

[Shri Surendranath Dwivedy]

in this country. They will try to catch hold of some weaklings, and then Shri Sukhadia will come out from the hospital and say 'Sir, I am now in a position to form the Government'. That is what they are trying to achieve. They are murdering democracy. Shri Y. B. Chavan should remember that there are parties and they are political forces in the country, which believe in democracy; I quite agree with him that in this country no political party and no political force which believes in violence and which does not believe in constitutional and peaceful change has any place or will ever have any place. The roots of democracy are well laid in this country and we are on sound foundation. The results of the elections have shown that we have brought about a peaceful and constitutional revolution which hundreds of violent revolutions would not have achieved. That is what the people of our country have achieved in these elections, and we have to respect that.

Therefore, if really the Central Government have any respect for the Constitution, if they really want to create an atmosphere in this country where people would have faith and confidence in the peaceful order of change, then they should be prepared to admit that mistake. There should be no question of prestige at all. I hope that the Prime Minister when she replies to the debate would have the courage to say 'A mistake has been committed and we are now correcting ourselves'. By correcting themselves, they will be creating a new precedent in this House. I hope that the Prime Minister will do so. Let us all respect the Constitution. If she says that, then I can assure you that we might agree not to press this motion.

I read in the papers this morning that Government are not lifting this Proclamation so soon. They are going to wait till the retirement of Dr. Sampurnanand on the 15th April or so, because they have made Dr. Sampur-

nanand a scape-goat and they want to keep up his prestige and honour. That is why they want to wait till then. Otherwise, they can take action any time they like. But I would agree, and I think my hon. friend Shri Vajpayee and all others would agree to withdraw this motion, if the Prime Minister says that 'It is a mistake; we have committed a mistake; we have not honoured the Constitution; we have not done a service to democracy; therefore, we are going to revoke this; normal conditions have prevailed in Rajasthan, the Assembly will be called, and the constitutional machinery will be set to work, and a Ministry will be set up and the leader of the Samyukta Dal would be called upon to form a government.'

The Prime Minister and Minister of Atomic Energy (Shrimati Indira Gandhi): Mr Speaker, Sir, no-confidence motions have become such a routine that we are not, at any rate, I am not bothered by their frequency except that by their repeated and unsuccessful use their utility will be blunted

May I pick up Shri Surendranath Dwivedy where he ended? It is very interesting to listen to speeches here because in each hon. Member's speech one has a glimpse of how he would function in a particular situation, and unfortunately they view our actions in that light. We heard from Shri S. A. Dange a particular exposition; we heard from another Member, Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia, another type of exposition, which shows the standards which they may use or they maintain. Similarly, we hear the motive attributed to the Congress Party; it may be that those are the motives that their parties have or would have if they were placed in a similar situation. Fortunately, the Congress Party does not suffer from all these things. And what is the proof? The proof is that today, after being in full power, we still have brought this country to a stage where in many States there are Governments of a non-Congress

nature, either headed by separate parties or by coalitions. This in itself is proof that we do not want to cling to power, that we do not want to act undemocratically.

An hon. Member: That is in spite of yourselves.

Prof. Samar Guha (Contai): That is not by the grace of the Congress Party, but due to the Constitution.

Shrimati Indira Gandhi: By the fact that the Congress Party allowed the Constitution to work (*Interruptions*). I am saying 'allowed' because there are parties in other countries which have a constitution where they have adopted other methods, where they have not functioned like this. This has happened in many countries in the world. So this is not an aspect that we can ignore nor is it good for us to ignore it.

I do not want to go into the details of the Rajasthan situation, because many Members have spoken about it. The constitutional points were very ably dealt with by Shri Shah and Shri Khadilkar; Shri Pahadia gave us the details of the situation. Many other Members have dealt with those points and last, but not least, the Home Minister went into great detail and dealt with the matter in a most able manner. So I do not want to go into those issues again.

But I do want to draw your attention to this fact that today there is a changed situation in India. But it is not a sudden change. We seem to think that because there was an election, a sudden change has come about. This change has been a gradual one; it has been coming about little by little, not only in every election, but even in between elections. We have been watching the change coming over the people and we have been consistently saying that these are the growing pangs of democracy, that these are the roots which democracy is striking down in

our country. And we have encouraged this.

I do not say that in some places there may not have been mistakes. There may have been people who do not want to encourage it. Of course, that must also have happened. But by and large, taking this vast country and its vast population, we have encouraged these forces of democracy. And today we see an entirely new situation.

One of the first things that I did was to extend my hand of cooperation and friendship to the non-Congress Chief Ministers of certain States. I am very happy to say that they responded in a like manner and they have assured me that we can cooperate together. It is not an easy situation, because not only is the economic situation difficult, the food situation difficult but the whole complexity of this new situation is there. But we will not fail for want of trying. That is the utmost we can say on this issue.

So I think it is extremely unfair of Members of the Opposition to pick out one instance where things have not gone smoothly. Everywhere else, where there are non-Congress Governments, the transition has been a very smooth and even speedy one. I wish it had been so in Rajasthan also.

There were certain conditions due to which this could not take place. In their speeches, Opposition Members seemed to imply that we intend for all time to have President's rule in Rajasthan or to prevent the Opposition from coming in if they had a majority, which is not so at all. The Home Minister has made it very clear. There were certain conditions created, conditions of violence.

Now, one may agree with the Governor or not. You may agree with what he did or you may not. But the answer is not to take that quarrel out in the streets of Jaipur.

