

CPI

1976/1977 / 909

1. On the Misuse of Emergency
October 27, 1976

Press release.

2. Joint statement of the representatives of the CPI, All India Trade Union Congress, All India Kisan Sabha, Bhartiya Khet Mazdoor Union, All India Youth Federation and the All India Students' Federation.

Press Release, December 6, 1976

3. Comrade C. Rajeswara Rao, General Secretary, Communist Party of India has issued the following Statement to the press today.

Press release, Dec. 16, 1976

4. The Central Executive Committee of the CPI which concluded its four-day meeting in Bangalore adopted the following resolution and released it to the press on January 16, 1977.

- For the Broadest patriotic and Democratic unity to meet the Challenge of Reaction.

January 19, 1977.

COMMUNIST PARTY OF INDIA

Central Office, Ajoy Bhavan, Kotla Marg, New Delhi

Phone Nos. PABX-271002/273618/19/10::: 276180(after office hours)

New Delhi,
October 27, 1976

press release

The Central Executive Committee of the Communist Party of India currently meeting in New Delhi has adopted the following resolution :

ON THE MISUSE OF EMERGENCY

The Communist Party of India extended its support to the declaration of national emergency by the Government because it fully realised the urgent necessity of resorting to such swift and firm action for warding off an imminent threat of subversion of our democratic system.

Even while pledging its unhesitating support to the emergency, the CPI had pointed out that the Government should take due care that the emergency powers were not misused. The CPI appreciated the solemn declaration of the Government that the extraordinary powers under the emergency would be directed only against the reactionary forces who were engaged in engineering a foul conspiracy to destroy our freedom and democracy. The Government repeatedly declared that the extraordinary powers would not be used against the democratic forces and the legitimate interests of the common people. The Government also stated times without number that whenever any evidence of misuse of emergency powers were brought to its notice suitable action would be taken.

The Central Executive Committee of the CPI, however, is constrained to note that while the Government correctly started by delivering stunning blows against the reactionaries, the emergency powers are now being used more and more against the democratic forces and the common people. There are increasing number of reports of high-handedness of officials, of harassment of innocent people, of collusion of officials with landlords, moneylenders, hoarders and profiteers to frustrate the implementation of the 20-point programme, of repression against landless and sharecroppers seeking to establish rights over their tiny patches of land, of attacks against the workers and the trade unions for carrying on normal trade union activities, of gruesome violence and coercion against weaker sections of the population by overzealous officials seeking to fulfil sterilisation targets.

The Central Executive Committee of the CPI is deeply concerned that members of the CPI, Congressmen and other democrats are being arrested in several States under the DIR and MISA because they protest against abuse of the emergency powers and firmly demand implementation of the 20-point programme. The Central Executive Committee is disturbed to find that in some States while the number of Communists detained under MISA or prosecuted under DIR is steadily increasing, reactionaries are being released on a big scale.

The . . .

The Central Executive Committee of the CPI further notes that some State Governments are refusing to permit the CPI, the AITUC, the AIKS, the BKMU, the AIPSO and other democratic organisations to hold meetings, rallies or conferences. There are reports of even closed door meetings inside halls being refused permission. Things have come to such a pass, particularly in the State of Bihar, that Development Conferences sponsored by the AIPSO were refused permission, members of the CPI were prosecuted under DIR for the crime of holding a meeting of a district Council of the CPI. While the All India Youth Federation and the All India Students' Federation were refused permission to organise a rally in defence of socialism, democracy and for implementation of the 20-point programme in Delhi, the Youth Congress was allowed to hold a number of rallies and meetings. Even the 30th session of the AITUC was not allowed to hold its open session at Jamshedpur and it was after a great deal of reluctance that the Government agreed to withdraw the condition that no delegate will criticise any policy of the Government even in its closed door delegates' session.

The Central Executive Committee further notes that the Government continues to stifle the voice of democratic forces by putting curbs on the press and the radio. Censorship is being misused to gag those who have consistently and unequivocally opposed Right reactionaries, while relaxing such censorship in the case of the latter.

In the opinion of the Central Executive Committee such ill-conceived restrictions on the activities of the democratic forces is leading to increasing abuse of the emergency powers. Freed from all fear of exposure from the press and the platform, the corrupt bureaucrats can indulge in corruption, commit excesses on the people and even wreak vengeance on their critics with impunity. This situation affords ample opportunity to unscrupulous politicians close to the administration to settle scores with their factional rivals.

The aforesaid developments are not only weakening the democratic forces in our country but are providing a heaven-sent opportunity to the reactionaries to augment their strength and frustrate the implementation of democratic policies. The Central Executive Committee is of the opinion that these dangerous developments, if unchecked, can seriously weaken the democratic forces and thwart the very purpose for which the state of emergency was declared.

