

It is everybody's knowledge that unless the poorest of the poor is uplifted and developed, the nation cannot claim to have done justice to all the sections. It is common knowledge that in spite of the Sixth Five Year Plans and spending over hundred thousands of crores of rupees, nothing tangible or worth the name can be said to have been achieved. On the other hand, according to the available statistics, the percentage of people below the poverty line is increasing year after year. Therefore, Madam Speaker, it can be said that performance of the Congress (I) for the past 35 year has been most unsatisfactory.

16.00 hrs.

We find Critical promises made as usual in the President's Address. We had expected that our young Prime Minister will have wisdom and take new steps and good policies, but our expectation belied when we found that the AIADMK Member, their ally was given the Deputy-Speakership and not to the real Opposition. It shows that they are only trying to copy the old methods. They have not changed even a little bit. That is quite evident now.

There has been some pious promise made that there will be clean administration. There is a saying that it is easy to win an election, but difficult to run the administration. Last 35 years have shown that the image of the bureaucracy has been one of indifference deep corruption and negligence. Now in this state of affairs it is very difficult to conceive of any clean administration unless drastic measures are taken. We do not find what new measures are being taken.

One thing that I would like to suggest is that audit of work should be established as a routine matter in the administration to evaluate work.

Only then can something be achieved. If really the Government is anxious to have a clean administration, it must have set up an Ombudsman at least as we have done in our State (A.P.)

With these words, I oppose the Motion of Thanks.

[English]

16.02 hrs.

CALLING ATTENTION TO  
MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC  
IMPORTANCE

16 02 hrs.

*Reported fresh violence in Sri Lanka causing loss of life and property of Tamilians and trespass of a Sri Lanka Patrol craft into Indian waters attacking Indian Fishesme :-*

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DAS MUNSHI (Howrah) : I call the attention of the Minister of External Affairs to the following matter of urgent public importance and request that he may make a statement thereon:—

“Reported fresh violence in Sri Lanka causing loss of life and property of the Tamilians and trespass of a Sri Lanka Patrol craft into Indian waters attacking Indian fishermen and the action taken by the Government in the matter.”

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI KHURSHEED ALAM KHAN): Since the House considered the question last, the situation in Sri Lanka already grave then, has deteriorated even further.

2. Until the end of last year, though the All Party Conference was making no visible progress, its mere existence gave some hope that a negotiated settlement, acceptable to all, would be found for the problems faced by the Tamils in Sri Lanka. The draft legislation introduced by President Jayewardene late last year was insufficient to meet Tamil aspirations, but was being considered seriously by the TULF with a view to improving it to meet their demands. Unfortunately, it was rejected out of hand by the Sinhale parties and the Buddhist Clergy and was then withdrawn by President Jayewardene. The All Party Conference was terminated on 21 December, and there is now no indication that a political solution is being sought. This is a matter of grave disappointment and frustration. We fear the continuation of the situation may not permit the return, in safety

[Shri Khursheed Alam Khan]

and honour, of many Sri Lankan Tamils who have taken refuge in India.

3. The continuing cycle of violence and counter-violence cannot resolve the ethnic problem in Sri Lanka. We are opposed to all forms of violence anywhere and deplore all loss of life and property. It is not our intention to discuss aspects of the problem which are internal to Sri Lanka, but it is unfortunate that the Sri Lanka authorities are concentrating on security operations. There are daily reports of Tamil civilians being killed by the security forces. Many Tamils of Indian origin who had settled in the North and the East are among the victims.

4. To compound all this, the Sri Lankan military has made Indian fishermen as its special targets. The Sri Lankan Government have arrested many Indian fishermen alleging that they were terrorists for which there is no basis. On later admissions of the Government of Sri Lanka, the Indian fishermen who have been either killed, wounded or captured were all engaged in fishing.

5. What is even more disturbing, over the last month, the Sri Lankan Navy vessels have been crossing into our territorial waters to harass our fisherman and seize their catches. On three occasions, we have lodged strong protests to the Sri Lankan Government, sought compensation for the loss of life and property and urged that this should stop immediately. We have asked for the release of those Indian fishermen and boats which have been in the Sri Lankan custody for past several months.

