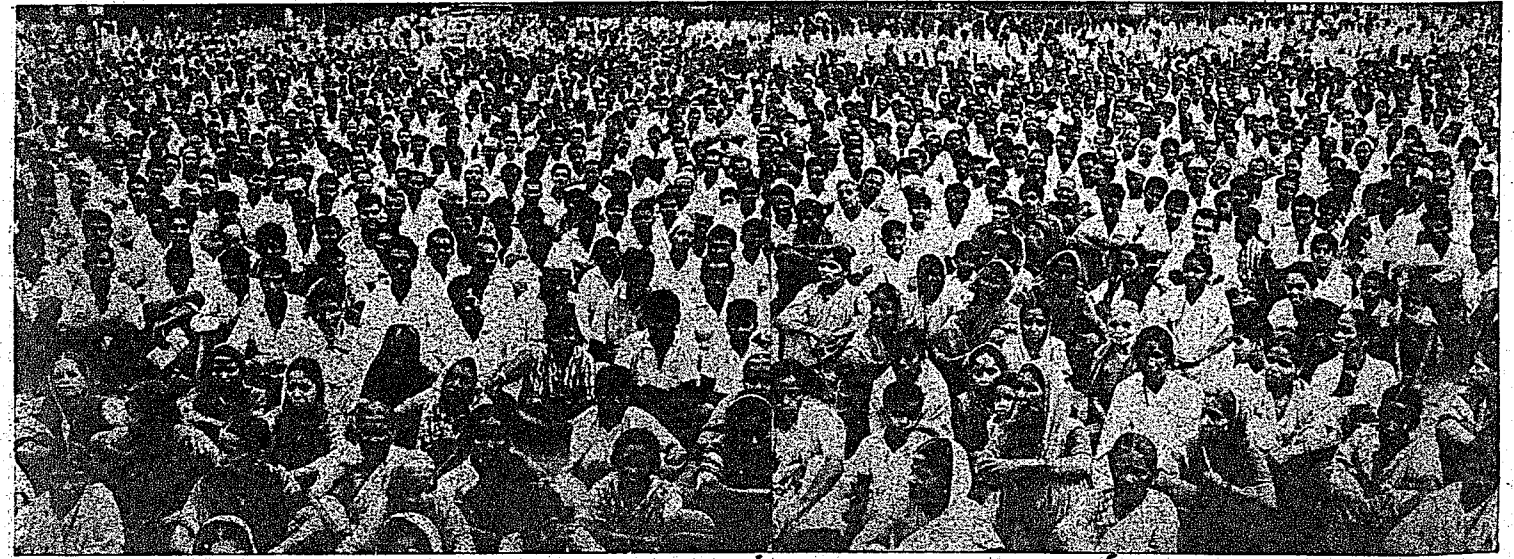
tween life and death following a cerebral stroke. Italian and Soviet specialists fought for his life and did everything possible. Within 40 minutes of Togliatti's death Soviet Premier Khrushchev arrived in Yalta and paid his last respect to this outstanding world leader.

On August 22 a Soviet jet flew from Simferopol airport carrying Togliatti's body to Rome. CPSU First Secretary Khrushchev and Deputy Secretary General of Italian Party Luigi Longo carried on their shoulders the departed leader's red draped bier.

At the airport Khrushchev said these farewell words: "Comrade Togliatti's death is a great loss to Communist Parties all over the world. We begin to feel how prominent was his contributions to the international working class movement."

Luigi Longo thanked Soviet doctors and specialists who did all in their power to save Togliatti.

Leonid Brezhnev CPSU Secretary, who is leading the CPSU



Documents of the Communist and Workers Parties
Articles and Speeches

INFORMATION BULLETIN

8-9

Nos. 6, 7, 8-9, and 10 of Information Bulletin on the world Communist movement's struggle against Chinese splitting activities are now available at PPH and allied bookstalls. PPH 12 Paise each, they carry documents of CPs from all over the world. Order your copies right now.

Mass Response For Satyagraha

HYDERABAD: Maqdoom Mohiuddin and 25 other satyagrahis were arrested in Hyderabad on August 24 when they forced their way into the Osmangunj wholesale grain market, shouting "Chor Bazar Band Karo", on the first day of three-day satyagraha which has been planned by the Andhra state council of the Communist Party of India as part of the nationwide Great Satyagraha from August 24 to 28 for people's food.

Amolak Ram and 4 others were also arrested on the charge of leading a procession in the prohibited area.

Among the 26 satyagrahis arrested was Sakhina Ghulam Hyder, with her infant son.

From the early hours people gathered near Osmangunj to witness the satyagraha organised by the Hyderabad city council of the Communist Party. It had become the talk of the town for the last few days and had electrified the atmosphere and charged it with expectation and hope.

It is evident that the slogan that the state should take over wholesale foodgrains trade and nationalise banks, punish severely the hoarders and blackmarketeers, open fair price shop for every 500 families and assure people food cheaply or quit gaddi echoed the very sentiments of people and they gathered from morning in their thousands to lend their support and demonstrate their solidarity with the satyagrahis.

There was a high drama when Maqdoom Mohiuddin, leader of opposition in the Council, arrived exactly at 10.15 as scheduled and pulling out his Red Flag began shouting slogans. Forty satyagrahis who arrived earlier joined in one voice to their leader's slogans and marched en masse from the opposite pavement to enter Osmangunj market gate.

The satyagrahis carried placards displaying the demands and they were prevented from entering the market by a posse of police. Elaborate police arrangements had been made with several hundred steel helmeted policemen cordoning the entrance to Osmangunj market and guard-

ing all the lanes and by-lanes.

The police were taken by surprise when the satyagrahis changed their earlier plan and, instead of marching in a procession from Char Minar as planned earlier, gathered at Osmangunj entrance itself. This was done in view of the prohibitory order banning processions, and it was feared that the satyagrahis might not have been allowed to reach Osmangunj, the place of satyagraha, thereby diminishing the purpose of satyagraha.

When satyagrahis marched en masse suddenly in response to Maqdoom's slogans, the police posse was a little shaken and the rows of the cordon were broken whereupon a grim policeman tried to bodily prevent the satyagrahis' entry.

The satyagrahis were in no mood to be rebuffed in their plans and despite police resistance tried to push their way in. This resulted in a scuffle, the police trying to prevent the satyagrahis and the satyagrahis trying to force their way in.

The satyagrahis were outnumbered by the police, but still they almost succeeded and a few entered the market gate when the police arrested them and carried them away in vans amidst slogans of "Communist Party Zindabad" and "Police Zulim Murdabad".

In the scuffle between the police and satyagrahis, several satyagrahis received bruises and injuries when the police tried to prevent their entry with their batons.

Makhdoom was a determined leader who would not be cowed down by police obstruction. Twice he was pushed away and his flag thrown

away. He recovered his flag both times and pushed his way to the front. In the scuffle he lost his watch and pen.

Another satyagrahi who won the admiration of all the onlookers was Sakhina Ghulam Hyder who displayed rare determination and revolutionary zeal when she paid no heed to police thrusts and was in lead with her infant son.

Such was the enthusiasm that when the police tried to prevent the satyagrahis and pushed them away violently, the onlookers, some of them workers and students, tried to take their place. The police promptly arrested some of them also, including Amolak Ram, city Communist and trade union leader.

In all 46 people were taken into custody. But only 32 were arrested while others were let off. The police released 26 satyagrahis and five demonstrators after a few hours of detention in the police control room.

Prominent among the satyagrahis besides Maqhdoom Mohiuddin and Sakhina Ghulam Hyder, were Naziruddin, Srinivasa Lahoti, Jahandar Afaz and Hari Singh who led a batch of volunteers from the League of Democratic Youth.

August 25 was the turn of the banks. Hyderabad has its Bank Street. Here are concentrated the Central Bank, Punjab National Bank, Bank of Baroda, Andhra Bank—apart from the State Bank.

Appropriately Hyderabad Stock Exchange is also found here. Enthused by Monday's successful satyagraha, a batch of 34 collected. In fitness of things today's leader was Raj Bahadur Gour, unrivalled leader of the bank employees.

The Democratic Youth League was well represented and led by Y. V. Rao. Baqar Khan and Devraj. Communist leaders were also among the satyagrahis. Three

Demonstration before banks and police action against satyagrahis in Hyderabad.

(Photo: Chandram)

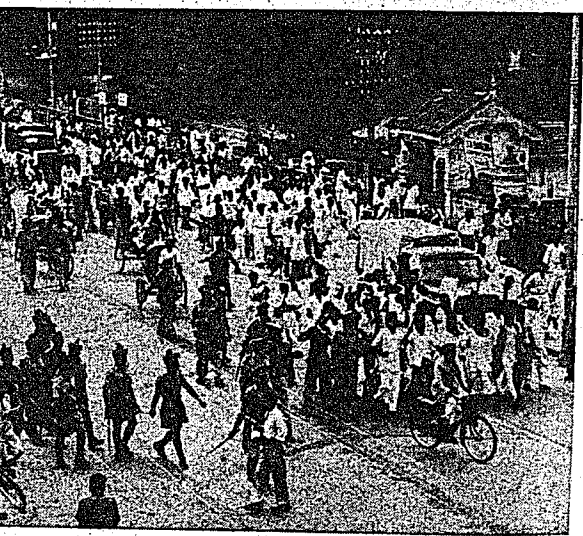
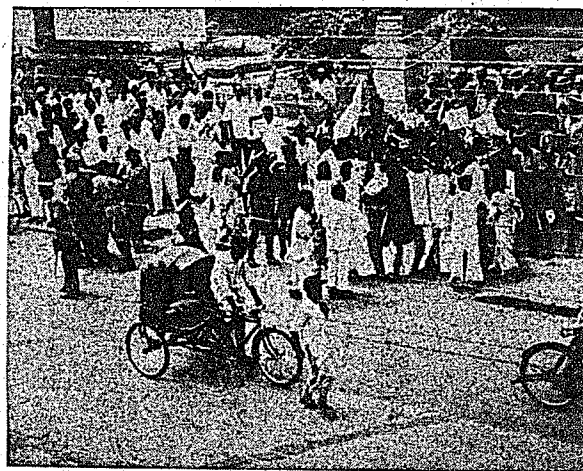
women, Kaiser Begum, Padma and Bhudev, two with infants in their arms, also joined.

Exactly on the stroke of 10.30 as previously announced, Raj Bahadur advanced with a Red Flag aloft and shouting "Nationalise Banks," "Stop Advances To Speculators And Hoarders," "Give Cheap Credit To Tilling Peasants."

A huge police force now moved into action and pushed and manhandled the satyagrahis. Undaunted, the satyagrahis continued shouting slogans and pressed forward.

At this stage huge crowds of bank employees who had come out to encourage the satyagrahis lustily raised slogans, demanding nationalisation of banks and saluting Raj Bahadur Gour.

From among the large crowd who had come in an organised fashion to cheer on the satyagrahis, Y. V. Krishna Rao, a member of the Secretariat of the Andhra State Council of the CPI, also raised slogans and was immediately taken into custody.



After some tense minutes, orders were given for the police vans to move. The satyagrahis continued to shout slogans and wave the Red Flag and Youth League flag. Even in the police lock-up, slogan shouting continued. The police has decided to prosecute the satyagrahis under Section 76 of the Police Act.

News is pouring in of statewide response to the call for satyagraha.

In Vijaywada in two days 175 satyagrahis have been arrested. Prominent among leaders were Rajgopala Rao and Visweswara Rao. In addition, 30 persons are on hungerstrike for 3 days, including Sriramulu, who is the leader of the Rickshaw Pullers' Union.

In jail, Chelasi Venkatratnam and others have gone on hungerstrike.

In Cantur, 101 satyagrahis moved into action on the first day.

Of date; Rajahmundry, Adilabad, Karimnagar, Bhongir, Sanga Reddy, Kothavalasa are places from where news of satyagraha has come in.

The Note submitted by the Union Ministry of Food and Agriculture, at the meeting of the opposition leaders called by the Prime Minister in the first week of August gave "a cautiously reassuring picture of the food prospects" and outlined the "drastic fiscal and physical measures to counter the price uptrend" which formed part of government's "new policy on food."

FIRST it is necessary to examine this claim and the measures outlined in terms of the actual results achieved so far. It will be also necessary to examine the short term and long term measures and proposals put forward by the Union Minister C. Subramaniam.

Secondly, in the light of this examination and a critique of these measures and proposals it would be possible to work out our own demands and proposals for a short term and a long term solution of the crisis which the united democratic movement for food has to fight and work for.

The aim of the government, says the Note, is to have a favourable impact on prices by bringing out foodgrains in the market by tightening control over trade, to prevent hoarding and by taking anti-hoarding measures. It has also listed seven other measures which it has taken for the same purpose: They are:

- ★ Banning exports of foodgrains from the country.
- ★ It claims to have increased the number of fair-price shops to reach foodgrains to the consumers and increased the quantum of sale through them.
- ★ Distribution of rice in the states of Madras, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Maharashtra, Gujarat and West Bengal has been increased.
- ★ Bank advances against rice and paddy were tightened in January-February 1964. Restrictions against advances against wheat since May 1964.
- ★ Forward trading in foodgrains and oilseeds banned.
- ★ Profit margins in respect of foodgrains at wholesale and retail stages have been fixed (U.P., Maharashtra, West Bengal).
- ★ System of maximum controlled prices introduced in West Bengal.

The Union Minister C. Subramaniam correctly emphasises that the crisis in foodgrains prices this time is definitely not due to shortages but is there "notwithstanding the increased availability of foodgrains inclusive of imports." The figure he cites clearly proves this.

The total production of foodgrains for 1963-64 was 79.3 million tons while the production for 1962-63 was 78.5 million tons. Imported grain was 6 million tons this year as against 4.6 million tons last year. The total availability of food grains, he calculates, was 2.5 per cent more this year than last year as against the estimated increase of population of 2 to 2.5 per cent annually.

Man-made Crisis

It is obvious therefore that the foodgrain monopolists and speculators seeking to take advantage of the general upward trend of prices have been withholding grains from the market and thus screw up

the prices, creating artificial shortage. This is admitted on all hands and the government itself sets the aim as "bringing out the grains from the hoarders" in order to keep the prices in check.

The actual objective the government has set itself according to C. Subramaniam is "not to allow the prices to rise", presumably from their present already high level.

What are the measures he says the government is taking for de-hoarding? One is the declaration and enforcement of maximum prices. Two, the fixing of the maximum limit of foodgrain stock which a trader can keep. Three, the compulsion to declare the stocks, those in excess of the maximum limit fixed, being subject to requisitioning by government.

Actually, the declaration and bringing into force of these measures has not been accompanied by any large-scale punitive measures against the big hoarders. In fact, the Prime Minister has given the food speculators and

hoarders "two week's grace" after which alone punitive actions may be taken.

These so-called de-hoarding measures taken by the central and state governments since the beginning of this year have been weak-kneed. Even as it was met with a determined resistance from the representatives of the food hoarders and speculators, who raised a virtual revolt against these controls.

Govt. Fails To Act

As a result, the proposed controls put forward in the beginning of this year were soft-pedalled or even given up leading to continued hoarding and rocketing of foodgrain prices. Even after this the Prime Minister gives the food monopolists two weeks grace before any real punitive acts are taken. We may cite two examples to prove this.

The Maharashtra government in the beginning of this year decided to put controls on the foodgrains trade and asked the dealers to submit periodical returns of sales and purchases and limit their margin of profit to 1.5 per cent in the case of cash sales and 3 per cent in the case of credit sales.

The All-India Foodgrains Dealers' Association advised the dealers to prepare for closure and actually a crisis was created in the mandis of Vidarbha by the dealers stopping all purchases for two days. The state Food Minister bowed down to the dictates of the big traders, and announced the promise of revision of the orders. The result was a spurt of rise in the price of wheat in February 1964 there.

A similar instance of blackmail by foodgrain merchants against efforts to control the trade occurred in Rajasthan when the government there issued the licensing orders re-

quiring the traders to display the prices of their commodities, to declare their stock, stating their average sale and purchase prices. The traders of Rajasthan declared a virtual hartal against this order in April 1964.

