

[Shri H. N. Mukerjee]

arrests in West Bengal in particular to which reference has been made, have been conducted outside of the ambit of Government's intentions and that those arrested are going to be released as a result of Government's intervention in this matter?

Shri Nanda: It depends upon what kind of offence has been committed.

Shri N. C. Chatterjee (Burdwan): May we have a clarification, arising out of his answer?

Mr. Speaker: My difficulty is this. I can call only those Members who have signed the notice.

Shri N. C. Chatterjee: I know that. The question has been put already. I am only asking for a clarification. Have directives been issued by the Home Minister to all the State Governments immediately to withdraw the orders and lift any orders against persons who have been detained for reasons other than the security of the State?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Member wants to know whether in pursuance of this policy any instructions have been issued to all the State Governments?

Shri Nanda: I have written a letter to all the States conveying the intentions of Government.

Shri S. M. Banerjee: You should protect us, Sir....

Dr. Ranen Sen: Does it mean that West Bengal has not accepted the Home Minister's instructions?

Shri S. M. Banerjee: I seek your protection.

Mr. Speaker: I must tell Shri S. M. Banerjee that he should not speak sitting again and again. That is not the procedure to be followed in Parliament; the procedure is that hon. Members should rise and try to catch

my eye. But I find that the hon. Member stands up and speaks whatever he likes and goes on as long as he likes.

Shri S. M. Banerjee: I simply wanted your permission. I was only trying to catch your eye.

Mr. Speaker: Now, let him say what he wants.

Shri S. M. Banerjee: I only wanted to get one clarification. The Home Minister has stated that the judgment of the Supreme Court and the other things flowing from it would be taken into consideration. What I would like to point out is this. Even after the pronouncements of many High Courts such as the Allahabad High Court, the Punjab High Court...

Shri N. C. Chatterjee: And the Bombay High Court.

Shri S. M. Banerjee:.....and the Bombay High Court unconditionally to release those persons and even after it had been declared that the arrests were *mala fide* and they were with *mala fide* intentions and they were illegal and the persons were released in December, they had again been arrested in February. So, what is the use of the hon. Minister's saying that such arrests will be unusual?

Mr. Speaker: How can I ask him to reply to this? It is for Government to decide.

Shri S. M. Banerjee: Let him answer that question.

Mr. Speaker: Now, Shri Shinkre.

15.20 hrs.

MOTION ON PRESIDENT'S
ADDRESS—contd.

Shri Shinkre (Marmagao): John Fitzgerald Kennedy, the late-lamented President of the USA, whose memory even we in India so very much

cherish, once said, or perhaps repeatedly said that the only way to deal with problems was to try to settle them . . . (Laughter).

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Member is not putting a question on the calling-attention-notice, but he is participating in the debate.

Shri Shinkre: This great saying and statement of the late President of the USA should be kept in letters of gold—which we do not have here but—at least in letters of steel and kept in front of every Minister of this Government and the Ministers of the Governments of our States, because the worst malady that this Government and the Governments at the State level suffer from in this country is only one, namely procrastination. The late Prime Minister of ours, Shri Jawaharlal Nehru used to say that when the problems became too acute, if you would allow them some time, they would solve themselves. This is exactly the opposite of what Mr. Kennedy with his completely elementary judgment of things and realities of life, had said. If we just take under review the years . . . (Laughter).

I do not know why this laughter should be there.

Mr. Speaker: Nor do I; he is not putting any question on the calling-attention-notice, but he is participating in the debate on the President's Address.

Shri Shinkre: They are not used to serious tasks and to serious speeches; they just want trifling-making all the time and thereby kill the time of the House.

Mr. Speaker: He is not asking a question on the calling-attention-notice, but he is participating in the debate.

Shri Shinkre: It is more than ten years now since in every possible manner, in every possible occasion, in

the election, the people of the border areas in the Belgaum and Karwar districts between Mysore and Maharashtra have demonstrated that they are not satisfied with the present arrangements and are not happy with what is presently obtaining regarding their political status. Yet this Government does not want to take any notice of this state of affairs there. I do not mean to say that Government should immediately say that Belgaum and Karwar should go to Maharashtra. But if they do not want that, let them say it very clearly and in positive terms. But what do they do? Sometimes they leave a big gap. They leave it to time. When the situation becomes too acute, then some Minister of Government, specially Shri Nanda, will make a statement assuring the people that within six months 'I will settle this'. For six months people keep quiet. But then just like his earlier assurance when he took over as Home Minister that within two years he would end corruption in the country and his subsequent attitude when an attempt was made to add an addendum to that statement that he had this in mind and not that, just like that he tries to get clear of that commitment. The same thing has happened in regard to this border dispute also.

