

PREFACE

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STATEMENT REGARDING ARRESTS IN CONNECTION WITH
ACTIVITIES DETRIMENTAL TO NATIONAL INTERESTS

18 January, 1985

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I wish to take the House into confidence on an important development. As you know, every Government has to exercise the highest vigilance in regard to the protection of confidential information and intelligence. I reviewed and strengthened security procedures. It came to Government's notice that certain employees in sensitive positions were suspected to be indulging in activities detrimental to national interests. Some arrests have been made in the course of these investigations which are still proceeding. I am confident that hon. Members would not press me to say anything more at this stage as it might hamper these investigations.

BACK NOTE

I. Statement Regarding Arrests in Connection with Activities
Detrimental to National Interests, 18 January, 1985

-NIL-

MOTION OF THANKS ON THE PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

22 January, 1985

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to first thank the President for his Address. I thank all the Members that participated in this debate for their contribution. Unfortunately, I was not able to spend as much time as I would have liked to here, in this House listening to the debate, because of certain issues that came up, just, during these days, and I know you will understand. But I have heard many of the speeches in my room on the loudspeaker, and I have been given notes of most of the others.

Our friends, sitting across from me, have spent most of their time dwelling on the past five years. They forget that we went to the polls with the record of the past five years, and our work in those five years has been endorsed by the people of this country, overwhelmingly endorsed by the people of this country. I will not waste my time on the past, like my friends in the Opposition we look towards the future instead.

Some issues have been raised about the elections and all sorts of wild charges have been made. It is customary after elections to make such charges, because they make a very good excuse.

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Like my friend has said, it is not money power, muscle power or any other power that counts; it is the voter that counts in an election. When we see such a large discrepancy in the number of people sitting on this side and that side, it can only mean that.

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The question is, who is in touch with the pulse of the people.

In 1977 we were not in touch with the pulse of the people and we were removed; in 1980 and in 1984, you were not in touch with the people and you were removed. You have to accept this fact. You can say what you like about percentages. You are talking about 50 per cent and 49 per cent; may I remind you, Sir, that your party got

progress in this and I do look friends in the Opposition whether they are in this House or other parties in the Opposition who are not in the House, in solving this particular problem.

Sir, the problems of the minorities in India have to be given special thought. They erupt in tension, they erupt in riots, but when we really look at it, it almost invariably goes back to economic disparity and it is this root that we must get to and our Government will be doing its best to try and start from the beginning and end this problem once and for all for a proper united India.

In a few days we are having a Summit of six nations in Delhi. This is another step in the direction of peace, in the direction of disarmament and we look forward to help relieve tensions in the world. India has been a strong supporter of the non-aligned movement, we are founder members and our policy towards this movement has not changed. We will, in fact, be taking more interest, developing more contacts, and try to improve South-South relations, South-South exchanges and see that the Third World can help itself because we have seen that where there has not been enough imagination and we have succumbed to foreign thought, it has ended to disaster, it has not ended in development. We will, in a similar way, look towards the South Asian region for better cooperation with our neighbours, better cooperation within the sub-continent.

We have been having some differences with Pakistan. On his last visit to India I had a meeting with their President, Shri Zia, and he was very cordial, very helpful and he talked very positively. I was very hopeful, I still am very hopeful, but unfortunately in the intervening period some of the actions by the bureaucracy, by the other members of the Pakistan Government have not been conducive to better relations between the two countries and we look forward to a positive response from Pakistan.

The House has been very alive to what has been happening in Sri Lanka. We are dismayed at the way the All Party Conference ended, we are dismayed that a political solution does not seem around the corner and we are unhappy about the way the security forces have been deployed and used. We look forward to a high level communication with Sri Lanka and we will do whatever we can to help solve the problems. We have to help them because we have a very large

number of refugees. And we would like conditions to be such that they can return to their homes. Later, in this year, Sir, I will be visiting the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A. and I will keep the House in touch with my deliberations there. We look forward to many more exchanges with other countries. We look forward to better friendship with all countries in the world.

In his speech, the President has talked about the future talks that are in front of us. Sir, this Government is committed to a clean public life. And we have started taking measures towards this end. We are committed towards electoral reforms. We will have discussions with all sections of this House on electoral reforms and we do hope to get full cooperation from you. Because if electoral reforms are going to take 10 years of deliberations, then they are not going to be worth the discussions. So, we would like to be quick—not hurried but quick and come to a conclusion so that the next elections could be fought under whatever reforms that we agree to.

During the past few days, we have been having talks with the Opposition, and amongst ourselves on the Anti-Defection Bill. We feel that for a cleaner public life, this is essential. What we have to see, Sir, is that there are no loopholes left which allow defections under any name, under any other method to take place. We had some talks with the Opposition. Some Parties want stronger Bill. Some Parties are in favour of a softer Bill. I hope we can close this gap and come to a reasonable conclusion because in any such legislation, we are really groping. It is something new that we are putting in. There are no precedents we can look at and it is for us to show the way. But that also means that we must be a little more objective, we must show a little more strength and be able to come out and have the guts to do it. That will not be lacking from our side, Sir.

India's economy, Sir, is very largely that of farmers. We will be doing many things for the farmers in the coming years. We have to see that our agricultural output increases substantially. We have to see that the inputs to the farmers have proper prices. We have to see that the procurement prices are correct. It is only then that we will be able to get the growth that we are wanting. We will look towards this end and I hope we will see a sharp increase in our agricultural production.

We will be looking, like the President said, Sir, at the textile industry. Over the years, the textile industry has deteriorated very substantially and

when I talk about the textile industry, I include the handlooms, the weavers, from the lowest level to the highest mechanised level of industry. We have to develop a new policy which does not throw anybody out of a job but we must remember that our textile policy is not targeted at producing jobs but at producing cloth, and producing cloth at rates which are acceptable to the poor people, to the masses, in our country. We will try and achieve this.

We are looking at a new industrial policy. We have to realise that India in the past 35 years has progressed tremendously in spite of everything our friends across the room say. We have made tremendous progress and now we must look ahead to a bright future. If our industry is to progress, if our industry is to keep up with the industry in the rest of the world, it must operate under similar conditions. We will look towards this end. We have to see towards employment. Industry is not necessarily the best place for employment. Sometimes it is the most inefficient place for employment. We have to look how we can increase employment even more than industry can give us. I am not advocating closing down industry or a radical change in all the industries that we have.

What I am saying is that our education policy, our industrial policy and our trade policy must be such that it looks ahead to taking India into the future with the rest of the world. We cannot pretend to be equal to other countries when we are operating systems which are 10 years or 20 years out of date. The world today is moving very fast and, towards this end, we will introduce a new education policy which will be targeted at a more modern type of employment. We will have a new industrial policy which will generate this employment and we will have to have a trade policy which dovetails with this. We will be trying to do this by the next session.

One of the most difficult points to handle has always been the judicial system. The judicial system is there to give justice and, if justice is delayed, justice is denied. We will look into this to see how quicker and speedier justice can be given at all levels.

While every section of our society has been progressing, we find that one section which cuts across all religious, caste and regional barriers gets left behind. That is why we have taken up special programmes for women. We will see that special programmes for the social, economic and cultural development

of women are made and put in front of you. We have already announced that we will be giving free education to girls up to the secondary level.

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In this work for women, we would like that voluntary organisations are specially involved and they take a major role.

This election really showed the world the power of youth of India and that is why there is such an age difference between the two sides of the House. We will be looking into very special programmes for the youth, for the employment of the youth and for the involvement of the youth in building this great nation of ours.

Vast areas in our country are devoid of forestation, are waste lands. We are going to develop these and we are going to set up a Waste Land Development Board to look into this. This will be not aimed just at forestry but, it will be designed in such a manner that the produce from this reclaimed land is given back to the people who are living in the neighbourhood. It will be for the benefit of the local people.

We are also looking at cleaning up the air and the water in our country. We have seen recent tragic accident in Bhopal where many people died and many-many more may be injured or are maimed, I am told that some effects of this terrible tragedy might not even be known for another six months. We are looking at the location policy for such factories and we are looking at how we can stop any factories polluting our rivers and our air. Our rivers have become extremely polluted. The first river that we are attempting to clean up is the Ganges. I will not say purify, because nobody can purify the Ganga. But we will try to clean it. We have...

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From this Government, you will see results.

This Government is looking deeply into our cultural heritage. Not only looking into our cultural heritage, to preserve it, to save it but, we are also going to look ahead into how to develop the culture of every region, of every group, in our country. We will be taking this up as a major programme.

To do all these things, we will need a fast administration, a clean administration, a responsive administration and we will be giving you this.

To take India ahead, we have to look towards the optimum utilisation of our resources. Our biggest resource is the human resource and we will look towards how to develop this. We will develop our natural resources and we will utilise our industrial and capital resources to the best benefit.

To do this, we will need technology. We will need a new education and we will need to look after the health of our people so that they are up to this. But, most of all, it will need managerial skill and it will need political will and we will give you both. But whenever one tightens one's belt to move ahead faster, one does feel the pinch. And this pinch is going to come in discipline. We will have to have discipline. We will have to respect institutions, and we will have to think, again, about not our freedom but the country's freedom.

Sir, in the coming years, we will build a united, secular, free India when a person's worth is not measured by his caste, creed, region or religion. We will build an India which is dynamic, an India which can move ahead with the rest of the world.

Once again, I thank all the Members who have participated and I commend the President's Address for adoption.

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BACK NOTE

II. Motion of Thanks on the President's Address, 22 January, 1985

1. PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: How can we make them before the elections?

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: I do not wish to make a charge against you. The people know what charges there are. That is why we are here and you are there.

2. SHRI AMAL DATTA (Diamond Harbour): What about the percentage?

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: I will come to the percentage also; don't worry.

SHRI AMAL DATTA: Next time don't use money power.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Dattaji, I will answer your question. I have heard what you said.

3. PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ (Baramulla): Also from this side.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: That percentage has been established barely two weeks ago.

PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ: Percentages is the same.

4. SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY (Mahbubnagar): Sir, we want to listen to the Prime Minister. But we are being disturbed by table-thumping.

MR. SPEAKER: Please do not interrupt. Be a good Parliamentarian.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: I think we will excuse him. He has just come from a House and we know how that House functions. So, we will give him time to learn and learn to behave in a proper House.

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: I had been there for 16 years and I do not have to learn anything more here.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Would you like to say anything more? Thank you.

5. AN HON. MEMBER: You provide hostels also for them.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: I wish we could afford to do that. That is something I would like to talk about when the education policy comes up.

6. SHRI C. MADHAV REDDI (Adilabad): It is a Herculean task.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: It is a Herculean task. Yes. But we have already identified the areas and we feel that we are up to it.

7. SHRI C. MADHAV REDDI: You also clean the Augean stables.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: That is why, you are there and we are here ! We have set up the Central Ganga Authority to clean the Ganga and, as my friend is so interested in the Ganga, out of the pollution in the Ganga, only 20% of the pollution is chemical pollution and 80% is sewage and other excreta and we will be able to clean this up with a timebound programme.

CONSTITUTION (52ND AMENDMENT) BILL

30 January, 1985

Mr. Speaker, Sir, this Anti-Defection Bill has been pending for a very long time. I think it was first mentioned almost seven years ago. We have taken it up as one of our first; major tasks because we felt that this is an area where public life needs cleaning up. As rightly promised during the debate on the Presidential Address, our Government has the political will to implement what we promise. We also have promised that we will carry the opposition with us. And I am happy to say, Sir, that we carried almost all of the opposition with us. There are only one or two exceptions.

We are moving an amendment for removing clause 2(1)(c). Clause 2(1)(c) allowed a Member to lose his membership of the House if he was removed from the party. Logically speaking, this clause should have been there, because like one of our Members from the opposition has just said, if we look at the moral issue and if we decide that the party is the fundamental unit which gets one elected, then one loses the right of that election if one is no longer a member of that party. Like another Member has said that 33 per cent for a split is too little and there should be no such thing as a split. There are lots of areas in this Bill which are grey. We are covering new ground which may be is not covered anywhere else in the world. And we have to see how best we can tread along the path, it is better for us to tread cautiously than to make serious errors and repent for them later. So, there will be shortcomings in this Bill. But as we see and identify those shortcomings, we will try to overcome them. By removing clause 2(1)(c) one lacuna comes out and that is that if the House —either this House or a State Legislature is not in session and there is a defection or a split or however it may be defined, but the Government is soon to, lose its majority, then there would be a long time before the next session was to be called and this could lead to a lot of horse trading. This was one of the reasons why clause 2(1)(c) was there. I am sure that this was one of the reasons why one of the opposition Parties was very keen more than one was very keen that this clause be maintained. We are looking into how to close this lacuna. We have not been able to do it in this Bill itself. But in my

discussions with the opposition we have found a method which we are looking into and hopefully we will be able to put some time-limit, possibly a minimum time-limit, between the suspicion of a Government losing its majority and the test of its strength to the House. We will see whether this can be put in, either in this Bill, may be in the next session, or, if it has to be put in elsewhere, we can do it there as well.

I do not want to take too much time of the House, because the opinion on this Bill is more or less unanimous, and there is not much to debate.

One point was raised: "What is the hurry in having this Bill? We have been waiting 7 years to have this Bill and a lot of damage has been done. This Bill should have come last year, should have come seven years ago." We are doing it the fastest that we can do. I feel that anybody who does not want this Bill has to have his own integrity examined.

Sir, it has been said that this Bill is being brought to keep the Congress Party intact, to strengthen the Congress Party. I would like to point out that the defections are invariably to the Congress Party, and not from the Congress Party. We do not have a problem with people leaving the party; we have a problem with people wanting to join our party. We do not need this to strengthen our party. You can see the strength of our party in front of you.

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This Bill is the first step towards cleaning our public life. We will be taking other steps, electoral reforms, other reforms, and you have my assurance, Sir, that we will carry the whole opposition with us in these forthcoming decisions that we will have to take.

Sir, I commend this Bill for adoption. I thank the opposition for cooperating with us in formulating the Bill and for supporting it.

BACK NOTE

III. Constitution [52nd Amendment] Bill, 30 January, 1985

1. SHRI H.M. PATEL: Looking ahead.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: I am looking ahead. You will see in 1990-today we are occupying almost the whole of that row—we will then be occupying even that row.

PROF. MADHU DANDEVATE: It is because, after some years, we will go to the "Upper House".

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Sir, we are not in a rush to send him to the "Upper House". but we are glad that he acknowledges that the Congress will be replacing the Opposition leaders in those Benches, when they leave.

AN HON. MEMBER: You will be in the Opposition.

STATEMENT ON THE SITUATION ARISING OUT OF ESCALATION OF IRAQ-IRAN WAR

21 March, 1985

Hon. Members are no doubt aware of the extremely serious escalation that has taken place in the past few weeks in the tragic conflict which has been going on between two fellow non-aligned countries, Iran and Iraq, for more than four and a half years. The most unfortunate recent development has been the extension of the hostile operations by both countries to civilian targets and residential areas, with direct attacks even on the capital cities and many other urban centres, resulting in the loss of civilian lives and properties. There are even allegations of the use of chemical weapons.

We, as India and as Chairman of NAM are deeply concerned and alarmed at these developments. Our endeavour, from the beginning of this conflict has been to persuade the two countries, with both of whom we have traditional and friendly relations, to cease the hostilities and settle their differences through negotiations and peaceful means. Such large scale military operations can only benefit those outside forces which do not want the region to enjoy peace and stability. Last week, I sent a personal appeal to their Excellencies, the Presidents of Iran and Iraq, for cessations of hostilities and, as a first step, to stop attacking, civilian targets as they had both agreed to do in their agreement with the UN Secretary-General of 12th June, 1984. I followed it up by sending special emissaries at Secretary level to the two capitals on Sunday, the 17th March, who have delivered my personal messages to the two Presidents.

On Tuesday, the 19th, I had a long discussion with a Special Envoy from Iran who brought me a message from his President. I have also received a reply from President Saddam Hussain.

Since the hostilities showed no signs of abatement. I have sent a high-level delegation to Baghdad and Tehran. Shri Khurshid Alam Khan MOS in MEA, left yesterday, accompanied by Shri Romesh Bhandari, Foreign Secretary.

He will visit the two capitals and convey to the two Presidents the grave concern of the entire NAM. He will urge them, in India's name and in the names of all fellow non-aligned members, to immediately agree, on reciprocal basis to cease hostile attacks against civilian targets as a first step to complete cessation of hostilities, to exchange Prisoners of war, and not to attack civilian ships in the Gulf.

I know the House will join me in sending good wishes to the mission of Shri Khurshid Alam Khan.

BACK NOTE

IV. Statement on the Situation Arising Out of Escalation of Iraq-Iran War, 21 March, 1985

-NIL-

STATEMENT REGARDING SITUATION IN SRI LANKA

25 April, 1985

Mr. Deputy Speaker. Sir, an all Party delegation from Tamil Nadu led by the Chief Minister, Shri M. C. Ramachandran, met me on April 23, 1985 and submitted a Memorandum regarding the latest developments in Sri Lanka. It was pointed out that the influx of refugees is continuing. Traditional activities of Indian fishermen in the Palk Straits have been affected. The situation is causing grave concern. The delegation requested the Government of India to take up the matter with the Sri Lankan Government for restoration of peace and normality so that the refugees in Tamil Nadu can return home and traditional, economic activities resumed on both sides.

I assured the delegation that the Government of India was following the developments in Sri Lanka and their repercussions on India with concern. They have been in continuous touch with the Sri Lankan Government, both through the normal channels and through special visits. In view of the prevailing situation I shall convey to President Jayewardene our distress and anxiety and the need to arrive at a speedy and viable solution of the problem on a political basis acceptable to all parties concerned. In view of the gravity of the situation, I am setting up a Special Advisory Group to continue efforts for resolving the problem.

BACK NOTE

V. Statement Regarding Situation in Sri Lanka, 25 April, 1985

-NIL-

DISCUSSION REGARDING SITUATION ARISING OUT OF
SERIES OF BOMB EXPLOSIONS IN DELHI AND OTHER PARTS
OF NORTHERN INDIA AND FAILURE OF INTELLIGENCE
AGENCIES IN THE COUNTRY

13 May, 1985

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would first like to offer our condolences to the people who have suffered during these last few days at the hands of the extremists or terrorists, whatever we would like to call them. We, all of us, view this extremely seriously. It is a new development, a new level of functioning, of operation by the extremists and it is to be taken very seriously. But still, it is sad that on an occasion that is so serious for the whole country, the opposition did not even have fifty people present in the House. It shows the importance they give to such issues. By and large from what people have said in this House, there is no difference in the mood of the House and in the feelings that are being expressed and this is one issue where the Opposition and the Government will be one to eliminate terrorism and extremism from this country.

The Home Minister will be answering this debate and I do not want to get into his territory. I am sure he will answer many of the questions that have been raised, the action that has been taken, the results that have been achieved, the special teams that he has set up, the arrests that he has made, whatever he has learnt about the particular devices and where they were made and so on. I do not know if he could put all the information he has in front of the House today, but in case he has to hold back some for reasons of investigation or further followup action, I am sure he will be giving the House full facts as soon as he is able to do so without prejudice to the case.

One member has raised the question whether Government or the Delhi Administration and the other Administrations reacted fast enough to build public awareness that such booby traps were being placed and that there was a danger to people from those devices. I think the Administration did act fast

enough because, although many devices went off, we have also got a large number of devices which the people recognised as booby traps after the publicity and they have been taken in tact. That is what is actually helping the investigations. So, this was not a shortcoming on the part of the Administration. In fact, they have to be commended on the speed with which this information could be spread and a large number of explosions of these booby traps were prevented from going off.

Members are justifiably apprehensive about the speed at which we are able to catch the terrorists. We have certain constraints and certain drawbacks. We have certain limitations by the laws that are available to us. And tomorrow, may be day after, we will be bringing some amendments to this House and we are looking into what we can do to counter terrorism as such. Are our laws good enough to handle terrorism? If they are not, we will bring in a Bill before the House to fight terrorism.

One member mentioned that we should have a Minister for Internal Security. I beg to state, Sir, that we do have one.

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Sir, we have been trying to get to the root of the problem that is there in Punjab. What we really have to fight is not the political aspect of it. That is where we must adjust and accommodate always, within the constraints of a united and integral India—that is where we must be flexible. But at the same time, we must be very rigid where there is any question of using violence towards those ends, where there is any question of threat to our national unity or integrity and where there is a question of a fraction breaking away. There, we will be tough and we hope the whole House will stand with us, in taking both these lines simultaneously.

Sir, one party is talking about water, Chandigarh and territory.

But may be, what they are really talking about is the whole territory of Punjab—how to sit in the Chief Minister's chair, while there is another group which is talking about the same territory in a different way: about taking it away. We must fight the second group with everything that we have with us; and we will do that.

Prof. Dandavate raised some points which, I think, need a little explanation. I do not want to go into the full details of what has happened in the last three

years, because we all know that; we have debated it a number of times. Most of the charges that he has made, have been answered more than fully on the floor of this very House. It is no use going into these again and again.

He did raise a point of arms being smuggled into the Golden Temple complex in food—well, he said food trucks. But if I remember correctly, it was in food trucks; but it was also inside bags of wheat, and bags of food I would like to point out that these trucks belonged to the SGPC, that these trucks were given specific clearances to go in and out by the SGPC at that time. SGPC has not changed much since then. So, although we all want to accommodate as much as possible, there are certain things we must keep in mind. We cannot forget that these actions could not have taken place without the full help of the SGPC. If people had gone into the Golden Temple, they were sitting inside the Akal Takht, they were sitting there because they had the permission of the management to go into that.

Now, there is one more small point. Prof. Dandavate Ji said: may be, we can have a metal detector through which the whole truck can go. I would like to remind him that the trucks are made of metal. So, they would be detected.

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But I think this is a very important juncture for all of us and like many Members have said, members of the Akali Dal have come out openly, may be for the first time as strongly as they have. I think this is very positive; and not only the Akali Dal, but also for the first time we have seen a large number of Sikhs coming out and condemning these actions, and I must congratulate our Sikh brothers and sisters for coming out openly against this action, for showing courage and guts because they will, at some stage, have to face the terrorists as well; and the whole House must congratulate all the Sikhs who have shown the guts and come forward and stood up against this. This is where we must rise above what we instinctively want to do, or feel that should be done. We must help them come out of their shelves. We have a choice today. We have a choice of countering a small group of extremists and terrorists and carrying the rest of the Sikhs in India with us. When I say 'with us', I do not mean the Government, I mean the House, the country. And we could very easily go wrong, a small false move, small error in our discretion or hastiness in our action could turn the whole group against all of us. And that is where we need

to act with utmost restraint and utmost patience and really we are talking of what Gandhiji taught us right, non-violence to the ultimate degree. Let them provoke us. But like previous times, again many Members pointed out every time a discussion started, every time it started moving towards conclusions, and things started going well something happened. We all reacted against that provocation. What was the result of that? It was that whatever procedures had been started were abandoned. Now, we have to show the guts to follow through with the action that we have started and we have to have the guts to bring out a conclusion and isolate the extremists from everybody else in this country. To do this we will need the help of every single person. And this is the time when Members in the Opposition specially leaders in the Opposition must not turn this into a political battle with the Government or against any party. It is too easy to do that. It is the easy way out.

..... XXX XXX XXX³

I will come to that. I answer Prof. Dandavateji. No, it has not taken place in this House. But I was going to come a little later to it in the debate, namely what is said must also be followed by actions. When immediately a bandh is called when immediately public action is taken, that is what is damaging, and that is what we must always be careful about. I am not trying to accuse because it would not be good to accuse anyone. We have to convince everyone who has any doubts, about the line of action that we are taking. It is in fact the only correct line of action, and there is no real alternative.

We have seen today, the leaders of the Akali Dal the traditional leaders of the Akali Dal, have taken a stand to an extent. May be we all wanted that they would have taken much stronger steps. But let us not forget, that just a few days ago they could not even have taken this much of stand. We must see the positive side and see how we help them build themselves up without helping in such a manner that we damage them permanently, but help them by our actions by not reacting, to what the extremists and terrorists want to see us react. They have wanted, right along, that a backlash comes and the whole community is alienated from the country. That is what we want to avoid here today.

It is also nice to hear from the Opposition Benches of a "foreign hand" involvement in these terrorist activities. But I would like to remind them that

whenever the Treasury Benches have raised this issue they have come out very strongly and sarcastically about this. But the fact is that there is an involvement. You know it, and it does not help ignoring it. At the same time, it does not help giving it too much importance and pretending that it is the only problem. That is a much wider problem than that and we have to see it in all its aspects. One of our Members said that the Punjab was leaderless. I beg to differ with him. The Akali Dal might be having leadership problems, but I do not think, the Punjab is having any leadership problem. Another Member mentioned about the Akal Takht being broken down. I beg to say that this is entirely the business of the Sikhs and we should not interfere in what they want to do with their religious institutions. If they want to remove it, they are welcome to remove it. If they want to build a 24-storey structure, they are welcome to do it provided it is within the Municipal Committee rules there. So, they can do whatever they like to do.

The fact is that today there is no room for complacency. We have been facing terrorism in our country for the first time for the past two or three years. Last week, it has taken a new turn, a more serious turn. It was limited to young boys with guns or machine-guns going and gunning down people. Where they were or they could be spotted and they could be caught. This is a different type. It is laying booby-traps for the people to pick up, where it is not so easy to spot the person who is doing that. Wherever terrorism has come up in this manner, in whichever country it has come up, they have not been able to eliminate it in a very short period of time, it has always lasted quite some time before they have been able to finish it off. And we must brave ourselves to face such a situation. We must build up our machinery whether it is intelligence, whether it is police, whether it is administrative, or some civil defence type structure, and create an awareness in the public, use voluntary organisations, use all our political organisations to try and identify where things are going wrong and where unusual objects are placed. There should be awareness. People should not go and grab things and pick them up and get themselves killed. This is something which we must think about and do something about it.

Terrorism comes up when there is a certain weakness. We must overcome this weakness. Our previous Prime Minister, Indiraji, had warned our friends in the Akali Dal that they must be very careful how they take their agitation. On

the floor of this House, if I remember correctly, she said: "If you start going down a road from which you cannot turn, it is extremely dangerous". That is why, we must see that the statements and actions taken by us are not such that they help terrorists and extremists.

Although the Akali leadership have been positive in certain aspects, they have also during the recent past said and done things which have encouraged extremists and terrorists. They must stop doing that. Not just saying it; they must stop saying it and they must also stop doing it. And here I would like our friends in the opposition, who know them well, to talk to them and convince them that if we have to fight these terrorists and extremists, we must all fight them together.

The terrorists will always have an advantage in such a situation. They choose their time, they choose their place. Today it is transistor radios, tomorrow it might be something else which might not be recognisable. We have to penetrate and go to the roots of it. We have to really flush them out.

I am sure, the Home Minister has already taken strong steps and he will be taking stronger steps to see that this cancer is taken out from our society. This is the time for all of us to mobilise public opinion, not just one community but all communities, all regions, all religions, to fight this. Killings, such as these, leave scar on our democracy, and we must put an end to them. Violence has no place in our society. The integrity, and unity of India is supreme and we will not let anything happen that will affect it.

Lastly, we are all privileged to have been born in India, Gandhi Ji's, Pandit Ji's India, where they had faced British bullets, lathi charges, totally non-violently. It needs much more guts and courage to be non-violent than it takes to be violent, and the recent acts that we have seen are not acts of courage, they are acts of cowardice, and we must fight them with all the strength at our command. Thank you, Sir.

BACK NOTE

VI. Discussion Regarding situation arising out of Series of Bombs Explosions in Delhi and other Parts of Northern India and Failure of Intelligence Agencies in the Country, 13 May, 1985.

1. MR. SPEAKER: It is better, you have removed the doubt.

PROF. MADHU DANDEVATE: They thought that he was in charge of Insecurity.

2. PROF. MADHU DANDEVATE: I said electronic equipment, and metal detector for us; and for them, electronic equipment.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Like I said earlier, one of the Members said that all the Akali leaders are not the same. All the Sikhs are not the same. All Sikhs are not Akalis; all Akali Dal people are not extremists. This is true, and we know it. But Members have said that.

Prof. Dandavate Ji has read out a letter written by Shri Badal which, he said, was not a love letter. May be, some day he will read out one of his other letters.

PROF. MADHU DANDEVATE: If it were a love letter, I would not have read it here.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: I said: may be, some other day he will read out one of his other letters.

MR. SPEAKER: Do you expect me to allow that, Sir?

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Not knowing his letters, I could not comment on this.

3. PROF. MADHU DANDEVATE: But do you find it that way? Did you find the battle like that here?

STATEMENT REGARDING VISITS ABROAD

23 July, 1985

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I seek leave to make a statement to the House on my visits abroad since the House last met and to give hon. Members a brief assessment of the talks I have held with the leaders of each of the countries I visited.

I paid an official visit to the Soviet Union from 21 to 26 May. I flew to Bangladesh for a day on 2 June. From 5 June to 10 June I visited Egypt, France, Algeria, the United States of America and Geneva in Switzerland.

As the House knows, our relations with the Soviet Union have throughout been excellent and my visit helped further to strengthen the friendship and mutually beneficial cooperation that exist between our countries.

I was accorded an especially warm reception in the Soviet Union. I had several meetings with Mr. Mikhail Gorbachev, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, during which he reiterated the importance which the Soviet Union attached to maintaining highlevel contacts with India and to enlarging friendship and understanding with India. I, on my part, pointed out the high value which the Government and people of India attach to our ties.

Our discussions were most cordial and farranging; covering bilateral relations and international issues of importance. In regard to bilateral relations, we agreed to expand and deepen our existing cooperation in various sectors in a long term perspective.

The international issues discussed included peace and disarmament and the developments in Southeast Asia, Southwest Asia, West Asia, Iran and Iraq, Southern Africa and Central America. We also briefed them on the efforts we have been making to develop friendly relations with our neighbours as well as our initiatives as the Chairman of the Non-Aligned Movement. I also met Mr. Nikolai Tikhonov, Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, Mr. Andrei

Gromyko, who has now become the President of the Soviet Union and was then Foreign Minister, and other leaders.

The outcome of our discussions has been set out in the Joint Statement which was issued at the end of my visit. Two Agreements were signed. The first, an Agreement on Economic and Technical Cooperation, provides for Soviet participation, in some important project included in our Seventh Five year Plan, particularly in power, coal and petroleum sectors. There is also provision for Soviet participation in the iron and steel and machine building sectors. Soviet cooperation under this Agreement is to be covered by a credit of one billion roubles.

The second Agreement signed was on the main directions of economic, trade, scientific and technical cooperation between our countries upto 2000 A.D.

My programme included visits to Minsk in the Byelorussian Republic and Frunze in the Kirghiz Republic. At a public function in Moscow organised by the Union of Soviet Friendship Societies and the Soviet India Friendship Society, the Lenin Peace Prize was awarded posthumously to our late Prime Minister, Shrimati Indira Gandhi. A square in Moscow was also named after her.

In my assessment, the visit has been very useful in enabling the leadership of the Soviet Union to get acquainted with our point of view and in taking Indo-Soviet understanding and cooperation to a new level of cordiality.

The purpose of my visit to Bangladesh on 2nd June was to express India's sincere sympathy to the Government and people of that country over the devastation and loss they had suffered as a result of cyclone. President Jayewardene of Sri Lanka, who was in New Delhi for discussions, also went with me to Bangladesh. We had talks with Lt. General Ershad, President of the People's Republic of Bangladesh. The visit was also an expression of the growing spirit of solidarity among the countries of South Asia.

Egypt and Algeria have been close colleagues of ours in the Non-Aligned Movement. Shrimati Indira Gandhi was to have visited both countries in April, 1984 but could not do so. After I assumed office, their invitations were renewed.

In Cairo, President Hosni Mubarak received me with great warmth and cordiality. We had an indepth exchange of views both on international and

bilateral matters. Egypt was particularly appreciative of our Chairmanship of the Non-Aligned Movement, our role in promoting disarmament and our efforts to bring about an early end to the Iran-Iraq war. There was agreement on the need to cooperate closely with each other and to remain in touch on the West Asia question. We also were of accord on the need to maximise bilateral economic and commercial cooperation. It was decided that the possibilities might be explored in a more concrete manner at the first meeting of the Indo-Egyptian Joint Commission which is likely to be held in October, 1985. I also had discussions with Mr. Kamal Hassan Ali, Prime Minister of Egypt.

In Algeria I had extensive discussions with President Chadli Bendjedid covering the entire range of bilateral and international issues. The talks were very cordial and relaxed. There was identity of views on international issues of mutual concern and we have agreed to keep in close touch, particularly on Non-Aligned issues. It was agreed to set up an institutionalised system of annual exchanges between our two Foreign Offices alternatively in Algiers and New Delhi. I also had talks with the Prime Minister, Mr. Abdelhamid Brahimi.

In order to give a further impetus to our economic and commercial exchanges, we agreed to purchase half a million tonnes of Algerian crude. Algeria has indicated its readiness to accord high priority to the award of commercial contracts and projects to India.

On the question of Western Sahara, our sympathy and support for the Polisario was reiterated.

I received Mr. Mahfoud Ali Beiba, Prime Minister of the SADR and member of the Executive Committee of the Polisario. It was made known to him that, following the SADR's participation at the 20th OAU Summit in November 1984, upgradation of our relations had been under active consideration.

My visit to France followed a series of highlevel exchanges since President Giscard D'Estaing's visit in January 1980, the Late Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's visit to France in November 1981, President Mitterrand's visit to India in November 1982 and Shrimati Indira Gandhi's short transit stop-over in Paris in September 1981. My visit proved to be very useful and reinforced the foundation for a more dynamic bilateral relationship.

President Mitterrand and I took stock of the world situation and the imperative need to promote international peace as well as greater cooperation between the developed and developing countries. I also had extensive discussions with the Prime Minister, Mr. Laurent Fabius.

In my meetings, I stressed the need to develop the political and economic aspects of our bilateral relationship in a balanced manner. The French displayed marked receptivity to our point of view.

Two accords were signed during the visit: one on the setting up of an Indo-French Centre for Promotion of Advanced Research in India and the other for French assistance in the conversion of urban wastes into energy, and depollution of the Ganga river. Overall Indo-French economic cooperation in a number of fields is expected to be significantly enhanced.

I inaugurated the Festival of India on 7 June. As Members are aware, the Festival will continue until mid 1986, and, already, it has had a marked impact on the French public.

In Paris I also addressed the UNESCO and reiterated our support to the work which that organisation is doing.

My visit to USA from June 11 to 15 was most useful.

I had an opportunity to exchange views with President Reagan on major international issues and also on matters of immediate concern to India like reports of Pakistan's plans to produce nuclear weapons and the activities of some terrorist elements. The talks were characterised by warmth and openness.

I welcomed the desire of the President for close cooperation with us on the international dimensions of terrorist violence against India.

I found both the President and his advisers a great deal of interest and understanding in regard to what we are trying to do in India. Even where we have differences in policy or in approach, I got the feeling that we could still discuss the issues and work together. We value these highlevel contacts and would like to continue the dialogue. I believe there is good scope for building on these foundations to broaden our understanding and cooperation.

Hon. Members would have seen the text of the joint statement which was issued at the conclusion of my visit to the United States, which lists out some areas of economic, scientific and technological cooperation. We have

identified some specific areas of collaboration, like extending the Science and Technology Initiative for another three years, initiating a vaccine action programme, and a long term research and technology development programme, and a programme for the advancement of commercial technology.

India was honoured by the invitation extended to me to address a joint meeting of Congress. I also had meetings with other important members of the Administration as well as prominent scientists, leaders of the Press and the media and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

Both in Washington and in Houston there were functions with the Indian community. Vice President Bush graciously accompanied us to Houston, where I paid a brief visit to NASA. A major event in my programme was the formal inauguration of the Festival of India, which was dedicated to the memory of Shrimati Indira Gandhi. President Reagan has referred to it as "an unprecedented nationwide celebration".

Hon. Members would have seen reports about President Reagan's recent surgery. I am sure the entire House would join me in conveying to him, to Mrs. Reagan and to the American people our best wishes for his full and speedy recovery.

On the way back from the United States I broke journey for a day in Geneva where I was accorded the privilege of addressing the International Labour Organisation. In my address I reiterated India's commitment to ameliorating the conditions of our workers in both the organised and unorganised sectors and to urge greater action on the part of I.L.O. in the service of unorganised workers all over the world.

BACK NOTE

VII. Statement Regarding visits abroad, 23 July, 1985

-NIL-

STATEMENT REGARDING PUNJAB

24 July, 1985

Mr. Speaker, Sir, we had committed our Party to giving the utmost priority to solving the problems in the Punjab. I have great pleasure in informing the House that, after some months, we have taken a very concrete step forward today. About 20 minutes ago, Sant Harchand Singh Longowalji and I have signed a Memorandum of Settlement. This will bring to an end a very difficult period through which the country has passed. It will be the beginning of a new phase of working together to build the country, to build unity and integrity in our country.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I lay on the Table of the House a copy of the Memorandum of Settlement arrived at between the Government and the Shiromani Akali Dal represented by its President Sant Harchand Singh Longowalji.

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BACK NOTE

VIII. Statement Regarding Punjab, 24 July, 1985

1. SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY (Mahbubnagar): Where is the Memorandum of Settlement?

MR. SPEAKER: It is here.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: It was signed only 20 minutes ago. Only one copy is there...

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: It has to be read out. We welcome this. We only appeal to the Prime Minister to read it out.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Do you want me to read out the whole thing?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Yes.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Allright; I will read it out.

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: We appreciate the difficulty...

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: There is no difficulty. The Rajya Sabha will have to wait a little bit. Otherwise, it is all right.

STATEMENT REGARDING ELECTIONS IN PUNJAB

23 August, 1985

Sir, Hon'ble members are aware that the schedule for elections in Punjab has been announced by the Election Commission.

The primacy of the electoral process in our country is obvious; it needs no special emphasis.

It is well understood by our people that the right to vote is their instrument for achieving progress and prosperity.

However, in the context of recent events in Punjab, the electoral process has also acquired a new national significance.

The fundamental issue now before all political parties committed to the democratic system is:

Shall we allow the exercise of the free will of the people to be obstructed, frustrated and subverted by the forces of extremism and terrorism?

On a correct response to this question hinges the fate of the democratic system in India.

Either all political parties unitedly face the sinister challenge of terrorism by strengthening democratic process or they succumb to the threat from terrorism and extremism.

In Punjab all else is secondary.

How individual parties fare is of little consequence. It does not matter who wins, and who loses.

What matters is that the lamp of democracy is not extinguished: what does matter is that India wins.

The people of India have shown that they value democratic rights and freedom above everything else: the political parties that represent them value democracy no less.

A democratic election is the people's answer to the brute force employed by a small section to impose their will on the masses.

We shall not allow divisive forces to prevail.

We shall serve as the instrument to enable the democratic process to triumph whatever the risk to ourselves.

As the custodian of the people's will and mandate, I am fully committed to this course.

Our democratic society has the inner strength to close its ranks to face the dangers that confront it.

We shall demonstrate that we are capable of rising above expediency.

Let us, who value the ideals that have built this Nation, together accept this challenge.

Back Note

IX. Statement Regarding Elections in Punjab, 23 August, 1985

-NIL-

STATEMENT REGARDING FOREIGN VISITS

26 November, 1985

During the Parliament recess, I visited Bhutan from 29th September to 1st October and Britain, Cuba, Netherlands and the Soviet Union from the 14th to 27th October. I attended the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in the Bahamas from the 16th to 21st October and the 40th anniversary of the United Nations in New York from the 21st to 24th October. I also participated in the celebrations of the 15th anniversary of Oman's National Day on the 18th November.

I was touched by the overwhelming welcome that I received from His Majesty's Government and from the people of Bhutan. I accepted on behalf of my mother, the Druk Wangyal, Bhutan's highest award. My visit has greatly strengthened our existing excellent relations with Bhutan.

We have long historical and cordial relations with Britain. The cooperation between our countries has brought mutual benefit to both. I had very useful talks with Mrs. Margaret Thatcher and her cabinet colleagues. I explained to her our concerns arising from the anti-Indian extremist activity from British territory, the imbalance in our economic exchanges and the consular and immigration problems faced by our nationals. I believe that my visit has led to a better comprehension of our concerns.

The situation in South Africa was the focus of attention at the Commonwealth Summit in the Bahamas. Consistent with our position, we called for comprehensive mandatory sanctions. The Commonwealth Accord on South Africa was adopted. We would have preferred a stronger statement, but the Accord represents a step forward. For the first time it commits Britain to specific closely monitored economic measures against South Africa. A group of eminent persons is being appointed to monitor the effective implementation and impact of the measures and to assist in a political dialogue with South Africa, including the genuine representatives of the black people. We have

nominated Sardar Swaran Singh on this group. The CHOGM also adopted a Declaration on World Order which was essentially based on a draft submitted by the India delegation.

Besides addressing the United Nations General Assembly on October 24, I also addressed special meetings of the non-aligned group and of the Special Committee Against Apartheid. Both in the Bahamas and in New York, I took the opportunity of separate meeting with a large number of Heads of State and Government and had useful discussions with them on bilateral and international issues. We also held a meeting in New York of the leaders of the six countries which had jointly launched the Delhi Declaration for nuclear disarmament. We sent an appeal to President Reagan and General Secretary Gorbachev, text of which is laid on the Table of the House.

I was the first Indian Prime Minister to visit Cuba. Indiraji had accepted President Castro's invitation but unfortunately could not undertake the visit. My discussions with President Castro on issues of bilateral and international interest were most useful. President Castro has heroically guided his people along the path of national reconstruction. We were deeply impressed with the visible progress Cuba has achieved under his leadership. I accepted, on behalf of my mother, the Jose Marti Award, posthumously bestowed on her by the Government of Cuba as a tribute to her stature as a world leader. I was deeply moved by the mass send off that I was given by the population of Havana.

A visit to the Netherlands by an Indian Prime Minister was overdue. Our relations are close and cordial. I had very useful talks with Prime Minister Lubbers. We appreciate Netherlands' very positive stand towards the developing countries and North-South dialogue.

I paid a brief visit to the USSR on the return journey to Delhi. I had an extensive and very useful exchange of views with General Secretary Gorbachev which carried forward the discussion that I had held during my visit there in May this year. We are in continual touch on matters of common interest.

My visit to Oman was in response to a personal and cordial invitation from His Majesty Sultan Quboos. From early times India and Oman have had friendly contacts in the fields of commerce and culture. There are about a

quarter of a million Indian nationals working in Oman in different sectors of the economy. There are promising possibilities of further expansion of our relations with Oman.

Tonight I shall be leaving for visits to Vietnam and Japan. Our relations with both these countries are close. I am confident that these visits will be as fruitful as those which I have undertaken so far.

BACK NOTE

X. Statement Regarding Foreign Visits, 26 November, 1985

-NIL-

MOTION REGARDING SEVENTH FIVE YEAR PLAN

18 December, 1985

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am not an economist and, at the same time, I must say that on most such occasions economists disagree with each other as much as they agree with each other. When we talk about something like the Seventh Plan, the questions that are really in front of us are the political choices on the economic plans that have been given to us by the economists. The exercise has to be as political as it is purely economic because ultimately what we are working for is the development of the poorest people in the country.

I would like to give a quotation from Gandhiji who said:

"Recall the face of the poorest and the weakest man you have seen and ask yourself if the step you contemplate is going to be of any use to him."

This is what we have kept in mind when we have formulated the Seventh Five Year Plan. Our thrust has been the poorest man has to become self-reliant and our goal must be growth with social justice. This Plan represents the collective effort of not only every one involved in the Central Government, but also in the Governments in all our States and Union Territories, and it is after every one has put his head together that we have produced the Seventh Plan which defines the objectives which we have set before the nation for the next five years. It is an instrument of consensus on the direction that we would like to give the country. Every plan must look at the problems at that particular time. Problems change as our developments are constantly changing and so there must be a positive outlook to tackle each problem as a new problem comes. But in tackling these new problems, we have tried not to deviate from the commitments of Panditji and Indiraji and the thrust, the directions, that we have given in this Plan, are those that were given by Panditji and Indiraji. The achievements of our planning process hardly need to be reiterated although I believe one of the Members from the opposite benches has said and if I may quote:

"The Sixth Plan has failed."

I was just going to comment on that. The Sixth Plan has been perhaps our most successful Plan. It has given us an average growth rate of approximately 5 per cent, higher than any other Plan and this has come about during a period of tremendous international problems on the developmental, financial and economic fronts India was one of the few countries which did not slide backwards. In fact, we performed better than we had ever performed. Some people think that this means failure! In the Sixth Plan, the people below the poverty-line reduced from approximately 52 per cent in 1980 to 37 per cent in 1984. Hon. Members there feel that this is a failure. Perhaps he would like to have kept the poverty line with 52 per cent below it.

..... **xxx** **xxx** **xxx**¹

But the proof of the pudding is in the eating. We have shown the country that the promises that we make, we keep. And with due respects to my friend sitting across the House, that is why we are here and he is there. We saw the great planners sitting across this House when we were talking about the Sixth Plan.

..... **xxx** **xxx** **xxx**²

Our Plans since 1952 have shown—not just India but shown the world—how a developing country can progress, how a developing country can consolidate, become self-sufficient and advance to the frontiers of science and technology in particular fields. We must congratulate not only our planners but also our scientists, technicians, our farmers, our workers, for this achievement.

..... **xxx** **xxx** **xxx**³

As I said, the priorities are in front of us poverty eradication, social justice, self-reliance. The real question is how do we come about doing it. The basis is from our old policies. But we have to apply those policies, those thoughts, to India as it is today. If we look back to the First Plan and see what India was like and we see India today, there has been a tremendous change. The change has come about because of the Plan, and while keeping in mind the thoughts that were in the minds of Panditji at that time, we have to try and apply those thoughts to India as it is today. We cannot apply his methods for India then, thirty years later now. But his thoughts—yes; his ideas, his ideology—yes. That works even today provided we match it with the situation on the

ground, with the development that has taken place because of the policies of that period.

Panditji has said that if India is to advance, India must advance in science and technology. This has to be the basis of any development. Much has been said about appropriate technology. Of course, we only want appropriate technology. The question is what is appropriate for us. What is appropriate for us is seldom what is appropriate for the person who is trying to sell us something which he does not need any more.

We have to see that we get the best for the particular job that we have in mind. The best must relate firstly to the areas where we would like maximum development. We must start with agriculture. We must start with our farmer. Our farmer cannot progress without technology. Why have certain parts of the country had a green revolution? Because of the most advanced technology being brought to them. That has to be brought to the others.

At the same time we have got to look, to see how we can bring better technology to those that have become used to what is available to them for agriculture, it is not only a question of giving better fertilisers or giving better seeds, giving better weather reports. We must also look at the technology for water management. How will we make the farmer to use less fertilisers to get better results? How we will make him to use less water to get better results? Conservation of our resources and an increase in the productivity on the other.

These two things can only happen if we use the best technology. Perhaps the biggest question, the farmer in India still faces is whether the monsoon is going to come on time. It is going to be ten days late or is to going to be early? During the past few years there has been a tremendous change. Now we have satellites. He can switch on the television set, he can see whether clouds are there. He knows that in five days they will come. But it is still not accurate enough. We must be able to tell him whether we expect the monsoon or the rain in so many days. So he knows that and he ploughs his field now and is ready for it.

For this there is only one way. We have to get the most sophisticated super computer. There is no second way to go about it. If somebody says that high technology cannot help the farmer, he is absolutely wrong. It is not a question of appropriate technology which would today be interpreted to mean that we give him two bullocks but with a much better plough to pull behind the

two bullocks. That does not help the farmer enough. We have to see, our target is to lift people up to a better living condition, to a better life. For this we have to have technology, technology starting with the farmer. Simple things to the most sophisticated things for better utilisation of water, fertilisers may be we need some sort of cheap compact soil testing equipment which can tell him you put one bag of this fertiliser, but don't put that fertiliser. Something which can tell him don't put water for another four days.

These sort of things can be made available today. They can be developed cheaply enough for our farmers to be of practical use to our farmer. It is in these directions that we must give our thrust for technology. As the rural sector, the farm sector, increases its affluence, its other demands also start raising, and then this will spread to the whole of our industry.

Our thrust must next be on the small scale sector because that is where the next largest number of people are employed. Similarly, we must see how the small scale can be benefited by new technology; how the small scale can be allowed to grow into the next larger size or bigger scale and somebody else comes into the small scale sector. The exercise must be of progression for all our people—small scale goes upto bigger, cottage comes to small and new people come into cottage. This sort of growth process must be there. Our policy should not be such that we clamp somebody into the small scale, and we clamp somebody into the cottage sector, and say if you jump or your production goes Rs. 5 more then suddenly you get hit by hard taxes so that the whole system becomes non-viable. There must be some growth potential built into the system.

Technology must also come into housing. Our housing is still too expensive. We must see how cost of housing can be reduced. It must be reduced to a level where it is available to the average person; it is available to the masses and not just to the few who can get access to it in the urban areas and in the towns and a few rich in the rural areas. We have done almost no work in this respect. Our houses are still constructed exactly they were may be twenty-thirty years ago. There has been no real development in this line.

Education is one of the critical areas. Our system has delivered, it has helped India produce top-class scientists. It has helped India produce the best technologists. We have through our system produced top people in every field

but today there is a dramatic change in development, in technology and in science and our education system is not ready or capable of coping with this load that is being put on it. And because of this deficiency in the system, or lack of flexibility in the system, we are generating a tremendous gap between the spiritual development of our people and their development technologically and scientifically. Our system must be designed to close this gap because only then really we will be able to use technology for the benefit of the country and mankind. If this gap grows, then we will become a slave of technology and technology will not be our slave to do our work. This is one of the more critical areas where a lot of thinking, a lot of discussion and debate is required and we hope that the new education policy will bring these ideas into fruition.

Our goals in the Seventh Plan have not changed. Our goal is to develop a socialist society and a society which gives full equality of opportunity; a society where disparities are removed; a growing dynamic society and not a static society tied down in itself. This again must be brought out by education.

We have recently clubbed together certain Ministries and labelled them 'Human Resources Development' not because we wanted to give a fancy paint job but because what we really want is to develop the human resources. Today from every corner people yell 'population' what is happening ! What is happening ! Yes, it is one of our biggest problem. What we must do is to turn this problem into the biggest asset and that will happen if we are able to develop the human resources in our country and this is what we must attempt to do; develop them not just in teaching them technology, teaching them sciences or medicine or whatever... but also develop a sense of values and idealism, a commitment to the country, develop the cultural heritage that we have inherited. All this must be blended into one package.

We cannot do these things independently and expect to get one result. We have to see that our traditions, our heritage, the culture that is India today, does not remain static. Too often we are tied down to saying this is not what it was in the old book. We must also think ahead; we have to develop. Our culture is not just our art, our music, our dance. Our culture is how we live. It is our art, it is our music, it is our dance. But it is also chewing *Pan* and it is also all the other things that we do which we know are not good. Painting the walls, are colours this is all our culture. The culture is how we live

and certain aspects of this have to be changed. The higher aspect of culture that is developed further must permeate down to the average Indian, must come down to the mass. It is no use having the best 'Bharat Natyam' closeted away in one little auditorium in Delhi. Whom does it serve, Sir? It does not go down to the people. So, this whole aspect must come under human resources development and that is why we have given perhaps the largest ever allocation to these sectors. We hope that with the input that we are getting from the country, we will be successful in producing a package which will achieve these ends.