They were supported by similar protests from the foodgrain dealers of Madras and Uttar Pradesh. The President of the All-India Foodgrain Dealers' Association demanded a "hands off food" policy from the central and state governments. He advised wholesalers to close business after clearing the existing stocks.

The result of this blackmail was that the Union Ministry for food itself announced certain concessions in the licensing order and called upon the state governments to make such changes as the situation in their states demanded. The

Present Crisis Of Foodgrains

measures were inadequate and have not been totally and firmly carried. The very fact that the Reserve Bank had to come out with a new order further "tightening controls on bank advances against paddy, rice, wheat and other foodgrains to check hoarding of stocks", is an admission that the two previous orders had no effect whatsoever.

Even the present order only "raises the minimum margins to be maintained by banks on advances against the security of foodgrains from 35 per cent to 50 per cent". This merely reduces the quantum of advances available to big foodgrain merchants on their stock of foodgrain, it does not ban the banks from making any advances available to the foodgrain merchants for their operations on the foodgrains market.

It is well known that even pressure on the government to compel it to implement the correct policy. Fourthly, this movement must put forward not only a correct food policy, but a scientifically worked out series of short term as well as long term measures for effectively implementing that policy.

There is general agreement on two aspects of the food policy—at least among the democratic parties. Firstly, given the present average level production itself, a better and equitable distribution of foodgrains must be guaranteed which means bringing down the prices, making foodgrains available at reasonable prices to the consumer, ensuring a fair return to the producer and firmly holding the price line.

Experience in our country as well as in other countries shows that this requires that the foodgrains trade must be

taken out of the hands of private wholesalers, profiteers, speculators and hoarders. It must be taken in hand by the state and organised efficiently in the interests of the producers, the consumers and of the society in general.

Even the latest Congress Working Committee resolution which confirms the government decision to introduce state trading from January next, has cited the examples of Japan and Australia where the rice and the wheat trade respectively have been made a state monopoly.

If state trading in grains, is to be successful and effective in our country, the government will have to get the firm grip over the credit resources by such measures as nationalisation of banks. It will have to take steps to check inflation without slowing down the rate of our planned development. It will also have to track down the menace of black money.

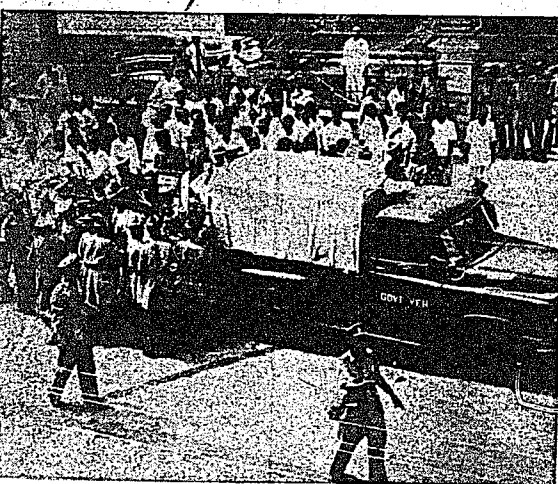
The second aspect of the food problem—the long

term aspect—is the question of increasing the level of foodgrain production, of removing the stagnation in the agricultural sector. India's dependence on foreign imported foodgrains on the PL 480 from America with its vicious consequences must be ended once and for all.

The latest Working Committee resolution also talks of making the country self-sufficient in food and independent of foreign food imports. But this cannot be done by merely talking of giving technical and scientific assistance to the peasant and by exhorting him to raise production.

Therefore, thirdly, a powerful mass movement has to be built to bring

All this again shows that



AUGUST 20: GOA BANDH

A Resounding Success

From OUR CORRESPONDENT

PANJIM: Life in Goa came to a stand-still for 24 hours on August 20 when the machines stopped working in the absence of workers who went on strike in response to the "Goa Bandh" call given by the Goa State Trade Unions Council.

WITH the downing of tools by the 5000 port and dock workers, the Marmagao harbour was completely paralysed with 25 ships lying idle in the blue waters of the Arabian Sea.

The Marmagao Port, Dock and Transport Workers' Union (AITUC) had endorsed the decision of Goa Bandh by GSTUC. Some 300 to 350 gangmen under the influence of EMS—controlled Transport and Dock Workers Union also supported the strike.

Only the small section of 150 gangmen belonging to Goa Dock Labour Union (INTUC) showed their symbolic presence in the harbour without however attending to work.

The city of Vasco da Gama, three miles away from the Marmagao harbour was like a war-field. The entire SRP force was concentrated in this little city; every 25 meters there was posted an armed SRP. Hundreds of city police were also moving in the area.

The shops and the bazar were completely closed. All the 95 taxis and the 12 buses were off the road. Large number of commercial employees too abstained from work.

The Mazagon Dock (Goa Branch) was empty with only watchmen guarding the heavy engineering machinery. The 400 workers together with the supervisory staff had joined the strike as per the decision of the Mazagon Dock Workers Union (AITUC).

INTUC Hoodliganism

Some INTUC hoodlums were threatening and intimidating the shopkeepers that they would break open and loot the shops if they were not opened. In this they had the full backing of the local police. But very few succumbed to the threats.

Section 144 had been especially imposed in the Marmagao—Vasco da Gama area in the hope of intimidating the workers. Some local police officers who were rather smart twice arrested and put Gerald Pereira, general secretary of the GSTUC, in the lock-up. But the Senior Superintendent of Police personally visited the cell and ordered the release as he was fully satisfied that the strikers were absolutely peaceful.

Shivaji Pednekar, a worker-leader in the Marmagao harbour, Parish Chondankar and Rohidas Desai, two prominent leaders of the Goa Bus and Taximen's Federation at Vasco da Gama, were also arrested.

Periera bitterly criticised the bankrupt policy of the government which has led to the artificial food crisis. He also warned the one dozen wholesalers and hoarders operating from Margao, the commercial capital of Goa, that the hungry people would not for long tolerate their profiteering.

Hundreds of the peasants from the villages had walked on foot to attend the rally. In Panjim traffic was completely paralysed with its 150 taxis and 50 carriers and buses being in the garages.

Clerks Abstain

In response to the call given by the Goa Commercial Employees Union, hundreds of white-collar desk-workers abstained from duty.

Narendra Shettye, secretary of the Goa Press Workers Union, in a statement to the press stated that the press workers from the capital fully support Goa Bandh. But they would work on that day so that the people do not suffer from the "Goa Bandh" news. Else the four dailies from Panjim—THE NAVHIND TIMES (English) GOMANTAK (Marathi), O HERALDO and DIARIE DE NOITE (both Portuguese)—would not have seen the light of the day on August 21. The news of press workers' support to Goa Bandh was published by these very papers.

The capital city of Goa, standing on the banks of the picturesque river Mandevi, amidst the inter-locks of the lovely hills, with all shops open but with no customers gave an appearance of a cemetery with its city of tombs and no people.

The second biggest commercial centre in Goa, Mapuca was also affected. The entire 150 taxis and dozens of north Goa buses were off the roads. The Mapuca branch of the Goa Bus and Taximen's Federation had fully implemented the call of "Goa Bandh".

A mass rally was held at Sanvordem which was addressed by Divakar Kakodkar, the secretary of the Union and other leaders.

In Margao, the city's 150 taxis and scores of buses and carriers were off the roads. The Margao branch of Goa Bus and Taximen's Federation had supported Goa Bandh.

The Gomantak Suvarna Karagir Sangh had also called upon the goldsmiths of Goa to join the strike. The goldsmiths shops and a good number of small retailers shop had been closed.

A huge mass rally was held at Margao which was addressed by Shamrao Modkolkar, the general secretary of Gomantak Suvarna Karagir Sangh, Narayan Desai, president of Goa Kisan Sangh, and Gerald Periera, general secretary of the Goa Bus and Taximen's Federation.

The Goa State Trade Unions Council and other independent unions which had given a call for Goa Bandh pressed for four main demands before the government.

Main Demands

1 The government should immediately take charge of wholesale trade in foodgrains.

2 Adequate stock of grains to be supplied to consumers cooperative societies and to the fair price shops. Government should also open more fair price shops in all the principal villages.

3 The Defence of India Rules should be used against the hoarders and blackmarketeers.

4 Immediate declaration of interim relief in the form of DA for all workers and commercial employees.

The response to "Goa Bandh" was splendid. It went off completely peaceful in spite of provocations by INTUC elements in various places.

The workers in the port and the mines came out more steely after this great first all-Goa struggle. They are confident that their unity would definitely yield positive results.

The Goa Bus and Taximen's Federation has scored a big victory by putting off the roads the entire fleet of 600 taxis and 200 buses throughout Goa. Their demand for giving import licences to the transport cooperative societies for spare parts, and resistance to bear any additional tax by the driver community will have to be heeded by the government.

Popular Slogan

The Federation states that the drivers are not willing to increase the fares and as such

they are not willing to pay any increase in the tax.

The popular slogan "Down With Price Increase" has already been picked up by the masses and is echoing throughout Goa in the green fields, the mines and in the distant Sahyadris of the Western Ghats.

Gerald Periera, general secretary of the Goa State Trade Unions Council, has congratulated workers, taxi-drivers, white-collar employees and the people in general for the positive and effective response given to Goa Bandh.

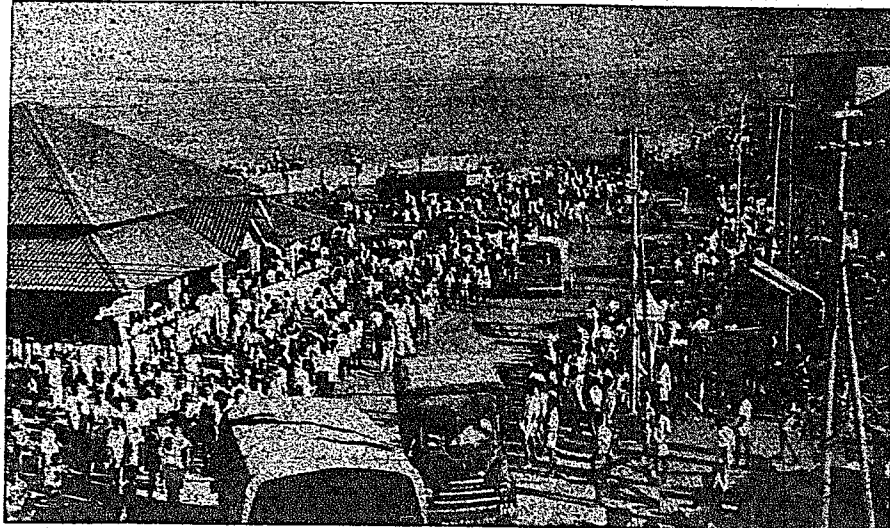
He called upon the government of Goa to immediately solve the food crisis, pay DA and solve the other problems of the people. He appealed to all sections of the people to remain united in spite of their political differences; only then shall we be able to resist this attack on the people by the government and the reactionary forces in the country.

"This mass movement all over the country is a national struggle for the economic emancipation of the masses which will mean one more nail in the coffin of the capitalist structure of the society", Gerald Periera declared.



Demands of the people.

"Down With Price Increase," Say Marmagao Workers



NEW AGE

FEED THE URBAN AREAS AND DON'T BOTHER ABOUT THE RURAL POPULATION—this seems to be the slogan laid down by the Uttar Pradesh government and its Food Minister Negi in dealing with the food scarcity and high prices problem in the state.

LOCAN or no slogan, the policy has been cleverly formulated; for, the calculation behind it is that the poor-villagers in the countryside are like meek cows: they do not howl in protest over their hardships but suffer them in silence.

The articulate sections of people in the urban areas, on the other hand, go in for agitations against the government over their grievances. And so, it is best to keep them pacified with at least a thin flow of foodgrains through the fair price shops.

This policy of the government of feeding the urban population and neglecting the rural people can be illustrated by the case of one of the worst affected districts in the state—Azamgarh.

Official Figures

According to official figures, 71 fair price shops in urban areas covered 1.36 lakhs of people while the rest of the population in the district coming to 22.71 lakhs are covered by just 400 rural shops.

Between July 14 and 27 no supplies were provided to the rural areas at all due to lack of foodgrains. Supplies were made to the urban shops though on a restricted scale.

Since July 27, the rural shops are being provided with just 18 quintals of rice per

fortnight each, while the urban shops get 40 quintals of wheat and 18 quintals of rice each per week.

Naturally, the rural areas in the state are the worst hit by the food scarcity. Travelling through the countryside of eastern Uttar Pradesh, one can find the whole village population exposed to this man-made disaster—man-made because the scarcity is artificial even according to official admissions.

But it is not only the rural areas that have been hit. Even towns have to suffer from the irregularity of government supplies to the fair price shops. I was told in Allahabad that in the last week of July there were no rations issued in the city at all. In the second week of July one kilogram per unit per week was supplied to the cardholders.

Inadequate Supply

Even inside the city, from locality to locality, the position regarding supply varied. Residents of a harijan colony near Khusrubagh complained that they did not get any rations at the fair price shops for a full fortnight.

Even when rations are available the people have to augment their supplies from the "open market", but when rations are not available, they have to de-



Kids stand in Queue.

(Photo: Shambhu Banerjee)

ON THE FOOD FRONT

ANTI-PEOPLE POLICY OF U.P. GOVERNMENT

By OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

pend entirely on the "open market" where the price of wheat rules at one rupee a kilogram or more.

When you move to the rural areas, the situation becomes all the more difficult. A village which I visited in Azamgarh district was Hussainganj. For a full month the foodgrain shop here had remained closed for lack of supplies.

And now, hardly Rs. 40 worth of rice, has been supplied to the entire village for distribution. It is intended to cover forty families, out of the total 700 of the village has, which means one rupee worth of rice for a family—barely sufficient to meet their needs for a day.

Twenty families in this village have no land. A majority of the rest own less than two to three bighas (a bigha is one-third of an acre), and only four families have ten to twelve bighas of land.

More than 50 per cent of the rabi crop in the village—rice, peas and arhar—were destroyed due to the cold spell. About 50 to 75 per cent of the early kharif crops of paddy, sanwan, koda and maize—the mainstay of the majority of the population in the months October to December—have been destroyed by drought.

In this background, the irregularity of supplies in the foodgrain shops and sometimes total lack of it can very well mean going without food for many families in the village.

The latest ration card scheme of the government has made the situation all the more worse. The food inspector has found it possible to allot only five cards to the whole village, with a maximum of five units a card. The inspector's stand is that no more cards could be allotted to this village because he has only 500 ration cards for a whole block of 50 such villages.

But the fate of the adjoining harijan colony is even more pitiable. The colony with 36 families has not got even a single ration card, which in other words means that the foodgrain shop and the ration card system do not exist for them.

Prices And Availability

The prices and availability of other food articles is not different either. In the village grocer's shop there is hardly a kilogram of coarse rice, mattar and arhar. There is five kilograms of barley flour. Rice is being sold at one rupee a kilogram, pulses 88 paise a kilogram and barley for 75 paise a kilogram.

Even molasses are in great demand these days in the villages of eastern Uttar Pradesh. The ruling price is 65 paise a kilogram!

The existing fair price shops and foodgrain shops authorised by the government themselves have become dens of corruption and blackmarketing. One reason why many villages have no fair

price shops is that these have been closed down because of malpractices.

One such village I came across was that of Baheri in Bahi district. The foodgrain shop there was closed down two months back because of malpractices. A temporary foodgrain shop which was opened in its place was also closed for the same reason. And for more than a month now, there is no shop at all in the village.

According to the authorities flood affected areas have priority in getting fair price shops. Baheri is a flood affected area and therefore should have got the fair price shop quickly. When the reasons for not getting the shop were enquired, came the following story:

A powerful Congress MLA was at the back of the owners of both the shops which were cancelled following discovery of malpractices. This MLA was bringing pressure on the authorities to re-allot the shop to the earlier allottee, but the authorities find it difficult to do so, while at the same time they are afraid to flout the wishes of the MLA and allot it to somebody else. And so, the village remains without a fair price shop.

Another instance of this "politics" in the running of fair price shops is provided by Rewati town. Licences of all the four fair price shops in this town were suspended on July 12 for alleged malpractices, but no new shops have been licensed.