Regarding the future of Goa, why do the Government not say today something positive about the political future of Goa? The late Shri Nehru had some idea of his own regarding what Goans want. He based his view on what a few suit-and-tie-wallahs may have told him that the Goans are a distinct community, they have a personality of their own and it is better not to mix it or merge it with the adjoining State. But after the first-ever held general election, the people of Goa have convincingly shown that they want to merge with Maharashtra. Yet no decision comes from this Government. There is no reference to it in the President's Address. Why do the Government delay too long a decision on this matter? Do they expect a reversal of the

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trend? Somebody may say that I am indulging in wishful thinking, but I think the writing on the wall is clear and next year is going to be a very decisive year as far as they are concerned and as far as the country is concerned.

Then again, what has happened regarding such a simple thing like prohibition? They meet again, and decide, what? To postpone a decision. The time is not considered ripe for a decision. After some time, after a month or two, they will meet and consider the issue.

We see the same indecision in regard to the Punjabi Suba question. In today's papers, there is a statement by Sant Fateh Singh that he is not prepared to wait even for a month. If some action is taken, they feel the pinch and will do something, not because they are convinced of the merits of the case, not because they have realised the problem or its political implications but because they wish to avoid as far as possible something more tragic happening. For every issue to be settled, they want some heads broken, some innocent lives lost. Then only they realise the pressing need to take some decision and go ahead.

Unfortunately, the Minister of Planning, who is now the wizard of Government to save it from its economic predicament, is not here; otherwise, I would have liked to ask him some very minor questions. Speaking in the House the other day, he was delivering some sort of a homily or sermon to primary school children. He tried to make out a case that the uppermost need of the country today is savings, to increase the savings and build up surplus which could help us go ahead with our developmental programmes. But I want to ask the Minister of Planning a few questions. Does he know that in the last 16-17 years, Central Government revenue—leave out the revenue of the Governments in the States—has gone up

something like 8-10 times? Does he know, for instance, that governmental expenditure has expanded in geometrical progression while income has risen only in arithmetical progression? That means, the more income they have, the more they try to spend. Under these circumstances, where will there be any saving? If they really mean to save, this is not the way to go about it. Government must set a clear-cut example themselves and show how to save. They must show that we are going to save more and more so that the surplus may be utilised afterwards for expansion programmes. Not only do Government not do that, but the moment they tap a new source of income, they immediately think of a new expenditure. The bureaucratic and administrative expenditure is going to such an extent that I do not think we have left any more resources to lay hands on. Our fiscal policy and taxation have reached the saturation point. The only way out for Government is to make a concerted effort and say 'This is the ceiling for government expenditure; it would not under any circumstances exceed that'. If they practise that and show up some saving, then Government can preach to the people at large to make some saving. Even then I am very much doubtful whether the average citizen of the country has left any cushion to make any saving. There may be a few here and there who may be having more than they ought to have, but I do not think the people at large have any cushion left under the stringent economic conditions prevailing currently in the country. But if still Government want to say that there is some possibility of saving, Government have to set the example first. Austerity, like charity, should always begin at home.

Another problem, to which I would make a passing reference, is about the value of the rupee. It is the press that every day Government is being pressurised—nowadays that is not the

word used, it is 'advised'—to devalue the rupee. I as a layman—not as an economist—feel that there is a great need for devaluation of the rupee because this artificial value of the rupee is not going to help us. They say we are getting good money out of exports with this artificial value of the rupee. What I want to say is this. No foreign buyer pays us more than he wishes to pay or more than what he thinks it is reasonable to pay. So our exporters would get what the foreign buyers think reasonable to pay to us in their interest. That being so, most of our exporters are also very reluctant to export because they get so little money out of exports because of this artificial value of rupee presently maintained. Supposing they export \$100 worth of goods, they get only Rs. 500, whereas if the rupee was devalued, they would get something like Rs. 800—900 for the same merchandise exported. Our local exporter is only concerned with what he gets against his exports; he is not concerned with what Government would get eventually against the export he makes, by way of foreign exchange.

