

STATEMENT RE: ELECTION
LAWS (EXTENSION TO SIKKIM)
ORDINANCE

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (DR. V. A. SEYID MUHAMMAD): Sir, I beg to lay on the Table an explanatory statement (Hindi and English versions) giving reasons for immediate legislation by the Election Laws (Extension to Sikkim) Ordinance, 1975, as required under rule 71(1) of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha.

BEEDI WORKERS WELFARE CESS
BILL*

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI RAGHUNATHA REDDY): I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill to provide for the levy and collection, by way of cess, a duty of excise on tobacco issued for the manufacture of beedi.

MR. SPEAKER: The question is:

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill to provide for the levy and collection, by way of cess, a duty of excise on tobacco issued for the manufacture of beedi."

The motion was adopted.

SHRI RAGHUNATHA REDDY: Sir, I introduce the Bill.

BEEDI WORKERS WELFARE FUND
BILL*

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI RAGHUNATHA REDDY): I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill to provide for the financing of

measures to promote the welfare of persons engaged in beedi establishments.

MR. SPEAKER: The question is:

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill to provide for the financing of measures to promote the welfare of persons engaged in beedi establishments."

The motion was adopted.

SHRI RAGHUNATHA REDDY: I introduce the Bill.

12.10 hrs.

MOTION OF THANKS ON THE
PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS—Contd.

MR. SPEAKER: Now, we take up the Motion of Thanks on the President's Address. The hon. Prime Minister.

THE PRIME MINISTER, MINISTER OF PLANNING, MINISTER OF ATOMIC ENERGY, MINISTER OF ELECTRONICS AND MINISTER OF SPACE (SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI): Mr. Speaker, Sir, as usual there has been a long debate on the President's Address. But, for the first time, I felt that the speeches tried to argue rather than abuse. Even so many Members were not able to get away from their old narrowness of thinking and some arguments, if I may say so, were rather self-destructive.

Obviously, the President's speech cannot be all-embracing and cover all the points which are of interest to us or to the nation. He spoke specifically of the Twenty-Point Programme and that subject also found

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†Introduced with the recommendation of the President.

mention in most of the speeches in the discussion. An hon. Member opposite, Shri Sezhiyan, referring to the twenty-point economic programme asked rather derisively, 'what happened to the Fifth Five Year Plan?' Now, the twenty-point economic programme is not in lieu of the Fifth Five Year Plan nor does it in any way conflict with the basic objectives and goals of the Fifth Five Year Plan.

What is the philosophy of the programme? My hon'ble friend, Shri V. K. R. V. Rao, put it in perspective. The programme has to be looked at as a whole. First, it deals with immediate tasks and long-neglected ones. It has introduced new priorities in identifying programmes of special concern to those at the very bottom of the ladder and to impart a new thrust and vigour to their implementation. Urban people—students and house-wives—have not been forgotten. Then, there are long-term programmes such as those for irrigation and power. It also contemplates a multi-pronged drive against economic evils such as black money and smuggling which erode the resource base of our Plan. If implemented in right earnest and with a due sense of urgency and mission on the part of all the agencies concerned, the programme will make a quick and perceptible impact on the lives of our people. It will rouse public enthusiasm and secure a greater sense of commitment of the people to the goals of our Plan. Thus, it will lay the foundations for a speedier advance in the years to come.

The important thing to remember is that at a moment of raging inflation, we have taken up a major developmental programme which does not increase inflation but contains it. I do not think that this can be called a small achievement. It is an ideal expressing itself in real and practical terms. Needs and justice have been sought to be met.

The hon'ble Members also referred to the delay in the finalisation of the Fifth Plan. It is a canard to say that we have given up the Plan. The basic strategy and objectives of the Fifth Plan remain valid as I have said on previous occasions in this House. They are economic self-reliance, the development of domestic resources of energy and the removal of constraints of production such as shortages of power and transport. In fact, these objectives of the Plan have now acquired heightened significance in the light of developments on the international economic scene in the last two years. Unfortunately, the hon. Member opposite and his party came to power by exciting the people on a narrow provincial basis. But, we in this House, cannot ignore the wider aspect. Economic upheavals have thrown the economies of most developed countries into disarray. Countries which have until recently maintained a rate of growth of 10 to 15 per cent. per annum have had to lower their sights are now faced either with a negative or a negligible rate of growth. Countries which used to pride themselves on their record of price stability have become victims of double digit inflation. Was it possible for us to completely insulate our economy against the blizzard blowing across the international economic scene? If there is delay in the finalisation of the Fifth Five Year Plan, it is because, we would like the international economic situation to stabilise a little so as to enable us to plan with a greater degree of certainty and assurance. It is wrong to think that the Annual Plans are ad-hoc exercises. Annual plans are formulated within the framework of the Five Year Plan and seek to further the objectives of the Plan. We have tamed the inflationary forces that threatened to wreck our economy. Prices today are some 7 per cent lower than this time last year. This is an achievement of which we can be legitimately proud.

