

7 AUG 24
Copy 1964

BHARAT BANDH !



July 31 — Kerala

August 5 — Gujarat

August 12 — Maharashtra

August 18 — Uttar Pradesh



**FORWARD TO THE ONE-DAY
ALL-INDIA GENERAL STRIKE
AND HARTAL**

INDEPENDENCE AND HUNGER

THE SEVENTEENTH YEAR OF Freedom, which is now ending, was perhaps the most vital, the most eventful year in independent India's history. The shadows were long and dark. But the light, when it came through, was brighter than ever before.....

It was the year in which the nation lost Jawaharlal Nehru—with all that that loss meant in the lives of the people.

It was the year which saw the forces of disruption and split act as they had never acted before, to divide the toiling people's movement. The Seventeenth Year saw the forces of dark communal reaction run amuck in West Bengal, Bihar, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh. The conspiracies of the imperialists and their henchmen reached new diabolical heights.

But the Seventeenth Year was also the year of the mightiest movement of the toilers. It began with the Bombay Bandh of August 20, 1963. It ends with the still more glorious Maharashtra Bandh of August 12, 1964. In between came the Great March of September 13, the biggest national demonstration ever organised by the Communist Party of India, and the National Campaign of the Toilers.

The Seventeenth Year saw the biggest, broadest congresses, rallies and campaigns for peace and in defence of nonalignment. The Peace Movement began to exert an influence on India's foreign policy, greater by far than it had ever done before...

* * * *

Independence Day 1964 dawns in the midst of rocketing prices, large-scale hoarding and profiteering, the loot of the masses, the fattening of the tycoons.

Government policies—weak-kneed and conciliatory to the enemies of the people, stern and repressive against the toilers—have sickened honest men and women, as they have earned the plaudits of the monopolists and their hangers-on.

The stories roll in of hunger stalking many villages and districts, of grass being eaten in lieu of foodgrains, of death taking the toll of the hungry and the starved.

All the horror of seventeen years of misrule has, in a flash, been understood by the millions, as they march against the food thieves and the policies which give the looters a free hand to amass wealth through people's miseries.

August 1964 has been and continues to be the month of the mightiest ever working-class actions. As we write, all Bombay and all Maharashtra are BANDH; last week it was Gujarat, which showed the way. The week before it was Kerala Bandh; next week it will be Uttar Pradesh.

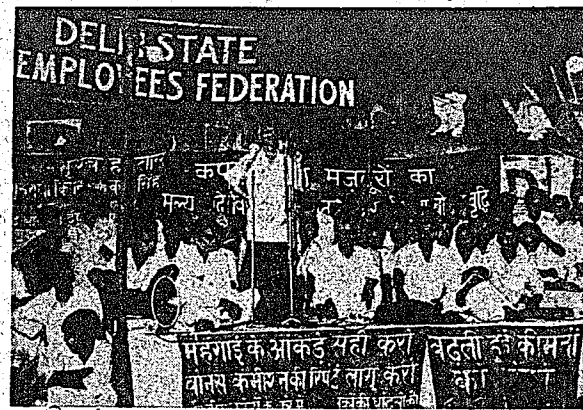
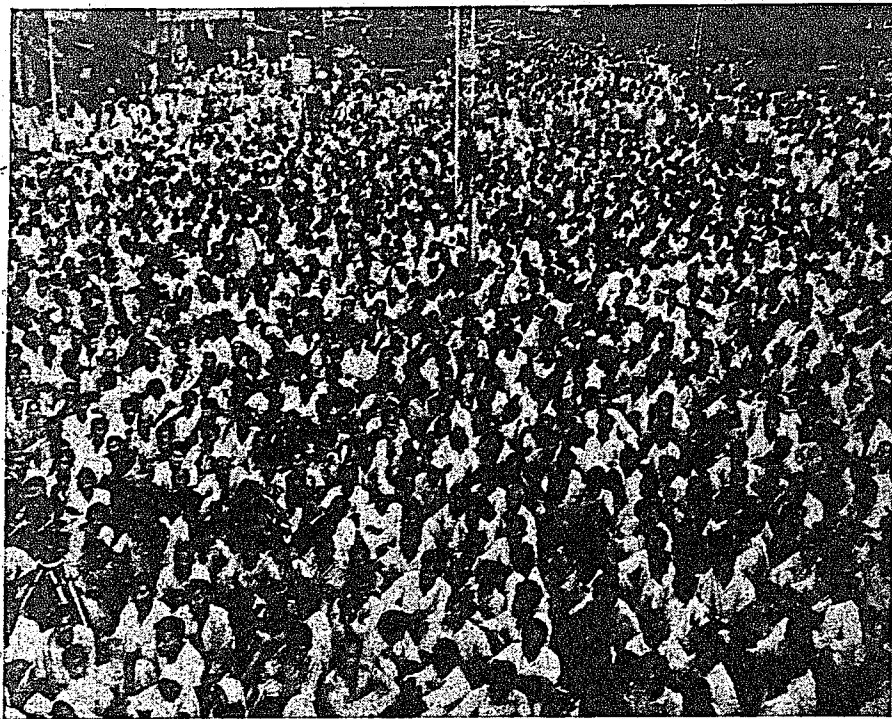
India's toilers greet the dawn of the Eighteenth Year of Independence with their marching feet, with their deafening slogans demanding state trading in foodgrains, nationalisation of banks, opening of fair price shops, unearthing the hoards of the profiteers.