6. To protect our fishermen, the Coast Guard patrolling has been stepped up. The Navy has also been asked to keep vigil. On the 11th January when an armed Sri Lankan patrol craft intruded into our waters  $4\frac{1}{2}$  miles west of Katchatheevu and was found harassing our fishermen, the Coast Guard apprehended it well within our waters. The boat,

with its crew, has been brought to our shores and held in custody. We have told the Sri Lankan Government that we expect that an intrusion will take place in the future. The Sri Lankan Government have requested for the release of their boat and crew.

7. The absence of any progress towards a political settlement and deterioration of the situation in Sri Lanka, might force more Tamils to seek refuge in India. We already have over 40,000 Tamil refugees from Sri Lanka. We are looking after them on humanitarian grounds. We hope that the conditions in Sri Lanka will improve rapidly so that the refugees can go back to their country in dignity and without fear.

8. I am aware of the depth of feeling aroused all over the country, especially in Tamil Nadu by the almost daily reports of outrages committed on the innocent Tamil population in Sri Lanka. Violence cannot provide the answer. It only leads to more violence. We urge it should end immediately. As the Prime Minister has reiterated, there can be no alternative to a political solution acceptable to all concerned, within the framework of Sri Lanka's unity and territorial integrity. The continuance of this situation has caused enormous human suffering and it remains our hope that the Government of Sri Lanka will take an early initiative to settle this problem through negotiations.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DAS MUNSHI : Madam Chairman, the statement is, no doubt, an elaborate one and it not only reveals certain facts, but also the admission of certain basic developments inside Sri Lanka.

Madam Chairman, before I put the questions to the Minister, we, hon. Members of the House, know that our young Prime Minister from the very first day of his office made abundantly clear to the whole world that apart from our contribution to world peace, our efforts should be there to strengthen our relations with our

neighbours, whether it is Sri Lanka or Bangladesh or Pakistan or Nepal, and I am confident that we are for it. While we have no intention and desire, in view of our principles, to interfere in the internal affairs of any country, the situation in Sri Lanka today is to be looked in a different manner, in the context of the present developments in the Indian sub-continent. Our relation with Sri Lanka since the age old times, Ramayana, to the visit of Vijay Singha, Atish Dipan- kar is not only a cultural and emo- tional one but almost, when we think of it, we think, we are the same members of the same family in this globe. Our emotional and cultural relations never got spoiled or never tried to interfere with each one's sovereignty and territorial integrity. But now Madam Chairman, you must be aware of the fact that for the last one and a half decades, a sinister move, an effort has been made by the imperialist forces in this sub-continent to destabilise the system of the de- mocratic nations specially those of the littoral States near Indian Ocean. Right after the emergence of Bangla- desh, we have been carefully noticing the efforts that are made inside Pakistan, the efforts that are made after the killing of Sheikh Mujibur Rehman inside Bangladesh and the developments after the fall of the Bandaranaike Go- vernment in Sri Lanka as well as its counterre-ction and its bearing directly on the population of India, especially on the people belonging to Tamil Nadu and the South. This is not an isolated incident. We should not look into it as a matter which is only involving Sri Lanka. Of course, it is an international matter. And the Sri Lankan Government out of their own cleverness and wisdom is trying to project to the whole world that it is a matter of terrorists only and matter of law and order and not as such the matter of Tamil popula- tion who wanted their legitimate rights to be accepted by their Govern- ment.

Now, we have read in the news- papers and it has been reported in the

Press a few days ago, that Mr. Ramp- hal is trying to make an initiative between India and Sri Lanka. I do not accuse Mr. Ramphal. Nor do I accuse him of any intention to do so; nor do I accuse the Common- wealth. But I would like to remind our hon. Foreign Minister that our Prime Minister who is now the head of the Non-Aligned Movement is equally responsible for peace in the Non-Aligned nations as well as peace in the world. Our status in this matter is not at all permitting us to see that Mr. Ramphal comes into the scene and decides the fate of India and Sri Lanka, especially in the context of the relations which are now being developed in view of the fact that the Tamil population is there. Therefore, my request to the Minister would be that the Commonwealth matter or the Commonwealth arrange- ment under the initiative of Mr. Ramphal should not come in this scene at all. On the contrary, I per- sonally feel, with great regard to the highest office of the Chairman of the Non-Aligned Movement which is now being occupied by India, by our young Prime Minister, Shri Rajiv Gandhi, that we should find certain measures in this situation, how best the problem can be tackled in participation in the common negotiation between TULF, Tamil population group and Jayawar- dene Government still further more should be explored. It is because, it is the land of Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru, it is the land of Indira Gandhi and of course now it is the land of our leader, Young Prime Minister, Shri Rajiv Gandhi. If you go back to history, on many occasions, Jawahar Lal Nehru...

