

PROTEST

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WILL GROW

AGAINST UNJUST TAXES UNLESS POLICY IS REVERSED

Says E.M.S. Namboodiripad

Punjab's Pratap Singh Kairon denounced the opposition parties in his State as "anti-national", because they opposed the new taxes which his Government proposed to levy on the people.

HE and his colleagues undertook a "campaign of exposure" against these opposition parties, and, to this end, held a series of meetings throughout the State. He tried to incite the Harijans against the rest of the people saying that the new taxes were meant to improve their conditions.

U.P.'s C. B. Gupta went a step further. He threatened the opposition parties in his State that he would deal with any campaign which they might undertake, with a 'firm hand'. He would not show any mercy to those who would express their protest against the new taxes by mass demonstrations and actions.

D MAGOG Y& THR EATS

These are just two examples of the two approaches which the Congress Governments adopt towards the growing popular discontent against their anti-people policy of taxing the common man's daily necessities. One is the demagogic approach and the other of repressive measures. Every other Chief Minister or Finance Minister of States, as well as Union Finance Minister Morarji Desai, adopts the demagogic of a Kairon, or the threatening attitude of a C.B. Gupta, to make the common people accept the heavy taxation that they propose to impose on them.

It is, however, becoming increasingly clear that neither the demagogy nor the threats would deter the people from giving expression to the acute discontent that is growing

within their hearts. This was shown throughout the month of June when many of the opposition parties gave calls for protest meetings and demonstrations against the taxation policy pursued by the Central and State Governments.

It will be recalled that the Communist Party observed June 16 in some places, and 17 in others, as an All-India Anti-Tax Increase Day; meetings and demonstrations were held under the auspices of the Party all over the country. Other opposition parties too called on their members and sympathisers to give public expression to the discontent of the people in this regard.

These meetings and demonstrations against tax increase in general were followed by demonstrations and peaceful picketing on July 1, directed against the increase in Railway fares and freights. According to a News Agency message, 600 persons were arrested on that day in various parts of the country. Included among those arrested were Members of Parliament, Members of the State Legislatures and other leaders of the people.

This was a programme which so far as the Communist Party is concerned, was carried out on the initiative of State units; no all-India call had been given by the Central leadership; it was only in three States that the State units took the initiative and carried out this programme. It is clear from what happened on that day that, if the Party had made it an all-India programme and if other

NEW AGE

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25 nP.

parties had joined us in making it a success, it would have become a huge nation-wide demonstration.

These meetings and demonstrations in June, and the demonstrations and peaceful picketing on July 1, are only the beginning. They will be followed by continuous campaigns, and, in places, by direct actions undertaken by one or more parties separately or jointly.

According to reports available, such direct actions are likely to be held in the next few months in U. P.; it is this that has enraged the Chief Minister C. B. Gupta. But the leaders of the Communist Party, the PSP, the Socialist Party, etc., have made it clear that they would proceed with their programme despite the threats held out by the Chief Minister.

GATH ERG MOMENTUM

There is no doubt that this will gather momentum if, in the meanwhile, the Chief Minister himself does not give up his policy of threats and concede the demands made by the people.

Just as in U. P. so in other States too, the common people are bound to come out in larger and larger numbers in demonstrations, and, if necessary, in direct action too, against the taxation policy of the Central and State Governments.

For, involved in this movement is the question whether the Governments should be permitted to adopt such taxation policies as would depress the living standards of the common people to very low levels, while the handful of landlords, capitalists, and other sections of the rich are allowed to garner all the benefits of development taking place in the country through the Five Year Plans.

It should, in this connection, be stated that the parties which joined in the meetings, demonstrations and peaceful picketings in the month of June and on July 1, do not agree on several vital matters of policy. Even on questions of taxation, there are differences among them, such, for example, as the difference between the Communist Party (which is not only not opposed to, but actually demands, increased tax burdens on the rich) and the Swatantra Party (whose spokesmen in Parliament opposed even the stoppage of

HAIL INDEPENDENT ALGERIA

Editorial

July 3 will go down in the annals of the freedom struggle of the colonial peoples as a memorable day. The

courageous people of Algeria, who have been carrying on a long and difficult battle for freedom are acquiring all the attributes of a fully sovereign nation and entering the comity of the free nations of the world.

