

Against Railway Fare And Freight Hike

Heroic Resistance Movement

(The Central Committee of our party issued instruction to all states for building up united movement against anti-people Railway and general budget of the central government. Here we cover in synopsis the resistance movement in West Bengal).

The flame of mass movement is again aglow. The heroic battle to resist the unjust railway fare and freight hike is on and 15th of April created a new history in the annals of the democratic mass movements of the country. The people bent low under the burden of mountain high taxes are finding a ray of hope in the valiant struggle initiated under the leadership of the SUCI and seven other opposition parties. The valour, the indomitable spirit, the firm determination and the resolute will to resist by the people are sending shiver down the spine of the power that be and savage attack is mounted on the people to break the resistance movement. Both the railway and the state police came down heavily on the peaceful demonstrators. They resorted to indiscriminate firing, teargasshelling and most brutal lathicharge on the unarmed people. A large number of people has sustained serious injuries including bullet injuries. Many have to be rushed to the hospital in a critical condition. But the spirit of resistance is indomitable; they cannot be cowed down by savageries because they are fighting for a cause—the cause of the oppressed humanity, and they have taken the right path, the only path, the path of struggle to realise their just demand. Their resistance movement is sending messages far and wide, kindling new hope in the heart of the poor and the downtrodden people. The people are spontaneously coming forward to join strength and the resistance movement is gaining momentum much to the chargin of the ruling class. Perhaps the lesson of history has not been learnt by the rulers, of our country. They should remember that it is the oppressed class who in different ages created and recreated history; it is not the oppressors but the oppressed who say the last word.

The programme of the movement was adopted in a jam packed convention held at Baker Hall, Calcutta under the auspices of SUCI, CUC, BJP, CWP,

three factions of CPI(ML), and RCPI. Street corner meetings, squattings and protest demonstrations were organised upto April 14, according to this programme. Then the resistance movement started from April 15. It was just after 10 AM in the morning that a few thousand volunteers under the leadership of comrade Sukomal Das Gupta, the State Secretary of the SUCI and Comrade Rabindranath Sahu of RCPI started squatting on the railway track at Howrah station. As a result firstly the 7 UP Toofan Express could not move and subsequently all the trains were immobilised. Thousands of people at the station and on the railway overbridge encouraged the squatters in support of their action. At 10.45 AM, the police force came and resorted to indiscriminate and savage lathi charge and they even tried to run the train on the squatters. At this the people burst out in anger and resolutely resisted and many of them jumped on the track. As a result this attempt to run the train forcibly failed and the police was forced to retreat

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Savage lathi charge by police at Howrah Station

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CENTRAL COMMITTEE ON 40th ANNIVERSARY of Defeat of Fascism

April 24, 1985

On this historic occasion of observance of the 40th Anniversary of Defeat of Fascism let us recall, first of all the saga of the indomitable courage and valour and the enormous sacrifices made by the Red Army—the Army of the revolutionary proletariat—along with the peace-loving people of the Soviet Union and the whole world in those intense and protracted battles without precedent during the last world war to deliver a crushing defeat to the Fascist military build-up of Hitler-Mussolini-Tozo Axis. We must not also fail to recall with reverence the magnificent and unique performance of the leadership of the Soviet Union headed by Great Comrade Stalin as the most dependable citadel for defence of peace, democracy and freedom of people of the whole world in those days of grim battle against Fascism, without which victory of the anti-fascist democratic camp could not possibly have been achieved. The victory of the Soviet Union under the able stewardship of Comrade Stalin over the Hitler-Mussolini-Tozo military might did not only earn it the glory of saving mankind from an impending peril but also released a huge anti-imperialist and anti-fascist mass-force everywhere, who, with the sincere moral and material assistance from the Soviet Union, could successfully organize and conduct resistance and liberation struggles of people in their respective lands.

But contrary to the expectations of many, and as envisaged by our Party rightly, the defeat of Fascist powers could not liquidate Fascism as such. Our Party at the time of its very inception in the year 1948 did take note of the fact that even after the Fascist powers are dead, Fascism still survives rooted deep in the very character of Capitalism itself.

