

[Shrimati Renuka Devi Barkataki]

to power with a massive mandate of the people. The people have asked us to form a Government and they want a clean administration. It is through a silent revolution that they have sent us to power. We hope that the Government formed by our Party will be loyal to the objectives for which we have been returned to this House.

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRI MORARJI DESAI): Madam Chairman, while replying to the debate on the President's Address, I would like to take care to see that I am not provoked into using a language which was used by my hon. friend, Shri Sathe, or even by the hon. the Leader of the Opposition. I do not want to set a wrong example from this side of the House. But, if members of the Opposition make provocative speeches and if replies are given to those speeches by members on this side, I do not think that there can be any legitimate cause for complaint. It would only be proper if neither this side nor that side uses any derogatory language against anybody or nobody makes incharitable remarks which are not consistent with anybody's self-respect. That is what I would beg of all the members of this House to do. I hope I will not fail in setting an example in this matter.

I was, therefore, pained to hear the Leader of the Opposition comparing Janata Party to a strange animal. I wish he had not used those words. I do not want to retaliate. We are all strange animals in one sense. Ultimately we belong to the animal species. But man is different from an animal in the sense that man has more discretion and intelligence which animals do not have. But if we forget that, then we relapse into animal terminology. I hope that will not be done in the future. That is all I beg of him to do.

I was also surprised because even in spite of his experience of many years as a member of the government that he should have used such language. The new experience he is now having of sitting on the Opposition Benches for the first time in his life is rich experience which I had some time ago and by which I benefited and I am sure he will also benefit but it will take some time for him and his colleagues because they are not very easily corrigible. They do not follow the system of self-introspection. That is where the difficulty comes in. I hope they will do so now. Then the improvement will be quick. But who am I to improve them? It is not for me to do that. It is for them to think about it.

But I was surprised when he said that nothing was said in the President's Address about the economic programme. I do not know whether he cared to hear it or to read it afterwards. We have very clearly stated what the policy of government will be in regard to economic programmes. Does he realise that we hardly got even 2 days to prepare the Address after assumption of office and in that did he expect that we formulate detailed programmes? I do not know if he has the capacity. At least I do not have it. But we have mentioned what requires to be done and what we are going to do. We will be judged only by what we do in future and we will certainly welcome all criticism in this matter if we fail in our undertaking and we will not try to retaliate as they are trying to do. And yet, it is said that we are retaliating. Where are we retaliating? At least I have not done so. I was surprised when my hon. friend, Shri Sathe or rather, I should not be surprised because I know him very well.

I have never heard anything else from him in this House during the years he was here and I was on the other side. What he referred to had

happened 21 years ago. He is not bothered about what happened 21 months ago but he does not mind mentioning and repeating *ad nauseam* what happened 21 years ago. I have replied to him in this very House from the Opposition Benches and let him refresh his memory from the records of this debate. I will not, therefore, reply him here. I have said what I have to say not on one occasion but on several occasions and still he goes on repeating these matters after 21 years in the knowledge that he is not distorting facts

He quotes from my autobiography. I am very happy that he did 'o me the honour of reading it at any rate. But I am sorry that he has only looked at some controversial points which have little relevance here and he did not have the courtesy to read the whole thing together. Apart from that it would be wrong for me to say that he mis-appropriated the time of the House. He went on speaking even though the Chair asked him to cut short his speech. But then he objected to other people interjecting whereas some Member on this side spoke, he began to interject. Is that the way how he will set a good example? May I request him to have more patience now as he is in the Opposition. I could not restrain him before nor do I wish to restrain him now. It is difficult for anybody to restrain him. Even it was not possible for Mrs. Gandhi to restrain him when he spoke from this side. I know that. He spoke anything that he liked. Let him do so. It will hurt him. It does not hurt me. But in this House if I do like-wise, will not somebody be justified in paying me back in the same coin. How would I complain about that? But he goes on complaining about us.

SHRI VASANT SATHE: I quoted facts. I quoted from the debate.

SHRI MORARJI DESAI: I do not know whether my hon. friend has any regard for facts. Does he ever bother about facts, I do not know?