The Central Executive Committee of the CPI is firmly of the opinion that the growing trend of misuse of emergency powers must be ended. It is necessary to release all democrats who are in detention under MISA, to withdraw all cases under DIR against them. It is necessary to allow full freedom to democratic organisations to hold meetings, rallies and conferences and to publicise their views through the press. It is necessary to allow them freedom for expression of democratic views, to expose the excesses committed by officials and to criticise and protest against the wrong policies of the Government. That alone will prevent the distortions that are taking place through the misuse of emergency powers on an increasing scale.

The Central Executive Committee of the Communist Party of India calls upon all those who value democracy and want to squeeze out the vile forces of reaction from our socio-political

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life to raise their voice in support of the aforesaid demands. The Central Executive Committee would like to make a special appeal to Congressmen to realise the grave danger that may befall us unless immediate steps are taken to halt the misuse of emergency powers.

S. G. Lokare

(S.G.Lokare)
Office Secretary,
Central Office, CPI

One of the important gains of the emergency was the holding of the price-line which gave some relief to the people in their economic misery. But of late prices of food articles and other essential commodities like cloth, medicines, have started rising again. Even according to the Government statistics, prices have risen by 12 per cent in the wholesale market, not to speak of retail prices, which are much above the wholesale prices. There is every danger that the prices will be pushed much higher utilising the natural calamities like cyclones, floods and droughts this year, upsetting the economy altogether if the present state of affairs is allowed to continue.

The most surprising thing is that prices are rising at a time when there are bumper harvests of paddy and wheat and the Government godowns are bursting with stocks of 17 million tonnes of foodgrains. In the same way, there have been good harvests of groundnut, mustard and other oil seeds. But edible oils have gone into the blackmarket and their prices have rocketed. The case of sugar is much worse.

This price rise is subjecting the consumers to hardships all right, but not helping the peasants either. On the other hand, the tragedy is that the prices of foodgrains were pushed much below the procurement and support prices fixed by the Government at the time of the harvest. Paddy sold at Rs.56 to Rs.60 per quintal, while the procurement price fixed by the Government is Rs.76 per quintal for medium variety. Jute sold at Rs.90-95 per quintal while the support price fixed by the Government is Rs.130 per quintal. Peasants nowhere got more than Rs.12 per quintal for sugarcane which is much below the price fixed by the Government for various regions. They had to part with their long staple cotton for Rs.300 per quintal, while the support price fixed by the Government was Rs.450. In the case of groundnut and other edible oil-seeds, no support price was fixed and the peasants were looted freely.

While this is the fate of the consumers and the peasants, the lot of the workers is no better. They are suffering from lay-offs, lock-outs, retrenchment, D.A. cuts and deprivation of their bonus. Efforts persist to cheat them out of their C.D.S. money, too, in the name of workers' sector. This is the reward workers are getting for helping invigoration of our country's economy through considerable increase in production.

The monopolists...

COMMUNIST PARTY OF INDIA

Central Office, Ajoy Bhavan, Kotla Marg, New Delhi-110002

phone nos. 271002/273618/19/10::: 276180 (after office hours)

New Delhi,
December 6, 1976

press release

Joint Statement of the Representatives of
the Communist Party of India, All India Trade
Union Congress, All India Kisan Sabha, Bharatiya
Khet Mazdoor Union, All India Youth Federation
and the All India Students' Federation

One of the important gains of the emergency was the holding of the price-line which gave some relief to the people in their economic misery. But of late prices of food articles and other essential commodities like cloth, medicines, have started rising again. Even according to the Government statistics, prices have risen by 12 per cent in the wholesale market, not to speak of retail prices, which are much above the wholesale prices. There is every danger that the prices will be pushed much higher utilising the natural calamities like cyclones, floods and droughts this year, upsetting the economy altogether if the present state of affairs is allowed to continue.

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The monopolists. . .

The monopolists, the wholesale traders and blackmarketeers are using the soft attitude of the Government to carry on the wholesale loot of the peasants by beating down prices at the time of harvest, the consumers by pushing up prices of food and other essential commodities later and the workers by imposition of fresh burdens. They are, at the same time, pressurising the Government to relax all controls, give tax concessions, liberalise credit policies and open the door to the multi-national companies through so-called collaboration agreements with Indian monopolists. All this is being demanded in the name of saving the economy from a non-existent recession.

The Government, instead of calling a halt to this blackmail of the monopolists and blackmarketeers has surrendered to their anti-national demands in most cases.

The handsome concessions given to the monopolists in the budget, including reduction in income tax and excise duty on luxury consumer goods certainly have contributed to the pressure on the price line. The extra increase in money supply and in credits from commercial banks to industry and trade has also played its part in boosting prices.

The Government did not come forward to maintain the support prices of the produce of the peasants at the time of the harvests in an effective way, but allowed the peasants to be looted by the monopolists and wholesalers.

The Government did not take effective steps to extend the public distribution system and supply of foodgrains and other essential commodities to the people at reasonable prices, though this is one of the important items of the 20-point programme for maintaining the price-line. On the other hand, the public distribution system is being wound up under the plea of bumper harvests.