**SOME HON. MEMBERS :** What about Mahatma Gandhi ?

**SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DAS MUNSHI :** I am talking in terms of the foreign policy of the country after independence. Try to under- stand my hon. friends from the Opposition. I am glad that CPM is reminding me of Mahatma Gandhi. I am grateful to it.

[Shri Priya Ranjan Das Munshi]

Now, Madam Chairman, you must be aware of the fact that Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru and Indragi in many international issues never lost their patience. They tried to negotiate and persuade in a much more detailed fashion to see that positive solution comes. But it appears to us that the Sri Lankan Government is now desperate and Jayawardene is behaving like a tyrant. It has been admitted in the statement, by our hon. Minister of State for Foreign Affairs and he said, not once, not twice but thrice that the naval vessels which were part of the Sri Lankan Army crossed the Indian border, the territorial zone of India in the name of catching our fishermen—but may be there are some ulterior designs and motives. As you know, the House is aware that the motives of the foreign powers, especially the imperialist forces of Indian Ocean and on the territorial water zone of India are not unknown to us. My first question is whether the Minister considers Sri Lanka Government's interference in India as a positive interference in India's security and integrity.

A mere protest is not enough. I want to know what kind of international protest the Government of India would like to lodge with the highest body of the world in this matter. I can understand one fisherman crossing the limit of territorial water and going to another territorial water. It is not that. It is a naval vessel which has crossed the limit of territorial water and come into the territorial water of India. It has been caught redhanded by the Government of India and it is in our custody. At the same time, the Minister has admitted, not once but thrice that naval vessels have been crossing the territorial water and coming into the territorial water of India.

Don't you understand that there is a design which is provoking India and disturbing the peace in the Indian

sub-continent? It is not Sri Lankan Government and President Jayawardene who is an instrument but there is some design behind it which is constantly engaged in destabilising the peace in the Indian sub-continent.

Secondly, it is not the problem of Tamilians alone. It is not that because I am from West Bengal, I am saying it. When I was in West Bengal during the liberation of Bangladesh I felt very much when Bengalis were being killed and there was genocide, I feel the same way when I hear that our Tamilian friends are being killed in Sri Lanka. There is the same feeling amongst the people in the south, in Tamil Nadu, when their fore-fathers, their brethren, are being butchered in Sri Lanka.

In the statement, it has been admitted that in the northern and the eastern part of Sri Lanka, not once, but constantly, on this pretext or that pretext, the army is killing the people, indulging in rampage, destroying the property and lives of Tamilians. When their brothers and sisters convey the message to Tamil Nadu or to India, we feel it. It is not because they are Tamilians. Tamil is the richest culture of India. Tamilian link is an original link with Indian culture. When Tamilians are being tortured in this manner, every Indian feels about it.

Mere expressing our concern is not enough. We have to create a situation in the whole world and convince the Sri Lankan Government, Jayawardene Government, and the people of Sri Lanka that what is being done there is not in the best interest of Sri Lanka. We have no intention to interfere in their internal affairs. But if they compel us to take refugees—in the statement, it is stated that we already have over 40,000 Tamil refugees from Sri Lanka—numbering 80,000 or 1 lakh from Sri Lanka, what will be the fate of southern State. It is not merely a law and order problem. The problem will take a different dimension.

You must be aware of the fact that the Khalistan movement—it has been accepted by almost all the members of the Opposition—is a movement which is linked with the foreign powers trying to disturb us in the north and the movement in Sri Lanka has a direct bearing on the creation of further tension, aggravating the situation in the south and to creating terrific passions in the minds of Tamilians there.

The ultimate object is to keep the Government of India in a fashion as if the Government of India cannot concentrate on their economic development works, so that it will have to concentrate only on the movement of khalistan in the north and see the fate of our Tamilian brothers in the south on account of movement in Sri Lanka, who are coming as refugees to India.