SHRI VASANT SATHE: You said, "Do not forget? Let memories be sharp."

SHRI MORARJI DESAI: Now he is getting excited like that. He complains about people having been shot in Bombay. I had said he does not bother about facts. That is all right. Why restrain him if he does not wish to restrain himself.

Does he realise that in Bombay, all the Members of my party, the majority of whom were Maharashtrians, never raised a protest before me about what had happened in all those years. Was that not a sufficient support for what had happened. He was nowhere at that time. Twenty years ago, I do not know what he was and what he was doing. Let him learn a lesson from that as also from the leader of the Opposition. Let him ask him whether he had told me that I had done wrong. Then he will be justified in saying what he is saying. Therefore, what I did at that time was not done without pain. But I was forced to do that. That is, the police were forced to do it. It was not that I went and gave orders. Of course, it is true, that if I had said that, no police man would have fired. Then no one should have fired. That is true.

I do not deny that responsibility. But what had happened then? The whole of the Bombay city would have been finished. Nothing else would have remained in Bombay city if it had not been done. Who did it?—It was done by the Maharashtrian officers. It was not done by anybody else.

See what happened in Delhi. Who burnt it, who bulldozed it? It was the Administration of the past Government which did it. I do not want to say that the former Prime Minister did it. I do not know who did it. But it was done in her regime. Therefore, that regime has to be blamed. The buildings were bull-dozed without any

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proper notice. Notice of a few hours! Is that the way to deal with the people? Have I ever dealt with like that? I am sorry my hon. friend tries to compare those happenings with the happenings of emergency. Delhi was burning. How did it happen?

I am glad he recognised it, that there was a meeting attended by five lakhs of people. Of course the police report at that time was that it was attended by only 50,000. I am glad that that knowledge has dawned on him today, that they were 5 lakhs. But what does that show? That shows the feelings of the people, and the feelings of those who attended; otherwise they would not have attended it. We were not in Government. We were non-officials. How would people have come there? We had no money to bring them in trucks. They came on their own and they heard us patiently. And it is objected to on the ground that we declared Satyagraha there. Does he understand what Satyagraha means? I don't know whether he has ever practised Satyagraha. I don't know whether he is capable of practising Satyagraha. Satyagraha does not mean that any force can be used by anybody. I would be the last person to do it. If anybody were to do it I would certainly protest about it. He referred to Gujarat happenings. Who were responsible for those happenings? It is these Congress people, not the opposition, who have encouraged them, and gave money to the young people. Who protested about it? I protested and said that they should never do any wrong thing and if they persisted then I will have to sacrifice my life. And it was therefore that I undertook a fast to stop violence and to stop other things also.

15.11 hrs.

[MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER in the Chair]

Therefore, it is not for my learned friend to advise me. I only hope he

takes a lesson from this. That is all that I hope. I do not know whether my hope is too much. At any rate one could hope for the best and be prepared for the worst!

Let us not, in our anxiety to defend the indefensible, say things which unnecessarily cause repercussions. When he said that people were fired upon like that, does he realise that Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru phoned to me that very evening when the riot started in Bombay and asked me to call the military; to call the tanks but asked me to finish it as quickly as I can. I told him, I am very sorry. I won't call the military. If I had called the military the casualties would have been five times of what they were, and the police would have lost their morale. I did not want to use maximum force. I wanted to have minimum force. I told him that if I was not able to control it in two days I would resign and get out of Government but I will not call the military. This is what I had told him. Therefore please be careful about what you say.

After all, I would not find fault with any Government if they meet violence with force. I would not find fault with any Government for that matter. I would not find fault with the post Government. Government has to use force to suppress violence. I have always said that. I will say it even now. But when there is no violence why should force be used? I cannot understand this. These are the standing instructions. They were the standing instructions when I was there and even now when I am here.

There was a strike going in Madras the other day soon after we took charge. The Governor phoned to me. They said, they are doing dharnas, not allowing people to do their work. I told him, if they do it and there is no violence, don't use any force, no tear-gas, no lathi-charge. You can arrest them and prosecute them. These are the instructions which I gave. These

are the instructions of this Government.