The Government is doing nothing except issuing empty threats that it will take resort to MISA and DIR if the monopolists and traders do not behave. They know very well what the threats mean and hence they are carrying on their nefarious activities with impunity.

The Government is giving all concessions to the monopolists in the name of invigorating capital market and increasing production. It is providing liberal credit in the name of modernising sick mills to the very people who made them sick by mismanaging them.

The Government is playing with fire by opening the door wide to the multi-national companies in the name of bogus theories of developing export-oriented economy dished out by the World Bank.

All these will only help the loot of the workers, peasants and other sections of the people by the monopolists, blackmarketeers and the imperialists, multi-nationals and the destabilisation of our economy through erosion of our country's policy of economic self-reliance.

Hence there is no time to lose. Our people must wake up to the danger of destabilisation of our country's economy through steep rise in prices once again. We put the following most urgent proposals before the Government for holding the price line stabilising the economy and alleviating the misery of the people:

- 1) The public distribution system, which is one of the important items of the 20-point programme, should be extended . . .

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be extended to every nook and corner of our country and essential commodities like foodgrains, edible oils, cloth and common medicines should be made available to the people at reasonable prices.

2) Wholesale trade in foodgrains, edible oils and other essential commodities should be nationalised so as to take physical possession of these commodities by the Government.

3) The peasants must be guaranteed remunerative prices for their produce. The Government should take effective steps through its concerned corporations to enter the market at the harvest time and buy their produce at remunerative prices fixed by it.

4) Now a time has come when the monopolists are not only looting the peasants, the consumers and the workers, but also upsetting our economy through making the textile, jute and sugar mills sick, to think of the nationalisation of these industries. Without this, neither can the peasants be given remunerative prices, nor can the consumers be supplied with essential commodities at reasonable prices and the workers can be given proper bonus and other benefits and saved from layoffs, lock outs and retrenchment.

Hence textile, sugar, foreign drug and jute industries should be nationalised immediately. In view of the extremely good performance of the public sector in the last three years, there should be no hesitation whatsoever in doing this.

A joint nationwide movement will be launched by the undersigned organisations for mobilising the people on these urgent demands and for convincing the Government of the need for the expeditious implementation.

As a first step of this nationwide movement for holding the price-line-

1) Joint committees at State and District level of the CPI and other mass organisations willing to cooperate should be formed for conducting the nationwide movement;

2) Joint deputations will be taken to the Prime Minister and the State Chief Ministers and memoranda incorporating these demands will be submitted to them;

3) On the 1st of January, 1977 joint demonstrations and public meetings will be held throughout the country to educate the public on these demands;

4) Hall meetings and seminars will be organised especially for the educated and other middleclass people on this problem;

5) After this, the representatives of these organisations will take stock of the situation and decide on further steps of the countrywide movement.

We appeal to all the parties, mass organisations and personalities interested in alleviating the misery of our people and taking the country along the road of all-round progress leading to socialism to cooperate and help us in this national endeavour.

New Delhi,
December 6, 1976

- S.A. Dange, Chairman, CPI and
President of the AITUC

- C. Rajeswara Rao, General
Secretary, CPI and
Vice-President of the
Bharatiya Khet Mazdoor Union

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-Bhupesh Gupta, Secretary, National Council, leader of the CPI Group in Rajya Sabha and Editor of New Age weekly

-Indrajit Gupta, Secretary, National Council, leader of the CPI Group in Lok Sabha and Vice-President of the AITUC

-N.K. Krishnan, Secretary, National Council and Vice-President of the AITUC

-K.G. Shrivastava, General Secretary of the AITUC

-Parvathi Krishnan, Secretary of the AITUC

-Dr. Z.A. Ahmad, President, All India Kisan Sabha

-Indradeep Sinha, General Secretary, All India Kisan Sabha

-G. Yallamanda Reddy, President, Bharatiya Khet Mazdoor Union

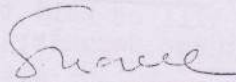
-P.K. Kadiyan, General Secretary, Bharatiya Khet Mazdoor Union

-C.K. Chandrapann, President, All India Youth Federation

-Anarendra Narayan Singh, General Secretary, All India Youth Federation

-Shambhu Saran Shrivastava, President, All India Students' Federation

-Aziz Pasha, General Secretary, All India Students' Federation



(S.G. Lokare)
Office Secretary,
Central Office, CPI

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COMMUNIST PARTY OF INDIA
Central Office, Ajoy Bhavan,
Kotla Marg, New Delhi-2.

Phone nos.
271002/273618/19/10
276180 (after office hours)

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New Delhi,
December 16, 1976.

PRESS RELEASE

COMRADE C:RAJESWARA RAO, General Secretary,
Communist Party of India has issued the
following statement to the press today.