The Algerian people have won their freedom, not because their colonial masters are 'generous' enough to 'make a gift' of their freedom, as is claimed by the imperialists. Freedom is wrested from the unwilling hands of the colonialists who had to be fought every inch and made to retreat.

The freedom struggle of the Algerian people has been the longest and the most exacting in sacrifices that any freedom-loving nation had to fight against its colonial masters. Year after year, the army of national liberation had to fight and sacrifice the lives of thousands of its gallant soldiers. Untold losses and sufferings have been the lot of the civilian people, because they 'committed the crime' of loving their country and rendering whatever help they could to gallant soldiers of the army of national liberation.

The colonialist masters had at their disposal not only the French army of occupation. Fascist bands had also been organised by the French settlers in Algeria, the notorious Secret Army organised by the settlers, the OAS, has inflicted unimaginable acts of cruelty on the peace-loving and patriotic citizens of Algeria. Hand in glove with the reactionary officers of the French Army, the OAS became a threat not only to the Algerian freedom-fighters but also to democracy in France.

That this combination of reactionary officers of the French Army and the OAS in Algeria could be defeated was due, firstly and above all, to the heroism of the Algerian people led by their united national organisation, the Liberation Front. Only people who have unbounded faith in the cause for which they are fighting can resist such a powerful combination of reactionary forces.

It is due, secondly, to the working-class and other sections of the democratic people in France itself. The Communist Party of France and other democratic elements in France came out in unmistakable terms and told their rulers that they would not tolerate the continuation of the unending war.

It is also due to the fact that the socialist camp headed by the Soviet Union has grown powerful to inflict defeat after defeat on the colonialists. The socialist powers have given unstinted support to the colonial peoples and barred the path of the imperialists who could no more drown the freedom movement in blood, as they have been doing.

The emergence of several new countries in Asia and Africa as fully free and sovereign nations is the remarkable feature of the international situation in the post-Second World War period. Contrast this with the situation in the pre-World War years.

Not only were the freedom struggles of the colo-

*SEE PAGE FOUR

CEC MOURNS

The Central Executive Committee of the Communist Party of India adopted the following resolutions on July 1.

DR. B. C. ROY

The Central Executive Committee of the Communist Party of India expresses sorrow at the death of Dr. B. C. Roy, the Chief Minister of the Government of West Bengal. He was an eminent physician who played his part in the freedom struggle as a congressman. Later when he acted as an administrator and the Chief Minister in West Bengal, we have had differences with Dr. Roy on many important issues. But the Chief Minister was not moved by pettiness and was always willing to discuss problems with even

those who opposed him. He was one of the most conscientious and hard-working Ministers and he devoted his energies for the success of the cause in which he believed.

The Central Executive Committee sends its condolences to the bereaved members of the Chief Minister's family.

P. D. TANDON

THE Central Executive Committee of the Communist Party of India expresses its deep sense of regret at the sad demise of Sri Purshottam Das andon who was one of the outstanding personalities of our freedom movement. He played a notable role in rallying the peasantry against the Zamindari system. (See Also page 4)

*SEE PAGE 13

PROTEST WILL GROW

privy purses to former princely families).

Despite these differences, however, they are all united in giving expression to the discontent of the common people on whom heavier and more unbearable burdens are being imposed by the Congress Governments. They are joined in this by sections of the ruling party as well.

Members of Parliament and of the various State Legislatures belonging to the Congress gave expression to this sense of discontent during the course of the Budget debates. Several units of the Congress organisation, and allied organisations like the INTUC, also came out against the new burdens that are being imposed on the common people.

The extent of the discontent can be seen from the fact that the combined total of votes polled in the last general elections by the parties which launched these campaigns comes to over 40 per cent of the entire votes polled. If to this were added the large mass of Congress sympathisers whose feelings were reflected in the speeches of Congress MPs and Congress MLAs, it will be clear that the overwhelming majority of the people are opposed to the taxation policy of the Central and State Governments.

