

SHRI CHANDRAJIT YADAV : Training in most sophisticated weapons** What was the Government doing ? giving information to the country. (*Interruptions*). Let the Home Minister corroborate it. We would like to know which sophisticated arms—we would like to know it.

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI P.C. SETHI): He means**

SHRI CHANDRAJIT YADAV : Let us know it. (*Interruptions*).

MR. SPEAKER : That reference will not go on record.

SHRI SATYASADHAN CHAKRABORTY : The Home Minister has agreed with this. The Home Minister has said that** they are giving training in sophisticated weapons. If it is true, you should resign immediately. You have no right to stay as a Government. The Government has no right to stay. Sir, what are you doing ? Why are you not stopping this ? If one lakh people are trained in sophisticated arms . . .

SHRI CHANDRAJIT YADAV : It may lead to serious repercussions.

PROF. K.K. TEWARY : I do not know why Mr. Satyasadhan misinterprets. I said 1.25 lakh volunteers—not that people who are staying in the temple. I did not say that. My point is that there are some people ; with the support that is coming ...

MR. SPEAKER : It is all right. Too much time has been taken.

PROF. K.K. TEWARY : How they are being trained, and the places where they are being trained.....Sir, in Jammu and Kashmir recently ...(*Interruptions*).

MR. SPEAKER : It is all right now.

** Expunged as ordered by the Chair.

PROF. K.K. TEWARY : On the 26th of this month.....

MR. SPEAKER : Now, Madam Prime Minister.

PROF. K.K. TEWARY : Sir, let me conclude. My approach to the problem is that the Opposition can have quarrels with us. They can have quarrels with the leadership. But on such a serious matter which concerns the integrity of this country, they should not display this kind of—partisan attitude.

MR. SPEAKER : You are repeating this time and again now.

PROF. K.K. TIWARY : They should try to help the Government in reaching an amicable settlement ; and at the moment when the Akali Dal has taken this stand of burning the Constitution and doing such other acts of violence, we should not enter into any negotiation until they swear that they will not encourage the anti-national forces, and secessionist forces. We must not open any dialogue with the Akalis, however strong may be the demands voiced by them.

PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ : (Bara-mulla) : I have to represent my party. I had requested you. I must be allowed.

MR. SPEAKER : The debate is going on. It has not ended. Now, the Prime Minister.

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI) : Actually, the turn was that of another Member from the Opposition. But since I have a message from the Rajya Sabha that they would like me there—I have asked permission from the Speaker to say a few words.

Sir, I appreciate the words which you said at the beginning before this Motion

was moved, and the manner in which you urged restraint on us all.

It is true that we in the Government were not happy about having this debate on the very first day, and the reason was not that we wanted to avoid it; in fact, we very clearly said that we did not wish to avoid it, but we felt that since there was going to be a bundh, and since there was the other move on the part of the Akali Dal, anything said here might be misunderstood and have adverse repercussions.

This was our only reason for wanting a postponement. So far as the date is concerned, who chose it? I certainly did not. I was informed by you; and so far as I know, it was the hon. members opposite who chose the date, to which our Ministers agreed. It is not my intention to reply to all the points raised. The reply will be given by my colleague the Home Minister. But since my name has been brought into the debate time and again—and I must confess that some members have not spoken in consonance with the advice which you have given I should like to take up some points.

Shri Vajpayee has gone into some detail. His words are always eloquent. I am a little afraid of eloquence; I am a very plain-speaking straight forward person; and I have noticed how eloquence of this kind quite often hides other ideas. If you can discern those other thoughts under his eloquence

Much of what he said had a veneer of truth, yet was a little bit away from the truth (*Interruption*) Well, no, I won't say half truth. I am not saying in any way that he was trying to.....
(*Int. rruptions*)

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE :
That is called marginal truth.

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE :
Anyway, you put the record straight.

SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI : I am trying to do it.

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE :
You tell us about details.

SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI: I am trying to do that. I don't want to go into all the details. For instance, mention was made of the religious demands. Whatever I said about these religious demands letter on, had been told to the Akali leadership and the Sants. When the Sants were here, I told them quite clearly what we could agree to. I have not moved from that position: but they have moved from their position. They changed their view on the timings they wanted for the transmission. There are various other changes. I don't think I should go into all those minute details. I repeat that I had clarified how much we could agree to and why we could not agree to the other demands. For instance, why we could not allow a transmitter; why we could not give the longer timing of the 3 hours for the transmission. Originally I thought they had agreed to between half an hour and one hour. Later the Akalis asked for increased time. So, in order to be conciliatory, we agreed to 1½ hours plus half, that is 1½ hours in the morning and half in the evening. In this manner, at every step, we tried to meet what they said. You asked, "why was this announced in the Gurdwara?" I did not think I was making an announcement; I thought my announcement had already been made to the Akali leadership. It was not formally written down, nor do I think that we could make such an official announcement until it was fully accepted, and we had some reason to believe that things would not go beyond. Actually they did go beyond. What I said in the Gurudwara was what I had told the Akali leadership, what I have since said at many public meetings. Nothing that I am now saying is new; it has all been said in public and in private on a number of occasions.

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS, SPORTS AND WORKS

AND HOUSING (SHRI BUTA SINGH): There also a request was made.

SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI : If we had agreed to transmission of the Gurbani, why did we not go ahead with it? Because the laying of transmission wires was not allowed. We had even appointed people for the work. But this needs cooperation from the other side concerned; and this is the case in other matters also.