The Eighteenth Year begins on the eve of the Great Satyagraha, when lakhs will court arrest under the Red Flag of the Communist Party. The Eighteenth Year opens, as consultations begin to fix a date for Bharat Bandh, the all-India one day

THIS MUST NOT HAPPEN AGAIN !



(Photo: Virendra Kumar)



Left: Mammoth meeting at Sabzi Mandi on August 5. Above: S. A. Dange addressing the meeting. Below: B. D. Joshi addressing rally before Labour Minister's house. (Photos by: Virendra Kumar, R. Parasher and H. Dasgupta)



Delhi Textile Workers Intensify Agitation

Meetings, Demonstrations and Squattings

The 22,000 workers of the four textile mills in Delhi are determined to win their demands. Stage by stage their campaign is becoming intensified and they are preparing for the strike action which will be taken recourse to if government fails to settle the dispute. (See last week's NEW AGE).

On August 7 the Kapra Mazdoor Ekta Union led a demonstration of about 3,000 workers before the residence of Union Labour Minister D. Sanjivayya. These workers squatted peacefully before his gates for two hours without allowing anyone to get in or out of the building. It is reported that the Union Labour Minister had earlier gone out of his residence.

Demonstration Before PM's House

On August 12 the union is going to lead a large demonstration before the residence of the Prime Minister, Lal Bahadur Shastri to impress upon him the urgency of the situation and the necessity of his intervention in the dispute.

If this representation fails to bring about any positive result, the union will then call upon the workers to strike work either on August 13 or August 14.

Meanwhile three more trade union functionaries have joined the hungerstrike before the mill gates; Gangadhar at Swatantra Bharat Mills, Pothiram at the Delhi Cloth Mills and Tularam at the Ayodhya Mills.