It is an organised game of big powers, imperialist design, with the United States at its head. They know that this is the only way teach a lesson to India and the littoral States of Indian Ocean.

With these words, I would request the hon. Minister to tell us, whether after the failure of negotiated settlement, after the withdrawal of President Jayawardene's legislation from the House, any fresh effort is possible politically and whether, in this regard, Government of India has received a communication and, if so, what steps the Government of India propose to take to persuade further the Sri Lankan Government to take the issue not in terms of law and order problem but in terms of a serious problem which has a direct bearing on Indian population, specially on our Tamilian brothers.

**SHRI KHURSHEED ALAM KHAN:** Madam Chairman, we quite share the anxiety expressed by the hon. Member. I would like to assure him and assure the House that everything possible is being done to ensure that a political

solution is found for this problem because we are quite sure that a military solution cannot solve such problems.

As regards our relations with our neighbour, I would also like to assure the hon. Member that on our behalf everything possible is being done to keep our cordial and friendly relations with all our neighbours, whether it is Pakistan or Sri Lanka or Burma or any other country.

As regards the statement of Shri Ramphal, I would like to inform the House that whatever Shri Ramphal might have said in his own capacity, he has no brief on behalf of the Government of India and this country,

16.20 hrs

[SHRIMATI BASAVARAJESWARI  
in the Chair]

As regards the intrusion of the vessels, the hon. Member is aware that as soon as one of the vessels crossed into our territorial waters—it came  $4\frac{1}{2}$  miles inside our territorial waters—it was apprehended and, as I mentioned in my statement, our coast-guard and our naval authorities have already been alerted and I can assure the House that we can take care of the security and integrity of this country and we would not allow any...

**SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DAS MUNSHI:** Do you consider it a positive interference in our territorial integrity? If so, did you communicate it to the Sri Lanka Government?

**SHRI KHURSHEED ALAM KHAN:** When we apprehended this vessel, we have protested to Sri Lanka Government and naturally they know that apprehending of this vessel was only on this account and this vessel was not so far been released.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Now Mr. Brajamohan Mohanty will speak.

**SHRI BRAJAMOHAN MOHANTY**  
(Puri) : Madam Chairman, at the outset I would submit that this issue has been debated earlier in this House and I find no silver lining during this period of one year in our relations with Sri Lanka.

Previously, the Government of India and this House also, decided that we do not want to interfere in the internal affairs of Sri Lanka. Our Prime Minister said that India is not against any other country, Sri Lanka and India are inter-linked. Sri Lanka Government cannot take the stand that India is not bothered about what is happening inside Sri Lanka because both the countries are culturally linked, politically linked and we are associated with each other in the non-alignment movement and in the peace movement and we are both one in demanding that the Indian Ocean should be kept as a zone of peace.

Now the problem is, today they have said "We had accepted that we do not want the division of Sri Lanka between Tamils and Sinhalese." The Sinhalese also migrated from India. They migrated from Bengal and Orissa. We do not want that. Government of India has taken that stand.

Sri Lanka is now satisfied that India does not want division of Sri Lanka. The Security Minister visited India in the month of April, 1984 and he made a statement in Sri Lankan Parliament and he has stated that he was happy that nobody in India wants the division of Sri Lanka.

We also condemn violence, the violence from the side of the Sri Lankan Government and also the violence from the side of the terrorists. We do not approve violence in any form, from anywhere.

The tragedy of the situation is that the Sri Lanka Government, particularly Jayewardene Government, have taken the stand of militancy and they want to eliminate 13% Tamils from Sri Lanka.

I would invite the attention of the Minister of External Affairs to the latest statement by Jayewardene made to the Newsweek, a foreign journal. He has categorically stated. I am quoting only three or four lines. He has stated that:

"The Indian position is that they are not interfering in our internal Affairs, that there are no training camps on Indian soil. (But) the terrorists are there. The Indian Government can not call them refugees. These are people who want to destroy the Government of Sri Lanka."

This is one part. I want that India should give assistance to Sri Lanka to help them combat the terrorists.