And history, since then, has provided ample proofs to substantiate our Party's contention that in this era of finance capital, particularly during the present third general and intense phase of crisis of moribund capitalism, when the capitalist economy does no more enjoy even the relative stability it used to enjoy before the second World War even in the midst of heavy odds, Fascism has become the order of the world capitalist system. This is why we find today growth of Fascism in all capitalist countries, big or small, advanced or backward. The ruling bourgeoisie of all the capitalist countries, in order to enhance the lease of life of their exploitative system, are on the one hand, taking steps continually to shift the burden of their crisis on to the shoulder of the common people and, on the other, moving with designs in all conceivable ways to build themselves as Fascist powers.

In their bid to encroach upon the freedom of speech and the Press, to curb civil liberties and democratic rights of association and movement of people, to suppress ruthlessly the Opposition as well as all democratic mass movements through recourse to draconian measures more and more, to make the Judiciary subservient to the Adminis-

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BANGLADESH SCENARIO

Despite Differences All Parties Must Unite to fight for Civil Liberties And Political Rights

Since their independence that they achieved through a glorious and heroic struggle from the hands of the ruling clique of Pakistan, the fighting people of Bangladesh have been passing through hard days of ordeal.

They have had to conduct unceasing struggle against the different ruling cliques, including the military junta one after another for achieving and protecting even the minimum of the civil, political and democratic rights.

At present they are in the midst of intensive and arduous struggle against the military regime headed by the self-imposed President Ershad who through a mockery of 'Ganavote' which was a fraud, had given a 'legal' stamp to his naked military dictatorship so as to continue his fascist-like oppressive rule over the country.

The situation that is at present prevailing in the country, the critical moment through which the fighting toiling people of our neighbouring country is passing, we think is a matter of deep and serious concern to the people of any country—the people who love freedom and democracy, who cherish and aspire to protect and extend the civil, political and democratic rights.

However, the present situation is of course nothing altogether new—it is not a break from that of the recent past. Rather if one goes through the different events and the motives, designs and the fascist-like heinous activities of the military junta on which we in our earlier issues have discussed in detail, one would be able to follow the logical course of events that has ultimately led to the situation, at present prevailing in the country.

Since his assumption of power through a military coup-d'etat Ershad has

been pursuing a cunning policy—a policy that like autocratic military rulers of modern history are often found to practise. The only motive underlying this policy is to perpetrate a rule of the military junta behind the facade of a legislature.

While on the one hand he has been found to make overtures to the opposition parties in regard to the fixation of dates and sequence of the parliamentary and the Presidential elections, to pose as if he is serious to restore democracy. On the other hand he has been taking recourse to all possible ruthless oppressive measures against his political opponents and the people struggling for the restoration of democratic rights, the very people who once fought a heroic battle and shed many a drop of their blood for the protection of their beloved mother tongue and ultimately for their freedom. But we know that this carrot and stick policy has failed to fool the people and the youth of the country.

The people, the youths and the students have burst into mighty movement against the autocratic military regime. All the world witnessed the heroic struggle that developed in the country under the leadership of the different opposition parties demanding the complete withdrawal of Martial Law and the restoration of democracy.

In the face of this mighty movement of the people—a movement that developed in towns and villages,—in fact through-

out the entire country, the military dictator heading the despotic regime was forced to take a conciliatory move. He relaxed the Martial Law to a certain extent and even was forced to fix a date for the election to the parliament.