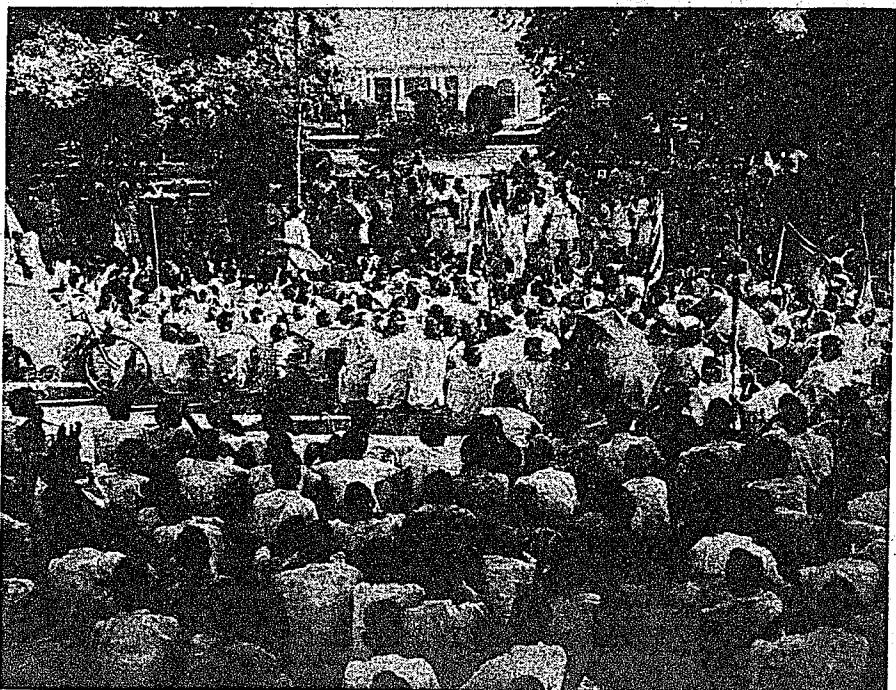
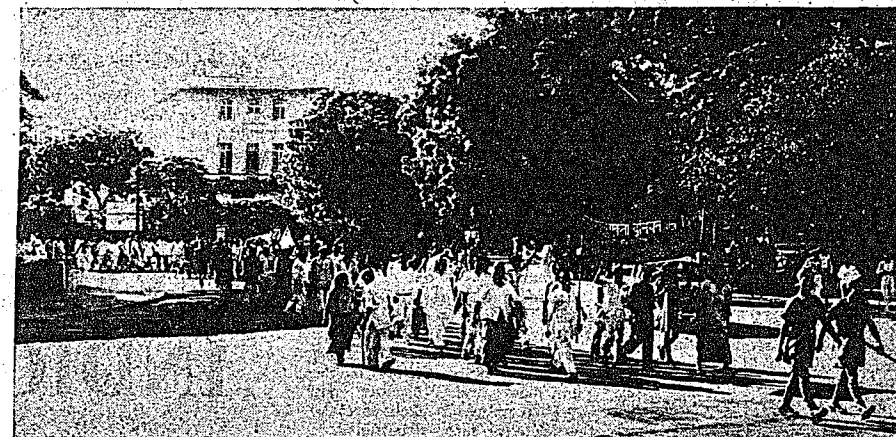
Raghunath, who has been on hungerstrike in front of the Swatantra Bharat Mills since July 29 was removed by police to hospital on August 7 night. His condition has deteriorated very much and one lung has collapsed.

Radhakrishnan and Charan Singh who are on hungerstrike in front of Birla Cotton Mills since July 24 have lost weight very heavily and their conditions are causing anxiety. Other hunger strikers, Shadram and Rupram who are on hungerstrike since July 29 have also lost weight considerably.

Earlier on August 5 the Kapra Mazdoor Ekta Union held a mammoth meeting at Sabzi Mandi which was attended by about 50,000 workers. The union had invited the bank employees, engineering workers and other sections of toiling people to take part in the meeting. Hundreds of workers responded to this invitation and attended the meeting to express their sympathy and solidarity with the textile workers.

The meeting was addressed among others by S. A. Dange, general secretary of the All-India Trade Union Congress, B. D. Joshi, general secretary of the Kapra Mazdoor Union, A. C. Nanda, general secretary of the Delhi STUC, and Y. D. Sharma, president of the Petroleum Workers' Union. R. C. Sharma, president of the Shop Employees Federation presided over the meetings. (August 10)

Right top: Workers marching to Labour Minister's house on August 7. Right: the rally before Labour Minister's house



In the midst of the reports of the daily mounting mass actions for food led by the Communist Party and other parties of the democratic opposition, reports have been appearing now and then in newspapers of action organised by Jan Sangh against the food policies of the government.

In Delhi it organised a hungerstrike and submitted a memorandum to the Food Minister. In Uttar Pradesh an agitation was organised by Jan Sanghites.

The Swatantra Party is also very critical of the government in this respect. It has, of course, not resorted to any 'direct action', if we disregard a symbolic demonstration in Bombay docks against the export of a small quantity of fine rice. But it has spelt its food policy and has promised to 'educate' the people about it.

This raises the question: what precisely is their criticism of the government's food and price policies? What are their proposals for the solution of the present serious crisis?

