

[Shri Raj Kumar Rai]

majority. So long as Congress was in power no wrong decisions were taken on the strength of majority but when Shri Dandavate's Government was formed and the Janata Party came into power in which he was a powerful Minister, at that time his party openly misused its majority in this House by debarring duly elected Shrimati Indira Gandhi from her membership. He should not expect that we shall do such things in this House with our majority. We do not do any unlawful act on the strength of our majority. We keep the interest of the country foremost before us. Our party has all along been fighting for the protection of the country. Therefore, I welcome and support his amendment and oppose the motion of disapproval moved by the Opposition.

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17.27 hrs.

[MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

DISCUSSION RE : SITUATION IN  
PUNJAB—*contd.*

[*English*]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : The hon. Home Minister to reply to the debate.

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (S. BUTA SINGH) : Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, first of all I express my grateful thanks to the hon. Members of this House for discussing the situation in Punjab at length.

Prof. Dandavate is again the champion of bringing the most important issue, a national issue, for discussion in this House. Punjab has occupied the focus of this august House... (*Interruptions*)

I happened to be the humble servant of this House for quite some time. What is happening in Punjab is not the law and order situation, is not a matter pertaining to one State or even to some communities. It has deeper roots. Its ramifications are very very serious, affecting the whole national life and, therefore, naturally it is the right thing that the House should

devote as much attention as we can to see that Punjab is kept peaceful ; there is respect for law and order, and communal harmony, peace, is maintained in Punjab.

The immediate cause for this discussion is the gruesome tragedy at a place called Muktsar. I immediately rushed. The hon. Prime Minister asked me to go and see for myself how such a dastardly act has taken place especially when there was incident-free fortnight in Punjab. In the two Districts, Gurdaspur and Amritsar, where the terrorists had occupied the central place, we had worked out a plan in co-operation with the State Government, the central forces. We had thoroughly and very carefully drawn up a plan in which every village was looked after. We created some kind of a strategy in which we were able to really monitor the whole operation very closely. Also, while we were satisfied with the operation we were trying to go into some of the hideouts of the elements who are out to destroy life in Punjab. Suddenly, from one remote corner very near the international border—only a few kilometres away from the international border—this tragedy has taken place. Every act of terrorism sends waves of fear and terror throughout the country. This particular act (which was the largest of all the acts so far done in Punjab) sent a wave of fear and reaction throughout the country and indignation that the fall-out was felt in Punjab and in Delhi, as a result of which, during the past 3 or 4 days, Delhi also was upset ; certain parts of Delhi witnessed tragedies, arson, loot and other lawlessness. But, fortunately, Sir, with the cooperation of the people of Delhi and the Delhi Administration, it was possible for us to control the thing in a short time. Therefore, we were able to really contain it in Delhi. There are parties who take even political mileage out of such gruesome tragedies. Instead of cooperating, with the forces and the law and order enforcing machinery in such occasions, they thought it better to launch some kind of a Bandh, —Mini—Bharat Bandh,—Madhya Pradesh Bandh, Himachal Bandh, UP Bandh, Delhi Bandh etc. Even after my repeated appeals,—personal appeals—to the honourable leaders of political parties,

they refused to call off the Bandh. Again, Sir, with the cooperation of the people of Delhi it was possible for the Administration to see that the whole thing is contained. (*Interruption*) Now, Sir, about the political atmosphere in Punjab, I cannot improve upon what the hon. Prime Minister said on the Floor of the House about the approach of the Government of India. Shri Madhu Dandavateji raised some basic questions in his remarks. He wanted to know whether the Government will make a categorical statement stating that there is no question of any separatist State or any move connected therewith. He asked whether this will be made non-negotiable. He said that there should not be any talk of extension of Article 370 to Punjab and that the time schedule provided in the Punjab accord should be adhered to and that the foreign powers assisting the terrorists should be exposed. He made also so many other suggestions. The hon. Prime Minister has provide that categorical statement here and it has been understood all over the country. I am sure Shri Dandavateji must be satisfied with that. Now, the things which further aggravate the situation must be contained. I am not going to request Shri Dandavateji to take up the issues with his erstwhile colleagues. But I am going to inform the House that things are happening in Punjab and in the Central Government, the State Government, and all the political parties are trying to mobilise the people in the State to see that this kind of a carnage is not allowed to happen in Punjab. But, Sir then unfortunately what some of the most important leaders of every section of the Akali party who were very close friends of Shri Dandavateji, one who happened to be Chief Minister and Minister here also, had to say on this issue? Now they are openly colluding with the extremists and terrorists. Every sentence they utter has its ripple. It has to be understood. And then the other day the Akali Member of Parliament, Shri Charanjit Singh Walia who belongs to that group, although I do not know how he made a speech here, he did not reflect the views of his group, but, Sir, the speech of Prakash Singh Badal after Muktsar is something which I would like this House to take note of. Soon after that incident, he spoke in one of the towns of a consti-