Congress Bosses Dictate

The reason for not allowing new shops is that no enquiry has yet been undertaken into the alleged malpractices of the earlier four shops. No enquiry is undertaken because of the powerful pressure put in by their owners, including a member of the District Congress Committee, on the authorities.

With more and more people depending on fair price shops for their rice and wheat requirements, more of the malpractices indulged in by these shopowners are coming into light.



Every commodity is scarce.

Why Does CPI Prefer National Democracy ?

Q. The CPI Draft Programme has stated that the class composition, as well as the Programme, put forward for people's democracy in our 1951 document are about the same as put forward for national democracy now. You have earlier explained the difference between people's democracy and national democracy but not why the latter is now preferred so far as India is concerned? (A. SADASIVAN, Anantapur, Andhra)

A. The CPI draft programme, after stating that the programme and class composition of people's democracy and national democracy are about the same, went on to declare: "The difference consists in this that in a people's democracy the alliance of patriotic classes is under the exclusive leadership of the working class. In the case of national democracy, the leadership of the alliance of the patriotic classes is shared between the national bourgeoisie and the working class."

The question to be answered then is why the CPI now feels that it is a more realistic revolutionary perspective to postulate sharing of leadership of the working class and the national bourgeoisie, rather than exclusive leadership of the former.

At the outset, it should be stated that this question cannot be answered on the basis of subjective desire. Certainly, the CPI desires the leadership of the working class of the front of patriotic classes. More, it desires that India should become a Communist country as soon as possible. Its ultimate goal remains unchanged.

Why then does the CPI not put forward the realisation of communism or of working class leadership as the immediate programmatic goal? This is because of the stage of the revolution in India and the concrete alignment of class forces in the country.

Marx and Lenin had long ago taught us not to go by our subjective desires when it comes to drawing up programmes or framing policies but by a scientific analysis of the objective situation. They had also taught us that the first and foremost duty of any revolutionary party is to find out the main enemy at any given stage of revolution and to mobilise against it all the possible allies that could be united.

Anti-Imperialist Struggles

Hence, the entire Communist movement, including the CPC and its followers, came to the conclusion that in the vast areas of colonies, semi-colonies and dependencies the stage of the revolution is not that of socialism but of anti-imperialism and anti-feudalism. The 1928 thesis on the revolutionary movement in the colonies and semi-colonies as well as the theoretical writings of Mao Tse-tung from the late 1930's to 1949 repeatedly stress this point. (In answering this question we shall not go into the sectarian application and interpretation of these documents.)

Hence, the entire Communist movement worked out a programme of an anti-imperialist, anti-feudal revolution for these countries. It pointed out that the classes objectively interested in this revolution were the working class, the entire peasantry, the urban petty-bourgeoisie and the national bourgeoisie.

The 1928 Comintern thesis had certain grave sectarian errors, however, with regard to the last named class.

It went on to point out that this anti-imperialist, anti-feudal revolution could not achieve any substantial success unless it was led by the working class. The national bourgeoisie was taken as being too weak politically and economically, as having links with imperialism and feudalism even while in opposition to them and as having antagonistic exploitative interests against the workers and peasants, to be able to lead this revolution.

The urban petty-bourgeoisie, including the intelligentsia was also stated to be incapable of playing an independent and organised role to the requisite degree headed by the leader of this revolution.

Hence, though not a socialist revolution the anti-imperialist, anti-feudal revolution was taken to be a national democratic revolution of a new type, led by the working class. This was theoretically summed up as new democracy and later as people's democracy, with the new theoretical work of Mao-Tse-tung.

Bureaucratic Capitalism

In China, the CPC correctly came to the conclusion that the most powerful section of the Chinese bourgeoisie had from 1927 betrayed the people and gone over to imperialism and allied with feudalism. This section of the Chinese bourgeoisie was represented by the Chiang Kai-shek leadership of the Kuomintang and was part of the ruling imperialist-feudal combine, taking final shape as bureaucratic capitalism.

The CPC then came to the conclusion that the national bourgeoisie, which was to be treated as a vacillating ally, was that section of the Chinese bourgeoisie which had not betrayed, not gone over to imperialism and feudalism, and consequently did not form part of the ruling combine against which the people's democratic front was to be built.

The CPI in the first years after Independence, also put forward the goal of People's Democracy. From 1948 to 1950 this was interpreted as being more or less the same as the worker-peasant democratic front worked out by Lenin as suitable for the first stage of the revolution in Tsarist Russia. B. T. Ranadive, the then General Secretary, specifically stated that the Indian bourgeoisie, as a whole, had gone over to imperialism after 1947, and was to be regarded as the enemy of the people's democratic revolution. For good measure, he attacked Mao's concept of the national bourgeoisie as a vacillating ally as being the height of revisionism!

Later, this line was modified but not essentially changed. Till the 1956 Palghat Congress, the CPI was of the view that the Government of India represented the imperialist, feudalists and the collaborationist section of the Indian bourgeoisie. But the whole Indian bourgeoisie had not betrayed and gone over to imperialism. There remained a section of the Indian bourgeoisie which was not part of the ruling combine, and it was this section which was said to be the real national

bourgeoisie and which could be included in the People's Democratic Front.

As can be seen, the CPI's analysis was a more or less mechanical repetition of the analysis made by the CPC for its own country and that, too, at a time when the new epoch had not come into being.

If the national bourgeoisie was to be so defined as to exclude all those who were represented in the Congress government and leadership, then obviously it would be far too weak politically and economically to be in any position to challenge the working class for the position of leadership in the continuing people's democratic revolution. Of course, where such a national bourgeoisie was to be found in India was another matter.

At the Palghat Congress of 1956, the CPI gave up this analysis for the very simple and obvious reason that it was totally contrary to the facts of objective development. The CPI now came to the conclusion that the Congress government represented the entire Indian bourgeoisie, which in alliance with the landlords and in compromise with imperialism, was attempting to develop India along independent capitalist lines.

Thus, in India the national bourgeoisie, even after winning state power, continued its former dual role of opposition to and compromise with imperialism. Thus, in India the ruling national bourgeoisie continued to be objectively interested in the completion of the national democratic revolution. Thus, the working class had to win it as a vacillating ally as part of its revolutionary duty in the building of the national democratic front.

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New Line Adopted

This was the significance of the political line adopted by the CPI since Palghat that the main task in building the national democratic front was to bridge the gulf between the masses under the influence of the Congress and those under the influence of the parties of the democratic opposition.

The new possibilities in India for winning the national bourgeoisie as an ally in the completion of the national democratic revolution are, of course, not to be separated from the new epoch in which we now live, when imperialism no longer determines the main trend of world development.

Thus, while the stage of the revolution and hence its programme is the same roughly as that worked out by the 1928 Comintern thesis or the CPC since the late 1930's, the difference comes in with the enlarged scope of the united front that can be built to implement this programme. In the new epoch and in the concrete situation obtaining in India, the bulk of the national bourgeoisie (excluding its topmost monopoly sections) can be the ally of the working class at this stage of the revolution. And if a class can be our ally objectively, it is our revolutionary duty to devise such tactics and slogans as will convert this possibility into a reality.

This national bourgeoisie is quite different from the weak, politically impotent and oppressive nonruling Chinese bourgeoisie which finally came over to and accepted the leadership of the CPC. It is both far more powerful

YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

economically and has a very extensive mass base and experienced leadership. It is futile to talk of allying with the national bourgeoisie in India without taking this objective fact into account.

If we are at all serious about bringing such a national bourgeoisie into the national democratic front it can only be on the basis of sharing leadership with it. This is the specific feature in India of the general line of the world Communist movement regarding the national democratic revolution and the role of the national bourgeoisie in it.

Indian Situation

Neither the CPC nor the splitters have publicly expressed any disagreement about the stage of the revolution in India or about the general line of the world Communist movement regarding the national democratic revolution where the national bourgeoisie is an ally.

The difference comes in with

regard to the definition of the national bourgeoisie in India with regard to the character and composition of the ruling class in India and therefore, with regard to the tactical line to be adopted towards the Indian national bourgeoisie. Mechanical copying of Chinese experience will not help to advance the cause of the Indian national democratic revolution.

To change the class relations in India from a position where the national bourgeoisie enjoys monopoly of leadership and political power to one where it has to share leadership and power with the working class is a revolutionary task of enormous magnitude and significance. Mass struggles of tremendous sweep and high political level, powerful mass organisations and a powerful Communist Party are required to bring about the required qualitative shift in the balance of class forces.

Such is the realistic and revolutionary perspective outlined by the Draft Programme of the CPI.

—MOHIT SEN

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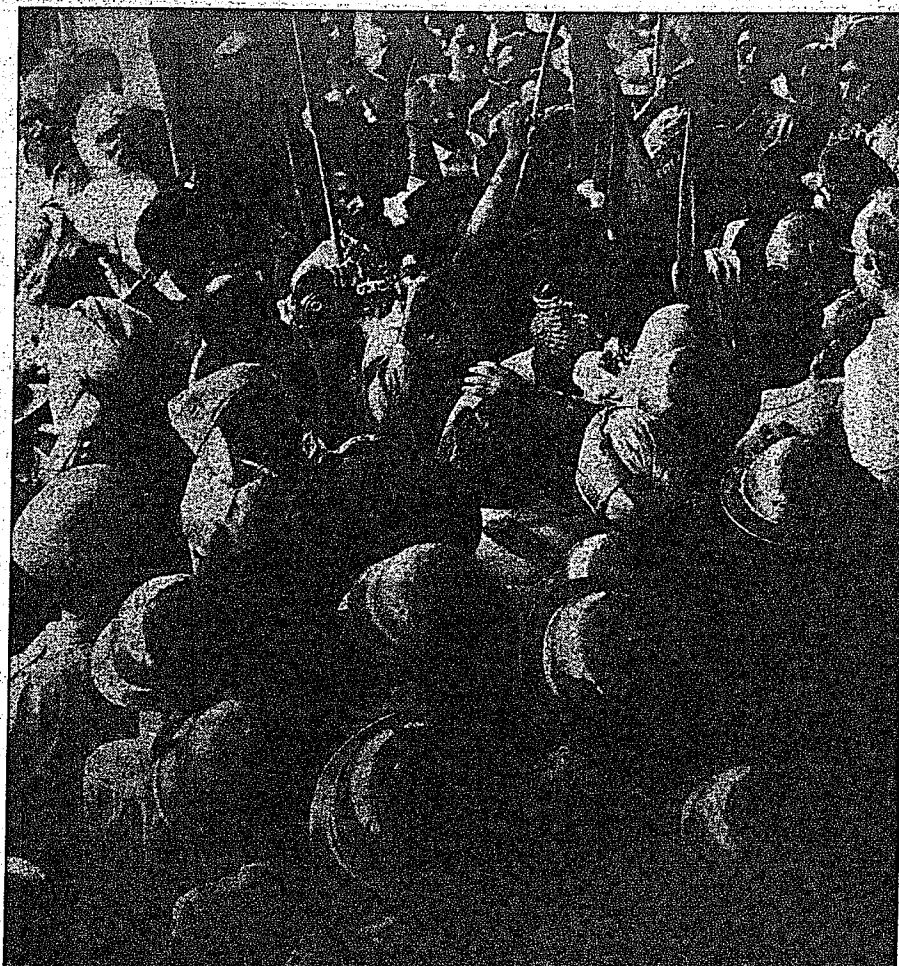
A POPULAR INTRODUCTION

by DEBIPRASAD CHATTOPADHAYAYA (Author of LOKAYATA)

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Police show their strength before Delhi Stock Exchange.

(Photo: H. Dasgupta)

GOVT'S REVENGE 1,300 ARRESTED Mass-Scale Police Terrorisation

MADRAS: The Madras government has become jittery over the food agitation and satyagraha planned for five days by the Communist Party as part of the Great Satyagraha.

Chief Minister M. Bakthavatsalam had been saying that the agitation was a "political stunt" and those who indulged in it were "unpatriotic troublemakers". He announced that he would "crush" the agitation.

True to his word, the Chief Minister has wielded the big stick in dealing with the peaceful agitation planned by the Communist Party. Even before the satyagraha was launched, the police arrested the top leaders of the Communist Party who were to have led the satyagraha in different centres. So far 1,300 people have been arrested.

In pre-dawn swoops on August 24, the police took into "preventive custody" Party workers and leaders all over the state. Those who were thus arrested included Manali Eandaswami, secretary of the Tamilnad state council of the CPI, M. Kalyanasundaram in Tiruchirappalli, K. T. K. Thangamani in Madurai, Parvati Krishnan in Coimbatore. Arrests are still continuing.

In Madras a batch of 11 volunteers including a woman was arrested at Broadway when they emerged from the Party office. They were to have picketed the collectorate.

The batch was led by A. S. K. Iyengar.

In Coimbatore district 79 Communist workers were arrested from Coimbatore, Mettupalayam and Bhavani. Among those arrested were the secretary and members of the district council of the CPI and the president of the Cement Workers Union at Madukkarai. The district Party office and trade union offices could not work as any body who came there, was arrested.

In Tiruppur, 30 miles from Madras, the police arrested ten Communist workers.

In Madurai, the police arrested 31 Communist workers, including the secretary of the Madurai Textile Workers Union and the secretary of the city committee of the CPI.

In Salem district the arrests numbered as high as 71. In Salem town 34 volunteers were arrested including G. Samuel, leader of the satyagrahis.

The police arrested 51 Communist workers in Tiruchirappalli. The arrests were made on the night of August 23.

The largest number of arrests took place in Ram-

nad district, where the police put behind bars as many as 179 people for asking cheap food.

Though many of the leaders of the Party have been taken into "preventive custody" by the police, it has not produced the desired results. Party members and sympathisers are coming forward to offer satyagraha before the grain markets, government offices and a few selected banks and the Madras Stock Exchange.

Satyagraha is continuing as scheduled and will last till August 28. About five thousand volunteers have been enrolled so far and the headquarters of the state council of the CPI has announced that the satyagraha would continue for the five days.

Meanwhile, the attitude of other opposition parties to the food satyagraha is interesting. While the Swatantra Party is admittedly opposed to it, it was intriguing to see the DMK applauding the government's "firm stand" against the Reds.

The Tenali Communists are silent about the agitation. Their leader P. Ramamurthi is reported to have invited the DMK for a "separate" agitation on food though the DMK is reluctant to join anything that "smells Communists".

Assam

From M. Bhattacharyya

Statewide Demonstrations

SHILLONG: Mass demonstrations were held before banks all over Assam on August 24 as part of the food campaign launched by the Communist Party of India.

These demonstrations demanded nationalisation of banking industry, which was present financing the speculators in people's food and helping the hoarders.

There were also public meetings in several places to explain the Communist Party's demands over food, including state wholesale trading in foodgrains, nationalisation of banks and ending speculation in foodgrains.

These demonstrations and meetings formed part of the plan chalked out by the Assam state council of the CPI as part of the Great Satyagraha. The plans finalised at the council's meeting on August 14 to 17 also included the following:

On August 25, 26 and 27 mass meetings will be held in the rural areas to rouse the kisan masses and the working people to join the Communist Party's struggle against the unprecedented rise in prices of all essential articles.

On August 28, there will be mass satyagraha before the government secretariat in the state capital and government offices in other places. Volunteers for this satyagraha will

be enrolled in the meetings on earlier days.

The mass satyagraha at Shillong will be led by Phani Bora, secretary of the state council of the CPI, Pramode Gogoi and Benoy Lahiri, members of the state executive of the Party. Tarunsen Deka, Arabindo Ghose and Lohit Das will lead the satyagrahis at Gauhati, while at Jorhat they will be led by Dadi Mahanta, and at Dibrugarh by Barin Chowdhury, secretary of the Assam TUC.

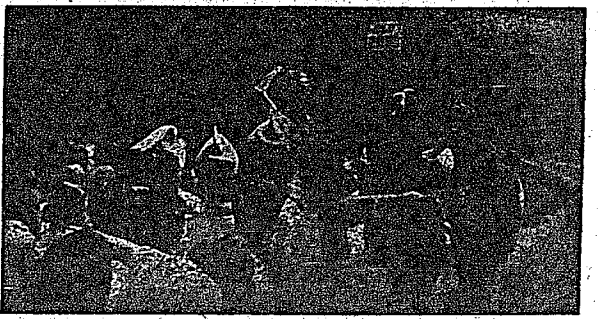
Other centres and leaders are: Nowgong — Kehoram Hazarika, Tezpur — Ramesh Sharma, Sib-sagar — Bhadra Krishna Goswami, Goalpara — Sarat Rabha and Nalhati — Deben Kalita.