S T A T E M E N T

I am surprised at the statement of some Congress MPs that they are satisfied with my regret for interfering in the internal affairs of the Congress and accepting 25-point programme of Congress and Youth Congress. The funny thing is from five point has become 25 point programme matter of 2 days. I am at a loss to know on what basis they are making such a ridiculous statement, perhaps by the distorted news item of Samachar.

Please read the enclosed cuttings of news items of my press conference published by four dailies of Bhopal.

Samachar deliberately omitted the five proposals for holding the price line I put in my written statement and said vaguely that I supported five point programme, so as to give the impression that I support the 5-point programme of Youth Congress. Some of the newspapers did not even stick even to the text of the Samachar and went further filling up the gap.

In my statement I mentioned our support to only the 20-point programme and nothing more.

When attention was drawn to the events in West Bengal and Orissa, I refused to be drawn into the discussion. I refused to be drawn into the discussion at this stage when negotiations are going on in Delhi, which Samachar has interpreted as "virtual retraction". I want to make it plain that I retracted nothing from what I said earlier about the protagonists of the so-called Constituent Assembly.

As for the interference in the internal affairs of the Congress, I have stated earlier many times that we have the least desire to interfere in the internal affairs of the Congress. I also stated that it is the prerogative of the Congress leadership and Congress legislative parties to put whomever they want to put in power. But certain developments in the ruling party or for that matter any other party, lead to the paralysis in the administration seriously affecting the life of the people and soiling public life, it ceases to be the internal affair of that party. Every citizen, not to speak of responsible parties, has the right to express his or her opinion in the matter. In a democracy that is the common practice and is often welcomed.

It is clear to everybody now that troubles inside Congress are not our making but that of the trouble-makers inside the ruling party.

About my statement of no confrontation with Congress, I repeated this many times earlier when I was asked by the Press-men whether our opposition to some policies of Congress mean confrontation with Congress, I stated that we are one with the Government on the policies of anti-imperialism, anti-fascism, anti-racism, defense of peace, friendship with socialist countries, and developing countries, economic self-reliance and fight against right reaction. But on such policies as on bonus for workers, remunerative prices for the peasants, supplying essential necessities of life to the people at reasonable prices and other issues effecting adversely the interests and rights of the people, we openly criticise the Government and oppose such policies. That is well known.

Our Party policies are as clear as daylight for everybody to see. Then what is the new thing they found in my statement now.

Taking a comprehensive view of all this controversy, I am constrained to think that it is a deliberate plan to whip up anti-Communism which can do only gladden the internal and external enemies of our country. I am only sorry to state some of the Congress MPs have fallen victims of this plan. I want to remind them that anti-Communism is not going to solve the internal problems of the Congress, I hope they will seriously think where anti-Communism leads them and our country. History is replete with vivid examples which I need not repeat. Anti-Communism is a long exposed weapon of imperialism and reaction.

While concluding I have to state clearly that Samachar and other mass media are being misused at the cost of truthfulness and objectivity and endangering the democratic norms of our country. Our Party will take up this serious issue with the proper authorities and on the appropriate forums including Parliament.

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Rashid Ahmad
For Central Office,
Communist Party of India.

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(ENCLOSURES: CUTTINGS OF NEWS ITEMS)

NO INTERFERENCE IN CONGRESS PARTY AFFAIRS

- Rao

(By Our Sports Reporter) RHOPAL, December 13. Communist Party of India, General Secretary Rajeswara Rao today denied interference in Congress Party's internal affairs.

Commenting on recent reports of speeches by some Congressmen depreciating 'interference' by CPI into Congress Party's internal affairs, Mr Rao told a news conference that his party did not want to interfere in Congress Affairs, but reserved the right to express views over issue relating to the nation.

The CPI still believed in its policy of 'unity (with Congress) and Struggle' and did not aim at any confrontation with the ruling party, he said.

While carrying questions on his reported statement, made at Calcutta earlier that there was a 'Caucus' in Congress which was out to destabilise some State Governments, Mr Rajeswara Rao said his party fully backed the country's policy on external affairs, self-reliance, friendship with socialist nations and expanding the public sector.

O R I S S A

He also refused to comments on the political happenings in Orissa and West Bengal.

Mr Rao ruled out an alliance at National - level with the CPM. Coordination at State level, however, could be considered, he said.

He said the CPI and its affiliated organisation will launch a country-wide campaign on five-point demands to extend the public distribution system all over the country and to supply the essential commodities like foodgrains, edible oils, sugar, cloth and medicines at reasonable prices to the people; to take over wholesale trade in foodgrains and other essential commodities; to take effective steps through the concerned corporations to ensure remunerative prices to peasants; to ensure adequate bonus to workers and to take effective steps to prevent lay-offs, lock-outs and retrenchments; to nationalise textile, sugar, jute and foreign drug companies.

MEMO TO PM

Memorandum would be submitted to the Prime Minister and the State Chief Ministers on behalf of the Party and 1st January, 1977 will be observed throughout the country to educate and mobilise the people in support of the demands through meetings, and seminars.