[Shrimati Indira Gandhi]

This is the only question. I am not blaming any particular person or any particular party. As I told the Maharani when she phoned to me, this is something which when one starts sometimes goes out of control. But a situation did arise where it was felt that it might not be manageable; it could have been that nothing might have happened. But had we not acted, had certain incidents taken place afterwards on the 14th, resulting in firing, loss of life and so on, again Opposition members would have been the first to accuse us and say 'You should have foreseen this. Why did you not take prompt action?'

Shrimati Gayatri Devi: The hon. Prime Minister just now said that this quarrel should not be taken out into the streets, that she was not saying that it was provoked by anybody, who provoked it, but I have tried to make it clear that whatever the official version is, eye witnesses and the people on the spot know that it was the police who fired. As I have said in my speech, why were the police there, two hours after section 144 was withdrawn?

Shrimati Indira Gandhi: The Governor has instituted a judicial inquiry in which all these things will come out. We are all interested to know what is the truth of the matter, but until the report of the inquiry comes out I think it is not right really to lay the blame on one side or another. That is why I did not say anything more about that particular issue.

But I would like to say how deeply grieved I am at the loss of life in Jaipur, and I would like to express my very deep sympathy for the families of those who have lost their lives.

One thing more. Many types of monopolies are talked about in this House. I would like to assure all hon. Members that the Congress Party does not seek a monopoly of power, nor does it think that it has

a monopoly of wisdom; in fact, we are opposed to monopolies of all kinds, feudal monopolies, economic monopolies, personal or family monopolies, and even the distressing monopoly of shouting and interrupting of some sections of this House.

As I said, what has happened in Rajasthan has greatly distressed us, and it is unfortunate that things developed in this way.

One charge was made by, I think, Mr. Ramamurti, which I must meet, which is that my meetings were arranged by the Government. There are certain security reasons, which I must confess that personally consider entirely unnecessary, but unfortunately there are certain rules here about security and it is this security aspect which is dealt with by the District Magistrate. He does not organise meeting or anything like that, but even the cost of this is always borne by the party.

Shri P. Ramamurti: On a point of information.

Shrimati Indira Gandhi: I am not yielding now, because there is no time at all.

Shri Umanath (Pudukkottai): The District Collector admitted it.

Shrimati Indira Gandhi: As I said, in six States today we have non-Congress ministries, and in three of these States the Congress has not lost, the number of Congressmen elected in the Assembly is very much larger than any other single party; nowhere else in the world would that be called a defeat or a loss, it is only here perhaps because you measure it with what the strength was before, that you think that it is a defeat in actual fact it is, you could say, a lessening of the votes, but it is certainly not a defeat. Where there are these non-Congress Governments, we intend to function as responsible and disciplined opposition, working

only for the good of the State. Actually, in Rajasthan also, as you very well know, the Congress is the largest single party. Anyway, I do not want to go into all those matters, and the time also is exceedingly short. I would like to express the earnest hope that at the earliest possible there would be a peaceful atmosphere in Rajasthan....

Shri A. B. Vajpayee: There is.

Shrimati Indira Gandhi: ... so that responsible government can be formed as everywhere else in the country, and whichever group or party has majority will be asked to assume this responsibility.

I would beg of all hon. Members of this House to look ahead in the spirit of true faith in democracy.

One point was mentioned by the Maharani, which was that we were afraid because of some enquiry which might be held. You all know that this matter has been discussed in this House, and the Administrative Reforms Commission has made certain recommendations regarding such allegations. We are very anxious to implement these, and we are going into the matter. We had taken it up with the State Governments earlier. Now, of course, we shall discuss the matter with the new Chief Ministers. We do not want to sleep on this matter; we want to take it up, to see that there is some regular machinery which can go into these allegations, both at the Centre and in the State. So, let us join hands in order to create conditions which would enable us to revoke the President's Proclamation and restore responsible Government in Rajasthan at the earliest possible date. That is what I said in my broadcast. I assure you that that is what I genuinely feel. It is now a question of all of us trying to work together. Earlier we were always the Government and most of you were on the other side, in the Opposition. Now we are both the

Government and the Opposition in a way in different places. Therefore, unless we try to work together, especially where there is a difficult situation, it will not be easy to have smooth functioning and to find a way out of the many problems and difficulties which our country faces. I sincerely hope that we will be able to create this atmosphere of working together and having normal conditions all over the country.

I add one small piece of information which I hope the House would be interested in some hon. Members sitting opposite also suggested that we might have President's rule in that State.

An hon. Member: Who said?...
(Interruptions).

Shrimati Indira Gandhi: Shri Balraj Madhok, among others.

Shri Balraj Madhok (South Delhi): It is good that she has raised this point. When curfew was imposed in Rajasthan, we got reports from there that because of the curfew the opposition leaders could not move about and that they were almost prisoners in their own houses whereas Mr. Sukhadia and his partymen were going about....

Shri A. B. Vajpayee: ...in police jeeps.

Shri Balraj Madhok: ...and trying to purchase independents, intimidating others and offering bribes to some. This was a situation which was very unfair to the Opposition. So, we said to them: You lift the curfew or do not allow Mr. Sukhadia and his partymen who have lost the majority to continue with the Government of the state and to go on using the official machinery and official authority for wrong purpose and to stab democracy; therefore, lift the curfew or impose President's rule and remove Mr. Sukhadia from power. That is what we said; we stand by that statement.