At Shillong, the state capital, besides the local volunteers, a batch of satyagrahis from other districts including Kamrup will offer satyagraha. The Shillong unit of the Party has made arrangements for their board and lodging.

There has been wide response to the Communist Party's appeal to the people to help the campaign with money and other facilities for the satyagrahis coming from outside to offer satyagraha in the capital.



Second day satyagraha before banks in Delhi. Two Party workers (top) and Y. D. Sharma (below) courting arrest. (Photo: Virendra Kumar)



SATYAGRAHA IN CAPITAL



NEW DELHI: The people's protest against high prices and food scarcity and the government policies which are contributing to it resounded in the Indian capital for three days from August 24. The occasion was the Great Satyagraha organised by the Communist Party of India.

THE echoes from the protest shook not only the seats of governmental power but those of the monopoly capital which seeks to control it and the hoarders, black-marketeers, profiteers and speculators who stand to gain from the anti-people policies of the government.

The Great Satyagraha was launched by the Communist Party in Delhi on August 24 when its volunteers picketed the wholesale grain market in Naya Bazar on August 24.

On the second day, prominent banks and the Delhi stock exchange were the sce-

nes of satyagraha, while on the third day, August 26, the Food Ministry was picketed by Communist volunteers.

Fiftyone satyagrahis were arrested on August 24 when they picketed four selected big wholesale grain dealers in Naya Bazar. Among those arrested were Jogindra Sharma, member of the central secretariat of the CPI. The satyagrahis were led by R. C. Sharma.

The satyagrahis demanded that the grain dealers should sell wheat at Rs 15 a maund. When the dealers refused, the satyagrahis lay down before the shops, and the police arrested them.

The procedure was repeated

satyagrahis were beaten up by the RSS hoodlums in the pay of the wholesale grain merchants.

Some of them even tried to push a handcart onto the bodies of the satyagrahis who were lying down but the timely intervention of a police officer saved the satyagrahis from serious injuries.

Some of the goondas even attacked press photographers. The camera of the **AMRITA BAZAR PATRIKA** photographer was smashed up.

The Jan Sangh was thoroughly exposed by its defence of the grain hoarders and profiteers, while the peaceful nature of the Communist satya-

fore the scheduled time of satyagraha and there was a militant demonstration.

The Delhi Stock exchange was picketed by a group of satyagrahis who had come from Shahdara under the leadership of Natha Singh. The batch including two women, Kamaljeet and Chandravati, had walked the seven miles from Shahdara to Delhi.

In utter contrast to the

shouting slogans, the most popular one being "Give Cheap Food Or Quit Office". This brought the total number of arrests in Delhi to 167.

The satyagraha was under the leadership of M. Farooqi, secretary of the Delhi council of the CPI. Among the satyagrahis was Bhupesh Gupta, member of the central secretariat of the Party.

A big procession marched down from Windsor Place, office of Communist Parliamentary Party, to Krishi Bhavan leading the satyagrahis. Many small processions had earlier converged on Windsor Place from several areas of Delhi, leading small batches of satyagrahis. A large number of women also participated in the demonstration.

The procession took a round

of the circle near Krishi Bhavan and paraded the road in front of the Ministry. Thousands of government employees came out of their offices to watch the Communist demonstration, and many more looked down from the windows of the multistoried buildings on both sides of the road.

Addressing the assembled government employees and demonstrators Farooqi criticised the government action in arresting the satyagrahis under section seven of the Criminal Law Amendment Act.

He said that they did not obstruct the people from discharging their duties; they were obstructing only the hoarders and profiteers from carrying out their anti-social activities. It is the speculators, hoarders and blackmarketeers who should be arrested instead of the Communist volunteers who were voicing the people's demands.

Bhupesh Gupta warned the government that the present satyagraha was only one phase of the struggle and that it would grow into a torrential movement to compel the government change its pro-hoarder and pro-speculator policies.

After the speeches, the volunteers tried to enter the Krishi Bhavan compound, but the police cordon at the gates pushed them back. While the satyagrahis pushed forward, they were arrested.

After the arrests, the police tried to disperse the slogan-shouting crowd from the place. But the people foiled this attempt by squatting on the road. They were addressed by Party leaders.



By Our Staff Correspondent

in front of all the four shops by different batches of satyagrahis.

All through a huge crowd which had gathered at Naya Bazar continued to shout slogans justly. Among the more popular slogans were "Hang The Hoarders", "Give Food To The People, Otherwise Resign".

The satyagraha passed off absolutely peacefully except for the unprovoked and unwarranted attack made by the Jan Sangh and RSS goondas who had collected in the grain shops.

The Jan Sangh had earlier announced its decision to "oppose" the satyagraha. On Monday the Jan Sangh and RSS goondas took positions inside the grain shops and when the satyagrahis picketed the shops, fell upon them.

Though the police had collected in strength at the site, they were unable to give adequate protection to the peaceful satyagrahis. Many of the

graha brought appreciation from the people assembled in Naya Bazar.

Earlier, three processions had come to the satyagraha site from three points in the city, leading the volunteers. The satyagrahis paraded Naya Bazar before offering satyagraha.

The second day of the satyagraha also passed off peacefully in Delhi. Though the police tried to provoke the satyagrahis in two places they were absolutely peaceful.

The first of these incidents occurred before the Punjab National Bank in fashionable Connaught Place. When the satyagrahis reached the bank premises, the police sought to arrest them which brought forth protests as the satyagrahis had not yet broken any law. The issue was settled peacefully when the magistrate present intervened and allowed the satyagrahis to address the people.

This batch of satyagrahis was led by Y. D. Sharma and included two women volunteers, Bulu Roychowdhury and Sunaina Sharma.

Another batch which included Romesh Chandra, member of the central secretariat of the CPI and editor of **NEW AGE**, and Premsagar Gupta, leader of the Communist group in the Delhi Corporation, offered satyagraha before the British-owned National and Grindlays Bank in another area of Connaught Place.

A third batch of volunteers, drawn mainly from textile workers and led by Munshi Ram Gupta offered satyagraha before the United Commercial Bank in Connaught Place.

Dev Dutt Attal led a batch of volunteers to offer satyagraha before the Punjab National Bank in Karol Bagh. Here, a huge sympathetic crowd had collected long be-



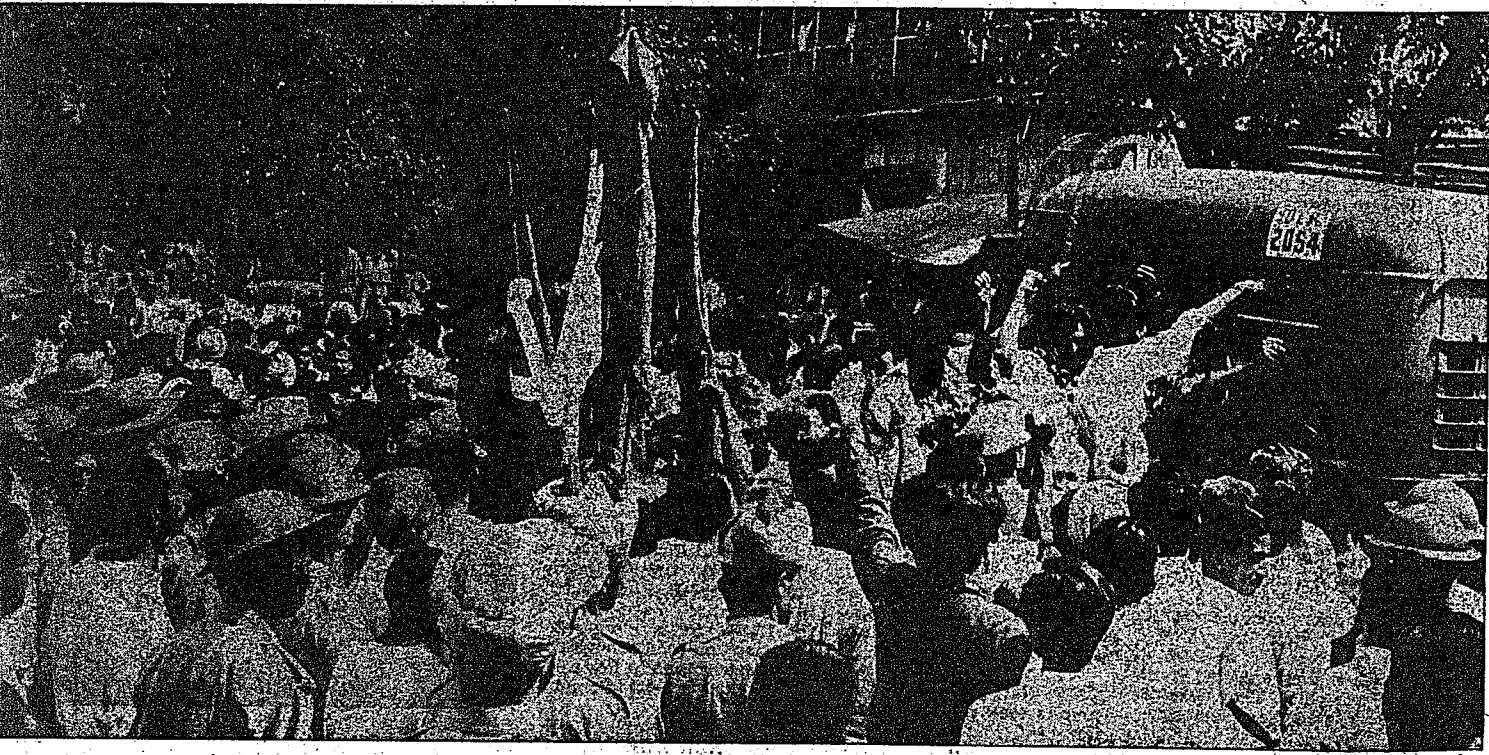
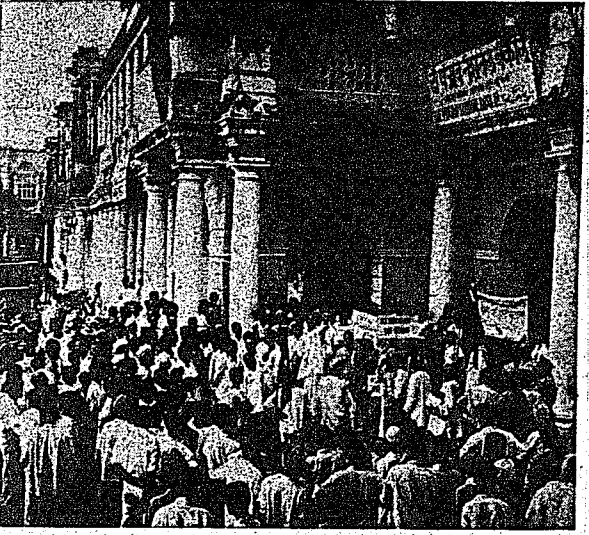
politeness of the police elsewhere, here they behaved rudely to the satyagrahis. The women volunteers were pushed around and the others manhandled by the police in a sudden show of might.

But the satyagrahis, as also the people who had gathered in front of the Stock Exchange, remained unprovoked. They shouted slogans condemning the police rudeness.

The main slogans of the day were "Nationalise Banks", "End Speculation In Foodgrains" and "Close Down Stock Exchanges".

On the third and last day of the programme in Delhi, mass satyagraha was offered before the Krishi Bhavan where the Food and Agriculture Ministry is located. It was for the first time in the history of the Government of India that one of its ministries located in the central secretariat complex was picketed.

Fortyseven satyagrahis were arrested by the police when they tried to enter the gates of Krishi Bhavan



Left Top: Jogindra Sharma courts arrest; Centre: satyagraha before Punjab National Bank; Bottom: satyagraha scene on August 24; Centre: R. C. Sharma courts arrest. Above: RSS goondas attack satyagrahis; Below: Hand cart being pushed against satyagrahis. (Photos: Virendra Kumar).

POLICE ATTACK SATYAGRAHIS

LUCKNOW: As the second day of the GREAT SATYAGRAHA draws to a close in Uttar Pradesh, the far from complete reports reaching Party headquarters indicate that nearly 1,200 satyagrahis have been arrested and sent to jail in different parts of the state.

THE arrested include Rustam Satin in Varanasi, Jharkhand Rai, deputy leader of the Communist group in the state Assembly, Vijay Pal Singh MLA, Raghunath Ram MLA (Ballia).

Among the arrested is also Sharafat Hasan Rizvi MLA, from Amroha who had joined the splitters but who during this movement has decided to court arrest along with a batch of CPI volunteers in his home-town.

The Party, according to reports received so far, had fielded nearly four thousand satyagrahis in about two hundred centres of the state on the first day, August 24.

In places the batches of the satyagrahis were small, varying in strength from 10 to 20 or 25, but in other places their numbers went up to 150 or even 200.

In many places the police tired them out and refused to arrest. In others, it picked up some and left out others. In all, the police arrested about one-sixth of the satyagrahis who peacefully, but decisively, picketed the three-fold centres of profiteering, money manipulation and misguided and misdirected power.

Sucheta Kripalani, Chief Minister had declared that she was not afraid of demonstrations and therefore she would not arrest people unless they ceased to be peaceful.

To their and their party's great credit, the satyagrahis were uniformly and universally peaceful. They retained their revolutionary poise and composure even in face of gross provocations by the police and the Jan Sanghite servants of the grain shoppers. But Sucheta's police did not behave peacefully.

Before Council House

In Lucknow, despite the fact that the satyagraha was led by Dr. Z. A. Ahmed and two other respected members of the state Assembly, Chandrajee Yadav and Raghbir Ram, the police behaved provocatively and insolently right in front of the Council House.

Seeing Dr. Ahmed standing at the entrance to the Council House, not even one member of the ruling party, including ministers, tried to force his way through the gate. Many of them did go inside, but they did so through other doors. The entire opposition was already out. Yet, some of the police officials tried to forcibly smuggle some people through the picketed entrance.

Later, they jostled and pushed to the ground many satyagrahis while they were trying to force their way peacefully inside.

The satyagrahis were dragged, pushed with lathies and some policemen even rained blows on them. In the scuffle and melee that followed, along with many others, Dr. Ahmed, Chandrajee Yadav and Raghbir Ram fell down on the ground. One of the satyagrahis fainted.

Raghbir Ram MLA and nearly a dozen others sustained painful injuries. At the end, after about three-and-a-half hours of a war of nerves 60 of the satyagrahis were taken into custody. Later the police released eight of them and only 52 have been kept in jail.

The three legislators, including Dr. Ahmed have not been arrested. The arrested satyagrahis have been charged under several sections like 147, 452, 332 and 114 of the IPC coupled with section 7 of the Criminal Law Amendment Act.

The other place where the police indulged in lathi-charge, even more wantonly and brutally, was Ghazipur.

There the Party had organised satyagraha in front of the Allahabad Bank and the District Supply Office. The police used lathis and canes to beat them in front of the Bank.

Beaten In Custody

Later, after 57 of the 200 satyagrahis had been arrested, the police again attacked them with lathis and batons on their refusal to climb into the police trucks. The satyagrahis wanted to be taken on foot to jail. Sixteen comrades were seriously hurt in this attack by the police.

The rough, districtwise breakdown of the arrests up to second day is: Lucknow 52, Azamgarh 150, Muzaffarnagar 300, Ghazipur 300, Ballia 102, Gorakhpur 53, Dehra Dun 25, Amroha 8, Moradabad 25 and other places about 150.

The second day saw hundreds more arrests when the satyagrahis concentrated their movement against the important banks.

In Varanasi, Rustam Satin and 53 other Communist satyagrahis were arrested outside the District Supply Office on the second day of the Communist agitation against soaring prices.

Fifty-seven satyagrahis were arrested at Ghazipur, 41 at Ballia, (According to reports available till Wednesday night, it is estimated that about 1500 Satyagrahis have been arrested in UP. More than 8,000 had offered Satyagraha during the three days.)