(MADHYA PRADESH CHRONICLE,
December 14, 1976)

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Rajeshwar Rao's pleaSTRENGTHEN PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM

(By our Staff Reporter. BHOPAL Dec.13, Mr. Rajeswara Rao, General Secretary of the Communist Party of India today stressed the need for strengthening the public distribution system all over the country.

Addressing a press conference here today Mr Rao said that in order to ensure that the people get commodities at reasonable price, foodgrains, edible oil, sugar, cloth and medicines should be distributed through this system.

Mr Rao also reiterated Party's stand for the take over of wholesale trade in foodgrains and other essential commodities. Remunerative prices to peasants and nationalisation of textiles sugar, jute and foreign drug manufacturing units were the other demands which were made by Mr Rao wanted the Government to take effective steps against monopolists and in this context the welcomed the stand taken by the Union Finance and Civil Supplies Ministers who have not only expressed concern over the rise in prices but have also threatened vested interests responsible for price rise with the view that these vested interests should not be allowed to disturb the price line which was one of the major gains of emergency.

He however made it clear that the party would continue to follow its policy of unity and struggle vis-a-vis Congress.

C H I N A

Asked to comment on development in China Mr Rao said that his party welcomed them. Asked to cite positive instances of such development Mr Rao referred to China's readiness to open dialogue with Soviet Union without making border dispute a precondition exchange and exhibition of films between the two countries definite trend towards modernisation and preparedness to introduce material incentives rather than Mao's thought for increasing the production.

Regarding CPI-CPM collaboration Mr Rao reiterated his own stand and added that at several places cooperation between the two parties from issue to issue had already begun. But there could not be any cooperation on national level till the CPM was not prepared to change its stand on basic issues.

(HITWAD, December 14, 1976)

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INTERFERENCE INTO DIVISION OF CONGRESSNO AIM OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY: R A O.

(Our Special Correspondent)

BHOPAL, Dec.13, The General Secretary of the Communist Party of India Shri C. Rajeswar Rao said here today that he had neither any intention of interfering in the internal affairs of Congress, nor does he want to split that Party.

He said this at a press conference answering a volley of questions. Shri Rao refused to say anything more than this regarding the Congress affairs.

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The Communist leader further said about the relationship of the Communist Party and the Congress that his party will continue to support Congress on the issues on which it has been supporting it. But the Communist Party will not keep quiet on the issues affecting the masses, whatever you may conclude from it.

Replying to a question, he clearly said that it is not the policy of his party to create a situation of confrontation with the Congress.

Replying to another question, he said the workers must get under all circumstances the minimum bonus, because the pay scales in different industries are absolutely inadequate. He said that though he was in favour of relating bonus to productivity, such policy in this connection should be adopted that the mill owners are not able to take undue advantage of it. For example they are taking advantage on the basis of loss and profit.

Speaking about Party's national campaign along with other mass fronts on the basis of 5-point demand, the Communist leader said, that the campaign in whichever form possible in different places. He said that a campaign will be launched for one important point of the 20-point programme, namely fighting the price-rise and strengthening the public distribution system on a nationwide scale. In this campaign demands will be put forward for the state takeover of foodgrains and other essential commodities, for making available foodgrains, other essential commodities, medicines, clothes, etc. through public distribution system. In this connection, movement will be launched on 1st January, 1977 all over the country to form public opinion through meetings and symposia.

(Translated from DESHBANDHU, Dec. 14, 76)

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COMMUNIST PARTY NOT IN FAVOUR OF CONFRONTATION WITH CONGRESS:

-Shri Rao.

Policy of 'Unity and Struggle' Will Continue

(From Special Correspondent)

BHOPAL, Monday. The general Secretary of the Communist Party of India Shri Rajeswara Rao said here today in a press conference that his Party is not at all in favour of confrontation with Congress. But Communist Party is free to express its opinion on the matter of public interest. Shri Rao said it is not so easy to carry on this policy even for those who want confrontation between Communist Party and Congress.

When his attention was drawn to the statements of many Congress MPs in which Communist Party was accused of interfering into the internal affairs of Congress, Shri Rao did not make any comment except expressing the opinion that his Party does not interfere into the internal affairs of anybody.

The Communist leader once again refused to say anything regarding activities inside Congress in connection with leadership changes (change of Chief Minister) in Orissa and West Bengal. He even refused to repeat the statement given a few weeks ago in Calcutta that "there is a group (Caucus) in Congress, which wants

to change the established governments in some eastern states.

Replying to questions Shri Rao said the Communist Party will continue its policy of 'Unity and Struggle' to wound the Congress administration and its policies.

Anti-Price-rise Campaign

The Communist leader expressed his concern over rise in the prices of essential commodities despite emergency, and in this connection mentioned the Pune speech of Prime Minister Mrs Gandhi. He said the Communist Party will launch a movement against price-rise. The Prime Minister and the Chief ministers will be presented with memorandum before 1st January, 1977. On 1st January a day will be observed to educate the people in this. Meetings and seminars will be organised on the day.