Not surprisingly there is much in common in the approaches of these two parties to the current crisis. Their criticism is aimed at preventing the government from taking any effective action in the immediate context against the hoarder-trader.

On a long term basis, they seek to bring about basic policy shifts in a reverse direction making use of the high prices and food crisis.

Both parties vehemently contest that hoarding is the immediate reason for the current price-rocketing.

The general council of the Swatantra Party finds no evidence to justify the sweeping charges against the peasants and traders. "The attempt to make a scapegoat of peasants and traders should be abandoned" demands its resolution.

The economic analysis of the Jan Sangh organ, ORGANISER, suspects the charge of hoarding "to be a case of giving a dog a bad name and hanging it." The headline in the ORGANISER shrieks: "It is a lie to say that food is being hoarded."

These assertions go against the generally known facts. By the very admission of the Union Food Minister Subramaniam, hoarding is the immediate cause of the food scarcity and high prices. Government spokesmen have emphasised at least the role of the black money, if not bank advances.

But, the Swatantra Party and Jan Sangh want no action against hoarders. They want the drift in favour of the tra-

RIGHT PARTIES' FOOD "SLOGANS"

By S. V. Unnikrishnan

ders in the government policy to continue.

Both the Jan Sangh and the Swatantra Party resolutely oppose the state taking over of the food-grains trade.

In its resolution the general council of the Swatantra Party "warns the country against the proposals for state trading in foodgrains and compulsory levies on the peasants which are being advanced by certain elements in the Congress Party."

"Government should give up the idea of nationalising and monopolising trade" demands Deendayal Upadhyaya in the ORGANISER. The Jan Sangh wants free trade to be preserved in any eventuality.

Not only that. All existing restrictions which hinder free unmoistened profiteering by the traders are sought to be removed by them.

The Swatantra resolution says: "The failure of controls is so obvious that it would be perverse to ignore it. No solution short of decontrol of prices and movements and the removal of com-

pulsory procurement will therefore suffice."

And Jan Sangh demands "removal of all restrictions on the movement of wheat and rice and abandonment of the policy of nationalisation of foodgrain trade."

State trading of foodgrains as part of an integrated price and distribution policy is unavoidable in the present context. The Congress Party itself has repeatedly stressed its need. Finance Minister TTK spoke in the beginning of June that the only way to surmount the present crisis, is state takeover of foodgrain trade.

Yet the government hesitates on the necessary measures. In this case too the food traders' lobby seems to exercise decisive influence on the government.

The Swatantra Party and the Jan Sangh by their vigorous opposition to state trading seek to freeze the government in its present position on state trading.

Swatantra economic commentators do not oppose the setting up of the foodgrains corporation decided by the government. They claim that they have been advocating all along that the state may enter the grains market as a competitor.

But the official resolution of the general council is silent on this point.

The Jan Sangh is also not opposed to the state entering the market in a moderate way to compete with the private trade.

And on the whole the Swatantra quarters seem to have been encouraged by the criminal drifting that has been the government policy during the crucial months of June and July and in fact till now. Their economic commentators term the government policy as 'realistic'!

Swatantra Criticism

As for the deeper and more fundamental causes, the Swatantra blames the government agrarian policies and what they call 'doctrinaire' economic plans. It maintains that the agrarian reform measures, and particularly the ceiling laws, caused stagnation in agricultural production.

The reasoning is that the ceiling on land holdings lead to breakup of larger farms which mainly produce marketable surplus, and thereby restricts opportunities of intensive capital investment to increase production.

The assumption behind this argument is fallacious. In fact with the present level of economic development and agricultural technique and agrarian overpopulation, ceilings on land-holdings and distribution of surplus land would immensely facilitate rational cultivation and increase in agricultural production.

Again, using this opportunity a new attack is mounted on the country's independent economic development.

The Swatantra resolution says: "The false order of priorities in Second and Third Plans, where quick yielding activities such as agriculture, road building and rural processing industries have been neglected in favour of low

and slow yielding heavy projects" created serious inflationary situation, contributing to the crisis. Hence, the demand for reversal of priorities in planning.

The Jan Sangh is explicit on this score. Deendayal Upadhyaya writes: "Not only that, the Fourth Plan has to be conceived differently but the Third Plan also has to be reoriented to remedy defects... The priorities of the Plan have to be changed and immediate efforts should be made to increase the supply of consumer goods both through larger internal production and imports."