The latest posture of the Sri Lanka Government is that we should not allow the refugees, those who are in India to enter into Sri Lanka and that we should give Sri Lanka all the ammunition to suppress them and to kill them. What is the reaction of the Government of India to this. Is there any scope for a peaceful solution, for a negotiated settlement? They have rejected it, and they are not for any negotiated settlement. They want to crush the Tamils, and they want to go for election; even if nobody comes to the polling booth, they will be going in for election. This is the tragedy of the situation to which I would like to invite the attention of the Foreign minister.

Now, what has happened? The militancy has developed during the period when there was uncertainty in India; after the death of Shrimati Indira Gandhi and when India was busy with the elections, at that time military steps were taken and expedited. That was the problem. My submission would be this. Is there any scope for a political solution? Earlier it was said here that we could influence the Government of Sri Lanka, particularly Mr. Jayewardene. But he is a tool in the hands of some foreign lobby. You know, an Israeli interest has been opened in the U. S. Embassy in Sri Lanka. What is the

purpose? They are advising and training anti-insurgency campaign. Not only that, there are some foreign powers who want not only to disturb us but also disturb the non-aligned movement and the peace movement of the world. It is an international conspiracy, and Mr. Jayewardene is a stooge. The question is; how to tackle it? Can we bring him to the negotiation table? An All Party Conference was held and the Resolution for a political settlement was discussed-but it ended abruptly. Now they are determined on military action. That part of the sea-coast in between India and Sri Lanka has been evacuated, and any refugee entering into Sri Lanka will be killed outright. This is the seriousness of the situation. I understand the delicate position with which the Government of India is confronted. We have the traditional friendship with Sri Lanka, we have our commitment to the non-aligned movement, our commitment to peace and friendship; in that background, how to handle the situation is definitely a delicate position for the Government of India. But all the same we cannot sacrifice the interests of the 13 per cent Tamils in Shri Lanka. They have been denied their legitimate rights. This is the situation. My submission would be this. Will the hon. Minister spell out some firm steps which will be convincing enough to the people of India that the Government of India means business?

My second submission would be this. Is there any chance for a negotiated settlement through diplomatic channel? I do not say that we should go for war. On the last occasion when the debate was going on, my friends, particularly those on the opposition, pressed for a war. We opposed it then, and today also we oppose it. We want a peaceful solution, we want a negotiated settlement.

My friend, Mr. Priya Ranjan Das Munshi, mentioned about Mr. Ramphal. He was not allowed audience by the Sri Lankan Government. There is a total confusion there. They want, somehow or other, to eliminate the Tamils.

Their latest stand is that, with our arms and ammunitions, they have to eliminate them. They are pressing that we should not allow the refugees to go back to Sri Lanka. This is the position. Is there any chance that they can be persuaded for a political solution, for a negotiated settlement? If there is some such chance, if there is any indication, then it is better that the Government of India spell it out.

Another aspect is about our fishermen. Their naval patrol craft was trespassing into the Indian territorial waters. I do not want to say that it is a deliberate act. It may not be a deliberate act. The most indisciplined army that we can find is in Sri Lanka. This is not my information; the entire foreign journalists are aware and they say that it is the most indisciplined army. Mr. Jayewardene also has admitted that they are indisciplined. (It may not be a deliberate act. But, all the same, we must be careful. Mr. Jayewardene should bring their army and navy to order. It is not our business. It is the business of Jayewardene to bring them to order. If they fail, they must, I am sorry to say that, reap the consequences. They must pay compensation. Yesterday only 17 fishermen have been prosecuted and they have been charged because they have trespassed into the territorial waters of Sri Lanka.

So this is the situation Madam, I would urge upon the Government of India that they should take a firm stand so that the Sri Lankan Government understand that a political solution is the only solution and there can be no military solution. They should not expect that mankind can tolerate that 13% Tamils will be eliminated from the land of their residence, that they will be eliminated from their ancestral land of residence and that they will be thrown out or killed. That cannot be tolerated.

SHRI KHURSHEED ALAM KHAN: I would like to assure the hon Member that we still have the hope that some political solution will be found to this problem because we are

[Shri Khursheed Alam Khan]

quite confident that a military solution is neither desirable nor feasible. Therefore, let us not give up our hope. The two Government representatives are already in contact and obviously the progress has been very slow. We still have the hope that it will be possible at some time that we arrive at a solution acceptable to all the parties.