(Translated from NAVBHARAT, Dec.14, 1976)

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NHOPAL, Dec.13 (Samachar) - Mr C.Rajeswara Rao, General Secretary of the Communist Party of India, said here today that CPI was not for confrontation with the Congress.

Addressing a press conference here today, Mr Rao who was earlier critical of what he called a caucus in the Congress virtually retracted it.

Rao said that CPI would support the five point programme.

He emphatically said that CPI was not for confrontation with Congress.

Mr Rao went on to describe the five point programme and said that CPI and other allied organisations had decided to launch a nationwide campaign on the five point plan. Memorandums, he said would be submitted to the Prime Minister and Chief Ministers on behalf of the organisation. New year's day would be observed throughout the country to educate and mobilise the people in support of these demands, through meetings and seminars, he added.

Mr Rao said that holding the price line had been one of the important gains of emergency, which had given relief to the people.

On China, Mr Rao said his party welcomed recent changes in China and especially its efforts to improve relations with Russia and India.

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New Delhi,
January 19, 1977.

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FOR THE BROADEST PATRIOTIC AND DEMOCRATIC UNITY
TO MEET THE CHALLENGE OF REACTION

Dec. 14, 1976)

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Meanwhile, In India the big business press has started singing praises for the new US President. It is trying to sow illusions that the new regime's attitude to India will be different from that of the Nixon-Ford regime. However, there is no objective basis for believing that US imperialists will change their basic strategy in the South Asian region and befriend India, allowing its independent growth into a strong industrialised country.

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operative and actively assisting subversion against our country.

The Geneva talks for ending the racist rule in Zimbabwe have reached a deadlock with the imperialists and fascists using the talks to divide the national liberation movement in that country. Their divisive efforts have not succeeded so far. There is no way forward for the Zimbabwe liberation forces but to continue the revolutionary armed struggle to end the racist rule there. The national liberation struggle in South Africa and Namibia is also continuing with the help of the independent African nations backed by the nonaligned and socialist world, above all the Soviet Union. The solidarity movement for the victories of the national liberation forces should be stepped up in our country.

A big victory in this period for the world forces of peace and democracy has been the release of General Secretary of the Communist Party of Chile, Luis Corvalan, from the prison cell of the fascist Pinoche junta. It is necessary to intensify the campaign for the release of Communists, Socialists and other democrats who are still languishing in Pinochet jails.

A negative development is that in West Asia, the imperialists have finally succeeded in bringing about dissensions in the oil-producing countries over the question of the latest oil price hike. They have also finally managed to considerably damage the PLO in Lebanon. They are further arming Israel to impose their own solution to the West Asia problem in favour of that country. They are now particularly using Saudi Arabia in order to disrupt Arab unity. But more and more the convening of the Geneva Conference as the only way out is coming to the fore.

Coming to the national situation, the Government of India's foreign policy of anti-imperialism, support to the national liberation movements and friendship with the Soviet Union and other socialist countries has been carried forward during this period. There is also the continuing of the further strengthening of the nonaligned movement which is essential for implementation of the Colombo Summit decisions.

The State visits to India of Bulgarian President and First Secretary of the Bulgarian Communist Party Todor Zhivkov and Hungarian President and Member of the Presidium of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party Pal Lozoncz, the discussions which they had with Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and other Indian leaders and the agreements signed during their visits have raised India's relations with these countries to a new higher level. The agreements cover economic, trade, scientific, technical and cultural fields and provide for vast expansion of the existing relations in these fields. The current visit of the Laotian President Souphouvong to our country and the forthcoming visit of Edward Giersek, General Secretary of the Polish United Workers' Party will further deepen and strengthen the friendship and cooperation between India and socialist countries.

In the field of the national economy, both the positive and negative features in Government policies noted by the last session of the Central Executive Committee continue. On the positive side there have no doubt been important gains in the development of our national economy though these gains have not brought benefits and relief to the masses. The negative aspects of the economic policies, however, stand out prominently.

The ruling circles are still looking forward to the World Bank and its agencies for "aid". This was blatantly exhibited during

the visit to this country of World Bank President Robert McNamara who was given a lavish welcome befitting a head of State. McNamara himself made it clear that the World Bank was changing its tactics in dealing with India. Instead of diktats of the old days, it is now praise and persuasion that are expected to do the job. The aim remains the same neocolonialist penetration of the Indian economy. The World Bank wants India to develop an export-oriented economy at the cost of the home market, an aim which finds sympathy in some ruling circles. It is also making intensive efforts to link up with the rural vested interests and reaction through the integrated command area projects. The multinationals are also making fresh bids to enter our country.