Our success in the anti-inflationary campaign has given us a new sense of

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confidence and has improved the outlook for the Plan. In 1975-76, we provided for an increase of nearly 25 per cent in plan outlays. We are aiming at a further substantial increase in the outlays for the next year. The House should remember that the world situation today is very different from what it was when we began planning.

State plans which are largely concerned with irrigation, power, agriculture and social services are somewhat less vulnerable to the destabilisation pressures generated by turmoil in international economics. Even so, what is the record of the Tamil Nadu Government in the implementation of its State Plan. Now, Central assistance, whether it is high or low, is being released in accordance with certain principles. Some States in the south such as Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka and in the north States like Punjab and Haryana and even a relatively backward State like Madhya Pradesh, have managed to fulfil the Plan outlays which in per capita terms are far higher than that of the Tamil Nadu Government. I should like to remind the hon. member and his Party that during the days of the Congress Government under the leadership of Shri Kamaraj, Tamil Nadu used to be near the top in terms of per capita plan outlays. Today it is somewhere near the bottom. This is the plight to which this State has been reduced during the last 6 years. In the long run, the poor performance of the State in certain crucial sectors will adversely affect the prospects of the talented people of the State. It may fit in with the political strategy of the Party to make out an impressive catalogue of their minor achievements for temporary political gains. But I am deeply worried about the damage caused to the growth potential of an important State in our country or indeed of the Indian sub-continent, for in their public pronouncements, the DMK Government seems unable to forget their separatist philosophy.

I would not have referred to the poor record of the Tamil Nadu Government on the economic front but for their attempts to mislead the public into believing that the State itself is doing everything it can to further the economic progress of its people, while the Centre is standing in the way. If the State claims to have implemented the twenty-point programme already, it is welcome to nurse this delusion. But for me, the specifics in the twenty-point programme and the spirit animating it are so important that no one who has the welfare of the people at heart can rest content with what has been already attempted or achieved.

There must be a continuous search for programmes benefiting the poor and the weak and a constant endeavour to improve on the quality of implementation of such programmes. I would, therefore, ask the hon. member and his Party not to jay that flattering function to their soul, as Shakespeare said, that they have already done everything that needs to be done to implement the programme and therefore can relax into complacency. It is not those clothed in brief authority but the common people of the State who will suffer the consequences of this grand delusion.

I should like to say a few words about economic achievements under the twenty-point programme in these last six months. Consumer prices for the agricultural labourer are now 8.3 per cent lower; 27 lakh tonnes of kharif cereals have been procured against 14 lakh tonnes last year; 53 lakh bogus cards have been eliminated; public sector production in these six months is 31.5 per cent higher than last year. Industrial production gains are as follows: steel is 15.9 per cent, power generation 12 per cent, coal 12 per cent, fertiliser 43 per cent, cement 11.8 per cent, crude oil 10 per cent, 60 lakhs house sites have been distributed. The programme for the removal of bonded labour is well known as also the establishment of rural banks. Ultimately there will be fifty banks,

each with 100 branches. Irrigation is being expanded and the Godavary accord is a welcome new and significant step. Handlooms have been given a loan of nearly Rs. 5 crores. Urban property evaluation programmes and the confiscation of smugglers' properties are other items. Workers' participation has already been effected in about 75 per cent of our public undertakings and we hope to expedite the programme in the remaining months. In income-tax, 7.3 lakhs of tax-payers are now off the tax range. In the apprenticeship scheme, 1.17 lakhs of seats have already been filled up and work is progressing.