Now, a criticism that I have been told by one of our friends across the House is that the public sector has been ignored. Partly I agree with my friend. But we have not ignored it. Certain States in the East yes, they have ignored it.

Sir, I have been very discreet. I did not mention any name, So, we were talking about the public sector. The public sector in this Plan has got the highest allocation that the public sectors ever had. And when we talk of the private sector, because our friends are interested in the private sector, who are we talking about in the private sector, Sir? It is not the big industrialist. He constitutes a small percentage of the private sector. A very vast majority of the private sector is the small farmer and that is whom we are talking about and if you want to include public sector plus small farmer, I do not have the exact figure, but it must be a large proportion of our investment. Because they are the private sector, you might not like the label. But the fact is that the small farmer is the private sector and if you don't like it, you can try nationalising it in West Bengal.

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We have in many ways completed one cycle of industrial development. Now, we must go in to a more sophisticated cycle where quality, productivity and efficiency are vital and important. Every time an industry is inefficient, the cost is paid by the sacrifice of some anti-poverty programme. If a public sector unit loses a hundred crores there is a hundred crores less from some other productive programme. It is a hundred crores less from an anti-poverty programme.

Public sector is not there to make losses; it is not there as a social handout to labour. We must understand this. Because if we are going to spend

hundreds of crores in keeping a plant running to keep, may be two thousand labourers or workers employed, we can give them much better benefits without wasting that money on a plant which is not viable. This basic fact we must face. It might not be easy but we are not here to squander the money of the poorest people of India and we must not let it happen.

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Our basic thrust is, like I said, alleviation of poverty. In alleviating poverty, we have to, on the one hand, do major projects which will be productive and through higher productivity generate wealth, which we must then deploy in anti-poverty programmes and a certain proportion back into the productive programmes. Our anti-poverty programmes have been extremely successful during these last five years. We have strengthened them and we have modified them slightly where we felt that there were some weaknesses. We hope that with the anti-poverty programmes and with the major development projects in the Seventh Plan, our poverty level will drop down to 25 per cent at the end of the Seventh Plan.

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In completing the Seventh Plan, perhaps our biggest problem will be mobilisation of resources. And we must look at it not just from the positive side of mobilising more resources for which we must do everything, but we must also see how we can use our resources more efficiently; whether it is power, whether it is a particular industry, whether it is in agriculture, efficiency has to be the key word. Because with the demand of growth from the people, there is no other way except the maximum mobilisation of whatever resources we have. This will involve a strong will on all our part. And I am sure that even some. Members from the Opposition will help us in this task. We will need a certain dedication, a certain commitment to the country, to our basic values, a certain selflessness to achieve the task that we have set out for ourselves. This cannot be done by just one group or another group, it has to be a task which is done by all of us working together. It has to be a cooperative endeavour not just within this House, but all over the country involving 746 millions of our people. It will require sacrifices and it will require a certain dedication and commitment to India; Swadeshi, as Gandhiji would have said. Swadeshi today has changed a lot. It is not limited to the only one or two items which were Swadeshi 40 years ago. That is part of our development. But the basic voice

that Gandhiji raised for Swadeshi has not changed. That we must keep in mind, because it is only with that, that, our plan will get the required thrust that it needs.

BACK NOTE

XI. Motion regarding Seventh Five Year Plan, 18 December, 1985

1. SHRI SAIFUDDIN CHOWDHARY: What is the position all over the country?

AN HON. MEMBER: Statistically you can prove it, but not really.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: The Hon. Members have a vested interest in keeping people below the poverty-line, while we want to bring them up above the poverty-line. Their vested interest is to keep them below the poverty-line, because then they can criticise the Government.

SHRI SAIFUDDIN CHOWDHARY: You have to fight the vested interests. That is not taking place.

2. SHRI SAIFUDDIN CHOWDHARY: We are not planners; we are learners.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: In 1977-78 when suddenly the Plan started rolling. And as the Plan rolled, so the country rolled downhill.

3. SHRI SAIFUDDIN CHOWDHARY: That is right.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: I would like to thank the Hon. Member. Only with the guidance and direction of the Congress Government, this has been possible.

4. SHRI SAIFUDDIN CHOWDHARY: We cannot make a plan. When we come to Delhi, we will do what is best.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: I do not know, Sir, May be they will do the 91st Plan. Sir, the public sector, as I said, has the highest allocation that has ever had. The public sector has been the key to our development, as an industrialised nation. It has been the pathfinder of India's industry and even today it will be the pathfinder in taking India's industry into the next generation of industrialisation.

5. PROF. N. G. RANGA: It has been a white elephant till now.

SHRI AMAL DATTA: This is exactly our charge against you so far. I am glad you are admitting it now.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: What I was really talking about was the requests made by some of the Hon. Members who came to see me in the last session when they wanted us to nationalise some of their units.

SHRI AMAL DATTA: They can all be made viable. Just because of your managerial inefficiency they are not viable today.

SHRI SAIFUDDIN CHOWDHARY: All the institutions are becoming sick due to mismanagement; for example the Hindustan Construction Company Ltd.

SHRI AMAL DATTA: What about your steel industry? You are losing crores of rupees.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Somehow, Mr. Speaker, Sir, such concentrations of sickness seem to take place in one particular area.

SHRI SAIFUDDIN CHOWDHARY: If they are doing bad, it is your responsibility

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Do not feel so guilty about your public sector.

SHRI SAIFUDDIN CHOWDHARY: We are saying that public sector is not doing well and that is your responsibility. You cannot say, it is bad and so, give it up. Make it efficient.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: We should have big injections which we keep giving to West Bengal to keep it up. We will send you a crate of glucose injections.

SHRI SAIFUDDIN CHOWDHARY: What is due to everybody should be given.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Some times we give what is due to everyone like we did in the last Plan. I can only talk of the last Plan at the moment. One particular State got a very high allocation for power. They complained of no power and low generation and I believe almost a thousand crores in the particular State was left unspent in the Sixth Plan because they did not use it for power generation.

SHRI AMAL DATTA: Do you mean that the money was there and it was not spent?

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: I would like to have a clarification. Did this happen in West Bengal, because the Hon. Gentleman got up and asked this?

SHRI SAIFUDDIN CHOWDHARY: Why should you be so parochial to industrial that we can ask questions about West Bengal only?

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: I did not mention any State. The Hon. Member felt that it happened there.

MR SPEAKER: No interruptions please. Please do not get agitated.

SHRI AMAL DATTA: Last year in spite of 8th Finance Commission's recommendations, West Bengal was denied Rs. three hundred crores. Please do not forget that.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: That is why some States took Rs. three hundred crores of worth of overdraft.

SHRI SAIFUDDIN CHOWDHARY: rose.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Chowdhary—not allowed. I have been too lenient. Take your seat now.

SHRI AMAL DATTA: I do not want to controvert the Prime Minister every time, but I can only wish that he knows things before mentioning. Unfortunately, speaking and showing ignorance by the Prime Minister I cannot appreciate.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: I am very sorry if I speak and show their ignorance.

SHRI AMAL DATTA: It is not our ignorance. You are stating that a thousand crores of rupees were unspent. It is not the question. The money was not simply there. And it is their fault, if the money was not there. When we asked Rs. 303 crores, it was denied to us right away.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: I believe that the Hon. Member is talking about some deficiency in West Bengal during Sixth Plan. I was not referring to any specific State.

SHRI AMAL DATTA: You were referring to West Bengal.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Obviously, he knows something which I do not know.

SHRI AMAL DATTA: We are members of Parliament. We have a

right to know. We represent the nation. You can make it clear as to which State you are referring to. It is no good making ambiguous statements in Parliament.

MR. SPEAKER: You always get too much agitated when you speak. You are carried away by your vehemence.

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing goes on record. Are you not tired now? How can we allow this thing to go on? What is this going on. Not allowed.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: If the Hon. Member is calmed down and cooled down, with your permission, I can continue Sir.

MR. SPEAKER: The problem with Amalji is that he always gets carried away.

6. SHRI SAIFUDDIN CHOWDHARY: That will be a great thing.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: You will have noticed that the only part of the House that was happy at the poverty line dropping was that part of the House.

SHRI SAIFUDDIN CHOWDHARY: What is there? I express my happiness. What is wrong in it?

SHRI V. SOBHANADREESWARA RAO: The other part of the House is responsible for increasing this poverty line.

SHRI AMAL DATTA: We can scarcely believe their statistics, poverty line going down and all that.

SHRI BALKAVI BAIRAGI (Mandsaur): Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Prime Minister has caught them redhanded today.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: In this plan, we have generated perhaps the highest number of mendays that have ever been generated till now. We estimate that 40 million jobs will be generated during this Plan.

SHRI AMAL DATTA: All anticipations!

MR. SPEAKER: Does it hurt you?

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: You know Sir, some people are upset when poverty is removed. Some people are upset when jobs are created. What can we do about that?

SHRI AMAL DATTA: We shall be the only people who would be helping you. The other side will not help you.

SHRI SAIFUDDIN CHOWDHARY: Take it in good sense.

SHRI AMAL DATTA: Your predecessor knew it when we came to her rescue.

PROF. N. G. RANGA: You can help by making the public enterprises profitable.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: That, I would accept. I would like to thank the Hon. Members. We entirely agree with him. We would not have been here, if it were not for them. They showed the country what they could do. That is why the country elected us. Thank you very much.

SHRI SAIFUDDIN CHOWDHARY: It is all aid.

REPLY TO MOTION OF THANKS ON THE
PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

27 February, 1986

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Presidential Address is not a time to score debating points and I will not try and do that as some of my friends have done. It is a time to take stock of what we had said last year, the promises that we had made the fulfilment of these promises and to look towards what lies ahead. Last year, when Parliament opened, there were two major problems that were confronting the country—the question of what would happen in the Punjab and what was to happen in Assam.

Two agitations were continuing. We had committed during the election and in the Presidential Address that these two problems would be tackled first. We were very glad that last year we were able to come to a settlement in both the States. Although they don't seem so happy, I am glad to say that we have new Members from those two States with us in this session.

Sir, the progress with the Accord in Assam is going well. We have been in touch and the Ministries that are dealing with it and are optimistic the way it is going. On the Punjab have been certain setbacks. One of the clauses of the Accord required a commission to be set up to look for villages which would be exchanged *in lieu* of Chandigarh. Unfortunately, the Report of the Commission was such that we could not take any action. Going by the original Accord which required us to refer to a Commission, logically we have to then refer to the Report of the Commission and we are going accordingly.

The question of mutual settlement between the two Chief Ministers as suggested by the Commission or of setting up another Commission to go into it is being looked into. There is a small question on the other Commission because we cannot give precisely the same terms of reference as might end up with precisely the same answer. So, that needs a little bit of sorting out between the two Chief Ministers but we are hopeful that we can do this and we will be able to move ahead. We are also seeing what can be done about the other aspects of that Accord, the SYL canal, the water allocation, the Capital for Haryana and the other clauses that are part of it.

Unfortunately, the extremists and terrorists in Punjab have once again become active. I would like to take this opportunity to remind everyone and more especially the Government in Punjab, that the vote that the people of Punjab gave was the vote against terrorism. It was a vote which was shared in great majority between the Akali Dal and the Congress Party. Those that had asked for a boycott were rebuffed by the electorate because the electorate went and voted in very large numbers. What I would like to say is that it will be letting down the electorate if we do not respond to the terrorists as the electorate responded to the terrorists. The electorate, in spite of severe threats, came out in large numbers to confront terrorism and to push terrorism back. This is what we have to do today. One other promise that we had made in the last Presidential Address was that of electoral reforms and a cleaner public life. We have taken a number of measures towards these ends. One of the first measures was that of an Anti Defection Act which has been talked about for a long time. But last year we passed it in this House. We cleared company donations for political parties.

Again, this has been a question which has been alive for many years and it was alleged that it was one of the prime reasons for causing corruption in elections. We have tackled corruption in every section and at all levels in the country. Wherever information has been available, action has been taken. There has been no partiality or bias applied either for or against any one.

In my address to the Party in Bombay and again when I met with some of the Opposition leaders at your Lunch, Sir, I had mentioned to them that there were certain other steps we would like to take and one of them was that we would like to bring our Party accounts into the open. I had suggested that we set up a group consisting of the Treasurers of our National Parties who could decide and give us some idea of how we could go about doing this, and with your agreement we can go ahead and do this.

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One other very major step that we have taken is that of removal of agents or *dalals* from almost every major contract, and this is a progressive measure, we will be going ahead and doing this almost from every Ministry and in every contract that we are doing.

About the promise for administrative reforms, again we have not sat quiet on what we had said. We have set up grievance redressal machinery in many Ministries. The feedback from the banks specially has been very good. There is training at all levels for the administration cutting across all levels. There are two separate schemes, one a shorter term refresher type of course and one longer course, to bring about more knowledge, more interaction so that the problems that one has faced in one part of the country could help solving problems in other parts of the country—mixing of the senior with the junior, really getting the new life into the Administration. The personnel policies are being reviewed. The efficiency of the Government—in sheer time taken for taking decisions, in the cost of certain actions—has been dramatically increased. The emphasis has been put on results and on accountability. Monitoring of all major projects is being done on a monthly basis to see that they are on schedule, the progress is correct and that allocations are not being diverted to other schemes.

We have made a new scheme to monitor all the anti-poverty programmes, and this reaches out randomly to blocks, to actually, physically go and check what work has been done. Each and every individual in that block who is listed by the State will be called upon and asked many things. I can just give you a few examples here. For example, how much time did it take him to get that loan from the first day he went to when he got it; how much did it cost him in expenses, in travel, to get that loan; how has the result of that loan or whatever was given to him worked out; is he getting a return on it; which banks are active and in which State. It is quite a complicated exercise but it comes out very simple and you can see it on charts very easily. We have had the first report from this and some very interesting feedback. We will be using this, not just to see how well the programmes are functioning, but also to correct where we find deficiencies in implementation, correct where there may be deficiencies in a particular programme or in the way the programme is being applied to a particular area. So, as we get more feedback, we will be correcting it.

We have promised a new education policy. We produced the Status Paper in August last year. A national debate has ensued and a lot of inputs have been received. These have been put together and the Minister for Human Resource Development will be ready with the paper in this Session to put before the

House. We have broadened the basic concept of education to a much wider concept of human resource development which works in two ways. One is the actual development of the human being into a better human being, developing his character, his personality, his morality. The second aspect is to see what sort of human resources we will need for the future—how many doctors, how many agricultural scientists, how many nurses, how many engineers, how many scientists, what type of scientists, what type of engineers. This exercise has not been done before and unless we have some idea of what we need, we will not be able to produce what we need. This is part of the reason for many of our scientists going abroad. They study in spheres which are less relevant or not that necessary to us today and we cannot employ them, we cannot use their knowledge for our benefit.

The Human Resource Development Ministry has also taken charge of developing women, children and youth. We have initiated many programmes and many more are on the way. Last year, we celebrated the "Youth Year". We have reorganised the Nehru Yuvak Kendras, given them autonomy. We look forward to a much revitalised institution which will be able to reach out the youth of the country.

As promised, we have introduced a new textile policy. The textile policy envisages much more protection for the handloom weavers and it envisages cheaper cloth for our people. The speed of implementation of the policy has not been as fast as we would have liked. But we are looking into it and we will see that it comes in fast. Any problems that weavers or handlooms may have will get special attention and, if necessary, we will apply the requisite corrections.

We had promised a new look at the judicial system. Again, we have made tremendous progress. Sir, *Lok Adalats* were set up last year and the speed of disposal of cases has been greatly increased. Administrative Tribunals would further reduce the pressure on the courts and the Law Commission is now looking for further changes that are to be done.

We have also started tackling the problem of urbanisation in the largest sense of the word. We have made a Group which is looking into the whole concept of urban development for India for the next 15 years. We have no such plan today, it is at random that people flock to cities. They make slums. They live in slums! We have to have a proper idea of what we want with our

urbanisation. When I am talking of urbanisation, I am not talking of just Delhi, Calcutta, Bombay and Madras and may be a few other cities. I am talking of also smaller cities and a full picture, of how we are to develop our urban structure.

One other promise was that of cleaning the Ganga. The Central Ganga Authority has been formed. It has already started its work. Perhaps the first tangible visible work will be when the *Kumbh Mela* takes place next month in Hardwar when they will find the river much cleaner.

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One other promise we had made was that of tackling our waste lands. We have set up a Board and the programme has already started. The targets that we have set are very high. We know that. They may be difficult to achieve. We know that. But that is the minimum we need to do if this country is to survive. We do not have the choice. We have to find ways of achieving that and the Wasteland Development Board will look at every way of achieving that target. It will involve all our people, youngsters, school going children, house wives, farmers, landless, every one.

The environment has been a problem. During the last Lok Sabha campaign, we had a very major disaster in Bhopal. It was followed by one or two other leaks. Fortunately, they were not as bad as the Bhopal disaster. We are ready with a very comprehensive legislation which we will bring in this Session to control all hazardous substances and for the first time, we are legislating in such a manner that an average citizen can take action. It will be a law that the people will be able to operate.

Our cultural heritage is something that each one of us is very proud of and we believe that our economic development, if it destroys our heritage, if it reduces our cultural heritage in any way, would not be true development and for this end, we are setting up seven Zonal Cultural Centres.

The idea is to develop each culture to its highest level, to expose that culture not to just its own regions and its people, but also to others around the country, also to take this culture right down, not to reserve it for the elite in the auditorium and in theatres but to take it down to the people in market places and in *melas* where our people are and make the best available to the average person. We have also decided that through these 7 centres and

cooperating with other centres which are already in existence, we will have an annual cultural festival in Delhi which will be held in winter every year and which will project the cultures from all parts of the country so that they may mingle and inter-mix. What can I do, Sir? They are not cultured at all.

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Science and Technology as to be the key for our development. Our thrust is for the development of our people, on anti-poverty programme and for socially relevant areas. We are setting up a number of scientific missions and thrust areas to see that full funding, proper scientific management and all the resources that are required in these areas are available.

One of the areas that we have chosen is drinking water. This may sound simple. But it involves the highest level of scientific and technological input. Oilseeds development, immunisation of children, eradication of illiteracy. We are setting up a new Biotechnology centre, a new Department of Biotechnology.

The Seventh Five Year Plan is based on a paper produced by Indiraji which put the thrust on food, work and productivity. The basic thoughts of our planning process, of our development process have not changed since 1947 when we got independence. The backbone of all our plan, of all our aspirations and our developments remains the same. It is for a united, independent, democratic, secular, socialist, non-aligned and self-reliant India. I can repeat it if you want. But it is better that you take it tomorrow from the transcript. The India we want, the India our freedom fighters fought for, the India that we here are all committed to.

The core of the problem in our development process is the gap between what India can do and what India is doing. It is this gap that we have to bridge. Our past achievements have been tremendous by any account. The structural transformation in agriculture, in industry and in the very lives of our people is there for every one to see. The question is : can we move faster today? How can we do more work for the poor, for the under-privileged, the Scheduled Castes, the Scheduled Tribes, women and children, the minorities and backward classes. It is for them that we have framed our Plan. The Plan will require *seva* and *tyaga*. In the President's Address, the President has said "Nations are built by generations that sacrificed for a better tomorrow". That is what we are required to do today.

Panditji and Indiraji built basic framework. It is intact today; it will remain intact and we will build upon it. Our directions and our policies have not changed.

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The other day one of the hon. Members was saying, "We have fought for our political freedom and now must fight for our economic freedom". And I felt like remarking that those who have not fought for their political freedom do not know how to fight for their economic freedom.

it is not a question of individual freedom fighters. It is the *bhavana* that is in the Party, that is built on the freedom struggle.

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The public sector losses cannot continue to rise like this. The efficiency in the public sectors must be improved and will be improved.

Another area which is very critical to our development and growth at this time is the cost of basic inputs. Again it does link back to the public sector. We must see how we can go back from a high cost economy, how we can make our products much more competitive. The rate that we are going now, it will not be long before we price ourselves out of our own market. We cannot afford to do this. It will require a certain amount of efficiency in the public sector, it will require much better management in the public sector, it will also require much more output from the labour in the public sector. These are not decisions that we can delay. They have to be taken and they must be taken now.

During this past year, the public sector performance has improved, the losses have been reduced; but very much more has to be done.

We have not changed our policy on foreign investment. Our basic principles and our policies remain unchanged. In the 7th Plan the public sectors will remain the biggest investment in the Plan and it will be higher than it has been in any other Plan upto now.

Simultaneously we have to mobilise all the productive forces that are in India. We have taken certain decisions to bring all such productive forces out and into production.

Our economy has traditionally been a mixed economy and we do not intend to change that.

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Sometimes it takes long to penetrate. I notice it has penetrated even further behind.

This attempt which carries not just in India, in other developing countries and other parts of the world did not end with the assassination of Indira ji; It has continued.

An hon. Member said that when we signed the accord in Punjab, everybody thought that everything was over and it was going to be rosy. We did not believe that, It was only a first step against terrorism. It will take time to wipe out terrorism. It has taken time to wipe out terrorism from every other country. Why are you feeling guilty as if you said it? Somebody from our side said it. For Heaven's sake, why do you feel as if I am attacking you? I am not attacking; somebody from our side mentioned it. Why do you feel so guilty about these things?

The fight against communal forces must be fought unitedly. We are heirs to Gandhiji's traditions, heritage, communal harmony; Panditji's scientific outlook and Indiraji's struggle against the forces of destabilisation terrorists, separatists and communalists. We cannot fail them. Communalism must not be used as a political tool. If I may read a sentence from the secret will of Babar to his son Humayun:

"It is incumbent on thee to wipe all religious prejudices off the table of thy heart."

That we must do today.

One of the basics of independent India has been of giving full rights to all the minority communities including the women. I will talk to you about women and it is about time somebody explained to you what you have not read. The Supreme Court has Passed a judgement in the 'Shah Bano case' which caused certain uncertainties in the minds of certain minorities. Whether the uncertainties were founded on something concrete or not is not for us to judge. But the fact is that certain minorities were afraid that certain guarantees that have been given at the time of Independence were being diluted.

We are a secular country. But how do we define that secularism? Do we define it as no religion? We define it as the right of every religion to coexist with the other religions. We acknowledge that right of coexistence by allowing religions to have their own Personal Laws. It does not reduce our secularism. It is, in fact, a strong constituent of our secularism. It is the basic strength of India that every religion has its own freedom of functioning within our framework and we do not try to suppress or change any religion.

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The second question that was whether by bringing a Bill to this House on Tuesday, we have reduced the rights of women under Sections 125 and 127 of the Cr.P.C. Let me try and explain to you as to what Sections 125 and 127 give and what they do not give to our women.

I do not think that you know about it. That is why I want to tell you.

..... **XXX** **XXX** **XXX**⁸

I am trying to explain to you why we have brought this law forward. Section 125 is not applicable, if the woman has means of her own. It is only if she is indigent that it comes into force. It does not apply to every woman. Section 125 is limited to the extent of going to the particular personal law. Once you go to the personal law, Section 125 is not operative anymore.

..... **XXX** **XXX** **XXX**⁹

Section 125 and Section 127 do not look after the dower, or property of lady in any way. Section 125 and Section 127—I will repeat, do not look after or give to the lady in question her dower or *mehr* in any way.

Section 125 and Section 127 do not give the women any right to her property. All the rights to her property, her dower come under her personal law.

..... **XXX** **XXX** **XXX**¹⁰

Sir, after six years of struggling under Section 125 a woman is given Rs. 179/- month! Are we trying to say that Section 125 is giving protection to the women? It is not giving the women adequate protection.

There is only one question and that is whether the Bill that we have brought is within the purview of Muslim Personal Law or not?

Earlier this year—last year—President Zia of Pakistan visited India. We have been discussing at various stages the steps that we could take to normalise the relations between our two countries, and we had worked out a certain time schedule on which steps could be taken. Unfortunately, the result of all that dialogue has not been completely like we would have liked. The speed has been slow.

I would like to reiterate that the steps will be absolutely mutual. In trade and in other areas, opening up must be simultaneous. We have been discussing our border issues. But we have not made much progress. We are very firm in our view of what we feel is the right position there and we will not be easily swayed from that.

In Sri Lanka, there has been a spurt of violence recently. Unfortunately, the ceasefire between the Government and the Tamil groups could not be maintained. We have been in touch with the Sri Lankan Government. We have recently been given a newspaper which is slightly beyond what their last paper was. We are studying that. We hope that it will be a sufficient move forward.

One Member, I believe, said that the Congress must wind itself up. What a wishful thinking !

..... XXX

..... XXX

..... XXX¹²

BACK NOTE

**XII. Reply to Motion of Thanks on the President's Address,
27 February, 1986.**

1. SHRI DINESH GOSWAMI: Why are you leaving us, the regional parties?

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: We will involve you also.

2. PROF. MADHU DANDEVATE: There will be more pollution.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: We are coming out with a law for pollution also. Only one thing we forgot in that. We forgot to include noise pollution!

PROF. MADHU DANDEVATE: We do not mind. He can continue his speech.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Unfortunately they do not know the difference between laughter and noise! Noise is what we hear from that side of the House!

SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY: Laughter is noiseless!

3. SHRI K.P. UNNIKRIISHNAN: Joke No. 2 of the evening.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: At least I made you laugh. ... At least you laugh.

SHRI K.P. UNNIKRIISHNAN: I will laugh at the proper time.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Very difficult.

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: We have been laughing all through within our sleeves.

SHRI AMAR ROYPRADHAN: There are so many laughing dolls on your side.

4. SOME HON'BLE MEMBERS: What about Shastriji?

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Also here is Morarji !

SOME HON'BLE MEMBERS: We have not mentioned his name.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: I was talking about the Plan. Shastriji was not involved in the production of any of our Plan as a Prime Minister. In case you

did not know, I will remind you of the fact.

You look enlightened. Our development.

Those are the rolling plans, that you had started. If you remember, the rolling plan has rolled certain people right across the room and what we are very lucky about is it did not roll the country downhill and back to where we started. The people realised what the rolling plan is and the ruling plan were doing and they rolled them across and keep you there.

Our development has been 93 per cent, for instance, by ourselves. This is the strength of our independence. If we are to maintain this we must generate from within for our developments. There are easier ways out.

Anything more? Any question? Sir, this is precisely what I was saying. If we take their suggestion, we will not remain independent. We will lose our independence. That is precisely.

SHRI AMAL DATTA: We want you to come out with the truth exactly what you are doing. You are not doing any favour.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: There are short term solutions available. Some of them have been given by my friends from across the room. But they are short term solutions and we will not use them. We have paid the price for our sovereignty in our independence struggle. We know what it is.

Sir, many of our friends are nodding their heads. I do not understand if they know what it is because the people who fought for freedom struggle are mostly on the other side of the House.

At least we did not get together with the other side. Forgotten that have you?

5. AN HON. MEMBER: A Party that is 17 years old.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Of course, you would not know of the type of bhavana that our freedom struggle built.

Sir, the sovereignty that we have won through our freedom struggle will not be exchanged for cheap and easy methods of development. We will generate from within and we will see that India remains strong, independent and sovereign.

SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY: Nobody stops you from doing it.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Sir, certain Parties whose Chief Ministers come to me for the most capitalistic projects take a leftist stand over here.

No Sir, I am not yielding the floor.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Mr. Speaker, Sir.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: He is the Prime Minister. Let him not forget that.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: I have not named any political party or Chief Minister Perhaps, you know the Chief Minister we are talking about. Which Chief Minister are you talking about?

I would like to ask my hon. friend one question.

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing goes on record. Not allowed. Order, order.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I did not name any Chief Minister, I did not name any State. Perhaps I did not name any Party. Perhaps my hon. friends have a certain idea of who this could be.

MR. SPEAKER: Somnathji take your seat.

Everybody is doing his own work.

Why do you worry? You can have your say when your turn comes.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: This is very odd when parties with leftist profession suddenly start getting together with parties with rightist profession.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: May be on some issues like price rise.

SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY: You are allied with Muslim League in Kerala.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: It is a sad day when our leftist friends let their ideologies blow in the wind and get together with the rightist forces, reactionary forces. I would request them to have a little bit of a rethink on where they are going and what they are doing.

Sir, our prime thrust for development must come from the public

sectors. The money can be available for public sectors if the conditions in the States are such that they get power, they get other facilities for the public sectors to work.

SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY: We support public sector.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: We need a strong and vibrant public sector. We need a public sector that works for the public good, not the public sector that drains the wealth of our people. This is one basic point where we differ from some friends of ours.

SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY: You created it by placing the private sector over the public sector.

6. PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: In some States there are capitalists' projects and that is why they come to you.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: In petro chemicals you refuse to associate with us. Can you deny that?

MR. SPEAKER: Order. Order.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: It is nice to see how the mix in the economy is balancing with capitalists balancing the communists. It is only with a mixed economy that we can be truly independent economically.

I said what we feel is that we can be independent only with the mixed economy. If you have a different idea you put it to the people just like as we put it to the people and the people put us here. You put your idea to the people and the people have put you there. Don't forget that.

I know just your very size has expanded. Would you like to say something on size, Mr. Unnikrishnan? I thought you were saying something on expanding.

Sir, we believe that it is only with the mixed economy that we will have a truly independent selfreliant India.

SHRI K.P. UNNIKRISHNAN: What is the mix like!

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: The type that we are running with truly indigenous science and technology development and full R&D support.

During this year we have made tremendous progress in the Defence

sector, in the R&D in our production and in our indigenous designs. I would like at this stage to remind our hon. friends, who had a 'bandh' of sorts yesterday because it was not what they had projected.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: What?

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: The people did not respond.

SHRI K.P. UNNIKRIISHNAN: That is the report you have got.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: All right. I would not argue about that except for the States where Government officially said there will be 'bandh' most things ran. The trains ran. Anyway that is not the point I was coming to. What I was saying.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: Intelligence reports can be corrected.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: What I was saying was that our GNP excluding agriculture is approximately Rs. 450 crores per day. Now, if we have lost let us not say one whole day—we will give you the credit and we will count only half a day — Rs. 225 crores you have burnt of the peoples' programmes.

SHRI K.P. UNNIKRIISHNAN: You can burn Rs. 1,000 crores and the people should keep quiet?

MR. SPEAKER: This is his point of view. Your point of view may be different. Please sit down.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Sir, I may be a little bit out in the number but in the recent price hike that has taken place, I believe, the Finance Minister collected approximately Rs. 500 crore — the number is subject to correction—and in one day you have burnt half of that.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: That shows the people's wrath.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: Please try to read the mind of the people.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: If this country is to progress, it cannot progress with 'bandhs' and closures.

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: In Andhra Pradesh, what happened to these people?

MR. SPEAKER: Please sit down. Please take your seat.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Sir, every time, a strike is called or a 'bandh' is

called.

'Every single time, a "bandh" is called or a strike is called, the country loses money. If it is Rs. 450 crore per day of a full 'bundh', it is Rs. 450 crore less for some development project in this one day. I accuse my friends across this room of costing the Indian people Rs. 225 crore.

SHRI K.P. UNNIKRISHNAN: I accuse you and your Government of making the country lose Rs. 1000 crores.

SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY: Sir, he should accuse Panditji and Mahatma Gandhi and other freedom fighters also.

MR. SPEAKER: Please sit down.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Sir, is my knowledgeable friend comparing the 'bandh' of yesterday with what Gandhiji did?

SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY: Yes, in Ahmedabad, all the textile workers went on strike.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Sir, perhaps he has forgotten that when Gandhiji was organising 'hartals' and "bandhs" it was against the British Government.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: Now, it is against the capitalism.

SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY: Are you anti-people or are we anti-people?

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Sir, the losses caused to the country today are the losses which are paid for by the poorest people of the country. If we lose hundred crores in a day, it is cutting the pockets of the weaker sections of the country.

SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY: You are cutting the pockets of the people.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Sir, it is not only a question of economics. My worthy friends do not think twice about wasting Rs. 200 crores, Rs. 300 crores which could go into anti-poverty programmes and development. But more than that, much more than that, they get together with communal forces.

SHRI V. KISHORE CHANDRA S. DEO: Who?

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: You are in league with the communal forces.

SHRI AMAR ROY PRADHAN: Why did Arif Mohammad Khan resign?

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: I am coming to that also.

MR. SPEAKER: No cross talking please.

SHRI AMAL DATTA: Prime Minister is unnecessarily provoking us.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: I am not provoking you. I am expressing a viewpoint.

SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY: So we are.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Communalism has been the traditional tool that has used historically to weaken our country.

SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY: Correct.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Thank you very much.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: For a change you make a correct statement.

SHRI K.P. UNNIKRISHNAN: This late realisation this afternoon!

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: The colonial concept of divide and destroy has not changed even today.

SHRI K.P. UNNIKRISHNAN: This part of the speech is very good.

7. SHRI EBRAHM SULEMAN SAIT: For that, our community stands grateful to you, Mr. Prime Minister.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: I will come to the next point. I will answer all your points because you have not read about what you are talking about.

SHRI AMAL DATTA : His support shows how far you are secular!

8. SHRI K.P. UNNIKRISHNAN: When that particular section was passed, you were not in the House and that is the only difference. I happened out to be involved is it. You must be enlightened about certain things.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Firstly, Sections 125 does not come in if the divorcee has been paid her full dues as per her personal law. Am I correct?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Yes.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Now, if one divorcee has the advantage of having her own personal law, should we deprive a Muslim divorcee of the advantage of her personal law. No. Hindu Law, Christian Law, Parsee Law, all these laws are available codified to the courts. The Muslim Law was not available in that manner to our courts. Why should we deprive one religious group of the right to have their law if they desire to have that law?

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: What about the law of the land, which is interpreted by the Supreme Court?

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: In no way has Section 125 or 127 been diluted by this law. What the Muslim women are getting in this is much beyond what Sections 125 and 127 give.

SHRI SURESH KURUP: Why did that woman go to the Court? Shah Bano went to the Supreme Court and got that decision.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Some things do take longer to permeate. Some things take longer to permeate if you listen, you might understand.

9. SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: Your mind is closed.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Section 127 limits Section 125 to the extent that if the lady gets what is due to her under her personal law Section 125 and Section 127 do not apply. This is what I am saying.

SHRI SAIFUDDIN CHOWDHARY: That is why we say Section 127 should be withdrawn.

MR. SPEAKER: That is his point or view. This is your point of view. You can have your point of view. You listen to him.

SHRI SAIFUDDIN CHOWDHARY: Instead of going forward, you are going backward.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: We are not going backwards.

MR. SPEAKER: It is your point of view.

10. MR. SPEAKER: This is all right, this is no debate.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: No. Sir. I do not want to yield. Sir. I do not wish to yield.

MR. SPEAKER: It is his point of view. You can have yours.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: There is no point in discussing this Bill now.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: We are not discussing this Bill.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: It seems that the Bill has already been taken for consideration!

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: We have tabled something in this Session and I would like to make our position clear on that because questions have been raised.

Sir, let us see the case of Mrs. Shah Bano herself. She had to fight for six years under Section 125 and Section 127. After six years of court cases, she was given Rs. 500/ or Rs. 200/ or something.

SHRI EBRAHM SULEMAN SAIT: I will tell you the position. She was given Rs. 179.25 paise.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: I stand corrected, Sir.

SHRI G.M. BANATWALLA: It looks like the price of a Bata Shoe!

11. PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: Tomorrow you are having a meeting of your party.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Today I had a meeting, this morning. Don't worry. I had a meeting with a part of your party also.

What are we looking for? When we look at the country, are we looking to divide and to cause problems?

We were told that Opposition was not consulted, and papers were not given on this particular Bill. For ten months, was it not of an adequate interest to draw your attention to it?

SHRI K.P. UNNIKRIISHNAN: Then your promise has no meaning.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: You forget that we called you, and you did not come. You forget that you were called, and you did not arrive.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: You were also replied to.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Let me beg to state that one of the reasons they might not have come was because they did not want to take a stand on this. Bill.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: I wish to go on record that this is not a correct statement. Next day, though early in the morning at 2.30 a.m. we received a letter from the Prime Minister's office giving a specific accede, that day at 10 o'clock we remained present in the meeting. So, it is wrong to say that on this issue, we were not prepared to discuss the matter with him. Don't try to induct politics into it.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: One of the issues—because you knew that issues that were to be discussed. This was to be discussed. They were leftover issues.

Prof. Madhu Dandavate has made a statement. I would like to remind him that he did not participate when this question came up at the introduction stage. The question is that no group or minority in the country should feel as if some basic rights that it had got are being taken away from that group.

SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY: It is exactly what a section is feeling,

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Unfortunately today, the Opposition is also in a minority.

MR. SPEAKER: There should be no cross-section talk. No, debate, there.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: What we need is national cohesion at this time. We need to see that issues that divide communities are not raised to levels where they cannot be brought down from. We have to see that such issues are not used for political ends. It is only with tolerance, with harmony and with concord that we can really move ahead.

Only then can we get India of our dream.

We believe in a politics of consensus and conciliation, but consensus and conciliation is not to be mistaken for weakness or indecision. During this year, India's standing in the world has gone up even further with our participation at various world forums, with our relations with the U.S.S.R. improving, with our relations with the Soviet Union who is our old, reliable and proven friend.

They do not like some of our friends. What can we do? Our relations with no other country can change this relationship between the Soviet Union and India—Thank you for call clapping.

SHRI K.P. UNNIKRIISHNAN: Whenever you say anything sensible, we

all agree with you.

SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY: Whenever you say anything sensible, we all support you.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: During this year, we have also improved our relations with the United States.

SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY: Neither they clap nor we clap.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: What can I say? During the NDC meeting.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: Why bring NDC here?

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: I was bringing it because you mentioned the USSR and the USA. I wanted to relate it to this.

You took up what I said. You started saying something when I said that. Mr. Speaker, the hon. Member was not present in the NDC meeting. So, I can tell him about that.

MR. SPEAKER: He is already feeling shy.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: During the NDC meeting, one Chief Minister — I am not naming him — one Chief Minister who was complaining about the whole Plan, he did not like the idea and he was generally a little upset and he said as the meeting was closing, "What am I to do if you do not give me the funds? Am I to look towards England and the USA?" I won't tell you who he? What can we do if a Chief Minister from the East looks to the West?

SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY: What a joke!

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: But seriously, Sir, what does worry us is.

MR. SPEAKER: He has said it in a lighter vein.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: I would suggest you expunge the Chief Minister from the record, Sir.

It will not be a good thing.

MR. SPEAKER: He has said it in a lighter vein.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: The Prime Minister referring to a Chief Minister! If it is with a sense of humour, it is allright.

MR. SPEAKER: It is a joke, and that is all.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: But, seriously Sir.

MR. SPEAKER: A man standing in the East cannot see East. He has to look West.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Sir, but seriously, what does worry us, is when our friends from the left start looking to the right. That does worry us.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: That is, the friends who have left.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Our friends from the left.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: I thought you said, friends who have left.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: They only leave on some days, not every day.

12. SHRI AMAL DATTA: Gandhiji had also said that.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: I am not talking of Gandhiji. I am talking of one Member whose only chance of changing benches is when the Congress winds itself up.

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: Congress of Gandhiji has wound up. Another Gandhi has come.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: After all, all Gandhis do not think alike.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Perhaps, that is his last hope and if only wishes were horses!

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: You are living on hopes.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: I would like to remind you that we have the people's mandate and we have the people's trust. We have a historical destiny and we will build a new India.

One other friend talked about a prince charming.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: That is aesthetic appreciation.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Let me remind you that there is no prince charming and there is no magic wand even if there are some hobgoblins at the bottom of the garden. The Congress Party is the party of the masses. We would not be shaken by Cassandras. The nation is not despondent; it is not disenchanted. The nation is confident; it is optimistic and the nation is proud to be Indian.

STATEMENT REGARDING VISIT TO HARARE, INDONESIA, AUSTRALIA, NEW ZEALAND AND THAILAND

13 November, 1986

I attended the English Conference of Nonaligned Countries at Harare from 1st to 7th September. It was a memorable and historic occasion. The 25th anniversary of the Movement was marked by a Special Commemorative Session recalling the signal contribution of the Nonaligned Movement to world peace and reaffirming the continuing validity of the principles and objectives enunciated by its founding fathers- Nehru, Tito, Soekarno, Nkrumah and Nasser.

Warm tributes were paid at the Summit to the memory of the former Chairperson of the Movement, Smt. Indira Gandhi. India's role, as Chairperson of the Movement, in consolidating the unity, strength and cohesion of the Movement, was highly appreciated. Our stewardship has brought to the Movement harmony and stability within, and strength and dynamism externally. Diverse and heterogeneous in composition but unified by a common commitment to freedom, peace and justice, the Movement has remained steadfast in its principles.

At Harare, we handed over the Chairmanship of the Movement to Zimbabwe. The focus of the Summit was on three of the most fundamental issues of our times-human rights in South Africa, freedom for Namibia and the right of all humanity to live in a world free from the constant threat of nuclear extinction.

The Conference adopted a special Declaration on South Africa and established a (Fund for Action For Resisting Invasion. Colonialism and Apartheid: the AFRICA Fund). The AFRICA Fund Committee is chaired by India With Zambia as Vice Chairman. The establishment of this Fund reflects the determination of our Movement to give concrete content to our solidarity with our brethren in the Frontline States and liberation movements in Southern Africa. We have commenced preparatory work on the establishment of this Fund, its work programme and the modalities of its operation. We have had

Intensive consultations with leaders of the Frontline States on measures to strengthen their capability to fight apartheid, to enforce sanctions against the racist Pretoria regime and to cope with that regime's retaliatory actions. A meeting of Senior Officials of the Fund Committee will take place in Lusaka later this month. A Ministerial-level meeting will precede a Summit of Heads of State or Government of Member countries of the Fund Committee which will probably be held in Delhi. I sincerely hope this Fund will receive the full support not only of Governments within and outside the Nonaligned Movement but of all Parliaments, voluntary organizations and individuals concerned at the violation of basic norms or civilization in South Africa and the threat to peace posed by Pretoria.

The Movement remained firm in its support to the cause of the Palestinians and resolute in the defence of the freedom, independence and sovereignty of nonaligned countries threatened by foreign intervention and interference.

The Harare Appeal on Disarmament adopted by acclamation, reflected our Movement's commitment to peace and disarmament and our concern at the growing threat to human survival. It urged the United States and the Soviet Union to take immediate steps to prevent the outbreak of a nuclear war and to agree to a moratorium on nuclear tests as a first step towards a comprehensive test ban treaty. The Summit endorsed the Six-Nation Five-Continent initiative for Peace and Disarmament which was launched in Delhi.

The last few years have seen a deepening of the world economic crisis. An action Programme for Economic Cooperation was adopted at Harare and a Ministerial Committee set up for harmonising and coordinating action on global and economic Issues. A political Declaration reflected the movement's consensus on most of the difficult issues confronting the world today.

The Summit was a watershed. It coincided with the 25th anniversary or the founding of the Movement. We reaffirmed our faith in the Movement and in our vision of a world community, united for, peace, disarmament and development. We Wish Prime Minister Mugabe success in facing the challenges ahead and pledge him our full support and cooperation.

During the course of the Harare Summit, I had the opportunity of making the acquaintance of a number of leaders and renewing my friendship

with those whom I had the privilege of meeting on earlier occasions. We had a very useful exchange of views on various international issues and on strengthening our bilateral relationship with a number of countries.

I also paid official visits to Indonesia, Australia, New Zealand and Thailand from 13th to 20th October.

We share with Indonesia a common cultural heritage, a similar struggle against colonialism, and partnership in the Nonaligned Movement. My talks with President Soeharto reflected shared perceptions on major international issues. We recognized that the level of our trade and economic relations was not commensurate with our political ties. We agreed to work out long term arrangements to add greater economic and commercial content to our relationship and to intensify interaction in the field of science and technology. We look forward to the further consolidation and strengthening of our traditional ties with Indonesia.

Our relations with Australia and New Zealand have been friendly but with little interaction in political or economic terms. Our countries belong to the Asia Pacific region but we have looked more to the West and elsewhere rather than at our own region. This process is being reversed. I hope my visits have given this process a further impetus.

I worked closely with Prime Minister Hawke within the Commonwealth at Nassau and in London to forge a consensus on sanctions against the Pretoria regime. During my visit to Australia we reviewed the progress in consolidating this consensus and building world opinion. We also reviewed our trade and economic relations and agreed that exchanges must be intensified. A Joint Business Council was established to stimulate trade and economic relations. A Science and Technology Agreement was also signed during the visit. We agreed on the need for greater interaction on expanding our cooperation in the fields of agriculture, space, meteorology and other areas.

My talks with Prime Minister Lange during my visit to New Zealand underlined a close identity of views on many international issues and our common desire to strengthen bilateral cooperation. Agriculture and afforestation were identified as promising areas of cooperation. Agreements on Trade and the Avoidance of Double Taxation were also signed during my visit.

My brief visit to Thailand was the first ever official visit by an Indian Prime Minister. We were accorded a warm welcome in a country with which we have deep and abiding cultural links. I had interesting discussions with the King and a useful exchange of views with Prime Minister Prem. A Protocol on Science and Technology was signed during the visit. We agreed to look into the possibility of establishing a Joint Commission. I am sure that in the years to come we will realise the untapped potential for the development of our bilateral relationship with Thailand.

My visits to these four countries of South East Asia and the Pacific provided the opportunity for translating the goodwill that exists for India in this region into more substantive political relationships and expanding trade and economic cooperation. Though these visits were necessarily of a very short duration, we have good reason to be happy with their outcome.

BACK NOTE

**XIII. Statement Regarding Visit to Harare, Indonesia, Australia,
New Zealand and Thailand, 13 November, 1986**

-NIL-

STATEMENT REGARDING VISIT OF H. E. MR. MIKHAIL
GORBACHOV, GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE CENTRAL
COMMITTEE ON THE CPSU

2 December, 1986

The General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Mr. Mikhail Gorbachev, visited India from the 25th to the 28th of November at my invitation. The visit was in keeping with the established tradition of exchanges at the highest level between India and the Soviet Union. It was an important milestone in our bilateral relationship. It contributed significantly to stability in the region and peace in the world.

I held long and intensive discussions with General Secretary Gorbachev on a wide spectrum of issues, bilateral, regional and international. Talks were held simultaneously at the senior Ministerial level. These exchanges took place in a very warm and friendly, atmosphere, characterized by mutual confidence and trust.

We discussed the broad outlines of our future cooperation in a longer term perspective. The rich experience of our past cooperation enabled us to explore new avenues to raise our bilateral cooperation to a qualitatively higher level. Several bilateral agreements were signed. Statements have been laid on the table of the House. The Agreement on Economic, Scientific and Technical Cooperation encompasses the Tehri hydro-electric complex, the modernization of the Bokaro steel plant, the setting up of new coking coal mines and oil exploration in West Bengal. One important element of this agreement is the provision of local cost financing by the Soviet Union. The agreements in the economic, commercial, consular and cultural areas reflect the growing strength and dynamism of our relationship.

General Secretary Gorbachev and I agreed to restructure the pattern of our commercial and economic exchanges to realise the vast untapped potential for economic collaboration. Our Finance Minister and Deputy Prime Minister Kamentsov are working out the details. We also decided to give a major thrust

to our cooperation in science and technology. Large research and development projects are being identified in frontier technologies. A Soviet team led by Academician Marchuk, President of the USSR Academy of Sciences, will visit India shortly to discuss with our scientists the specific projects to be undertaken.

I had a very useful exchange of views with Mr. Gorbachev on the security environment in our region. We reaffirmed the continuing validity of our Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation. The Joint Statement issued at the conclusion of the visit reflects the close proximity or identity of perceptions of the two countries on international issues. Above all, the visit demonstrated the firm commitment of our peoples to world peace.

India has always stood for non-violence. India in the United Nations, in the Nonaligned Movement, and through the Six-Nation Five-Continent Initiative, has consistently worked for disarmament and peace. During Mr. Gorbachev's visit, the Soviet Union joined India in a common vision of a nuclear weapon free and non-violent world. The ideals of Gandhiji and Lenin have found expression in the Delhi Declaration. The Delhi Declaration is a vitally important initiative. It sets forth principles which must find universal acceptance if there is to be a peaceful future. The Declaration is being circulated as an official document by the United Nations. We commend the Declaration to the world community for acceptance.

The visit of General Secretary Gorbachev to India was memorable. It will have enduring significance for the further development of Indo-Soviet relations and the contribution of our two countries to peace and stability.

BACK NOTE

- XIV. Statement Regarding Visit of H.E. Mr. Mikhail Gorbachov, General Secretary of the Central Committee on the CPSU, 2 December, 1986

-NIL-

REPLY ON MOTION OF THANKS TO THE PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

3 March, 1987

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I rise to support the Motion of Thanks to the President for his Address to Parliament. The debate on the President's Address has, by and large, been very constructive and interesting and I would like to thank all the hon. members who participated in that debate for making it so constructive. I would like to specially thank the members of the opposition who had so little to raise that they have made it constructive.

Sir, one of the points that was raised was that of having accords and trying to settle differences by talking across the table. Although I have already clarified in great detail outside the House, as it has been raised in the House, I think it is necessary that we put certain records straight in the House.

We have heard criticisms of the Punjab. Accord, the settlement in Assam, the discussions, the agreement on Mizoram and in this vein it is relevant to recall Indiraji's Accord with the Sheikh in 1975. I would also like to quote a sentence from the Punjab Accord which says:

"This settlement brings to an end a period of confrontation and ushers in an era of amity, goodwill and cooperation which will promote and strengthen the unity and integrity of India."

I am specially quoting this because in the past few days we have had a joint effort in Punjab with all the opposition parties the parties in Punjab, our own party, all working together. For what? Perhaps, before I come to 'for what' it is necessary to go into how we are working together and how we are able to work together. If there had been no Accord, this would not have been possible. This is only possible because there is a democratic Government in Punjab. That is why it is possible. While it may be difficult to complete every single aspect of the Accord, yes, we are having problems. I am not denying it. On our side I have said, we are ready to do things. But there are problems, whether it is in the States or elsewhere. But the major issue with an Accord is not the issue of whether this BARIKI has been done or that BARIKI has been done. The major issue is that many Members sitting in this House today, more especially in the Opposition, would not have been in this House if that Accord had not been

signed. These Accords are a major steps forward in bringing the democratic process to the fore in solving our problems. Let this not be decried.

Hon. Members have raised the question of whether this has not been done or that. We would not have been here to raise that question if that Accord had not been signed. So, let us not forget that. I will come to West Bengal later, Dattaji. I will come to West Bengal, do not worry.

Sir, while we believe in accords, many of my friends sitting opposite me believe only in discord. And we firmly believe that a large country such as India, a country with a heritage like India's heritage, with our value systems which we would like to restore, with our culture, our diversity, a country such as this can only be run by raising a consensus amongst all our people. And we will continue, in our effort, to run this country, especially on major national issues by getting a political consensus; and I would like to thank our Members from the Opposition who are cooperating with us in having such a consensus on Punjab.