Nor is this surprising. For, the policy pursued by the Government is such that the common people cannot but protest against it, resist it. The policy, as was clearly stated in the Third Five Year Plan Report, is one of "taxing consumption through indirect

taxation over a wide range". This is frankly stated to be unavoidable, since "the total resources required cannot be raised without it".

The Report itself admits that "indirect taxation along these lines tends to raise the price to be paid by the domestic consumer" and then argues that "this is a sacrifice that has to be accepted as part of the plan."

Plan Alibi

Such a policy is accepted by the Government on the ground that, again to quote the Third Five Year Plan Report, "there is no escape from the fact that, in a country like India where the bulk of the people are poor, resources on an adequate scale cannot be raised without calling for a measure of sacrifice from all classes of the people".

The question, however, arises: Is any measure of sacrifice being called for from the big landlords, capitalists, high-salaried officials etc? It will be clear for all who have eyes to see that they do not make any sacrifice; they, on the other hand, are enabled to get themselves richer and richer. Various official reports of the developmental activities like the Community Development have made it clear that the benefits conferred on the people by these activities are all seized by a handful from upper layers of society; the lot of the common people is only to pay for them.

If this assessment of the developmental activities undertaken, and the taxation imposed, by the Government were to be challenged by the leaders of the ruling party, there is a simple way open for them to disprove the case made out by the opposition.

It was suggested by the leader of the opposition in the Punjab State legislature, Chowdhuri Devlal. He challenged Chief Minister Kairon to put the question of tax increase to a plebiscite of the common people. The challenge was, of course, not accepted. He knew that, if it were accepted and the people given an opportunity to give their verdict, he would have to give up his policy completely.

Whether or not the Punjab Chief Minister is to accept this particular challenge by the leader of the opposition in that State, the campaigns launched by the opposition parties all over the country have squarely posed the question before the all-India leaders of the ruling party: Do they claim that the policy of increasing the burdens of taxation—that too of indirect taxation which tends to depress the living standards of the common people—has the support of the common people?

Do they think that, in launching the anti-tax campaign and organising meetings, demonstrations and peaceful picketing on this issue, the opposition parties are "opposing for the sake of opposition"?

Or, do they think that the feelings given expression to by all the opposition parties, and a section of the members of the ruling party itself, are of such a magnitude that serious note should be taken of them and taxation policy reconsidered?

So far as the Communist Party is concerned, it has repeatedly made its position clear. The question, according to it, is not whether resources are to be found for the implementation of developmental plans and projects; they should, of course, be found.

The question on the other hand, is: who should bear the burden of development—whether it is a handful of big landlords and capitalists who control the major part of our resources, or whether it should be the large majority of the common people whose living standards are already extremely low?

Suggestions Turned Down

Our Party's spokesmen in Parliament and in the State legislatures have suggested alternative ways and means for finding the resources necessary for developmental activities. The spokesmen of the ruling party, however, refused to accept them. They have always taken the stand, and still continue to take the stand, that resources can be found only by forcing the poor—who, after all, form the majority of the people—make the utmost sacrifice for the plan.

They, on the other hand, have allowed the handful of the rich to go scot free on the ground that, being much

fewer in number, the sacrifice that they make could not be adequate to enable the Government to carry out its projects.

Our Party has always warned that such a policy would lead to disastrous consequences. It would lead to acute mass discontent, burst out into mass struggles, and, in the process, would hamper even the economic development in the name of which these burdens are put on the common people.

On the other hand, if the alternative policies suggested by the Party are adopted, it would release the enthusiasm of the people who would

thereby be prepared to make the utmost sacrifice in the cause of national development.

The protest demonstrations organised by the opposition parties, and sympathised with by large sections of the Congress sympathisers themselves, are an indication that the warning issued by our Party is correct.

The sooner the leaders of the ruling party realise the futility of their efforts to suppress the growing discontent of the people, the better for the ruling party itself and for the country as a whole.