This demand is nothing new. These parties have been putting it forward always. They echo the voice of foreign imperialist interests and Indian monopolists. What is new and dangerous is that today these pressures may exercise bigger influence on the government.

Prime Minister Shastri's letter to Cabinet Ministers demanding consideration of postponement of heavy projects of the Plan, work on which has not yet commenced, is a dangerous portent.

Such are the policies advocated the parties of right reaction. They go against the immediate and basic interests of the working people, and also of the nation as a whole.

Dominating Influence

Many aspects of these policies are reflected in the policy and measures of the government itself through the dominating influence of right reaction within the Congress and government.

It is against such pressures to compel the government to discard such policies and act differently that the people have intervened in mighty mass actions led by the Communist Party and other democratic parties. United bigger and mightier battles are impending.

But the Swatantra and Jan Sangh advance these policies as opposition parties. They come out as critics of government's mishandling of high prices, and advocate wrong remedies.

In the case of Jan Sangh there is even a pose of 'militant' action for food. It resorts to satyagrahas, hungerstrikes and other forms of action. These 'struggles' are diversionary tactics to orientate people's attention in a wrong direction and save the real culprits from their holy wrath.

This 'militancy' and 'actions' against the government may deceive even some well-meaning people. This has to be guarded against. It is clear that Jan Sangh cannot be even a momentary ally in the people's struggle for food.

The Communist Party and other democratic parties should carry on explanatory campaign on the dangerous implications of the Swatantra-Jan Sangh policies and expose unrelentingly the tant posture projected by the Jan Sangh.

This is necessary for correct and purposeful orientation in the struggle that is now on. This is necessary for drawing the masses following the Jan Sangh also into the united stream of mass action.

CHINESE SPLITTERS ROUTED AT TOKYO, HIROSHIMA

Indian Delegation Takes Lead In Preserving Unity Of Peace Workers

By Romesh Chandra

The Chinese leadership's splitting activities received the biggest ever international rebuff at the anti-nuclear conference recently held in Japan.

PLANNED by the Chinese leadership to be the starting point for the establishment of a so-called "peace movement", in opposition to the World Council of Peace, the "Tenth World Conference Against A and H Bombs", which began in Tokyo on July 30, turned out to be a complete debacle for the splitters.

To Peking were brought, before the conference in Japan began, handpicked adventurers and disruptors from wherever they could be purchased. The majority of these gangsters were rotten elements, expelled by the Communist Parties in their countries.

All these were then shipped to Tokyo and duly given credentials by the Chinese-manipulated "organisers" of the Tokyo conference.

Bogus Representatives

Most of these seventy or eighty adventurers did not even pretend to represent a peace committee or a trade union or any other organisation.

Obviously they had no right to represent anybody but themselves, but the obliging "organisers" regarded these ladies and gentlemen, schooled in the gentle art of splitism by the Chinese leadership, as the "true" representatives of their countries.

Meanwhile the genuine delegates who had been officially nominated by their national peace movement were given a back seat.

Next week NEW AGE will publish a full report of the conference which will detail the kind of elements whom Peking recruited to "represent" their countries.

In the meanwhile, suffice it to say that the "delegates" whom the Chinese imported to Japan were no "delegates" at all, and acted merely as the gramophone records of the anti-Soviet hysteria of the Chinese leadership.

What queered the Chinese pitch completely was the unanimity with which all genuine, formally accredited delegates walked out of the tamasha staged by the Chinese leaders in cooperation with their over-zealous Japanese disciples.

At the initiative of the Indian delegation, seventy delegates representing 32 countries and all the major international organisations denounced the Tokyo conference for the Chinese puppet-show it was and withdrew from the conference.

All the carefully prepared plans of the splitters were thus blown up. The world, including the Japanese people themselves, saw that the Chinese-run conference was completely unrepresentative—after such a large number of delegates had walked out.

This unity forged among the genuine representatives of peace movements and other international and national democratic organisations was carried forward in the "world conference against nuclear weapons" held at Hiroshima, sponsored by the Councils Against Nuclear Bombs of Hiroshima, Nagasaki and Shizuoka—the three prefectures which had been victims of atomic bombs and hydrogen bomb tests.