Much has been said about Punjab, about the special problems of Punjab in this House during the past year. I do not want to go into the details and the pros and cons of the debate that has already taken place. But today when all of us are working together in Punjab, the stand of the Government of India stands vindicated. Let that be clear. What we stood for, the support that we have given to the Government of Punjab, today, after a long time, is bearing fruit when we see that the forces of secularism, the forces for separating religion and politics are standing together against factional tendencies, against terrorism, against fundamentalism, against the forces which are out to destroy the country. And, once more, I thank all sections of this House for cooperating in this fight in Punjab.

In the accords on Punjab, on Assam, on Mizoram, we have gone into the implementation. Yes, there are items in the Accords which are not completed. But my stand that there is nothing pending with us, we are not stopping anything, we are not blocking anything from the Centre remains.

I know the hon. Members from Assam have been agitated. And I am meeting the Chief Minister this afternoon. And I have no doubt that after our meeting I will have convinced him that on our side there is nothing pending. If there are some doubts, we will clear them this afternoon.

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In some items, for example, we have gone well beyond what we were required to do. It is a balance you have got to strike. There is nothing pending on our side. I will clarify that very clearly today. If the Chief Minister wants we will make a public statement bringing it to the notice and laying it on the Table of the House. You should let that be between the Chief Minister and us and we will decide how to handle it. And if we feel that it should be made public, because ultimately what do we want.

It is a question of getting things normalised in Assam. I tell you what the problem is. I will tell you what some of the problems are. Some of the problems arise when certain chauvinistic attitudes start coming out. Now, we cannot put up with that. Of course, there are going to be problems. But the Accord does not say that it is to be implemented in the manner in which the Assam Government wants. The Accord says that there will be discussion on certain things which will be done. So do not jump to conclusions that we must do every word that you say, because we are not trying to act in our interest or against your interest. We are trying to act in a manner which is in the interest of the nation, which is in the interest of Assam.

Sir, we will not deviate from what is written in the Accord. Let me reiterate that. But we will not allow anything to take place which in our view endangers or weakens the national integrity of this nation. Let me be very clear about that. I am just making a statement.

Mr. Deputy Speaker. Sir, communalism is one aspect which is worrying every section of this House, which is worrying every section of society in our country. It threatens the nation as a whole and there cannot be any partisan considerations when we are faced with the threat of communalism. We must join together to fight communalism, to isolate and defeat the minority of fanatics and fundamentalists and terrorists who try to build their strength on either religion or other forms of communalism. We must be careful and work unitedly, as we are doing in Punjab, to fight this evil. In Punjab, together we have demonstrated that on issues which are important. We can rise above party differences and we must rise above party differences. We must get together and face these challenges squarely. It is time now, I think, the nation is ready for a full debate on separating religion from politics. and the follow up action from that in this House as may be required from whatever comes out

of that debate, and I am willing to start such a debate, participate in such a debate with the Opposition, with anyone, because this spectre must be faced by all of us together. I hope that we will get cooperation from all sections of the House in bringing these issues up and, perhaps most important, in being able to concretise these issues, and not just have a grand debate and then leave it as a nebulous end with no results. It is time that we concretise these issues and specifically set in motion certain steps to separate religion and politics and the interference of religious bodies in the political system. It is going to be difficult to get the definitions and get the finesse that may be required but even if it is difficult, I think it is time that we put our heads together and got something down on paper and got something going which will stop. We will welcome any suggestion from you provided it is constructive.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, our economy is very buoyant and just a few days ago, while presenting the Budget, I pointed out many highlights of the economy.

But, perhaps, the biggest indicator of the buoyancy of the economy is the despondency of the opposition.

The results in the economy have indicated our policies and have indicated that the innovations that we have brought in have been correct.

One important point, and one which I have been reiterating for two years now, but it is necessary to say so again, is the question of socialism. Socialism is not the spreading of poverty as Panditji has said. Socialism is more equitable distribution, it is the uplift of our people and the most important aspect is that we can only move towards socialism if we have a greater productivity, if there is more wealth to distribute, only then can we distribute more wealth. We must generate that wealth. We have shown in these past two years that the Indian economy is resilient and is capable of generating just this sort of development. We have continued the strategy that was started by Panditji. We have continued along the road that Indiraji had taken us.

But just as Panditji, during his 15-16 years of Prime ministership, and Indiraji, during her 16-17 years of Prime ministership, had during these periods modified specific programmes, yet kept in mind the basic ideologies, basic philosophies, that were the roots of those programmes, so are we required to do that today. It is no use us now saying that Panditji in the 50s said that steel

plants are the most important thing. Yes, steel plants are the most important thing. But Panditji brought in steel plants because that was the need of the day. The idea behind it was technology was required. New techniques were required. New knowledge was required. The steel plants, the massive new temples of India as he called them, were only manifestations of that idea. Today, those ideas must remain the same, but the manifestations will change as technology changes, as India develops and as our needs change. We are going along the same road because we believe that the strength of the country, the integrity and unity of India, our self-sufficiency lies in those very ideas that were laid at the foundations of our development. We do not wish to deviate from those ideas. But we will develop those ideas with time. We have shown that by sticking to those very ideas, those concepts, we are able to show very high growth rates 8%, over 8% over three years. This is the first time in twenty years that the Indian economy has shown this rate of growth.

The other day I was sitting in the House and one of the hon. Members was speaking and he was very confused about the numbers. I do not want to tax his mind further. It seems to have been taxed already too much.

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Sir, we have shown that by improving productivity in our sector, by improving the efficiency of its functioning, we have brought about a change in our economy. But there are tremendous challenges ahead. It is not going to be an easy task and the biggest challenge is going to be to bring about a new ethos, not just in industry, which is important, in the public sector, which is more important— but, perhaps most important of all, in the system of delivery of the Government. I raised this point in my Budget speech and we intend to go into this in great depth. I have no illusion of quick answers or ready remedies. It is going to be a long drawn out exercise. It is going to require a total change in the way the Government and the organisations of Government function, not only at the Centre which again may be, perhaps, easier to handle because of the type of tasks that are assigned to the Centre, but right down at the State levels, right down at the district levels, where it gets much harder, the lower you go, the closer to the grass-roots you get— And again we will require cooperation from every section of the House if we are to be successful in this. This is not a task which can be left only to Government. It will require the involvement of all our people. And we would like to open a debate on this at any level in the House, outside the House, anywhere, and come to conclusions which we hope will help this process. Again

I have no illusions about trying to do this fast or quickly, but we must see that every step is in the right direction, is in the direction of reducing the costs of delivering our programmes. When I go to the rural areas, when I go to the remote villages, we hear tremendous complaints about how the programme that we start from the Centre changes its character, changes its effects by the time it gets down to the roots. Of course, this happens, we do not deny that, but it is not adequate to make noises here, to correct it. That is only the starting point. We must go into this in depth and see why this has happened, what the blockages, what are, the problems are, and try and remove those problems. The costs are too high. It is not just a question of deviation from targets. The cost of the programme or its implementation is too high, the cost of taking it down absorbs so much of the cost of the programme that by the time it is ready to get to the weaker sections, the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, the other disadvantaged sections, what is left of that programme after—what shall I say?—deductions for administrative costs is a very small fraction of what we started with. So, this is what we have to take as the next step in improving our functioning. Government is very clear that it is going to tackle this, and we would like the full involvement of the whole nation in tackling this task.

In the agricultural sector, growth has not been as what we would have liked it to be. We have invested a lot more in irrigation and power and fertilizers and other inputs for agriculture, we have given higher prices to farmers than have ever been given before, yet production is not increasing as it should, and this needs serious attention. We will be giving it serious attention.

We have had a number of years of drought. A number of Members from different States have been raising this question and it has also hindered agricultural growth. But in spite of these numerous droughts and the damage caused by floods, our agricultural production has increased. Admittedly not as much as we would have liked it to increase, but still it has increased in spite of these difficulties and in spite of nature not helping us. The food situation is comfortable. We have used a very large quantity of foodgrains for giving work to those sections in difficulties. I must thank our farmers, our farm technologists, every one involved in the agricultural sector, for giving us this production in spite of the difficulties that they are facing because of bad rains. The Seventh Plan has envisaged much greater allocations in the first three years than any other Plan. For the first time we will be completing

63 per cent of the Plan in the first three years. This is another major achievement of the Government.

Our investment in the public sector has been much more than in any preceding two year period. This shows the importance that we give to the public sector. It is part of our Plan, it is part of our development process, and we have no intention of reducing its importance. In the Seventh Plan, we have also given tremendous importance to anti-poverty programmes. The amounts that we have allocated for anti-poverty programmes are higher than ever before. As I pointed out in the Budget speech, this year we have allocated Rs. 2,000 crores for rural development. This compares with the total Sixth Plan allocation of Rs. 3600 crores. And in these two years-1986-87 and 1987-88—we will have allocated more for rural development than in the total Sixth Plan. That is the importance we are giving to rural development: that is the importance we are giving to fighting poverty.

We also see anti-poverty programmes in a wider perspective. Anti-poverty programmes cannot be limited to programmes that are hand-outs and help directly because that is only possible within a very limited area, no matter how much we allocate for it. We have allocated Rs. 2,000 crores this year which is a very high figure. But no matter how much we allocate, the figure will always be such that we can only reach those that are really at the bottom and those that are the very poorest. To reach out to the rest, we have to see anti-poverty programmes in a broader perspective and that broader perspective is industrial growth; that broader perspective is agricultural growth. Because that is where the real anti-poverty action is taking place. We only help those who are too poor and too weak to even be able to grasp these programmes by our direct help, anti-poverty programmes.

Perhaps the most important part of an anti-poverty programme and certainly what I think is the cutting edge of our anti-poverty programme, is the education programme. There can be no removal of poverty without education. We can keep handing out, helping, doing everything but if we cannot lift up the next generation—all right, we cannot do it effectively with the generation which is already with us. We have a major programme for adult education but we realise the limitations of that programme. But let us at least...(Interruptions) Unfortunately, some Members are totally unformed and there is very little I can do about that.least...(Interruptions) Unfortunately, some Members are totally unformed and there is very little I can do about that.

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Education is the crux of our development. It is becoming more and more important as technology develops in the world. I have been talking about this to other Heads of States. It is not a problem which is limited to India. This same problem exists, the dimensions are different, the details are different but the basis of the problem is the same. Technology, industry develops fast. If our workers, if our younger generation, does not get educated equivalently or at equivalent rates, then they will start falling behind. Much of our self-confidence depends on the confidence of our people to cope with what they are faced with today. We have to decide whether we are going to live by running our industries as they were run 50 or 60 years ago. Is it really in the interest of our worker to keep him doing the same job that a worker 50 years ago was doing or is it in the benefit of the worker that the working environment changes, that he upgrades himself, his technology is upgraded, his know-how is upgraded and instead of operating an outdated machine, he operates a much more sophisticated machine, in a much more sophisticated environment? We should not limit our vision of improving the lot of the worker to only giving him some better cloth and giving him a better salary and perhaps a television set and a little better food. These are very limited perspectives. We must improve the life-style. We must improve the working environment of that worker and this will require going into our whole industry in depth and it will require a very major shift in thinking of many of our labour organisations. *(Interruptions)*. I was not referring to you, Dattaji.

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Absolutely correct. Benefits must pass to the workmen. But what are the benefits we are talking about? This is important. I am trying to get to the root of the problem. Are the benefits only improved salary or are we looking for a better working environment for the worker?

Do we want him to operate in the same environment? I have seen how some textile mills operate. I have seen how terrible the working environment is there. Are we doing anything to improve that? No. We are only fighting for his wages which is important. Wages are important but wages cannot be the end. Wages are only one part of the package that the worker must get.

Education is not something which can be limited to educational institutions. Why are you feeling guilty? I am talking on a very serious matter. Unfortunately, it is going well over your head? Education is something which must not be limited to educational institutions. Education is not something that ends when you leave college or when you leave school. Education must continue throughout your life because, if it does not then, your society will start stagnating. It must continue throughout the life of an industrial worker. Upgradation of his skill must take place continuously. We must make this investment in our people and it is this that we have tried to start by bringing a new Head called Human Resource Development. It is this broader concept. Unfortunately, the resource has not developed. What can I do? I will come to that also.

We started with many ideas. I do not want to go into great depth on all the ideas. But I think, one is worth mentioning. And that is the Navodaya Vidyalayas. We have started a totally new system. The Navodaya Vidyalaya has been called elitist by some, they have been called all sorts of things. But it is necessary I think for me to go into this once again because we keep getting the same argument. What is an elitist education? I think elitism must be seen in two ways. Elitist, what? Does 'elitist' refer to money? If it refers to money and the financial strength of a particular family or a particular individual, it is very bad and we must not allow that to interfere in any way with the education system, But if 'elitist' refers to brains, then, I think, we must go in for elitism. We must go in for getting the best brains in the country. Today, we are not getting the best brains in the country because we are not able to reach out to the rural area for the brains that are available in the rural areas. We are limiting ourselves to urban area and certain areas, perhaps around urban areas, which can reach out to the better institutions. Today, the system is very categorically elitist. It is weighted against the intelligent brains in the rural areas who do not get an opportunity to come out. The only opportunity that the intelligent people in the rural areas get to get a good education is if they are rich. If they are poor in the rural areas, not a chance. If they are poor in the towns, again they go to our NDMC school or municipality schools or Government schools and the quality of the school is not such, the quality of the teachers is not such, that they can reach out and pick up the Intelligent. It is not such that they can differentiate to find out which child is good for which subject and how they should bring them up. We just do not have that capability in our system today. The system today is very elitist because it discriminates against

those with brains in favour of those with money, in favour of those in urban areas. This is what we want to change with the Navodaya Vidyalayas. And this is what we are going to change with the Navodaya Vidyalayas.

Perhaps one of the most important aspects of the education system—and this is something again that we must work together on—is the value system that it builds in our society. Unfortunately, for whatever reason our society has drifted away from our traditional value system. It has drifted towards a very materialistic value system. That is even reflected here in the House because when we have debates. On major debates, what do we want? What are the demands? They are monetary demands. Invariably, it ends up with monetary demands fiscal control. It invariably reflects very materialistic system of values that we are developing today. Our society has its roots in much deeper values, in spiritual values, in aesthetic values, in our culture which has developed over thousands of years. Our culture, Indian culture, is not just one culture. It is the culture of tens of different people. It is the culture of Assam. It is the culture of Tamilnadu. It is the culture of our tribals. It is the culture of...

I was going to bring Bengal at the end by raising it. It is the traditional culture of Bengal; it is not what is sought to be projected as the culture of Bengal—and this is an important point- the culture which sometimes we seek to project because we seem to see it in a very political perspective, we try to make it a tool, a platform, for our own individual bench or progress. It is this that we must break when we talk of values and bringing back our values. And we hope that the new system will be able to do this. I have no doubt that the directions that we have given are correct. They will require corrections as we learn from experience. It is not something that you can cast and then just let it go. We will have to work, we will have to debate, discuss, develop and fine-tune this policy as it develops. I have no doubt that we will get valuable inputs from every section of the House, and I hope that these inputs rise above our party positions or our regional positions or the petty chauvinism that we hold within us. We must rise above that if we are to strengthen the country today and bring in the values that I know that each one of us sitting here really wants to bring back into our society.

Economic growth is not just the responsibility of the Central Government. It is an area where we work together with the State Governments. Sometimes I have been told that there is a lack of coordination. Sometimes I

It is an exercise in removing the red-tape and the blockages. And it is then for the State. Because once we have cleared a package, then it is mostly the responsibility of the State to take advantage of this package. If we give a thousand crores or four hundred crores and the State does not want to make use of this, and the State still whines instead of getting down and going and working, then what can we do about non-implementation? Implementation of almost every single project is with the State Government. There are a very few items with the Centre even when they are our plans and programmes. Almost every programme of the Centre is finally handled by the State Government and the efficiency of the State Government in handling those programmes reflects on the percentage of that programme which actually accrues to the beneficiary. If a State Government is inefficient, then less gets to the people.

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India's foreign policy has been targeted on the basic philosophy of strengthening India. India is strong of non-alignment is strong in the world. If alignment becomes strong, if blocs become strong, then developing countries, those countries which won their freedom after tremendous struggle, will lose that very freedom. Even today we find that, although we have thrown off the colonial yoke and are independent, the world economy is not independent as we would like it to be.

In Many ways, colonialism and imperialism exist in the world economy. This is the next challenge that is facing us. This challenge cannot be faced by looking inwards and ignoring what is happening in the world. If we ignore that challenge, India cannot stand on its own feet, India cannot stand as India is standing today, India will not be independent if we cannot keep the newly independent countries independent all over in the world.

This is not a task that we can shirk from. It is a task that we, must face up to and tight. It is sad sometimes to get a feeling from certain Members that it is irrelevant what happens around the world. It is sad to see certain sections of this House feel that one can ignore what is happening in the world and just look inside and survive. That is the attitude which enslaved us. That is the attitude which dropped India from its heights of glory to the low low levels of slavery that we were reduced to. It is this attitude that we must watch out for today. Today India gives the lead in the world in many areas. We will not give up this lead. We will keep this lead. We will fight for it. What we are looking

for today is not a mere change in the economic set-up of the world. That is important. We have fought and we have fought hard and we have won even when we have been faced by the strongest all aligned against just a handful of countries but because we were right, because we have the will, because we have the determination we have fought for what was right and we have won what was right.

Today the challenge is much more important than that. The challenge is to get the world to look at ourselves in a different perspective. Just as we say that we are one nation; just as we want to remove the caste, region, linguistic barriers which divide our country so we must remove the other barriers that divide humanity in this world. It is only when we start seeing the world as one humanity that the strength of countries such as India, which rely on basic principles and values as opposed to brute force and alignment it is then that our strength will come out. It is then that the world will become a truly livable place. It is this challenge that is in front of us today. It is not a question of helping the blacks in South Africa just because certain atrocities are taking place, but because they are part of our family. We are one humanity, that is why we are reaching out to help them. If we fight against wrong attitude anywhere in the world it is because we want to change this attitude from one of "us" and "them" to all of us together, as one humanity. It is this that Panditji started off and it is this task that we must continue on.

Today when India speaks it is not the India of 1979 where nobody even bothered to listen to us. Today when India speaks India is listened to. It is heard. India counts. In 1979 in the international scene India did not count. This is the difference that we have made. If we now once more look inwards, if we follow the wrong policies outside, we will be back to the stage where we were the mockery of the world. Do we want our country to go back to that stage? We in this Government will not allow it go back to that stage.

We have taken a major initiative on disarmament. The Six Nation Five Continent Peace Initiative has set the stage in the world environment, in the atmosphere in the world for the Reykjavik Summit that took place. We were disappointed that conclusions were not reached but we are not totally disheartened because the proposal, are still there. Verification is a major problem. We from the Six have offered certain solutions. We will be continuing a long that road. We welcome the new initiative, the new Soviet initiative, on the intermediate nuclear weapons and we hope that this will be successful.

country today to destroy the barriers that we are building to protect ourselves in our regions, in our languages, in our religions and in our castes. The need of the hour is unflinching secularism, unity in our democracy in maintaining, the essential values of our heritage. Panditji has said that we are small men serving great causes, but because the cause is great, something of that greatness falls upon us. It is in that spirit that we shall strive undaunted, undetected and unfazed.

BACK NOTE

**XV. Reply on Motion of Thanks to the President's Address,
3 March, 1987**

1. SHRI DINESH GOSWAMI: But Mr. Prime Minister, I have pointed out to you in the speech—unfortunately you were not there—that all the queries and all the help that we have asked for, the replies are being awaited in clause 5(4), clause 7 and so on and so forth. I hope, you will give specific answer to this because you have given an impression round the country that the Central Government has done everything. And I have tried to point out.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: I did not want to raise it here because we are talking this afternoon. And it would unnecessarily vitiate the talks this afternoon if I took a strong position on what we have done. And I would not like to do that just now...

SHRI AMAL DATTA: Why should it be a private talk? Why do you not take the House into confidence?

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Because I cannot take the House into confidence about the talks I am to have this evening.

I will do that if you wish.

SHRI DINESH GOSWAMI: I do not want you to take the House into confidence. But I hope, you will revise that position that everything that the Central Government has to do has been done, and Mr. Chintamani Panigrahi's position that 90 per cent of what the Central Government has to do has been done. Kindly revise that position.

2. SHRI AMAL DATTA : Between the old and the new series. Why did you keep out 95 items of the old series from the new one and not brought them in the new series?

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: I cannot be held responsible for low rates of growth in certain parts of our country.

SHRI AMAL DATTA: Wonderful!

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: And Members from those parts of the country obviously have the perception from their home ground in views.

SHRI AMAL DATTA: It is a fraud on the nation— the figures that you have put up.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Sir, if the hon. Member really wants some answers, those figures represent new industries. If the hon. Member feels.

SHRI AMAL DATTA: What has happened to the old industries? Have they died out? 95 industries have been taken out. Do you know that?

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Mr. Amal Datta, no interference please.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Certain industries such as petroleum, such as electronics.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: He has the right to speak. When you were given time, you were also speaking.

SHRI AMAL DATTA: Without mentioning my name, he is referring to me.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: I beg your pardon. I did not mention any Member by name. It is not for me to identify those that feel guilty of being confused.

SHRI AMAL DATTA: It is very easy to identify.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Sir, if the cap fits. I can hardly be responsible for the size of the head.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE (Rajapur): Mr. Prime Minister, don't touch West Bengal. Otherwise, either Kumari Mamta Banerjee will be angry of he will be angry.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Sir, all our Members from West Bengal are needed for campaigning. Some are preferred to be kept outside the state.

SHRI AMAL DATTA: As Prime Minister if he says this, then it is derogatory to Parliament.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Sir, I don't want to hurt the hon. Member's feelings.

SHRI AMAL DATTA: No, no. you are not hurting me; you are hurting the nation.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Mr. Datta, take it easy.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Sir, I did not mean to hurt the hon. Member.

SHRI AMAL DATTA: Then what exactly did you mean? Campaigning is more important than attending the Parliament? That is what exactly you meant?

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Mr. Amal Datta, don't figure out like this.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Sir, if I have hurt the hon. Member's feelings. I apologise to the hon. Member. But if he is upset that he has not been invited to campaign, we are willing to invite him to campaign if nobody else does.

SHRI AMAL DATTA: As Prime Minister, it is not proper for you to say like that. It lowers the dignity of Parliament. Please try to uphold the dignity of Parliament.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Sir, it is an open invitation and if the hon. Member wants to take it up, I will talk with him after the debate.

3. SHRI AMAL DATTA: What is your programme? A very small amount has been allocated for adult education.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: In case the hon. Member is not aware, we have a technology mission on that.

SHRI AMAL DATTA: Nothing has been done on that. Don't harp on things which the Government cannot achieve.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: We only have steel production today because Panditji laid the foundation-stone in the early '50s. You start a programme...

SHRI AMAL DATTA: You have the same steel production as in the early '60s.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Except in Bengal where perhaps it is lessening.

SHRI DINESH GOSWAMI: You were present only when he was making his speech. That is creating the trouble.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: No. I was there for other speeches also. But fortunately others were disciplined and stayed within their time limits, while certain other Members just kept on and on and on talking, wasting the total time of the House.

SHRI P. KOLANDAIVELU (Gobi Chettipalayam): Most of your time is being spent on Amal Datta.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: You are absolutely right. We shall send him for campaigning. Education is the basis of our anti-poverty programme.

SHRI MOHD. MAHFOOZ ALI KHAN (Etah): Why are we people also being involved? It is between you and Shri Amal Datta only.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: We are telling you about the education. We hope that some other people also learn alongwith you.

SHRI MOHD. MAHFOOZ ALI KHAN: That is right.

4. DR. DATTA SAMANT (Bombay South Central): Modernization benefits are passing on the employers, not to the workers. That is what happened in textiles.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: He does not want to change his way of thinking!

SHRI BALKAVI BAIIRAGI (Mandsour): Mr. Prime Minister. Sir, both these Dattas are fighting with you simultaneously.

DR. DATTA SAMANT: Benefits should pass on to the workmen.

5. SHRI AMAL DATTA: Election publicity.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: I am at a total loss. Just a few minutes ago, the hon. Member questioned my giving a thousand crores to Bengal. Now he says that giving a thousand crores to Bengal is election publicity.

SHRI AMAL DATTA: I am not questioning the figures —AD HOC Rs. 1007 crores. This was debated in the House, and when the Planning Minister could not answer, the House had to be adjourned. You must be knowing what a predicament you had put your Minister into.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: There is no question of the total being wrong. We can give the full total.

PROF. MADHU DANDEVATE (Rajapur): You have given a thousand crores to Bengal. Why not give the hundred crores to Bombay which you have promised?

6. SHRI AMAL DATTA: It is allocating money to the capitalists. If they want it, they can have it.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Sir, there is no question of allocating money to the capitalists. But we have also seen and it is necessary to bring another point out that certain State Governments have for the past five or six months stopped all work on their rural development programme and anti-poverty programmes. I wonder why they stopped it. One Particular Government I am aware of, has not done any work.

7. SHRI P. KOLANDAIVELU: Why not we stop this genocide first? Military action is going on.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: That is violence.

SHRI P. KOLANDAIVELU: Hundreds of people are dying. Today, I have found in the papers some response from Shri Jayewardene to India's call, to the Prime Minister's call. I would request the honourable Prime Minister to let us know the position first.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: After we sent a Communication, a letter to the President, the level of violence has come down. But we are not satisfied with the level it is at today. We hope it will come down further and that we will be able to have a negotiated settlement because no other settlement will be a lasting settlement.

With China, there has been tension on the border. We want a peaceful settlement of the border issue. What is needed is patience, restraint, wisdom, statesmanship and perhaps, most of all, vision from all concerned.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: And firmness?

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: And firmness —that was included in 'wisdom'.

STATEMENT REGARDING INDO-SRI LANKA AGREEMENT

30 July, 1987

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have just returned from a brief but momentous visit to Colombo and I would like to take the House into confidence immediately about the outcome. I consider the visit momentous because His Excellency President Jayewardene of Sri Lanka and I signed an Agreement yesterday, the 29th of July, which aims at bringing to an end the difficult conflict which has afflicted our friendly neighbour Sri Lanka for years. The House is aware of the background of the ethnic conflict between the citizens of Sri Lanka which has its roots in complex historical and socio-economic factors. The conflict assumed acute dimensions over the last four years endangering the very stability, unity and integrity of Sri Lanka.

Things reached a low with the outbreak of unprecedented violence against Tamils in Sri Lanka in 1983. I do not wish to go into the details of the large scale killings and the extensive sufferings which affected the Sri Lankan people. The period between July 1983 and May 1987 was a particularly tragic chapter in Sri Lankan history. Thousands of civilians were killed-Tamils, Sinhalese, women, children, even monks and priests. Thousands were rendered homeless and became refugees, as it were within Sri Lanka itself. India received nearly 150 thousand Sri Lankan Tamil refugees.

We have structured a framework for a durable solution to Sri Lanka's ethnic problem. The Agreement meets the basic aspirations which animated the Tamils' struggle, namely, the desire to be recognised as a distinct ethnic entity; political autonomy for managing their political future; an appropriate devolution of governmental power to meet this objective, the recognition of the Northern and Eastern Provinces of Sri Lanka as areas of historical habitation of the Tamils and the acknowledgement and designation of Tamil as an official language of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka.

The Agreement constitutes the Eastern and Northern Provinces of Sri Lanka into one administrative unit with an elected Provincial Council and a Chief Minister. Powers would be devolved to the Provincial Council within the

framework of the proposals finalised between May to December 1986 to ensure a full measure of autonomy to the Provinces of Sri Lanka.

The Emergency in Sri Lanka is to be lifted in the near future. The cessation of hostilities and the surrender of arms is to take place within a defined time frame. A general amnesty is to be granted to all militant cadres. Elections to the Provincial Councils are to be held within three months.

The Agreement suggests the holding of a referendum on the basic issue of the link between the Northern and Eastern Provinces by the end of 1988, which the President has the discretion to postpone.

The President of Sri Lanka and I have also exchanged letters in which Sri Lanka has agreed to be responsive to India's political and security concerns. The Agreement and the letters detail the obligations which India has undertaken on its part to ensure the unity, territorial integrity and stability of Sri Lanka. We shall meet these obligations faithfully and in full.

The President of Sri Lanka informed me that he felt that the outbreak of violence in Colombo and other parts of Sri Lanka over the last few days was the work of the Sinhala terrorist organisation-the JVP. He felt that some members of the religious organisations and opposition parties had allowed themselves to be used as tools by the JVP. But none of the parties representing trade unions and workers had supported the violence.

Hon. Members would recall that the same organisation had engineered a large scale Insurrection in Sri Lanka in 1971. The then Prime Minister, Mrs. Bandaranaike, had asked for our assistance to put down the insurgency, and we had given prompt and full assistance.

President Jayewardene explained that because of the deteriorating situation as a result of these disturbances and the increasing demands that this puts on the Sri Lankan security forces, his Government would need assistance to implement the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement for ending the ethnic crisis. For this purpose the Government of Sri Lanka made a formal request for appropriate Indian military assistance to ensure the cessation of hostilities and surrender of arms in the Jaffna Peninsula and, if required, the Eastern Province. He also

requested for air transport to move some of the Sri Lankan troops from Jaffna to points in the South.

In response to this formal request from the Government of Sri Lanka, and in terms of our obligations under the just signed Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement, units of the Armed Forces of India have today landed in the Jaffna Peninsula. Let me repeat that our troops have landed in Sri Lanka in response to a specific and formal request of the Government of Sri Lanka who have invoked our obligations and commitments under the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement. Our troops have gone there to help implement the Agreement to end the ethnic strife in Sri Lanka and their despatch underlines our firm commitment to the unity and integrity of Sri Lanka. We are in continuous touch with the Government of Sri Lanka at various levels.

The conclusion of this Agreement has not been an easy exercise for the Sri Lankan Government and the Sri Lankan leadership. I wish once again to pay tribute to President Jayewardene's wisdom, courage and statesmanship.

I am confident that the Agreement which we signed with Sri Lanka yesterday brings to an end a tragic chapter of Sri Lanka's recent history and marks the beginning of a new chapter in Indo-Sri Lanka relations. I am equally confident that the Agreement will remove past tensions and mistrust and consolidate and strengthen the friendship between the peoples of Sri Lanka and India dating back to more than two thousand five hundred years of shared history and heritage.

The text of the Agreement signed between His Excellency President Jayewardene and myself and of the letters exchanged between us at Colombo yesterday will be placed on the Table of the House at the earliest.

BACK NOTE

XVI. Statement Regarding Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement, 30 July, 1987

-NIL-

STATEMENT REGARDING ALLOCATION OF A MINE SITE TO
INDIA IN THE CENTRAL INDIAN OCEAN BY THE
PREPARATORY COMMISSION OF THE
INTERNATIONAL SEABED AUTHORITY

26 August, 1987

I rise to inform this House of an important development during the 40th anniversary celebrations of our Independence. On August 17, 1987 we have secured for our country a unique position. Our application for registration and allocation of a mine site in the Central Indian Ocean was unanimously accepted by the Preparatory Commission of the International Seabed Authority -PREPCOM- a body of the United Nations.

Hon'ble Members will recall that the Third U.N. Conference on the Law of the Sea accorded India, Pioneer Status along with three other countries in deep seabed exploration in recognition of their achievements in seabed surveys, research and development. India is the only developing country to be so recognised. This was an important landmark.

The decision of the PREPCOM, to register India's claim first and earlier than that of the other countries and allocate an area 150,000 (one hundred and fifty thousand) square kilometers for further exploration and development is yet another landmark. This decision entitles us to explore and develop the resources of the deep seabed, which contain rich deposits of polymetallic nodules and which are a source of important minerals like copper, cobalt, nickel and manganese. However, commercial exploitation of these resources will take place only in future, after we have developed or acquired adequate technology and after the U.N. Convention on the Law of the Sea comes into force.

It is a matter of great satisfaction that the Preparatory commission has determined that similar claims of other States, viz. France, Japan and USSR would be registered towards the end of this year. This will pave the way for universal participation of developed and developing countries in the new legal regime for ocean space.

The registration of our claim for a deep seabed mine site indeed provides concrete indication of indigenous scientific capabilities and achievements. It is yet another step forward in our quest for self-reliance.

I am sure this House will agree to place on record our appreciation for the excellent work done by our scientists and engineers who have taken up the challenging task to explore new horizons of science to unravel the mysteries of the ocean.

BACK NOTE

XVII. Statement Regarding Allocation of a Mine Site to India in the Central Indian Ocean by the Preparatory Commission of the International Seabed Authority, 26 August, 1987

-NIL-

STATEMENT REGARDING SITUATION IN SRI LANKA

9 November, 1987

Mr. Speaker, I rise to inform the House about progress on the implementation of the Indo-Sri Lankan Agreement, including the background to the operations of the Indian Peace Keeping force (IPKF) in the Jaffna peninsula.

The Agreement has been acclaimed internationally. There is a widespread consensus that the full implementation of the Agreement will be of universal benefit. Tamil aspirations would be met, the unity and integrity of Sri Lanka preserved, and peace and stability restored to the region. Some of our important security concerns would also be met. Therefore, the Government of India is committed to the full implementation of this Agreement. We believe that this resolve is shared by the Government of Sri Lanka.

In the three months since the Agreement was signed, we have made satisfactory progress on many fronts. The Sri Lankan security personnel have stayed in their barracks. Home Guards in the Eastern Province have been disarmed and the Special Task Force has been largely withdrawn. Over 3300 Tamil detenus have been released under an amnesty, and the rate would have been freed if the LTTE had not disrupted the return to normalcy.

The contours of civil administration in the North and the East were being drawn on the lines suggested by Tamil representatives ranging from the LTTE to the TULF. The interim Administrative council had been announced, with the LTTE given a decisive majority share. The return of the refugees from India had been planned in consultation with the Government of Sri Lanka. We had identified priority areas for rehabilitation, to be financed through a grant of Rs. 25 crore announced by India. Peace had been established in the North and East of Sri Lanka. The return to normalcy was imminent.

It is a matter of great regret that the LTTE threw all this away. They went back on every commitment that they had given us. They deliberately set out to wreck the Agreement, because they were unable or unwilling to make

the transition from militancy to the democratic political process. The LTTE were given every possible encouragement and opportunity to join the political mainstream and even to play leading role in the process. The LTTE leadership which had masterminded the killings of over 600 rival Tamil militant cadres, were permitted to retain their personal arms for their security. They were allowed to hand over their arms at their own pace, even though this enabled motivated parties to question our resolve to implement the Agreement. Our High Commissioner flew to Jaffna several times to find out what the LTTE leadership wanted. On September 28, an agreement was reached. The minutes signed conceded every single demand of the LTTE concerning the composition and functioning of the Interim Administrative Council. In return, the LTTE reiterated their support to the Agreement and once again promised to lay down arms. The establishment of the Interim Administrative Council was announced in accordance with this agreement. But within hours, the LTTE went back on their commitment.

The LTTE chose to adopt a course of violence. While they promised us support to the Agreement, they started a propaganda campaign against India and the Agreement through meetings and through their illegal broadcasting facilities. They organised disturbances in Jaffna, disrupting normal life and the process of reconstruction and rehabilitation. They threatened all Tamil civilians who disagreed with them. They hunted down and massacred about a 100 members of other Tamil militant groups. They tried to inflame Tamil opinion in Jaffna by imposing an unnecessary and tragic fast unto death by one of their cadres to demand concessions that were already under discussion and were resolved to their satisfaction.

At this stage the unfortunate suicide of 12 LTTE cadres took place. The LTTE killed the eight Sri Lankan soldiers in their custody and massacred over 200 civilians in the Eastern Province. They publicly repudiated the Agreement and started armed attacks on the IPKF.

The LTTE's repudiation of the Agreement, their attacks on Sinhals and Muslims in the East and their murder of Sri Lankan soldiers threatened to produce a Sinhala backlash that would have destroyed the Agreement and produced a cycle of violence worse than any island had so far seen. The victims would have been mainly Tamils, especially in the South and the Central Highlands.

The House will appreciate that this could not have been allowed to happen. In these circumstances: the, IPKF were given instructions to apprehend anyone carrying arms or involved in the massacre of civilians. At this point, the LTTE launched attacks on the IPKF. There was than no alternative to disarming the LTTE.

The IPKF were given strict instructions not to use tactics or weapons that could cause major casualties among the civilian population of Jaffna, who were hostages to the LTTE. The Indian Army have carried out these instructions with outstanding discipline and courage, accepting, in the process, a high level of sacrifices for protecting the Tamil civilians. I place on record Government's very deep appreciation of the dedication and high moral standards with which the Indian Armed Force have conducted operations in Jaffna, against a group that flouts every norm of civilised behaviour, coercing old men, women and children to act as shields, using innocent children as human bombs, murdering prisoners, and boobytrapping houses of the people of Jaffna one whose behalf they claim to be fighting. We wish a speedy recovery to our wounded soldiers. I pay homage to the soldiers who have layed down their Jives. I am sure the entire House will join me in conveying our tribute to our gallant armed forces and our deepest sympathies to the bereaved families.

Despite grave risk to IAF helicopters, emergency food supplies were air-dropped over the city even during the fighting. The IPKF shared their rations with the refugees in Jaffna, cooked food was sent to refugee camps as soon as these came under the IPKF's protection. We have made a major effort to restore civil supplies, amenities and administration to Jaffna. Simultaneously, shiploads of essential food and other supplies have been sent to the port of Karkesanthurai. Relief convoys are being sent to Jaffna, even though the LTTE continues to attack these humanitarian missions. Electricity and telephone communications, which had been sabotaged by the LTTE, have been partially restored with equipment flown out from India to replace what had been damaged. A small team of civil administrators has been sent out to advise and assist the IPKF in relief and rehabilitation work. The Indian Red Cross have sent over their personnel, and, in cooperation with the local Red Cross, they are doing a remarkable job of providing relief and medical assistance in the city.

The unfortunate developments in Jaffna were not of our making. We reacted with a heavy heart when there was no alternative. We got the LTTE everything they wanted, disregarding the cost to our credibility with other militant groups and all communities including the Tamils. We overlooked the LTTE's vicious propaganda even before the outbreak of hostilities, not just against the Agreement but against India and the IPKF. In the Interim Administrative Council, they were given a clear majority of seven out of twelve, including a Chairman of their choice. Other Tamil militant groups were excluded at their insistence. While the Government of India have accommodated every concern of the LTTE, the LTTE have not honoured any of their commitments.

Even after they attacked the IPKF and precipitated the hostilities, we have repeatedly said that if the LTTE hand over their arms, support the Agreement and renounce the path of violence, they can still play an important role in the future democratic set up. President Jayewardene has already promised them amnesty again if they surrender their weapons and support the Agreement. The LTTE have responded only with ultimatums and renewed propaganda, spreading misinformation and lies aimed at tarnishing the image of India and our armed forces. We still hope that better sense will prevail.

Throughout we have worked towards ensuring an early and effective devolution of powers so that the legitimate aspirations of the Tamils are met and they can live in security, with dignity and honour as equal citizens of Sri Lanka. Even while trying to control the violence unleashed by the LTTE, we have been mindful of the need to ensure an early return of Sri Lankan Tamil refugees from India and the need to ensure that fresh colonisation of Tamil areas does not take place.

There were reports of Sinhala colonisation in the East even after the Agreement was signed. This naturally caused concern to the Tamils, particularly since large numbers of Tamils of the Province are still refugees, either in India or in the North. We have taken this up strongly with the Government of Sri Lanka to ensure that this does not happen. The Sri Lankan Government have agreed to the formation of a Monitoring Committee, consisting of all communities, to investigate complaints of fresh colonisation.

We are keen to ensure an early return of Sri Lankan refugees in India to their homes. The Government of Sri Lanka have also agreed to cooperate with us to facilitate the early return to their homes of Tamils who have been internally displaced. We hope the process will start soon.

Long-term peace in Sri Lanka will hinge on the devolution package. The Sri Lankan Government have already introduced legislation in their Parliament to amend their Constitution to provide for the creation of Provincial Councils and the devolution of powers to them. The legislation also provides for the creation of a single Tamil province in the North and the East. In the light of Sri Lanka's unitary constitution, this legislation is unprecedented. The powers it seeks to devolve to the Provincial Councils are considerable. However, some of its provisions do not fully meet Tamil expectations.

This matter was discussed extensively with President Jayewardene in Kathmandu and during his three day working visit to Delhi. We have received firm assurance that if, over the coming months, difficulties arise, the Sri Lanka Government will make such changes as are found necessary.

The Government of India believe that, despite some problem and delays, many of which were foreseen but unavoidable in the resolution of an issue of this magnitude and complexity, this Agreement represents the only way of safeguarding legitimate Tamil interests and ensuring a durable peace in Sri Lanka. Some have chosen to criticise the Agreement. None has shown a better way to meeting the legitimate aspirations of the Tamils in Sri Lanka, restoring peace in that country and of meeting our own security concerns in the region. We have accepted a role which is difficult, but which is in our national interest to discharge. We shall not shirk our obligations and commitments. This is a national endeavour. I am confident our efforts will have the full support of this House.

BACK NOTE

XVIII. Statement Regarding Situation in Sri Lanka, 9 November,
1987

-NIL-

STATEMENT REGARDING VISITS ABROAD

11 November, 1987

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to apprise the House of my visits abroad since the last session of Parliament. On my way to the Commonwealth Summit in Canada, I made a brief transit halt in Tokyo on the 12th October for an exchange of views with Prime Minister Nakasone. We discussed matters of mutual interest. A soft untied Japanese credit equivalent to \$200 million was announced. The Prime Minister expressed Japan's full support to the Indo-Sri Lankan Agreement.

The commonwealth Summit was held in Vancouver from the 13th to the 17th October.

The Summit took place amidst growing speculation that the Commonwealth had run out of steam in its campaign against apartheid in South Africa. This was proved wrong. All the Commonwealth countries, with the exception of Britain, agreed that sanctions were beginning to have the desired effect. We, therefore, decided to intensify the pressure and expand the scope of sanctions. We undertook to work for wider international acceptance and better implementation of the Commonwealth sanctions programme.

Several new suggestions, including those made by us, were accepted. We agreed to undertake, on a continuing basis, an evaluation of the impact of sanctions. We also agreed that any effort to frustrate these sanctions should be identified and brought to light. We concurred on the need for an expert study to examine the implications of Pretoria's, relationship with the international financial system for the maintenance of the apartheid regime. We will take further action, including additional sanctions, in response to the situation as it evolves. The Programme of Action relating to sanctions on South Africa was adopted by all Commonwealth countries, with the solitary exception of Britain.

All of us initiated a programme of coordinated Commonwealth assistance to the Frontline States. A Special Fund was established to provide technical

assistance to Mozambique. Commonwealth assistance to the victims and opponents of apartheid will be expanded. We agreed to give high priority to efforts aimed at removing censorship in South Africa, because it is such censorship which hides the truth about South Africa from world public opinion. To provide high level impetus and guidance for achieving these objectives, the Summit set up an eight member Committee of Foreign Ministers. The Committee will be chaired by Canada and includes India.

The events in Fiji figured prominently in our discussions in Vancouver. In my Statement at the inaugural session, I expressed our serious concern about the racist overtones of recent developments and the undermining of democracy in that country. Fiji has ceased to be a member of the Commonwealth. The Summit decided that the question of Fiji's readmission would be taken up only when circumstances so warrant and in keeping with the basic principles that have guided the organisation. We also agreed that the Commonwealth would be ready to offer its good offices to contribute to a solution of the problems in Fiji.

The Vancouver Commonwealth communique contained a strong endorsement of the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement. The Agreement was acclaimed as an act of the statesmanship. An important achievement of the Summit was the Vancouver Declaration on World Trade, which brings together on a common platform representative of developed and developing countries drawn from all continents. The Declaration expressed our concern at rising global protectionist practices and calls for the implementation of the Punta-de-Este commitments on "standstill" and "roll back" of protectionist measures. The Declaration recognises the disadvantaged position of the developing countries in international trade and, in view of this asymmetry, the need to give special consideration to their interest in the Uruguay Round of Trade Negotiations.

We launched the Commonwealth programme to promote distance education, that is, the use of new communications technologies to bring learning within the reach of large numbers. through a system of non-formal education. India is well placed to both contribute to this initiative and to benefit from it.

Within the parameter of the differing perceptions of the sovereign government represented in the Commonwealth, the agreements reached at the

Vancouver Summit confirmed the dynamism and relevance of this organisation in international affairs. Notwithstanding the single discordant note on the issue of sanctions, the Summit welded together a large section of world opinion on key issues of peace and stability in the world. I would like to record our appreciation of the meticulous care with which arrangements were made by the Government of Canada. I would also like to commend the important and imaginative role played by Prime Minister Brian Mulroney of Canada, in steering the Conference to a successful conclusion.

While in Vancouver, I had bilateral discussion with Prime Minister, Mulroney, I also had meeting with a number of other leaders including the Presidents of Bangladesh, Guyana, Maldives, Tanzania and Zambia, the Sultan of Brunei and the Prime Minister of Australia, Britain, Malta, New Zealand, Singapore and Zimbabwe, and the leader of the Nigerian delegation.

On the 18th October, at Harvard University, I delivered the Jodidi Memorial lecture on India and Democracy.

The following day I participated in a special debate in the United Nation General Assembly on the Report on environment and development presented by the Commission headed by the Norwegian Prime Minister, Mrs. Gro Harlem Brundland. The President of Maldives and the Prime Ministers of Denmark, Norway and Zimbabwe also participated in the debate.

I addressed a luncheon meeting jointly organised by the Foreign Policy Association, the Asia Society and the Indian Chambers of Commerce in New York.

I spoke about India's Foreign Policy and the contemporary political scene.

I undertook a working visit to Washington at the invitation of President Reagan. We attach great importance to our relations with the United States. We believe that a continuing dialogue between our countries is indispensable for a better understanding of each other and to expand mutually beneficial cooperation in bilateral and international affairs.

I had a breakfast meeting with Congressional leaders, including the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the Senate Majority leader. As a result,

there is now a greater recognition in the United States of the gravity of Pakistan's unrelenting quest for nuclear weapons.

President Reagan and I had a wide-ranging and useful exchange of views on regional and international matters. The US reaffirmed its full support to the Indo-Sri Lanka agreement. I reiterated our serious concern over Pakistan's weapons oriented nuclear programme.

Our discussions covered other vital issues of the day. I welcomed the prospect of the agreement between the Soviet Union and the United States to eliminate short and medium-range nuclear forces.

We discussed the strengthening of bilateral ties. The agenda drawn up during my 1985 visit has largely been completed, and a new agenda has now been put in place. We agreed to extend the Science and Technology initiative, which has shown positive results, for another three years beyond 1988. We also decided to extend the scope of cooperation to the frontiers of Science and technology.

Projects have been identified for cooperative research in ocean science development, in water management, and in arid-zone agriculture. Development fellowships are being instituted to place our scientists in premier American institutions for research in areas of specific interest to both countries.

We agreed to increase our cooperation in trade and investment. We will expand our work in curbing drug abuse and drug trafficking. We will strengthen our tie in culture and education. We are exploring avenues of, cooperation in defence-related technologies. Members will be glad to learn that we agreed on the importance of greater interaction between legislators of two countries.

On my way back to Delhi, I met Prime Minister Lubbers at Amsterdam airport.

From the 2nd to the 4th November, I was in Kathmandu for the Third Summit of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC).

In my statement to the House after the 2nd Summit in Bangalore, I had said that during India's Chairmanship we would endeavour to consolidate and diversify regional cooperation.

At Bangalore we had put forward new ideas for closer people-to-people interaction. We also took several steps to give regional cooperation more meaningful substance. We decided to set up a Group of Legal Experts to work out a framework for cooperation in combating terrorism. We discussed idea of a SAARC Food Security Reserve. We sought to extend regional cooperation in new fields such as the prevention of drug trafficking and drug abuse, disaster management, forestry and ecology, and trade, industry, money and finance. We agreed to draw up common principles, procedures and rules for establishment of regional institutions. And finally, we decided to take action to make the SAARC Secretariat functional.

I am glad to inform the House that we have achieved these objectives and discharged our obligations.

During our Chairmanship, as many as 100 events- almost two per week- were held. Out of these, India alone hosted 45.

All the new ideas agreed upon in Bangalore have now been translated into projects. The SAARC audio-visual exchange commenced with the direct telecast of the inaugural session of the Kathmandu Summit. The programme of SAARC fellowships, chair and scholarships is scheduled to begin in the academic year of 1988.

At Kathmandu, the SAARC Food Security Reserve was established. This is the first time that countries of the region have decided to pool resources to help one another in an emergency.

The SAARC Regional Convention on the Suppression of Terrorism was signed at the Summit. The stage had been set when experts from SAARC countries met in Delhi in March this year and identified extraditable offences which are terrorist and not political in nature. The Convention is a breakthrough. It demonstrates the desire of all countries in our region to come together to fight the menace of terrorism.

Deep concern was expressed at the recurrence of drought, floods and tidal wave in our region. Following our initiative to bring disaster relief management within the scope of South Asian Cooperation, we agreed at Kathmandu to commission a study on the protection and preservation of the

environment and on the causes and consequences of natural disaster in our region.

India, believes that South Asian cooperation should move towards incorporating the core economic sector of trade, industry, money and finance. The view is gaining acceptance. At Kathmandu, we decided to undertake studies in this direction. We hope these studies will encourage countries in the region to move confidently towards cooperative venture in these areas. During the Summit, I visited the SAARC Secretariat and saw it at work. It is creditable that within a year of its establishment the Secretariat is well on the way to discharging its functions fully.

The Kathmandu Summit gave me the opportunity of having an informal exchange of views on bilateral and international issues with other leaders present.

Before concluding, I would like to express our appreciation of the excellent arrangements made for the Conference by His Majesty's Government of Nepal. The success of the Summit owed much to the distinguished leadership of our Chairman, His Majesty the King of Nepal.

BACKNOTE

XIX. Statement Regarding Visits Abroad, 11 November, 1987

-NIL-

STATEMENT REGARDING AGREEMENT BETWEEN U.S.S.R. AND
U.S.A. ON ELIMINATION OF LAND BASED INTERMEDIATE
NUCLEAR MISSILES

9 December, 1987

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Agreement on elimination of land based Intermediate nuclear missiles concluded yesterday between General Secretary Gorbachev and President Reagan represents a truly momentous development.

It is true that it envisages the elimination of only around 3 per cent of the combined nuclear arsenals of the United States and the USSR. But its historic significance is that it is the world's first nuclear arms reduction agreement.

It is also the first time that the United States and the USSR have, agreed to completely eliminate an entire category of nuclear weapons.

This agreement has vividly demonstrated that, given the necessary political will, technical problems, such as verification, can be overcome.

This Agreement is not, and should not be considered as more than a beginning- historic beginning, a vital beginning, but still only a beginning. The survival of humanity depends on the nuclear weapon powers travelling all the way down this road to the complete elimination of nuclear weapons.

The world will be really safe only when, as the Delhi Declaration puts it "the balance of terror" gives way to comprehensive international security.

After we get the full details of the Agreement, we will put a much more comprehensive statement before both the Houses.

BACK NOTE

- XX. Statement Regarding Agreement Between U.S.S.R. and U.S.A.
on Elimination of Land Based Intermediate Nuclear Missiles,
9 December, 1987

-NIL-

begging for help from our side to help the Opposition. In that pleading appeal of his, the only two Prime Ministers he forgot to mention were those that were non-Congress. So, obviously, the impression that is left on the country is of the Congress Prime Ministers and not of the others. They accused us of having politics of confrontation. Who started the Conclaves? Who tried to undo the people's mandate?