One hon. Member opposite asked: why are people not being tried if they are guilty of treason? We have—I can at least speak for myself—never used this word or questioned their patriotism. The danger is not of individual acts but of the collective challenge which was being exploited by elements within and outside the country. Their political challenge has been politically met and the unconstitutional agitation has been constitutionally repulsed. The Opposition cannot any longer hope to divide the Congress or to play one against the other, nor will the sowing of rumours help them.

It would be ridiculous for any person to claim infallibility. I have never done so. I have always considered myself a humble servant of the country. What I have said is that my assessment of trends in India and the world have so far proved correct as against the assessments made by most opposition leaders who usually echo the assessment of those outside our country. This is not because of any personal quality but because I have learnt from our great leaders to be close to the voice of the people.

When I first mentioned foreign agencies, I was ridiculed within the country and without. How do we, or any developing country for that matter,

prove or dispute the doings of agencies who have had long years of experience in a variety of countries, using all kinds of methods, and different sections of their own and the local population, besides, religious groups, journalists, academicians and so on? This is not an ordinary, everyday crime that can come under normal law. To take it lightly does not speak highly of anyone's patriotic instincts. Unfortunately the Member who spoke of this matter has become known for his cleverness in creating mischief and misunderstanding. So long as those antics were confined to this House one could look upon them with some amusement but now he has attempted to do the same in state politics with undesirable results.

I listened with great respect to Kumari Maniben. No one says or thinks that the emergency is a perfect solution or that everything is for the best. There are many imperfections. I am conscious of our shortcomings. I know also that we have people among us who may not be fully in tune with our programmes. Yet we are moving ahead. We have not compromised on any policy matter. She mentioned abuses by the bureaucracy; we are also aware of that. But I should like to point out that those abuses have not suddenly begun since the proclamation of the emergency; they have existed before also. It is our task to discover the faults and to rectify them whenever they are pointed out to us or we get any information. I know also that the difficulties in implementation are not going to be removed merely by our wishing so or declaring the emergency. They will remain because powerful classes and powerful forces at all levels are against the implementation of our policy. We do realise this. All we can say is that these forces must be combated with all the strength at our command and this is what we are trying to do. We may have setbacks, but we have moved forward and we intend to continue to do so. If there are any complaints, if

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anybody knows of cases, I shall be glad to be told of them and I shall certainly follow them up. Kumari Maniben also spoke of people drinking. Now, you know that we are trying to launch a movement against alcoholic drink. But what about that paragon of virtue in this respect—the State of Gujarat? During the Assembly election I heard of liquor being distributed in a tanker. Only the other day we all read of deaths in Surat due to the imbibing of illicit liquor.

Kumari Maniben and her party may not believe in violence and I do not dispute her saying so. But why do they join with those who do? Why do they allow this violence? As hon. Members on our side have mentioned, there were attacks at every Congress meeting held before the Assembly elections. In my meetings, while the attendance was in lakhs, 10, 15 or 25 people would throw stones, or shoes. They would shout abusive and even obscene slogans. I did not once hear any of their leaders objecting or instructing that that should not be done. One of our candidates was sought to be burnt alive and could be rescued only in the nick of time with serious burn injuries. In the recent elections there, there have been three murders of which we definitely know and many cases of violence. I do not want to read from the large number of letters and telegrams which I have received and which have been referred to the Government.

Kumari Maniben spoke of two prisoners. We all know that Shrimati Gayatri Devi and Shrimati Scindia are not political prisoners. They were arrested for something quite different. In fact, the case against Shrimati Gayatri Devi would have been brought, but there is often a delay in such matters and she was arrested because of information that she might leave the country. I know how strongly Parliament feels when some-

thing like this happens and we would be blamed for not preventing it.

