

## PRICE RISE AND FOOD CRISIS

The Seventh Congress of the Communist Party of India notes with grave concern the immensity of the food crisis through which the whole country has passed in the outgoing year. The crisis still continues. It is accompanied by the galloping rise in the prices of all commodities, has hit the common people very hard and has also stood in the way of the fulfilment of the Plan targets and involved the plan itself in a crisis. The anti-people character of the government's food and price policy was never so exposed as now.

The bankruptcy of the theories advanced by various spokesmen of the ruling party, and particularly by big business, from time to time, that prices of all commodities are rising and food is scarce only because production is lagging behind consumers' demand, has now been evident to everybody. Even the government has at last been forced to admit that an artificial crisis has been created by hoarders and profiteers, though big business circles continue to harp the same tune as before. It is now clear beyond doubt that the capitalist monopoly combines, with the tremendous concentration of economic power, speculators and the big landholders together have conspired to produce this

crisis by hoarding one commodity after another in order to extort the people by frustrating all controls. Black money, which finances the blackmarket, is nothing but the super profits of the monopoly combines, speculators and big landholders.

The policy pursued by the ruling party has been strengthening these parasitic elements by enriching them under the guise of encouraging private initiative for more production. But the reality is that even production is hampered because capital resources continuously flow into the blackmarket and expand the volume of black money through the monopoly combines and other parasitic elements in society.

The Seventh Congress of the CPI emphatically declares that in order to bring the price level down and stabilise the same, banks and wholesale trade in agricultural produce must be nationalised, by fixing reasonable fair prices for consumers and producers; speculation and forward markets must be abolished. In order to alleviate the food crisis statutory rationing must be introduced in all towns and deficit states like Kerala and Gujarat and fair-price shops opened in all rural areas. In order to step up agricultural production, concentration of land in a few hands must be broken by imposing real ceilings and distributing surplus land thus available as well as government fallow land to poor peasants and agricultural labourers, in cooperation with representative peasant committees. Extension of small and medium irrigation works, distribution of fertilisers to the peasants and flood-prevention measures must be extended and carried out on a scale vaster than ever before.

This Congress notes that government's decision to set up the State Trading Corporation for Foodgrains is an indirect admission of the bankruptcy of their policy of controls without the guarantee of supply, but regrets that neither nationalisation of banks nor the nationalisation of wholesale foodgrain trade have yet been accepted by the government. The worst phase of the crisis in Kerala and Gujarat has completely proved that measures so far adopted by the government to combat hoarders and profiteers and to supply foodgrains to the people are not at all capable of coping with the situation.

The Seventh Congress notes with satisfaction that people's

resistance against hoarders, profiteers and the government's food policy is growing in all parts of the country, that the cooperative consumers' stores movement is spreading in the towns and that every popular democratic party and even many people inside the Congress are becoming more and more vocal for a change in government's policy. The barren and bankrupt policy of the government has been condemned in innumerable mass rallies, processions and satyagraha organised by the Communist Party. But the crisis has reached a stage when the movement must be raised to a higher level, with its two facets, namely, militant mass struggles against the hoarders and the government as well as organisation of cooperative consumers' stores in all localities; militant mass movement for changing government's policy must now be developed into countrywide satyagrahas culminating in *Bharat Bandh*. This Congress calls upon all Party units and Party members to throw their entire weight into this great movement against high prices and for people's food. All parties and patriotic people including Congressmen and Congress committees wherever possible must be approached in a fraternal spirit to build up a united mass movement. This Congress calls upon all the people irrespective of political affiliation to join this sacred struggle in one form or another.

#### MISUSE OF D.I.R. AND EMERGENCY POWERS BY THE GOVERNMENT

The Seventh Congress of the CPI expresses its indignation and protest against the continued misuse of the emergency powers and the Defence of India Rules by the government for suppressing civil liberties, for arresting and detaining without trial persons belonging to opposition political parties as well as leaders and workers of the democratic mass movements in different states.

A number of communists continue to be in detention since November 1962 when they had been arrested in the name of national emergency created by Chinese aggression on India's borders. Subsequently the DIR and the emergency powers have been used recklessly to put down even peaceful and constitu-