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The fact is that these meetings. I don't want to argue across the Floor, Sir. The fact is that these meetings were removing the tensions between the Government and the Opposition and the Opposition did not like that because then they found it difficult to argue on the Floor of the House. And they have said so to my Minister for Parliamentary Affairs.

I called a meeting in November 1986 for general discussions; again you did not come. I called a meeting for Bofors in August 1987; again you did not come. So, who is the one who is having confrontation and who is the one who is trying to have consultation? The fact is that on every occasion that we have tried to involve the Opposition in the decision making process, they have run away from that. They have refused to come and be involved. And when they have come, they have always wound up the meeting in indecision by not being precise and decisive in their arguments.

And I can quote it on specific meetings that we have had on specific subjects — I can quote it on meetings where a number of subjects have been covered. The fact is that we have tried to involve the Opposition, they have not wanted to get involved, because they have been indecisive and they don't want to face the truth. That is the fact of the matter, Sir.

The Hon. Member who spoke just before me mentioned something about Fairfax. And I did notice that he was reading from a typed speech. Perhaps his speech was typed.

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Perhaps I could only request the hon. Members to follow in the footsteps of their Chief Minister. Come around to our view of thinking. Open your eyes. Find out what is happening. If you open your eyes, you will find out. Go to West Bengal and find out.

We are dealing with the multinationals, transnational from a position of strength, without compromising anything of our independence in thought and action at any stage. Let that be very clear. Unfortunately, the Opposition is not prepared to think objectively about the conditions of the economy and of our society. It is not adequate just to make noises here. You have to think objectively and come out with specific alternative programmes and ideas, if you can do so. But so far there has been a total vacuum and that has been seen during this debate also. The Congress is not afraid of change. The Congress knows how to learn from the realities, to learn how to change and make the economy more faster, how social change must be brought about and how the cultural life of the country must be improved. This was Panditji's contribution to the Congress and to the country. This was the basis of my speech in Bombay. I am glad that Shri Madhav Reddi referred to my speech in Bombay and I would only request, perhaps I should ask them, whether any party in the opposition has the self confidence to do such introspection and if you have, I would request you to do so, You had your turn, now let me talk.

Can any of you, do any of you have the guts to look at the changing world and the changing conditions in the country? Do any of you have the guts to self-criticise? Do any of you have the guts to accommodate new ideas? The fact is, no.

My speech in Bombay was based on the values of the Congress as presented by Gandhiji, by Jawaharlal Nehru, and by Indira Gandhi. There was no deviation. We stand by that. And I would like to remind the hon. Members that this is not the first time that the Congress has looked within, there have been a number of occasions when the Congress has cleansed itself.

Much was talked about power brokers and *Satta ke dalals*. The Congress on a number of occasions has ejected these power brokers and has thrown out the *Satta ke dalals*, but where do we find these *dalals* today? Where are these power brokers who have been thrown out of the Congress today? I see them sitting on the benches opposite me.....

I am not yielding the floor.

I would request my friends to look within.

Sir, I am very sorry that I have touched the soft point in some hon. Members. That was not my intention. Let me be very clear; I am not talking of

one, two or three individuals, I am going well beyond that; I am talking of most of the parties which are sitting opposite me today, who have changed their labels a number of times; who changed their flags and symbols a number of times.

I would like them to look within. A little bit of introspection will do no harm. And while you are taking a little time to look within, also look to the left and right to see whom you are cooperating with, and whom you are sitting with. It will help you.

I talked to a very senior leader from one of the Leftist parties. I do not want to take his name; he is not here. He complained to me; a very senior leader of one of the Communist parties complained to me about employment and modernisation. Now, first let me put it right. He said that he is against my policies because I am modernising.

So, I said, "What is your objection to modernisation? Surely, if our people are to rise and progress and get up above their poverty, we must modernise. What else is modernisation?" He said, "Modernisation will result in a loss of employment". I said, "it does not necessarily have to". But let us, for the moment, separate the argument. Let us not link employment and modernisation. We will discuss employment later. Let us talk modernisation for a minute. I asked him. "Can you tell me if India as an independent nation in the 20th Century can survive without modernisation?" He was silent for almost 60 seconds by the watch and then he said, "But employment will be affected". That was his sole response!

The fact is that there is a total void in the thinking that is taking place amongst the Left in our country today. There is a total void. And this is what is even more disturbing because so far it was only the Right which had this void. At least we had one group of people with whom we could argue on policy and ideology and on basic principles. But today, we have lost even that. Today we have got a total void. I would request you or perhaps beg you to start thinking.

Start thinking about how poverty can be removed from this country. You cannot remove poverty if you do not bring better technology at the grassroot village level.

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We have during these years restructured our industry to face the challenges of the Eighties and and the Nineties. The industrial growth is impressive no matter what you think. The average growth during these three years has been a little under 9 per cent. I am saying 'three years' because one member said to me, "Do not quote one year or do not quote certain times". The industrial growth during the first four months of this year has been 12.6 per cent and the industrial growth in July has been 15.8 per cent. Sir, July is the last month for which figures are available. I challenge any of the members to show me another time in the history of this country when industrial growth has been at this rate. I say any other time. I am not limiting you even to independent India. Go back 2,000 years and tell me.

I will come to unions also. Do not worry. Then you will have you turn to shout.

This has come about because we have pursued policies that will develop and strengthen the country and not policies which are aimed at results of political arguments which can be given for the immediate needs. We are investing in the future of this country. We are not looking just for today. We are investing in tomorrow. And one of the problems that we are having, the reason that such large changes are required is that I feel very strongly that we have not invested enough in the future in the past. And I am including my own Congress Governments in that criticism. But it is always easier to look back and say, "You should have done that, you could have done that and so on". There were other problems that they were facing. So without trying to criticise, I am trying to put what I see as a problem today, I see that we have not invested enough in the future, much more needs to be done. And if we listen to what you say, there will be no investment in the future for this country.

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The fact is that it is not only industrial growth, but overall growth which is at an all time high today. Yes, we have had a very drought this year. Only in the last 100 years for which the record is available, there have been only three occasions when there have been two consecutive droughts; This is the third occasion. In spite of that we are getting the industrial growth that I just quoted. In spite of that we are going to have a positive overall growth which

has not happened in any bad year before. In 1979 when there was the last drought before this and it was nowhere near the drought that we have had minus five per cent overall growth. We had 20 per cent or 22 per cent inflation. I forgot the exact number. So let us just get the perspective right. The fact is that during these years, the country has progressed and developed at a rate at which it has never done so before. For this I would like to thank all those who have been involved, specially the administration, the scientists, the technologists, the managers, the farmers, the most menial workers—I mean, it is only because we have been able to mobilise all of them together, that we have been able to achieve this. And we are proud of our people that have achieved this. As I said this drought is one of the worst in recorded history. In terms of rainfall it is one of worst. If you want to.

Like I said only on two occasions in this century—and we have statistics only from 1885 onwards—before this, has there been a case of two droughts following consecutively. This time two droughts have followed, two consecutive years of bad monsoon. So, let us be clear of what is happening inspite of that, we have seen that the infrastructure functions well. Every aspect of the infrastructure is doing well. I am glad that Madhav Reddi Ji contrasted the drought with 1979 I will also contrast the drought with 1979. The drought now is much worse than in 1979 in every measure. What also has to be taken into account, which does not show up in the Met. Department's statistics is the time of the rainfall. If there are so many inches rain or centimeters of rainfall, Met. Department says: "Yes; the rainfall is all right". But if they do not fall in July, and they fall in September, it is not all right for the farmer. It is not all right as far as production is concerned. That statistics is not included in the rainfall statistics of the department. I have told them now. They will include such a statistic also. They will factor it to weight it for the farmer. But inspite of that, and this year the rainfall that has fallen, has fallen too late to be productive. So the effect of the drought is much worse than is seen by mere statistics, as they have shown it in the Met. Department's files. But inspite of that, we have taken the initiative to tackle the drought from here. Except for Rajasthan and Gujarat which have had very bad years for 3 or 4 years preceding, no other States — and I am saying Congress and Opposition States; unfortunately yesterday when you were talking to me, or when you mentioned only what I said about Opposition Chief Ministers. I wish you had also noted what I had said about our own Chief Ministers. I am absolutely straight. I do not pull any

those efforts. We have to see that there is an equal commitment in the States at nurturing and conserving our natural resources. This, unfortunately, is not realised adequately enough at the State level and perhaps even lower at the district level. This awareness must be brought about.

Sir, we are completely and totally for the freedom of the Press. We uphold that freedom. Just like we uphold all our basic democratic rights. There is no difference. Freedom of the Press is part of that right. Indeed, what is infact needed today is not just freedom of the press but also freedom for the Press from their overloads. This too needs to be established, one is not adequate. I am talking seriously. I am not trying to make a point. This has to be done as well. Nobody can be set apart from the process of the law, no matter how high or low or well connected. I have said so on the floor of this House, I have said so on a number of occasions. Yesterday Unnikrishnan Ji made a remark. I will say that now. Nobody is above the law in this country, no matter how well connected, no matter how highup, no matter if they belong to the Press. The law acts on the press as well. There is no separate law for the Press. If they violate the law, they will be punished according to the law. Let us be clear about that.

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Sir, this Government has complete faith in the Constitution, in the judiciary, in the law of the land and in Parliament, and we lay ourselves open to all the institutions. We have not shirked away at any time from facing them, but unfortunately, the same cannot be said of many who are sitting across the House. I would request them also, instead of taking to the street, to submit themselves to the institutions as well.

Sir, only a few people touched upon foreign policy. I was a little sad; about that because our internal policy is as closely linked with foreign policy as it is with each part of our internal domestic policy. Unfortunately, many in the Opposition have not realised that. It has been said that we have changed our foreign policy. Somebody said that initiatives have not been taken. I cannot categorically state that so many initiatives have been taken in so many months during this Government, and compare with an equivalent number of months during Pandit Ji's time, or Indira Ji's time, or Shastri Ji's time.

I do not want to show them the mirror of our achievements because I

feel that there is no such need.

But the number of initiatives that this Government have taken I think few other Governments have taken especially in the time-frame that we are talking about and you can talk about any area, whether it is South Africa, whether it is ANC, whether it is SWAPO, whether it is Frontline States, whether it is the Non-Aligned Movement, the African Fund, the Commonwealth, Eminent Persons Group, whether it is 6 Nation five continental initiative, whether it is on environment, whether it is on disarmament and development—I can go on whether it is on SAARC, it is an endless list, much longer than perhaps any other administration, certainly in the time-frame of three years.

The Sri Lanka Accord has come into some criticism in the House. I reiterate that it is historic accord. It has bear internationally acclaimed and it answers all legitimate Tamil aspirations. In fact, it goes beyond.

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Sir, under India's chairmanship the Non-aligned Movement gathered a strength which it has seldom had before and which it had lost in the intervening period. In SAARC, it is under India's leadership that the Organisation has really taken root and become strong. Like I said earlier, at the Commonwealth, at the UN India has played a very positive role in every aspect. With China we have moved forward. Tensions have been diffused, openings have been made and perhaps I could contrast this to what happened with China during the Janata period when the nation was humiliated by China attacking Vietnam while our Foreign Minister was in China. That is the difference between the foreign policy that you ran and the foreign policy that we are running. On Kampuchea India has played a key role in the getting together of the two leaders. On South Africa like I said India has done a lot with the USSR and here I think a special word for our friends, because while we have been improving relations with the U.S. and other western countries, and our friends have got very agitated about the progress that we have made, they have not bothered to see what has been happening with the U.S.S.R. during this period also. Perhaps they are not really interested because if they were, they would know the real thing. Never before have we had such a high number of high level visits between the two countries — never before. Never before has there been such interaction at high level and at lower levels between the Soviet Union and India on international issues — never before on bilateral issues. The Delhi Declaration

was a path breaking declaration where for the first time, perhaps ever a major power has come on the line of non-violence and signed a document, that is based on non-violence. Is this not diplomatic initiative? Even the language of the papers of the Washington Summit derives from our thoughts and our philosophy.

I would humbly submit that although the INF agreement has been signed today, it is not something that has happened overnight. It has happened because Panditji in the face of grave odds called for nuclear disarmament, because Gandhiji the day after the bomb was exploded in Hiroshima said that the system must be changed, if the world has to survive. For 40 years, India has fought for this. During these last three years, the efforts that we have put in are perhaps more than what have been put in any such period in the preceding years.

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Nobody is so naive as to think that major policy decisions take place overnight. It is after years, decades of work that the groundwork is done, when the atmosphere is right and when things suddenly click. And it is because of the decades of work that Pandit Ji did, that Indira Ji did, that India has done. It is the decades of espousing Gandhiji's ideals, that has led to this. Don't belittle India's role in this. Be proud of India's role. There are sometimes, some occasions come in one's life when one has to rise above petty differences for the nation's interest. Sometimes, occasionally, please do so.

Sir, with the Soviet Union, we have organised the first ever Soviet Festival outside the Soviet Union and it has been held in India. It is a mark of the friendship of the people of the Soviet Union and the people of India, going beyond just the Government.

In technology, the agreement that we have signed with the Soviet Union is unprecedented in its scope, in its content, in the access to hitech that it gives us. We have set a target of increasing our trade 2 1/2 times by 1992 and we aim to achieve this and I would like to just inform the hon. Members that in the cooperation that we have signed with the Soviet Union, the cumulative cooperation that has been signed from independence to 1985, when compared with what we have signed from 1985 to 1987, in these three years, we have signed between 1 1/2 to twice the number that we have signed in all the years

from independence to now. I am giving a broad band of $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 2, because the exchange rate fluctuated depending on how you do the exchange rate it comes to a minimum $1\frac{1}{2}$ and maximum around 2.

Is this not improving relations? Is this not diplomatic activity?

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With Pakistan, we want to cooperate, we want friendship and we want relations to improve. We have taken many initiatives, I do not remember the exact number now. But if my memory serves me right, when I was in Kathmandu and I spoke to their Prime Minister, I pointed out about 14 initiatives that we have taken which are lying pending on their side where no movement is taking place on their side. There is no shortage of initiatives from our side. We seek closer people to people relationship with the people of Pakistan, through culture, through tourism, through trade, through economic cooperation, and we would like to build on this. Unfortunately, the Government of Pakistan is highly uncooperative, whether it comes to such exchanges at people level, or it comes to their activities including their nuclear weapon programme which compromise all our other initiatives. Let me reiterate that India, during these years, has not deviated an iota from the basic postulates and principles of Gandhiji and Panditji. That is the basis on which we have developed. That is the basis on which Indiraji developed her programme and it is on that same road that we have been functioning and we have been successful only because we have gone on that road. Let me remind our hon. Member, specially in the operation who have very little experience in foreign policy and the little experience that they have is embarrassing in the nations. So I do not want to bring that out, whether it was in China or in Cuba or in Tanzania, it has been an embarrassing period. The fact is that diplomatic activity good diplomatic activity, is that which takes place behind the scenes and it is not shouted out from every corner, and every street corner. That is what you have got to understand, when you understand that perhaps, if you understand that, then we will get some constructive contribution on the foreign policy issue.

One more canard has been raised on self-reliance. It has been said that we are giving it up. Nothing could be farther from the truth. India is more self-reliant and stronger today than it has ever been in the past. Obviously, they appreciate our self-reliance. You don't. What do you expect? You want to see the nation weakened.

All our policies in industry, in agriculture, in developing technologies — are related to this goal of self-reliance. India can only be strong and independent, if we are strong in every field and self-reliant in every aspect. That is the road that we are taking. We are absolutely clear that India will in no way get trapped into the debt trap or get trapped by some of the obsolete technologies that we are being asked to do by some of our friends from across the room. We must upgrade technology. We must liberalise and recognise the complexities that are involved in the process of becoming self-reliant. We will not become self-reliant if we remain tied to old ideas. When I talked of the 21st century, I was not talking of the machines. I was talking of the mind. Your mind must be ready for the 21st century. That means, thinking about your problems in new ways — not finding readymade solutions; not running to your Mecca and then finding that Mecca has changed and they have got new ideas. Those ideologies will not work. You have to think new.

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For self-reliance, there must be flexibility in our planning. We must see problems as they come and find solutions for them; find solutions within the framework of our ideology; within the basis of our thinking of Gandhiji and Indiraji. But the solutions have to be ours. They did not have the same problem. They could not have solution to these problems. But they have given us direction which will give us the solutions. So, we must take that direction and find our solutions. That is what is necessary today. And that is what we are doing. I do not want to go into the details. Our industry cannot be self-reliant; our agriculture cannot be self-reliant it is not efficient. This must be realised. Efficiency does not mean unemployment. Infact, efficiency will mean more employment which will be generated. The same is true in the farmer's field and the same is true on the factory floor. The same is true in offices and service industries. And this must be realised by us. This was the vision that Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru had given to India. Let us not mistake it. Many in the country opposed him very strongly when he talked of industrialisation, 35 years ago. Let us not forget that. He had to fight that. We will fight it in everyway. The Congress will fight it like the Congress fought it earlier. We will see that India develops even if some of our friends do not want it to do so. One of the Members in a very long, rambling speech shed tears for Public Sector. More has been done for Public Sector during these 3 years than and ever before. Let

me give you some numbers. I will not go to the rolling plan days when everything was rolled out. I will only quote from Indiraji's time because that is the last the highest investments that were more. In 1980-81, approximately, Rs. 21,000 crores was invested in the Public Sector. In 1984-85 it was Rs. 47,500 crores and by 1987-88 expect that to go up to Rs. 83,500 crores. This is the type of investment we are making in the public sector. We have put between 1984 and 1985.

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In these three years, the implementation of the Plan has been the highest in any three years of any other Plan. A number of new projects have been taken up in the Plan this year. Our commitment to the public sector is complete and there is no going back on that commitment. The public sector is a cardinal principle of our philosophy of planning and we are not changing it. We have kept the public sector at the commanding heights of our economy and that is where it is going to stay; and that is the only way.

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In the agricultural sector, for the first time the green revolution is spreading eastwards. We are working at increasing production specially through the small and marginal farmers. We have paid special attention to their needs through the IRDP and NREP and other income — and employment generating programmes.

Lastly, I would like to come to the point of corruptions. No Government has done more to fight corruption than this Government.

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BACK NOTE

XXI. Motion of No-Confidence in council of Ministers, 11 December, 1987

1. SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA: Where?

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: In Delhi.

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA: Do you mean the Nani rally. There was a Nani rally.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Lok Dal, I said; not Congress. So, you should sort out your problems first.

Sir, since the last elections, there have been 19 by-elections to the Lok Sabha. Out of the 19 by-elections, we have won 13. I can list them out—the State and the constituency, if you want. The Janata Party won 2; the CPM has won 1; the SSP has won 1; the Lok Dal won 2. But then, I think, one has left them.

So, the point that has been raised that this Government has lost the confidence of the people is totally wrong. We are supported by the people in the same ratio and proportion, as this House here represents. And that is why I take very strong exception to the statements made by Shri Somnath Chatterjee in this House when he has insulted the entire population of this country and the House should demand an apology from him. Shri Somnath Chatterjee has said that almost 80 per cent of this House has been elected by blackmarketeers and FERA violators.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: When and where I said this? I never said this.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Did you not say that the constituency of the Congress is of blackmarketeers and FERA violators?

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: I said in what your Law Minister has said about Judiciary, you substitute the Government for the Judiciary.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: No, Sir, that is a different point. It is a shame that the hon. Member insults the people of India in this manner.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: Let him read out.

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: Let him read it out. He has not been in the House.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Let him answer if he wants to answer.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: What I have said, he is deliberately misquoting. Where is this sentence in my speech?

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Let him make a personal explanation later, if he wants I stand by what I said. Let the hon. Member make a personal clarification.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: Let him produce that sentence from my speech.

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: What you have said is wrong. Will you apologise to the House?

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: I have said that different elections have shown that this House does not any longer represent the views of the people outside. That is what I have said.

2. SHRI C. MADHAV REDDI (Adilabad): Is holding the Conclave a confrontation?

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Please sit down. You will get an opportunity to speak after this.

Who refused cooperation with the Government on matters of national importance? Who refused to come to the meetings that I called for the opposition? Do you want me to name the dates? Is this politics of conciliation or confrontation? February 1986 you boycotted my meeting on consultations when I called because you said they were rituals.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: Definitely.

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: They were rituals.

3. SHRI N.V.N. SOMU: It is a handwritten speech, you see this.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: I am sorry, it is a handwritten speech. I stand corrected. It is a handwritten speech. But I beg to submit that handwritten speech was obviously written before the Thakkar-Natarajan Commission gave their Report. Because if he has read the Report he will see that the Government

stands totally vindicated in that Report and it is the Opposition.

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: You did not take any stand at all.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: And it is the opposition and their friends who stand totally indicted by that Report. Everything that the Opposition said in this House during the last session.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: Your stand is to cover up.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: There is no coverup in that Report. It is patently clear that the Opposition was totally involved in this attempt to misguide the nation. The report has said that people, who were employees or earlier employees of the CIA, were involved in investigating things for the Government. Who fought for it? Each one of you. Everyone of you was supporting this six months ago. What happened now?

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA: What did Mr. Brahma Dutt say here?

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Everything has been looked at by the Thakkar-Natarajan commission.

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: We wanted a house committee.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: No, Sir. During that debate, there was a demand for a judicial inquiry and we accepted that demand.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: No.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Your personal demand may not have been. We gave the Bofors to the house committee. What happened to you there? The fact is that you are not interested in getting to the truth. You are interested only in making noise.

The point is that now the Whole nation knows your motives, the whole nation knows the dangers that have been opened up by this investigation, and the whole nation knows who the enemies of the nation are and who is collaborating with them. It will not help to hide behind procedural and other arguments. It will not help to run down the judiciary.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: You go to the people.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: We don't need to go to the people when the

people are with us. The people are not with you. so, you go to the people. And the shameful double standards that you have displayed are embarrassing to the whole nation.

Sir, sadly the debate shows that even on ideological point there has been little difference amongst the Opposition. Traditionally, it has been the established right of the Right parties, sitting across the floor, to have a vacuum of thought and ideology and vision. But today I am seeing that they are joined by our friends from the left in that.....

SHRI SAIFUDDIN CHOWDHARY (katwa): You are worried.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Of course, I am worried because I want a good Opposition. That's what is worrying me. I want an Opposition which can stand across the floor and argue about policies, which can argue about the future of the nation. An opposition which is tied up in personal problems cannot help the nation. And I would still request you — I have said so publicly; I have said so in public meeting; I have said so in Press conference — that I would welcome a strong Opposition. I would welcome an opposition that stands on principles and values; not an Opposition that has debated like we have debated yesterday and today.

While the whole world is watching the changes that are taking place in the Soviet Union and China, they are watching the ferment of new ideas, our Left still wallows in the comfort of old clothes With due respect, just for the benefit of our friends from the Left, I would like to read a small quotation from somebody, they might appreciate. May be they can guess the name, The quotation is;

"New tasks have to be tackled with no readymade answers, nor are there such answers today. Social Scientists have not yet offered us anything cohesive.

The political economy of socialism is stuck with outdated concepts, and is in no way, in tune with the dialectics of life." Perhaps this will open their eyes.

I will request my minister to give him an entry into the Navodaya Vidyalaya. Perhaps he will learn there.

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI ARJUN SINGH): Sir, you have mentioned the Right and the Left but you have not mentioned those who are neither Right nor Left.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: The fact is that everywhere a change is taking place. Much has been said about the multinationals here. Let's clarify the picture. One rambling speech went on and on about the multinationals but what is happening in the Soviet Union and China with multinationals? Are they not socialist countries? Are they devoid of socialism in those countries? Closer to home? What is happening with multinationals in West Bengal? Obviously our friends in this House are totally out of touch with what is happening in the world outside. You don't have to go far. You don't have to go in China; you don't have to go to Soviet Union but at least look at West Bengal. Ask the Chief Minister of West Bengal what he thinks and why he is going in this direction?

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: It is because of you. You are deliberately not cooperating with West Bengal. You want that West Bengal should be an industrial desert. You don't know anything in this country. He is deliberately misleading. He thinks that he is the king emperor of India.

to the country. This was the basis of my speech in Bombay. I am glad that Shri Madhav Reddi referred to my speech in Bombay and I would only request, perhaps I should ask them, whether any party in the opposition has the self confidence to do such introspection and if you have, I would request you to do so You had your turn, now let me talk.

Can any of you, do any of you have the guts to look at the changing world and the changing conditons in the country? Do any of you have the guts to self-criticise? Do any of you have the guts to accommodate new ideas? The fact is, no.

My speech in Bombay was based on the values of the Congress as presented by Gandhiji, by Jawaharlal Nehru, and by Indira Gandhi. There was no deviation. We stand by that. And I would like to remind the hon. Members that this is not the first time that the Congress has looked within, there have been a numbers of occasions when the Congress has cleansed itself.

Much was talked about power brokers and Satta ke dalals. The Congress on a number of occasions has ejected these power brokers and has thrown out the Satta ke dalals, but where do we find these dalals today? Where are these power brokers who have been thrown out of the Congress today? I see them sitting on the benches opposite me.

I am not yielding the floor.....

I would request my friends to look within...

MR. SPEAKER: No interruptions please. Please sit down. This would not form part of the record. Please sit down now. Mr. Ram Dhan, please sit down.....will you take your seats.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: I appreciate very much. I thank the Hon. member for his comment. I appreciate very much that. The Chief Minister of West Bengal finds that the ideologies of the CPM do not give progress in Bengal. He is to look to Congress ideologies and leadership from here. Thank You Sir.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: Unfortunately, he is the Prime Minister of India. We cannot ignore him. Whatever federal structure was there, he has finished it. He does not answer all those points.

SHRI BHAGWAT JHA AZAD (Bhagalpur): For 45 minutes he spoke without interruption. He cannot tolerate our reply. This is the way of CPM.

4. SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY: What happened to land reforms?

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: How did we get the Green Revolution in? It was possible only because the highest level technology was given to the farmer. There is no other way. If some of my hon. friends on the mother side had their way and if we had no tractors, no fertilizer, no better seeds and no irrigation, where would the green revolution be and where would our farmers be?

SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY: What about land reforms?

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: You raise it when your turn comes.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): Bengal has always opposed that.

SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY: What was that?...

MR. SPEAKER: No cross-talking.

5. SHRI SAIFUDDIN CHOWDHARY: What about the investment in the past?

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: We have invested more in the past also. No other Government has gone to such great length to preserve the culture and

heritage of this country, as we have. I did not really want to comment on it but I think it does deserve comment because one Member—very unfortunate that he used the word 'Hindu Rate of Growth' Very unfortunate.

SHRI C. MADHAV REDDI: Why unfortunate? It is an accepted phrase. Hindu Rate of Growth has a definite meaning.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: It has got no meaning on this side of the House; let me say that very clearly.

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: It was an expression coined by late Prof. Raj Krishna. It had been quoted umpteen times.

SHRI SAIFUDDIN CHOWDHARY: You say what is the meaning of that?

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Obviously. I am not worried about the meaning. I am arguing about the terminology. We do not like such terminology being used. I find it insulting that such terminology is used. I find it insulting to the nation, to the community that is referred in that. I would like to say—you have said was raised here and there—'Yes' perhaps an economist raised it. But the economist raised it according to what was happening during the Janata period, if you remember. It is sad that that terminology is used by some Members today.

6. SHRI BHAGWAT JHA AZAD: Yes; quite right.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Does the country not need any financial discipline? Is the money to be squandered and thrown away? Or does the money belong to the poor people? Should it not be used properly?

The fact is that there has been total unaccountability on financial spending in this country, whether in the Centre, or in the States.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: In the Centre also.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: That is what I have said, and we are putting that right. We are tightening up in every department at the Centre; and the same tightening up will have to be done in the States, if this country is to progress. There is no way around it, there are no excuses. The cost of administration, the cost of implementing our programmes is much too high; and most of that high cost is not in the Centre. Yes; we are correcting it in the Centre. We have faults in the Centre. But it is not in the Centre, because the delivery system is

in the States. It is not in the Centre. If the delivery system had been in the Centre, perhaps that would have also been in the Centre. We would have been equally inefficient. We would have squandered equal amounts. But the delivery system happens to be in the States. So, the tightening up must come in the States. During a drought, when the money situation is even tighter, they must be even more disciplined to see that there is no money wastage, and that the money goes down to the people for whom it has been targeted; and we want to see that happen. No matter how much noise you make here about your Opposition Chief Ministers . I am not going to bend. Unless I am shown the figures of work done and they are verified, we are not going to release any money at all. And I have made that very clear to the Finance Minister. I have made it very clear to the Cabinet Secretary.

So, let us be very clear about that. As I said in spite of the drought, in spite of all the problems, the infrastructure has performed better than any preceding year. You can contrast that with any other drought year or difficulty year and you will see that the gap is even greater. There is one problem which is very serious and that is the rise in prices; and I would like to highlight it specially because very few of the members from the opposition have highlighted it. he is not from the opposition; he is our member. This is a real worry and what makes me sad is that the opposition does not worry that the prices are going up.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: We have raised discussions.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: I am not talking about that; I am talking about this debate.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: You have not gone through the debates.

SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE (Panskura): You read my speech, I referred to the price rise.

SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY: I do not know whether you have heard us.

7. SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: You do not have the time to hear the proceeding. you were in bhopal.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: I was only in Bhopal for three hours. The debate had gone on for the whole afternoon yesterday, I was sitting here from six o' clock to 11.15 or whenever we dispersed last night. Don't talk like that.

SHRI DINESH GOSWAMI (Guwahati): Mr. Prime Minister...

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: You made a good speech.

SHRI DINESH GOSWAMI: Mr. Prime Minister, in fact, I said that the price rise is such that if the opposition members' wives would have come to vote today, the motion would have been carried. At least, you should have read that. It is not that nobody referred to it.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Mr. Goswami, thank you. I appreciate to what you have said; and although I was not there for your speech, I was told that yours was perhaps the only speech which carried substance.

SHRI DINESH GOSWAMI: Your compliments may create problems for me politically.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: It was not a compliment; I was trying to state the truth.

8. SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: It was an year of three governments; 1979 was an year of three governments.

MR. SPEAKER: Why are you speaking, unnecessarily?

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: You were also there; your party was also there. You remember what you did. You remember how many years it took us to correct the damage that you had done.

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: It will require thousand years to correct your mistakes.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: I can remind you now. If you want I can remind you. But I do not want to remind the house and take the time of the House on an issue which every one is very knowledgeable about in fact; but some don't want to face them.

MR. SPEAKER: I shall ask them to meet you. You can discuss together.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: I take that as a commitment from the Chair because whenever I invite them to come, and talk they do not come.

MR. SPEAKER: Do you expect me to give a ruling, Sir?

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Please.

9. SHRI C. MADHAV REDDI: Question !

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI : I will tell you why. How many State Governments have been dismissed by the Centre during these three years?

No Look at any Government before.

10. SHRI V. KISHORE CHANDRA S. DEO (Parvathipuram): What happened in 1980?

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: In 1980, I myself said it was an aberration,—which I thought was an aberration—but that aberration was there because the dismissals had taken place in 1977. The Governments that were there were not the correct Governments. That is why it had to be done. It was an aberration to correct a wrong action.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: Why was N.T. Rama Rao's Government dismissed?

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: What about Kashmir Government? What about the Punjab Government in the recent past?

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: What about the Punjab Government?

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Only Punjab Government, and I stand by that decision. It was not for political reasons, but it was because the administration had broken down. Let us be very clear. Achariaji, you can keep on arguing, but let us be very clear. The precedent of dismissing Governments was set in 1977 when nine Government were dismissed *en masse*.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: In 1959 an elected Government in Kerala was dismissed.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: You have mentioned about Kerala. Let me say, even today if I find any State Government is going in an anti-national direction, I will dismiss that Government—no matter what majority they have.

MR. SPEAKER: Achariaji, kindly sit down.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Sir, On Centre State relations, let me ask, has there been one case of discrimination in fund allocation between the Congress run States and the Opposition run States— not one case.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA (Bankura): Hundreds of cases.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Name me one case now.

SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY: Tell us what factories you have given to West Bengal in the last ten years. Tell one factory...

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: I am not talking of factories. I am talking of plan allocations, I said.

MR. SPEAKER: Why don't you stop it? Why do you keep interrupting...

MR. SPEAKER: You have turned grey, yet you have no patience.

MR. SPEAKER: Please sit down, Sir.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: What we are doing Sir.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: What was recommended by the Eighth Finance Commission, that was not given to West Bengal.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Because West Bengal, I believe, I do not remember the exact details, did not meet their part of the thing.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: I can tell you.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: We can look at it. Anyway, we can look at that point and if I am right it was handled by the previous Government and not by this Government. So, it does not come into this. It does not come into purview of this. Let it be very clear Sir and if we.

MR. SPEAKER: Kumari Mamata Banerjee, please sit down.

SHRI AJOY BISWAS (Tripura West): Sir, in the case of Tripura, the per capita allotment in the Seventh Plan is less than the other States of the North Eastern Region. In the case of Nagaland, it is more than 4,000. In the case of Tripura, it is 2200.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Sir, the allocation of Tripura—I do not have the numbers here, I am speaking from memory, it is almost one and a half to double the average allocation of the country.

SHRI AJOY BISWAS: In the case of Tripura it is 2200 and in the case of Nagaland it is 4000.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: You are getting double the allocation of the country and you are complaining.

MR. SPEAKER: Not allowed. I am not allowing these interruptions.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Eastern Region has also Mizoram, Sikkim. Yes, there are opposition run States also. You cannot separate it like that. There is also Assam. But there is one thing that we must be very careful about, and I want to get back to that, that is the financial discipline in the States—the diversion of plan fund for non-plan activities, we cannot go on in this manner. The country just is not rich enough to squander the poor people's money, it must be invested for the future. I do not want to quote. I can quote from West Bengal also: What happened to your Sixth Plan?

One particular State, my Members will not be aware of this, I visited—I do not want to take the name of the State, perhaps by the guilty feelings you will find out which State it is—one particular State I visited. I talked with the Chief Minister. We looked at the plan performance. On every single sector, they were below target and not just one per cent, two per cent, fifty per cent, sixty per cent, seventy per cent below the target, in essential sectors like Power, Energy and Agriculture. Only one sector, they have spent more than the target, fifty per cent more than the target and that was...

AN HON. MEMBER: Publicity.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: And that was publicity.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: Even then you have lost the last Assembly elections.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Thank you Achariaji. You have told our Members which State it is.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: The people have rejected them. If he has the courage, let him go to the elections.

He tried his best. He indulged in repeated untruth, but the people rejected them.

MR. SPEAKER: Kindly sit down now. Bairagiji, do you want to say something? Have you recollected some Urdu couplet?

SHRI BALKAVI BAIRAGI (Mandsaur): Sir, I would like to the hon. Prime Minister, Shri Rajiv Gandhi to sum up the matter in the following manner:

*"Isse zyada ayena inko mat dikhlaiye,
Vaise hi badshakla hein, benoor Thei, daar jayenge,*

*Aiyne ku tor dena zid hai inke husna ki,
Is mashakkat mein bichare khud ba khud mar jayenge."*

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: I will make every effort to seek the advice of the hon. Member.

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Ram Dhan, do you also want to quote an urdu couplet?

SHRI RAM DHAN: Mr. Speaker,

*"yoon to hum jante hein, jannat ki hakikatein
Lekin dil ke bahalane ko Ghalib yeh khayal acchha hai."*

SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD: Bairagi ji had asked them to see their face in the mirror.

[MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER in the Chair]

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I will try not to show them the mirror, but if they themselves want to look into it, I cannot stop them.

11. SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: What about the National Herald, Sir?

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: National Herald has been found guilty by the Government, of having sublet major portion of the building in blatant contravention of the lease agreement. Are you aware of it, Mr. Prime Minister?

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: I have said that wherever the law is violated, it will take its course. There will be no shielding or protection for anybody. I cannot make that any plainer for you, and even if we send you back to your school, you would not have it blatant.

12. SHRI N.V.N. SOMU (Madras North): No, Sir. Definitely not.

[MR. SPEAKER in the Chair]

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Will you hear me out? When I finish talking, you can comment.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Somu sit down.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Sir, I am not yielding.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Somu, you have to seek my permission. Sit down.

SHRI N.V.N. SOMU: Sir, here it is said, IPKF is under the command of Mr. Jayawardene. I want to know whether the Commander of the Indian army is our President or Sri Lankan President.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Somu, please sit down.

Why are you making noise? Mr. Somu please sit down.

MR. SPEAKER: He will answer that.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: I will give you an opportunity.

MR. SPEAKER: He wants to know whether Mr. Jayawardene is its Commander-in-Chief.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: I was just wanting to ask him when he is quoting from a document or a newspaper, is the hon. Member willing to swear by the authenticity of what has been said in that?

SHRI N.V.N. SOMU: Yes, Sir. It has been said by the Minister, Mr. Vincent Perera in Sri Lankan Parliament.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Somu, you must realise that yesterday we had a stiff time on this point. You have to authenticate and take full responsibility for what you are saying, when you are putting on the Table of the House. You have to do it. I am just warning you.

SHRI N.V.N. SOMU: I fully rely upon the Hindu Paper. It is said in Sri Lankan Parliament.

MR. SPEAKER: It is a press report of what has been said in the Sri Lankan Parliament. Where is the question of vouching for its authenticity and all that?

SHRI N.V.N. SOMU: It is reported in Hindu by P.T.I.

MR. SPEAKER: I have heard you. Sit down now.

MR. SPEAKER: I have not allowed any Member to speak.

MR. SPEAKER: What I say is it is a press report. Now, listen to me.

SHRI N.V.N. SOMU: It is said in Sri Lankan Parliament.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Somu, please listen to me. Certain things are distorted and also misreported at certain times. That is what he is saying. Now, that is all right. Sit down.

SHRI K.P. UNNIKRIISHNAN (Badagara): Let him deny it. Let the Prime Minister deny it.

MR. SPEAKER: I fail to understand why you are shouting.

SHRI K.P. UNNIKRIISHNAN: Why does not he deny it?

MR. SPEAKER: What is happening with you all? I will name you, don't behave like that.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Sir, we are all Indians.

SHRI N.V.N. SOMU: First I am a Tamilian, next Indian.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Sir, this is precisely the sad part of what is happening in the Opposition. First they are Tamilians and Andhraites and Bengalis and what not.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: No that is not our view. It is his personal view.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Sir, Let us be clear, Sir, let this House at least resolve that everybody who is sitting in this House is an Indian first, Sir,

I would like to hear from the hon. Members from the Opposition that they are first Indians and then anything else. Yes, Sir. One Member is saying 'No'. Let him say he is an Indian first.

SHRI N.V.N. SOMU: By language I am a Tamilian, but by nationality I am an Indian.

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: Sir, I am on a point of order.

MR. SPEAKER: What is your point of order?

MR. SPEAKER: Now sit down.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: They don't even know what they are doing. In 30 seconds he switches from here to there and back again. Perhaps by the time I finish speaking, he will be back to be a Tamilian again.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: What is this, Sir?

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI : Sir, in the Non-aligned. All right, I will avoid it. In the Non-aligned India has played a role...

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: Sir, let him answer this point first.

MR. SPEAKER: He is coming. Listen now.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: I will answer that. I am not aware of precisely what has been said in the Sri Lankan Parliament. I cannot...

SHRI N.V.N. SOMU: In the Hindu it is mentioned here.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: *The Hindu* is not the record of the Sri Lankan Parliament even if you wave the paper around.

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA: It is true that our Party has supported the accord, but never we were informed that the IPKF would be not under the command of our own commanders, but under President Jayewardene's command.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: The IPKF is under the command of our commanders. I am not aware of what has been said in the Sri Lankan Parliament and I will not comment on something I am not aware of. The Hindu is not the record of the Sri Lankan Parliament.

MR. SPEAKER: Please sit down.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Jaipal Reddy, can you be tamed at any time? Please sit down.

13. SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: You are not referring to your own contribution?

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Unfortunately, what Narasimha Raoji said is so true. You have grown so cynical that all you see is yourself, unfortunately. And that is the sad part.

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: I am happy that you are sad.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Unfortunately, in this world, things cannot be switched on and switched off, specially where major policy issues are involved.

MR. SPEAKER: Whom should I blame — Narasimha Rao Ji or...

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Narasimha Rao Ji only showed the mirror.

MR. SPEAKER: Jaipal Reddy Ji to be blamed !

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: The only thing we can blame Narasimha Rao Ji, for is that he knew where to point it, with his past experience.

14. PROF. N.G. RANGA: Indiraji's statue has been raised in Moscow, no other statue of any other country's leader.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Thank you, Rangaji. Rangaji is right Sir.

SHRI N.G. RANGA: We have raised Lenin's statue also.

15. SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: Which Mecca are you referring to?

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Our friends from the Left understand which Mecca I am referring to.

SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY: What is your Mecca?

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Delhi. Our Mecca is Delhi, unlike yours which is outside India.

16. SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: Speak in percentages, not in absolute figures.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Shall we have to send you to school to learn that? OK. we shall teach these things in our Navodaya schools.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: What is the drop in the value of the rupee during these five years?

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Let me just emphasize again. The investment in the public sector in 1980-81 was Rs. 21,000 crores. Between 1984 and 1987, we have put in Rs. 36,000 crores.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: In real terms?

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: In two years; this is the comparison. Let us not shed crocodile tears for the public sector because a public sector that is inefficient, a public sector that is a drain on the people of the country is not the public sector that we want. We want a public sector that works for the people of the country...

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: Sathe's theory.

THE MINISTER OF ENERGY (SHRI VASANT SATHE): People's theory.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Anybody who drags down the public sector by trying to limit the productivity and the efficiency of the public sector is not speaking for the public sector but is speaking to kill the public sector forever, is an enemy of the public sector. The survival of the public sector depends...

SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY: But you are doing just the opposite in the NPCC.

SHRI SAIFUDDIN CHOWDHARY: How many more pages do you have?

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: You had nothing to say. I have got plenty to say. That is why I thank you for this opportunity—because we have done so much in three years that I want to tell you about and which you are ignorant of.

Please sit down. You can speak later.

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Choubey is not even ashamed of his grey hair.

17. SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: What about the private sector? How much was the investment in the private sector?

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: If the public sector investment is doubted, we have to double the private sector investment also. We want development. We do not want you to stifle it. Investment in the private sector is not ours. Government investment is in the public sector.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: This is our socialism!

SHRI SAIFUDDIN CHOWDHARY: The private sector investment has become more for the first time.

MR. SPEAKER: Don't interrupt. Kindly sit down. Do you want to gag someone's voice, why are you doing so?

18. SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: You have done the most to cover up corruption.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Let me finish. Then you can comment. Sir, the issue of Fairfax was raised in this House. I have already commented on it. The Commission has vindicated our position completely. And what comes out from that Report is that the opposition mixed up with one group of industrialists was trying to take advantage. Is that not corruption?

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: Opposition?

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Yes, the opposition. The opposition raised an issue without understanding the issue of caring to go into the issue. If you had bothered to look into it, we would not have had to give it to the commission to give the answer. The answer was there.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: You have diverted it.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: We have diverted it to get the truth. Of course, it has been diverted towards truth. It was going towards complete falsehood.

I have no doubt that every single issue that has been raised in this House, the Government will be cleared on every single count I know it. The Government has not done anything wrong. There is no way that the Government is involved.

The commitment to truth was demonstrated when we set up the JPC. That was the commitment to truth. Those that wanted to get to the truth joined the JPC. Those that were afraid of the truth, stayed away.

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: Those who wanted to cover up the truth joined the JPC.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: I have not finished on corruption. Sir, let me say that at every point where any act of omission or commission or corruption is pointed out, this Government has taken action. When the PAC, I think, subject to correction, gave a Report against one of my ministers, the same day, I made him resign. When there was a question about my Chief Minister in two States, I made them resign. Did any opposition Chief Minister who is charged with corruption resign?

What is happening in Andhra? What has happened in Karnataka? What is happening in Bengal?

SHRI M. RAGHUMA REDDY (Nalgonda): You resign first.

MR. SPEAKER: Sit down. Nothing goes on record.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Sit down for a minute. Let me finish. I will answer everything you say. On this count, we are very clean. There is no Congress Chief Minister who has a Supreme Court or High Court indictment today. There are opposition Chief Ministers who have.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: You are talking of corruption, have you read the judgement of the High Court?

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: What action have you taken against your Orissa Chief Minister?

MR. SPEAKER: Nobody is allowed.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Let me reiterate. There is no High Court or Supreme Court decision against any Congress Chief Minister. There is against two Opposition Chief Ministers and they are still in Government. Let them resign... Let me see the commitment to clean political life coming from the Opposition for a change. Let us see you act also, not just talk on corruption. We have acted.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. Please sit down.

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: We are prepared for a judgement of the people. Are you prepared?

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: There are many ways to dodge High Court Pronouncements.

I have said that, I am repeating it. The High Court has stayed it.

Let me conclude. What we need in the country is a strong Opposition, but an Opposition that is not tied to their dogmas. When will they come together? When will they work together for a better and more prosperous India?

I put to this House... Sir, one point I missed. I am sorry. I just saw Unnikrishnanji, he reminded me. Yesterday an Hon. Member said that this Opposition is not the Loyal Opposition as in England. Let me just understand that phrase. In England there is Her Majesty's Government and there is Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition. The loyalty is to the country, the loyalty is not to individuals. Sir. In England. Please, Unnikrishnanji, if you please listen, you will understand what I am trying to say.

SHRI K. P. UNNIKISHNAN: If I have to learn from you it is not worth learning.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Unfortunately I gave that up very long time ago.

In England, there is Her Majesty's Government and there is Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition which means the Opposition is loyal to the nation. Yesterday the Hon. Member said this is not a Loyal Opposition. Perhaps, on some other occasion he would like to clarify who he is not loyal to. Is he not loyal to the nation? Sometimes I do think that.

SHRI K.P. UNNIKISHNAN: If you are not capable of understanding me, I cannot help you.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Unnikrishnanji, you better clarify quickly.

SHRI K.P. UNNIKRIISHNAN: I was referring to the concept of Parliamentary Democracy with monarchy and without monarchy. You are treating yourself as a monarch.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: I would request the Hon. Member to make this clarification in this session because he may not be here in the next session.

SHRI K.P. UNNIKRIISHNAN: I am prepared to do it tomorrow.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: I put to this House and I submit that this Motion be rejected Thank you Sir.

19. SHRI C. MADHAV REDDI: You please sit down if you cannot understand.

Now, it is my turn to show you the mirror, you may see how beautiful and good looking you are and how much you have changed.

I have heard the speeches of hon. Members from treasury benches and the other side attentively, yesterday as well as today.

Today, we heard two speeches, one from Mr. P. V. Narasimha Rao and another from the Minister. After I heard the speech of Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao, I expected that the Prime Minister would rise to the occasion and speak at a high plane and try to reply to the various issues which we had raised in the proper perspective. But I was very sorry to listen to the Prime Minister who indulged in political gimmicks, political rhetorics.

Now, I would like to touch upon the various issues which he had raised subsequently. I would also like to revert to some of the remarks which he had made. Before I go to Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao's speech—I must say that his speech was at a very high plane. He tried to explain in the proper perspective, in the historic context, the various issues before the nation. He is a very veteran parliamentarian and a great administrator, man of great ability, culture and learning. I have great respect for him. I know with the experience he had as a Chief Minister and as a Minister here, he has earned distinction and his advice would have been of value. But is he being consulted? I would like to clarify certain points raised by the Hon'ble Prime Minister.

First of all, he said that it is not his duty to come to the rescue of the Opposition. We never asked for his help. What I mentioned yesterday was that when I got up to move the motion, I was prevented practically by shouting

from the other benches and the Prime Minister was sitting in the corner of seat and was laughing. Sir, it is his duty to control his.... Members When I was discharging my constitutional responsibility of moving the Motion, he was allowing his Members to obstruct my speech. At that time I did not utter a single word: The moment I got up, you started obstructing.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Sir, I do not mean to interrupt but I just want to say that perhaps, there were a few interruptions but let me re-assure the Member that nothing

relevant he said was lost.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: It is again a personal attack.

SHRI C. MADHAV REDDI: There is nothing wrong in hitting the people politically but don't hit them below the belt. He was referring to the opposition meetings which he had been conducting for consulting the opposition leader. I attended my party in almost all the meetings which he had convened the meeting of opposition leaders during the last two years. I am not mentioning about the first year. In the meetings there was just passing of the information to us and not consultation with us. You take a decision and then you are going to announce it in the Floor of the House after 15 minutes and you call a meeting of the opposition leaders. Is it a consultation? Is it not a ritual?

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: It is a personal attack against the opposition.

SHRI C. MADHAV REDDI: He said something about the Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister which he should not have mentioned because the matter is in the High Court. It is sub judice.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: All I said was that there are strictures against two Chief Ministers. There are, there are...

SHRI C. MADHAV REDDI: There were four writ petitions. Two writ petitions were rejected and the other two which were filed by none else than your own State Secretary are Pending adjudication. These petitions are politically motivated and they are before the High Court. I do not want to make any comment about them. It is wrong to say that High Court has passed any strictures. No stricture have been passed. I challenge that. If there are any strictures the Chief Minister would have resigned. In spite of this since the

allegations have come he has appointed a commissions. He has subjected himself to be scrutinised by the commission.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: The Commission has been appointed in such a broad base manner that it cannot give any proper answer. The terms of reference of the Fairfax Commission were drafted by Mr. V.P. Singh. Let me tell you that.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): Jyoti Basu appointed a fantastic commission.

SHRI M. RAGHUMA REDDY: He was also a Minister under you.

SHRI C. MADHAV REDDI: The Prime Minister said that during the last year 19 bye-elections were held and Congress got 13. I admit that. But what is going to happen today? Are you going to hold bye-elections in U.P. now and claim that they are going to be won? Let us face the situation as it is today.

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (S. BUTA SINGH): We will win the bye-elections as and when they come. We have won bye-elections in Andhra Pradesh.

MR. SPEAKER: Why are you talking of a matter about which there is no dispute. They are all in all and can do anything at will. Neither you nor they want it now.

AN HON. MEMBER: Mr. Buta Singh had gone to Rajasthan for election.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Yesterday, Shri Arif Mohammad Khan commented that Shri Buta Singh had gone to Rajasthan for election. I would like to say that we consider the country one; we do not care where we put them; Congress is strong enough, the support for the Congress is strong enough to make anybody win from anywhere. We do not have to have parochial, communal, regional and other chauvinistic attitudes to win the elections which some parties do.

SHRI C. MADHAV REDDI: I am very happy that the Prime Minister says that the country is one. Here, in the speech of Shri Buta Singh, he says: Why this fellow, that is, the Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister goes to Nagaland.

SHRI BUTA SINGH: If you permit me, I would state that there was a full dress debate on this subject in the other House. If they want here too, they are welcome to bring it and I would explain.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: They are raising the subject today; let us have a separate debate on this issue.