Hon'ble Member, Shri Patel spoke of fair elections. I do not want to go into details. Some of our Members have pointed to what has happened in the Gujarat elections. I shall only mention two cases. One is about the Government official who had put 2½ papers in the ballot box for the Janata Front. He admitted doing so when he was caught red-handed and actually had other such marked papers in his hand ready to be put into the ballot box, I believe he is now behind bars. Similarly there was the news which nobody has contradicted that some thousands of Harijans were not allowed to vote. They were surrounded by workers of a particular group. This happened in the recent elections. But before that, after the Assembly election, I think I have referred earlier to this, a colony of Christians was razed to the ground because on being questioned by some students as to for whom they had voted, they replied 'Congress'. Their houses were burnt to the ground. I do not know whether the Government has come to their help now. But for quite some time the Government had not done so. Now, does Shri Patel consider it democratic or constitutional to dissolve a duly elected Assembly by public violence, by Street agitations or a threat to fast unto death? We gave into Morarji only to save his life, knowing that it was a wrong thing to do. Not a wrong thing to save his life, but wrong to dissolve the Assembly because of such pressure and threat. Maniben was perfectly right when she quoted what I had stated about MISA. I did say so, but I would submit that the circumstances which developed later were exceptional and extraordinary. And, when something entirely extraordinary and exceptional takes place, you have to have exceptional measures to deal with it. Who is the best doctor? Is it a panel of doctors, a hotchpotch of people

with different views on treatment? One doctor may make a wrong diagnosis, but having a number of doctors, perhaps with different viewpoints—one Ayurvedic, one Unani, one Allopathic, one Homoeopathic, one expert in Tibetan medicine or some other science—are they capable of giving better treatment to the country? Because, this is what it was—a group of heterogeneous elements in which the Jan Sangh was dominating and calling the tune. I don't think that what we have heard in their speeches, what we have witnessed of their actions, can be the right path for this country to retain either its unity to give fairplay to its minorities or to bring about the sort of equality which is absolutely essential not only from the human point of view, but from the point of view of the country's future strength and effectiveness in dealing with problems, pressures, threats and dangers.

Shri Tridib Chaudhuri is a senior and respected member of this House, but I think he would have been more convincing when he spoke against democracy and people taking advantage of certain situations had he raised his voice all these years, when so much hatred and falsehood were being spread. A virulent campaign was mounted with tremendous pressure. What shouting there was! Again and again we are asked, what could a few people of the opposition do when Congress has a massive majority? But they had made it difficult for any member on this side to function, to reply even in a soft voice. Later, I must admit our members also took to shouting and it was not possible for me to stop them. Their standard reply was: when the opposition cannot be controlled, how can you tell only us to be quiet? I had no answer to that. So, this pressure was mounting. As I pointed out the other day, it takes a long time to construct, whether it is a building, whether it is a dam or a project, it takes a long time, it takes a great deal of money and re-

sources and involves many people. But to destroy, what is needed? One person can throw a bomb. One person can set fire. So, this argument about relative members is irrelevant and unconvincing. All over the world, where the forces of reaction have been able to establish themselves, they have not been in the majority. It is a few who have been able, through noise, and support from outside, by creating a particular atmosphere to suppress the voice of the people. They have been able through rumour-mongering and whisper campaigns to create an atmosphere where the ordinary person is thoroughly confused and does not know what is happening. While he attempts to sort out his thoughts and to find the truth of the situation those other take advantage and establish themselves. This has happened time and again in different countries and different parts of the world. Did Shri Tridib Chaudhuri pause to wonder whether there was any truth in the wild allegations which were being bandied about and hurled across at us day in, day out?

I see in front of me the hon. member, Shri Viswanathan. A short while before I came into the House I heard that after his speech in the House yesterday, some members of a political party—perhaps you can guess which one it is; assaulted him in the lobby. (*Interruptions*). I am not yielding.

(*Interruptions*)

SHRI SEZHIYAN (Kumbakonam): I appeal to the Speaker please constitute a committee. If anything has been done by my Party members, I am ready to face whatever consequences you suggest. (*Interruptions*).

SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI: I am not entering into any argument. (*Interruptions*).

SHRI SEZHIYAN: My Party can never indulge in such things. (*Inter-*

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ruptions). We have been accused of CIA agents. (Interruptions).

SHRI G. VISWANATHAN (Wandiwash): This House was a witness, when I was speaking I was not only prevented from speaking but they had also used abusive language in Tamil which I did not bring to Chair's notice. Again, they threatened me inside the House. In the Lobby also, they tried to assault me. (Interruptions).

SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI: I said: I was told, I was not a witness to the incident and, therefore, I do not wish to argue about it. The word used was 'assaulted'. (Interruptions). Any Member who wishes to do so, can go to the hon. Speaker and speak to him later on. Threats are given quite publicly. Cuttings of what is said and written against many people including myself have been sent to me from Tamil Nadu. I am used to this and we have not complained. But when the falsehoods and threats created an atmosphere which finally led to murder most foul, even then most of the Opposition were content merely to say that this should not have been done. They did nothing to change the atmosphere of hatred which always breeds violence.