As regards the 17 skippers who are in the custody of the Sri Lankan Government, we have already taken up this matter and we hope that it would be possible to get them released early. I cannot fix a date for this but we have protested to the Sri Lankan Government about the delay and I am sure that they would be able to find a way out and the process of law will be initiated and our skippers will be released along with their boats and they will return to our country soon.

**DR. V. RAJESHWARAN** (Ramanathapuram): I must first thank our Government for having taken nice steps to protect our Tamilian fishermen. As a member from Ramanathapuram which is nearer to Sri Lanka, I would like to suggest to our hon External Affairs Minister that fishermen's stories are very pathetic. Since I witnessed their pathetic conditions personally. I request our hon External Affairs Minister that we must instal a permanent Naval Base near Rameswaram and we must take necessary action to protect our people from the attack of Sri Lankan Navy by permanently posting our naval ships with 24 hour vigilance.

I also request our Government of India to see to the feasibility of the Sethu Canal Project in view of our defence and we must help our fishermen in all ways.

**SHRI KHURSHEED ALAM KHAN**: We have taken all possible steps to help our fishermen and to ensure the safety of their life and property and as I have already mentioned in my statement, our Coast Guards

have been asked to intensify the patrolling and the Navy has also been alerted. These measures taken will take care of the safety of life and property of the fishermen and there should be no apprehension on this account.

**SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE** (Panskura): Madam Chairman, in line with the statement I would first like to extend our heart-felt sympathy towards the victims of State terrorism of Jayewardene government in Ceylon on our Tamil brethren. I do not want to go into the internal affairs but then as a political observer of the world I cannot refrain from stating that the present plea of the Jayewardene government to quickly drop the all parties conference saying that TULF has rejected his proposal shows the deliberate intention of escalating the situation in Sri Lanka and bringing pressure on India and Indian Government. As far as we can gather from the world press Mr. Amirthalingam has said that they have not rejected it but they have certain reservations.

I am very apprehensive to learn that there is a plan being talked about inside Sri Lanka that out of every parliamentary constituency of Sri Lanka 200 families of Sinhalese will be brought into the Tamil areas to settle. It will create a very serious situation because 30,000 families mean at the rate of five persons per family one and a half lakh new population will be coming and to that extent the Tamilians from that area will be driven away. So, we are apprehending a big influx in India in this way. I would like to know whether our government is aware of this plan and, if so, what is the reaction of the government.

Secondly, I would like to say that the recent naval intrusion is not as innocent as it may sound-to catch some fishermen. They have to follow the agreement which was reached between the Ceylonese government and us in 1974 which definitely provided our right of fishing in that area. This is not only within our area but also 10 miles behind the

maritime area. Our fishermen are being persecuted like anything. The Jayawardene Government's intention really is to militarise the Palk Strait with the arms gained from USA, Britain and others. The real intention of USA in this regard is to use the island of Sri Lanka to link their Seventh Fleet with Diego Garcia in the Pacific ocean. This in reality is part of that game to building pressure around India for cowing it down like they do in many other developing countries.

Therefore, I would like to know is it just an accident that General Waltair, former topmost boss of CIA, visits off and on Ceylon to talk with the Jayawardene government. We do not know on what questions they talk but each time that happens we see more and more intervention. I would like to know whether our government is aware of the contents of this visit, and if so, what is the attitude of the Government. What is the attitude of the Government of India with regard to the role of USA? It is being stated that this is an internal affair of Sri Lanka in which India is all the time interfering; thereby they are maligning our country's intention and also totally disregarding the actual realities. So, I would like to know this. What is the Government of India doing to educate world public opinion on our stand? What are you doing to draw friendly countries, to keep them informed, about our stand? What initiatives have you taken and what more steps do you propose to take? I say this because this will not end immediately. Lastly I would like to express the hope that a political settlement will be found. But it will not be that easy because the whole thing is not aimed at just pushing the Tamilians out, but it is vitally connected with India's security and building pressure against India and so I would like to know what other political initiatives Government of India is contemplating.