Satyagrahis under arrest at Lucknow

43 at Mau in Azamgarh district and 24 in Azamgarh town, according to reports received.

At Tehri 22 Communist satyagrahis were arrested for demonstrating outside the office of the Sub-Divisional Magistrate.

One hundred and eighteen Communist satyagrahis were arrested at Muzaffarnagar on Tuesday. On Wednesday the total number of arrests in this district went up to 300.

People's Support

At Dehra Dun nine satyagrahis were arrested on Tuesday, bringing the total number of arrests so far to 25.

Our satyagraha has become the biggest news today. There is almost unlimited sympathy and support among the people of practically all walks of life for our struggle.

The send-offs that were given to satyagrahis at every place were attended by hundreds and thousands of people. At many places flower petals were showered on them. In some, women came out with 'thais' and applied sandal and other sacred pastes on the foreheads of the satyagrahis.

The satyagrahis have unquestionably become dear to the people. I have known of no movement launched by the Party which has evoked such feelings of affection and friendliness among the people for our comrades.

The hated Jan Sanghis are becoming more hated on account of their opposition to this people's own crusade for food. The splitters are feeling incredibly lost and crest fallen—and are looking so!

In Lucknow itself, many independent and other opposition MLAs had given a warm send-off to our batch this morning. Many Congressmen, legislators, came to Dr. Ahmed or Yadav, pressed their hands and told them that they fully supported us. Thousands watched the satyagraha in the blazing sun.

(According to reports available till Wednesday night, it is estimated that about 1500 Satyagrahis have been arrested in UP. More than 8,000 had offered Satyagraha during the three days.)



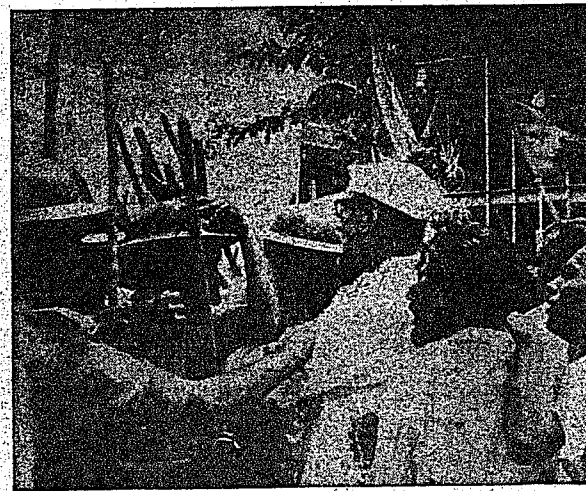
An Old Man is Manhandled By Police



Police resort to Lathi charge at Lucknow



Dr. Ahmed being prevented from entering the Assembly House



(Photos: Tandon)

NEW STAGE IN BATTLE FOR UNITY OF PEACE WORKERS

Chinese Disruptive Move Checkmated In World Conference In Japan

The All India Peace Council, at its special session at the end of June this year discussed in some details and with a sense of deep anxiety, the dangerous disruptive moves of the leadership of the Chinese Peace Committee aimed at destroying the unity of the World Peace Movement. These reprehensible moves, which began to take organised shape in international meetings from about 1961, had grown in intensity as time passed.

THE All-India Peace Council decided to inform the entire Indian Movement about these efforts of the Chinese Peace Committee and warn all members and supporters of our movement against such Chinese inspired disruption being attempted inside the Indian Movement.

Looking back now, it is clear that this discussion on the perils which face the unity of the peace movement, both internationally and nationally, was not a day too early. For just one month later, we saw the tragic consequences of Chinese interference in the internal affairs of a national peace movement, when we attended the two conferences against nuclear weapons organised in Japan in July-August.

The Indian delegation, which attended this Conference, was jointly sponsored by the All India Peace Council and the Indian Association for Afro-Asian Solidarity. These two fraternal organisations had decided to accept invitations, which they had received, from two Japanese bodies, which were organising conferences against nuclear weapons.

Dawn Of Splittism

We knew well enough that the two separate invitations indicated division inside the Japanese Peace Movement; we knew the history of this split and the responsibility for this split, which rested so heavily on the Chinese Peace Committee and those sections in Japan, who insisted on following to its last letter the Chinese line, which is best summed up in the world "splittism".

It was also clear to us from the documents circulated that, on problems of peace and disarmament, the positions being taken in the preparatory documents of one conference were nearer our point of view than those of the other.

But since the organisers of the Conference in Tokyo, (titled

ed the 10th World Conference Against A and H Bombs) guaranteed, in their invitation letters complete freedom of discussion and the right to put forward any point of view, we felt we should accept its invitation, despite our differences on some questions with the opinions of the main organisers.

We also felt it was not our business to take sides in the internal dispute inside the Japanese Movement; we considered, on the contrary, that we should use any influence we may have to help unify the movement in Japan.

It was with this clear understanding that after considerable thought the All India Association for Afro-Asian Solidarity decided to take part in both the Conferences—in the one at Tokyo as well as the one at Hiroshima.

The Indian delegation was led by Aruna Asaf Ali and included a number of leading figures in the Indian Peace Movement. Several of us had had experience of the foul behaviour of Chinese delegations and their hangers on at other international conferences.

But what faced us at Tokyo was beyond anything we had experienced earlier and exceeded the worst we could have imagined.

Let me say this right away: the Tokyo "Conference" was NOT a conference for peace; it was sought to be turned into the "inaugural" session for the launching of disruption inside the peace movements of as many countries as possible—wherever the Chinese leaders could BUY—yes, BUY—even one adherent for their adventurist, Chauvinist, bellicose policies.

The Indian press has given so far only a very brief glimpse into the chamber of horrors which was constructed in the halls of the Diamond Hotel in Tokyo, where the so-called "10th Conference" was held.

But since the organisers of the Conference in Tokyo, (titled

in most cases, no one but perhaps their closest relatives even knows of their existence!)

Abuse against whom? Against the imperialists? Against the makers of war? Against the US bases which are dotted all over Japan?

Not at all... not one word against them. The entire torrent of dirt, which shot out of the mouths of these adventurers, was directed against the Soviet Union, against its leaders—and against the World Council of Peace.

The purpose? To justify Chinese acquisition of nuclear weapons, Chinese "domination" of the world, Chinese adventurism, false Chinese "theories" on every conceivable subject—which oppose the general line of the world peace movement.

Protests Unheeded

Again and again, the genuine delegates protested. Aruna Asaf Ali voiced the feelings of all these genuine delegates when she said that we had come away thousands of miles to Japan to discuss ways to unite against war and imperialism—we had not come to take part in a crusade against the Soviet Union or the World Council of Peace.

But not the organisers continued to refuse us permission to talk of the issues of peace—instead they gave more and more time to speak to the gangsters enlisted by Peking from the worst elements in several countries.

The rest of the story is now well known. When the Conference opened, suddenly new "rules" were announced arbitrarily. No delegate, who was to attend also the Hiroshima Conference, could be a member of any of the directing bodies of the Conference or of the drafting committee; and, as a final touch, no delegate could speak unless he had handed in his speech 48 hours before hand (and since this "rule" was announced less than 48 hours before the end of the "international" conference, it meant that no one, whom the organisers did not want would be allowed to speak!)

The "rules" began to be enforced: the Presidium, the Steering Committee and the Drafting Committee were "elected"; Algeria and Argentina were denied the right to speak, when the leaders were called upon, one after the other in alphabetical order—because of the 48 hour "rule," though Albania, whose delegates arrived in Japan three hours earlier, was given the floor!

Patience was now exhausted. It was clear that the Chinese leaders meant the "Conference" to be a rubber stamp of their policies. Repeated demands to examine the cre-

dentials of the Peking-paid delegates failed to secure any response.

The Indian delegation at this critical moment, took the lead in convening a meeting of all genuine delegates. The results: a united walk out by representatives of thirty two countries and all the major world organisations.

Only a rump remained behind to toe the Chinese line. The walk out was the biggest blow imaginable for Chinese prestige and aims. All delegates expressed their gratitude to the Indian delegation for taking the lead in giving this major rebuff to

texts of resolutions, in accordance with the discussions in the drafting committee.

It was perhaps a consequence also of the high regard won by the Indian delegation for our country that ensured the unanimous adoption at the Hiroshima Conference of the resolution supporting the Colombo Proposals and calling for negotiations between India and China "on the basis of the acceptance and implementation" of the proposals.

This was the first international conference, where such a clear-cut resolution could be adopted—and was

by ROMESH CHANDRA

the Chinese disruptors and splitters.

This action, jointly taken by some 80 genuine delegates helped also in making the Hiroshima Conference the tremendous success it was.

The Indian delegation continued to take a leading position in the Hiroshima Conference deliberations. In a way, one can say that India recovered in the Japan Conferences the high position which it had always held in international meetings before the Chinese aggression.

Indian Stand Appreciated

It was a tribute to the strong anti-imperialist stand taken by the Indian delegation and to its initiative against disruption, that the Indian delegation found a place in all the committees set up at the Hiroshima Conference (no other country had this unique honour). It was an Indian who was given the privilege of speaking on behalf of the World Council of Peace at the International Conference at Hiroshima.

Again it was an Indian, who was one of the two foreigners (the other was from Algeria) who were entrusted with the Japanese hosts, to prepare the final

understanding the result of the painstaking work done by the Indian delegation.

The speech made on behalf of the Indian delegation by Aruna Asaf Ali was a major contribution to the Hiroshima Conference. The resolutions finally adopted by the conference were, in large measure, along the lines supported by the Indian delegation.

The interventions and speeches of other Indian delegates on other occasions were also warmly acclaimed.

The delegation was able to make the widest contacts both among the Japanese delegates and also among delegates from other countries. The MPs and MLAs in the delegation had a special meeting with Japanese MPs. Close contacts were made with the Japanese trade unions, youth organisations and women's organisations.

The vast mass support which the Hiroshima Conference received among the Japanese people testified to the great success of the Conference. As the echoes of the conference are heard in more and more countries, its immense significance will be more easily understood—its significance not only for the Japanese people, but also for the unity of the World Peace Movement as a whole.

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Short-Term And Long-Term Steps

*FROM PAGE FIVE

Favourable conditions for raising production can be created only by carrying through to completion the radical agrarian reforms in the interest of the peasantry ending the sabotage and side-tracking of the same by the landlords and the government. The concentration of land in the hands of capitalist landlords and others have to be broken, land ceiling to be firmly applied so that surplus land thus made available as well as fallow land in the hands of the government is distributed to the landless peasants and agricultural labourers.

The cultivating peasant has to be freed from the triple burden of semi-feudal exploitation and from the exploitation of usurious and trading capital. The remaining landlord and share-cropping tenants will have to be made owners of these lands; the remaining instalments of compensation which burden vast number of peasants will have to be stayed or remitted altogether; the mounting debt burden on the shoulders of the peasant will have to be sealed down; the peasant assured of a fair return for his produce through state trading in foodgrains and commercial crops; he must be assured of the supply of necessary industrial goods at comparable and stable prices through fair price shops and through co-operatives.

All these measures will have to be taken to enable him to get out of the vicious circle of deficit economy; and then alone will he be able to take practical steps to invest in technical improvements and be in a mood to turn to cooperative farming.

The mere distribution of surplus and fallow lands will not be able to solve the problem of the vast number of landless and agricultural labourers to ensure the full utilisation of their labour power.

The reclaiming by modern methods the vast tracts of cultivable waste lands in the hands of the government in the various states, and setting up a hundred or so large mechanised state farms of the type as Suratgarh is a fruitful and practical idea which needs to be taken in hand and pursued with vigour. Apart from contributing to the utilisation of the labour power of the agricultural labour force, this plan could make a very substantial contribution to the increase of food grain production and stock in the hands of the government.

So much for the long-term aspect of the food problem. But we are not dealing with this aspect here. The urgent need of the hour is to spell out the concrete steps and measures to effectively implement the first aspect of policy of solving the present food crisis and laying the firm basis for a just and equitable distribution of foodgrains.

As the Working Committee resolution points out the government has taken steps to step up the import of wheat

and rice not only from USA, but as well as from Australia, France, Cambodia and other countries. The quantum of these foodgrains being made available to the needy areas is being stepped up.

The number of fair price shops are being increased from 55,000 to 80,000 and some 50 million people are being supplied with wheat and rice at controlled and subsidised prices. This is of course an emergency measure to gain a breathing space. This has to be immediately followed by vigorous and all-round dehoarding operations and by bringing down the prices on the general market.

As has been pointed out by the Working Committee resolution, "in spite of the fairly satisfactory production of cereals (this year) unfortunately the market arrivals have been at much lower level than during the previous years. This has created scarcities in various areas and prices also have been pushed up to an unprecedented level".

This "unfortunate" development of unprecedented low level of arrivals in the market is not due to the producers, that is, peasants keeping back the stock, as some inspired representatives of the big traders are suggesting, but due to the anti-social activities of the wholesale traders who keep concealed hoards in order to raise prices and to make huge profits.

It is good that the Working Committee now wants the state governments to take firm action against those who go on hoarding and concealing their stocks "even after the period of grace" given by the Prime Minister. It is also good that the Working Committee wants the state governments to fix and enforce "reliable maximum prices" of foodgrains, on the basis of fixing producers', wholesaler's and retailers' levels allowing fair margin, but no more.

Similar statements have been issued even earlier. Licensing orders were issued defining maximum limit of stocks to be retained by trader, beyond which they were liable to be requisitioned. Maximum prices were announced, though they were not very moderate. Nothing happened. Hoarding continued. Prices continued to rise.

Announcement of licensing orders without a vigorous dehoarding campaign and punitive actions against defaulters, only served as advance warnings to hoarders to conceal their stocks all the more securely. Price fixation remained on paper. Whether the government and the ruling party seriously mean what they proclaim now in the Working Committee resolution, will be seen only when they break with the past and take the following steps:

DEHOARDING campaign is still necessary. It has to be conducted by the government in cooperation with peoples' food movement, with the help of organisations of grain trade employees, of hamals, of truck drivers etc. who should help in unearthing hoards.

ALL concealed grain stocks discovered, now that "the two weeks of grace" are over, must be straight away confiscated and sent to fair price shops to be sold at controlled and subsidised rates.

ALL declared stocks above the proclaimed limit must be taken over by the government at prices just a little above those prevailing at the last harvest.

MAXIMUM foodgrain prices fixed can be implemented only if there are stern punitive actions; peoples' food movement must have to be vigilant to see that the fixed prices are implemented. Similarly, it is necessary to see that the opening of more fair price shops promised by government is implemented especially in rural and other areas where there is "scarcity" and where prices have risen. Long queues are reported before existing fair price shops in rural areas because there are not adequate stocks in them.

Rapid expansion of the network of fair price shops supplying the population with foodgrains at controlled and subsidised rate, a vigorous dehoarding campaign and bringing down of prices by implementing the maximum price levels that are being fixed—these are the essential preliminary steps to establish firm state control over foodgrain distribution making the state trade a success, ensuring fair return to the producer and making foodgrains available to the consumers at reasonable fixed prices.

Unless these preliminary steps are successfully carried out and the present inflated prices of foodgrains are brought down to the level at least of the last harvest season, the government will not be able to make the requisite purchases at the next harvest at any reasonable price to make its state trading a success. For instance, the ruling prices of wheat (medium quality), rice and jowar in Maharashtra were reported to be between Rs 100 to 120 per quintal for wheat, Rs 90 for rice and Rs 75 for jowar.

These were prices in Bombay City. By effective action the government has got to succeed in bringing down these prices, say by October, to Rs 50 or so for wheat and rice and about 45-50 for jowar. If it fails in this its purchase operations at the next harvest would be a failure.

This brings us to the main question of establishing state trading in grain. First question is, are we demanding immediately the institution of state monopoly in foodgrains trade, the complete elimination of private trade in food grains?

This will require that the government procures the entire marketable surplus of foodgrains from the peasants. This also requires that the retail distribution is done through rationing, by supplying the consumer through government licensed shops.