20. SHRI C. MADHAV REDDI: No doubt, diverse elements shall come together and unite but I apprehend that this unity will be shortlived because there are people who are jealous of such unity. The fire which can reduce the entire lot to ashes can start from within as well as without. This has happened once in our country and the entire party was reduced to ashes.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Sir, I am not sure whether the motion for no-confidence was against the Government or it was no-confidence against the opposition. What is the hon. Member saying?

SHRI C. MADHAV REDDI: You were not here when Shri Bhagwat Jha said this. I am replying to him.

It does not take long for diverse elements to unite.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: But I was commenting on the fire which has erupted from within. If it has erupted from within then the no-confidence motion should have been brought against the opposition because you have ignited this fire.

SHRI C. MADHAV REDDI: The fire shall not be sparked from within but outside. The fire will start from outside.

Sir, a mention was made here about the rally which was organised here two days ago. And it was said that we can bring not 10 lakhs but 20 lakhs.

Who has prevented you? You certainly bring them. When a rally was organised by you in May last, we saw that there were as many trucks and lorries as there were people in the rally. Yesterday I did not find even a single lorry. It appeared as if...

SHRI BHAGWAT JHA AZAD: Did the people come on foot all the way from Andhra Pradesh and West Bengal?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI H.K.L. BHAGAT): You are not right.

You are not speaking the truth. You have not seen the rally. The people in the rally — I do not expect this from a person of your calibre. Is this all that you want to say.

AN HON. MEMBER: You have been a Congressman throughout your life.

SHRI C. MADHAV REDDI: What do you expect from me? If we speak, you have problem and if we don't speak, even then you have problem. You will go on speaking whereas we should not speak at all. You want that you should go on speaking whatever you wish and we should not resist it or reply back.

SHRI H.K.L. BHAGAT: I expect good behaviour from you. I want you to speak politely.

SHRI C. MADHAV REDDI: You have yourself observed that it is all due to the effect of the company that we keep. We have gone wayward.

SHRI C. MADHAV REDDI: Sir, a mention as about the economic situation in the country. Every speaker said that the economic situation is very bright. There is a lot of progress and industrial production has gone up to 9.5 per cent. Prime Minister put it at 16 or 17 per cent. I do not know where he got the figures from but your own figures show that the industrial production has gone up by 9½ per cent. But what is the production this year and what is the growth rate? When I said Hindu growth rate, you were trying to make a point out of this giving it a communal angle. This is unfortunate. I have not said it. It is the economist who said.

Hindu society is static, and not dynamic. It has been static for thousands of years. Similarly, our growth rate has been static at 3.5 per cent. It has not gone beyond that. That is what is meant by Hindu growth rate.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: That is what I was emphasising.

You are using a derogatory term for a major community in the country and I object to that. That is what I have said.

SHRI C. MADHAV REDDI: I am not using it; it is already there in all the textbooks.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: You have not only used it yesterday, you again used it today and it is on the record of the House as to who has used it.

SHRI C. MADHAV REDDI: You did not understand Mr. Prime Minister. I have not coined the word. The word is already used by all the economists.

You can ask anybody. You can ask about it from Shri Jha, who is your economic advisor. He will explain it to you.

Coming to the question of deficit financing, the Prime Minister made a solemn promise last year while presenting the Budget. As a Finance Minister he presented the Budget. He made a very solemn promise that the deficit will not increase. He said that the deficit will not increase and that he would not like the deficit to go beyond what is projected. What was projected? It was projected Rs. 5,688 crores. He made a solemn assurance to this House that the figure will not go up. But what is the deficit today? I am not talking of the projections. I will ask the Finance Minister to tell me what is the deficit today, as on date Your RDI credit to the Government of India is the actual deficit and I would like to know what is it? The figure shows that already there is a deficit of Rs. 8,637 crores, not withstanding the supplementary demands that we have passed only a few days ago.

This is the actual position. Sir, many hon. members from that side spoke of destabilisation. The argument was that this motion was brought with a view to destabilise the Government. Does that mean that the motion to express lack of confidence is going to destabilise the nation? Why are you afraid of it? A 'no confidence' motion is an accepted genuine weapon in the hands of the Opposition. There is no question of destabilisation of the country; defeating the Government is not destabilising the nation. You feel that if the Congress is not there, there will be chaos in the country because the alternative or opposition to Congress is not there. That was how the English people used to say that once they left India, there would be chaos.

There was a French Emperor who used to say:

"After me, deluge."

There is a similar proverb in Telugu also which carries the same meaning.

Why do you think that there is no alternative to Congress. We would be in a position to unite once there is scope and once there is an opportunity for us to do so in no time as we had done before.

Shri Pant has said that the Prime Minister has got a right to criticise the Chief Minister.

We never said that he should not criticise. The Prime Minister criticises the Chief Ministers and the Chief Ministers also criticise. It is a regular feature at the political level. There is nothing wrong about it.

But the campaign of disinformation which is being carried out by the Central Government is very wrong. That is what I want to say.

Shri Shiv Shanker told this House that the Government of Andhra Pradesh did not give any account since 1983 till date. It is wrong. As far as I know accounts pertaining to the last 4 to 5 months *i.e.* from April-May till date are not available with you but the accounts for the remaining period have been already sent to you. In spite of that you say that the accounts do not reach you from the State Government. Who told you that the States do not send the accounts? I think there is nothing wrong in asking for the details of the drought relief that is spent. But this does not mean that you continue to insist on the accounts even from those States which have already furnished it to you. That is not fair. What do your Ministers do when they visit Andhra Pradesh? What does for instance, Shri Shiv Shanker or other Ministers or the Party Chief in the State do there? How much time do they spend in Andhra Pradesh? Shri Narayan Datt Tewari had also gone there recently. He is a gentleman. He went there, addressed a meeting and came back. But what these people do there. Have they been given Ministerial berths only to look after Andhra Pradesh and destabilise the Government there? I am sure that these people go there for this purpose alone, otherwise they have nothing to do there. They go there every second or third day. What do they do there? Do they have any official work there? They go there on Government expense but the only work that they do there is to propagate against the State Government. They do not have any other work there.

It is said that this Government has been signing various accords and it is a great achievement. And I am happy that they have signed the Accords to solve the most difficult problems. Even though these Accords have been signed with all the good intentions, they have been signed in haste, I must say. You have signed these Accords in haste and you are now repenting in leisure.

Which of the Accords are you implementing honestly?

SHRI H.K.L. BHAGAT: Which is that Accord which you did not welcome in the House.

You name one which you did not unanimously welcome.

SHRI C. MADHAV REDDI: I have welcomed all the Accords.

SHRI H.K.L. BHAGAT: You have welcomed the Punjab Accord, the Mizoram Accord and all other Accords.

SHRI C. MADHAV REDDI: I welcome them even today, I have been welcoming every Accord. What I meant to say is that you sign the Accords but you do not implement them.

You repent it in leisure.

You do it in a haste. You are in a hurry that something should be done.

Ultimately you land yourself in difficulties.

You mentioned about Sri Lanka.

You land yourself in difficulties.

What happened in Sri Lanka? Today you have committed the nation to the extent of about 10 to 15 crores of rupees per month in expenditure. We do not know when that expenditure is going to go. I would warn you that like the Syrian Army in Lebanon which came from Syria to keep peace you have to be there for many-many years. You have committed a nation to such a huge expenditure when people are dying here due to drought and famine.

You never thought at that time that you are taking a wrong step. You had to reach an accord and you did so, but now you are in a dilemma as to what should be done.

You are not able to extricate yourself.

Now I want to say something about corruption. We never said that you indulged in corruption. You have yourself said in the House that neither you nor any of your family members ever indulged in corruption. It is good that everyone of you have admitted it. We believe that everyone is honest.

I think that everybody is honest unless the contrary is proved.

We never said that you are corrupt. But we have surely said, and say it even now, and will continue to say that people have starting suspecting you

because all kinds of tales are going round and there is circumstantial evidence against you. People feel that there is something fishy. Why? Because they have been told by the people from Sweden who are here these days, that there are three such companies which have received money amounting to Rs. 82 crores or Rs. 62 crores Which are those companies? Are those foreign companies? They also told the names of those companies.

These names are with you. Yesterday, Mr. Pant pointed out that how do you know that these names have not been passed on to the Committee.

May be you have passed on the names to the Committee.

I do not dispute that. We do not know about it. How do you know? He was telling that.

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI K.C. PANT): You can know by joining the Committee.

SHRI C. MADHAV REDDI: This is too late in the day now. I can say that.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: It is not too late. If you want, we can bring another resolution, increase the size of the Committee and you can join.

SUCCESSFUL TEST FIRING OF PRITHVI - INDIA'S TACTICAL SURFACE TO SURFACE MISSILE

25 February, 1988

I am very glad to inform the House of an important technological achievement of Indian scientists and technologists. It is a notable milestone in our programme to achieve self-reliance in areas of high technology and of considerable significance to our defence preparedness.

The first ever test firing of "Prithvi", India's tactical surface-to-surface missile, took place at 11.23 in the forenoon today. The House will be glad to know that it was successful, meeting all the specifications. With this successful test firing India joins the select group of 4 nations which have developed this class of surface-to-surface missiles. This missile is based totally on indigenous design and development efforts of the Defence Research and Development Organisation. I would like to stress again that no foreign knowhow or collaboration is involved.

"Prithvi" has a range capability of 250 km. with different types of large payload warheads which can inflict heavy damage on adversary targets. Compared to other missiles of this class, it has the best warhead-to-weight ratio. Very advanced inertial navigation and guidance systems incorporating onboard computers operating with realtime software are used in the system. After a number of necessary test launches, we plan to induct "Prithvi" in numbers into our Defence Forces.

On behalf of the House, I would like to place on record our congratulations and warm greetings to all the scientists, engineers, technicians and workers of the Defence Research and Development Organisation who have worked tirelessly and with dedication over the years in designing and developing "Prithvi". The nation is justly proud of them.

BACK NOTE

XXII. Successful test firing of Prithvi-India's tactical surface to surface missile, 25 February, 1988

-NIL-

REPLY TO MOTION OF THANKS TO THE PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

02 March, 1988

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to thank all members who have participated in this debate. Many interesting comments have come; some useful suggestions have been made. But the general tenor of the debate has been worthy of the highest, parliamentary tradition. For that, I congratulate all the members.

1987 was a year of persistent challenge and determined response, a year of achievement in the face of great difficulties. Some of the difficulties were caused by disruptive forces within the country; some difficulties were caused by disruptive forces inspired from abroad; some were caused by the weather.

Twenty years ago, Indiraji faced difficulties of a similar kind that were forced on us by weather. In 1966-67 when she launched the Green Revolution it was her farsightedness that had given our economy its strength and resilience today—the strength and resilience that has led us meet the present crisis through our own efforts and our own endeavours. We have not carried the begging bowl to any one. We have not compromised on our freedom of action. At that time, Indiraji's strategy was opposed by a segments of expert opinion, by even some myopic elements from the benches opposite; but Indiraji prevailed and because of her faith in our *kisans*, because of her confidence in the ability of our scientists, and because of her trust in the performance of our extension workers, she pushed forward with policies which led to the Green Revolution. She assured our farmers required inputs at reasonable prices despite subsidies that the economy might have to bear. She gave remunerative prices to the farmers as a cardinal principle of the new strategy; and she took the banks to the rural areas, to the farmer, to give him credit. She introduced a country-wide system of procurement to give the farmer stability in his prices.

Indiraji ensured that the strategy for the agricultural sector and the Green Revolution was in the interest of all the sections of our rural community—the farmer, the small and marginal cultivator, the landless labour, and even rural artisan.

In these two decades, we doubled our output because of her integrated vision of rural India, because of her sympathy and understanding of each segment of our rural society, because of her assiduous attention to inputs costs and subsidies.

Today after four years of bad monsoon, two years of poor rains and two years of severe drought, we can hold our head high and look to the future with confidence because Indiraji laid foundations which were sure, sound and secure. Our drive to maximise the rabi crop is meeting with encouraging success. We hope that the shortfall will not exceed 10 per cent of last year's output. Perhaps we will be able to hold it down to 7 per cent. But I would like to remind members that the drought is not over. The dry months are still ahead and in some States there is going to be another difficult period that we have to cross. We have to be watchful and vigilant.

We have done much to mitigate the distress in the drought areas. Relief programmes have been handled efficiently by and large. The ceilings on assistance have been put at Rs. 1400 crores, approximately half of it earmarked to Gujarat and Rajasthan where the drought has been severest. Surcharges on taxes have put the burden of drought relief on the richest sections of our society.

Using the foodgrains from the buffer Stocks we have launched programmes to generate employment and to build assets to cushion against future droughts. Through worthwhile drought relief schemes we have ensured that expenditure on relief became expenditure on development. We have rushed fodder from areas of surplus to areas of scarcity. We have introduced special programmes for drinking water. We have introduced special programmes lifting the output of village artisans and the handloom weavers, because these are sections which have been hit indirectly by the drought and it has caused them severe problems. We have tried to bring programmes for this special section in a manner such that they do not move out of their trade and we do not lose the expertise that we have gained over thousands of years.

The genesis of the Green Revolution was a scientific breakthrough, a scientific breakthrough which brought new hybrid seeds and a package of inputs to the irrigated lands. This led us to self-sufficiency in foodgrains. We must now ensure that there is no levelling off in this output. The scientific

community must once more be galvanised into providing answers for the next phase of the Green Revolution to take it to new crops and to give it resilience against the vagaries and changes in the weather. Already, thanks to the Special Rice Production Programme, the Green Revolution is moving eastwards, into eastern U.P. which is rapidly becoming a new greenary for India.

Dryland farming has been boosted by the Technology Mission for oilseeds and the national project on pulses. The primary cause of our not surpassing the 1983-84 record of foodgrains output is the weather and, therefore, it would be reasonable to hope for a better monsoon this year.

Our objective remains to regain the Seventh Plan targets for food production. We will give a new thrust and a new impetus to agriculture. We have given careful attention to agriculture. I have held review meetings at various levels and, following these I have given specific directions to the Planning Commission to revamp the Plan for agriculture, to reorder priorities, to give agriculture the highest importance.

I have asked the Planning Commission to furnish a detailed action plan, which should be ready any time now, based on each district, its cropping pattern, its needs for water, power, fertiliser and other inputs. In the remaining two years of the Seventh Plan we must regain the lost momentum. We must hit 175 million tonnes of foodgrains production by the end of the Seventh Plan.

To this end, the Budget allocations for agriculture have been substantially increased. The Finance Minister has announced major fiscal and financial incentives for the farm sector. We are committed to the *kisan* as the backbone of our economy. We are committed to promoting productive agriculture. We are committed to promoting investment in agriculture. We must galvanise rural India by placing the results of the best technology in the hands of the poorest farmer, by providing subsidies where they are required to ensure inputs at reasonable costs.

We have to look at the subsidies themselves. While we are giving very large amounts on subsidies, we have to see that these are used to the maximum benefit of the farmer. There are some doubts raised in this regard. And I have asked the Finance Minister to look at these subsidies to see whether there is need for a change in the method of subsidy so that the same amount can be used more effectively for the benefit of the farmer.

We have to see that attractive prices are given to the farmer so that farming is more remunerative.

And we have to carry with us all sections of the rural community. When we look at the problems of the farmer, we must look beyond just the farmer, at the whole rural community and bring about programmes for all their uplift. Of course, the key element is the farmer because economic activity revolves around the farmer in the rural areas, But while looking at the farmer, we must look at the full community. This cannot be done by pitting the farmer against everybody else. It cannot be done by raising false dichotomy between agriculture and industry. It cannot be done by opportunistic alliances with vested interests, who nurture their own interests raise unreasonable demands and hold country and the farmer to ransom. We shall never surrender under the pressure of vested interests and we shall be always at the forefront to fight for the genuine rights and needs of the farmer and the rural community.

While facing up to the difficulties in agriculture during this year we have pushed ahead most satisfactorily in other areas. Infrastructure has done very well, almost entirely in the public sector, it has returned a performance to fill the heart of every Indian with pride. Despite the drought which curtailed hydel generation, our overall power generation has increased by 7.6 per cent—thanks to thermal generation increasing by 16 per cent. The Plant Load Factor has gone up from 44 per cent in 1979-80 to 50 per cent in 1983-84 to 55 percent in 1987-88. Coal production has increased by 10.2 per cent over last year. Railway freight has gone up by 5.4 per cent over last year.

Overall industrial performance is most satisfactory. Despite drought industrial growth is likely to exceed 8 per cent, making it over 8 per cent for four years in succession. This proves that our industrial policies have clearly succeeded. We will continue to give full support to the productive forces in industry to encourage greater competition in our industry. But there is no room for complacency. The impact of drought might come in the coming months and may be soon in a slowing down in industrial growth. We will watch developments very carefully and we will try to maintain the high momentum. Till a few years ago, drought meant disaster. There was a drought in 1979-80—although it was nowhere near as bad as the drought that we have gone through during these past two years. Then the GNP declined by 4.7 per cent. This year there is no fall in the GNP—perhaps even a moderate increase. On

all such previous occasions, only retrogression has taken place; there has been no question of progress. This year we have moved ahead. For the first time in the history of our planning, we have achieved 86 per cent of the Central sector outlay in real terms in the first four years of the Seventh Plan. Never before have we seen such dynamism in investment. Project management has considerably improved. Many major public sector enterprises will shortly be coming on stream.

This is practical socialism—socialism, which has doubled investment in the public sector over a single Plan period; socialism, which has pushed up public sector performance productivity and profitability to levels that it had never achieved before. Our commitment is to a strong public sector, a public sector with much greater autonomy. We will be spelling out plans in a White Paper to be presented shortly to Parliament on the steps that we wish to take the public sector.

There is one area that is of major concern to all of us, and that is prices. We share this concern with many of the Members who have pointed it out. We regard the control of inflation as one of our top priorities. We have taken steps to hold back the pressures of inflation. In 1979-80—and it is best to compare with 1979-80 because that was the last time that we had a drought although as I said, the drought was nowhere near as bad as the drought that we have had this time—the Government was formed by some of our friend? Sitting on the Opposite benches. And you will remember, Sir, how the prices were allowed to rise by 21.4 per cent at that time.

..... **XXX** **XXX** **XXX**¹

Sir, prices are a serious problem. But in spite of the trying circumstances, we have managed to keep the inflation rate below 10% and we will keep a very careful watch to see that it is not allowed to go up.

In the previous two years, inflation has averaged only 4.5% per annum. We have gone this by keeping the lid on the budget deficit by deploying monetary and fiscal policies in tandem to contain prices. We have done this by ensuring essential supplies, with additional imports of edible oil, to meet the shortages. We will continue to closely monitor the price index and we will do everything that can be done to keep the prices down. I am particularly concerned at Government expenditure. This is an area where we have not been able to do

as much as we had wanted to do, not that, that we have not made progress—we have—but much more needs to be done.

We also have to concentrate on the productivity of Government. Again in some areas like infrastructure in the public sector, we have done well. A lot more needs to be done. But in other areas a lot more has to be done.

Sir, the overriding priority of this Government is the elimination of poverty. The key to poverty elimination, we feel, lies in good education for the poorer sections of our society. The key to poverty elimination is in the healthy growth of our economy and the key also is in our antipoverty programmes. In taking all three together, we have made a major dent on poverty during these years. No previous Government has earmarked as large a sum as we have for antipoverty programmes. No previous Government has introduced as many improvements as we have in the administration of these programmes.

One hon. Member complained of the leakage of development funds. We are plugging loopholes through concurrent evaluation which enables us to make adjustments in ongoing programme, which enables us to do the fine tuning to change the system sometimes so that leakages can be reduced. But let me say that all leakages are bad, leakages which go to the bureaucratic system are bad. But perhaps even worse are those leakages which go to the cadres of the party.

..... **XXX** **XXX** **XXX²**

Sir, the poverty ratio fell dramatically during the Sixth Plan period. We are aiming at a further dramatic reduction in the poverty ratio in the Seventh Plan and we shall make a determined effort to end this scourge by the turn of the century. Government have addressed themselves to these challenges with seriousness and with success. Regrettably, the same cannot be said of the Opposition.

..... **XXX** **XXX** **XXX³**

It is sad that so-called progressives express reactionary views when it comes to updating technology. Obsolete technology gives us low levels of productivity. It gives us low wages and it gives us low growth, perhaps no growth, where will we get millions of additional jobs? Without growth, how

will we give employment to our young men and women? Nothing is more anti-worker than condemning the workers to outdated units which inevitably grow sick. Nothing can be more anti-worker than threatening his job by denying him opportunity and denying opportunity to millions on the register. If the number of units, the sick units, has increased eightfold, as one Member has said, the basic reason is outmoded technology, bad management and unthinking trade unionism. This is what we have to face.

Sir, that Member's solution is no technology upgradation only manual labour. Such a policy will bleed the economy while ensuring galloping sickness. To end the curse of unemployment, what we need is proper education, fast growth and constant upgradation of skills on the job. Then, as technology advances, the same worker will find that his drudgery is reduced, his productivity is increased and his wages are enhanced. Meanwhile, employment opportunities will increase to those that are in the queue.

Our policies have given two years of excellent labour relations. A new consciousness of the imperatives of higher productivity, of lower costs and better quality, has come into our industry and into labour. A greater participation of labour in management is taking place, especially in the public sector units.

Sir, the Congress Party is not only a party of the farmers and the rural-folk but it is also the true party of the working-class.

It represents the employed, the unemployed and the unorganised. The Congress does not promote as some parties do, the interests of a small minority of the working class to the detriment of the vast majority of the working class. Development in our country...

Sir, some people's minds will never come into the 20th century. They will remain there with Marx.

..... **XXX** **XXX** **XXX⁴**

Sir, development in our country is rooted in democracy. If we want more development, we must have more democracy. This is one of the significant conclusions that we have been getting from the seminars and workshop of District Magistrates that we have been holding.

From these workshops, a few things have already become clear. One is that it is difficult for the administration to work if the devolution of democracy at the district level is not done adequately and properly. The second is that there has been no adequate attention to the needs of the district itself in planning for the District. This needs attention. And to make a truly responsive administration at the grassroots level, we need to build this partnership between democratic institutions at the district-level and the administration at the district level. For this, we must ensure that elections at lower levels take place regularly and without delay.

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On the other hand, we intend to take into account local needs and local requirements when we look at our national objectives and national targets. I am requesting the Planning Commission to start looking now at the Eighth Plan and the formulation of the Eighth Plan based on the district as a unit, to build up the Eighth Plan from district plans and I have asked them to give instructions to all the State Governments to start preparing their Eighth Plan on the basis of District Plans for their own States.

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Sir, to this end, we would like to strengthen the capacity of the district administrations to prepare adequate plan proposals and we like to give the district administration greater flexibility in deploying the resources for development, We would like to give new life to participatory development by harnessing local democracy for local development.

Sir, the Chief Ministers who have accompanied me to these workshops have said how useful these encounters have been—useful for themselves and useful for the district magistrates. There was one Chief Minister who declined our invitation to attend. And only one. And then after declining the invitation to attend he complained of conspiracies behind his back. Sir, let me say that there is only one conspiracy—and that is to have a more responsive administration. I have been very impressed during these workshops by the dedication to duty, by the drive and by the resounding faith in democracy of our district magistrates.

Sir, let me turn to Punjab. In Punjab, representative democracy was given every opportunity. Unfortunately, the elected leadership failed to rise to the

occasion. And there is still insufficient evidence on the part of any faction of the party that was elected to power to be ready to face up to terrorism with determination and unambiguity. Only with such readiness, can the normal political process be re-established. The menace of terrorism cannot be left unchecked. Firm police action is essential and indispensable and we will carry on with firm tough police action. The unity of the country and the integrity of the country demands nothing less.

For several months after President's rule the security forces were gaining on the terrorists. In recent weeks, the terrorists have had some grisly successes. But if we are firm in our resolve, when ultimately we shall prevail.

One of the Members had mentioned Tripura. The benches opposite have generated much heat over the declaration of a disturbed area in Tripura. Sir, the people of the State have given their verdict on whether Tripura was a disturbed area or it was not a disturbed area.

Sir, the previous Government, through a dangerous combination of incompetence and naivete had allowed insurgency to overtake the State. It is ironic that one Member accuses us of encouraging fissiparous tendencies when it was his party's softness and shilly-shallying that brought Tripura to this, terrible pass.

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In April-May last year there was an outbreak of communal violence in Meerut and elsewhere. It was shocking and painful. Sir, effective action was taken to stamp out the violence; but alas, not before many innocent lives had been lost. Allegations of atrocities have been looked into, the district administration shaken up, rehabilitation undertaken, the fanatics contained and fundamentalism has been restrained.

We are relieved that since then communal violence has not flared up again in Meerut and in that area and has not spread further afield. By and large, the country has remained free of any major incident of communal violence.

Sir, our greatest asset in fighting communalism is that our people are overwhelmingly not communal. We have a long tradition of tolerance and brotherhood. Our composite culture is a reality. We have five thousand years of experience of unity in diversity. Communalism is the work of a few misguided

elements who sometimes succeed in inciting communal passions by exploiting specific social disorders and tensions. To marginalise the communalists, we need determined political action; we need vigilance of the local community and the local leadership; we need an administration that is impartial and seen to be impartial; that is seen to be firm and determined in dealing with violence. And, above all, we fight communalism by fostering and preserving the values and standards embedded in our culture and our traditions.

Our traditions of tolerance, of assimilation are threatened from two angles. One threat is from materialism overtaking certain sections of our society. The second threat is from fundamentalism and communalism, regionalism and other such isms that are based invariably on intolerance and violence that misleads in projecting simplistic solutions to highly complex problem. Economic opportunity has opened the door to unprecedented mobility for our population. This mobility is uprooting millions from traditional cultural moorings. Many millions more than ever before are interacting at a personal level with people of different languages, of different cultures and of different faiths. For all of them we must make our diversity a living reality. Our education system is being improved to inculcate the right values. Our seven Zonal Cultural Centres are taking the message of diversity to the people at their doorsteps doing commendable work in remote and farflung areas, in city slums and in small towns, of bringing people together from every corner of the country and bringing the culture of different parts of the country together.

Almost all States have cooperated with us in bringing the best in education to talented boys and girls from all sections especially the poorer, weaker and deprived sections. There is only one State that has not. It has, of course, a vested interest in the continuation of poverty in the curious belief that the core curricula should be built around alien ideologies. While that State continues to ensure poor education for the poor people, happily the rest of the country forges ahead.

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Now Operation Blackboard has been undertaken to assist State Governments in equipping primary schools. This is a State subject. Should we have to come in to do this? But we are doing it because we are worried about the poor.

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That is why we are giving it to you. The Centre can only provide supplementary assistance. The responsibility must be that of the States. When will the States take this responsibility seriously?

..... **XXX** **XXX** **XXX**¹⁰

Now over 200 Navodaya Vidyalayas have already been opened. More are in the offing. The single largest segment of boys and girls in Navodaya Vidyalayas come from the poorest sections of our society.

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The Navodaya Vidyalayas have established that the background of the students is overwhelmingly rural. Two things have been established: one that there is tremendous intelligence which was being lost because good schools were not available to these poor children. Second, that by losing this, the country was losing. It was losing one whole reservoir and the Navodaya Vidyalayas have pulled that reservoir out. For the first time, the children of the poorest people in the country have access to the best education that is available. It is by drawing on such a reservoir of excellence that our country will progress and develop faster and we will fight the vested interests which insist on denying good education to the poor. We will give good education to the poor.

Sir, one other area which has been of major interest to us is the uplift of women and giving women their full rights. During these years, we have legislated on a number of fronts to give women protection. We have legislated some very strong legislation, the type of which has never been legislated before in this House just to give women their rights.

We have given free schooling for girls in all States. We have worked out a detailed plan to assure women their full rights. A National Committee on Women, which brings together distinguished women from different disciplines, is being set up to advise on the formulation and implementation of programmes for women. Our country is growing younger.

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It is true. The average age of our country—while some of us grow older and older and senile, the country is growing younger. Approximately 70 per cent of the country today is under 40 and the problems of our youth are

very much a national priority. The biggest problem is employment. For employment, the first thing that was needed was a structural change in our education system. We have already started that process. We need to inculcate an ethos of enterprise, of initiative in our youth. We need to change attitudes. We need to make them proud of India and its heritage. We have greatly expanded the expenditure on our youth programmes and our sports activities and this will give us an improved quality of youth activities.

Sir, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes continue to suffer under social and economic pressures. To end their disabilities, we are promoting, at a higher level than ever before, programmes for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes—welfare programmes development programmes — and ensuring them justice. We have made major structural improvements in revamping the SC/ST Commission and strengthening the hands of the Commissioner. I am closely monitoring the deployment of funds that have been earmarked for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

The minorities are an integral part of our manyfaceted diversity, our composite heritage and our valued traditions. India can not remain India if we lose any part of the totality of our culture. Some minorities have, on an average, done exceptionally well. Others, for various reasons, suffer specific handicaps and need special attention. The key to the resolution of the problems of the minorities is in the conscientious implementation of Indiraji's 15 point programme. We have greatly strengthened the monitoring apparatus for this programme. We will do all we can to ensure that the minorities play a role in national life, commensurate with the contribution that they have made and the contribution that they can make.

Sir, hon. Members are aware of General Secretary Gorbachev's initiative to withdraw Soviet troops from Afghanistan. We welcome his initiative. So do all those who seek a peaceful settlement. We hope that the talks in Geneva will be successful. We hope that the Geneva Accord will be signed before the 15th of March so that the withdrawal process on 15th May can start. We have been working since 1980 to help resolve the problem. Indiraji had talks with the Afghanistan Prime Minister, We have had many discussions at the Foreign Ministers' level. We have played a key role in the Non-aligned formulation to stop intervention and interference which is one of the key aspects of the discussions that are taking place today. I have had repeated discussions and

talks with General Secretary Gorbachev and President Reagan beginning in May-June 1985. I have had a long discussion with President Najib when he was in India at the end of last year. And, in recognition of our constructive role, both the USA and the USSR have taken us into confidence in the resolution of this problem. Key Afghan personalities have appreciated our contribution. Some people have questioned the need for India's involvement in the solution of the problem in Afghanistan. We can not remain indifferent. We have a vital stake in what is happening in Afghanistan. Afghanistan is in our neighbourhood. Afghanistan is an integral part of our region. The developments in Afghanistan have brought about the confrontation between the major powers in our region to our very doorstep. Now we have an opportunity to strengthen the forces of Non-alignment. It is for that reason that I invited the President of Pakistan to Delhi for a working visit, President Zia has not been able to come. He has said, because of his occupations with political activity at home. At his suggestion, I have named our Foreign Secretary as my special emissary. For stability in our region, India and Pakistan need to work together on this issue to find a solution. I wanted to talk to President Zia about this. In evolving a solution, we can work together to the benefit of each, for the good of all. I hope there will be opportunities soon for wide-ranging consultations.

In Sri Lanka, significant forward movement has taken place in recent days on the implementation of the Agreement. The Agreement secured justice for the Tamils and the unity and integrity of Sri Lanka. It secured our security interests and it secured Non-alignment in the region. President Jayewardene has reiterated a general amnesty for those who lay down arms. We have made definite progress towards the devolution of powers to Provincial Councils. President Jayewardene has made a commitment to holding elections towards the middle of this year. Elections to the North and the East will be to a single Provincial Council making a reality of the merger. Thus, the Tamils of Sri Lanka will have an opportunity of democratically choosing their own representatives to administer their affairs. The Tamils of Sri Lanka will have an opportunity to test the claims of different groups of Tamils to represent the Tamils. This should be determined through the ballot box.

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I agree entirely with the hon. Member. We are not for innocent Tamils getting killed. We will do everything to protect the innocent Tamils and we

have done that.

In fact, the very task of IPKF is to protect the innocent Tamils.

This will give an opportunity for the Tamils in Sri Lanka to see who really represents the Tamils and represents them through the ballot box, not through the barrel of a gun.

An encouraging indication or index of the return to normalcy is the return of the refugees. A steady stream of refugees has been going back to their homeland.

I must take this opportunity to pay the highest tribute to the gallantry of our soldiers in the IPKF for the discipline and courage with which they have carried out this delicate task. It is deplorable that anyone in this House should give credence to the malicious fabrications about the work of the IPKF.

We are always in danger of getting too engrossed in the minutiae of development. Yes, statistics and indices are important but we must look to the larger vision of India. India has mattered in the world. We have led in the world of Ideas. Our major contribution has been to enduring values and standards, to the soul and the spirit of human kind. Our national task is to take India again to its rightful place to the front rank of human civilization. Development is an essential tool in this endeavour, but the real challenge is the response to what lies beyond mere development and mere growth. To that great task the nation is summoned in this 40th year of our independence.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I wish to express my support to the motion of thanks to the President for his inspiring Address and urge the House to do likewise.

BACK NOTE

XXIII. Reply to Motion of Thanks to the President's Address, 2 March, 1988

1. PROF. MADHU DANDEVATE (Rajapur): What about 1977-78?

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: There was no drought in 1977-78. And 1977-78 was the momentum from 1975 to 1977 that had carried them through. It was when the momentum was destroyed that the true colours of the Government had come out. I have to say 'true colours' because it was not one colour.

PROF. MADHU DANDEVATE: If there is a progress under new regime, that is the momentum of the past, if there is degradation, that is on their own. That seems to be their logic.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: I am glad that Dandavate Ji agrees with me. As I understand he said that progress.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: He said your logic.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Of course, we have done well. Our Government in these three years has done well only because Indira Ji, in the five years preceding, had given that momentum, and I have no hesitation in saying so. If she had not given that momentum, we would have found this drought very difficult. Let me remind our friends also that if she had not given that momentum upto 1977, I hate to even imagine what could have happened to the country because even with the momentum that she had given they almost destroyed the country.

PROF. MADHU DANDEVATE: The latest momentum was the destruction of democracy.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Mr. Speaker. Sir, the hon. Member talked of democracy. I don't think many heard it. I would like to remind the hon. Member that it was Indiraji who called for elections in 1977. It was not the Opposition.

Yes, that is what shows her commitment and the Congress's commitment to democracy.

Sir, some of our friends are very vociferous. But I would like to remind them that they should think back to where they were ten years ago.

2. SHRI SAIFUDDIN CHOWDHARY (Katwa): You are talking about loan melas.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Why are you feeling guilty?

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA (Bankura): You are holding loan melas with whom?

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Sir let me remind hon. Members that there are only two or three cadrebased parties in this House.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: We are happy about the confession, Sir.

3. SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: What?

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: I should not have to repeat things to those with head phones on.

Sir, while the country has confronted the severest drought of the century and threats to the integrity and security of the nation, the Opposition has been chasing chimeras in the vain hope that pursuit of scandal will make up for paucity of policy.

AN HON. MEMBER: Fairfax.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: Fairfax and Bofors.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Not only that, more than that. You will find out who is right and who is wrong.

Sir, precious parliamentary time has been wasted and I believe that more than one Member from the opposite side, from the Opposition, has complained of the inadequate time that they got to discuss the Demands of last year's budget. But may I remind the Members, Sir, where was that time taken up? Where was that time wasted?

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: Why?

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Who usurped that time? Who usurped the time that was set aside for serious Issues?

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: To expose you.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: On chasing ghosts.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: To expose your corruption.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: The only corruption that has come to light

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: The flight of capital is no corruption?

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Sir, the only ruption that has come to light on the issues that were raised in the first half of last year is the statement made by the ex-President of India, where the ex-President has said that Rs. 30 to Rs. 40 crores were made available to him. Sir, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the ex-President on the strong moral stand that he took and was not carried away by them.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: Sir in that very statement he has said that the members of the Rajiv Government were responsible for that. He has made it very clear.

MR. SPEAKER: A bad thing is a bad thing, whosoever it may be.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order. Sit down.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: Sir, we are prepared for another Commission if they want. We redemand a Commission on that.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Sir, I would not like to quote directly from what he said because I don't have the words here with me.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: I have got a copy, Sir. You read the article in Sunday in which the interview is given. He has alleged that the members of the present Cabinet were also responsible for pressurising.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order. Please sit down.

MR. SPEAKER: What are you doing?

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: If I remember rightly.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: He said, 1/3rd of the Ministers were there.

MR. SPEAKER What are you doing?

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: If I remember rightly, he specifically mentioned certain members of my Cabinet, who are no longer members of my Cabinet.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: Sir, he has mentioned, they continue to be members of the Cabinet today.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: They are in your Cabinet.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order. It is a very serious matter. You can appoint a committee for that.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: Shall I lay that interview on the Table of the House for the education of the Prime Minister?

PROF. K.K. TEWARY: Those Ministers are sitting with the Opposition now. They are sitting with the Opposition, Sir.

SHRI THAMPAN THOMAS: I am on a point of order. About the time of the House, be said, the House time has been misused. It is an aspersion on you, Sir.

MR. SPEAKER: Please sit down.

MR. SPEAKER: Not allowed. Sit down.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Sir, I would like just to say again, I did not say "misused". I said, "usurped".

MR. SPEAKER: Sit down.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: I may point out to you that in exposing the Mundhra scandal, the father of the Prime Minister look a lot of time of the House. But that was fully justified. Mr. Feroze Gandhi was fully justified in taking the time of the House to expose the Mundhra corruption. Let him remember that.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: I agree entirely with anybody who wants to spend the time of the House in exposing corruption and we will spend time of the House in exposing corruption—but come with some facts.

MR. SPEAKER: I have heard these things. I do not know whether I should intervene at this stage. But Sir, what you have said and what they have said—I think, this is a serious matter for the security and safety of this country. I think, we should do something to find out the truth about this.

MR. SPEAKER: Please sit down.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: Thank you, for your observations.

MR. SPEAKER: Sit down.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Mr Speaker, Sir, on your direction.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order. Please sit down.

MR. SPEAKER: What are you doing?

MR. SPEAKER: Don't talk to them.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, on your directions, I will request the Home Minister to find out where this 30 or 40 crores is and how it was acquired.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: Sir, we fully support you. We congratulate you.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: He should report to the House.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: Let a House Committee be constituted, to find out this. We are ready.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: I would also request the Home Minister to try and find out how this money was to be used, because there is no campaigning ..in a Presidential election, in that sense—how was this 30-40 crores intended to be used in a Presidential election.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: Let your direction be followed by the Home Minister, Sir.

SHRI SAIFUDDIN CHOWDHARY: Why not a House Committee?

MR. SPEAKER: Why are you making a noise?

MR. SPEAKER: Why are you creating a nuisance?

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: Are you ready to appoint a House Committee?

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA (Basirhat): Are we to understand from what you have said just now that you are making the Home Minister responsible for holding an inquiry and finding out who was offering that money to the ex-President?

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: Also who are the Members of the Cabinet?

MR. SPEAKER: Why don't you. allow the P.M. to speak?

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA: Are you making the Home Minister responsible for finding it out?

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: No. I am asking him to find out what is the best way to go into this.

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA: He must be made responsible.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: The entire interview of the ex-President should be investigated because he has referred to the present Members of the Cabinet.

MR. SPEAKER: Sit down and take your seats. Sit down now.

MR. SPEAKER: You please sit down. You please sit down.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: We will follow your interruptions. It is sad that certain progressive.

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing doing.

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA: What are your instructions?

MR. SPEAKER: What I have said is there on the record.

SHRI THAMPAN THOMAS: We want a House Committee.

MR. SPEAKER: Enough is enough. Please sit down. Please let the Prime Minister speak.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: This is the best intervention in the entire debate.

4. PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: Atleast the minds of some of us are on the 20th Century; others' are on the 8th century.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: Even in the 17th century.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Sir. unfortunately, they think of Karl, but behave like Groucho.

5. SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: What about Bihar, Orissa, U.P. and other States? You hold elections in your State.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: The hon. Member has raised a question. We have given instructions to our Chief Ministers yesterday from the Working

Committee of the Congress to hold elections in all our States in most States, they have either been announced or held.

SHRI V. SOBHANADREESWARA RAO (Vijayawada): Even in the Capital, elections have been postponed.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: They promulgated an Ordinance and put off the elections by one year.

SHRI V. SOBHANADREESWARA RAO: You hold elections in your party.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: I would like to emphasise that the elections must be fair and not rigged.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: What did you do in Tripura and Meghalaya?

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: I have not said so. Some Members of the Government, they said so. I do not know.

SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY (Midnapore): Why not you hold election in the Congress Party?

6. SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA (Bankura): We have already done it in West Bengal even at the block level.

SHRI AMAL DATTA (Diamond Harbour): You call the members of Planning Commission jokers.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Sir, some States claim that they have done it. But let me assure you, Sir, that when it comes to actually looking at numbers on the paper, there is no State which has done it. Neither a Congress State nor any opposition State.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: It is just not there on paper.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: West Bengal, we have already done block level planning.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: I do not want to argue with the Hon. Members.

SHRI AMAL DUTTA: Members of the Planning Commission, you call jokers.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: What Groucho?

SHRI AMAL DATTA: The Planning Commission members whom you call jokers have not kept you informed.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: I will have to call him Groucho from now on.

SHRI AMAL DATTA: You can call me anything but you call them jokers also.

MR. SPEAKER: Whatever you are saying It does not look nice.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Sir, I have never called the Planning Commission members as jokers. Let me be very clear about that. It seems jokers are around here opposite who distort things.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: It came in the newspapers. You have not refuted it.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: I do not bother to refute everything that is printed in the newspaper. Let me be very clear. I have tremendous respect for the Planning Commission, My only complaint about the Planning Commission is that they are not aggressive enough in their planning, that they are limiting themselves to balancing the inputs from Ministries. I want them to step out much further and produce a much more aggressive plan. That is what I have been talking to them about.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE (Rajapur): But you are the Chairman of the Planning Commission.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: That is why I have directed them to do that.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA . You direct yourself also.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Sir, perhaps, some day in the distant future, the Hon. Member will be a Member of the Government. Then he will know how the Planning Commission runs.

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI K C PANT): No chance.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: He may change parties !

7. SHRI AMAL DATTA: There had been no violence, do you know that? TNV murders were only before the elections and not afterwards; not a single one.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: There can be no democracy for common murderers of unknown innocents. Our system reflects the will of the people. It entrusts the elected Government with authority to discharge its responsibilities. The changes proposed by one Member opposite would destroy our stability and endanger our democracy itself.

8. SHRI SAIFUDDIN CHOWDHARY: Why don't you raise the number.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: Why only one Navodaya Vidyalaya in one district? Why not all schools be Navodaya Vidyalayas?

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: If you agree.

SHRI SAIFUDDIN CHOWDHARY: After 40 years of Independence there is only one school in a district. What is the meaning of this?

MR. SPEAKER: Please sit down, You cannot do like this.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Sir, after 40 years of Independence when we have found that the State Governments have not bothered to give good schools for the poor, we have had to step in and give good schools to the poor. There are only one or two States where the State Governments are still refusing to give good schools to the poor.

9. SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: Education is in the Concurrent List.

10. SHRI R.L. BHATIA (Amritsar): Sir, open a school for their education also!

11. SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: How many students are there?

12. SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: Growing young !

13. SHRI N. V. N. SOMU: Innocent Tamils are being killed there.

STATEMENT REGARDING LAUNCH OF INDIAN REMOTE SENSING SATELLITE (IRS-1A)

17 March, 1988

India's first indigenous Remote Sensing Satellite (IRS-1A) has today been successfully launched from Baikanour Cosmodrome in the Soviet Union. The spacecraft is functioning normally. It is revolving around the earth in a polar orbit once every 103.2 minutes.

After separation from the VOSTOK launcher, the automatic deployment of the satellite's solar panels has been successfully accomplished. They are maintaining the temperature within the stipulated limits.

The satellite is being controlled from the main Spacecraft Control Centre at Bangalore. ISRO ground stations at Lucknow and Mauritius are also being used in this mission. In addition, at the initial stages of the mission, ground stations of foreign space agencies located in Kenya, the United States and the Federal Republic of Germany are assisting in monitoring the progress of the satellite.

All systems and sub-systems of the Indian Remote Sensing Satellite have been designed and fabricated indigenously. IRS-1A weighs 975 kg. and carries two sets of state-of-the-art cameras. One camera will provide imageries with a resolution of 72 metres over a longitudinal strip of 148 km as the spacecraft sweeps over India. The second camera will provide imageries with a resolution of 36 metres over the same area. The spacecraft orbit will be continuously adjusted to ensure that all imageries are taken every day, around 10.25 a.m.

The successful launching of IRS-1A is a major milestone in our remote sensing programme. India now becomes the fifth nation in the world after USA, USSR, France and Japan to have accomplished the remote sensing of the earth's resources from Space.

I am sure the House would wish to join me in extending our heartiest congratulations to the team of scientists, engineers and supporting staff of the Department of Space whose dedicated efforts over the last 5 years have brought this great success to the nation.

BACK NOTE

XXIV. Statement Regarding Launch of Indian Remote Sensing Satellites
(IRS-IA), 17 March, 1988

-NIL-

DEMANDS FOR GRANTS (1988-89)

20 April, 1988

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, we have had an illuminating debate with many valuable and constructive suggestions and I would like to thank all the Members who have participated constructively in the debate.

There is a broad national consensus on the principles and objectives and on the way we conduct our foreign policy. Despite differences that occur in detail the main constituents of our foreign policy have been reaffirmed and reiterated a number of times. The main constituents have a continuing relevance in today's world.

Sir, the world is changing very rapidly, especially international relations, in the last two or three years. New attitudes are developing, new ways of thinking are springing up and all this will pose new challenges to all countries in the world especially countries like India who play a significant role in international affairs. In such a situation, one cannot remain mired in the past. One must remain flexible. But at the same time one's basic principles and fundamental ethical perceptions must be rock steady on the postulates on which we have based our foreign policy.

At one time we were regarded as immoral and impractical when we based our foreign policy on an ethical foundation, today, this has changed. Now the world is accepting the indispensability of non-violence, of freedom from nuclear weapons and of disarmament. Today, the world accepts that there can be no real, complete development if truth is not unburdened of the weight of bloc interests and spheres of influence. The world is coming round more and more to our way of thinking, in seeing humanity as one without segmented interests, in celebrating and accepting and diversity of different peoples of this earth. Countries which were highly suspicious of peaceful coexistence, are today talking of peaceful coexistence and not of deterrence.

During these years, since our foreign policy was given a firm grounding by Jawaharlal Nehru, the world has started coming around to our worldview. And this is evidenced most recently by the Delhi Declaration, which was signed

in November 1986, affirming non-violence and nuclear disarmament. It is being affirmed by the logic of reversing and ending escalating nuclear weapons development.

The SIX-NATION INITIATIVE was started with Indiraji in May 1984, at a time when the dialogue between the major powers was at a standstill, at a time when nobody thought that the tensions could come down. But by the efforts that she made, by the continuing efforts of the SIX nations in the FIVE-CONTINENT INITIATIVE, by the continuing efforts of all those involved in disarmament, by creating the atmosphere, the right atmosphere in the world, we have, for the first time, seen the dismantling of nuclear weapons after the signing of the INF treaty.

We have seen tensions coming down, especially amongst the major powers, and an acceptance of different socio-economic systems. We see, for the first time, a little light for a true international democracy developing and moving away from a bipolar world.

This is the time for us to look ahead to a world where there may not be nuclear weapons, where disarmament will have taken place. We have to safeguard ourselves against new developments which could pull us back into the same competitive arms race. Beyond nuclear weapons, we must see that there are no other means of mass destruction developed. We must see that new dimensions are not added to the arms race and, equally important, we must see that no highly accurate conventional weapons are developed, what we have termed 'surgical weapons' in the FIVE-CONTINENT INITIATIVE, weapons, which used effectively, could remove the entire leadership of a nation without causing widespread damage but still causing complete chaos.

So, is the time to start thinking of how we can start controlling these things and putting things on to a new track. We need new structures of international cooperation. We need a really, effective United Nations system, restructured to reflect international democracy and sovereign equality. We need international cooperation based on the recognition of one common family of human beings, an interdependence of interests, and the symbiosis of growth in the South with stability in the North. We need a world order based on the insights and values of Gandhiji and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru.

Sir, coming to South Asia, we have, on a number of occasions, reiterated our commitment to friendship and cordial and cooperative relations with

Pakistan. We entertain the warmest sentiments for the people of Pakistan, with whom we share much in common—language, music and literature. We have a common history. There is no ill will towards the people of Pakistan. We wish them well. And, therefore, we greatly welcome any exchanges at the people's level visitors, tourists, students, journalists, trade-unionists, women's groups. At every level, we would like to see many more exchanges. We seek interaction with the new generation who have been born and who have grown up as Pakistanis but whom Pakistan policies have kept distanced from a personal knowledge of India. Peace between Pakistan and India is peace between their peoples.

To promote such contacts and build cordiality in the Shimla spirit, we have proposed a number of steps. I do not want to give an exhaustive list but I would like to read out some. We proposed a Treaty of Peace and Friendship. We proposed an agreement for non-attack on nuclear facilities, we have proposed discussions on new ground rules on the border. We proposed an MOU on hijacking. We proposed on MOU on air space violations by military aircrafts. We proposed expansion of private trade. We have proposed a move to a non-discriminatory trade regime and the MFN treatment. Indo-Pakistan joint ventures have been proposed. Exchanges of writers, of intellectuals, exchanges of media, cultural exchanges, troupes, films, drama, music, dance. We have proposed exchanges of books, periodicals and newspapers. We have proposed many other confidence-building and risk reduction measures, as may be mutually agreed. We have proposed the easing of travel restrictions. We have proposed cooperation on drug trafficking and terrorism. Unfortunately, we have stuck with very unsatisfactory responses from the Pakistani side.

On the other hand, Pakistan forestalls people to people programmes. They pursue what is very obviously a nuclear weapons programme. They assume hostile postures in areas such as Siachin. They allow their territory to be used for the support, sustenance and sanctuary of terrorists and separatists.

We have informed the Pakistan Government that our Home Secretaries—The Home Secretary of Pakistan and the Home Secretary of India—must meet to discuss the sudden increase of terrorism on our borders. We must have good communications between our two countries at various levels. On the military side, we already have a hotline. Perhaps a hotline is needed between the Secretaries also to see that any tensions that build up can be defused and reduced as soon as possible or immediately.

We had one such hotline between the Foreign Secretary of Pakistan and the Foreign Secretary of India. But, at their request, it has been dismantled. We would like to have it restored and put back so that tensions, if they build up, can be reduced quickly.

I hope that we can get on quickly to genuine and sincere normalisation of our relations. A prosperous, stable Pakistan, with its independence, sovereignty and integrity fully assured, is in India's national interest. We would like to see a Pakistan like that.

A little further West, in Afghanistan, we welcome the Geneva Accord. It should lead to a cessation of interference and intervention in Afghanistan. It should lead to the return of refugees. The Agreement in Geneva has opened a window of opportunity for peace and stability in Afghanistan, assuring its independence and sovereignty and its non-alignment. We have played our role constructively and quietly in facilitating this process. We regret that Pakistan did not respond to our invitation for consultations. We could have made things a little smoother, perhaps.

In our view the best guarantee of peace, stability and non-alignment in Afghanistan is a strong Government in Afghanistan. And, we would like to see a strong Government in Kabul. We have vital stakes in this. Therefore, we are inviting President Najibullah to visit India to discuss all aspects of the post Accord situation. We wish the people of Afghanistan an era of progress, reconstruction and rehabilitation and we pledge our support to this endeavour.