tuency which I had the honour to represent in this House when I was a Member from Punjab. Do you know what he said? He said, 'I hold the Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi directly responsible for communal flare up in Delhi in which six persons were killed'. Sir, he is conveniently forgetting that in his own native town—Mr. Badal belongs to Muktsar town, his village is quite near, and in his own native town that thing has happened, he forgets about that. There is not a single word about the innocent people killed in that tragedy, but he tries to attack the Prime Minister for what is happening in Delhi. Sir, let me assure this honourable House that we never approach this kind of a situation in the country from a narrow communal angle. But for the presence of this Government and their prompt action the after-effect of what happened in Muktsar would have been many many times more. It was the Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi who immediately directed all concerned—half a dozen Ministers were moving in the troubled area of Delhi. Myself, Bhagatji, K.C. Pant and the Chief Executive Councillor—we were all amidst when the stones were being pelted when the guns were taken out, when the sords were used, when the iron rods, were used, when the things were set on fire. When the gurudwara, temple and everything was being destroyed, we were in the thick of these things. And where was Shri Badal? Now, it is this kind of attitude of a particular section of the Akali Party—I do not want to really score points with Badal, but I have to say and I must say that it is this kind of attitude of the Akali leadership that is aggravating the situation in Punjab. So, what is Badal and his colleagues, Tohra and others, doing? Wherever a known terrorist is killed, they go to his house, they organise the kriya and bhog ceremony. They do not stop at that only. They put a flag there and they declare him as a martyr. Sir, if such things are allowed to happen in Punjab which has seen the worst communal situation in the last 3-4 years, where will this lead to? Similarly, he goes on saying that. After having said that, he forgets about Muktsar. But he says that if this happens in Delhi, it is bound to have repercussions there. The former Chief Minister said that 'such incidents are bound to have repercussions

[S. Buta Singh]

here—'Here' means Punjab, as if there are no repercussions in Punjab already. What is happening? The families of a particular community are marching out and nobody to stop them. I hope to persuade the State Government to come to Delhi, see that they are provided with security, see that they are persuaded to go back to their homes. But here is a former Chief Minister whose quarrel with the Chief Minister is only because he has not been made the Chief Minister. About the accord for which Madhuji is very keen and everybody is keen, he says that the Punjab accord is a mockery of the sentiments of the Sikhs and treachery to the Panth. Shri Badal, even at that time when the accord was signed, was not with Santji, but when it came for the distribution of tickets—because the accord was the manifesto—and when it came to share the fall outs of the accord, he got the major share—he and Mr. Tohra between the two. That is why, poor Barnala today is finding himself in a situation where a large chunk of his party has walked out. Anybody in the place of Mr. Barnala who was the Party leader at that time, even now, the President of the Party, should have made the Accord has the touchstone and he should have made the Accord as the qualifying standard for any candidate for that party. In that case, Mr. Tohra and Mr. Badal or his associates would not have found even a ticket for the party. But having taken all the benefits of the Accord, now they turn their back and say, it is a treachery with the Sikhs.

Now, what is the Accord? They are going about saying that the Accord is not relevant to the Punjab political situation. They are not one with the Accord. But about the forces which they are supporting today - whether it is Damdama Taksal, AISSF, Dal Khalsa—and all those organisations which are responsible for all these things—is it not know to Mr. Tohra or Mr. Badal that these organisations were never one with the Akali Party, not to speak of the Accord? The same Prakash Singh Badal could not visit the Golden Temple for over a year because he was mentally afraid of these organisations and today he is becoming the champion of these organisations. This only takes us to the serious situation and we should try

to analyse what is the situation in Punjab. It seems, the feeling has gone among the Akali leaders that only one who takes the most extremists posture will become popular leader of the community. That is the basic thing in which the Akali Party is caught.

17.42 hrs.