But, if some State Governments which are not under our control do something, I will not be responsible for it. But we will certainly take action to see that that does not happen. That I can certainly assure you.

Then, the hon. the leader of the Opposition said—that we had not mentioned any programme. I would refer him only to page 3 from the second paragraph onwards. The programme has been given. But, does he expect that we can spell it out immediately? Did they spell it out their Twentypoint programme? They only said twenty-points and, like mantras, they went on repeating all the while and nothing was spelled out. I have not objected to any of them. (*Interruptions*) They said twentyfive and then it became twelve in their manifesto. That is the tragedy of it. What is the use of saying all these? I have gone into it very deeply. I do not neglect whatever comes from you, I want to benefit from it if I can. That is all I would like to add.

Therefore, Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I would only beg my friends to have more patience in this matter and not to compare the janta party to a strange animal. I hope more restraint will be observed in future. That is all I expect. If it does not, I shall go on using restraint from my side. That I can assure him. We have started implementing our professions and the Leader of the Opposition will be broadcasting to the nation to-day. He did not ask for it. We have requested him to do it. Is that not true?

This is what we are going to do. Indeed I had mentioned and I can assure my hon. friend, Shri Sathe also that if he has any complaint about any administrative actions resulting in any oppression, I would request him to tell me. I can assure him that all grievances capable of redress would be looked into. That is the attitude of this Government in the matter of law and

order, in the matter of economic order, in the matter of social order and in the matter of administration. We have mentioned all these things. But we cannot put details into that address. That is what ought to be appreciated. They wish that the janta party will break up—this is what the Leader of the Opposition said that the janta party will break-up in no time and that it cannot last. If wishes were horses, then everybody will ride on them. It is not possible. As a matter of fact, it is the wrong desire that leads to the down-fall of the people. That has happened. That is the tragedy of it.

Let us take a lesson from it and not have wrong desires. After all, how will it benefit the Opposition? If he thinks that the two party system should function and if it is good for democracy, should we not wish that this should last? If you defeat this party legitimately when the occasion comes I will not resist. Even if they so desire the Janta party will not break up. I do not know what will happen in the future. But I only hope and trust that this wish will not be fulfilled. This will not benefit him at all. He said that they have been defeated. It is true that the people declared themselves against the emergency and therefore they had been defeated. If we had not won, then how are we here? I do not know if the people did not prefer us to them, how would we have got the votes? I cannot understand this which is such a simple matter. I never thought that he was not using his commonsense in this matter. I am afraid if his desire is to see that the Janta party goes out he will be in possession of office, this is an indiscreet statement. That is all I can say.

Sir, as long as the Janta Party is in Government, we will see to it that we will establish democratic traditions by our behaviour not by asking other people to do it if our performance falls short of the expectations. I shall be thankful to the leader of the opposi-

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tion to point it out to me or for that matter any member of the opposition can point that out to me so that we can improve upon it. No man is wise enough not to learn from others. And that was the fault committed by the previous government. That was the fault committed, and I may be pardoned if I say, by the then Prime Minister. If that had not happened, then all that happened would not have happened. But whatever happened is for the best in my view. If sufferings come, they come to chasten us. And it is then that we can improve. Even three years ago I told my friend that what is happening is for the good of the country. This country would not have learnt a lesson until it suffered. We got freedom very easily because of Mahatma Gandhi. I have always felt that we did not pay sufficient price and therefore, this country did not realise the value of freedom. We had to pay a price. We have paid that price during the last twenty months and I hope we will not have to pay a further price now. At any rate we will see to it that we will not extract any price from the Opposition. Let me assure the Opposition. That is not our intention to do so. If any price is to be paid, we will pay it, but we will not make others pay it. That will be our attitude in his matter. What do we want? I am quite sure our aims are common. I do not doubt that they also want to see that this country becomes great, happy, strong and to help the human society to be happy. That is our aim. I am quite sure the aims are common. But aims may be anything. Unless the means are pure, nothing can be free from blemish. That is what the Father of the Nation taught us. It is possible that we will make mistakes. After all, we are not angels nor can we say that we have no faults. All have faults. But let us not try to take advantage of faults of each other but try to help each other in removing them. If we do that, I am quite sure the future of the country is very good. I have no doubt that it has been my faith for years that