This at once brings back the memories of monopoly procurement and the rationing of the later war days

under British rule. One is immediately reminded of the harassment of the peasant in the name of monopoly procurement, of the bad quality imported wheat and rice one got in the ration shops, while better quality grain circulated in the black market. All this was used by the representatives of big foodgrain merchants and their representatives to oppose control, state monopoly in foodgrain trade and all cereals.

Their opposition resulted in the removal of all controls on foodgrain trade soon after independence. And now when the present situation demands re-imposition of these controls and effective state intervention in food trade, those very elements come forward to oppose any state trading in foodgrains and all cereals.

The question we are concerned with is whether we should demand state monopoly of foodgrain trade or should support the type of state trading as outlined by Subramaniam and now supported by the Working Committee resolution. Here it must be clearly understood that whether it is state monopoly of foodgrains trade or state trading which secures a commanding position in that trade, both must achieve the same objective, that is, dislodge the wholesale trader from the position of being able to play with the stocks and manipulate prices of peoples food.

The vested interests in the foodgrain trade oppose both the forms equally vehemently and will use every means and pressure to see that the State Trading Corporation becomes ineffective and fails in its purpose. That is why it is necessary to define the prerequisites and measures that are essential to make state trading in foodgrains a success.

The first step, which we have already outlined is the vigorous dehoarding drive and bringing down the prices, in good time before the next harvest, that is, already before October. The next point is to fix the price for the various foodgrains at the producers' level at which the state will buy the grain from the peasant leaving a reasonable rate of profit after covering his production costs.

The government has appointed a committee to work out this essential price. It is of course essential to secure such a price for the peasant, and that is the key to help him to increase food production. Actually the bulk of our peasantry is always forced to sell its marketable surplus at distress prices far below even his cost of production.

Often the cultivating peasant is deep in debt and is already 'bound', long before the harvest is ready, to sell his rice or wheat at throw-away prices to the money-lender who is also a wholesale grain dealer. Some times the wholesale trader through his agents in villages distributes advances to peasants in the sowing season, in order to secure his marketable produce at prices which barely meet his cost of production.

Credit and marketing co-operative societies could protect the peasant, provided these are run in the interests of broad mass of peasants and not dominated by vested interest as they often are today. Even so, the cooperative network is not all widespread. So the point is not only to fix a remunerative price for the peasants' produce but also to

ensure that the peasant gets it.

Further it is also necessary to ensure that the peasant gets all the essential industrial goods he needs, such as cloth, sugar, iron implements and sheets, fertilisers and cement at fixed prices which are par with the price he gets for his produce. This is another prerequisite for inducing the peasant to sell his produce at the economic price thus fixed.

Next point is how to secure the substantial portion of the marketable surplus of foodgrains so that the government is in a commanding position in the foodgrain market and is in a position to counteract all moves by the big wholesalers to corner stocks and raise prices. This is the key point on which the whole success of state trading depends.

If the State Trading Corporation is to be a success, its formation must not be delayed upto January next but must start functioning already in October this year when the kharif crop starts coming in. By this time the dehoarding and the bringing down of prices should have been completed and the State Trading Corporation should be ready to purchase the kharif crop not only in the mandies, but at various purchase points directly from the peasants at the fixed prices. Government purchase agents must not be allowed to trade on their private account and must restrict themselves to government purchasing and stocking operations only.

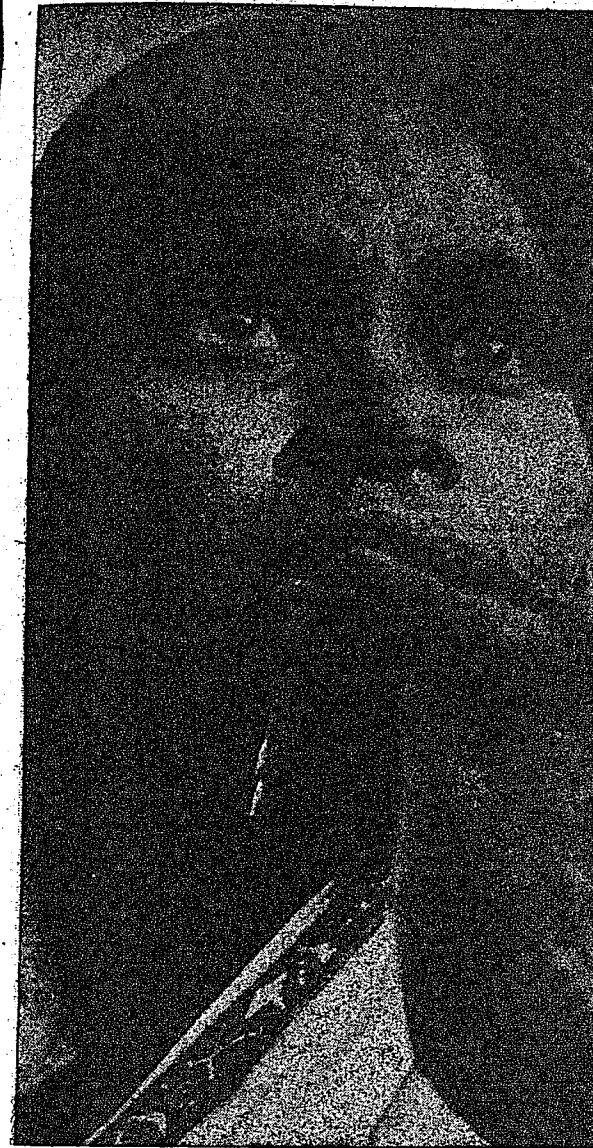
Wholesale trader will thus be forestalled by the government purchase apparatus. This is not enough. The wholesaler has to be deprived of the means, the bank advances, with which he finances his hoarding and speculative operations. We have shown how the Reserve Bank orders to restrict bank advances against foodgrain stocks have utterly failed in their purpose and that the new order will fare no better.

Latest RBI statistics show that the advances of scheduled banks against foodgrains have increased during February and May this year. This shows that what is needed is not just restricting the advances but to put a blanket ban on such advances. Not only must the private wholesale trader in food be prevented from getting the bank advances for speculative purposes, but the bank resources, at present so used must be requisitioned by the government to finance its take over of the foodgrains trade.

The government must be armed against the contingency that it does not secure sufficient stocks. It must be in a position to compel the wholesalers to sell their surplus stocks above the limit fixed to the government at prices a little above those offered by the government to the peasants. Even more stringent measures will have to be taken to defeat the activities of the hoarders and speculators.

The state trading in foodgrains that we have outlined above, will be something much more than just "exerting stabilising influence on the prices of foodgrains". To be really successful the government foodgrains trading corporation must get such substantial part of the marketable surplus in its hands so that

* ON PAGE 18



The Worried Look.

(Photo: Shambhu Banerjee)

ORISSA CAMPAIGN AGAINST PRICES

From Nandakishore Patnaik

CUTTACK: The whole of Orissa is witnessing meetings and demonstrations in support of hungerstrikes against rising prices and worsening food situation. Thousands of people come to the streets in sympathy with the cause and actions of hunger strikers.

A number of towns of Cuttack district, in Athagarh, Kujang, Morshaghal, Dhanamandal and Jajpur Road, Communist Party workers have resorted to fasting in support of the call of the Communist Party.

In Athagarh, led by the state council member Brajakhishore Patnaik, Brajakhishore Prabhara, Dinabandhu Misra, Nanda Kishore Pradhan, Kanhua Charan Behera, Daitary Swain, Bisun Behera and Raghunath Rath resorted to hungerstrike from August 10 to 12 before the sub-divisional office.

In Dhanamandal hundreds of people responded to the call of the leaders of the Communist Party. Subal Charan Nayak, Maguni Charan Jena and Divakar Biswal resorted to hungerstrike to protest against the deteriorating price situation.

The hungerstrike undertaken by Yudhishthir Naik, member, NAC at Jajpur Road was supported by thousands of people who pledged to carry forward the agitation

for people's food.

At Morshaghal, Adhikari Madan Mohan Das led the volunteers who went on hungerstrike from August 10 to 12. A large number of people including Party sympathisers signed the pledge.

Massive Support

Kujang witnessed the three-day hungerstrike by Sanatan Pal, Artatran Samal, Satchidananda Ponda and Gopal Swain. Thousands of people visited the place of fasting and pledged their support to the common cause.

Along with the middle class, the student masses are agitated over the price crisis. The All Utkal Students Federation while expressing alarm at the present worsening conditions of the people urged upon the students masses to be aware of the crisis and accept the challenge thrown by the government.

The Ganjam district council of the CPI has resolved to participate in the satyagraha

ASSAM HOUSEWIVES' RALLY AGAINST FOOD PRICES

From M. Bhattacharyya

SHILLONG: A housewives' rally is not a usual phenomenon in Assam. But on August 9 last Gauhati witnessed such a rally and that too under the auspices of the women's wing of the Congress, the Assam Mahila Samiti. The issue that brought an unusually large number of women to the rally was food scarcity and rising prices of all essential commodities, including food articles, that hit the housewives most.

WORKERS' Rally
SPEAKERS at the meeting not only expressed their grave concern at the ever-mounting prices of essential commodities, but also threatened "direct action" if the demands of the meeting were not accepted by the government within a reasonable time.

The meeting demanded immediate price control of all essential commodities without which, it apprehended, the country "will soon be facing a famine". It demanded stern measures against profiteers and dehoarding of stocks lying with the hoarders. It demanded state trading in foodgrains and expressed itself against food import from foreign countries.

The meeting formed a committee to take necessary steps for launching "direct action", if prices did not come down within a reasonable period.

The housewives' rally was not the only public rally at Gauhati on the issue. Gauhati witnesses public meetings and hunger-marches organised by different organisations, particularly the trade unions, almost every day.

No Work Day Observed

The observance of "No Work Day" by more than 45,000 Class III and Class IV employees of the state government on August 11 that brought the civil administration in all the districts to a stand still for the day is also viewed here as an expression of popular feeling at the current price spiralling.

The call for the observance of the day was given by the All Assam Ministerial Officers' Association and Grade IV Employees' Association to ventilate their dissatisfaction at the recent recommendations of the Assam Pay Committee, to demand a fresh revision of pay scales to ensure living wages to the employees and to implement the provision of the Constitution regarding equal pay for equal work.

Helping Hoarders

It is also noted that while in the case of Goalpara the boarded stock was seized, the stock found out at Gauhati was not seized. It is significant that oil millers of Assam had been raising the price of mustard oil on the plea of scarcity of mustard seed, while the above mentioned raids revealed that the wholesalers had been holding huge stocks of mustard seed.

In the Gauhati godown that was searched, tins of linessed oil, castor oil and groundnut oil were found along with mustard oil tins. It is suspected that these oils were kept there to adulterate mustard oil; there could be no other reason for such a huge stock of other varieties of oil.

It is significant that immediately after the search in the Gauhati godown, the local oil millers assured the supply department that they would release mustard oil to the retailers at Rs. 52 per tin of 17 litres instead of Rs. 58 at which rate they had been selling it for the last one month or so, resulting in the rise in retail price.

It is now stated that if the oil millers would honour their commitment, retail price of mustard oil should not be more than Rs. 3.25 per litre.

It is obvious from this single instance that if the government took action against the hoarders their resistance could be broken and the people could be given relief.

It is pointed out that people are now at their tether's end and that is why expression of "concern" by spokesmen of the government at the rising prices and scarcity and dangling of statistics can no longer keep them passive sufferers.

Under pressure of public opinion when government take some action here and there against hoarders, huge hoarded stocks of different commodities are unearthed which only shows that the present scarcity is artificial.

For instance, at Gauhati recently there was a surprise raid at a wholesaler's godown. It revealed 1900 bags of pulses, 396 bags of pulse seeds, 2,000 tins of mustard oil, 685 tins of other oils and 23 bags of mustard seeds.

Earlier one godown of a big merchant in Goalpara district was raided and it brought out a hoarded stock of 8,000 tins of mustard oil and a huge stock of mustard seed. In another place also a similar raid brought out a huge stock of mustard oil and mustard seed.

And yet the price of mustard oil has been rising. It shot up to about Rs. 5 a litre from Rs. 3.12 a litre in course of a month.

It is noted that while a few of the godowns were searched there are a large number of godowns that have not yet been searched. Instead, the hoarders themselves have been asked to disclose their stock. This is interpreted here as giving a chance to the hoarders to hide their stock so that a search of their known godowns would not reveal that stock.

as directed by the state council as well as the national council. More than two hundred comrades have pledged to join the great satyagraha struggle and brisk preparation is under way.

In its recent session, the Sambalpur district council congratulated the people of Sambalpur for their successful hartal in the urban areas and called upon them to join the satyagraha movement to begin a week later.

Ramakrushna Pati, member of the Central Executive Committee of the CPI, called on members of the Balasore district council to rally round the call of the CPI and appealed all to join the great satyagraha.

Communist leaders in the district have undertaken a tour of the district and are holding meetings to canvass support for the satyagraha. In Mayurbhanj district too, Pati attended a meeting of the district council, where a decision was taken to participate in the all-India struggle.

In Kotpad, an important town of Korupur, comrades met to plan for the coming satyagraha. After the reporting made by Sadanda Mahanti, members decided to launch a programme of meetings, demonstrations etc.

The entire Party is agog with preparations for the forthcoming satyagraha. Satyagrahi forms have been enthusiastically filled up and an urgent meeting of the secretary and district secretaries is being held to plan out the details of the struggle.

In some districts, it is reported, the Deputy Commissioner threatened departmental action against those employees who participated in the observance of the "No Work Day". But undaunted by the threat the employees continued to sit in their respective places of work without performing any duty.

HOARDING : CRUX OF WEST BENGAL'S FOOD PROBLEM

BY OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The famished and hungry hordes typical of the 1943 famine are not to be seen, no starvation deaths have so far been reported and yet in a sense the tragedy of West Bengal today is even more poignant than the one that occurred twentyone years ago.

THE 1943 crisis, hit mainly the rural poor—it is they who crowded the streets of Calcutta and perished in thousands in the city or on their way to it. The 1964 crisis is an all-pervading crisis which has affected all strata of the population beginning from the landless labourer in the village to the middle classes in the towns.

One does not have to look in the streets for evidence of hunger. Every home, barring those of the fortunate few at the top, conceals behind a deceptively normal exterior a grim picture of privation and suffering.

Under these conditions what has died is faith in the future, hope of things ever improving. Frustration and cynicism hang like a pall over the whole people.

The abnormal rise in prices of almost all the essential commodities, rice, dals, mustard oil, vegetables, fish and meat has seriously hit the people and it may safely be said that all those up to the Rs. 1,000 per mensem income limit have been affected.

During the course of a seven day visit to West Bengal for an on the spot survey of the food situation I gained the impression that in the main the crisis is artificial, created to satisfy the greed of the hoarders and profiteers who flourish under the protective shelter of a government that has no policy of its own and is susceptible to the pulls and pressures that beset it from various sides.

A visit to the markets revealed the most amazing scenes. Almost everywhere the fish stalls, generally the busiest centres in the market, were deserted. In some places a solitary stall did business and long queues waited patiently for a piece of fish.

As each customer came up he was given a bit which was not weighed but arbitrarily declared by the stallholder to be so many grams. If the customer argued he was pushed out. The next man in the queue took his place and took his share without question almost as if he was receiving alms.

Markets Empty

In one of the biggest markets in Calcutta—in Gariahat market there was literally not a single stall selling fish at 7.30 A.M., normally a peak hour. Rice and mustard oil were not available at all.

Government is giving out rice at the rate of one kilo per adult per week from fair price shops or modified ration shops. But this is only for card holders.

Cards are not easy to get. If you want to apply for a card you have first to get an application form and even that is not so easy. To be eligible to receive the form you must prove that you are a resident of the area. A rent receipt is demanded as evidence but it is precisely the poorest strata of the population most in need of ration cards who cannot produce these receipts since such things are unknown in the bustees in which they reside.

I learnt that in a thickly populated area like Kidderpore

Whatever rice they produced they were forced to sell immediately after the harvest at the rate of Rs. 12 to Rs. 13 per maund of paddy. Today they are having to buy rice at Rs. 40 a maund.

To keep body and soul together they are taking loans and advances against next year's crops or selling their land. Thus a process of gradual transfer of land from the poor and middle to the richer sections is taking place.