Sir, our Agreement with Sri Lanka was universally welcomed as the only basis for a fair and lasting settlement in Sri Lanka; a settlement meeting all the legitimate needs and demands of the Tamils; an Agreement that strengthens Sri Lanka's unity; an agreement that meets our security concerns.

In the last 9 months the IPKF has stopped the conflict between Tamils and Tamils. The IPKF has stopped the conflict between the Tamil militants and the Sri Lankan army. The LTTE has been disarmed—a large section of the LTTE has been disarmed by the IPKF.

Near normalcy has been established in the North and we are moving towards normalcy very rapidly in the East. The Sri Lankan Government has released most Tamil detenus and has framed legislation for provincial councils.

For the LTTE we keep channels open. We welcome them to join the political process and to test their standing in the democratic process.

Sir, in South Asia, SAARC has been moving very well and it is moving rapidly. We are very satisfied with the progress. SAARC is reaching new potentials and establishing a good framework for relationships in South Asia. A Member has raised the question of SAARC being used to settle bilateral issues. I would like to make our position very clear. SAARC is not a bilateral forum and we will not use it to sort out our bilateral issues. We have direct contacts and we deal directly on bilateral issues.

Sir, with China we have been endeavouring to improve our relations. We are building a climate of trust, looking for a new and productive phase in our relationship. We recognise that the process of normalisation is complex. The border question needs peaceful negotiations. It needs mutually acceptable outcomes and we need to keep in mind the national sentiments in both countries. The maintenance of peace and tranquillity on our borders becomes vital while we talk of long term settlements. We are strengthening cooperation in many fields with China. We are glad that the efforts to normalise relations have been welcomed by all sections of the House. We have accepted, in principle, that I should visit China on their invitation.

Our relations with Japan have advanced significantly. I have had a large number of meetings with their ex-Prime Minister Nakasone, when he was Prime Minister and after. And on this visit to Japan, I had a very long meeting with Prime Minister Takeshita. Japan is now our largest bilateral donor of official development assistance. It is also our third largest trading partner. We expect an increase in Japanese investment, in joint ventures with Japan, and in technical collaboration with Japan.

On my way back from Japan, I stopped over in Vietnam to meet the new leadership that has taken over. Vietnam is a true and sincere friend of India, with whom we enjoy shared values, shared principles and many shared geopolitical perceptions. My visit reaffirmed the strong historical ties between the two countries. We have established a strong political understanding with the Vietnamese leadership, an understanding to promote all round cooperation in economic, social and cultural development, an understanding that will strengthen and safeguard the forces of peace and stability in Asia.

We had talks about Kampuchea. As you are aware, Sir, India has been active in trying to find a solution for the problems in Kampuchea. We are playing our part. We hope the talks between Prince Sihanouk and Prime Minister Hun Sen will be resumed soon.

There is an important role for the ASEAN countries. I hope that they too will come forward and play that role. Our relations with the ASEAN countries are progressing smoothly. We have increased economic, commercial and other relations. The Prime Minister of Singapore visited India a little while ago and I have visited Indonesia and Thailand. We have longstanding ties with Malaysia.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the Gulf War continues. We have persistently deplored this fratricidal conflict between two non-aligned countries. We have remained in close touch with both. We have endorsed the United Nations Security Council Resolution 598. The negotiating process to implement the Resolution has been undermined by the resumption of the war of the cities and by the resort to chemical weapons. We deplore the intensification of the Great Power naval presence. The incidents in the Gulf involving US warships are becoming more and more serious and we urge the utmost restraint on all sides. The need of the hour is statesman like caution, reversing the escalation and promoting a negotiated settlement.

In West Asia, our support to the Palestinian cause the PLO is historic and consistent and dates back to our freedom struggle. We condemn the brutal behaviour of the Israeli forces in the Occupied Territories. The recent cruel assassination of Abu Jihad is also an act that will only escalate tensions in the area and will make it more difficult to normalise matters and to find a solution. The situation is critical and brooks no piecemeal approach. I believe there is growing support for an International Conference on the Middle-East. The Palestinians have an inalienable right to self-determination and we support them in that right.

Moving to Central America, we support the Contadore process. It has led to the Guatemala Peace Accord in the middle of last year, which should lead to a just and lasting settlement ensuring the right to self-determination, independence, security and integrity of all States of the region, free of interference and intervention from outside.

There is much evidence of the growing affection and shared perceptions and concrete support from Latin America to India, despite the long distances that separate our countries. I must make special mention of the genuine efforts that Daniel Ortega has been making in Nicaragua to bring about peace, to uphold the independence of Nicaragua and to strengthen non-alignment in the region.

Our relations with Peru have improved tremendously during these past years. Peru is blazing a new trail in Latin America. Argentina and Mexico are partners in our Six Nation Initiative and we are working unitedly for disarmament. We had a lot of cooperation between Brazil and India in the GATT negotiations. Because of our unity and like-mindedness we were able to have our way and swing things in favour of the developing nations. We must expand our cooperation with Latin America to a level commensurate with the great interest and sympathy for India in Latin America.

Our relations with the USSR have been traditionally close and warm. These are now expanding at an unprecedented pace, improving qualitatively to new levels. Special mention must be made of the new thrust in increased trade and economic cooperation, and especially in science and technology cooperation that we are starting up. The Festival of India in the Soviet Union and the Soviet Festival in India have been great successes.

We are looking forward to General Secretary Gorbachev's visit to India in November this year.

We have been steadily improving our bilateral relations with the United States since Indira's visit in 1982. The United States is now our largest trading partner with growing scope for increased economic cooperation and technology transfers. We have been holding useful consultations on international and regional issues with the United States. On defence matters, our concentration is on high technology with a view to strengthening our self-reliance.

Our foreign policy is based on the basic postulates given to us by Gandhiji, of one humanity, of non-violence and of speaking the truth. On one humanity, we have fought for ending the divisions, the narrow walls that we have built. We have fought for ending apartheid which has spawned colonialism in Namibia. We have fought against invasion, subversion and destabilization in Southern Africa that apartheid is causing. Our response to the challenge is seen in the AFRICA Fund. Forty-five countries have responded, and pledged over a quarter of a billion dollars, including Rs.50 crores from us. Several donors, including India have initiated projects.

Increasing recognition of the Non-aligned Movement is taking place in the world. At one time it was called immoral. Today, it is accepted by all nations. The principles and practices of non-alignment are seen as the only path for assured peace, stability and prosperity in the world. We have grown from a small minority to an overwhelming majority; and even those who are not in the Non-aligned Movement have started talking the non-aligned language. We must maintain the unity of the movement, because that is what will give us strength.

In the economic field, the irrational world order is harming development in the South, and continued prosperity in the North. We need a new consensus on an economic order, a new consensus on development and a cooperative world order.

India has been fighting for disarmament, nuclear disarmament, from long before it was fashionable. The INF Treaty is a historic step in this process, but it must be remembered that it is only a first step. A lot more needs to be done. Much must be built in this process. To make further progress, we must work towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons within a time-bound programme. We must include all nuclear weapon powers in the process. We must see that weapons, nuclear weapons, do not extend into new dimensions. We must see that there is no development of other weapons of mass destruction or surgical weapons. We must replace doctrines of deterrence by doctrines of peaceful coexistence.

In 1988, we conclude the 40th year of India's independence. We also begin the birth centenary year of Jawaharlal Nehru, the architect of our foreign policy. His vision was much in advance of his times, but it is getting world-wide recognition today, a quarter of a century after his death. We are the proud inheritors of an ancient civilization whose basic precepts are the source of our foreign policy. We have remained steadfast to Jawaharlal Nehru's vision. There are new challenge and new prospects and new possibilities ahead. We have to abide by our own principles, but interpret them anew to suit evolving circumstances. We shall work towards peace and amity in our neighbourhood and the resolution of regional conflicts. We shall work for human rights and justice in the world, for international democracy among sovereign equals, for cooperative world order, for one humanity.

BACK NOTE

XXV. Demands for Grants (1988-89), 20 April, 1988

-NIL-

STATEMENT REGARDING DEVELOPMENTS IN MALDIVES

4 November, 1988

I rise to apprise the House about recent developments in the Maldives. In the morning yesterday, we received reports that the capital of our friendly neighbour, the Maldives was under attack from a group of mercenaries apparently recruited by disgruntled expatriate Maldivian citizens. These mercenaries arrived by ship. After landing in the capital, Male, at about four in the morning yesterday, they quickly captured some key government buildings, including the radio station, the TV station and the communications centre. They also surrounded the Presidential Palace. They were reported to have taken hostage one senior Government Minister and a large number of civilians. The objective of the operation, clearly, was to overthrow the democratically elected government of Maldives.

President Gayoom managed to elude the attackers and took refuge in an area outside the Presidential Palace. Shortly thereafter we received a formal appeal for urgent military assistance to put down this plot. This request was repeated by Maldivian emissaries in Colombo and New York. According to reports that we were receiving at regular intervals, the situation was critical.

Maldives is a peaceful country, with no Armed Forces except a small force to maintain law and order. President Gayoom is the democratically elected and popular President of this friendly neighbour of ours. He was reelected for a third term in office as recently as September 23, 1988 securing over 95 per cent of the votes polled. Maldives is also one of our closest and friendliest neighbour. It appealed to us in desperation in its grave hour of need. After carefully considering this appeal, we felt that we must respond positively and go to the aid of a friendly neighbour facing a threat to its sovereignty and its democratic order.

Accordingly, two IAF aircraft with about 300 paratroopers of the Indian Army were despatched yesterday evening on a reconnaissance mission with carefully pre-planned options. Later last night, I briefed leaders of the opposition of the action taken. I am glad to inform the House that our troops successfully landed near Male. I take this opportunity to inform the House about the background of our action in support of the democratically elected government of a friendly neighbouring country.

I am proud to report that our troops have carried out their assigned task in an exemplary fashion in the highest traditions of the Indian Armed Forces. They successfully completed their major mission by around 2:30 this morning. The safety of the President and senior members of his government were ensured. The operations have been carried out in an extremely tight time frame without a single Indian casualty till now. More troops have landed in the Maldives during the early hours of this morning to ensure the availability of an adequate force to meet any contingency. Some armed rebels have been captured. Mopping up operations are continuing. We would like to withdraw our troops at the earliest. We are in touch with President Gayoom and hope that the withdrawal can begin today. President Gayoom telephoned me early this morning and expressed his deep appreciation of our prompt and timely assistance. We are happy to have been of assistance to the friendly people of the Maldives, with whom we have always enjoyed close and warm ties. The attempt to spread terror and undermine peace and stability in our region has been frustrated, I am sure the House would wish to join me in conveying the country's good wishes and support to President Gayoom and the people of the Maldives. We extend to our Armed Forces our appreciation and our warmest congratulations. This was an operation involving coordination between all three wings of the services. The country is proud of the speed and efficiency with which the operation was planned and executed.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, our response to developments is a clear manifestation of our commitment to the promotion of peace and stability in our region. It is in keeping with our belief that countries in the region can resolve their problems in a spirit of friendship and cooperation, free of outside influences.

We have kept in touch with a number of friendly countries on these developments. I am happy that the response to our constructive approach, both in our neighbourhood and elsewhere, has been positive and indeed heartening.

Thank you, Sir.

BACK NOTE

XXVI. Statement Regarding developments in Maldives, 4 November,
1988

-NIL-

STATEMENT REGARDING THE VISIT OF MR. GORBACHEV,
GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE
CPSU AND PRESIDENT OF THE PRESIDUM
OF SUPREME SOVIET TO INDIA

21 November, 1988

Sir, as the House is aware, Mr. Gorbachev, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the CPSU and Chairman of the President of Supreme Soviet, came as our honoured guest to receive the Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament and Development, President Gorbachev's contribution towards making our world free of nuclear weapons and strengthening the force of peace, cooperation, goodwill and understanding has brought about a unique and qualitative change in the international environment. In our honouring him with the Indira Gandhi Prize, we are paying tribute to a person who symbolises the passionate yearning for peace, progress and prosperity to which Indira Gandhi dedicated her life. President Gorbachev's visit was a reaffirmation of the high regard which the Soviet Government and the people have for the values which motivated our freedom struggle under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi and for the vision of a strong and self-reliant India, which Jawaharlal Nehru and Indira Gandhi espoused.

Sir, the Delhi Declaration which President Gorbachev and I signed during his last visit to India in November 1986, embodied the commitment of our two countries to rid the world of the threat of a nuclear holocaust and to build a nuclear weapon free and non-violent world order. The Action Plan which I presented to the Third Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly on Disarmament in June this year, spelt out to the world community, the concrete steps which could be taken to achieve the goals enshrined in the Delhi Declaration. Honourable Members will be pleased to note that President Gorbachev has supported our Action Plan. India and the Soviet Union have agreed on the need for immediate measures to end the nuclear arms race, to establish international control over emerging new technologies with a military potential and to work for the conclusion of an International Convention banning the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons.

President Gorbachev's visit provided yet another opportunity for us to exchange views on regional and International issues. We both agreed that since my last meeting with him in July 1987, there has been a marked reduction in the tensions and suspicions which had bedevilled the world in the recent past. The signing of the INF Treaty, the Geneva Accords on Afghanistan, the cessation of hostilities in the Iran-Iraq war and the progress towards finding negotiated settlements to issues in South-East Asia and Southern Africa, are all manifestations of a new era emerging in international relations. President Gorbachev's bold and Imaginative initiatives are replacing confrontation by cooperation, suspicion by trust and doubt by hope. The Soviet Union highly appreciates India's active and constructive role in the Non-aligned Movement and our efforts to promote peace, disarmament and development.

As Hon'ble Members are aware, developments in Afghanistan had led to increasing tensions in our region and even threatened our security environment. It has been the hope of the international community that the Geneva Accords would usher in an era of peace and stability in the region and enable the Afghan people to determine their own destiny, free from all foreign interference and intervention. President Gorbachev informed me that while the Soviet Union supported the establishment of a broad based government in Afghanistan, it was concerned at the continuing violations of the Geneva Accords. It is our hope that these Accords would be implemented fully in letter and spirit, so that the people of Afghanistan can devote their energies to the tasks of national reconstruction and economic development.

The House is aware that our bilateral relations with the Soviet Union have been growing from strength to strength. During President Gorbachev's visit we reviewed the progress which has been achieved in implementing the various decisions and agreements which we had arrived at in our past meetings. Agreements were signed yesterday on the construction of a nuclear power station in India, on the exploration of outer space for peaceful purposes on the setting up of the second stage of the Vindhya Thermal Power Station, on Avoidance of Double Taxation as well as a Protocol on Economic and Technical Cooperation in Power Projects. The texts of the Agreements and the Protocol are laid on the table of the House. These agreements will give an added impetus and new dimension to our already multifaceted economic, scientific and technical cooperation. We also signed an Indo-Soviet Summit

Statement, whose text reflects our common commitment to strengthening peace, friendship and cooperation. The text of the statement is also laid on the Table of the House.

May I add, Mr. Speaker, Sir, that our ties have been significantly strengthened by the unique exposure which people in India and the Soviet Union have had during the last year, to each other's ancient, rich and diverse cultural heritage.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, our friendship with the Soviet Union has stood the test of time. President Gorbachev's visit to India is second in the last two years, symbolises the desire of the Soviet leadership and people to further nurture, enrich, deepen and widen this friendship. This, we greatly cherish and fully reciprocate.

BACK NOTE

XXVII. Statement Regarding the visit of Mr. Gorbachev, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the CPSU and President of the Presidium of Supreme Soviet to India, 21 November, 1988

-NIL-

STATEMENT REGARDING CLARIFICATION OF CERTAIN
REMARKS MADE DURING QUESTION HOUR
ON 27 FEBRUARY, 1989

28 February, 1989

Mr. Speaker, Sir, Yesterday, during the Question Hour, I made some remarks. And reading the newspapers this morning I got a feeling that some erroneous message has gone which is not quite what I have said.

First, I would like to clarify that at no point did I say or imply or use the words that the opposition was unpatriotic or anti-national. These words were not used by me. That is not what I meant. What I did say, which I have no hesitation in reiterating, is that at least one Member at the opposition has been raising the issue of Khalistan and the reformation of States within the Union. And I have not seen anybody in the opposition taking that up as an issue. I have not accused the opposition of raising Khalistan as an issue and I do not accuse them of doing that. But if they are truly committed to fight the terrorist, I would like them to take action against that Member.

Sir, I have also got some letters from very senior members of the Opposition appealing for some actions to be done, showing softness on terrorists. And, this is the sort of double standard which makes it difficult to fight terrorism.

Lastly, I would like to say that yesterday in the heat of the discussion I mentioned the CPM. I meant to mention all the Communists because the CPI, the CPM, the other Leftist Parties have been fighting the terrorists and have been taking a nationalist stand. I want to thank them and congratulate them for that.

I would also like to take this opportunity to say that apart from the Congress and the Leftist Parties, many people from other Parties have also been killed and our hearts go out to them. They were all patriots. They stood and fought for the unity and integrity of our nation.

Lastly, if the Opposition wants to come out clean on this issue. I would like them to take a positive stand against terrorists. I would like them to show

the nation that they will not allow any member of the Opposition to pander or soft-pedal to the terrorists in any way.

If anything I have said has hurt Members of the Opposition, I am sorry about that, but I would like them to correct it by action. Thank you, Sir.

BACKNOTE

XXVIII. Statement Regarding Clarification of Certain Remarks Made during Question Hour on 27 February, 1989, 28 February, 1989

-NIL-

REPLY TO MOTION OF THANKS TO THE PRESIDENT'S
ADDRESS

3 March, 1989

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I first like to thank the hon. Members for the high order of debate that has taken place on the President's Address, keeping with our parliamentary tradition and befitting of our flourishing democracy.

This is the last year of this Lok Sabha.

..... XXX XXX XXX¹

I said Lok Sabha... Something wrong with your headphone?

..... XXX XXX XXX²

It is appropriate to look back at the challenges that we have encountered, our responses to those challenges and the tasks that lie ahead.

Sir, our vision that has guided us has been moulded by the vision of Gandhiji and Panditji, the vision of Indiraji. It is on that basis that we have faced these challenges. Our struggle has been to strengthen the unity and integrity of India. If you think back, at the time that this Lok Sabha was elected, there were tremendous doubts and questions in everybody's mind throughout the nation on these basic questions. Today that has been entirely removed.

Our struggle has been to remove poverty and to remove unemployment. We have worked during these years to build India's rightful place in the world. We have looked at a number of areas: the first and most important is peace and stability because without peace and stability there can be no development—peace and stability nationally in our region and internationally. We have worked to accelerate the economy because we felt that these are the two basic things that are needed for the development of our nation. We have brought peace and stability to Assam, to Mizoram, to Tripura, Darjeeling areas...

..... XXX XXX XXX³

I will talk at length on Punjab; relax.

..... XXX

..... XXX

..... XXX⁴

I do not mind. Let them be happy with such things.

Sir, regionally, Afghanistan is coming back to normal. We have reduced our tensions with China, to some degree with Pakistan and Sri Lanka, which was boiling over, is very rapidly coming back to normal.

Globally, the dialogue between the Soviet Union and the United States, which was at a complete standstill, is restored. The talks in disarmament are moving. The tension spots around the globe are slowly reducing in tension. We have worked during this period for a new world order; for new international political relations; for new military relations in disarmament, and for new economic relations.

Nationally, our economy has been targeted at two things basically — at removing poverty and reducing unemployment. To do this we had needed rapid growth because without rapid growth we could not generate the resources that were required for investment in these two critical areas. We have looked for science and technology to be brought into the service of the poor as a multiplier of development, as a key in the development process. We have looked at the delivery system and streamlined the delivery system to see that our programmes are more effectively brought into the homes of the weaker sections. Most of all, we have strengthened our economy enough for it to start becoming competitive globally. This has been seen in the way our exporters have met the global challenges. We have looked at these challenges with new approaches and they have yielded encouraging results.

As I said, tensions have been reduced nationally, regionally and globally. Our economy has done well in very difficult circumstances. In the North-East we have almost completely ended insurgency. We were tough with the insurgents. We gave no quarter. Yet we showed that the Government was ready to talk and to listen subject to only two conditions — violence to be given up and anything that is to be talked would be talked about only under our Constitution. We have shown that solutions are possible within the system as it exists today, without need for modification. We have shown that we are able to rise above party interests to national interests to bring about solutions. We have brought about full democratic participation in the North East. It is not a question of whether the Opposition or the Congress wins an election or losses an election.

What is important is that the people of North East have had an opportunity to decide after many long years. We have ushered in democracy in the North East. We have set the stage for peace and stability and for development. And we offered to those few individuals in the North East who are still outside the mainstream and outside the system to work with them, as we have done with the others, abjuring violence, working within the Constitution to find solutions to their problems.

There is a new problem coming up in Assam. It is a problem that the Assam Government must look after. The Home Ministry will give them all the assistance that they will ask for. One problem, tension area, that has been difficult during these four years has been Punjab, Sir. In Punjab we have given no quarter to terrorism.

..... **xxx** **xxx** **xxx**⁵

Terrorists have been faced with tougher force than ever before. We worked with all to try and bring about peace. We started a political process. It had to be aborted because those in authority were not willing to stand firm against the forces of terrorism. Sir we have stood firm; the people of Punjab have stood with us. I take this opportunity to think for a moment about all the martyrs and patriots who have given their lives in Punjab for national unity and integrity. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank those opposition parties who have worked with us in very difficult circumstances in Punjab. I speak specifically of the two Communist Parties in Punjab.

At the same time, I would like to point out that there have been occasions when we have not had the type of support from some sections, from some political parties that we would have expected in Punjab. Some examples Sir. We did not get unanimous support from the Opposition Parties on an issue as clear as 'Black Thunder'. Could any question be asked? But we did not get unanimous support. There were those amongst the Opposition who said that "Black Thunder" was wrong. I am very sad. Then, there are those who are today talking of a Sikh State. It is very unfortunate that some of the members of the Opposition did not realise what they were supporting these last few days.

I would like to ask a few questions. May I read out a small section from a booklet Sir? This is a small booklet which, I believe, has been sponsored by

certain members from the opposition parties, it says, "For the solution in Punjab firstly, the solemn commitment made before Independence" — I am not aware of any such solemn commitment — "for creation of an autonomous Sikh State within India should be honoured."

..... **xxx** **xxx** **xxx**⁶

..... **xxx** **xxx** **xxx**⁷

This is a booklet called "The Sikh Case". It is prepared Bharat Mukti Morcha of Punjab.

..... **xxx** **xxx** **xxx**⁸

I must remind the hon. members of the House...

..... **xxx** **xxx** **xxx**⁹

If you give me an opportunity, I will give the name.

Sir, the first thing I would like to say is when I speak of Members of the Opposition I mean Members of the Opposition not Members of the Opposition in either House. When I speak of Members of Opposition in the House I speak of Members of the Opposition in the House. But Members of Opposition include, when I am saying that, look please understand I am including people in the Opposition who are not in the House but who have at times taken a position. Sir, I would like to read.

..... **xxx** **xxx** **xxx**¹⁰

I am reading the first sentence of the foreward of this little booklet. This booklet was prepared by the Punjab Unit of the Bharat Mukti Morcha at the instance of Shri Ram Jethmalani, M.P.

"Is an endeavour to place before the general public and particularly the Opposition Leaders the Punjab problem and to suggest a just and amicable settlement."

Then the last sentence of the foreword or one of the last sentences of the foreword says:

"Special thanks are due to Mr. Ram Jethmalani who read the draft and made useful suggestions."

Now, I go to the suggestions which have been put to the Opposition

Leaders as a just and amicable solution. The first solution that is suggested...

..... XXX XXX XXX¹¹
..... XXX XXX XXX¹²

I am only trying to show you that there are things that perhaps you are not aware of and...

..... XXX XXX XXX¹³

Then, this is what I was talking about.

..... XXX XXX XXX¹⁴

It says that first... Sir, let me read out the solution. ...

..... XXX XXX XXX¹⁵

Let me read this and I will tell you what I am trying to say.

..... XXX XXX XXX¹⁶

Sir, the suggestions are, "firstly, the solemn commitment made before independence for the creation of an autonomous Sikh State within India be honoured."

Do we really want this?

Second, "Repeal the laws separating religion and politics".

Do we want this?

Third Sir, under the heading "Permanent Solution"...

..... XXX XXX XXX¹⁷

No. Sir I don't at the moment.

..... XXX XXX XXX¹⁸

Thank you Dandavateji.

..... XXX XXX XXX¹⁹

"There being no..."This is the permanent solution, Sir...There being no alternative to the formation of an autonomous State within India, the structure of such a State is what should engage the deliberations of the Opposition leaders."

And it goes on: "It must have full internal autonomy with complete control over its economy. Only Defence, Foreign Affairs Communications and Currency to be Central subjects". Is this any different from the Anandpur Resolution, Sir? In the whole book, there is not mention of one person that the terrorists have killed. There is no mention of the martyrs who have died fighting for the unity and integrity of India. The book spreads poison and nothing else. Sir.

What I am asking, Sir is: what action have the friends of the gentleman who has sponsored this book taken against that gentleman? Was he not elected by the support of certain Opposition parties?

..... **XXX** **XXX** **XXX**²⁰

..... **XXX** **XXX** **XXX**²¹

I do not want to argue the substance of that book. What I am looking for is action by the members of the Opposition against the gentleman. That is what I want to see.

..... **XXX** **XXX** **XXX**²²

Sir, I am not making any charge against the Opposition. What I am asking is—I am asking the Opposition to take action against the gentleman, and to clarify... That is what I am asking for, Sir.

..... **XXX** **XXX** **XXX**²³

Sir, he will have an opportunity to answer.

..... **XXX** **XXX** **XXX**²⁴

One or two hon. Members....

If the hon. Member wants time to answer this, I am willing to have a debate on the connections of certain members of the Opposition, connections with the terrorists. I am willing to have a debate. I will give you plenty of time.

..... **XXX** **XXX** **XXX**²⁵

Certain members, I said not you, Acharia Ji.

..... **XXX** **XXX** **XXX**²⁶

It is not you, Acharia Ji. Not Members of Parliament, necessarily. I am

saying: members of the Opposition.

Let me point out. I have not charged anybody. I have raised a particular issue. I would like to see action. I have not seen action.

..... XXX XXX XXX²⁷
..... XXX XXX XXX²⁸

Sir, unfortunately, yesterday I could not be present in the House. I believe some members from the Opposition have said that adequate attention was not paid to Punjab in the President's Address. Sir, we are paying the utmost attention to Punjab.

I would like also to point out — this is a matter of interest —that in the seventy-one point, I think it was seventy-one or seventy-two point programme of the National Front — seventy one point programme — Punjab appears as point number 67. The relevance given to Punjab in the National Front Programme is No. 67! And what does it say? What is the earthshattering statement that the National Front makes about Punjab? It states that immediate steps will be taken. That is all. Point 67 "immediate steps". Nothing more than that. No thinking has gone into it. This is the importance that the National Front has given to it.

..... XXX XXX XXX²⁹

Sir, I do not know whether you have become a Member of the National Front or not. They are quite capable of protecting themselves. ... Why are you protecting them?

Sir, the fact is that we have been taking Punjab very seriously. We have taken Punjab seriously. I made two visits to Punjab.

Sir, we have been taking Punjab very seriously. We saw the problem in Punjab, as I have said on a number of occasions in this House and outside, as a problem to be tackled on two fronts.

On the one front, there is the problem of breaking the back of the fundamentalist and the linkages of the religious and fundamentalist terrorists with their supporters outside and with the religious institutions inside. The second is the hard action to see that the crime comes to an end. We have worked on both fronts. I visited Punjab twice last year. ... Let me finish now.

Sir, twice I visited Punjab. Everywhere that I went, I got a very warm welcome, an enthusiastic welcome and an affectionate welcome. ... Sir, the hon. Members have not gone to Punjab and they talk from here. Let them go there. Sir, one thing is very clear in Punjab that the people of Punjab have had enough of terrorism. The people of Punjab want peace. They want development and that is their priority today.

I have checked my impression and I have found that the people of Punjab are convinced that terrorism must be ended and work for development must start. As I said, during these years we have broken the nexus with fundamentalism and secessionism.

Today there is only perhaps one group left which has any religious background at all. All the rest have been shattered and completely destroyed. This is a fact.

Sir, the gurdwaras today are no longer sanctuaries. The devout Sikhs in Punjab were shocked, shattered and distressed when they saw the type and the level of the desecration that was going on inside the gurdwaras by the so called religious fanatics. They are extremists and terrorists of the highest order with no religion in themselves.

The Golden Temple has been restored to its pristine purity. The full *maryada* is being observed in the Golden Temple after a very long time. Over 20,000 devotees visited the Golden Temple on Makar Sankranti day. The social reform movement that had started based on terror and intimidation, has completely petered out: it is finished. Schools and colleges are normal or very near to normal. Over 50,000 children took their school leaving examination. The economy in Punjab is strong and robust in spite of the drought in '87 and floods in '88. The voluntary protection forces in the villages are working. Public activities like public meetings and other activities have started again. As I said, barring one or two groups, the terrorists have ceased to be a political force in Punjab. They are a criminal force. But they have ceased to be a political force. Today they are mixed up in drug trafficking, in smuggling and in looting. Amongst the people there is widespread revulsion of such criminal activities. Now is the time for us to double our efforts against terrorism and the criminals. And we are going to initiate just that. We are going to have very strong measures against those that are involved in such crimes. But now, that the political linkage has been broken with the terrorists,

now that religious fundamentalism and terrorists have been separated, is the time, we feel, to start a normalisation process in Punjab. The first thing that we would like to do is to release the Jodhpur undertrials. All the Jodhpur undertrials will be released. Those that have other charges, will have normal prosecutions against them through the due process which will be done by the Punjab Government. Then the Punjab Government will start withdrawing the cases for objectionable speeches and I think, the written material — I forget what the exact terminology is — the cases that are there against those individuals. We will remove the restrictions under the Foreigners Act for people to visit Punjab. The Disturbed Areas Act will be limited to the seriously disturbed areas of Punjab only and not to the whole of Punjab. The Special Armed Forces Act will also be limited to those parts of Punjab which are severely affected and not the whole of Punjab. TADA will be used very rarely. The National Security Act amendment will be withdrawn and it will revert to the parent Act. But most important is that the police functioning will be brought back to normal as rapidly as possible. A monitoring mechanism to guard against excesses will be set up very rapidly. Committees will be set up to monitor their functioning. We will set up district committees immediately and perhaps, if they are successful, sub-divisional committees which will look after the development process in Punjab. They will be Chaired by the D.Ms, and non-officials will be associated with the committees. Certain powers of decision making, specially in the antipoverty programme, will be given to these committees. They will also have an advisory role and a role for grievance redressal where problems can be brought and can be just sorted out. We are also organising a Village Defence Organisation which will be basically a non-political organisation consisting mainly of ex-servicemen, ex-policemen, ex-BSF, ex-CRPF, ex-uniform personnel, which will motivate the local people and run small village defence units.

The Panchayat elections which had been announced in September but for various reasons could not be held, mainly because of the floods, will be held starting in May this year and we hope they will be completed by the middle of the year.

We had promised to consult the Opposition Parties in Punjab and we will be doing that. The Cabinet Committee has had a number of internal meetings and they are ready now. So, we will start that process also. We

would like suggestions from them on how to fight against terrorism and how to accelerate the return to normalcy.

One other question has been raised a number of times and I believe that nobody wants to listen to an answer. That is the case of the Delhi riots and what has been done. 225 cases have been registered, with over 2,300 accused. More than half the cases are in the judicial process. Eleven cases have been concluded, with convictions against ninety people and six life imprisonments. To say that nothing has happened is categorically wrong. The legal process in India is a little slow. We are all aware of that. But it is also sure that it is working, it is grinding away in the right direction. Let us be clear, there is going to be no soft-peddalling of the Delhi riot cases of those that have been involved in it. I have said so on the floor of this House before and I reiterate that today.

We would wish to see the political process in Punjab completely restored. But there will be no relenting against the fight, against the terrorists and the criminals. We can only contemplate a return to the political process after we have countered terrorism without fear and without compromise.

Coming to Centre-State relations, which has been raised by a number of speaker, we have repeatedly said that we stand for good Centre-State relations and we have worked for that. Yes, of course, we have differences. We all have differences. We have differences with non-Congress governments in Opposition States, we also have differences with Congress governments in the States. It is not a question of Opposition or Congress, it is a question of a certain perspective from the Centre and a perspective from the State. Neither is right and neither is wrong. Each has a responsibility, each sees a picture, and the relations will develop as the nation moves ahead, as we establish our institutions, as we build our institutions. We have worked in that way. I see some of our Leftist Members smiling. Let me remind them that it was with our help that you were able to prevent the break up of Bengal. Let me remind you.

That is the sort of help that we have been giving. That is, when it comes to the crunch, we have stood with the States. We have not let down the States at any time. Whether it is question of national calamities or difficulties that the States go through, we have always done our best to work with the States. Where we have felt that the States are doing something which is prejudicial to

the interest of the strength of the Central Government, to the interest of the unity and integrity, in a long term perspective that we see from the Centre, we may be corrected ten years from now when others look back and look at history and say 'yes it could have been otherwise'. Well, that is our view on an issue and it is our responsibility to protect the unity and integrity of the country and not to show weakness in such areas. Our attempt will always be to sit down across the table and discuss these issues and sort them out and that is how we would like to deal with you.

I just like to quote a couple of quotations from Gandhiji. Our attitude to Centre State relations is based on these quotations and on Gandhiji's view. At the Round Table Conference in 1931, Gandhiji described the Congress in the following terms. I quote:

"It is what it means: "national". It represents no particular community, no particular class, no particular interest. It claims to represent all Indian interests and all classes."

He went on to add:

"Above all, the Congress represents in its essence the dumb semi-starved millions scattered over the length and breadth of the land in its 700,000 villages. Every interest which, in the opinion of the Congress, is worthy of protection has to subserve the interests of these dumb millions and so you do find now and again apparently a clash between several interests. But if there is a genuine real clash, I have no hesitation in saying on behalf of the Congress that the Congress will sacrifice every interest for the sake of the interest of these millions."

..... **xxx** **xxx** **xxx**³⁰

Sir, some of them perhaps took objection to some of the words that Gandhiji used such as "represent to particular community or class."

Perhaps that is why they had to leave the Congress because we represent all communities and all classes, and some people found that a little difficult.

If the hat fits, everybody is welcome to wear it. Sir, turning to our economic performance, during these years our basic thrust, as I said, has been on removing poverty and on removing unemployment. The Seventh Plan was built around these thrusts. We have had significant achievements during these

four years. The 1987 drought was handled impeccably and I would like to thank all the Governments that were involved, all the administrations that were involved but most of all, I would like to thank the farmers, the '*kheth mazdoor*' in the field. I would like to thank the *mazdoor* in the industries and the infrastructure which kept it going.

..... XXX XXX XXX³¹

Sir, during the drought, the momentum of growth was maintained. For the first time, in such a severe drought, we had a positive growth rate not only positive growth rate but a growth rate of 3.6% and I would like to remind some of our friends who today are sitting opposite us that there was a drought when we were sitting opposite them in 1979.

It was a very mild drought, Sir, nowhere near as severe as the drought we had this time and during that drought, the growth rate was minus 4.7 per cent. That is the performance we have to compare. Sir, this year, the growth rate will be just under 10 per cent giving an average of over 5 per cent which is above the 5 per cent target that we set for the Seventh Plan. I thought I heard someone say that the economy has been an epitome of stagnation. All I can say is that perhaps they have not kept their eyes and ears open, or perhaps they have not wanted to see.

Sir, we have made good use of the rain, the grain output is above a very ambitious target that we have set, it will perhaps cross a 170 million tonnes which is 20 million tonnes over and above the previous peak that we had in 1983-84. It is a record crop for cotton, for sugarcane and for oilseeds. During this period we have also had a very good response from industry. The average growth rate has been 8 per cent in the first three years and is likely to above 9 per cent for the Eighth Plan. The economy is clearly on an accelerating growth path. The Central Plan outlay for the Sixth Plan was 90 per cent of the projected outlay. It was a new record for the Sixth Plan. For the Seventh Plan it is going to be 115 per cent, another new record, and this is in real terms. Like I have said, Sir, this Government is committed to the planning process and we have demonstrated it unlike some others who just rolled along. For this achievement, this is the national achievement, and for that we must also thank all our friends because the nation includes everybody. But I would particularly like to thank the kisans, the khet mazdoors— the mazdoors who have made this possible. It is the people of India who have stood up to the

drought, who have seized the opportunities of the good rainfall, who have brought our economy above the targeted growth path. The economy is buoyant and the growth has been accompanied by poverty alleviation plus substantial employment generation. Consider the expenditure on the poverty alleviation programmes. And here I would like to include not just the allocations for the rural development departments, but also the other departments which are dedicated to poverty alleviation, which means the rural development department for the anti-poverty programme plus the welfare programme for the poor, plus the human resource development programmes for the poor. The expenditure figures in 1980-81 was 1.6 per cent, of GNP. In 1985-86 we had raised this to 2.3 per cent, in 1989-90 we have raised it to 2.5 per cent. Over Rs. 9000 crores if committed for the poorer sections in our society.

Sir, there have been some new initiatives in the Budget. The ICDS programme which looks after perhaps the weakest sections in our society, *i.e.*, the children of the poor, has been expanded by approximately one third to reach 2,200 blocks. It is only limited. We wanted to do more. But we were not able to do more, not because of paucity of funds or lack of will that gives the funds but because the infrastructure and the people required to run the programme were not available at the grassroot level to do a faster and more rapid expansion.

Sir, in this Budget, we have given sarees free for destitute women. Productive employment will give a new thrust to accelerated growth. We have done this by soaking up surpluses from the rich, specially for the Jawaharlal Nehru Rojgar Yojana. This will be supplemented by merging and revamping the NREP and RLEGP programmes. The administrative measures will focus on unemployment and the unorganised labours. We will upgrade employment policy in the Planning Commission. We will also see how we can strengthen the Departments that are looking at rural works and rural development to include rural employment and also the National Commission on Rural Labour. We will ask the Urban Development Ministry to give a new thrust to employment intensive sectors like the construction sector and the services sector. All economic Ministries will be focussing, will set their focus on activities that have implication for increased employment. The work has already been started on this.

Sir, the allegation that some Members have made that the anti-poverty

programme are starved is absolutely not true. Some said that the anti-poverty programmes are starved. Some said, there is nothing in the Budget for poverty removal. How myopic can they be? If they have not read it, they could have at least heard it.

What it really shows is poverty of truth amongst some Members.

Some feel guilty.

The War on poverty has been not just a war fought by funding standard departments more. It is a war that we are fighting by including hi-tech, middle technology and low technology. For example, for drinking water, we are using high technology such as satellite imagery and certain types of nuclear soundings. On the low side is our programme for guineaworm eradication. We have changed the method of implementation of our scientific programmes and converted them into a societal technology mission which focus technology for solutions to problems of the average person in his daily needs. It is the first time that high technology has been so focussed. It is giving a multiplier effect to the investments and resources that we are committing to these programmes.

Immunisation, for example, has vaccines as very hightech, the cold chain system as the middle technology and disposable syringes as low technology. In agriculture, bio-technology of the highest levels is being used to help our farmers and low technologies are being used to include oil *ghanis* in the oilseeds programme. The overall approach is imaginative, innovative and modern.

But there is one area of the economy which is causing us concern, and that is prices. They are running higher than we would like and it is causing special difficulties for the poorer and the weaker sections and specially in certain sensitive commodity areas. Prices need to be controlled and we will take action. There are two types of action; certain action has already been visible in the Budget that has been laid on the Table of the House. One of the areas that pushes prices up is the deficit. This year we have reduced the deficit for the first time after many years from the previous year.

One of the Members has spoken, I believe, outside the House, who said that the problem is whether the deficit will be exceeded or will it be maintained. I would like to just point out for his benefit that at the time when the Budget was being handled by some who are in the Opposition today the deficit drifted

to Rs. 4,500 crores above the Budget estimates. Since then, in 1987-88 it was only Rs. 126 crores above the Budget estimates and in 1988-89, it was only Rs. 456 crores above the Budget estimates.

We have kept a very tight lid on the deficit and we are going to keep it on this year also.

I am specially glad to see all our Ministers thumping the tables because they are the ones who will be running for flexibility in these areas and I would like to remind them at that time.

We will also use the PDS to control inflation. In the last two years, over 9,000 new outlets have been increased. This is one and a half to twice the target that was set.

The other area of worry is the balance of payments. Control on the deficit will help control the balance of payments also. The Budget measures have already been taken and other measures to boost the exports. It is the bulk purchases which are causing some of the problems. Sophisticated indirect measures are needed to restrict the rise in imports. For example, curbs in certain areas compatible with economic efficiency, fiscal curbs on luxury goods which have large import contents and we have already looked to that. We will be doing more. One area that I have been speaking about for a long time which is now coming to a stage where we will be ready perhaps to bring a Bill, hopefully during this Session but definitely by the next Session, is the area of panchayati raj and devolution. Let me here again say very categorically. This is not an issue of Centre versus State and that is not how we would like to look at it. That is not how we would like to work it. It is not an issue of Congress versus non-Congress. We have no intention of bypassing the State Governments. Let me clarify. We are not attempting to rule the districts from Delhi. What we want to do is to help the people to rule their own lives. We are not attempting to erode the States' authority. We are only attempting to reinforce the people's authority. We are not attempting to alter the basic structure of the Constitution. But, we are attempting to realise the vision in the Constitution.

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We are determined to realise Gandhiji's dreams of democracy commencing from the villages. The Constitution conferred on the States, the responsibility for realising that dream but that dream has not been fulfilled. We are determined

to realise that dream.

When we are ready we will call a Conference of State Chief Ministers. The fear that State Chief Ministers will not be consulted is only a paranoia and perhaps motivated malice.

Sir, we have brought out the National Perspective Plan for women. It has certain recommendations and the following measures, we feel, we can start implementing immediately. Sir, the asset distribution should be jointly in the names or singly in the names of the women for the Wasteland that are distributed, for the surplus ceiling lands, for house-sites, for the Indira Awas Yojana. In the Poverty Alleviation Programmes, 30 per cent will be women beneficiaries. Reservations in local bodies shall be recommended to the States. Reservations in National Development efforts such as the Planning Commission and other areas, we will try and see that it comes in and we will commend it for the States also to do the same. We will also try and see that the right proportion of women are in the recruitment organisations such as the UPSC and we will commend it also to the State Governments.

We will have a Commissioner for the rights of women who will take timely action in cases of atrocities.

Sir, on the international front, India's prestige has risen to a level that it had never been at before. Our foreign policy has given broad support to the initiatives that were started by Panditji and Indiraji. We have been successful in contributing to the change in the international climate, to the change in the regional climate. We have been part of the efforts for reducing tensions in many parts of the world. My visit to China was the culmination of a process started by Indiraji. A Joint Working Group will be set up to jointly consider measures for fair, reasonable and a mutually acceptable solution. It will also look at steps to maintain peace and tranquility in the border areas. Agreements on bilateral cooperation were signed. A Committee was set up and they will look at economic relations, trade relations and relations in Science and Technology. Special emphasis was laid on building future relations between India and China on the principles of Panchsheel. We have also decided to work together on the principles of Panchsheel for a new, more equitable world order political and economic.

Sir, China and India constitute over one-third of humanity. We can make

major contribution to world peace and prosperity.

Sir, my visit to Pakistan, after the restoration of democracy in Pakistan, has started the process of improving relations between our countries. A dialogue that was initiated with their Prime Minister has helped reduce some of the tensions and work in the other tension-areas has started in earnest. We look forward to improved longterm relations and we look forward to complete normalisation. Sir, Sri Lanka, after a long help is returning very rapidly to normalcy and to a normal democratic path. The Agreement of 1987 has been almost completely implemented. The turnout of voters in spite of threats has been very heartening and the devolution has been particularly good. The IPKF continues its operations and it will do so till the Tamils and the Government of Sri Lanka feel that they are necessary. We would like to thank the IPKF for the job they have done. We commend the job that they have done. We salute their achievements.

On disarmament and non-violence, India has a unique record particularly in bringing both these ideas home to the world. After many decades of struggle, for the first time, major countries in the world are accepting non-violence and non-alignment as basic tenets for the development of civilisation. These are ideas going back to Gandhiji and Panditji and these are the ideas that we have to build the future of the world upon. And at this juncture, when there are rapidly changing relationships in the world, it is all the more important for us to work towards these ends.

Sir, in conclusion, I would like to appeal to all Members to join us in supporting the Motion of Thanks to the President and to thank him for his gracious Address to Parliament. Thank you.

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Sir, I would like to thank the hon. Member for the stand that he has taken. I would also like to point out that

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Sir, the name that I read out in the book, Mr. Jethmalani, I believe has also written a letter commending that book to various people. To the best of my recollection the hon. Member was elected from a State where the Hon.

Member's party supported him to win sponsored him.

I would look forward to the Janata Party or the Janata Dal or whatever it is now I am not too sure, or Front or whatever it is... should take some action against the gentleman. Has any action been taken?

Yes, I know Hon. Member Dandavateji's position on this. I have no doubt on Dandavateji's integrity or nationalism or patriotism. But what action are they taking with that Member?

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Sir, the letter was written in the beginning of September 1988. It is now five months, six months already.

BACK NOTE

XXIX. Reply to Motion of Thanks to the President's Address, 3 March, 1989

1. AN HON. MEMBER: Not Parliament.
2. SHRI DINESH GOSWAMI (Guwahati): President said: "Parliament".
SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY (Mahbubnagar): Something wrong with the Head of the Government.
3. AN. HON. MEMBER: What about Punjab?
4. SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA (Bankura): There is Bodo agitation also.
5. SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: What about Rode?
6. SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: What is he reading from?
7. SHRI NARAYAN CHAUBEY (Midnapore): What is the name of the book and who is its author?
8. SHRI V. SOBHANADREESWARA RAO (Vijayawada): He said that it should be above Party lines. Is it above Party lines?
9. SHRI SAIFUDDIN CHOWDHARY (Katwa): He has to give the name of the author.
MR. SPEAKER: He can give the name only if you let him to do so. You are not keeping quiet.
10. SHRI V. SOBHANADREESWARA RAO: You cannot give an impression to the people outside the House that the Opposition is supporting that. Sir, why should he comment like that?
SHRI NARAYAN CHAUBEY: He is clubbing everything together. He is wrong.
11. SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: We have not seen the book. In all probability this book may have been published by RAW, by the Home Ministry.
MR. SPEAKER: Look here. You can disclaim that. You can rebut that. But what is in print is in print.
12. SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: He is trying to convey wrong signals.

13. SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: We are aware of it. We have rejected it.
14. SHRI K.P. UNNIKRIISHNAN: We have rejected your assessment of Bhindranwale as a Saint also.
15. SHRI SAIFUDDIN CHOWDHARY: You are reading what we have rejected.
16. SHRI HARISH RAWAT (Almora): Let him tell with whose support he has won.
17. PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE (Rajapur): Mr. Speaker, if the Prime Minister permits me to intervene for a second...
18. PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: All right. Thank you
19. PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: Thank you for your audacity.
20. PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: He asks the question; and he does not allow us to intervene. He asks the questions, and does not want an answer.
21. SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: Can he keep on making statements without allowing us to speak. Sir? How can he get away with baseless and malicious statements?
22. SHRI HANNAN MOLLAH (Uluberia): What is the basis of his charge against the Opposition?
23. PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: He asks the question: 'What action you have taken,' And he does not want me to intervene and tell him clearly—so that all the controversies remain.
24. SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: When?
- MR. SPEAKER: You will get an opportunity afterwards.
- He has said that.
- SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: Just now.
- PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: I will not defy you and intervene: but I should be given an opportunity to clarify the position of the Opposition.
25. DR. DATTA SAMANT (Bombay South Central): Let us have the debate now. Sir, This is too much.
26. SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: Here and now we should have the debate.
- SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: When you are charging the members of the Opposition...

27. PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: With your permission, I would like to point out to you. Sir, he says, "I have some questions to the Opposition" and when we say "I am prepared to intervene and clarify the points so that you might not have any discussion on that", he is not prepared to yield. Anyway, I do not want to foist myself on you as well as the Prime Minister and the House, but give me an opportunity when his speech has been completed, I would like to clarify that point which he has raised.

MR. SPEAKER: Please sit down.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: Mr. Speaker, all that I am requesting you is, since he has made a very highly controversial and provocative point, since he has not yielded, it is left to him. Sir, can I not make a submission to you? Mr. Prime Minister, I am making a submission to the Speaker. I was saying that I do not want to interrupt the speech of the Prime Minister since he said, "I do not want to yield", I do not want to thrust myself on him or on the House, but after his observations are completed, I would like to clarify the points.

MR. SPEAKER: I have listened to you, now you listen to me. He has given assurance to give you an opportunity.

He has said it.

SHRI CHANDRA PRATAP NARAIN SINGH (Padrauna): You stopped me from speaking, but Prof. Dandavate is speaking and you are allowing him.

MR. SPEAKER: He asked my permission and I gave him permission. I gave him permission to speak and he spoke, and I have asked him to sit down. Mr. Jaipal has not got my permission and he is not on record. And he is not going to be on record. Whether you or Mr. Jaipal, without my permission nothing goes on record.

28. DR. DATTA SAMANT: He is saying that the Opposition is having links with the terrorists. Why not remove it from the records?

MR. SPEAKER: He is not saying that. He said something and you said something. He has a right to say something. You have a right to say something.

MR. SPEAKER: He may have some information in his possession.

MR. SPEAKER: Professor, he says that you will have an opportunity.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE. His saying is not sufficient. You are the Speaker. You have to decide. He is the leader of the House. You are the Speaker of Lok Sabha.

29. SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: Immediate steps will be taken to give it priority...

30. SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: It was a different Congress party.

SHRI V. SOBHANADREESWARA RAO: That was not this Congress. That was a different Congress.

31. SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: What about 1,70,000 industrial units which were closed down and workers have been out of job?

32. PROF. N.G. RANGA [Guntur]: Go back to Mahatma Gandhi.

33. PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, in the course of his intervention, the Prime Minister has made certain comments. Sir, it is not customary for any Member to make any reply. But I sought his permission. He said: "not now." And you said: "afterwards I can make the observation." I will only pick up one point to put the record straight. As far as my party—and I may say that even the position of the opposition Member—is concerned, Sir, not only we are opposed to theocratic State in the country as a whole but we are also totally opposed in this land of Gandhi for any autonomous State which will be restricted to any religion and any community in any part of India. That is one thing. Secondly.

SHRI SHANTARAM NAIK [Panaji]: Show it in action.

34. PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: Please. Let me clarify second point. He read out one booklet published by Bharat Mukti Morcha. I may humbly point out to you that even the title of the booklet and what is contained inside the booklet is so contradictory that those who have written that booklet, probably, there appears to be a bundle of contradiction. I will just point out to you one contradiction. He has said that the booklet is titled, "Case for a Sikh State." Whereas, inside, it is said, this State, that is, autonomous State and I quote:

"It should be comprised of all contiguous Punjabi speaking areas without bringing in the consideration of any community. The time-tested Sachar / regional formula is ideally suited."

Even if they are proposing this, that would conflict with a Sikh State. And I wish to make it clear that in this House, on behalf of my party and on behalf of the opposition as such that the division of India in 1947 was the first and the last. And we shall not tolerate any division of the country on the basis of religion and community. And as far as that point is concerned, I moved an amendment. Sir, you blessed it. That was also accepted. And we are informing all those who are connected with this Mukti Morcha that that is not the position not only of Janata but any other opposition party in this country.

35. PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: Just a minute, I forgot one point. Another point; I said that 1947 division was the first and the last. Here is a Constituent Assembly Member, Prof. Ranga. Even Congress leaders who accepted the division of India under compelling situation made it clear that we have not accepted the two nation theory based on religion. Therefore we are proud that India is the second largest country in the world where there is the largest Muslim population. It is not Pakistan; but it is India. Because we have not accepted the two nation theory.

36. PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: Leave it to us. We have never asked the Prime Minister what action he will take against the person who had taken a contradictory stand on the Muslim Personal Law and also on Shah Bano's case. We will sort it out. We will assure the House. It is not for him to suggest that we do this.

MOTION REGARDING INTERIM AND FINAL REPORTS OF THAKKAR COMMISSION

10 April, 1989

Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is not easy for me to speak on the issues that are at hand because although in a sense they are sterile, in another sense for me they are highly emotive and they take me back to a very difficult period.

Sir, Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi was shot in broad daylight on October 31, 1984 by two assassins in front of numerous witnesses.

Three actions became incumbent upon us first to prosecute those that were responsible; second, to institute a criminal investigation into the assassination and the attendant circumstances; third, to establish a Commission of inquiry to go into the security lapses, the deficiencies in medical facilities and medical attention, as also the wider ramifications and implications of any conspiracy that might have been there.

This House will appreciate the inter-connection between these three sets of actions. The time frame for their completion could not be co-terminous.

Indiraji's assassination was not just to murder her, it was through that act to kill all that she stood for and fought for.

Indiraji stood for democracy. She was a democratically elected leader of the largest democracy in the world. She was a great believer in democracy and in the people of India, it is the enemies of our democracy who were out to destroy Indiraji, and the democratic foundations of our polity.

Indira Gandhi stood for secularism. She was deeply committed to secularism as the bedrock of our nationhood. The voters of religion in politics were out to eliminate her and in eliminating her to eliminate the secular basis of our nationhood.

Indira Gandhi stood for nationalism. She was propoundry dedicated to the independence of India. The opponents of our independence were out to finish her and with her to finish our independence, our very existence.

Indiraji stood for self-reliance. She was devoted to a self-reliant India. Those bent on sabotaging our self-reliance were out to end her and our self-reliance.

Indiraji stood for stability. The incessantly drew attention to the nexus between terrorists operating inside India and elements working outside India instigating and assisting them. Those determined to dismember India were out to murder Indiraji and to so fulfil their nefarious purposes.

Indiraji stood for patriotism, Sir. The last drop of her blood was for the motherland for its unity, for its integrity. The enemies of our unity and the foes of our integrity were out to kill her and through that to destroy the unity and integrity of Bharat Mata. The assassination of Indiraji was not only the murder of an individual. Their motive was to break our unity. Their purpose was to sabotage our integrity. Their aim was to wreck our secularism. Their goal was to subvert our self-reliance. Their intent was to destroy our democracy. And their objective was to cut at the roots of our existence as an independent nation.

Sir, it was our duty to ensure that the assassins and their accomplices brought to book; to ensure that the conspiracy from which crime was hatched be exposed and revealed.

The conspiracy which had spread its net wide both here and abroad had to be unrevealed so that the death of our Prime Minister did not become the death of our democracy, nor the end of our secularism nor the termination of our self-reliance. The conspiracy had to be traced to its farthest reaches to protect the nation from the most serious threat to our integrity, unity and independence since the wresting of our independence, our freedom in 1947.

The assassins were apprehended on the spot. The conspirators remain at large.

The assassin was given every opportunity under the law to defend himself. So were his accomplices. It is worth noting that a seven-man Bench of the Supreme Court passed the final judgement; a judgement given after due deliberation under the prescribed law. And an unprecedented step was taken in giving the accused a second opportunity. It is distressing that the integrity of judges is being impugned even in the precincts of Parliament Sir, the motivation is not very clear. Obviously it is not the finer points of jurisprudence but ulterior political ends that are the motives.

There is an inalienable right of the accused to secure Defence Counsel and there is the inalienable right of a lawyer to extend his professional services

to his clients. But when legal practice becomes a cover to pursue dangerous political pretensions, then it is incumbent upon us to expose the political wolf masquerading in the robes of a legal sheep. It is also incumbent upon us to expose his political accomplices.

If it is for the courts to defend the rights and privileges of the accused and their defence counsel, it is for the Parliament to expose the machinations of errant politicians.

In the aftermath of Indiraji's assassination we established a Special Investigation Team, the SIT, under an experienced police officer with a long track record in criminal investigations. SIT's instructions were clear, to investigate the crime and the attendant circumstances. We established a Commission of Inquiry. To constitute the Commission of Inquiry we selected a judge in consultation with the Chief Justice of India. The Chief Justice suggested the name of a distinguished sitting judge, Justice Thakkar. A close linkage was established between the functioning of the SIT and the Commission of Inquiry.

Sir, the learned judge himself asked that his report be kept secret. This recommendation was accepted by Government. Government's decision accepting the learned judge's recommendation to keep the report secret was submitted for approval to this House. And this House endorsed the decision by adopting a Resolution.

This House derives its mandate from the people. The will of the House is the highest expression of our democracy. As Leader of the House, it is my sacred duty to ensure that its will is respected.

Sir, the Congress Party takes its inspiration from an ideology of over a hundred years of service to our Motherland, from principles which brought us our Independence, from ideals that have informed our modern nationhood and from a vision that has transformed humankind. Our inspiration does not come from the pages of some newspaper. We are the party of Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru and Indira Gandhi. We have no lessons to learn from those who eject elected in one guise, and then hope from seat to seat in a miasma of shifting loyalties and opportunistic alliances. We have nothing to learn about principles or ideology from those who lack both.

Sir, the will of this House was flouted by the unauthorised passing of a secret report to unauthorised recipients. What did the Opposition do? Did

they condemn the breach of privilege of this House? Were they outraged? Did they give expression to their outrage?

Some one has betrayed the will of Parliament. Someone has breached the trust reposed in him. Someone has violated his oath of secrecy. Someone has been a traitor to his word. The leak has not come from us. We will institute inquiries to determine the source of the leak.

For the past few weeks, some members of the Opposition have behaved like marionettes of manipulative journalism. This is not surprising. We are used to this spectacle.

But what is distressing is the spectacle of responsible opposition parties with an unimpeachable record of nationalism, drifting along with such people, to be drifting along with them in the same boat. Let me caution them: that boat is full of leaks!

Sir, allegations about the contents of the Thakkar Report reached the press three years ago. But no repercussion was heard in this House or elsewhere. Why did this not happen Sir? Was it because the journalists concerned did not instruct the stalking horses of the Opposition on what to do? Or is there a deeper significance to the timing of this latest brouhaha?

The Thakkar Report pointed to a larger conspiracy over and above the crime on the spot. Those in the know of the leaked contents also knew that criminal investigations were drawing to a close. They knew that non-disclosure of the Report was to preclude prejudicing the investigations into conspiracy and the prosecution of the conspirators. Why then the leak now? What was the intention of the accessories of the crime of leaking the nation's secrets at this time and in this manner? Why did they not disclose their hand earlier? Why now?

Some Akali leaders have said that the conspiracy case has been filed because the report was made public. In a sense, the nexus is correct but the cause and effect are wrong.

Sir, the noise was raised because we were on the point of filing charges against the conspirators. The Thakkar Report led to a line of investigation which exposed the conspiracy. So the friends of the conspirators acted to forestall the conspiracy being revealed. They knew the net was drawing to a

close. They knew after Atinder Pal Singh was picked up late last year that the Investigation Team was close on their heels. They knew that it was only loose ends that had to be tied-up. They knew that only charge sheets were to be filed. They knew once the case was in the Courts, the Thakkar Report would inevitably have been made public.

So, they chose a diversionary tactic on the eve of filing of the chargesheets. They thought up this exercise of reviving what was an old thing. The friends of the conspirators could, if they had wished, have leaked the portions of the Report relating to the conspiracy because if we believe what they say — they say they have the full Report—why then only a selective leakage pointing in one direction? Why not a complete leakage? Why were they trying to protect the conspirators? Was it not a ruse to divert the attention of the nation? If it was not, why was the leak a selective leak? And if not, why now and not earlier?

We do not have definitive answers to these questions. What we do have is a stackful of needles quivering on the magnetic field of suspicion that point to the conspirators, that point to their political peers, that point to their friends, that point to their accomplices.

The political conspiracy was with a criminal purpose and treacherous intent. Criminal because its means were assassination and anarchy. Treacherous because, it was aimed at wrecking our independence, our unity, our integrity, our very existence.

The conspiracy relied on detonating the explosive mixture of religion and politics. The last time that mixture was detonated, it led to partition. Never again will we allow our country to be partitioned or divided. Never again will another Resolution whether moved at Lahore in 1940 by the Muslim League or moved in Anandpur Sahib in 1978 by the Akali Dal be allowed to break our unity or compromise our integrity. We are one nation. We are one people of many religions but of a composite culture. Our unity allows for diversity, but there is no room for sectarianism, violence or secession. As Justice Sarkaria has observed of the Anandpur Sahib Resolution "The country cannot survive as one integrated nation if the Anandpur Sahib Resolution is accepted".

Yet there is an MP, who is not a member of the Akali Dal or of its many factions, who has overtly supported the core of the Resolution. When he first espoused this ignoble cause he was not a member of any political party. Then he was deliberately adopted by the Janata Dal and made their candidate for the Rajya Sabha. Why did the Janata Dal go out of their way to select such a man unless it was that they shared his views?

I concede, of course, that the Janata Dal are such a confused lot that they did not know or did not care to find out what this gentleman was up to or what he was doing behind their back. But now it is over a month since Parliament was made aware of his nefarious activities. Has his Party done anything to throw him out of their ranks?

And what are the responsible nationalist parties of the Opposition, those that are part of the National Front, those that are part of the Janta Dal? Have they demanded his ouster? No, they have not. No, they have not done so. In effect, they have acquiesced in this national affront. Indeed, their silence is inadvertently aiding and abetting those dangerous wayward elements who seek to destroy our country. By default they are giving encouragement to the terrorists. There are sins of commission and sins of omission. I appeal to all responsible nationalist opposition parties to distance themselves publicly and clearly from these elements. Let the people of the country see the Opposition repudiate them. Let the terrorists see the nationalist parties of the Opposition's repudiation.

When the Thakkar Commission Report was tabled, a wholly unnecessary controversy was raised on what constitutes a "Report".

I would like to note that, in tabling the report in the manner it was done, no departure had been made from any precedent. As in the past, so on this occasion, the Report was tabled, but the proceedings were kept in Government archives. Never before was this procedure challenged. Why challenge it now?

It was challenged now because of the desperate desire to vitiate the conspiracy case by portraying the observation about Dhawan as an indictment of Dhawan. There is a world of difference between observation and indictment. Justice Thakkar's job was to point every needle he could find. The needles are in the Report. The proceedings are the haystack. We were not required to table the haystack.

For four years, the SIT went into the activities of Shri Dhawan in great detail; they went into the minutiae of justice Thakkar's observations. During these years, Dhawan was kept distant from the affairs of Government. During these years, he was subjected to enquiry, interrogation and investigation more severe even than by the Commissions of Inquiry set up by the Hon. members of the Opposition who have decided to be absent today.

The SIT established that there were no grounds to convert those observations into an indictment. So, no basis remains to keep him away from the affairs of Government. We are a prudent Government. We are also a fair Government. Now that he has been exonerated, why should his integrity be doubted?

We will not allow ourselves to be diverted. We shall press on with prosecution of those not exonerated. We shall press charges against those we believe guilty of conspiring against the nation. We shall not waste time of this nation of this House as the friends opposite are doing in drawing red herrings or in the calumniation of an innocent person.

The Congress Party and the Congress Government take their responsibilities very seriously. Whenever a prima facie case of nepotism or corruption has been established or a Court indictment handed down, a Congressman holding high office, be he a Chief Minister or a Union Minister or a Governor has always had to step down until the charges have been cleared.

We do not have in our ranks a Chief Minister indicted by a High Court on seven charges of corruption and nepotism but who sticks to his office like a limpet.

Sir, we do not have in our ranks a Chief Minister held guilty by a High Court of "flagrant violation of the rule of law"—and that High Court judgment was later supported by a Supreme Court judgment. Yet, he continued to cling to office till he was caught out on another charge and could not continue any more.

We do not have in our ranks a Chief Minister who shields his family members from criminal investigations and prosecution in crimes against women.

Sir, the Congress Party is an honourable party. We run an honourable Government.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am Leader of this House. It is my bounden duty to ensure respect for the will of the House and its rights and privileges.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am also the Prime Minister. It is my bounden duty to see that criminals are prosecuted and conspirators are foiled. This, I have done. I have been true to the sacred trust reposed in me. Sir, the nation is safe in our hands. We have guaranteed its independence. We have reinforced its unity. We have upheld its integrity.

But, Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am also the only surviving son of an assassinated mother. It takes a peculiarly sick mentality to insinuate that I could betray the love and affection that she showered upon me by restoring to the bureaucracy a suspected accomplice in her assassination. What manner of men are these who make such accusations! Their low insinuations are not a reflection on me, or on our Government, but on them, on their thought processes, on the functioning of their minds, on the murky depths at which they function.

As the House is aware, I had no love for politics. I treasured the privacy of my happy family life. My mother respected both these sentiments.

Then my brother, Sanjay was killed in the prime of his life. It broke a mother's heart. It did not break a Prime Minister's will. Without even a day's break for grief, she carried on her noble task singleminded in fulfilling her pledge to her people.

There is a loneliness that only a bereaved mother can know. There is a unique loneliness that only a bereaved woman Prime Minister can know. That Prime Minister was my mother.

She called to me in her loneliness. I went to her side. At her instance, I left my love for flying. At her instance I sacrificed my family life. At her instance I joined her as a political aide. From her I learnt my first political lessons. It was she who urged me to respond to the insistent demand from the constituency and the Party to take my brother's place as Member of Parliament for Amethi. With her blessings I was made General Secretary of my Party. It was her sudden death that led to my Party asking me to accept the challenge of stepping into her shoes.

In accepting the challenge I fulfilled a national duty and a filial duty, the duty of a son to a mother.

That son stands before this House today. My private grief is my own. My memories of my mother belong to me.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, Indiraji was also the Leader of this House. She was the Prime Minister of this country and I will not stand idly by while her memory is slandered, her ideals transgressed, a vision of the India for which she lived and died is still to be fully realised. I will not stand by idly when her tragic death is made a political play thing by irresponsible politicians of low calibre and malicious intent.

I give them my answer now. I am not going to be deflected from my purpose by the campaign of whisper and malice that has been unleashed against me, my family and my associates.

Sir, if there was one lesson I learnt from my mother Indiraji, it was to press on regardless, Ekla chalo re, she used to say.

Sir, chargesheets have been filed against the conspirators. The objective of the conspiracy was clearly a "Khalistan." The means to be employed was the assassination of the Prime Minister to create chaos, confusion and anarchy.

From the start of terrorism in Punjab, the purpose of the killing has been to fire a communal reaction. For the maximum reaction, they chose to kill the Prime Minister. To the conspirators, it did not matter that thousands might be killed, thousands of innocent Sikhs, thousands of innocent Hindus, thousands of other communities, nor that their aim could only be achieved by drowning the country in rivers of blood. The conspirators' intent was to promote communal fratricide, the conspirators' intent was to climb to their objective on mounting corpses of innocent men, women and children. Through a holocaust, they wanted the country to break so that on one of its pieces they could establish their fascist fundamentalist rule, it was in this atmosphere that Indiraji was gunned down in cold blood. It was in this atmosphere that an orgy of violence was unleashed against our Sikh bretheren in Delhi, Kanpur and elsewhere.

I had just taken over as Prime Minister. For me there was no time for mourning, only time for action. I threw myself into restoring confidence, restoring security, restoring friendship and brotherhood between communities that have lived together for centuries.

Sir, the terrible bloodbath of November 1984 was a carnage which will rest for ever on the conscience of all decent Indians. It happened in the cusp of a traumatic transition. That is not an extenuating circumstance. We cannot forgive ourselves, it should never have happened. But let me say in all humility, Sir, we have prevented any recurrence of mass killings of Sikhs in the capital or elsewhere. Repeatedly agents provocateurs have sought to provoke horrors to fulfil their nefarious purposes. Repeatedly we have thwarted them. I am pledged to a life of honour for every Sikh in India. I would not be my mother's son if I were not.

Within a fortnight of assuming office in 1984 I decided to go to the polls to let the people determine which party they wanted, whom they wanted. That decision was a reflection of my commitment to democracy, another lesson that I had learnt from my mother.

There were those who counselled postponement of the polls as the nation was in the throes of a terrible trauma. I did not listen because I put my trust in the people, Indiraji taught me to trust our people.

The results of that election are reflected in the composition of this House. Because the people apprehended that the country might not hold together, the people held together.

Our mandate was clear. Our first task was to ensure the unity and integrity of the country, it was to assure the independence of the country, it was to reinforce our secularism and our democracy.

Over these four years, our endeavours have been attended with remarkable success. There was an agitation in Assam which was started when the Janata Government was crumbling to its conclusion. It has been brought to an end by us through an agreement. The erstwhile agitators are today fullfledged democrats entrusted by the people with responsibility for tending to that State.

In Mizoram, an insurgency of 20 years standing has been brought to an end again by agreement. The former insurgents, whether in office or out of office, are pledged to the unity of the country and unwavering adherence to democracy.

In Tripura, within months of assuming office, the Congress Governments in the State and at the Centre negotiated an agreement ending years of

violence and opening the way to the resolution of differences peacefully and democratically.

In Nagaland and Manipur residuary insurgencies are edging to a conclusion.

In the Darjeeling Hills, an ethnic agitation rocked the State as the political parties geared up for the polls. It would have been the easiest thing to have done and to have taken a populist view and gone the populist way of stoking the majority sentiment against an ethnic minority. But that is not the way that Gandhiji taught us or Panditji taught us or Indiraji taught us. With only months to go before the West Bengal Assembly election, I affirmed that the agitation was not antinational. I insisted that the Darjeeling Gorkhas had real problems requiring real solutions. The Congress may have lost the election but we won the people of Darjeeling for West Bengal and for the country. What would have become a very serious insurgency was avoided. The Congress way, as always with the Congress, as always with Indiraji, is the country before party, the people's interests before our own.

Sir, even in Punjab, there has been substantial progress. We have moved towards restoring peace and tranquility. Last year, there was no terrorist killing reported from nearly half the police stations of Punjab. Operation Black Thunder established for all to see the sacrilege perpetrated by the terrorists at the holiest of holy shrines. Since then all Gurdwaras have been cleared of murderers and criminals. The murderers and criminals that were polluting the precincts and abusing the sanctity are no more allowed in. The granthis and sewadars no longer work under the shadow of terrorists rifles. Once again, the scriptures are being recited for spiritual salvation and not as tools of political propaganda. Sir, the terrorists have been exposed. Little sympathy for the terrorists remains. Only small sections of the people still support them. Their general support has virtually dried up. There are perhaps only one or two small terrorist groups with a vestige of ideological motivation. The rest are indistinguishable from common criminals, smugglers, drug traffickers, gun runners. The people of Punjab— Sikhs, Hindus, Muslims and of all other communities—have stood rocklike together with the country. The fundamentalists have not been able to break their communal amity. The secessionists have not been able to suborn their national loyalty. The terrorists have not been able to terrorise them. The people of Punjab have prevailed. Once more, as so often before, the people of Punjab have saved the country.

But violence continues. There are two reasons basic and fundamental.

One is the succour and support which the Punjab terrorists have been receiving from across the border and from abroad. We have taken a range of action against this. We are hopeful that the change over in Pakistan from a military rule to democratic rule will lead to the complete cessation of all support to terrorists from across the border. Some signs are visible and we are hopeful that this will be fully realised. In Pakistan, those recognising such action could destabilise the region, including their country, are now beginning to assert themselves.

The second basic reason for our not overcoming it in Punjab has been our inability as a country to present a unified front against terrorism.

The fault does not lie with the people. The people of the country, more especially the people of Punjab, have stood firm against the vilest of terrorism. They have refused to be shaken from centuries of communal amity. They have refused to betray their country. They have refused to be untrue to the message of their Gurus.

The fault lies with some political parties. There are some parties, steadfast in struggle against communalism, terrorism and secession. We welcome their support, we honour their courage, we honour their strength of conviction. Terrorists may be a miniscule minority but they draw comfort from what some politicians and some political parties say and do. They also draw comfort from those who stay silent, those who do not denounce the dangerous pronouncements and nefarious actions of others.

During the debate on the President's Address, the Opposition disowned the views of a Member as expressed in a pamphlet, in whose publication he had connived. Yet, he continues to be their honoured and muchvaunted colleague. I do not understand and I cannot understand how they can disown him when he is not in Parliament and then applaud him when he speaks. He has not withdrawn from his position of support to the Anandpur Sahib Resolution. He has affirmed on the floor of Parliament that he still supports the Resolution. He is able to be a Member of Parliament only because one Opposition party inducted him and elected him. What does that party say now? Are they ready now at least to withdraw from him their benevolent patronage?

Double standards led to his election. He is widely known to have participated in a United States television programme sponsored by a third country to preach hatred and disaffection against the unity of India. He did not have a word to speak against terrorism even on that programme. Can his party not find anyone more worthy to festoon with their ticket? Or is this what to expect of a party whose two representatives visited a neighbouring country in so critical a time as March, 1984 and there lavished praise on the hospitality of a military dictator but did not utter a word against the support of their hosts to terrorists, secessionists and traitors? And what of the other Members of the Opposition?

Are they prepared now at least to denounce the Member, dissociate themselves from his Party, keep aloof from his Front? Are they prepared now at least to tell the country where they stand? Do they stand with this one man and the Anandpur Sahib Resolution or do they stand with the people of this country?

Secularism is the key to the strength of India. The protagonists of Khalistan will be broken only on the rock of secularism. The only hope of the secessionists is to suborn our innate secularism, to suborn the innate secularism of our people. They hope by terror to divide community from community. They want to fan the flames of communal hatred so that India is destroyed in a communal conflagration from the ashes of which their 'Khalistan' will emerge. They are out to destroy centuries of the closest bonds between Hindus and Sikhs. They are out to smash to smithereens our composite Punjab. They want to smash the Punjab that is equally a home for the Sikhs and the Muslims and the Hindus and the Christians and many others. They tried to convert the shrines into fortresses. They failed. They tried to convert the canons of Sikhism into the cannons of war. They failed. The people of Punjab and the people of this country refused to let Hindu fight Sikh and Sikh fight Hindu. The people of Punjab and the people of this country remembered the tolerance and compassion that has been preached by all the Gurus. They remembered our composite culture which is our greatness. They remembered our secularism which is inborn in every Indian.

I put the insistent question, therefore, and there is no escaping the question. I ask it again of every Member of this House. Are you with those who stand with the core of the Anandpur Sahib Resolutions?

Are you with these who stand for communalism?

Or, are you ready to stand and fight against communalism, for secularism?

And you must remember a recent judgement, a very important judgement of the Bombay High Court which has unseated a Member for using a communal slogan in his election. It is needless for me to mention who the lawyer fighting for communalism against secularism was. It could only have been one Member of Parliament who could take up such a case. The question that we have to ask that member is: Are you with the people of India? Are you with the heritage of India and the glory of India? Or are you out to suborn that and to destroy us? And the question I would like to ask all the Opposition parties is: Are you with that Member supporting these values or are you going to stand up and stand for the unity and integrity and glory of India? I have a plea to the Opposition, Sir. I say to the Opposition: Purge your ranks of these vile bodies and join the vast majority of our people in the struggle against communalism and against terrorism.

Sir, we will bring the terrorists to their knees. But if the Opposition prefers to consort with people of this like, so be it. We shall carry on the struggle ourselves singlehandedly with firm determination. May I add that this was another lesson that I was taught by my mother, Indiraji?

Sir, the S.I.T. has completed its work. The chargesheets have been filed. The law will take its own course. But the designs of the conspirators against the people of this country will not be terminated in the courts of law. That battle has to be fought in the political arena. We have supporters in different sections of the House. We must all close ranks. Those who prefer the company of conspirators and the friends of conspirators are welcome to stay away. They will stand exposed in the eyes of the people. For the rest of us, the path is clear. We shall relentlessly press on with the struggle against violence. We shall consolidate the support of the people of Punjab. We shall entrust them power and responsibly commencing with the Panchayat elections. We will talk to those who eschew violence and respect our Constitution. We shall return tranquility to Punjab.

Sir, were not those who are shouting the loudest today amongst the frontline of Indiraji's detractors? Today they are shedding crocodile tears. What love did they have for Indiraji? Was it not they who poured calumny

over her? Was it not they who hounded her day in and day out? Was it not they who trampled democracy under foot when they debarred her from sitting in Parliament after the people of Chikmagalur had voted her in?

Those responsible for resorting to devious means to eliminate her from the country's public life are today posing as her champions and as her defenders now that she has been physically eliminated from our midst. Sir, this House is not misled by such posturing. Nor is the country.

Sir, in conclusion I would like to say that I have felt Indiraji's presence beside me as I have been speaking today and during these past traumatic days. I have felt her benediction in the actions that we have taken to keep the country strong and united. That is my comfort, Sir, that is my reward.

Thank you.

Sir, I made a mistake. It was a three-man Bench, not a seven-man Bench.

BACK NOTE

XXX. Motion Regarding interim and final Report of Thakkar
Commission, 10 April, 1989

-NIL-

STATEMENT REGARDING JAWAHAR ROZGAR YOJANA

28 April, 1989

Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, there is no problem before the country so acute as the problem of the unemployment and underemployment. There is no segment of our population more disadvantaged than the rural poor. There is no section of our people as much in need as women from poor rural families, especially those with no land of their own.

It was from Jawaharlal Nehru that we learned that our first national duty is to work for the elimination of poverty. It was from Jawaharlal Nehru too that we learned that the greatest national endeavour is to mitigate the distress of the un-employed and under-employed masses of rural India.

Therefore, there is no greater tribute we could pay to the founder-architect of our modern nationhood than to dedicate our celebrations of his birth centenary to a programme of providing massive employment to the poor in rural India.

Sir, we are today launching the Jawahar Rozgar Yojana.

It is a programme aimed at placing in the hands of village panchayats around the country adequate funds to run their own rural employment schemes in the interests of the vast masses of the rural poor who constitute the bulk of rural India. It has been estimated that in the last seven years, rural employment programmes have reached only 55 per cent of the village panchayats around the country. The Jawahar Rozgar Yojana aims at reaching every single panchayat.

Central assistance will finance 80 per cent of the programmes. In its very first year of operation, that is the current fiscal year, Central assistance for this programme will amount to Rs. 2100 crore. We are so structuring the finances that funds will be allocated to States in proportion to the size of their population which falls below the poverty line. The further devolution of these funds to districts will be determined in terms of criteria of backwardness such as the share of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the total population of the district, the proportion of agricultural labour to total labour, and the level of agricultural productivity. Special consideration will be given to meeting the requirements of geographically distinctive areas such as hills, deserts and islands.

It is our expectation that, on an average, a village panchayat with a population of three thousand to four thousand people will receive between Rs. 80,000 and Rs. one lakh a year to implement the Jawahar Rozgar Yojana. We expect to be able to provide employment to at least one member of each poor rural family for fifty to a hundred days a year at a workplace near his residence. We hope to incorporate into the programme integrated schemes to provide employment to nomadic tribes. A very special feature of the scheme is that 30 per cent of the employment generated will be reserved for women.

Through the devolution of this programme to village panchayats, we expect the benefits of this programme directly reaching the people to be significantly higher than in the past. Thus far, too large a proportion of funds for such programmes has gone to contractors and intermediaries. There have also been other leakages. Besides, there is scope for economizing on the costs of administration.

By devolving the finances to the Panchayats, and entrusting to them the administration of the programme, we expect a much larger proportion of the funds than ever before to be deployed on the programme itself.

We also expect the implementation of the programme to be more open, more transparent than ever before. Every villager will know how much money is available for the programme and which are the schemes being financed. He will also know who are his fellow-villagers being employed on the schemes. Each beneficiary getting employment will know how much remuneration he is receiving and others are receiving, as also how many days of work he is being given and others are being given. Those who are cheated or deprived will not only have the possibility of demanding immediate redress, they will also have in their hands the ultimate weapon of the vote to turn out of office any panch or sarpanch who abuses the powers and responsibilities devolved on him. Democracy will reinforce opportunity to bring the Welfare State to the doorstep of the villager, where he lives and seeks work. For, as Jawaharlal Nehru said:

"Panchayats and village communities, should make their proposals. We can no longer function merely from the top, for we have to organise cooperatively the millions of our people and make them partners and sharers in these great undertakings."

Panditji urged us to remember that:

"Whatever plan we might make, the test of its success is how far it brings relief to the millions of our people who live on a bare subsistence level, that is the good and advancement of the masses of our people. Every other interest must be subordinated to this primary consideration..."

He added:

"Unemployment, on a large scale, casts a blight on many young lives and is one of our major problems. We cannot remove it by some magic... But we should be able to guarantee employment and work to anyone who is prepared to work hard and is not disdainful of manual labour."

That remains our ultimate goal. For the present, we are doing as much as our resources permit. All existing rural wage employment programmes stand merged into the Jawahar Rozgar Yojana. The Yojana will reach out all over the country to the 440 lakh families in rural India living below the poverty line. We aim to touch each one of these families. We aim to alleviate something of the hardship which these families face. In particular, we aim to mitigate the distress which the women of these families have faced for centuries with their legendary courage and fortitude. And we aim to secure these noble ends through the noble institution of the panchayats.

Sir, in the name of Jawaharlal Nehru, that great freedom fighter and builder of modern India, we rededicate ourselves to ending the curse of unemployment, eliminating the blight of poverty, dismantling discrimination against women, and assuring for all our people opportunity and assistance in leading a full and fulfilling life.

Thank you, Sir.

BACK NOTE

XXXI. Statement Regarding Jawahar Rozgar Yojana, 28 April, 1989.

-NIL-

STATEMENT REGARDING COMMUNAL SITUATION IN VARIOUS PARTS OF THE COUNTRY

3 May, 1989

Sir, a secular India alone is an India that can survive. Perhaps an India that is not secular does not deserve to survive. Sir, India and secularism must remain synonymous to assure the glory of our civilisation and the future of our country.

In every village of India, in every *basti*, and in every *mohalla*, there are people of different faiths, of different languages, of different cultures who live together as neighbours. Secularism is a condition of our existence. It is the essence of our tradition. Secularism and our nationhood are inseparable.

We are a multi-religious society, we are a multi-lingual society, we are a multi-cultural society, but we are not a multinational society. We are one people, we are one nation, we are one country and we have one common citizenship.

Sir, most civilizations posit nationhood and diversity as antithetical. The single greatest contribution of India to world civilization is to demonstrate that there is nothing antithetical between diversity and nationhood. Through 5000 years of living experience, we have demonstrated to the world that our unity in diversity is a vibrant reality.

Sir, today's world is in desperate need of learning from India's experience. Peace and survival in the modern age depend on non-violence, on tolerance, on Compassion and understandings; on peaceful co-existence between diverse philosophies and diverse ways of life. Through technological development the world is becoming smaller and is growing into a global village. The world is equally in need of unity and diversity.

India's secularism is a global need because global secularism is inseparable from human survival; it is inseparable from global inter-dependence; it is inseparable from global co-operation.

Sir, the history of humanity is blood splattered with the consequences of narrow-minded nationalisms, equating community with nation, religion with nation, language with nation, ethnicity with nation. To escape history's trap of turbulence and tragedy, many countries and regional groupings are now seeking to escape the exclusivisms of past. They are reaching towards multi-cultural societies, where diverse faiths, languages and cultures can live together in harmony, equality and confidence, in the confidence, that they can conserve their heritage and their culture, with the self-confidence to exchange ideas and experiences, to live together without the cross-fertilisation of ideas, leading to cultural genocide.

Sir, in this worldwide effort, the world is learning from India's unity in diversity. No other civilization has as long a record as ours in evolving a composite culture. No other country has as long a record as ours of a polity based on secularism.

Sir, notwithstanding thousands of years of secularism, the forces of communalism have not been vanquished. The history of India is a kind of dialectic between the forces of secularism, tolerance and compassion versus the forces of communalism, fundamentalism and fanaticism. In the long run, secularism will always triumph. But the never ceasing running battle with the opposing forces of communalism continues which we must fight.

Sir, it is also important to understand how India sees secularism. How do we understand secularism? First and foremost, our secularism is not anti-religious or irreligious. We have a deep and abiding appreciation of the rich vein of spirituality that runs through our culture, that runs through every religion of India. It runs through our history, it runs through every person who is an Indian. That rich vein of spirituality is the source of our moral values, of our ideals and our standards, of our goals and of our objectives. We venerate this spiritual tradition. We cherish its moral values. We respect all the different forms in which this spirituality manifests itself. The cardinal principle of our secularism is equal respect for all religions: sarva dharma samabhaav.

Our second great principle is that we respect all religions equally. No religious community is singled out for favours by the State, no religious community is subjected to any disability or disadvantage by the State. The State has no religion. The State is above religion. For the State, religion is a private and personal matter for the individual. Whatever religion an Indian professes,

whatever faith an Indian propagates, for the State it is a personal matter. The State is concerned only with full protection for all, with equal opportunity for all, with equitable benefits for all. For the State, all Indians are Indians equal in the eyes of the State.

The third principle, which flows from the first and second, is that since religion has high value, it must remain in the sphere of private and personal life. It has no role to play in the politics of the country.

Sir, injecting religion into politics is the poisoning of our body politic. Mixing religion with politics is against the traditions of our civilization, the canons of our Constitution and the survival of our State.

Sir, we have not forgotten, and we will never forget, the terrible consequences to the Freedom Movement, of the mixing of religion with politics. From the War of Independence that started in 1857 to 1940, Indians of all communities, except communalists, were together in the battle to free India, to make India independent for all Indians irrespective of their creed or caste, living together as one nation was axiomatic, respecting and celebrating our glorious diversity, united in the belief that India belongs equally to all Indians.

Soon after the Lahore Resolution was passed by the Muslim League, Sir, because of the Quit India Movement the secular leaders of all communities and religions at that time were mostly in jail or had gone underground. Sir, it gave an opportunity for the communalists to make inroads into the mainstream. Within less than a decade of the Lahore Resolution, India was partitioned.

We shall never let another partition of India happen again. We shall never again let the forces of communalism triumph over secularism.

A patriotic Indian is a secular Indian. A nationalist Indian is a secular Indian. A dedicated Indian is a secular Indian. A disciplined Indian is a secular Indian.

Sir, through forty years of Independence we have shown that we are one nation. We have faced external aggression as a united nation. We have stood firm as one nation against the internal forces of fundamentalism and fanaticism. It is illustrated most dramatically by what has happened in Punjab. The protagonists of secession found common cause with religious fanatics. Together,

they roped in terrorists, murderers, hired assassins, gunrunners, smugglers and common criminals, mixing politics with religion, mixing religion with criminality. Gurdwaras were turned into criminal dens till Operation Black Thunder, proving that terrorism was not for religion, not for religious purposes, but for ulterior motives. The people were disgusted at the defilement of the shrines and the misuse of religion. They were disgusted with the intimidation of the Granthis and the oppression of the sevadars.

The people of Punjab have not given in. The tolerance of our people has triumphed. The brotherhood of centuries has triumphed. The innate secularism of our people has triumphed. Sir, the forces of communalism have not accepted defeat. They are always on the prowl, always looking for an opportunity to make mischief, always trying to insinuate themselves into the political life of the country working from behind the scene or using others as a front, if the secular forces stand together, communalism can be contained. The danger arises when political parties, for opportunistic reasons, lend the weight of their support to narrow causes.

There are political parties represented even in this House that have become tools wittingly or unwittingly of fundamentalism and fanaticism masquerading as religion. Some political parties live on stoking the fears of religious minorities. Other political parties live on stoking the religious passions of the majority communities. And then there are those who convert petty arguments and minor disputes into communal conflagrations. There are those that create disputes where none exist. There are those that incite passions only to pose as protectors of the faith. The Congress is pledged to have nothing to do under any circumstances with such forces.

As a Government our foremost duty is to safeguard secularism. We invite the cooperation of every section of this House to join us in this great national endeavour. I welcome the suggestion that has been made by Shri Indrajit Gupta. I have already requested the Home Minister to call all the secular parties, all the nationalist 1st parties, and to talk with them and work with them to see how we can build a composite culture.

Our secular traditions began with the Vedas and the epics. The concept of the Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, further developed by the Buddha and Mahavira was the basis for the development of Indian civilization and of our society. We welcomed Judaism in Kerala; we welcomed St. Thomas and Christianity; we

welcomed Zoroastrianism and today we have the largest Parsi community in the world; we welcomed the great Sikh Gurus from Guru Nanak to Guru Gobind Singh. We synthesized Islam and the great Sufi tradition of Amir Khusro and Kabir and Baba Farid and Shah, Abdul Latif. Our religious festivals are festivals not of one community but of all Indians and all communities. We celebrate them together.

Over the last 40 years we have augmented our capacity to tackle communalism. It is reflected in the declining trend in communal incidents. It is reflected in the containment in the numbers of persons losing their lives and suffering injury in communal clashes. But the task has not ended. It will not end till there are no more communal incidents, till there is no more loss of life or limb or property. Indeed, not even then as the highest vigilance will be required to keep communalism at bay. We will have to fight communalism till it is defeated and ended and completely vanquished.

Law and order is a State subject. The Centre can at best consider the national perspective, issue guidelines and assist State Governments, but the primary responsibility lies squarely with the State Governments. The State Governments have been assisted time and again by the courts, and I would specially like to congratulate the Bombay High Court and Justice Barucha for their historic decision.

Sir, we have commended to the Chief Ministers the far-reaching recommendations of the National Integration Council's sub-group headed by Shri P.N. Haksar. There has been some effect, although the overall action has not been to our satisfaction. The overall communal situation has become better than in the past. But there is no room for complacency. The communal monster must be laid low.

Indiraji fell martyr to the bullets of communalism. She was the author of the 15-Point Programme which was to be implemented by all the State Governments. I have chaired a number of reviews of that programme and although we have made much progress, I am not happy with the progress that has been made. Much more needs to be done and we will be seeing to it that the follow up is up to the mark. With each session that we have had the follow up has worked better and the results are showing. The curve is on the upswings. But it is too slow. It must be accelerated. We urge the protection of the

minorities. We must work for multi-religious police forces. We must give special assistance for the education and economic advancement of the minorities.

The challenge to secularism is not from one quarter, but from fanatics of all faiths stirring trouble in various ways. There are those who ignore our composite culture and project to followers, a distorted and motivated picture of India's history creating grievances where there are none, making political capital out of distressed religious sentiments. It is for the State Governments to be alive to such attempts, to set up an intelligence system for advance information about trouble makers and trouble spots. It is for State Governments to take preventive action and quick, corrective measures.

No State Government, Congress or non-Congress, can claim an unblemished record. All State Governments, Congress and non-Congress, have attempted to tackle the problem. No State Government has ever been refused a full assistance of the Centre in preventing or tackling the problems in a particular situation. This is not an issue between the Centre and the States, it is not an issue between the Congress and other parties. It is a national issue and it is an issue that demands a national response.

The elements of a response, formulated through a general consensus and the consent of the country, is what is needed. The secular injunctions of the Constitution must be carried out in good faith and with deep dedication. Religion must not be mixed with politics. No one doing so can run for elections today after our recent amendments. But still there are some political parties who have not amended their constitutions. These political parties must amend their constitution and bring them into conformity with the nation's Constitution.

The minorities needing educational and economic help must be assisted to avail of equality of opportunity as guaranteed by the law. Genuine grievances must be tackled quickly. Imaginary grievances must be quickly exposed. The machinery of law and order must be insulated from all religious prejudice, from all communal overtones. The people of India must be involved in giving practical expression to their innate secularism.

This year we are celebrating the birth centenary of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. He was one of our greatest secular leaders, perhaps one of the greatest secular leaders of all time.

When Gandhiji was felled by religious fanatics, the national responsibility of carrying forward secularism fell on Panditji's shoulders.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru staunchly opposed the bloodletting of partition, reassured the minorities, reformed the obsolete and oppressive mores of the majority community. He gave Indians of all faiths the confidence that the State is above all prejudice, above all discrimination, above all narrowness. He assured every Indian of honour and opportunity.

Sir, we would soon like to call a meeting of the National Integration Council to discuss the issue of communalism, and we would like that to be followed up after the Home Minister has his initial meetings with leaders and members of the opposition parties.

Sir, in a few days, we will be commemorating the 25th anniversary of the passing away of Panditji. There can be no more significant manner of honouring Panditji's memory than in fulfilling his ideals, in rededicating ourselves, in rededicating India and every Indian to the principles of secularism which Jawaharlal Nehru espoused and the unflinching application of the principles to the political and social life of our country.

Thank you, Sir.

BACK NOTE

XXXII. Statement regarding Communal Situation in various parts of the country, 3 May, 1989.

-NIL-

CONSTITUTION (SIXTY-FOURTH AMENDMENT) BILL

15 May, 1989

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill to further amend the Constitution of India.

Sir, democracy was the greatest gift of our freedom struggle to the people of India. Independence made the nation free. Democracy made our people free. A free people are a people who choose their own representatives. A free people are a people who are governed by their will and ruled with their consent. A free people are a people who participate in decisions affecting their lives and their destinies.

Gandhiji believed that democratic freedoms have to be founded in institutions of self-government in every village of India. He drew his inspiration and his vision from the 'Panchayats', the traditional village republics of India. Panditji established the institutions of Panchayati Raj as the primary instrument for bringing development to the doorstep of rural India. Indiraji stressed the need for the people's participation in the processes of economic and social transformation.

Yet, there is no denying that in most parts of the country we have failed to fulfil the high hopes we had vested 30 years ago in the institution of Panchayati Raj. Elections have been irregular. They are of ten unnecessarily delayed and frequently postponed.

This is not a matter of political will. The best record of regular elections to Panchayati Raj institutions is of two State Governments which since the Inception of Panchayati Raj have almost continuously been ruled by the Congress Party. Gujarat and Maharashtra.

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Sir, in recent times, some State Governments run by the Opposition Parties, such as, the CPI (M) in West Bengal and the Telugu Desam Party in Andhra and the Janata Party in Karnataka have held regular elections. In other States.

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In other States, the record of non-Congress parties and coalitions has not been much better than that of Congress run State Governments. This is not a matter of political parties.

The essence of democracy is elections. Elections to Panchayati Raj institutions have been woefully irregular and uncertain. A mandatory provision in the Constitution is sacrosanct. A statutory provision in the State law does not have quite the same sanctity. We propose through this Bill to enshrine in the Constitution regular, periodic elections to Panchayati Raj institutions.

We also propose through this Bill to end the other sickness which has overtaken Panchayati Raj in many parts of the country, that is, the sickness of unending suspensions and dissolutions. In the absence of any compelling provision to reconstitute Panchayats within a reasonable period of time by democratic elections, suspended Panchayats have remained suspended for years on end and dissolved Panchayats have remained dissolved for up to a decade or more. In the existing municipal law on the subject State Legislatures have given the executive authority such wide powers to abort the institutions of Panchayati Raj and delay reconstituting them that these institutions have been leached of their ability to stand on their own as representative forums of the people's will. Their existence has depended less on the mandate of the people than on the whims of State Governments.

Our Bill leaves it to the States to determine the grounds and conditions on which the Panchayats may be suspended or dissolved. We expect State legislatures to specify the grounds on which the Governor may suspend or dissolve a Panchayat. That is a matter for the Governor acting, in accordance with the Constitution, on the aid and advice of the State Government. Our concern is with ensuring that a dissolved Panchayat is reconstituted within a reasonable period of time. Our Bill would make it mandatory through the Constitution for all Panchayats dissolved before the expiry of their term of office to be reconstituted through democratic elections based on adult suffrage within six months of the dissolution to complete the remaining term.

No more will Panchayats remain the playthings of the arbitrary exercise of executive power. It is the people who will determine within a matter of months the profile of the reconstituted panchayat. It is the Constitution which ensures that the Lok Sabha and the State Assemblies are constituted by the

vote of the people on the basis of universal adult suffrage. It is the Constitution which ensures that if an Assembly is dissolved, it is reconstituted by a procedure and within a time frame specified in the Constitution itself. These are essential safeguards to ensure the strength and vitality of democratic institutions. The institutions of Panchayati Raj have lacked strength and vitality precisely because they have lacked Constitutional safeguards. Our Bill will ensure that Panchayati Raj has a democratic character similar to the Lok Sabha and the State Assemblies and Constitutional protection for their functioning as representative institutions of the people.

The single greatest event in the evolution of democracy in India was the enactment of the Constitution which established democracy in Parliament and in the State Legislatures. This historic revolutionary Bill takes its place alongside that great event as the enshrinement in the Constitution of democracy at the grassroots.

Till now, there have been weaknesses in the structure of our democracy because although the superstructure is strong, the foundation has been weak. Putting together both Houses of Parliament and all the State Legislatures, we have only about five thousand to six thousand persons representing a population of nearly 800 million. This has had two serious consequences.

First, the number of persons holding elective office in well-founded institutions of democracy has been far too small in relation to the size of our electorate. Once we accord to democracy in the Panchayats the same sanctity now enjoyed by Parliament and the State Legislatures, we will be opening the doors to the participation in democratic institutions of something like seven lakh elected representatives. The people's stake in democracy will be increased by a factor of approximately 115.

There is a second deleterious consequence of the vast chasm that separates the general body of the electorate from the small number of its elected representatives. This gap has been occupied by the power brokers, the middleman, the vested interests. For the minutest municipal function, the people have had to run around, finding persons with the right connection, who would intercede for them with the distant sources of power. The system has been captured by the power brokers, it is being operated in the interest of the power brokers, it is being protected by the power brokers. The power brokers have established

their vice like grip only because democracy has not functioned at the grassroots. The only way of breaking their stranglehold is for democracy to fill the vacuum, which the power brokers have occupied. Once the people have their own elected representatives from electorates as small as a hundred to five hundred persons, the source of power will lie only as far away as the Panchayat Ghar: not some distant State capital or the even more distant capital of the country. To end any role for power brokers in the system, the Bill provides for the direct election of members to Panchayats at all levels.

Every voter will have his own representative in the Gram Panchayat, in the midlevel Panchayat and in the Zila Panchayat. That representative will be responsible to a small and well recognised electorate. If he fulfils the mandate of the people, he will be re-elected; if he fails, the people will throw him out of office. The power of the vote will become the power of enforcement. The will of the people will render the power broker superfluous.

Today, opportunity for democratic elected leadership is confined to the few thousands who succeed in entering the portals of the State Legislatures and Parliament. Once this Bill becomes an integral part of the Constitution, a huge countrywide reservoir of leadership potential will be created. At each Panchayat election approximately half a crore men and women, most of them young, will present themselves to the electorate seeking the peoples mandate. Some will succeed and some will fall by the wayside. Those who do not succeed will get another opportunity five years later.

There is a vast uncultivated field of talent lying fallow in rural India. It is that fallow field, we now propose to seed. That field will be watered by the votes of the Members of this House and of our colleagues in the Rajya Sabha. The crop of talent you raise will give us the bountiful harvest to take our nation forward to a prosperous, glorious future.

There is no country richer than ours in the most precious asset of humankind, the human resource. We in India, have not flourished, as we should because we have not nurtured our greatest resource. This Bill makes it possible for the bulk of the nation's talent to be given an opportunity. Throughout the country there will be a ferment. In every one of our 600,000 villages in every one of our 5,000 blocks, in every one of our 400 districts, democracy will groom the men and women whose experience will subsequently become available to legislatures at the State level and to the Parliament of the Union of India.

Our proposed Constitutional amendment lays the Constitutional injunction upon the State Legislatures, it is for the State Legislatures to enact the appropriate law.

A quite unnecessary controversy has been raised about the role of the Governor in the proposed Panchayati Raj system. The Constitution is unambiguous on this point. Article 154 (1) states that "The executive power of the State shall be vested in the Governor". Article 163 (1) clarifies that "There shall be a Council of Ministers with the Chief Minister at the head to aid and advise the Governor in the exercise of his functions". And, therefore, the word Governor in the Constitution refers to the Governor exercising his executive powers only and exclusively on the aid and advice of the Council of Ministers with one exception. The exception is provided for in the remainder of clause (1) of Article 163 ... which reads: "except in so far as the Governor is...."

Sir, I quote:

"except in so far as he is by or under this Constitution required to exercise his functions or any of them in his discretion."

The distinction between the expression "the Governor" and the expression "the Governor in his discretion" is such a well known matter of Constitutional law that it is amazing that there should be any confusion on this point. After all, the expression, "the Governor" appears at scores of places throughout the Constitution, and has nowhere been misconstrued, or misinterpreted.

We are confident that in this Parliament, acting in the exercise of its inherent constituent powers, there will be no confusion between the functions of a Governor acting in accordance with the aid and advice of his Council of Ministers, and of a Governor acting in his discretion wherever the Constitution requires him to do so.

In establishing the institutions of democracy in Parliament and in the State Legislatures, our founding fathers gave particular recognition to the disabilities suffered by the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes. Provision was made for the reservation of seats for them in accordance with the proportion of their population in the total electorate. This is principal which has not been incorporated in most of the Panchayati Raj legislation enacted by the State Legislatures.

In my discussions with Panchayati Raj representatives, both during my extensive tours of rural India and in the numerous Panchayati Raj *sammelans* we have held, it was brought home to me most forcefully that the democratic rights of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes cannot be secured by good intentions alone. At this stage, it has to be secured, in the first instance, by reservations in Panchayati Raj institutions on the same basis as reservations are given in the Lok Sabha and in the State Assemblies.

I see that a certain section of the House is not at all happy about this.

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There is a widespread and justified apprehension on the part of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes that if their due representation in these bodies is not ensured, Panchayati Raj could become an instrument of oppression in the hands of the rural elite.

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Experience in different parts of the country has shown how, in the absence of reservations, vested interests and feudal interests have been able to capture these institutions.

Their hold on these institutions has been reinforced by the failure to hold regular elections. The people's mandate has been perverted into an instrument of exploitation.

To forest all such a perversion of the process, our Bill proposes to make it mandatory for State Legislatures to ensure reservation for the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes.

I was aware that reservation for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes would cause certain problems when we wanted to enforce them, but to be honest I did not expect the problems to come from this section of the House.

Obviously, the power brokers and feudal interest as stand totally exposed today.

To forestall such a perversion of the process, our Bill proposes to make it mandatory for State Legislatures to ensure reservation for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in proportion to their population in the relevant panchayat area. Our Bill also proposes a significant departure from the Constitution as it exists today. We propose the reservation in Panchayats at all

levels of 30 per cent of the seats for women.

I appreciate the interruptions from the hon. members; and I appreciate that this too disturbs them tremendously.

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There are three major reasons for which we believe this Constitutional innovation to be necessary.