USSR Rejects British Charges Against North Vietnam

Moscow, July 3

"The Government of the USSR resolutely rejects as groundless the assertions of the Government of Great Britain that the Democratic Republic of Vietnam is allegedly the source of current disorders in South Vietnam", says the note of the Soviet Government to the Government of Great Britain, forwarded to the Embassy of Great Britain in Moscow today.

The Soviet note is a reply to the note of the British Government, received on June 14, which attempts to justify the increasing U. S. interference in the home affairs of South Vietnam.

The Soviet note points out that the Government of the USSR is concerned over the situation in South Vietnam "which has developed as a result of the violation by the United States of the 1954 Geneva agreements."

Military Alliance

"The report of the International Commission on Vietnam stresses that the military measures taken by the U. S. in South Vietnam bespeak of a factual military alliance between South Vietnam and the U. S., which is prohibited by Article 19 of the Geneva agreements," says the Soviet note.

"It is surprising that in touching upon this report of the International Commission in its note, the Government of Britain ignored this important provision."

The Soviet note says further: "In this light, the efforts of the Government of Great Britain to somehow justify the actions of the U.S. in South Vietnam and to make out that the U.S. does not seek to obtain bases or other military advantages in that country are utterly untenable."

The note recalls that the authorities of South Vietnam, with the support of the United States, began carrying out brutal repressions against former members of the resistance movement shortly after the signing of the 1954 Geneva agreements, embarking right away on the road of violating Article 14 of the above-said agreements.

Naturally, the Vietnamese, residing in the north of the country, entertain feelings of ardent sympathy and fraternal solidarity towards the population of South Vietnam and express support to their just struggle.

The Government of the USSR, as a co-chairman of the Geneva Conference, the note says, "supports the chapters of the International Commission's report which were unanimously adopted by all the members of the Commission, and believes, as before, that the ending of the dispatch to South Vietnam by the United States of arms and military supplies, the immediate withdrawal from South Vietnam of the U. S. military personnel and the liquidation of the American military command in the territory of this country, are urgent measures needed to normalize the situation in South Vietnam, to ensure Vietnam's development along the road of peace and independence."

The Soviet Government renews its proposals to the Government of Britain to send an appropriate message to the U. S. Government in the name of the two co-chairmen.

The note points out that the Government of the USSR fully supports the statement by the Polish representative in the International Commission, and holds that his statement reflected the actual state of affairs in South Vietnam.

The Soviet Government also supports the position of the Government of the DRV with regard to the report of the International Commission, as set forth in its statement of June 4, and in the letter sent by the Foreign Minister of DRV to the two co-chairmen on June 20.

GOA HARBOUR STRIKE

From Our Correspondent

GOA, July 2

The strike of seven thousand workers of Mormago Harbour has entered its third day. All the ten ships, which had come to take Iron Ore, are idle in the Harbour. The busy harbour of Larmagoa now looks like a haunted place.

THE strike is very peaceful, in spite of the provocations and intimidation made by some companies.

There was a mammoth rally of 10,000 people, despite rains, at Vasco da Gama yesterday. The meeting decided to continue the strike indefinitely until the demands were conceded by the companies.

The Union has appealed telegraphically to the Prime Minister, the Leader of the Opposition, the All India Port and Dock Workers Federation and other Port and Dock Unions in India. Besides, Goa Mining Welfare Union from North Goa and Goa Mine Workers Union from South Goa, have expressed their fraternal solidarity with the Union.

The Shipping Agents and stevedores are adamant and not prepared to discuss the issue with the representatives of the Union, in spite of the sincere efforts made by the

Managing Committee of the Union.

The Union has made it clear that it is not prepared to refer the case to the Labour Officer Leao Pinto, appointed during the Portuguese regime. The workers have no faith in the Portuguese fascist laws, which Pinto wants to implement.

The three main demands of the Union are:

- 1) Reinstatement of sixty dismissed workers immediately and assurance that there will be no further retrenchment and dismissals.
- 2) No wage cut and the maintaining of the wages at the old level.
- 3) Medical facilities.

The Union is prepared to continue the strike indefinitely if the above three demands are not met.

(As we go to the Press, news have reached us that the strike has been called off. Editor)