SHRI DASARATHA DEB (Tripura East): What has the Congress Party done in Tripura. They have put the Opposition Members inside the jail. Please tell me. (Interruptions).

SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI: We are now talking what is happening in this Parliament.

Shri Indrajit Gupta commented that there was no point in speaking if it would not be fully reported. I do not know whether the speech has been fully reported or not because I do not read these things in the news-

papers. In Parliament do we speak for the benefit of hon'ble Members or do we speak for the public outside?

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA: Ali pore): Both. We are sent here by the people. (Interruptions).

SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI: It is an odd way of looking at it. We speak here to put our point of view before Parliament.

Points were also made about monopolists and monopoly. It is true that we are thinking of changes in the industrial licensing policy, some have been made and these are precisely in order to encourage small and medium entrepreneurs and to prevent a few people from taking advantage even of the controls for their own businesses. Some controls are necessary. We do not think that everybody should be left free to do exactly as he likes in industry, in grabbing economic power. But we must guard against controls becoming self-defeating. Controls in themselves are not synonymous with socialism. We should not confuse the means for the ends. If we find that a particular policy is not yielding the results that we had hoped from it, we must modify it. And when hon. Members opposite spoke about our association with the monopolists, I wondered if they considered the Jan Sangh and the Swatantra Party more radical just as China and Chile today are considered more democratic by some?

Then comes the question of bonus. This is a controversial question. It is true, that workers in India may not get the sort of wages that are paid in other countries. But I do not know whether the wages of all industrial workers here are very much lower than in every country in the world. When a concern is losing how can it possible get on its feet, if it is forced to pay a particular amount in bonus? My attention was drawn to this aspect the week after our decision on the

6 per cent bonus. I happened to go to one of our big public sector undertakings, where I met a delegation from one of the socialist countries; and the first thing they told me that they were astonished at this decision of ours. They could not see how we could hope to build up our industry, how we could put our public sector on a sound basis, if we continued with this policy. It is not only a question of industry. It is also a question of the workers themselves. An increase in payment leads to greater inflation and an increase in the prices of other goods. They are not merely industrial workers; they are also a part of this country; they have to meet the needs of their families—then that increase in bonus does not help them at all. That is why we took the decision. I was a party to the earlier decision. I am not blaming anybody. If I find any decision is wrong, then it is our duty—even if we displease people—to set that wrong right. But we sincerely hope that as our industrial base strengthens and as our economy is on a sounder basis, it will be possible for us to do more for our workers.

Similarly, I share the concern of all hon. Members of both sides of the House at the lay-offs and the retrenchment and so on which have been taking place. The Minister, my colleague, yesterday announced that a legislation would be brought soon. I am told that the apex body which was set up, has been able to solve some questions. (*Interruptions*).

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE (Kanpur): The employers do not care for the apex body. They care two hoots for the recommendations of the apex body.

SHRI BHOGENDRA JHA (Jainagar): Emergency has not helped. Not a single employer has been arrested under MISA or the DIR.

SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI: Then we must look at it again and see that the employers are not helped in this manner and that the workers do not suffer. There are no two opinions in this matter.

I should like to take this opportunity of expressing my congratulations to industrial workers. They have shown great discipline and enthusiasm. The figures show improved working in almost all sectors of industry. Recently when I was in Visakhapatnam I found that quantum of work done by the dock workers in the last few months had increased considerably. So, I would like to express my gratitude to them, and also to the armed forces which have shown courage and determination in war and disciplined work in peace. They are to be congratulated on their steadfastness.

Much has been said about the press. I do not want to dilate on that matter. I have spoken on many occasions. I am not against the press, Indian or foreign. What I am against is falsehood and hypocrisy. What has been the record of some newspapers? If I can take the House back, long years ago when I was a girl, it was more important for a pressman to secure a scoop and to get it printed in his paper than to save the life of the Lindbergh baby. We find this attitude increasing not only with regard to Indian affairs, but affairs anywhere, that more and more people want to go for something that is sensational, something that will hit the headlines, rather than constructive, solid work. It does not perhaps matter in an advanced and affluent society, but it does matter in a country which is trying to build itself up in the face of tremendous odds and difficulties. It does matter if you are spreading what I was told by a British Lord who visited us, "alarm and despondency", against which there was a law in England during or immediately after the last World War. It is a serious

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matter for any country which confronted with special difficulties, as our country undoubtedly was. We all know the attitude taken by the foreign press towards events in India, towards drought, the refugee situation, the Bangla Desh war or any other internal or international problem.