The Hiroshima conference was attended by well over a hundred delegates from outside Japan, representing 45 countries and ten major international organisations. It came to unanimous decisions on the most vital issues.

Support To Hiroshima Conf.

This conference had the support of the powerful Japan Socialist Party and the millions-strong Japanese trade union movement SOHYO, as well as other sections of public opinion in the host country.

The reasoning is that the ceiling on land holdings lead to breakup of larger farms which mainly produce marketable surplus, and thereby restricts opportunities of intensive capital investment to increase production.

The assumption behind this argument is fallacious. In fact with the present level of economic development and agricultural technique and agrarian overpopulation, ceilings on land-holdings and distribution of surplus land would immensely facilitate rational cultivation and increase in agricultural production.

Again, using this opportunity a new attack is mounted on the country's independent economic development.

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MAHARASHTRA BANDH!

Unprecedented Protest Action of the Toiling People

From Our Staff Correspondent

BOMBAY: Life came to a complete standstill in Maharashtra on August 12. The fast-moving, bustling city of millions—Bombay, became silent as all activities ceased at the stroke of midnight on August 11/12. All factories and mills stopped working. There were none to turn the wheels, except the specifically-excluded essential services no other services functioned. It was the same story in all other cities and towns in the state. It was a massive, unprecedented protest of the people; a gigantic action that brought about a complete stoppage in every walk of life; it was a MAHARASHTRA BANDH!

ALMOST the same time one year back, on August 29, 1963, the toiling people of Bombay had registered their protest against the anti-people policies of the government through a general strike and hartal in the city.

This time, it was an all-Maharashtra protest general strike and hartal against rising prices; for state-trading in foodgrains; nationalisations of banks, import-export trade; stoppage of hoarding and speculation; for increase in dearness allowance; immediate payment of bonus and such other demands.

It was the most peaceful protest of people; there was not a single untoward incident. Bombay, Nagpur, Poona, Kolhapur, Sholapur—in city after city, town after town, toiling people quit their work for 24 hours. All shops, tea-stalls, pan-shops, banks, offices including the LIC, transport, mills, factories, port and docks—at every place the strike was a complete success. In Bombay, even the Reserve Bank employees joined the strike. All members of the Opposition walked out of the State Assembly when Speaker disallowed an adjournment motion.

The general strike and hartal was called by the Communist Party and the SSP, supported by other political parties. The support to the strike was so widespread that even the Congress did not oppose it. No Section 144 was imposed in the city.

In Bombay, the Communist Party organised two huge mass meetings: one in the morning near Martyrs' Memorial and the other at Shivaji Park in the evening. The

and trade unions have written to S. A. Dange in response to his letter appealing for a united action for Bharat Bandh on September 7, that they would meet the Communist Party Chairman in Delhi on August 17 to discuss the matter.

S. A. Dange, in his letter addressed to political parties and trade union organisations had stated that

an all-India protest general strike and hartal had never before taken place in the country's history. "The resentment of the people, their consciousness and even organisation may be said to have arrived at a stage where such a mighty action has become possible".

The letter proposed that "those of us who can meet

and consider this proposal should do so immediately. Those who are not inclined to such a meeting may communicate their ideas to each other on this question through any medium that they may prefer. Though all of us may not be able to come to the same platform, yet we may adopt the well-known formula, MARCH SEPARATELY, BUT STRIKE TOGETHER."

25,000 Workers March To PM's House

Delhi Demonstration For People's Food

By Our Staff Correspondent

NEW DELHI: Twentyfive thousand workers and middle class employees in Delhi went in a procession on August 12 to Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri's house to present a memorandum demanding effective steps to check the rise in prices and provide cheap food to the people.

THE demonstration was organised by the Delhi Trade Unions Action Committee on which are represented all the trade unions in the Capital affiliated to the AITUC, the Delhi State Bank Employees Federation, the Northern Zone Employees Union and such other organisations.

The demonstration started from the Minto Road Park and passed through Connaught Place and Janpath to reach Motilal Nehru Place. Both sides of Connaught Place were lined by people who expressed sympathy with the demands of the demonstrators.