The monopolists here are happy over the various concessions given by the Government and are now praising the "intelligence and wisdom of the leadership" and the "refreshingly pragmatic and result-oriented approach" in the economic policies of the Government. But it is increasingly becoming clear that all the concessions given to them, including those in the last Budget, have not brought the hoped for results. The monopolists have refused to expand production through stepped up investments. Things have come to such a pass that Finance Minister C. Subramaniam had to threaten the monopolists that if there was no response from the private sector to the incentives given, the Government would have to "evolve alternative measures to ensure higher production."

But the monopolists are not in any mood to listen. Whetted by the concessions already given, they are demanding more, this time steep reduction in corporate tax. Instead of boldly meeting the threat, some of the Ministers are meekly offering more credit for rehabilitating "sick" units. Some Ministers are even holding out promises that there would be no nationalisation even if the units become "sick".

Emboldened by this official attitude, the monopolists are freely resorting to closures disguised as lock-outs, to imposition of heavier workloads and retrenchment on various pretexts. A large number of jute, textile, engineering and other concerns are lying closed, involving crores of rupees worth of production losses and unemployment of thousands of workers.

Because of the failure of the private sector to expand production, through both modernisation and installing of new capacity, the demand for machinery and goods produced in the public sector is not growing. As a result, the public sector, which has a magnificent record of production and expansion to its credit in the last few years, is facing problems. There is insufficient demand for its products and orders with some of its units are very low to keep up production at peak levels. The problem has not become acute yet because of the readiness of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries to buy from the projects aided by them.

An important positive development has been the realisation of the target in Indo-Soviet trade set for 1980 in 1977 itself. This has been made possible through the "step up in regular trade and through the timely offer of crude oil by the Soviet Union which is to see India through a crucial period. It has also helped to checkmate imperialist blackmail by its offer of heavy water for our nuclear power projects. There have also been agreements with Poland, Czechoslovakia and GDR for further developing the trade and economic relations between these countries and our country.

The situation on the price front continues to cause anxiety. The upward move of the wholesale price index began in March 1976.

The retail prices of many of the essential commodities like foodgrains, sugar and textiles have risen even more sharply. Prices of edible oils have shot up.

The most shocking thing is that the prices are rising despite the bumper harvests of paddy and wheat and the Government godowns bursting with grains. Despite the huge stocks built up by the Government the public distribution system is shrinking, a concrete proof of which is the lower offtake from the central godown pool. The allotment and despatch of controlled cloth has also been reduced substantially.

The price rise is hitting the consumers all right, but it is not helping the farmers either. At the time of harvests, prices are depressed to fleece the peasants and later these are raised even by creating artificial scarcities. The beneficiaries of the price manipulation are wholesale traders, landlords and monopolists who indulge in trading activities.

It is clear that the warnings issued by the various Ministers to the monopolists and traders that if they did not behave in the matter of prices, stringent action would be taken against them have remained empty threats. The unscrupulous hoarders and blackmarketeers are having a field day and they have not hesitated even to take advantage of natural calamities like cyclone, flood and drought to still further boost prices of essential commodities.

Friction has been developing between our Party and the Government because on issues like bonus, curtailment of trade union rights, concessions to monopolists and wooing of multi-nationals, forced sterilisation, continued detention and new arrests of CPI workers, open violation of democratic norms and erosion of democratic institutions, our Party has been boldly opposing these anti-people policies and standing by the masses. The Prime Minister's attack against the CPI came in this background. It gladdened the hearts of internal and foreign reaction. It came in handy for the sponsors of the constituent assembly move, to launch a virulent anti-CPI tirade. Demands are being made even for a ban on the CPI. Deliberate distortion of CPI positions is being done, utilising the mass media, including the AIR, and our Party is maligned and slandered through fabricated news.

The Prime Minister's later statements declaring that the CPI had stood for Indian independence and was not an enemy of the country, in contrast with right reactionary parties, has not persuaded the anti-Communists to give up their game.

It has to be also noted that the anti-Communist hysteria sought to be whipped up has not evoked much response in the country even among Congressmen. The slander campaign against the Party and demands for its ban made by a very small section of Congressmen has evoked only revulsion among the mass of the people. More and more sections of democratic opinion are realising that anti-communism is not only a part of reaction's diversionary tactic, but helps the forces of reactionary and the vested interests.

The sponsors of the constituent assembly move got more desperate after their defeat over the 44th Constitution Amendment Bill. They have continued their activities against those who do not toe their line and spread them to the States, and in this they have not hesitated to ride roughshod over the accepted democratic norms or to resort to some extra-constitutional and authoritarian means.

The CPI has not only wholeheartedly supported the 20-point programme but has been working for its success since its implementa-

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tion would provide relief to the people and help radical changes in the rural areas. It is deeply concerned over the tardy implementation of this programme and urges the Central and State Governments to overcome this serious lag above all by activating popular committees and seeking mass cooperation. It is not opposed to the five-point programme nor does it consider it reactionary. However, this programme will not solve the problem of unemployment and poverty. Moreover, it is wrong to counterpose and give it precedence over the 20-point programme. The CPI supports family planning but opposes coercive methods that are being used in this regard, as well as compulsory sterilisation.