Now to ensure a free and fair election the opposition parties demanded that the Martial Law must be completely withdrawn and a neutral Government must preside over the polls in place of the existing military Government. While any man with the minimum commitment to the democratic norms and rights would consider this demand to be cent per cent justified and fully legitimate, more particularly in the situation prevailing in Bangladesh, we are astounded to note a well known daily press of our country to reflect a different tone. The Statesman (dated the 9th March, 1985) in its editorial 'The Generals Retreat' observed, 'It must be said in the Generals defence that the compromises he announced—partial dismantling of the Martial Law hierarchy in the countryside abolition of certain special courts and in practice full scope for political activity did not evoke a matching response from the two opposition alliances comprising 15 and seven parties. On the contrary, they seemed determined to take advantage of official flexibility to press for further concessions especially total withdrawal of Martial Law and the installation of a "neutral" Government to preside over the polls.'

Such a naked defence of the head of an autocratic military regime is not only deplorable, we think it goes against the basic concept of bourgeois democracy and more so,

the very basic charter of Human Right.

Now Ershad is cunning enough to realise that the acceptance of the said demand would pave for his autocratic military regime the path to liquidation.

He reacted in the most high-handed manner befitting a fascist like military dictator of his brand. In the most naked and heinous manner he cracked down on the people and the opposition parties. He reimposed all the provisions of the Martial Law, banned all political and trade union activities. And with a view to suppressing the movement of the people he took recourse to all possible repressive measures.

Many a leader of the opposition were under house arrest, others in large numbers were taken behind the bar. And to curb the voice of protest of the youths and the students, the two of the most fighting sections of the people, all the schools, colleges and universities were closed down.

In fact a reign of terror was let loose throughout the entire country.

Side by side, the earlier declaration on parliamentary election was withdrawn and following the footsteps of the like military rulers of his brand, with anti-people, anti-democratic fascist-like military rule, he announced that a 'Ganavote' would be held for seeking people's verdict in favour of his autocratic regime and his continuation as President.

That it was nothing but a mockery, a new trick, a heinous aggression on the civil and political rights of the people, an affront to democracy, was clear to all.

The people all over the country, responding whole heartedly to the call of boycotting the so-called 'Ganavote', given by the opposition parties, refrained from participating in this show business of guided democracy. The 'show' was a 'complete success'. Although, Ershad's machi-

nery was not so efficient as that of Ziaur Rahman, his predecessor or that of Zia of Pakistan. Because while Ziaur could show a 'support' of 98.8% and Zia 98%, his machinery could not raise the figure above 94%.

Now just after the mockery of 'Ganavote' Ershad has again brought the carrot out of his bag and 'promised' to restore democracy as soon as possible.

The same old tactics, i.e. the same old attempt to confuse the people and continue the autocratic military regime.

But we know that Ershad's motive or design or the blue print of his autocratic rule is already clearly exposed to all.

Now, just at this critical moment of the country, there is only one task before the fighting people and all the oppositional forces—the only task, that we too, feel after taking lessons from history, is to build up an all-out mighty struggle by uniting all the fighting sections of the people against the autocratic military regime with the one minimum object, and that is the restoration of the civil and political rights of the people, the restoration of democracy.

We know that there is many a difference among the oppositional parties, on the basic political outlook and policy. Some of them are not even free from vacillation regarding developing a protracted struggle. While keeping open the door to ideological struggle among themselves centring all these issues, all the oppositional forces must unite to develop an all-out united struggle of the people for realising this minimum demand.

Time and again, the people, the youths, the students of Bangladesh have manifested their fighting fervour, zeal and courage. Time and again they have showed their
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at the resistances of the people. At 11.30 AM a large contingent of railway and state armed police force was deployed and they resorted to merciless lathi charging and teargas shelling on the squatters. But inspite of such a savage attack, the volunteers continued squatting by lying down on the track. The police physically lifted them on the platform and continued beating them even after arrest. They were bleeding profusely but the police did not stop. After this the police opened fire five to six rounds and one of the squatters sustained bullet injuries. The police even arrested those who were hospitalised in critical condition. 150 SUCI workers and 2 RCPI workers were injured at Howrah station. 22 comrades had to be hospitalised for sustaining severe injuries, the condition of 6 comrades was critical. 20 persons were arrested at Howrah and 30 persons are missing. After the squatting was over after 12 noon, the police resorted to lathi charge on the procession out side the station area.