The conditions of the landless labourers is the most pitiable. They are living on the gratuitous relief given by the government or on casual work they can find. Just at the moment there is a demand for labour but I was told that this would come to an end within a month. At that stage starvation deaths might become a reality unless the government steps up its distribution of gratuitous relief.

I saw one case of a landless labourer who was unemployed. He lived on gratuitous relief. It consists of four kilogram of atta per fortnight. He is able to have only one meal of two rotis a day without anything to go with it. The atta that is supplied contains not only a lot of chaff but a lot of sand and dust.

Fish And Mustard Oil

The story of fish and mustard oil is even more fantastic. Since there is no supply of these from fair price shops the traders are dictating their own terms. They have forced the government to revise mustard oil prices on more than one occasion and even now they are not satisfied.

Taking advantage of the fact that there is no control on tin containers they are selling mustard oil for Rs. 5 to Rs. 6 per kilo as against the controlled price of Rs. 3.25 which has now been raised to Rs. 3.90 for oil bearing the government Agmark. The difference is supposed to represent the price of the container which actually does not cost more than four annas or so.

To force the government to raise prices they have indulged in the most despicable blackmail—adulteration. This has already begun to take its toll in the shape of an epidemic of gastro-enteric ailments.

The fish racket in West Bengal is one of the biggest and most organised with its ramifications spreading from the top echelons



Protest Demonstration for food in Calcutta. —PHOTO: Sambhu Banerjee

of the government to the smallest retailers in the market.

The bulk of the supply comes from the Bheries or large fish ponds within West Bengal but it is insufficient to meet the demands of the state. From other states in the country as well as from East Pakistan there is a considerable inflow.

The Bheri-owners however are linked with the wholesale traders and the two together have a complete grip over the entire fish production and distribution in the state.

Since the price control was introduced the Bheri-owners have stopped bringing their supplies to the market. This involves no losses because the fish remains safe in the pond nor does it mean that their business is at a standstill.

The fish goes straight to the homes of those who can afford to pay the fantastic prices demanded through channels that they have built up. While the fish stalls remain empty agents of the fish dealers discreetly negotiate deals with customers in the sidelanes surrounding the markets. Those who wish to indulge in the luxury of eating fish in Calcutta today must pay the price—and that ranges from Rs. 6 to Rs. 10 a kilogram for the better varieties of fish.

Only Token Action

In the face of this situation what is the policy of the state government? A comprehensive statement on the subject was circulated to members of the Assembly at the beginning of the food debate last month.

The essential points of this were that the "government was meeting the hoarders' challenge" by launching prosecutions. There had been 360 prosecutions in Calcutta and 1,412 in the districts. 43,116 quintals of rice and 1,94,503 quintals of paddy had been seized from the 'jotedars'.

The Chief Minister admitted in a subsequent press confer-

ence that the amount seized represented only a small fraction of the estimated hoards in the state.

Other points in this programme were introduction of state trading from January next and of rationing in the greater Calcutta area next year.

With regard to prices of fish, pulses or mustard oils the Chief Minister had hardly any proposals to put forward except to suggest that people should substitute other cooking media for mustard oil.

He also stated that he would contact the centre to fix up selling prices of commodities for which Bengal had to depend on other states.

Later the government has clarified that it intends to procure seven lakh tons of rice. This is less than fifty per cent of the marketable surplus. Evidently private agencies would also be allowed to procure from the producers.

Doomed To Failure

Even if this is not so and the government tries to procure the whole of the marketable surplus, the policy is doomed to failure if the government steps into the market as late as January next and if it does not arrange to give loans on a large scale to the peasants during the lean period, which means the months between now and January.

Actually it is during this period that 'jotedars' and moneylenders get their grip on the peasants by giving them advances. Once these advances have been given and accepted by the peasant the crop is lost. In effect the sale takes place even before the crop is harvested and when it is still in the field.

This process has already started and will be completed in the course of the next few months. Once the traders have control of the stocks, the story of 1963 and 1964 will only be repeated in 1965.

The basic fact to be grasped about the economy of West Bengal is that as far as rice is concerned the 'jotedars' or large producers who form ten per cent of the population but control fifty-eight per cent of the land have succeeded in establishing links with wholesale foodgrain dealers, with the rice mill owners, with banks and other financial interests and have also established their own network of retail establishments.

The 'jotedar', the rice mill-owner, the banker, the wholesaler and his agents have clubbed together to form one huge octopus that has spread its tentacles far and wide, that has links with topmost circles of the government hierarchy and that is now sucking the life-blood out of the people of the West Bengal.

The policy of the government in so far as it has been expressed in pronouncements up-to-date would not even succeed in lopping of a single one of the tentacles not to speak of destroying the octopus as a whole.

Satyagraha Reports

BIHAR

PATNA: More than 4,000 satyagrahis have offered satyagraha before courts, collectorates, banks, grain-mandis etc., in Bihar till August 25, the second day of satyagraha. More than three hundred satyagrahis have been arrested so far.

POLICE resorted to lathi-charge at five places on peaceful satyagrahis. At Madhubani, a batch of 300 satyagrahis was lathicharged, out of whom 41 received serious injuries. Other places where lathicharges were made are: Laheriāsaraī, Begusarai, Arrah and Sitamarhi.

In Patna, 29 satyagrahis led by Indrapati Sinha were arrested on August 24. Same day, 12 satyagrahis led by Bhogendra Jha

were arrested at Darbhanga, 18 led by Rajkumar Purbey MLA at Madhubani, 34 led by Chandrashekar Singh MLA at Begusarai, 31 led by Shah Zohair at Jahanabad, 22 led by Janakdhari at Muzaffarpur, 25 led by Jalil Chakri at Siwan, 23 at Gopalganj, 24 led by Ramswarup Singh at Sitamarhi, 21 at Hajipur, 17 at Nawadah, 26 at Giridih, 3 at Samastipur.

On August 25, 14 satyagrahis

were arrested at Patna, 79 at Gopalganj and 28 at Giridih.

On August 24, about fifty satyagrahis led by Sunil Mukherjee MLA, and including Gurbux Singh, Dinesh Bose, Ganesh Basak, Mani Chakravarty, Brij Bai picketed the court of the SDO at Jamshedpur for the whole day. But they were not arrested.

Next day, over 100 satyagrahis led by Sunil Mukherjee and Dr. U. Misra MP picketed the banks at Jamshedpur. No arrests have been made so far.

Earlier, on August 22, all shops and markets were closed at the call of the Communist Party to protest against food crisis and government's inaction in the matter. Similar reports about bazaar hartals have been received from Ghatsila and Baharagora.

ORISSA

CUTTACK: The Great Satyagraha was launched in Orissa when 16 satyagrahis courted arrest before the Cuttack collectorate under the leadership of Durgacharan Mohanty.

THE arrests were made under section 147 IPC and section 447 of the Criminal Law Amendment Act.

A huge demonstration was taken out through the main roads in the city to the collectorate, where a meeting was addressed by Mohanty before courtuing arrest.

The satyagrahis tried to enter the premises of the collectorate

when the SDO ordered the arrest.

In Baripada six satyagrahis led by Harihar Das offered satyagraha before the court, while in Khurda eleven satyagrahis led by Basudev Dora offered satyagraha. The satyagrahis were not arrested.

In Aska four persons have gone on a hungerstrike. Here volunteers who offered satyagraha were

MADHYA PRADESH

BHOPAL: Communist volunteers picketed prominent banks in the city on August 25 as part of the Great Satyagraha. Earlier, a procession with the satyagrahis at its head paraded the city.

THE satyagrahis at the United Commercial Bank were led by Mohini Devi, at Allahabad Bank by Lala Baldeo Prasad, at Bank of India by Pandit Baldeo Prasad, at Central Bank by Hashmat Ali and at Punjab National Bank Wahid Ali Bange.

None of the banks could transact normal business from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. when the satyagrahis were arrested by the police. They were charged under section 41(5) of the DIR and section 341 of IPC.

Mohini Devi and Akhtar Tanha, both municipal councillors, as also Saida Khatoun were sentenced by the magistrate for

one month and four days simple imprisonment.

The remaining 22 satyagrahis were sentenced for one and a half months. Some of them were given simple imprisonment while others got rigorous imprisonment. The police took an unprecedented step in Gwalior when they arrested on the night of August 23 seven Communist leaders under the DIR. Among those arrested were Ramchandra Saravate, Motilal Sharma and Hamarayan Upadhyaya.

On August 25, the police arrested 29 Communist workers in Gwalior on the charge of taking out a procession and staging a demonstration.

KERALA

TRIVANDRUM: Ninety Communist volunteers were arrested in Trivandrum on August 26, the first day of the three-day satyagraha planned by the Kerala state council of the CPI as part of the GREAT SATYAGRAHA for people's food.

The arrests were made when the volunteers picketed the secretariat. They were led by M. N. Govindan Nair MP, member of the central secretariat of the CPI, and M. K. Kumaraswami MP.

At Ernakulam, 23 people have been arrested for offering satyagraha before the collectorate. Reports from other centres are yet to come at the time of writing.

Czech Embassy's Statement

B. Laska, Charge d' Affaires of the Embassy of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic in India issued the following statement to the press on August 25:

MY attention has been drawn to a news appearing in a section of the press that an official of the Czechoslovak Embassy had met Mr. S. S. Mirajkar, President of the All-India Trade Union Congress (AITUC) or Mr. S. A. Dange, General Secretary of the same organisation—it is not clear whom—to verify certain allegations about mishandling of AITUC funds which are supposed to be sent by World Federation of Trade Unions with headquarters in Prague. I have to declare that this news is totally unfounded and baseless. No Embassy official met any of these two leaders for so-called verification.

I have further to state that the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU) is a completely sovereign international organisation of workers which is recognised by the United Nations. Czechoslovakia and her trade unions act as hosts only and have provided facilities for its world office.

The Czechoslovak government, its agencies or its diplomatic representations have nothing to do with its functioning, activities, and funds and no Czechoslovak Government official is authorised to act or intervene on its behalf.

The Czechoslovak Embassy

in India wants to make it clear that its officials have never acted on behalf of the WFTU nor have any authority to do so. The question of enquiry into AITUC funds by the Czechoslovak Embassy can, therefore, never arise. Further, the Czechoslovak Embassy has no knowledge of WFTU's and its affiliate organisations' activities.

The Czechoslovak Embassy regrets to say that the above-mentioned news is detrimental to the growing friendly political relations and fruitful economic and cultural cooperation between the two countries. I hope, in the light of this statement, the Press will help to rectify any misunderstanding which might have arisen due to the news in a section of the Indian people.

Benjamin Davis

The National Council of the Communist Party of India sent the following message to the Communist Party of USA expressing its condolences at the demise of Comrade Benjamin Davis:

The National Council of the Communist Party of India deeply mourns demise of Comrade Benjamin Davis, outstanding fighter for American working class and Negro freedom movement. We specially recall his leading role in heroic fight of American Communists against fascist McCarran Act. In his departure American comrades have suffered serious loss. Accept our heartfelt condolences.

MAHARASHTRA

BOMBAY: Hundreds of satyagrahis offered satyagraha in Maharashtra on August 24 to 26 as part of the All-India Satyagraha for food. The districtwise break-up is not available till the time of report.

IN Bombay city, on Monday about 125 satyagrahis picketed grainmandis, bullion market etc., led by K. N. Joglekar, Bapurao Jagtap and Robert Gomes.

On Tuesday, more than 300 satyagrahis courted arrest following a massive demonstration before the banks.

Among them were 40 women workers. On the last day, about 175 satyagrahis courted arrest at the Assembly House precincts. This group was led by the CPI Chairman S. A. Dange.

All satyagrahis in Bombay were released the same evening by the government.

MYSORE

BANGALORE: The three day programme planned by the Communist Party in Mysore as part of the Great Satyagraha commenced on August 24 when two batches of five volunteers each picketed the wholesale grainshops and were arrested.

THE first batch was led by M. S. Rama Rao and the second by N. Chinnappa.

Three batches of five volunteers each under the leadership of N. L. Upadhyaya offered satyagraha before the Deputy Commissioner's office.

Earlier, a procession with the satyagrahis at its head paraded the streets.

On the second day, 21 volunteers were arrested for offering satyagraha before the Reserve Bank.

On August 26 M. S. Krishnan will lead a batch of volunteers to offer satyagraha before the Vidhan Soudha.

PUNJAB

CHANDIGARH: Police went in for repression and lathicharges in some places when Communist Party volunteers in Punjab began their five-day satyagraha against high prices and people's food.

AT Jullundur, the police kicked, beat up and then lathicharged the batch of 41 satyagrahis led by 'Avtar Singh' Malhotra, secretary of the state council of the CPI.

Five of the volunteers were injured seriously. Among those seriously injured are Kulwant Singh, Mohan Singh Randhawa, Ajit Singh and B. S. Prem.

The district jailer even refused to admit these satyagrahis in the jails without medical examination. Eighty-year-old Ganga Singh Baba was unconscious for the whole day.

At Phagwara also the police resorted to lathicharge against the peaceful satyagrahis and five thousand demonstrators.

Then, on August 25, the police pounced upon Jagjit Singh Anand, chief editor of daily NAWAN ZAMANA and arrested him while he was taking photographs of the demonstration in Jullundur. The Party had earlier directed Anand not to offer satyagraha and announced it.

In Faridabad 18 volunteers including eight women picketed the Punjab National Bank for the whole day on Wednesday. No business could be transacted in the bank but no arrest was made. The batch was led by Satish Loomba, secretary of the AITUC.



Queue before ration shop, Calcutta

—PHOTO: Sambhu Banerjee

PROBLEM OF DISTRIBUTION OF FOODGRAINS

*FROM PAGE 14

It is not only able to smash the grip of the big wholesalers in the market, but will also be able to supply the food requirements of the majority of the consumers in urban and rural areas.

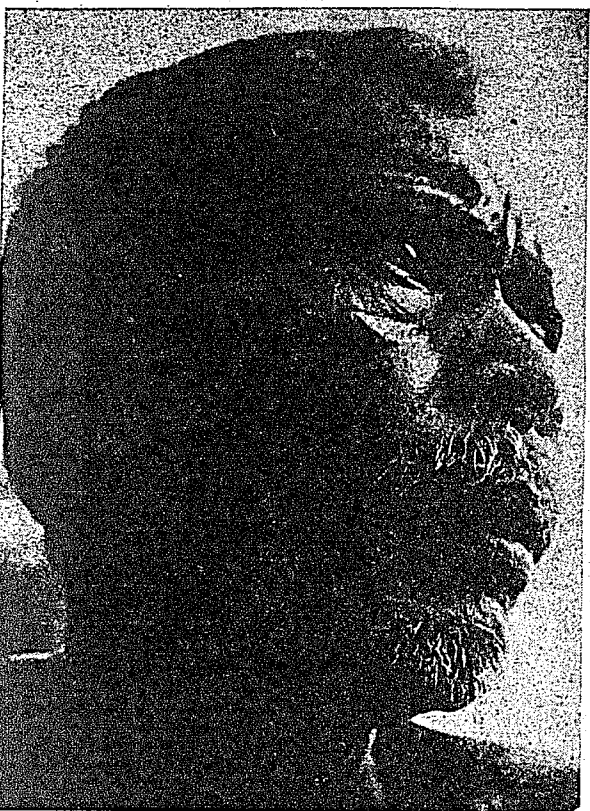
The distribution of foodgrains will not be like total rationing but in the nature of provisioning on the basis of family cards considering each adult member as a unit, covering the bulk of the working population and the common people in town and country side. This distribution would be through licensed shops supplying the card holders with fixed units at controlled and subsidised prices.

The state trading carried out as explained above will approximate to a state monopoly of wholesale foodgrain trade. Though wholesale trade would not be banned in this scheme, it would be powerless to corner the stocks to affect the prices.

That is why a successful working of such a scheme would prepare the ground for a transition to state monopoly in foodgrain trade which will have to come as a part of an all-out drive against the monopoly groups who in league with foreign monopoly capital are holding to ransom the livelihood of the people and the planned development of

What about tomorrow?

Photo: Shambhu Banerjee



6,000 TOILERS DEMONSTRATE

ASANSOL: Over six thousand workers, middle class employees, town people marched through the main streets of Asansol, completely jamming the traffic on the G.T. Road for hours together on August 16 under the banner of the Communist Party, AITUC and various other trade union organisations.

