

SHRI MISHRA'S LETTER TO SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES

New Delhi, Vaisakha 12, 1896
May 2, 1974

The following is the text of the Minister of Railways, Shri Lalit Narayan Mishra's letter addressed to Shri George Fernandes, sent yesterday:

"On 30th April evening, you will recall, I had intervened and participated in the third meeting of the Negotiating Committee set up by me under the Chairmanship of the Deputy Railway Minister, Mohd. Shafi Qureshi. The discussions we held proceeded in a very cordial atmosphere and, at its conclusion, we decided on two matters. Firstly, to meet again in the morning of 2nd May, 1974 - regretfully, despite my earnest and sincere persuasion, you would not agree to resuming the session in the evening of 1st May on the apparently unalterable plea of a prior engagement in Lucknow. Secondly, we agreed that representatives of your group would get together with the Member Staff (Railway Board), in the forenoon of 1st May, to draw up the minutes of the matters on which agreement had been reached as well as to record the position taken on the remaining issues in the three meetings held till then.

2. These minutes of agreement were drawn up between the Member (Staff) and the Union representatives, but it is with profound regret, I learnt, that the representatives of the AIRF of which you are the President, absented themselves from the meeting this afternoon; an absence that I can only interpret as a clear indication of your dissociation from the

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significant agreements and understanding the Committee had arrived at in its three days of protracted deliberations.

3. What has caused me even greater distress is that, knowing fully well that another meeting was slated for the 2nd May, at the Press Conference your group held in Rail Bhavan after my meeting, you described the deliberations till then "as a meaningless exercise" and declared that "as of now, the decision of a strike from May 8 stands".

4. Ever since the talks started on 12th April, I had, at every possible opportunity, made it clear to you that the Government was anxious for a negotiated settlement, more so at a time when our country was passing through a very difficult economic situation. You fully reciprocated this. Yet, when my attention was drawn to reports in the Press, of the AIRF's intention to serve a strike notice on the 23rd April, we got together and I made a specific request to you to defer this action as the Qureshi Committee was then in session. To this your reply was that the strike notice was a mere technicality and would not in any way prejudice the negotiations. In spite of this assurance of yours, I was pained to read subsequently accounts of your public speeches in Bombay and elsewhere which were in language and content obviously calculated to damage the very purpose of the negotiations.

All this leads me to but one conclusion; that you are not sincerely and earnestly interested in negotiations towards a settlement which serves the genuine interests of railwaymen."

MG/HL/KCG

35/2
2-5/1130

Press Report

For favour of publication in the Press.

To
The News Editor,

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Dear Sir,
A press report is being forwarded herewith for favour of publication in your esteemed daily/weekly/fortnightly/monthly/periodical.

Yours faithfully,

B. Puzhoyastha
Dated.....74. Forwarded by: Convener of the meeting.

REPORT

A public meeting held at the call of different local trade unions of Dibrugarh area on 17-12-74 at Gandhi Park.

Shri Tilok Gogoi of Zilla Press Karmachari Sangha, Dibrugarh presided over the meeting. The meeting observed one minute's silence in memory of late veteran trade union leader Shri K.G. Bose.

Shri Binulendu Chakrabarty representing UCR/NCC and convener of the meeting explained in details the 9 point demands formulated by 6 central trade unions of Assam and laid greater stress on working class unity in the struggle against the anti-working class policy of the Government in the shape of wage-freeze, repression of railwaymen, LIC, P&T, State Govt. employees and the like. Shri Mani Showrick of AIU, explaining in details the real causes of inflation, concluded that the Govt. should turn back from following the capitalist path of economy so that general mass of the country can be saved from the inevitable ruins of capitalism. Shri Devashis Chatterjee of UCBI/AIEEA explained the evils of black-money while Shri Nil Bhattacharjee of L.I.C.I. Workers' Union exposing the character of black-marketeers demanded immediate supply of rice in fair-price shops which had not been supplied for last 2 weeks. Shri N.C. Ghose of All Assam Theatrical Porters' Union also spoke in support of the demands.

In his presidential speech Shri Tilok Gogoi urged upon the working-class unity to fight out the onslaughts unleashed by the ruling class. The resolutions were read out to the audience which were accepted unanimously.