Speaking of the emergency some hon'ble Member alleged that we have opened the flood-gates which could be used by despotic persons. Was it the same thing said about our atomic experiment? Does anybody seriously believe that those who do not believe in democracy, those who do believe in the use of atomic power for military purposes, were waiting for India or the Congress to do anything? Would they and have they not, in their countries, taken whatever steps they wanted to take regardless of foreign opinion? We have tried to take certain steps, which may not be ideal, in order to prevent something worse happening to the country, in order to prevent democracy being swept off entirely. Certain curbs have been put, nobody denies that. Nobody says that it is good to do so. At the same time, as many Members mentioned, there has to be a feeling of responsibility, some thought of duties along with rights. Unfortunately, we were going further and further away from such a concept, and this has to be reinstated.

The Foreign Minister spoke at length on the international situation. I need not go over the same ground. As our strength increases, there is an effort to decry India. This is no time for us to slacken our vigilance. We have believed and we do believe in co-existence. What does that mean? It means that we agree to get along with countries whose systems or methods we may not entirely approve of.

There are countries with whose policies we do not agree. But no country can be pushed off this world on to another planet. Unfortunately

there is a new theory (I am not quite sure how to pronounce it) the 'Triage Doctrine' which absolves affluent countries from the bother of helping very poor countries, which are to be left to fend for themselves. Where will they go? Can they be moved from their geographical position on earth? If poverty increases or disease spreads, can other countries be immune? These are far deeper questions. I am not going into them here.

I should like to emphasize our desire and genuine and persistent effort for friendship and cooperation with all countries, near and far. We may not always agree with America, but we know that it is a dynamic nation; it has attracted talent from all over the world including India; the people are dynamic and are constantly giving birth to new and stimulating ideas on education, the arts, science and technology. I should like to give them my congratulations on their bicentennial.

I forgot to mention one point. I think it was hon. Member Shri Manoharan, who referred to Hindi. This question has been debated here many times. I repeat my assurance that there is no desire or attempt to force Hindi on those who do not want it. But we do feel that it could be worth while for all Indians to have at least a working or an understanding knowledge of any one Indian language so that we do not have to converse with one another in English. You and I happen to speak English. Perhaps those on the other side have greater knowledge of it than we have. But, as a whole, those who know English are such a minute minority in the country that it cuts us off from the vast majority of our masses. Therefore, if all over India there is an understanding—it need not be a perfect understanding of Hindi—which does not obstruct the development of Bengali, Assamese, Tamil, Telugu or Kannad or any other Indian language, it should be welcomed. We are aware that none of these languages is a

dialect; they are all ancient languages with their own history and beautiful old literature. We are doing everything possible to encourage these and help them to grow. But no one language need impinge or tread on the toes of others and certainly we do not want Hindi to do so.

Sometimes a group of people are over enthusiastic on both sides. The Hindi enthusiast try to spread the use of Hindi and some hon. friends outside are over enthusiastic in decrying Hindi, saying that only their language should be encouraged.

Yesterday I replied to Shri Patel when he spoke about some draft of Constitutional changes being circulated. A number of people, known and unknown, legal luminaries as well as others, have sent me notes, suggestions, letters, telegrams, all kinds of things, and one or more of these may be in circulation, I do not know. No such document has been circulated by me or by the Government or Congress Party, so far as I know. But I have said that whatever suggestions come should be considered in depth. We do not believe in change for the sake of change. On the other hand if change is necessary, we should not hesitate to bring it about. But if there is a change, it should be in the direction of justice and fair play to those vast number who are being denied their due.

This change should not be for the sake of any party or personal power. We must be concerned with human life and welfare which are as important as human liberty.

Some hon'ble members have spoken about elections. Elections are certainly not being given up. But elections are not the be-all and the end-all of democracy, or of life. We do look beyond. The good of the country, its unity and capacity to defend itself against aggression or oppression, its ability to produce more and distribute production more fairly, all these are

aspects which cannot be neglected and we cannot allow a situation to develop where these aspects are jeopardised merely for the sake of an election or of proving to the world how democratic we are.