At the Sealdah Main and North Station the squatting on the railway track started just after 10 AM. under the leadership of Comrades Proboch Purkait, MLA(SUCI), Aloke Mukherjee (CPI-ML Palm Avenue), Pradip Banerjee (CPI M-L S. N. Banerjee Road) Sajal Mitra (CUC) and Gopal Mitra (BJP).

All the trains at the Main and North station were immobilised. The police force was deployed and resorted to savage lathi charge. 31 volunteers were seriously injured as a result. Here the police fired one round to break the squatting.

At the Sealdah South Station, the squatting on the railway track started after 10 AM under the leadership of Comrade Debaprasad Sarkar, MLA (SUCI). 50 persons including women volunteers and common passengers sustained injuries because of merciless lathi charge by

the police. Even Comrade Debaprasad Sarkar, MLA was not spared. Two SUCI workers among many injured had to be rushed to the NRS Hospital in critical condition from this place.

The authorities thought that the resistance movement would fizzle out because of the savage attack but this expectation was belied. The first phase of the resistance movement from 15th April to 20th April continued with renewed vigour. On 16th the resistance spread to other stations. On this day not only the police but the workers of the CPI(M) were in action. Comrade Chira Ranjan Chakraborty, a prominent organiser of our party sustained serious head injury at Ballyganj station in lathi charge by police.

Comrade Amitabha Ganguly, Calcutta District Secretary of DYU was injured when CPI(M) workers mounted attack on him. On subsequent days the movement spread from Coochbeher in the north to the Diamond harbour section in the south. Resistance was offered at Mecheda, Bankura, Burdwan, Joynagar, Lakshmi-kantapur, Canning, Bolepur, Suri, Rampurhat, Berhampore, Adra, Barasat, Chakda, Rishra, Haldibari, Jalpaiguri, Dinhata and many other stations of all the

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districts of West Bengal. Every where the police resorted to savage lathi charge and at Mecheda the police opened two rounds of fire after teargas shelling. Every where hundreds of volunteers were seriously injured and some of them had to be rushed to hospital in critical condition. Even the women volunteers were not spared by the police. The first phase of the movement ended on April 20.

On April 22, a letter on behalf of the eight parties was addressed to all left democratic and opposition all India parties for building up sustained movement and taking up the issue of police atrocities against the volunteers of this movement in Parliament.

Thousands of people have come forward to extend their whole hearted support to the movement. We know that a government having a minimum democratic sense would have conceded the demand of the people after this massive success of the first phase of the movement. But the people must remember that the present Congress(D) Government installed in power through large scale rigging relies on use of brutal force and not on democratic norms and value. So the people will have to prepare them-

selves for still higher phase of movement by building up passengers' resistance committees and enrolling themselves in thousands as volunteers in the resistance movement. It is only by the pressure of sustained movement of millions of people that the government can be compelled to concede the just demand of the people.

The first phase of resistance movement also exposed the farce enacted by the CPI(M) in the name of movement. Before taking up the programme of movement, our party, the SUCI, appealed to all left democratic and opposition parties to build up united movement against the unjust railway fare and freight hike. The CPI(M) instead of responding to our call for a united movement announced 'Rail Rokho' on March 19. It is needless to narrate here how this 'Rail Rokho' of the CPI(M) ended in a fiasco as the people's memory is still fresh how the central government came to the help of the CPI(M) by announcing cancellation of trains on that date and how the CPI(M) suddenly withdrew this 'movement', backed by the state and the central governments. After this fiasco the CPI(M) announced the programme of

campaign before the ticket counters from April 15. But this programme was also withdrawn and when the real movement started, the people and even the workers and cadres of the CPI(M) saw the contrast in the attitude of both the central Congress (I) government and the CPI(M) led 'left front' government to this resistance movement initiated by our party along with others. Against this resistance movement savage attack was mounted not only by the central and the state government but what is more, the people including many rank and file members of the CPI(M) saw with deep pain and anguish how the CPI(M) engaged its workers to mount attack on the demonstrators, along with the state and railway armed police force. Not only the people in general but many members of the CPI(M) noted with deep pain how workers of the democratic movement were falsely chargesheeted with attempt to murder when the reality was that they peacefully squatted while savage attack was mounted on them by the police. This first phase of the resistance movement has clearly demonstrated to the people that the

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police claimed 'blank firing'!