Restrictions on the Rightist parties are being relaxed and their leaders and cadres are being released. The reactionary parties have offered to hold talks with the Government without preconditions and have urged the release of all their leaders. Simultaneously they are also having talks among themselves for the formation of a single opposition party.

While top-ranking rightist leaders are being released, it is deplorable that Communists who have been imprisoned in various States during emergency are not set free. On top of this, new arrests and detentions are taking place, as for example in UP, where recently nearly 400 CPI cadres have been rounded up under either MISA or DIR.

The CPM leadership continues to follow its old opportunist policies. Though it has refused to form a front with the reactionary parties, it is cooperating with them under the banner of Civil Liberties Union. It is gloating over the tension that developed between the CPI and the Prime Minister. It refuses to change its negative and opportunist policy of blind anti-Congressism. It refuses to recognise the importance of unity with the democratic forces in the Congress. Nor does it recognise the significant role these forces within the Congress are playing to safeguard democracy and for taking the nation forward. Recent events, far from vindicating its line, as the CPM claims, have amply demonstrated its barren and disruptive nature. We appeal to the CPM to think over these matters and take a realistic attitude.

The CPM has expressed readiness to cooperate with our Party and the mass organisations on people's issues. While there cannot be any united action on political issues in view of the CPM's present barren policy of blind anti-Congressism, our party reiterates its stand that it may be possible for our Party and the CPM to cooperate on mass issues at local level.

During the last two and a half months, the CPI and the mass organisations have launched a number of campaigns over the urgent demands of the people. These have made an impact on the masses who have enthusiastically come forward to support the demands and join the movement.

The national campaign to hold the priceline launched by the Party and the mass organisations has evoked widest attention in the country. It has attracted workers and others. The five main demands put forward by our Party have found ready response among the people. It has linked the issue of extension and strengthening of the public distribution system to supply the essential commodities to the people at reasonable prices to the issue of remunerative prices for the produce of the peasants as also bonus and other rights of the workers. Thus vistas have opened up for a common national campaign of workers, peasants and the mass of the people on a national basis. This was evident in the widespread,

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observance of January 1 in almost all the states through mass rallies, demonstrations, hall meetings, seminars, memoranda submitted to the Prime Minister and the Chief Ministers etc. There is mass enthusiasm over this anti-price rise movement started by our Party and the mass organisations.

The campaign and its slogans are more and more becoming national demands. Even the Reserve Bank of India has in its report on currency and finance for 1975-76 expressed concern over the rise in prices and suggested extension of the public distribution system and the inclusion of some essential commodities in its ambit. The campaign is also having its impact on the official circles. Statements have been made on behalf of the Central Government that the public distribution system would be strengthened. State Governments have been directed to take stringent action against hoarders and blackmarketeers and to check the price rise. The Reserve Bank of India has imposed stricter credit controls in a bid to check expansion of money supply.

The AITUC's campaign for the fundamental rights of the working class, observed during November 15-22, 1976 was a great success. There have been united actions for bonus and against the continuation of the Compulsory Deposit Scheme. A broad consensus is emerging among the AITUC, INTUC and HMS in particular and the vast mass of workers in general on bonus, CDS, against lock-outs, closures and retrenchments and other working class rights.

But it is becoming increasingly clear that to effectively hold the priceline, to ensure remunerative prices to the peasants for their produce, to ensure the rights of the workers, to safeguard increased industrial production, in short to improve the living standards of the people and create stable conditions for national economic development, structural changes in the field of economy are urgently called for. Defence of democracy and its extension in the face of persistent efforts to undermine it and to erode our parliamentary institutions is the most pressing task of all progressive forces.

These tasks can be fulfilled only if the broadest unity in action of all democratic and progressive parties and forces, particularly such unity between the CPI and the Congress, is built up. Recent developments have unmistakably shown that not only vast possibilities for building such unity exist, but also that its being realised in practice. Democratic and patriotic unity has time and again been able to foil the conspiracy of imperialism and right reaction.

The situation in our country today offers us great opportunities as well as poses serious dangers. Only by fully utilising all the opportunities can the dangers be met and eliminated. This places on our party and all the patriotic and democratic forces the solemn duty of strengthening the existing unity among them and deepening and broadening it to meet the serious dangers as well as challenges of the future.

The Central Executive Committee of the CPI decides to carry forward and intensify the national campaign to hold the priceline in cooperation with the mass organisations by presenting a mass petition for the five main demands to the Parliament. It calls on all party units and members to immediately move into action and collect signatures in every city, factory and village. It appeals to all the people to sign this mass petition which embodies their demands and answers the nation's needs. Millions of signatures must be presented to the Parliament by the end of March.

The Central Executive Committee of the CPI is confident that all our party members and party units will rise to the occasion to worthily discharge the great responsibility that history at this critical juncture has placed on us.