Textile workers took leading part in the demonstration. The workers of all the four textile mills in Delhi are currently agitating for their own separate demands, and they turned up in their thousands to participate in this demonstration.

Bank and insurance employees also took part in the demonstration in large numbers. Hotel workers, newspaper employees, engineering workers and shop employees also took part in it.

When the demonstration reached Motilal Nehru Place, the Prime Minister was not in his house. It was a heavy cordon of police which greeted the peaceful demonstration.

Big Show of Police

The police had indeed put up a big show. Hundreds of them lined the route of the procession and many more were concentrated near the Prime Minister's house. Armed and mounted police were also posted in front of the Prime Minister's house.

This unwarranted show of police force must have made even the police authorities self-conscious, especially in front of the movie and still cameras of newspapers and television

companies. And so the order rang out just before the demonstration reached to collect all the lathis and dump them in a corner.

When it was known that Shastri was not in his house, a deputation on behalf of the demonstrators went to meet him in his office in the central secretariat. The deputation consisted of H. L. Parwana, B. D. Joshi, D. D. Singh, R. C. Sharma, Ranjit Singh, Shiv Kumar, A. C. Nanda, Shakil Ahmed and Prem-sagar Gupta.

The demonstrators peacefully squatted in front of Shastri's house—on the lawns of Motilal Nehru Place and the road skirting it—for one and a half hours till the deputation came back after meeting the Prime Minister.

H. L. Parwana, convenor of the Action Committee, reported on the deputation's meeting with the Prime Minister.

Steps Disagreed

The Prime Minister is understood to have agreed with the deputationists about the seriousness of the price and food situation, but differed with them on measures to check the rise in prices. He said government was taking steps to bring down prices.

To the demand of the deputationists that banks be nationalised, the Prime Minister is understood to have given a flat "no."

The memorandum submitted to the Prime Minister said that workers have increased the production of cloth and sugar and yet their prices have gone up. Availability of foodgrains is more this year than last year, and yet their prices have gone skyhigh.

"Everybody knows and the government admits that there is

food; but it is in the godowns of hoarders and blackmarketers. Despite many conferences at the highest levels and several declarations, nothing concrete is being done to disgorge the hoards of blackmarketers and to punish these thieves of people's food.

"It is a far cry from the declaration once made by the late Prime Minister about these 'gentlemen' that they 'must be hanged from the nearest lamp-post'.

"Life has shown and events have proved that distribution of a basic commodity like foodgrains should not be left in the hands of a rapacious class of private traders who have turned hoarders and profiteers. It must be taken over by the state without any further delay. The case for state trading in foodgrains has become stronger by the behaviour of the private trade.

Drastic Measures Necessary

"In the meanwhile the Government by an order must bring down prices of foodgrains and compel the traders to sell at fixed prices. No mercy should be shown to the hoarders and profiteers. Their hoards must be confiscated and drastic measures be taken against them.

"The stock exchange speculators and private bankers have joined hands with the hoarders to rob the people and to accentuate the present crisis of prices and distribution. It is strange that the government has not yet closed the stock exchanges and has not even stopped the banks from advancing money to hoarders and profiteers.

"As long as banks remain in private hands, in the hands of a few monopolists, the present situation in the sphere of prices will continue, to the detriment of the interests of the common man. We, therefore, urge upon the government to take over banks and run them in the interest of the nation as a whole.

"In the meanwhile the government must stop the banks from advancing money to big traders of foodgrains and of other commodities of daily use."

From HIROSHIMA

* FROM PAGE 17

the collective protest by the genuine delegations at Tokyo.

At Hiroshima, the Indian delegation leader had the honour of being the first foreigner to preside over a conference session. In the drafting committee, a major share of the work was entrusted at the final stages to an Indian representative.

It was perhaps a result of this special role played by the Indian delegation that the

world conference unanimously agreed to adopt a resolution fully supporting the Colombo proposals and calling for India-China negotiations "on the basis of the acceptance and implementation of the Colombo proposals".

At no previous international conference for peace or for Afro-Asian solidarity or for that matter any other purpose, has such a forthright resolution supporting India's just stand been adopted with so much goodwill for India.