[MR. SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

Therefore, I have no doubt that it can be only a minor difference of degrees but to an extent, these are the leaders who are responsible for driving this kind of wedge and also responsible for making the Akali party to take that kind of an attitude which has placed the Sikhs all over the country in such a position that it is becoming difficult for them, because they have been branded, they have been equated with the policies of the Akali Party. Does that mean that Punjab means only the Sikhs and only the Akalis? The Sikhs are there all over the country and they are proud patriots. They are the ones who sacrificed for the freedom of the country. They are responsible for the development of the country, for building up the country. How is it that today, a handful of leaders of a political party have come to be equated with the destiny of all the people living all over the country? That has to be understood. Let us not go with the impression which is sought to be created by some of the Hindu reactionary forces who equate every Sikh with whatever Akali Party—whether the present or the earlier or the break-away group—and they are trying to preach this. That is not the fact. The fact is that some of the elements in the Akali Party have been unfortunately managed by the anti-Indian forces. They are willingly or unwillingly acting as agents of the enemies of the country. That has to be made know to the people of the country. Only then, we are able to take an unattached, objective view of the situation in Punjab.

Now, as I started my remarks saying that we made efforts to restore peace in some parts of Punjab, we met with a limited success. We wanted to take the march onward; we wanted to expand the whole thing. Unfortunately this Muktsar incident has happened; it could have happened anywhere. But I want to inform the august

House that our political parties must ponder over, must sit together and take the situation in Punjab, not in a partisan or a party manner. I am happy, this time again, the House has reflected the national will and Mr. Speaker, Sir, you set the tone. Earlier also, it was your appeal which raised the level of discussion. This time again, you had set the tone and the Members have followed and you have really reflected. You have put the mind of the country and the mind of the nation through this House. I would like to mention one or two points raised by the hon. Members Sri Sultan Salahuddin Owaisi and some other Members, Shri Piyus Tiraky, Prof. P. J. Kurien and also Prof. Saifuddin Soz that we must make all-out efforts to see that normalcy is restored especially in the border areas where such a situation has disturbed the normal life of the people. We have been making very serious efforts—and today luckily too, myself, my colleague Shri B. R. Bhagatji along with the leaders of the Opposition, we had a detailed discussion with the hon. Prime Minister and I am sure some fruitful results will come out from the discussion that we had today and I am sure this House will back up the Government efforts to fight out the forces of disintegration, the anti-national forces, the forces of communalism who are out to destroy the fabric of our national unity and integration and I am sure the House will stand by and also back up the Government in taking up that challenge.

I need not mention about the implementation of the accord because it is a subject matter on which the discussion earlier was also taken. The latest position is known to almost all the Members. We are very keen that the accord is implemented very sincerely and effectively. But, unfortunately, certain problems cropped while implementing the accord. We cannot really take it technically. Dates have been shifted, not unilaterally, dates were shifted because circumstances existed and every time the initiative came from the Chief Minister of Punjab because we were faced with a situation almost like a dead end and we wanted to save further complications. Punjab is already in the thick of woods. We have lot of problems. Another problem added, the State administration might find it even difficult to stand. There-

fore, every time, I request or I advise hon. Chief Minister of Punjab. We were able to adjust. It is not the date which is so sacrosanct. It is the actual effect on the life of the people, how it will affect the people, what will it really produce if that accord is implemented. Three times it has happened. Now we are trying to see that the problems are resolved through mutual consultation with the participation of the concerned parties and an agreeable solution is found.

One thing which is quite heartening is that in Punjab, especially in the big towns, the people are living harmoniously. In spite of the things happening every day, things happening, unbelievable incidents taking place, the basic unity, the mutual confidence of the people is there very much and they are Punjabis and they take pride in this. But we should not allow the situation to really go out of control. It is high time and I am sure, as I mentioned in the beginning of my speech, that we are making a joint effort, national effort, with the involvement of the leaders of the Opposition and, I hope, the Punjab Government and especially Shri Barnala who has been cooperative, who has been helpful, will understand the message, the mood of the House and the country and will cooperate with the efforts of the Government of India, with the involvement of all the political parties, will save the people from any further happenings that have put the Punjabis to shame.

With these words, again I express my thanks to the hon. Members for participating in this discussion.

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17.50 hrs.

STATUTORY RESOLUTION RE :  
DISAPPROVAL OF THE COMMISSIONS  
OF INQUIRY (AMENDMENT)  
ORDINANCE, 1986  
AND  
COMMISSIONS OF INQUIRY (AMEND-  
MENT) BILL, 1986—Contd.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : We take up Items 9 and 10.