There was also mention of a round-table dialogue. I spoke of this yesterday. My attitude has never been one of rigidity. In one of the papers I saw a headline suggesting that "I rule out dialogue" I am not in the habit of categorically ruling out any proposition except when it concerns injustice or matters which go against the interest of our people or the strength of our country. On those matters I must say, I am and always will remain firm. But on questions of dialogue or talking with the Opposition my attitude has not been inflexible. On the contrary, I have always tried to find ways of conciliation. I am afraid, this effort of mine has led us into trouble. When we have gone out of our way to be tolerant and have made friendly gestures, the Opposition has taken it for a show of weakness and they have chosen that moment to threaten and exert greater pressure to exact some more concession out of us. Can you shake hands with one hand? It needs two hands. We have always shown our willingness. It is for the Opposition to give up the path of obstruction and violence and to create conditions for a dialogue.

What is the objection? For the poor people of the country, the goal is to have more; for our workers, it is to have better conditions; for our farmers, to have strength to face the vagaries of weather; for our city people, better amenities, better transport and so on. What of us who are supposed to represent all sections of the people? Can the end be any one or several of these things? Is our task not of a far greater magnitude, of vaster proportions? I spoke earlier of duties. This is the time when we must consider what are our duties and obligations, not only to Parliament but to the country as a whole. Is it not our duty to see that

[Smt. Indira Gandhi]

peaceful conditions exist? While it is the duty of the Government and the ruling party to allow freedom of expression and association and to allow the legitimate functioning of the Opposition, it is equally the duty of the Opposition to allow the legitimate functioning of the Government. But this functioning of the Government and of some Assemblies was being hampered long before these Ordinances came into force. Along with rights we have to think equally about our obligations, our responsibilities and our duties.

Democracy cannot be one-sided. It can work only if all sections subscribe to its conditions and are willing to curb their liberty to the extent that it does not tread on the liberty of others. Only then can democracy survive and function. It is our responsibility to restore hope and confidence. This is what we have tried to do and this is what I meant, when I earlier spoke about the spread of alarm and despondency. I was concerned at the danger to the country and not at threats to a Party or one or more individuals. There was a deliberate effort to spread despair amongst the people, to spread a feeling of hopelessness by proclaiming that nothing has been done, nothing is being done and nothing can be done. This affected our young people, our farmers and others. Therefore, each group thought that it should try to get what it could for itself. If you believe that the country has no future, how can you work for a future? You will then say 'let us grab what we can while we may'. It is only when we have hope and confidence for a bright future that we can say 'let me sacrifice now because the future is on the horizon'.

13.00 hrs.

Bharat Mata is bent by the heavy burdens of colonialism, of imperialism of feudalism. She is suffering visibly not only from the ills of poverty, de-

privation and disease but also from mental complexes and attitudes bred by superstition and out-dated habits, by chauvinistic thinking, by narrowness—of religion, caste, creed, language or province—by customs which weigh heavily on the poor. It is our duty today to enable Bharat Mata to become young again, to hold herself erect and her head high—and in this, we would certainly like the help and cooperation of all those Members of the Opposition who believe in the tasks we have set ourselves and who feel that a new way of cooperation can be found.

Sir, I commend this motion to the House.

MR. SPEAKER: The 117 amendments which have been moved to the motion are now before the House. Should I put them all together to the vote of the House?

SHRI P. G. MAVALANKAR (Ahmedabad): I would like my amendments to be put separately.

SHRI RAMAVATAR SHASTRI (Patna): I would also like my amendments to be put separately.

SHRI BHOGENDRA JHA: My amendments may also be put separately.

MR. SPEAKER: I shall now put Amendments 7, 8 and 9 moved by Shri Bhogendra Jha to the vote of the House.

Amendments Nos. 7 to 9 were put and negated.

MR. SPEAKER: I shall now put Amendments 16, 17, 19, 24 and 81 moved by Shri Ramavatar Shastri to the vote of the House.

Amendments Nos. 16, 17, 19, 24 and 81 were put and negated.

MR. SPEAKER: I now put Amendment No. 68, moved by Shri P. G.