THE rally, biggest ever held in this industrial town, was organised by the Communist Party (Asansol sub-divisional committee), Colliery Mazdur Sabha, Hindusthan Glass Employees Union and others, in support of All India Satyagraha from August 24.

At the front of the rally marched Bhowani Sen, secretary, West Bengal State Committee of CPI, Tahir Hussain, general secretary, Bumpur Kult Action Committee, Kalyan Roy, general secretary, Indian Mine Workers Federation, Nihar Mukherji, secretary, All Bengal Engineering Workers Federation, Niranjani Dihidar, general secretary, Glass

& Rackett Coleman Employees Union, Haridas Chakravarty MLA, Ketarain Missir, Nitish Sett, Aswini Roy MLA and other leading figures of trade union movement.

The processionists, many of whom came from distant collieries, were carrying Red flags and huge placards and posters demanding nationalisation of food trade, bank, coal mines and setting up of fair price shops in collieries and factories and punishment of hoarders and profiteers.

The procession ended before the Municipal Hall where resolutions were passed supporting the All India Satyagraha call.

the country, in the interest of their profits.

The State Trading Corporation as planned by the government, it appears, will not be along the lines indicated above. It seems that it will neither be preceded by a vigorous anti-hoarding drive and the rapid bringing down of prices; nor will it be accompanied by timely and effective measures against the big wholesalers and monopolists so that the government secures the bulk of the marketable surplus of foodgrains into its hands.

Government's record of surrender to the pressure of big traders and monopolists, who have been opposing all controls and who have now stepped up their campaign against state trading in foodgrains, gives grounds for these apprehensions.

In fact the present foodgrain price crisis, according to the latest Reserve Bank review is unprecedented in its intensity during the last 10 years. It has shaken the economy as a whole. It is a part of a general rise in prices, and a galloping inflation, which is accompanied by a steep rise of the power and wealth of monopoly groups, and a sharp deterioration in the living standards of the masses of the working people.

The very objective of the Plan and development are at stake. The spokesman of the monopolists, the FICCI

etc. are pointing to the rise of prices and inflation and are demanding the cutting down of the Plan itself, especially the heavy industries part, and this is finding an echo from some of the leading people in the government and the ruling party itself!

The present food crisis is lighting up as if in a flash, the contradictions of the government's policy of implementing the Plan and development, which is orientated towards building capitalism and consequently towards strengthening monopoly. The present crisis is a warning signal which highlights the bankruptcy of this policy.

What is needed is not right sounding policy statements like the present Working Committee resolutions which is then sabotaged by half-way measures and compromises.

What is needed is a right about turn—a reversal of gears, from a capitalism orientated policy which feeds and fattens the monopolists at the expense of the people and the nation to a socialism-orientated policy of crushing the monopolists and breaking their power.

Rising Crescendo

The rising crescendo of "Bandhs" in the various states, the all-India satyagraha struggle of August 24-28 and the preparations for the all India

hartal—all these surging movements of the masses are resounding with the slogans of such a reversal of gears, such a national policy.

These slogans are: FIX prices remunerative to producers and reasonable to consumers.

HOLD the price line TAKE over wholesale trading in foodgrains. REDUCE prices of all essential commodities and supply them through a broad chain of fair price shops and cooperatives.

For the effective implementation of these demands what is needed is the following:

NATIONALISATION of banks, oil industry and export import trade.

EXPAND and democratise the public sector.

BREAK the power of foreign monopolies—nationalise coal, plantations.

ENFORCE control over textile, sugar and cement industries.

IMPLEMENT need-based national minimum wage for all industries.

These slogans together with the programme of radical agrarian reform and development of agriculture which we have outlined in the course of defining the long term aspect of the food problem should form the outline of the national policy giving a people's direction to our country's planning and development.

POLICE LATHI-CHARGE HUNGER-STRIKERS

FROM LALIT BARMAN

DHANBAD: Police resorted to wanton lathi-charge at the Dhanbad court compound on August 17 injuring a large number of hunger strikers and members of public.

THE hunger strikers were peacefully squatting outside the court compound throughout the day and at about 5 PM when arrangements were being made for holding a mass meeting at the conclusion of the token hunger strike, police blocked both sides of the road and resorted to lathi-charge at the order of SDO, Dhanbad and SDO Raghunara.

The hunger strike was observed by about 500 workers (including 20 women workers) and Party members at the call of the Bihar State Council of the CPI to protest against the rising prices and food-crisis.

Pre-planned Attack

Before the hunger strikers assembled, the entire court area was heavily cordoned off by police, locking the gates of the compound with armed sentries standing guard over them. Throughout the day, large numbers of people assembled where the hunger strikers were squatting. A memorandum was kept ready by the hunger strikers for submission before the SDO but despite repeated requests, he refused to meet the representatives of the Party.

Before resorting to lathi-charge, police arrested the leaders of the hunger strik-

toons and flags. The action of the police has been severely condemned by the people of Dhanbad.

Same day, the Socialist Unity Centre brought out a demonstration at Dhanbad against high prices. The leaders of the demonstration, Prithvi Chanda and Anil Sarkar were arrested by police, after they were called to the office of the DC.

Mass Hunger-Strike In Rajasthan

From OUR CORRESPONDENT

JAIPUR: More than 150 workers of the Communist Party observed a mass one-day token hunger strike on August 23 at the Ramlila Maidan in Jaipur. The hunger strikers included H. K. Vyas, secretary of the Rajasthan State Council of the CPI, Gaffarali, secretary of the Jaipur City Committee of the CPI and other important trade union and local leaders. Among the hunger strikers, there were women participants also including Rampyari, a veteran trade union leader, Smt. H. K. Vyas, and Hanu-mansahai (Municipal Counsellor).

HUNGERSTRIKES have been resorted to at other places also. In Alwar, the Party conducted a hunger strike programme from August 16 in batches of five at a time and each batch continued the hunger strike for three days. In Udaipur the local Party Unit organised hunger strike of five comrades from Saturday. All these moves will culminate in the satyagraha which will start everywhere from Monday.

Last week has been a week of intensive campaign. At Bharatpur a huge meeting was held on August 16 addressed by H. K. Vyas where the

programme of radical agrarian reform and development of agriculture which we have outlined in the course of defining the long term aspect of the food problem should form the outline of the national policy giving a people's direction to our country's planning and development.

Following is the translated version of P. Kutsobin's article on India which appeared in PRAVDA on August 20. Kutsobin, apart from his stay in India as correspondent of PRAVDA, has visited India a number of times including this year. He is a keen student of Indian affairs and keeps close touch with developments in this country.

DURING the last phase of Nehru's life, millions of Indians belonging to totally different political groupings kept asking the same question: "Who after Nehru?" Various forecasts were made on this account.

Now when Nehru is no longer alive and when a new cabinet headed by Lal Bahadur Shastri has already been formed, another question is on everybody's lips: what will be after Nehru, which way will India take in its further development?

Nowadays everybody in India agrees that the life and the activity of Nehru have made up a whole epoch in the history of India. And this is in no way an exaggeration. In the course of Nehru's lifetime India has turned from a colony dominated by British imperialism and deprived of any political rights into one of the biggest powers of the present world which substantially influences the destinies of the world.

It will also be no exaggeration to say that the problem which India faced in 1947, were exceedingly complicated in their nature and really tremendous in their scope. The economic backwardness of the country and abysmal poverty of the broadest masses of the population, down-trodden for centuries under colonial oppression—these were only some of the problems.

If the achievements of independent India are translated into facts and figures, the picture will be impressive. Within one decade, from 1951 to 1961, the industrial production has almost doubled and the national income has increased by 42 per cent. In the years of independence thousands of new schools and hospitals, many colleges and universities have been built. A number of measures has been taken to improve labour laws, social insurance of the working people, etc.

Drag On Progress

However India's successes and achievements would have been far more substantial but for the resistance of the upper crust of the propertied classes standing up against any social and economic transformations effected in the interests of broad masses of the people. The late Jawaharlal Nehru repeatedly spoke of the cupidty of big Indian bourgeoisie who wished to live at the expense of the working people.

Speaking at the Jaipur session of the All-India Congress Committee in November 1963, Jawaharlal Nehru said that "the monopolies are enemies of socialism" and that "we have deviated from the course of socialism to the extent that these monopolies have grown in the past few years."

Of course, Nehru's understanding of socialism differs from the Marxist interpretation. He thought that socialism could come to India not through the liquidation of private property controlling the means of production but through the so-called system of "mixed economy" which implied the development of the private

increase their influence on the country's foreign and domestic policies. They are intensifying their struggle against a radical agrarian reform, against the state sector, for further concessions to private Indian and foreign capital.

They are trying either to limit to the minimum the sphere of operation of the state sector, or to use this sector, as well as the whole system of state control of the economy, for further enrichment. They often demand "gradual" denationalisation of the big enterprises of the state sector under the pretext of their "inefficiency."

Struggle Is On

An acute struggle is going on in India between those who want the industrialisation of the country to benefit the people and those who consider that in such a state as India the monopolies should be given full freedom.

There is quite a widespread idea that a re-distribution of wealth of the country should not be demanded, since that would be tantamount to demanding "re-distribution of poverty" and that first it is necessary to become wealthy

In a world where the prestige of socialism is growing with every day, the Indian monopolies and their political organisations, resorting to alliances and deals with foreign capital, are making efforts to preserve India as a country in which capitalism would traverse the classical way of its development.

At the same time the working classes, which make up the overwhelming majority of the population, consciously or sub-consciously gravitate towards the socialist, and not capitalist, way of development.

As far back as 1955 the Indian National Congress proclaimed the building of "society of a socialist pattern" as its aim. At a convention of that party in January this year the slogan was replaced by a new programme slogan about the construction of "democratic socialism" in India.

Many in the country have appraised the modification of its basic slogan by the leadership of the ruling party not only as a concession to the democratic elements inside the National Congress Party, but also as a manoeuvre, an attempt to preserve the influence of the party among the broad popular masses who are ever more openly expressing dissatisfaction over their difficult economic position.

The reality of India today is

they are also in favour of socialism, though not of the "Marxist" type, that they favour a "purely Indian socialism" which should not mean the abolition of private enterprise.

Newspaper Tirade

The Indian newspapers controlled by the monopolies keep on advocating the idea that no legislative or other measures of "coercion" should be applied against the powers that be, since this would contradict the behests of Mahatma Gandhi on non-violence. At present the Rightists are mustering their forces, so as to prevent the new government from implementing any measures which would infringe on the interests of the propertied classes.

Some press organs, reflecting the interests of the monopoly bourgeoisie, even refer to the astrologists' prophecies about the "lucky star combinations" for the career of the former Finance Minister, Morarji Desai, an idol of the Indian big business. The astrologists predict that Desai will soon occupy a place "of honour" among the leadership of the state.

Rajagopalachari, leader of the Swatantra Party, this "indomitable" patriarch of the Indian reactionaries, is advocating his anti-popular ideas more loudly than during Nehru's lifetime. He calls for immediately reconsidering the "harmful legacy" of Nehru, for renouncing the policy of non-alignment, utterly restricting the sphere of operation of the public sector in the economy and changing the country's policies, making them more reactionary and pro-imperialist.

However, no matter how influential the Rightists might be in India, they are not an absolute force on a nationwide scale. The brazen-faced self-confidence of big business is largely explained by the division and lack of unity in the ranks of the democratic movement.

The overwhelming majority of the country's population, including the democratic forces inside the ruling Congress Party, come out against the rampage of the private capital elements, in favour of the implementation of profound social and economic reforms in the interests of the people. The Indian people favour such a society in India that would ensure a just distribution of the national wealth which was and is being created by the people's labour.



By P. KUTSOBIN

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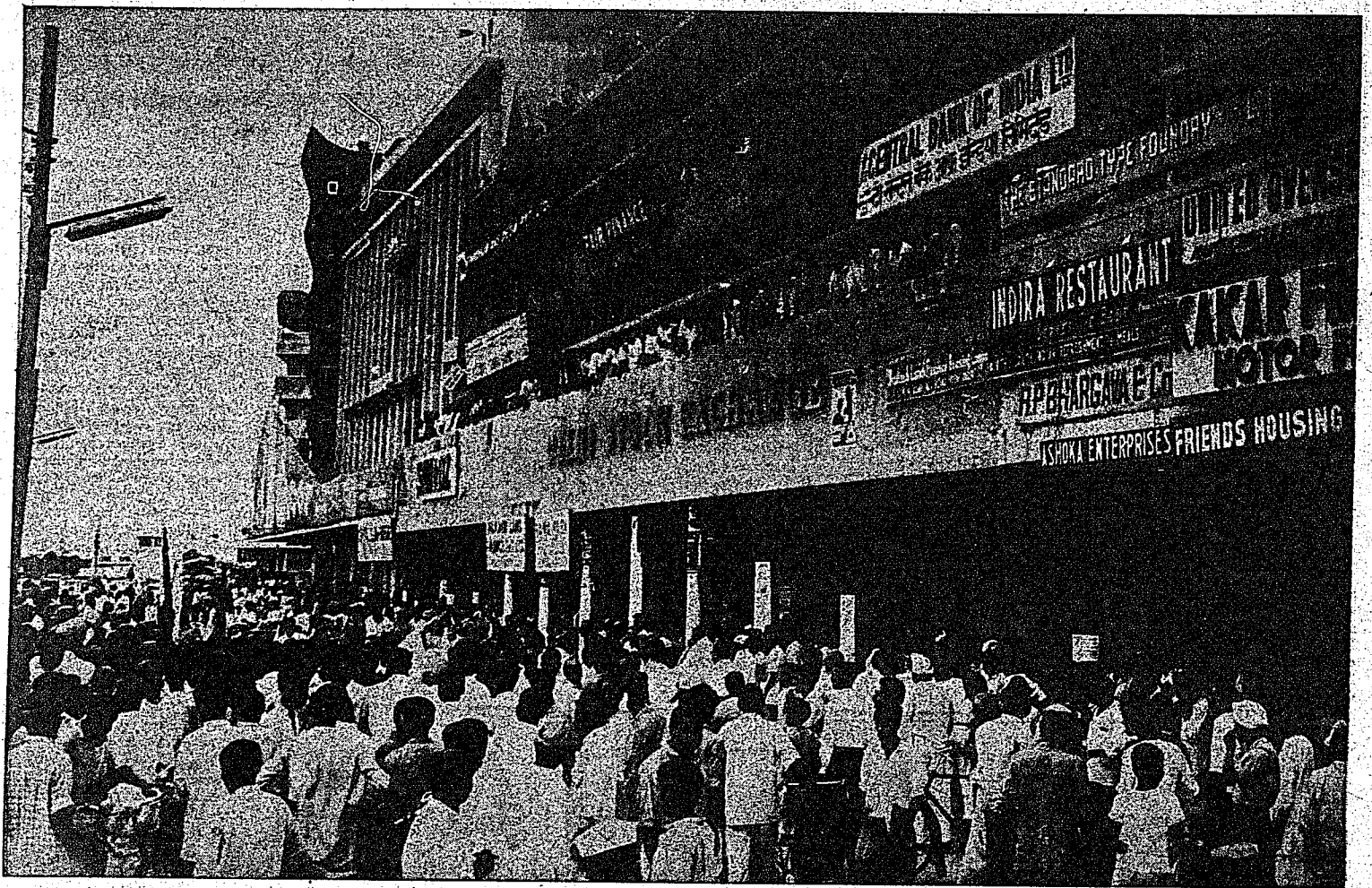
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Top Row: Satyagraha before Delhi Stock Exchange. Second Row: (Left to Right) Prem Sagor Gupta, Raj Kumar, Sunaina Sharma, Bulu Roychowdhury, Romesh Chandra (Editor: NEW AGE) and Dhanram courting arrest before banks. (Photos: Virendra Kumar) Third Row: (Left to Right) Satyagraha before Punjab National Bank, Karol Bagh (Photo: H. Dasgupta), and Police Zoolum before Krishi Bhavan. Last Row: Huge gathering before Krishi Bhavan during Satyagraha (Photo: H. Dasgupta)