So this artificial and unrealistic value of the rupee does not help our export as Government appear to be thinking. Although I am not an economist, as a layman I feel there is a case for devaluation of the rupee. What I want Government to do is not to stick to some dogmatic approach and continue what they have been doing because somebody in the economic affairs department of the Finance Ministry advised against devaluation. Please, for God's sake, study this problem, assess it, analyse it in all its implications, and if needs be, go ahead with devaluation. What I have said is what I came across after having talked to several business people who are interested and who know about the day-to-day life of the exporters of our country.

Shri Hanumanthalya (Bangalore City): They give only one side of the case.

Shri Shinkre: They may be giving one side of the case. Do you mean to say that this Government have taken in view all sides of the case? This Government also works on one side of the case, because somebody in the Economic Affairs or Finance Ministry has one side of the case, he presents it to the Finance Minister, and the Finance Minister sometimes takes it as the biblical word and goes ahead with that. Now that, after 17 or 18 years, we have seen that we are consistently failing in our economic process, why not have a change, take some major decisions regarding our financial and economic regeneration?

Regarding the Administrative Reforms Commission announced by the Government, there is no doubt that all the members whose names have been announced by the Government are worthy people and they deserve the highest consideration and respect of all the people not only in this House but from the country as a whole, both by their wisdom as well as their exalted abilities and qualities of mind and heart, but to my mind this Commission appears to be very much one-coloured. It ought to be slightly technicoloured. All the people who are forming this Administrative Reforms Commission at best know only what is happening or what has happened in countries with this Anglo-Saxon type of administration which has been copied by India blindly or otherwise. So, I would like that this Commission should include at least another Member who has had some experience of different set-ups. There are so many other countries. For example, there are several countries of Western Europe which have a different administrative set-up. One cannot say that countries like France or Germany or the northern countries of Norway and Sweden are ill-managed. First class administrations obtain in those countries. Even a small country like Denmark has perhaps the most excellent administration known to the world. It might be said that these are

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small countries and we cannot copy whatever statutes they might have for administrative purposes. I also do not say that we should copy them, but my specific suggestion is that we should add one Member to this Administrative Reforms Commission who knows about other administrative set-ups also, so that the Commission may also examine administrative patterns which obtain in those countries which are basically and radically different from the pattern obtaining in England, India or the Commonwealth countries, so that what they produce by way of a report is all-absorbing, and would help us to go ahead by shedding away all the defects which we have been suffering from hitherto.

STATEMENT RE. PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT TO UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

The Minister of External Affairs (Shri Swaran Singh): With your permission, I would like to inform the House that our Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, has accepted the invitation of President Johnson to visit the United States of America.

Mrs. Gandhi will visit the United States for four days commencing from the 27th March.

This information I thought I should give to the hon. House because several questions had been asked in this House about the proposed visit and the probable date of our Prime Minister's visit to the United States of America.

Shri Hanumanthaiya (Bangalore City): Can we make a suggestion with your kind permission?

Mr. Speaker: Yes.

Shri Hanumanthaiya: You will recall that President Johnson, when he

postponed the visit of the late Prime Minister Shastri, gave this reason that Congress was in session and therefore he was not free to meet the Prime Minister.

Mr. Speaker: We should give our good wishes.

Shri Hanumanthaiya: Please bear with me. This is a very difficult point.

The President of the United States gave the reason that Congress was in session for postponement of that visit. Now when our Parliament is sitting, we have been urging you and placing our point of view before you that this House should be treated with respect. Any foreign visit ought to take place after the session of Parliament. During the session of Parliament it would not be right for the Prime Minister to leave Parliament to itself and go for any talks, whatever may be their character. It is a question of postponing by one month or so. That is my humble suggestion.

Some hon. Members rose—

Mr. Speaker: There ought not be a discussion over this.

Dr. L. M. Singhvi (Jodhpur): I do not want any discussion.

I think we are grateful that Parliament has been kept informed of this, and has been given the precedence that it deserves.

We would also like to say that this is an important visit that our Prime Minister is making, and the House would like to give all its good wishes to her in the many tasks she would have to face there.

Mr. Speaker: Now, let us leave it here.

Shri A. S. Alva