The meeting created a great enthusiasm among the general mass of the area.

President of the meeting of
17-12-74.

This public meeting held under the auspices of different fighting Trade Unions of the area of Dibrugarh (viz. 1) Dibrugarh Electricity Supply Workers' Union 2) U.C.B.I.S.U. 3) C.S.I.S.U. 4) U.S.I.S.U., 5) U.C.R./NCCRS.S) A.I.I.S.A. 7) L.I.C.I. Workers' Union 8) Dibrugarh Tailors' Union, 9) All Assam Thela-Porters' Union, 10) Establishment Workers' Union, 11) Hickyshow Chalak Dainik Mazdoor Union, 12) Jalia Press Karmachari Sangha, Dibrugarh on 17.12.74 at Ganibi Park expresses its grave concern at present situation of the country and takes the following resolutions unanimously :-

A, This meeting fully endorses the 9 point demands, announced by six Trade Union Centres of Ass (viz. AIUCU, SITU, UTUC, UJUS(L.S.), AHS) in co-operation with other co-ordinating bodies of the states including UJYS. These demands are as follow

- i) Immediate withdrawal of Wage-freeze Act and measures.
- ii) Immediate taking possession of all the stocks, hidden and open of foods grains and essential commodities from big landholders, whole-sellers and other holding big stocks and their fair distribution through a public distribution system supervised by People's committees.
- iii) Take over of whole-sale trades of foodgrains and compulsory procurement of all marketable surplus from t land holders and of essential commodities from their producers and arranging their equitable distribution at controlled fair rates through a public distribution system supervised by the people's committees.
- iv) Demonetisation of currency-notes of hundred rupees and above and freezing of bank deposit above a certain limits
- v) Take over of big business and monopoly houses both Indian and foreign.
- vi) Re-opening of all closed factories and units and full utilisation of installed capacities.
- vii) End of corruption and bureaucratisation at all levels.
- viii) Jobs for all or un-employment relief.
- ix) An end of all anti-working class policies, repressive measures and laws and establishment of Industrial relations on democratic basis.

President of the meeting.

26/8/74
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PRESS RELEASE.

The Convention of the NCCRS/E.Rly. including MTP/Cal. held at the University Institute, Calcutta on date under the Presidentship of Comrade Bimal De, the Convener of the NCCRS/E.Rly. About 1000 delegates from 47 Units of the N.C.C.R.S functioning throughout the Eastern Railway participated in the Convention.

Post-strike situation and the attitude of the administration in reinstating the removed staff and other sort of victimisation like keeping Railwaymen in Jail Custody still today on MISA & DIR, transfer, premature retirement, Demotion, promotion to juniors violating the seniority rules were the main subject which came out for the different speakers participated in the deliberation.


Following programme was adopted to strengthen the organisations of N.C.C.R.S. to get back the victimised staff and to force the Govt. to start negotiation with NCCRS on the Charter of Demands :

- (1) Postering for one week starting from 26.8-74 vindicating atrocities of the administration and demanding withdrawal of all penal measures forthwith.
- (2) Communication with public and the Railwaymen through leaflet for one week from 2.9.74 explaining the stand of NCCRS and the attitude of the administration.
- (3) Mass squatting in all major stations of E.Rly. for 3 days from 16.9.74 to 18.9.74.
- (4) Demonstration before General Manager's Office on 19.9.74 at 16/Hrs on the occasion of 'Sahid Divas'.

Few other resolutions were also adopted supporting the demands of the AIR INDIA and the NGO's Behhar and urging the Govt. ~~of India~~ to a settlement immediately. The other one condemning the Railway Minister's declaration in the Parliament on 20.8.74 disregarding the statement of the President of India circulated through PTI and Boradcasted through All India Radio.

The Convention also condemned the Govt.'s decision to raise freight and fare except low-rated traffic which will adversely tell upon the common people in this hard economic crisis when Government failed to check the spiraling increase of the prices of the commodities.

The Convention also adopted a strong resolution condemning the recent 'Black Ordinance' of wage freeze and calls upon the Railwaymen in particular and working class in general to launch a united movement against the onslaught on the working class and assures of any sacrifices of the Railwaymen which may be required to launch the movement.


(Bimal De) 21/8
CONVENER/NCCRS(E.Rly.)