**SHRI KHURSHEED ALAM KHAN :** The hon Member has raised a few questions. In the first instance I would like to say that the all parties

Conference was disbanded all of a sudden because the sinhalese hardliners and the Buddhist clergy did not cooperate. Therefore this conference could not make any progress. As regards our country's safety and security, this Government is aware of its responsibilities. Surely we know what we have to do for our safety and security. As regards colonisation, yes, it is a fact that in the Jaffna area it is reported that one or two Sinhalese settlements have established by the Sri Lanka Government. The hon. lady Member pointed out that the intention was to reduce the percentage of the Tamil population residing there. But surely all these things would be discussed when a political solution is found. I still hope that it would be possible for us and Sri Lanka Government to find the necessary political solution because any military solution or settling of sinhalese and in that area will not be able to solve the problem for ever. Therefore, they have to come to the negotiating table. As the hon lady member knows, India has offered its good offices in this behalf and they were accepted. We hope that they will continue the same line of thinking and we continue to try to impress upon the Sri Lanka Government that a political solution has to be found as early as possible.

**SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE:** What are you doing, for mobilising public opinion on your stand and what is your attitude towards the role of the USA Government? This is a vital question which I raised.

**SHRI KHURSHEED ALAM KHAN:** I am sorry that the hon. lady Member is not aware that this matter has already been taken note of in the UN Assembly and other bodies. As far as USA Government is concerned, they know very well what we want, that there should be a political solution.

**SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE:** What is your assessment of their role?

**SHRI KHURSHEED ALAM KHAN :** It is very difficult for me to say what they are doing behind the scenes.

**SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DAS MUNSHI :** Are you aware that the presence of American and Israeli agents is there and their spying agents are very much active in Sri Lanka itself doing various things clandestinely? If so, did you protest about it?

**SHRI KHURSHEED ALAM KHAN :** This is a delicate question. I would not like to express an opinion about it.

16.44 hrs.

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

[*English*]

**MR. CHAIRMAN :** Now, we will resume discussion on the President's address. Mr. R. Prabhu.

**SHRI R. PRABHU (Nilgiris) :** Madam, Chairman, I rise to support the motion proposed by Prof. N G. Ranga in thanking the President for his Address. The President in his address was very comprehensive and at the same time precise end to point. We are meeting here after the saddest event in the Indian History—the assassination of our great leader, Shrimati Indira Gandhi. Madam, Chairman, every single person in this country felt that he had lost one of his or her own, be it a daughter or mother or sister. Shrimati Indira Gandhi in her lifetime had established a firm system of administration and institutionalised democracy. Her foresight has resulted in developments in certain critical fields like administration, foreign relations, planning, upliftment of Harijans, weaker sections, womens, welfare, etc. The list is endless. Above all, she has sustained the glorious traditions of the greatest institution

in this country—the Indian National Congress—which is celebrating its centenary in this year. These institutions and causes are shining monuments of her accomplishments and achievements and it is our privilege to assist our young and dynamic Prime Minister to carry on these causes and the institution and hand them over to the future generations. This point of time coincides with India's finest performance in economic development and political democracy. We should be legitimately proud to be Members of Parliament of the largest democracy in the world. I say finest performance in political democracy because of the free and fair manner in which the election were held. Our country is a large country stretching from Kashmir to Kanya Kumari and in the West from Arabian sea to Bay of Bengal in the East. So, the precision with which the elections were held throughout the country had actually stunned the whole world. The massive majority with which the Indian National Congress was returned to power shows that Indians have robust common sense and the sleeping giant of India has awakened in its critical hour when the integrity of India was challenged and was at stake. A lot of people all over the word says that the masses in this country are illiterate and the literacy in this country is very low, but Indians have this robust commonsense and the people of India have risen up to the occasion and voted in a uniform pattern from North to South and from East to West to show their faith and trust in the youthful leadership of the Prime Minister. They reposed their confidence in the young and dynamic leadership of Shri Rajiv Gandhi. Today, it is not only the finest hour in the political scene but also the finest hour of economic scene. In another two months' period, we will be completing the mammoth Sixth Five Year Plan with an investment of nearly 105,000 crores of rupees. We have also achieved the plan target, that is, the growth rate of 5.2% per annum. This is not a mean achievement. If we look at the overall scenario of the world today, except America and small countries like Hongkong and Singapore, there has been a negative