Defeat of Fascism

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trative bureaucracy, to trample upon values, norms and codes and to make mockery of people's verdict only to stamp the rulers' illegitimate acts, to inculcate regimentation of thought and narrow national jingoistic feelings, to bring about a 'peculiar fusion of science with spiritualism, to militarise the economy and make the State subservient to the interest of the monopolists, to increase police and military budget as well as the pace of arms build-up to colossal dimensions, not only countries with nakedly military dictatorial rule as in Pakistan but also those with so-called democratic parliamentary forms as in India and many other countries are unmistakably betraying this fascist trait of their character which now poses the most serious threat to people's struggle for democratic rights, better living condition and emancipation in all these countries.

The imperialist-capitalist camp with the US imperialists at its head is engaged today frantically in a fray for extending their spheres of domination by resorting to all-out militarisation and stock-piling of most sophisticated and deadly weapons, nuclear blackmailing, installing nuclear missiles like Cruise and Pershing II in some European countries and also posing a threat of star-war, unleashing of or entangling in localised warfares, creating war-like tensions in different regions from time to time, and through making and breaking up of various economic and military combinations on a global scale. Even some countries of the third world, India among them, nursing aspirations to become competitors in the world political arena and desirous of extending their own spheres of influence, are also taking resort to militarisation of their economy.

To fight Fascism to finish has thus become today all the more the prime task of all democratic movements and revolutionary struggles of people everywhere. And, to be able to fight Fascism successfully through to end, it is essential, first of all to have a clear and precise understanding of Fascism with all its facades—an understanding that is free from confusions and illusions of all sorts.

Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, our leader, teacher, guide and founder General Secretary of our Party, and an outstanding Marxist thinker of this era, elaborating and concretising further the Marxist-Leninist understanding of this phenomenon, has defined Fascism as "a historically conditioned form of counter-revolution in which Capitalism seeks to stave off revolution by an anticipatory move". Comrade Ghosh has shown that Fascism, though it takes on a variety of forms, has some common features. In this era of finance capital, both in the advanced and in the backward capitalist countries, the same process of concentration of private capital, development of State capital, fusion of the two into State monopoly capitalism, making the State thereby subservient to the monopoly capital, is at work. This lays, on the one hand, the rock-bottom economic foundation of Fascism, and concentrates, on the other hand, absolute political powers in the State.

And, in the field of culture, Comrade Ghosh has shown: 'Fascism is a peculiar fusion of spiritualism and Science'. It is, in other words, a queer admixture of spiritualism, obscurantist ideas, illogical bent of mind with the technological aspects of science. Warning the working class against the prevailing popular misconception that danger of Fascism comes from the conservative section of the bourgeoisie, Comrade Ghosh has shown, on the basis of historical experiences, that 'Fascism grew and developed within the womb of social-democratism'. He observed: "If it was true in the pre-War (Second World War) days, it is thousand times more true now; because, social-democracy is the last prop of capitalism in the present era of imperialism and proletarian revolution. And Fascism is entrenching itself through social democratic plans and programmes. Showing the inadequacy in the understanding of Fascism as 'the overtly terrorist dictatorship of the most reactionary, most chauvinistic and most imperialist elements

of finance capital', Comrade Ghosh pointed out: "Fascism always and everywhere adopts a dual policy of suppression and persuasion...adopts deceptive social-democratic plan, programmes, grants minor economic concessions to the people, tries to control anarchy in capitalist economy and insecurity in life flowing therefrom like unemployment, etc.. And when the unconscious masses, being deceived, take these so-called radical measures as anti-capitalist, pro-people measures and lend the Fascists enthusiastic support in the carrying out of their plans and programmes, the Fascists concentrate all their powers to exterminate Communism spiritually and the communists physically' thereby pushing mankind and human civilization to extreme darkness and ruination.