this country cannot go down, it is bound to go up and become happy and in the terms of Mahatma Gandhi, it would establish "Ram Raj". If that happens in this country, then we will be able to be of some service to the world in creating those conditions by our example. We do not have to advise other people or to give sermons to other people. It is enough if we serve ourselves by promoting peace and goodwill in the world. Well, that will be our foreign policy. Of course, there is difference in the foreign policy of non-alignment. Non-alignment must be there. It is not a policy which is in doubt, but sometimes aberrations enter in that policy. We will try to see that aberrations will not come. That is all that we can say. I don't say that formerly aberrations had come deliberately or by mischief. That is not my contention at all. But I would say that in human efforts, sometimes weaknesses do come. We have got to guard against them and that is what we are trying to learn by experience.

Non-alignment can be practised only if there is freedom from fear and fortunately this country passed through such fears in the last twenty months that I can never compare this condition to any other conditions in the history of this country. But we have got to live it down. We have got now to see that such fear does not recur again in this country. We must have freedom from fear in this country. Otherwise, we will not grow at all. If anything has plagued us in this country, it is this fear which has plagued us and it is that which comes in the way of development on all sides. Unless we are able to restore this freedom from fear in this country, all our efforts at development are not going to succeed and in that common endeavour of removing that fear I would appeal to my friends in the Opposition to help us in seeing that fear is removed from the minds of the people at large. But that can happen only when we ourselves shed fear. We are not afraid if we have to get out of this Government. That was the

fear from which the past government suffered. It was, therefore, that emergency came; otherwise emergency would not have come. And my friend, the Leader of the Opposition has said that this was a vote against emergency. Can there be a greater criticism of it than that? And who had supported the Emergency very strongly? He himself. But I suppose he was not free to do otherwise. It is that freedom which we want to restore to everybody not only here but to all of you. This is what we would like to do. There will be no democracy unless there is freedom from fear and it is this which we have got to restore and everything that we have will be directed towards that end.

Therefore, I want my hon. friend, Shri Sathe, to be free from fear. But I also want him to be free from bravado; Bravado does not give fearlessness. It brings for him more fear. Therefore, may I suggest to him to see this. If he does not wish to see it, I shall have no quarrel with him. I have not considered him as anything but a friend. I know that when I was in the Opposition benches he was talking to me very freely. But when it came to speaking here he spoke in a different language. Now, this is what we ought to avoid. I know he will want to say one thing and then say another thing. Even now in his speech here I saw that. He respects me and also condemns me. Both things are done.

SHRI VASANT SATHE: Is it not freedom from fear?

SHRI MORARJI DESAI: This is not freedom from fear. This is freedom from truth. Therefore, let us be more careful about it. We ought to be more careful about it that there should be fearlessness in practising truth. If that is not realised, I am afraid we will never acquire freedom from fear.

I do not want, Sir, to take up time of this honourable House because I do not see there was much criticism of what is done because there is not much done yet. Things are being done. Therefore, how can there be much criticism? The criticism is only in the air and I have nothing to reply about it. I have only to appeal to my hon. friends to see that we work together in cooperation. That does not mean that they should not criticise us. We welcome every criticism that you make. But let us make in such a manner that we don't hurt each other. That is all my request, Sir. Thank you.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Now, no question will be replied.

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN (Arkonam): I am on my legs Sir.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: You may be on your legs, but on what? If it is a point of order, you could have said 'point of order'.

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: I am going to ask the Government to give a categorical assurance that they will continue the work of the Sarkaria Commission. Will the Prime Minister be pleased to say something on it? That is what I want.

SHRI MORARJI DESAI: May I say, Sir, that the Sarkaria Commission's work is going on? It is not complete and I cannot take any definite action unless that is complete and I have requested Mr. Sarkaria to complete his work as soon as it is possible and he has said that he will do it in four months.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Now some amendments have been moved to the Motion of Thanks. I will put all these amendments to vote together unless any hon. Member wants that any of the particular amendments should be put separately.