First, women constitute half the population and are involved in rather more than half the economic life of rural India. However, to our shame, their share of assets and income is much less than their share of the population. But the toil and sweat imposed upon them is rather more than half. Second, the sound finance of the household has traditionally been the responsibility of woman. Financial discipline and fiscal responsibility are ingrained in the habits and outlook of the women of rural India. These are qualities badly needed in Panchayati Raj institutions. We believe the presence of women in large numbers in the Panchayats will not only make the Panchayats more representative but will also make them more efficient, more honest, more disciplined and more responsible.

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Third, it is the women of India, in their role as grandmothers and mothers, who have been the repository of India's ancient culture and traditions. It is to them that is entrusted the responsibility of transmitting to the next generation the quintessential values, standards and ideals which have enabled our civilization to survive and flourish without a break despite vicissitudes of many kinds. It is that strength of moral character which women will bring to the Panchayats. Let us give them a warm welcome.

Not even a warm welcome for the women from the Opposition.

I now turn to the heart of the matter; devolution and sound finance. Respecting the right of the States to legislate provisions for devolution, we have deliberately refrained from tampering with their rights. We have no intention of attempting to rule the districts from the Centre. But we do expect the State Legislatures to enact such measures as are required to devolve powers and authority upon the Panchayats, keeping in mind the provisions of this Bill and the spirit in which this Amendment is being brought forward.

First is the power and authority of the Panchayats to draw up plans within the framework of guidelines and conditions to be stipulated by the State Governments. These plans will constitute the basic inputs for the planning process at higher levels. Thus we will ensure that the voice of the people, their felt needs, their aspirations, their priorities, become the building blocks of the edifice of planning. We must put an end to planning from above. We must put an end to priorities being conceived and decided at ethereal heights far removed from the realities on the ground. We must put an end to paternalistic planning. We must initiate a process of people's planning.

Our Bill goes beyond merely planning for economic development. It lays upon the Panchayats the even heavier responsibility of planning for social justice. It will not do to romanticise life in our villages. Life there is hard. Life there is exacting, life there is in many ways, exploitative and oppressive.

In driving the power brokers out of the power houses, in rendering the Panchayats to the people, we lay upon the people's representatives the solemn responsibility of turning their attention first and foremost to the needs of the poorest, the most deprived and the most in need. Each plan for economic development will be accompanied by a plan for social justice. No plan for economic development will merit attention until its social justice component is clear. This is a charter not merely for our villages to become prosperous, but also for our villages to become just.

The second major responsibility of the Panchayats will be the implementation of development schemes assigned to them by the State Governments on such conditions as may be specified by the State Governments. These schemes should cover the major economic concern of rural India commencing with agriculture and land improvement and going on to irrigation and watershed management. It must comprise the diversification of the rural economy into animal husbandry, dairying, poultry and fisheries. It must incorporate industrial activity in rural India. It must extend to minor forest produce which is the chief source of income for our entire tribal populace. It must encompass the day to day concerns of rural India, housing, drinking water, fuel and fodder. The devolution must deal with the basic infrastructure of communication and power in rural India.

We have suggested the inclusion in the Panchayats area of competence of development schemes relating to non-conventional energy sources.

The proposed Eleventh Schedule seeks to vest in the Panchayats the major responsibility for the administration of poverty alleviation programmes. It would entrust panchayats with education and culture as well as health and family welfare, women and child development. We propose to request the State Legislatures to make social welfare programmes for all the weaker and handicapped sections a functional responsibility of the Panchayats. We also propose to give to the Panchayats the responsibility for the public distribution system, which is so crucial for the survival of the weakest and the poorest as also for the general health of the rural economy.

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The Bill proposes that the Panchayats be entrusted with the most neglected area of our community life, namely, the maintenance of community assets.

I would like to stress that the Eleventh Schedule is not an exhaustive list. We hope that the States will progressively devolve many more powers and authority upon the Panchayats so that whatever can be looked after at the local level is looked after at that level and not remitted upwards.

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The single greatest danger we have to guard against is the devolution of powers to the Panchayats being followed by the transfer of these powers out of the Panchayati Raj system into other bodies constituted outside the system and placed under the direct control of the State Governments. Almost all the State Governments whether Congress or non-Congress, who have established a good system of Panchayati Raj have seriously weakened the impact by constituting bodies outside the Panchayati Raj system where real powers of decision making are vested and where the elected representatives of the Panchayati Raj are overshadowed by Ministers appointed by the State Government or, as in the case of Karnataka, by the MLA becoming the ex-official Chairman of the Taluka Panchayat Samiti.

It is the purpose of our Bill to ensure that powers delegated to the Panchayats remain within the Panchayats and are not channelled outside the system. By the same token, our Bill is designed to ensure that all development agencies are brought within the framework of the Panchayati Raj institutions and made responsive to the elected authority. There are two basic reasons for administration at the district and sub-district levels having become so unresponsive

to the people. One is the fragmentation of the district administration into a large number of agencies vertically owing responsibility to State Government without adequate coordination at a single focal point at the district level. The other has been the absence of an elected authority to function as that focal point.

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Sir, the House would recall that our Government was returned to office with the largest mandate ever accorded to any party in the history of independent India. I, as Head of that Government, pledged to make a number of structural changes. I very quickly discovered that the system could not cope with the demands which we were making upon it. There was too much ossification.

Mere tinkering with the system would not do; a systemic transformation was essential. Indeed, the starting point of the exercise which has led to the presentation of this Bill was my search for a way of fulfilling the 20th point of our revised 1986. 20 Point programme, which promised to the people a responsive administration. At my instance, the Department of Personnel organised a series of workshops on Responsive Administration to which were invited all the District Magistrates, Deputy Commissioners, and District Collectors of the country. I spent over 20 hours in discussion with them.

It emerged that we could not make our administration responsive merely by simplifying procedures or establishing grievance redressal machinery or opening complaint windows. Every such step only led to one more power centre for the power brokers to occupy. The *sine qua non* of responsive administration is representative administration, responsible to the electorate. Such responsive administration in rural India can only be secured through genuine Panchayati Raj. It is this that our Bill seeks to achieve.

Devolution of administrative powers must go hand in hand with sound finance. Too often in the past, Panchayati Raj has had functions without finances, responsibilities without funds, duties without the means of carrying them out. Our Bill empowers State Legislatures to ensure the sound finance of the Panchayats by endowing them with the revenues of taxes that might be appropriate by, or assigned to them, as also with grants in aid from the Consolidated Fund of the State.

To assist State Legislatures and the executive authority in determining

which taxes to assign or leave for appropriation, as also the grants in aid to be given, the Bill proposes the establishment of a Finance Commission to make suitable recommendations.

I would stress the importance of determining the taxes which will be levied, collected and appropriated by the Panchayats. Nothing will inculcate in the Panchayats a greater sense of fiscal responsibility than the possibility of retaining with them the moneys that they raise for such use as they best deem fit. Untied grants make for local level planning. Authorisation for appropriation makes for responsible local level planning. So far, the tendency has been to confine appropriation to cesses. We hope State Legislatures will go further and identify taxes, duties, tolls and fees which might be appropriated by the Panchayats.

We are asking of the State Legislatures no more than we are ourselves ready to do as a Union Government. A beginning has been made with the Jawahar Rozgar Yojana. 80 per cent of the Funds are being devolved on the village panchayats.

We propose to extend this principle to other Centrally sponsored schemes. There can be no better way of involving the people in their own development. There can be no better way of reducing corruption and nepotism. The system we propose is a transparent system. The bulk of the electorate in a village is composed of the intended beneficiaries of development schemes. Each intended beneficiary will know what schemes are available, how much money there is in the scheme, whether and how the moneys are being spent. Any Panch or Sarpanch who cheats the people will be removed by the people. There is no way he can escape the consequences of the malfeasance.

I would now like to turn to those parts of the country we are proposing to exempt from the system, or in respect of which special provision is made for modification. In the North-East, there is one sparsely populated tribal State which has no difficulty in adopting Panchayati Raj without modification. That is the State of Arunachal Pradesh. The Bill recognises that in three other States of the North-East Nagaland, Meghalaya and Mizoram, there are traditional systems of self-government, ask in to Panchayati Raj, which must be preserved. Indeed, the rest of the country would be well advised to study and learn from the Village Development Boards of Nagaland. In these three States, the traditional systems will be left undisturbed.

Similarly, in areas covered by the Sixth Schedule, where autonomous District Councils have been established, we would not wish to disturb the system so carefully structured. On the same principle, we are not extending the Bill to the District Council areas of Manipur and the areas covered by the Gorkha Hill Council in the Darjeeling Hill district of West Bengal.

As regards the Union Territories, the Bill empowers the President to withhold, extend or modify the application of the provisions of the Bill to a part or the whole of the Union Territories. This is designed to ensure that traditional or nascent institutions in areas like the Nicobar Islands, Lakshadweep and Pondicherry are not adversely affected and the special characteristics of Union Territories like Delhi are taken into account.

Similarly, in areas covered by the Fifth Schedule the Governor in his discretion and not on the aid and advice of his Council of Ministers may determine the conditions of which Panchayati Raj would be extended to these areas.

Sir, the Bill proposes that all State Legislatures bring their State legislation into conformity with the proposed Part IX of the Constitution within a year of the commencement of operation of the amendment. We recognise, however, that Panchayati Raj institutions have been elected in most States, some as recently as this year. The Bill authorises the continuance of these Panchayats till the expiry of their terms, unless State Legislatures decide otherwise. The interregnum between the passage of this Bill and the alignment of State legislation with its provisions will, we hope, be used by State Government to give deep thought to the working of the new system.

Panchayats will have to be given the staff they require. We do not propose that the Annual Confidential Reports of the bureaucracy be written by elected representatives at the Panchayat level, but the district bureaucracy will have to be trained and oriented towards discharging its new responsibilities in changed conditions. We have to build trust and mutual respect between the district bureaucracy and the elected Panchayats. At other levels of our democracy, in the States and at the Centre, the bureaucracy and the elected authority have learned to work together in mutual cooperation. Such a harmonious relationship must also subsist between the district bureaucracy and the Panchayats. We hope. State Government will resist the temptation to effect a cleavage between the regulatory and development functions of district

administration. There will have to be coordination because it is only through development administration that a regulating officer can establish the contacts and linkages essential to forestalling a law and order crisis or resolving it when it occurs.

We are deeply conscious that this Bill restricts itself to democracy and development at the grassroots in rural India. We must extend the same concern to the growing urban and semi-urban population of the country. To this end, Government propose to bring forward major legislation in the next session of the Lok Sabha.

We shall turn our attention to recasting, revamping and rejuvenating the cooperative movement which Panditji had always regarded as the essential complement to Panchayati Raj.

We come to this House after long consideration and a national debate without precedent. We have consulted more than ten thousand representatives of Panchayati Raj institutions from all over the country. We have discussed Panchayati Raj with the bureaucracy at different echelons, including district officers, Chief Secretaries and Secretaries to the Government of India. We have held meetings with Panchayati Raj Ministers and the Chief Ministers of the States. We have extended the debate to political levels, with in Party forums and in a Parliamentary Consultative Committee.

Our proposals are before you but our mind is not closed. In the months to come, we hope there will be an intensive debate about these proposals all over the country. We are prepared to carry forward such discussions with Opposition Parties and Chief Ministers. We will ofcourse listen with the utmost care to suggestions made on the floor of the House. We seek consensus but we are prepared to face the challenge of confrontation. We shall fight for the rights of the people, we shall fight for democracy for the people, we shall fight for development for the people. It is the people of India who are our first and foremost concern. The proposals we place before the House are not really our proposals, they are the proposals of the people of India. We have drawn upon the accumulated experience of Panchayati Raj from all over the country, the good experience as well as the bad, the experience of Congressrun governments as much as of State Governments run by other parties. This experience has been pooled and churned. Out of this manthan has emerged the *amrit* which we now propose to share.

Our democracy has reached the stage where the full participation parties caption of the people brooks no further delay. We are accused of rushing through this Bill. There has been no rush. For several years now, we have been holding well published consultation at several different levels on Panchayati Raj. No one in the public life of this country could have been unaware of our intentions. Our respected Rashtrapatiji, in his Address to both Houses of Parliament, had specifically referred to the major legislation on the subject which Government proposed to bring forward. We now fulfil that promise. Those who decry this as an election gimmick are precisely those whose feudal interest will be overthrown by power reaching the people. Sir, whenever I talk of power brokers and feudal interest, it hurts some of our friends very deeply and for that I apologise to them. But this is a fight for strengthening our people and we will fight this fight inspite of every thing the Opposition has to say.

Sir, we trust the people. We have faith in the people. It is the people who must determine their own destinies and the destiny of the nation. To the people of India, let us ensure maximum democracy and maximum devolution. Let there be an end to the power brokers. Let us give power to the people.

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BACK NOTE

XXXIII. Constitution [Sixty-Fourth Amendment] Bill, 15 May, 1989

1. SHRI AMAL DATTA: (Diamond Harbour): What is the record of U.P.?

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: You hear the next sentence.

2. SOME HON. MEMBERS: Say Tripura also.

3. THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (S. BUTA SINGH): They are not even concerned. They are not even concerned.

4. SHRI M. RAGHUMA REDDY (Nalgonda): What were you doing all these years?

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: We are waking you up; that is what we are doing.

5. SHRI M. RAGHUMA REDDY: What about the backward classes?

6. SHRI AMAL DATTA (Diamond Harbour): You give them 50 per cent.

7. SHRI AMAL DATTA: The Public Distribution System is collapsing.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: That is precisely why we want to give it to somebody who will run it and not to the States who are making it collapse.

8. SHRI SATYAGOPAL MISRA (Tamluk): What about the land reforms?

9. SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY (Mahabubnagar): Is this an election manifesto?

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: This is a manifesto for the election of the Panchayats... Let us be clear about that.

This is a manifesto for the people of India ..., Sir, this is a manifesto to give power to the people of India and to rob some of the power brokers who are getting so agitated.

10. SHRI C. MADHAV REDDY (Adilabad): Sir, you have permitted the hon. Prime Minister to make a long statement at the time of the introduction of this Bill. Sir, we have given notice that we are going to oppose the introduction

of the Bill. Sir, our notices are pending before you and I would like that you should permit us to speak on the views given by the Prime Minister.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Sir, for allowing a debate, we can extend the session for tomorrow and we can have it tomorrow.

We have deliberately decided not to have a debate in this session because we thought that in the intervention period we will have enough time for debate for the Opposition because we in the Congress have been debating it for two years. It is the Opposition which has ignored the people. So, we have thought that we have the debate in the next session.

CONSTITUTION (SIXTY-FIFTH AMENDMENT) BILL

7 August, 1989

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the House would recall that when I introduced the Constitution (Sixty-fourth Amendment) Bill on the 15th of May, I had said that Government intended to bring forward in the Monsoon Session major legislation relating to the urban local bodies. We are now fulfilling that commitment.

Already in common parlance the Bill I introduced in the last Session is called the Panchayati Raj Bill and this, the Nagarpalika Bill. Allow me, Sir, to use these familiar names rather than the somewhat ponderous official titles.

The Nagarpalika Bill supplements the Panchayati Raj Bill, the theme of this Bill is the same as that of the other: Constitutional sanction for maximum democracy and maximum devolution. Even as we see the strengthening of the Panchayati Raj system as the key to eliminating the powerbrokers from the life of rural India, so do we see this Bill as the key instrument for reducing and eventually eliminating the role of the powerbrokers in urban India.

We seek through these Bills to vest power in the only place where power rightfully belongs in a democracy in the hands of the people.

In the past few days we have been sad witness to the gravest assault on democracy since the founding of our Republic: the abandonment of the Lok Sabha by a section of the elected representatives of the people. In the last general elections the people gave the Congress an overwhelming mandate to govern the country for five years. In the same election they returned a few Opposition Members to occupy the Opposition benches for the same five years. The Members of the Opposition were elected to fulfil the vital democratic function of contesting the Government and its policies right here, on the floor of this House, not in the streets or in the columns of newspapers.

We respect those democratic and independent minded Members of the

Opposition who are here with us today, to democratically debate the issues of fundamental national importance which I shall be raising. By the same token we must deplore the behaviour of those other Members of the Opposition who have simply run away from this highest forum of democratic dialogue. They have abused this noble institution to which type were elected. They have violated their mandate. They have betrayed their constituents. They have eroded democracy itself. Why have they tried to destroy democracy in Parliament? I have no doubt that it is primarily because they could not bear to see democracy devolved to the people. Had they stayed, they would have been exposed. They have fled. It has only exposed them sooner. A stern reckoning awaits them. The people will, of course consign to the dustbin of history those who have resigned the seats to which they were elected in 1984. Yet, this only increases the responsibility of those of us who have remained in this House to strengthen the foundations of our democracy.

Democracy in Parliament and in the State Legislatures remains fragile so long as the roots of our democracy do not reach down to the villages and *mohallas* where the people live. Our Constitution detailed the provisions for democracy in Parliament and in the State Legislatures. Therefore, democracy in these institutions has survived every vicissitude and flourished. However, our Constitution did not make democracy in local self-Government a Constitutional obligation. And so democracy in the Panchayats and Nagarpalika has withered at the roots.

With these two Bills, we shall ensure that while India lives, democracy at the grassroots lives. No longer will democracy in local self-government be a passing political pastime. Through these Bills, democracy in local self-Government becomes a solemn Constitutional obligation, an obligation that can neither be suborned nor flouted for reasons of expediency or indifference.

Sir, we wanted to come to this House only after consulting all the Chief Ministers. Tragically, but in keeping with their penchant to avoid democratic discussion, all but two of the non-Congress Chief Ministers stayed away from the discussion. Many of them refused to let the elected representatives of their parties participate in the Nagarpalika Sammelans and I believe one of them has dismissed some of those who participated in those discussions. They denied permission to their Municipal Officers to attend the Conference of Municipal Officers called by the Ministry of Urban Development. We have

done our best. We have done all we can to involve them in a nationwide debate. They say there must be consensus before the Constitution is amended, but refuse to come for a discussion. How can a consensus be forged without dialogue? Their non-cooperation notwithstanding, we come to Parliament at the end of the widest and most intensive series of consultations undertaken in the history of independent India. I have personally interacted with upward of 25,000 knowledgeable, experienced, persons, most of whom are elected representatives of the people, before coming to this House with the Panchayati Raj and Nagarpalika Bills.

Times out of number we have stressed that this is not a Centre-State issue. Why should the Constitutional enshrinement of democracy in the Panchayats and Nagarpalikas be a bone of contention between the Centre and the States? Why must regular elections, the end of arbitrary suspensions and the restitution within six months of the people's will be a matter of dispute between the Centre and the States? Why should reservations for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and women be a matter of confrontation between the Centre and the States? There is, in fact, no contention between us, at the Centre, and the Governments in the States. There is contention only between those of us who wish to empower the people and those political forces who wish to see power retained in the hands of feudal oligarchies and the coterie of powerbrokers they represent.

Far from encroaching on States' rights, we have displayed the utmost sensitivity to the structure of the Centre-State relationships built through the Constitution. Entry 5 of the State List remains untouched. The sovereignty of State Legislature remains undiminished. We are amending the Constitution, not drafting municipal law on a State subject. What is being taken away is the right to ignore the people. What is being removed is the right to flout the people's will. What is being ended is the reign of the powerbrokers. It is not a question of the Centre's rights versus the States' rights. It is a question of the people's rights.

In according Constitutional status to the Nagarpalikas, we are butresponding to the joint resolution passed by the Central Council of Local Self-Government and the All India Council of Mayors pleading for the conferment of Constitutional status on urban local bodies. In both these bodies were represented Ministers, Mayors and other elected representatives of the Opposition Parties

including political parties represented in this House today and those they have run away. Ranging from the CPI (M) to the BJP and taking in much that lies in between, official spokesmen of all these Parties have again and again asked for Constitutional recognition for the Nagarpalikas. As recently as in their representation to the National Commission on Urbanisation, the Calcutta Corporation headed by a CPI (M) Mayor argued that a country — I quote:

"wedded to grassroot level democracy must bless its local institutions with a Constitutional status."

They went in to say — and I quote again:

"This bold initiative would become much more meaningful if the roles, functions, responsibilities (fiscal and other) and obligations of various levels of government are Constitutionally defined."

And I cannot resist quoting also their categorical conclusion that urban problems cannot be solved without giving:

"local governments their rightful place in the country's Constitutional framework itself."

What has happened to change their minds? Let me phrase the question in a different way: what has happened to change their principles? Is it that they are getting too used to the company of those with diametrically opposed ideologies and those with no principle or ideology at all?

We have heard the argument that there is no need for a Constitutional Amendment to bring democracy to the grassroots and endow power to the people. It has been argued that what is needed is political will. I respectfully submit, Sir, that it takes more political will to amend the Constitution than it does to pass a municipal law. I would also respectfully submit, Sir, that our Constitutional Amendment creates the necessary political will where that will does not exist. There is no place in any of this for a holier than thou attitude. No party in India can claim an unblemished record in local self-Government. Equally there is no major political party in India which has not something to its credit in regard to local self-Government. There are some Congress Governments that have done better than others. Equally there are Opposition-run Governments which have done sometimes better than others, sometimes worse, indeed sometimes better than their own past record, while sometimes falling short of their past achievement. Our approach to the Panchayati Raj

and Nagarpalika Bills has been non-partisan. We have drawn from the experience of all. We are beholden to all. We now bring forward a Bill which makes democratic decentralization to the Nagarpalikas a keystone of the country's Constitutional arch.

Having discovered that there is an irresistible groundswell of popular support for the Panchayati Raj and Nagarpalika Bills, one Opposition party has now come up with an alternative proposal for a Constitutional amendment. The proper forum to table such amendments would be the floor of this House. But since the Party mainly responsible for these alternative proposals has fled its democratic responsibilities, their proposals cannot even be considered. Let us see what happens in the other House where, in glaring contrast to their behaviour here, they cling like limpets to their seats.

Then there are the purists of the Opposition who say that, in no circumstances, will they have any truck with Constitutional provisions for local self-Government. This purity is, however, called into question when one discovers that, a recently as at the February 1989 Joint Meeting of the Central Council for Local Government and the All India Council of Mayors, the delegations of the Telugu Desam Government of Andhra Pradesh, the Left Front Government of Kerala and the CPI(M) Mayor of Calcutta, leading a delegation of the Left Front Government of West Bengal, were all party to a resolution which demanded a Constitutional amendment in relation to the Nagarpalikas.

There are yet other constituents of the National Front—or, should I say, the National Front?—who demanded at the 11th Joint Meeting a uniform statute for all Nagarpalikas in the country. How can there be a uniform statute without a Constitutional amendment? And even assuming for a moment that this is achieved by some legal legerdemain, the essential difference between a Constitutional amendment and a Municipal statute remains. The consequences of a Constitutional amendment are ineluctable. Our proposals would enshrine democracy in the local bodies in the most sacred basis of our modern nationhood. In contrast, any model bill will have no binding significance for State Legislatures and no guarantee of outlasting changes of party or personality. If we really want democracy and devolution in the Nagarpalikas, there is no alternative to the kind of Constitutional amendments that we propose.

The starting point of the Nagarpalika Bill is the recognition that those

who live in urban settlements are entitled to the same democratic rights, and the same rights and responsibilities for development, as we seek to confer on rural India through the Panchayati Raj Bill.

Already, a quarter of our population lives in urban India. The proportion will rise to a third by the turn of the century and cross the halfway mark within a few decades thereafter. This major demographic trend needs not only to be recognised but also encouraged. What has gone wrong with our pattern of urbanization is not that there is too fast and furious a flood of people into towns and cities, as that the pattern of urbanization is skewed. It is the larger metropolitan cities that are attracting the bulk of those coming in from the rural areas. This severely strains the resources of the larger cities without conferring any real benefit on the rural areas from where the new entrants have come. What we need is a rational pattern of urbanization. We need to see small and large towns growing in every district, drawing the bulk of their population from the surrounding rural hinterland. That way the talent and enterprise of the people will remain, to a large extent, within the district. Urbanisation will be related to rural requirements. Urban settlements will cease to be isolated compartments.

It is the compartmentalization of India into rigidly segregated rural and urban settlements that has been the worst legacy of the colonial system of local self-Government.

When, 107 years ago, the British introduced their system of urban local self-Government, the urban settlements of India had a very different role to play to the one we now envisage for them. The colonial government of the time saw the urban settlements of India as enclaves where they could hide themselves away comfortably from the surrounding reality. They assumed that drains and drinking water, street lighting and street cleaning were needed only for themselves and their hangers on. It was assumed that civic amenities were not for rural India.

Four decades into Independence, the reality has changed but the shell remains much the same. The law makes it obligatory to provide civic amenities for all recognised urban settlements, but the strained resources of the urban local bodies makes it almost impossible for them to meet their legal obligations. On the other hand, the inhabitants of rural India are demanding — rightly — that they too be given civic amenities, and— rightly — they are, increasingly,

received their due.

We have to get out of the colonial categorization of India into separate rural and urban boxes. We have to replace the compartmentalization of rural and urban India by a rural urban continuum, which threads the farthest rural hamlet to the largest megapolis in a *rudrakshamala* of democracy and devolution.

Secondly, in the colonial system of Municipal administration there was no place for development planning and no role for development activities. When Panditji introduced Panchayati Raj to fill the rural vacuum left by the colonial legacy, he envisaged the institutions of Panchayati Raj as a crucial instrumentality of development. Although, over the years, the Panchayati Raj institutions have decayed, they have remained, in concept atleast, a prime instrument of development. In contrast, the Municipal bodies have withered but assumed no developmental role. The development of India is not possible without planning for development in our urban settlements as much as in our rural settlements. Indeed, planning at the crucial interface between the rural hinterland and the urban settlement will be the chief progenitor of accelerated growth.

Accordingly, the first chapter of the Bill we have tabled deals with settlements in transition from rural to urban.

As it is, such settlements constitute the single largest category of settlements beyond the rural village. The present tendency, in most parts of the country, is to classify such settlements as urban and take them entirely out of the purview of rural urban interface. We propose that, instead of a proliferation of non-viable urban local bodies at this end of the spectrum, local self-Government in the Nagar Panchayats partake of the flavour of both rural administration and urban administration. This is emphasised in the very name suggested for these bodies, Nagar Panchayats, that is the simultaneous recognition of the urban character of such a settlement and its continuing link with the rural countryside. More to the point, the powers and responsibilities devolved on Nagar Panchayats draw both from the rural list and the urban list. Planning undertaken by Nagar Panchayats will marry the requirements of the rural hinterland to activity that can best be undertaken in the transitional settlement. The recognition and encouragement of Nagar Panchayats will draw away from the land the populations that the village cannot support while retaining within the locality, for the common benefit of the rural hinterland

and the urbanising settlement, the talent, the enterprise of those willing to undertake the risk and the adventure of uprooting themselves from their ancestral villages. Instead of being hollow symbols of a false prestige, as the smaller Municipalities regrettably are at present, the Nagar Panchayats will become the focal points of the dynamics of development.

We would hope that in every district, one or some of the Nagar Panchayats will grow into a town worthy of a Nagarpalika. It is by the even spread of towns around the country that we will take the pressure off the large metropolises as well as off the land. It is in the spread of such settlements that we seek a rationalization of the pattern of urbanisation, it is also these settlements that will, progressively and in phases, serve as the foci for industrial growth centres. Thus, we bring together the recommendations of the National Commission on Urbanization and our scheme of growth centres.

Let us now see how decentralized democracy in the Nagarpalikas compares with decentralised democracy in the Panchayats.

Democracy in village panchayats has two distinctive characteristics. First, the individual voter has a close, personal relationship and ready access to the elected representative because, on an average, each Panch represents between 100 and 500 voters. Second, each Panch has a voice which counts for a great deal in the Panchayat. It is the combination of these two factors—the personal contact between the voter and the elected representative, and the importance of the elected representative in the elected body—which is the first essential step towards eliminating the powerbroker from the polity.

In contrast to the three levels of Panchayati Raj—the village, the block, and the district—we have so far only had single-tier Municipal administration. This works fairly satisfactorily in smaller towns because the wards are small and the Municipal Council compact. However, as the town grows larger, the distance between the voter and his representative increases, and the number of members of the Municipality also tends to increase. By the time towns grow into cities, and cities into metropolises, the median size of the ward expands to 30,000 and more, extending, in the case of one Delhi ward to even two lakhs and above. The membership of the Corporation also expands to nearly one hundred and fifty members.

To bring democracy in urban settlements closer to the people in the

mohallas and the neighbourhoods where they live, the Nagarpalika Bill proposes two innovations. The innovations are by no means a radical new departure. They build upon existing informal arrangements and administrative structures.

In all urban settlements, with a population of one lakh or more, we propose the constitution, by direct election, of Wards Committees, to whom the Municipality will devolve local powers and local responsibilities, and such finances as are required to carry out their assigned tasks. We leave it to State Legislatures to determine the territorial area and size of population which will be served by a Wards Committee. We would hope the jurisdiction of a Wards Committee would be sufficiently compact to give citizens a sense of personal involvement in the affairs of their neighbourhood and ready access to the elected representatives to deal with their ward level problems. The Ward Councillor will be a member of the Wards Committee of his area and will constitute the link between the Ward and the Municipality.

In cities with a population above three lakhs, we propose that the chairpersons of the Ward Committees be constituted into a Zonal Committee. The determination of the territorial area and size of population falling within a Zonal Committee is left to the State Legislature to decide. Powers, responsibilities and finances will devolve to the Zonal Committee from the Municipal Corporation.

A great advantage of the introduction of a two-tier system of municipal administration in the larger Municipal Councils, and a of a three-tier system of municipal administration in Municipal Corporations, is that it will level councilors and corporators free to deal with city leave issues, with matters of policy such as citywide infrastructure, overall economic and social development, linkages with neighbouring Municipalities and economic interaction with the district as a whole.

Hitherto, the absence of effective, representative local self-Government has introduced a glaring distortion in our system. If a drain in a *mohalla* gets blocked, the Ward Councillor, the President of the Municipality, the MLA, the MP and the local Minister are all together approached to get the drain unblocked. Sometimes the unblocking of the drain even requires the intervention of the Prime Minister!

The removal of such distortions requires a systemic changes so that each

level focusses on its level of responsibility.

The establishment of Wards Committee will give the people of the *Mohalla* or *para*, the locality or neighbourhood, a sense of personal involvement in their civic affairs. It will afford an opportunity for public spirited citizens to serve their locality. It will help focus attention on how the people themselves view their problems and the solutions they suggest. It will help mobilise local participation and local resources for local development. It will give voluntary organisations a neighbourhood forum in which to share ideas and explore the scope for citizen action. The city will then truly belong to the people.

The importance of this in the poorer parts of the city cannot be overemphasised. Today, the unrecognised and unwanted are left uncared for. They huddle together in festering slums. They are unrecognised because they are unauthorised. They wait in dread of the moment when they will be uprooted. Uprooted, they settle themselves elsewhere for settle somewhere they must. That they are unauthorised does not mean that they must. That they are unauthorised does not mean that they do not exist. They do and for their protection they turn to the slum bully, who territories them into submission but, in exchange, offers a measure of protection. The children of the unwanted are then sucked into the underworld. The Wards Committees offer these unfortunates a new hope of a new dawn. The *mohalla* can begin looking after its own. The elected representatives of the mohalla will look after the interests of the mohalla. The mohalla can cease being at the mercy of others. The slum bully will give way to the mohalla panchayat, that is, the Wards Committee.

We have assured the involvement of the Ward Councillor or Corporator in the work of the Wards Committee. This will help him keep in close touch with locality level problems but, at the same time, free him to consider larger questions of policy.

The country has enthusiastically welcomed the assurance of regular, periodic elections to the Panchayats every five years. Through this Bill, we seek to extend this provision to the Nagarpalikas. The country has also greatly welcomed the proposal to reconstitute dissolved Panchayats within six months by direct election. We extend this provision too, through this Bill to the Nagarpalikas.

Social justice demands representation for the Scheduled Castes and the

Scheduled Tribes in proportion to their population. We have assured this in the Panchayats. We assure this too in the Nagarpalikas.

There is no section of our society more oppressed, more exploited and more neglected than women. In every segment, class or community, women suffer all the disabilities inflicted on that group and, in addition, suffer also the consequences of gender discrimination. Yet, their contribution to economic life, social wellbeing, cultural continuity and ethical standards is far greater than their share of the population. We must make a determined beginning to bring women into the mainstream of local self-Government. It is proposed to extend reservations for women to Nagarpalikas on the same pattern as has been envisaged in the Panchayats.

I now turn to the functions of urban local bodies. The traditional civic functions of Municipalities are well known and well understood, if not always well implemented. We would like to see the Nagarpalikas go beyond the mere provision of civic amenities.

They should be empowered to play a crucial role in the preparation of plans for local development and in the implementation of development projects and programmes, including specially conceived programmes for urban poverty alleviation.

That is the only way of involving people in their own development and ending the mai-baap syndrome. Real responsibility will foster realistic expectations, and an understanding at the grassroots level of resource constraints. Nagarpalika members and those who elect them, must learn the necessity of choosing between alternative options, and the need to mobilise additional resources to meet additional demands. At the same time, the people's involvement in the planning process will lead to plans which respond to local needs and local desires. Planning should not be the unravelling of some bureaucratic fantasy about what is good for the people. It is for the people to themselves decide what is good for them.

I would like to particularly emphasise that the Nagarpalika Bill stresses, as does the Panchayati Raj Bill, that planning by local bodies should deal not only with economic development but also with social justice. This means that no plan for economic development drawn by any local body will be valid unless its social justice component has been specifically spelt out in the plan.

Thus, social justice is not left as an adjunct to the planning process but made an integral part of it.

Planning without resources is an invitation to irresponsibility. On the other hand, planning based on a clear idea of the magnitude of available resources, and anchored, to the extent possible, in self-generated resources is the *sine qua non* of responsible planning. We propose that a Finance Commission be constituted in every State to review Municipal finances and recommend principles on the basis of which the sound finance of the Nagarpalikas can be assured. As in the case of Panchayati Raj institutions, this would involve the earmarking of certain taxes for assignment to, or appropriation by, the Nagarpalikas, in addition to grants in aid. It is our hope that Finance Commissions would see their way to progressively devolving to the Nagarpalikas fiscal responsibility for the appropriation of the revenues of more and more taxes, duties, tolls and fees, because it is when a nexus is established between revenues raised and revenues spent that local bodies are best able to exercise fiscal responsibilities. We recognise, of course, that no Nagarpalika will be able to survive on its self-generated resources alone. A system of incentive grants is essential to provide an additional stimulus for fiscal responsibility and financial self-reliance.

There is scope for the Nagarpalikas to go much further in looking for resources for local development. They must be encouraged to seek access to the capital market, of course keeping in mind their capacity to service the Municipal Debt. There is need for specialised financial institutions to deal with Municipalities and urban development, in particular housing. There is need also for a refinance body similar to the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD). We are making a study of these possibilities.

The Panchayati Raj Bill seeks to devolve powers and responsibility for planning to Panchayati Raj institutions. The Nagarpalika Bill does the same for the Nagarpalikas. Any district is, however, a composite of Panchayats and Nagarpalikas. It is, therefore, essential to have a mechanism for consolidating and harmonising the plans prepared by different Panchayats and Nagarpalikas, preparatory to drafting a development plans for the district as a whole.

This brings us back to our running theme of the rural-urban continuum. Colonialism created the artificial rural-urban divide, democracy and devolution

must restore the interaction of rural and urban settlements so that the district as a whole prospers, with planning in the towns fostering in the countryside more remunerative cropping patterns, higher agricultural productivity, greater incomes and larger employment and, reciprocally, urban prosperity being accelerated by linkages with the rural economy and with other urban settlements in the district. We must create an awareness and a recognition of the advantages of the integrated development of the district as a whole.

It is, therefore, proposed that a Joint Committee of the Nagarpalikas and Panchayats be established to undertake these tasks. The Committee will be elected by the members of the Zila Panchayat and the Nagarpalikas from amongst themselves in proportion to the ratio of the rural to the urban population. Reservations for the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and women will be assured in the Committee. Thus, the district development plan will not only include the social justice component of the plans prepared by each Panchayat and Nagarpalika. It will be prepared and finalised only with the full participation of the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe representatives, in proportion to their population, and with women constituting 30% of the membership of the committee.

For metropolitan areas, the Nagarpalika Bill proposes the establishment of a Committee to consolidate and harmonise the development plans of the Panchayats and Nagarpalikas comprised within the metropolitan area, as also to prepare the development plan for the metropolitan area as a whole. We have ensured popular representations in the Committee by providing that at least two-thirds of the members will be elected from and amongst the members of the Nagarpalikas and the chairpersons of the Panchayats falling within the metropolitan area. The remaining one-third could represent authorities with special interest in the metropolitan area as well as government representatives and persons of eminence.

In the course of the nationwide debate that has followed the introduction of the Panchayati Raj Bill, apprehensions have been expressed about criminals and antisocial elements entering the body politic through the local bodies. Such apprehensions are not without foundation. We have had several instances in the past of persons who would be disqualified from standing for Assembly or Parliamentary elections being able to contest local body elections. They

Constitution affords protection against the entry of such persons to the Assemblies and to Parliament. Its very silence on the subject of disqualification for membership of the Panchayats and the Nagarpalikas has resulted in State legislation leaving wide open the lacunae and loopholes through which such undesirable elements have wormed their way into the local bodies. We are plugging that gap. The Bill before the House details the disqualifications for the Panchayats and the Nagarpalikas based upon the existing Constitutional provisions in regard to the Assemblies and Parliament, as well as disqualifications prescribed through legislation. The implication is that all the disqualifications we introduced through our amendment last December to the Representation of People's Act will also apply to candidates contesting elections to the Panchayats and the Nagarpalikas. Our Bill also opens the possibility for State Legislatures to introduce other disqualifications which may be necessitated by local conditions.

The Constitutional Amendments which I commend for your consideration constitute but the first stage of a process. The process must be carried forward to the second stage of State legislation and the third stage of executive implementation. Many of the details of the new system can be settled only at these subsequent stage. Quite rightly high importance is attached to such matters as the convening of Gram Sabhas to consider issues of importance, transparency in the proceedings of the Panchayats and the dissemination of public information about their decisions, the public notification of electoral rolls, and the public display of information about the implementation of programmes such as the Jawahar Rozgar Yojana, including details of the works undertaken the expenditure made, and the names of beneficiaries. These are matters that cannot be dealt with in a Constitutional Amendment but must be dealt with at later stages. State legislation, the rules made thereunder and the Government Orders issued will, we hope, not merely conform to the letter and spirit of these amendments, but creatively interpret them to fulfil the high expectations our people have reposed in the rejuvenation and revitalization of the Panchayats and Nagarpalikas. It would be the responsibility of State Governments to undertake the required dispositions to bring within the purview of the elected authority, the district bureaucracy and official agencies operating in the district. The recruitment, training and orientation of the Government servants who will service the local bodies is a State responsibility. It would be for the State Governments to ensure the proper staffing and the smooth flow

of funds to finance the assigned tasks and devolved functions of the Panchayats and the Nagarpalikas. All these are tasks which call for close cooperation between the Union Government and the State Governments. Our cooperation is pledged. The people will not forgive the State Governments who fail to cooperate. So, our task does not end with the consideration and passage of these Bills. We would hope a vociferous public opinion and vigilant monitoring will ensure that our intentions are fully and faithfully realised.

The Constitution Amendment Bills we bring before this House constitute, by no means, the end of our grassroots revolution. We look forward, in the next Lok Sabha, to thoroughly revamping the cooperative movement which, in many sectors and many parts of the country, has run aground on the shoals of upperclass domination, mismanagement, malfeasance and worse. We are also conscious of our work on the Panchayats being unfinished because we have not yet dealt with the nyaya-panchayats. Equally, in urban India, we need to complement responsive administration with the quick delivery of justice. This work will be a major priority for our Government in the Ninth Lok Sabha.

Sir, this is a moment of history. This is a moment of revolution. The decisions we take will decisively determine the destiny of our democracy. We are here in this House by the will of our people, it is to the people we shall return shortly to seek a renewal of our mandate.

Five years ago, we had promised our people a radical restructuring of government at the grassroot to make it more representative, more responsible and more responsive. We now on the threshold of the most significant systemic change to take place since the adoption of the Constitution 40 years ago.

With these two Bills, we redeem our pledge to our people. Power to the people. The people are with us.

I, now, seek leave of the House to introduce the Constitution (Sixty-fifth Amendment) Bill, 1989.

Sir, I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill further to amend the Constitution of India.

BACK NOTE

XXXIV. Constitution [Sixty-Fifth Amendment] Bill, 7 August, 1989

-NIL-

STATEMENT REGARDING AGRICULTURAL PACKAGE

12 October, 1989

Mr. Speaker, Sir, 37 years ago, speaking in this House, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru said:

"We certainly attach importance to industry; but in the present context we attach far greater importance to agriculture and food and matters pertaining to agriculture. If our agricultural foundation is not strong then the industry we seek to build will not have a strong base either. Apart from that, the situation in the country today is such that, if our food front cracks up, everything else will crack up too. Therefore, we dare not weaken our food front. If our agriculture becomes strongly entrenched, as we hope it will, then it will be relatively easy for us to progress more rapidly on the industrial front, whereas if we concentrate only on industrial development and leave agriculture in a weak condition we shall ultimately be weakening industry. That is why, primary attention has been given to agriculture and food and that, I think, is essential in a country like India at the present moment."

37 years later, the time has come for us to reiterate that the highest national priority must be given to the farmer, to farming, to food and agriculture as the cornerstone of our economy. Much has happened in these 37 years. No longer are we threatened with famine. No longer is the begging bowl waiting to be taken out of the cupboard. The agricultural policies followed by successive governments over four decades of freedom have set the stage for the epochal transformation that has taken place in Indian agriculture. True, there was a severe setback during the three-year tragedy of Janata rule, but the agricultural economy was set back on course after Indiraji and the Congress came back to the Treasury benches.

Now, our *kisans* and *khet mazdoors* have rendered us self-sufficient in food. They have given us this year the highest-ever output of foodgrains and most other agricultural products. They have given us the inner strength to withstand the rigours of drought and the ravages of floods. They have given us honour and self-respect. They have reinforced our independence. They have proved the first line of our defence. It is on the basis of self-reliance in agriculture that we have been able to build a self-reliant economy, a deeply democratic domestic polity, and an independent foreign policy. Had we at any

time cracked upon the food front, as Panditji put it, the whole country and everything we stand for would have cracked up too. It is because of our buoyant agriculture that this has not happened. That is the depth of the debt of gratitude that the country owes the *kisan* and the *khet mazdoor*.

During the last nine years, GDP and per capita income have risen faster than ever before. This has led to an upsurge in demand for food and other wage goods, including several agricultural products. This is wholly welcome development. It means a significant improvement in nutritional levels and living standard. We must get up production to meet this explosion in demand. Therefore, we are determined to accord the highest priority to agriculture in the Eighth Five Year Plan. Agricultural growth must be accelerated. Agricultural income and employment must grow faster than they have in the past. Our *kisans* are concerned at the process of determining support prices for farm product. We shall ensure that two major modifications are introduced in the method of computing the cost of production while fixing support prices for agricultural produce. First, we shall determine the wage costs on the basis of the statutory minimum wage for agricultural labour notified by the State or the actual wages paid, whichever is higher. Second, we shall include in the cost of production the labour input of the *Kisan* at a higher wage reflecting the managerial and entrepreneurial role of the *kisan*. In order to enable *kisans* to rationally determine their cropping pattern, support prices are being notified by Government in advance of the sowing. However, this system leaves out of account the increases in costs taking place between the point of announcement and the point of harvesting. To remedy this, we are instructing the CACP to work out a suitable escalation formula. Meanwhile, for kharif 1989, support prices will be increased at the beginning of the marketing season to take into account increases in the prices of inputs and the general price rise since the commencement of the sowing season.

The procurement prices per quintal: of paddy will go up from Rs. 175 to Rs. 185; of coarse cereals like jowar, bajra, maize and ragi from Rs. 155 to Rs. 165; of kharif pulses like tur, moong and urad gram Rs. 400 to Rs. 425; of groundnut in shell from Rs. 470 to Rs. 500; of black soyabean from Rs. 305 to Rs. 325 and of yellow soyabean from Rs. 350 to Rs. 370; of sunflower seeds from Rs. 500 to Rs. 530; of F414 and H777 cotton from Rs. 540 to Rs. 570, and of H4 cotton from Rs. 650 to Rs. 690; and finally, of jute (M5

Assam variety) from Rs. 280 to Rs. 295. These rates will also apply to those farmers who have already sold their produce in the current kharif marketing season.

The farming community has also been concerned at the terms of trade for the farm sector in relation to other sectors. The adverse movement of the terms of trade has been rectified to some extent in the Sixth and Seventh Plans. In the Eighth Five Year Plan, we shall ensure favourable terms of trade for the farming sector.

Many farmers are not able to obtain the advantage of minimum support prices because procurement centres are sometimes at a considerable distance from their farms and villages. We intend to increase the number of procurement centres so that, eventually, every kisan will have access to a procurement centre within 10 kms of his village. The rural roads network will also be strengthened in a phased manner. Kisans, particularly those engaged in the farming of perishable farm commodities, are often denied a fair share of the value of their produce because of the very perishability of their output. The only answer lies in expanding rural godowns and cold or cooled-storage facilities. To this end, a special programme is being instituted for the extension of institutional credit on attractive terms for the establishment of cold or cooled-storage facilities in rural areas.

There is scope for substantially improving credit facilities for the farm community. We propose four specific steps in this regard: First, we must rectify the problem of credit not being available to members of cooperatives because of the cooperatives to which they belong having become ineligible for NABARD refinance. We have decided to open, with effect from the ensuing rabi season, a special line of credit of Rs. 100 crore through cooperative and commercial banks which will be earmarked exclusively for Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe farmers. Second, scales of finance for short-term production credit will be revised annually so that the credit made available to the farmer fully meets the recommended doses of inputs at current prices to meet his cultivation requirements.

Third, a special credit regime is being instituted for kisans in rainfed farming areas covered by watershed development programmes. The new regime will operate on the basis of ensuring the availability of credit through a three

to five year cycle so as to even out the inherent risks involved in good and bad monsoon years appearing in a cycle in such areas. The special credit regime will take into account problems of overdues which arise within a cyclical period to ensure an adequate flow of credit in support of viable crop production and other allied activities. This regime will be reinforced by a major programme of watershed development in rainfed farming areas.

The fourth step we propose is essentially a procedural one but which kisans will immediately recognise as being of the utmost importance to their requirements. Passbooks and agriculture credit cards will be extended to kisans so as to enable the easy drawal of production loans from cooperative and commercial banks.

The National Agricultural Credit Relief Fund will devise a comprehensive relief policy based on the special characteristics of production and the severity of damage in different agroclimatic zones. Through the rescheduling of loans and waivers of interest and principal in defined circumstances, the credit needs of farmers in different zones will be kept in view. While we have invested astronomical sums of money in land improvement and irrigation, our management of land and water resources has been so poor as to render the benefits secured far below the optimum achievable. We propose to take a number of steps to improve the management of our land and water resources.

During the next five years, irrigation waters will be made available on an assured basis to an additional one crore hectares of land in the command areas of canal projects. The authorities concerned will be held responsible for reaching water to farmers in assured quantities and at the right time. Also, ten lakh tubewells and dugwells are to be constructed every year. And five lakh hectares will be covered annually for the programme of desalting and maintenance of village tanks, beels, bunds and ponds. Second, the productivity of unirrigated land is to be enhanced through effective watershed development and *in situ* moisture conservation. This programme will extend to 50 lakh hectares during the next five years.

Third, 25 lakh hectares of usar and barani land will be reclaimed at the rate of five lakh hectares a year. We need not wait for the commencement of the Eighth Plan to take up these projects. A beginning should be made this year itself.

Plasticulture holds vast potential for increasing agricultural productivity. The uses of plastic are many, especially in irrigation, storage and packaging. Existing plasticulture schemes will be substantially expanded. It is proposed to extent incentives for the installation of sprinkler or drip irrigation systems to all farmers. During the Eighth Five Year Plan, one lakh additional sprinkler systems and one lakh drip irrigation systems will be installed to optimise the use of scarce water resources.

Good seeds are the basic foundation of higher agricultural productivity. The New Seed Policy is under implementation and the buffer stocks being built will ensure that kisans have access to high quality seeds and planting material at reasonable prices. We are particularly concerned about small, marginal and SC/ST farmers. With effect from Rabi 1989-90, minikits for the supply of improved seeds will be ensured, under the existing Centrally-sponsored schemes, to 20 lakh such farmers.

Agricultural research is simply not getting the attention or priority it needs. We are reconstituting the Indian Council for Agricultural Research and I shall take over as its President. We have two major objectives in mind. First, we propose to generate appropriate technologies for each sub-zone of the 15 agro-climatic zones so as to be able to modernise our agriculture in each of the zones. Second, a special timebound programme in research and development of hybrids is being taken up to cover rice, maize, jowar, bajra, arhar, cotton and oilseeds. Results will be demanded within five years and the implementation of the research programme will be monitored at the highest level. To promote the manufacture of agricultural machinery and implements of improved design, particularly those using new and more efficient materials, a special Fund is being established to extend credit for the manufacture, fabrication and marketing of such machinery and implements, as also for the leasing or custom hiring of such machinery and implements, plant protection equipment and sprinklers.

For adding value to primary produce, as also expanding employment opportunities in rural areas, it is necessary to encourage agro-based industries, particularly food processing. A special extension and infrastructure package is being put in place for the development and processing of fruits and vegetables in suitable areas. Also, incentives are being given to industrial units to enter into contracts with small producers individually or through cooperatives. For the diversification of rural economic activity, Fish Farmers' Development

Agencies are being established in all coastal districts to encourage pisciculture and aquaculture. Special attention will be given to poultry development and sheep farming including reduced costs of poultry-feed, market support for the stabilisation of egg prices, incentives to establish processing complexes in rural areas linked to small poultry farms, and support to the export of processed products.

Agriculture has the potential of becoming a major export sector. Our *Kisans* will benefit from linking agricultural production to lucrative export markets. In order to realise this potential, we propose to extend incentives to expand the production base of exportable commodities as also the range of non-traditional agricultural exports.

In this connection, and in view of the expected bumper crop of cotton, I am happy to announce that we have decided to permit the export of one lakh bales of Bengal Deshi cotton and two lakh bales of extra long staple cotton. As regards the import policy for agricultural commodities, these will be so regulated as to ensure that our farmers are assured remunerative prices for their produce.

Major institutional reforms are required to support this package. We have two important programmes in hand in this regard. First, we are initiating a programme to update and computerise land records so that farmers can obtain documentation on demand. Second, we propose to reform, revamp and rejuvenate the cooperative movement which, in many parts the country and in many ways, has failed to play the central role envisaged for the cooperative movement in our strategy of socio-economic transformation. This is a priority task for our next term in office. The interests of agriculture are the interests of the nation. There is no dichotomy between agricultural development and national development. The former is the foundation of the latter. We are confident that the agricultural package, I am now placing before the House, will herald a bright new era for our *Kisans* and *Khet Mazdoors* and for the whole farming community.

Thank you, Sir.

BACK NOTE

XXXV. Statement Regarding Agricultural Package, 12 October,
1989

-NIL-