To fight Fascism successfully, therefore, it is imperative to fight social-democratism of all shades and the various reactionary measures adopted by the Governments through Parliament which directly facilitate the ascension to power of Fascism. Whoever fails to put up this fight appropriately against the reactionary moves of the bourgeoisie and the growth of Fascism at the preparatory stage will not be in a position to prevent the advent of Fascism but on the contrary, will objectively facilitate its victory.

All who cherish in their heart human values, liberties and the freedom of mankind, all who are seriously concerned with the struggle for emancipation of the oppressed people cannot and must not rest content with only pondering over the various aspects of the menace of Fascism but must feel the urgency of combining the strength of people on the broadest possible scale in order to resist Fascism and give it a smashing defeat.

No doubt Fascism and the threat of war will be finally defeated with the final disintegration of imperialism-capitalism in the course of growth and victories of liberation struggles in the colonies and semi-colonies and revolutionary movements in the metropolitan capitalist countries, that is with the victory of world revolution. But to resist the growth of Fascism and the threat of war and to strengthen the liberation struggles and the revolutionary movements, we feel strongly that rejuvenation of the platform of International Peace Movement by freeing it from all sorts of pacifist approaches on the question of war and peace and making it a real and powerful fighting front of all sections of peace and freedom loving people and forces the world over against the forces of war and fascism with the communist and workers' revolutionary parties as its core, is the urgent call of the hour. And to this end the most important task devolving on the genuine communists—the vanguard detachment of the revolutionary proletariat—is to take positive steps to protect the nobility of communism and proletarian internationalism from the hands of all the reformist, revisionist and neorevisionist trends that are posing as the main danger before the international communist movement from within and to restore the lost unity of the International Communist Movement through uncompromising struggles on the basis of Leninist teachings and code on all major questions of ideological differences, but never allowing those ideological struggles to disrupt the State-level and Party level fraternal relations, at the same time presenting always a united face against Fascism—the arch enemy of mankind and civilization.

Lastly on this occasion let us recall the historic warning by Comrade Ghosh:

"If Fascism comes, it will not spare anybody. If this greatest enemy of civilization and mankind in this era gets entrenched, there will not be many left who can be called MAN, because Fascism not only dehumanizes, it obstructs the very process of development of man".

We urge upon all peace-loving, democratic minded, well meaning, freedom loving people in general and the Left democratic Opposition parties and genuine communist in particular to close their ranks, build up broadest possible united democratic mass movements which alone can act as a deterrent to the impending danger of Fascism all over the World.

Heroic Movement

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SUCI is the only force of struggle and the more this truth is being revealed in the public mind the more the ruling class is getting panicky and this is the reason why so much slanders, so much calumny, so much vilification campaigns have been started against our party. But the enemy of the people will fail to isolate us from the masses by slanders and canard because the people have identified this party as their own and in the midst of struggle we shall be with the people in their weal and woe.

Bangladesh

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fighting mental make up, their firmness of mind to struggle hard. They have sacrificed enough blood in the past, and are not afraid to sacrifice more if the struggle demands, from them.

We firmly believe that if a mighty united struggle can be developed basing on these positive aspects of the fighting character of the people then one day it will create a new chapter in the history of struggle of the people of Bangladesh.

We, on behalf of the fighting people of our country, whole heartedly support them. We know that the fighting people all over the world do stand by their side. Now, no force in the world would succeed in checking their onward march to ultimate victory.

Delhi UTUC (LS) State Conference

The Delhi State Committee of the UTUC(LS) organised a convention on 19th March 1985 at Constitution Club Hall on the issues of increasing the rate of the minimum wage, repealing of Black Acts and anti-working class attitude of the Labour Department of the Delhi Administration.