So far as not selling tobacco or meat is concerned, this has nothing to do with the Central Government. It is concerned with municipal laws. We told the Akalis to take the matter up with the municipal authorities and that if it came to us in any form we would support it. In this issue also there was some variation as to whether it should be the same area as in Haridwar and Varanasi or whether it should cover the whole city. I am giving these as examples. What was in our hands to accept, we accepted though with some slight modification where we thought that it was not good for the country or it could have other repercussions. If you are going to have a three-hour transmission from one Gurdwara how can you say that you will not have it from other Gurdwaras, from temples, from mosques and churches? You simply cannot. That would mean not having any other programmes.

These are some of the reasons. Some Opposition Members have differed. I do not want to name the Parties, I think all of you know who said what. Initially several political parties and their own reasons and their own objections to one or other of the demands. Some agreed to some demands, some did not agree to those but agreed to others and so on.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : Does it include Congress (I)?

SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI : The Congress? So far as the Central Government is concerned, there was no ambiguity. I made it clear when I met the

Akalis long before the tripartite came into the picture. Some matters which were mentioned here were told to them before the tripartite talks, before you talked to them formally; privately you may have talked to them but before you talked to them formally, these things were made clear. It is after we thought that we had disposed of the whole matter, only the religious demands were before me, here in this Parliament House in Room No. 9, when I thought that the meeting was over and I got up to say 'Namaskar' because of other previous engagements, then they said, "No, no, that is not the main thing; the main questions are of the river waters and territory". Until then there was no mention of river waters or territory.

With regard to the All-India Gurdwara Act, we said, "we have only one objection which is that the other Gurdwaras are in different States. They have their own elected boards or committees and we feel that all concerned should be consulted."

I am sorry to say that I do not remember the number of Gurdwaras. Perhaps the Home Minister may know but it has kept changing. First it was a large number. Then it came down. Now the latest figure varies from 10 to 30.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : They made it clear that they would insist only in the case of the historic Gurdwaras and that too with local consent.

SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI : Our point was that local consent was necessary. If they agreed, there was no quarrel. I have only met the Sants twice. It was in 1981, if I am not mistaken, I put my point of view before them on those occasions. I have not moved from my stand.

Now with regard to river waters, I was a little unhappy about the way things were going. It is not a good precedent, it is not a good tendency to go back on awards. The Shah Commission gave

some ruling. Then there were other awards. What is the proof, what is the guarantee, who will give the guarantee, that if we now come to a new agreement, it will be considered binding, final and enduring? This was the only question and the only hesitation in my mind. However, when they stressed that this was very important, I agreed that the water dispute could be referred to a tribunal.

The Speaker has already chided one of our Members for mentioning that there were three years in which all this could have been sorted out. I am not repeating the story. But it is a fact which must be kept in mind. That was the time to sort it out when all the surrounding States were also allies of the Janata Party Central Government. When the Akalis were in the Central Government and they had their own Government in Punjab, Obviously if that period of three years was not long enough to settle it, I think, it is very unfair to say that these two years are too long a period. We have not rested—we have had bilateral and tripartite meetings. In between we got messages from people who acted as mediators. Some messages said that the Akalis would prefer to have bilateral rather than tripartite talks. We had all kinds of people going back and forth. I even meet some people whom I would not normally have seen, who were on the extremist side, only because of my deep desire for a solution, to come nearer to an understanding. But all the same, the situation kept on continuously changing in some way or the other. What were the pressure? Somebody has asked: Who was not for an agreement? Obviously it is those who are more extreme. These extremists have always been there. They may not be the same extremists who are now shooting people. There were extremists within themselves. But once the extremists asserted themselves, it was not possible for the moderates to come to an agreement, however much they wished it. This was my assessment after talking with the Akalis that even though some were in favour of an agreement, there

would be pressure on them. There is no pressure on us. We knew how far we can go. Now as regards some issues, they concerned other States as well. We told the Akali leadership that if they could get together with the Haryana people, with the opposition parties there and with our party and sort out the matter, we would agree. But there exist more than one party. Somebody had quoted what one of our party members has said. It is true. We do not have that kind of monolithic rigidity as you have in your party. We do not want to have that kind of rigidity. But I must confess that this creates problems for us. I am not saying that it is an easy way. Everybody has his own view. Everybody expresses his own view. And unfortunately, when it is a question between State and State, then most people divide not according to their party but according to the States. We have seen this in many other States, whether it is a communal problem or whether it is a language problem.

I think somebody spoke about the police standing by. It is true that to some extent this has happened. It has happened in Haryana, it has happened in Punjab, it has happened in West Bengal and Assam and perhaps in other States. We are not happy about it. I am not saying this to blame the Opposition or to pick a quarrel with them. These are facts of life which we have to keep in view and which we must try to sort out together. We must try to build that kind of spirit of secularism. Not all the people who are in the Opposition are secular—I am sorry to say that. And I think you know it. I am not going into that.

I am grateful that Chaudhary Charan Singh—was less vitriolic than his usual self in his words. He blamed our Government in Kerala for taking the cooperation of the Muslim League. The first coalition was with the Marxists. But so far as the BLD, as it was then called, is concerned—I am told by my Muslim friends—they entered into a poll alliance with the Muslim Majlis to fight the

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UP Assembly elections in 1974. In 1977 the Muslim Majlis continued as members of the alliance and in the Janata Party they were treated as belonging to the Lok Dal faction. In the BLD quota I have the names of those who were there, but I do not think we need go into that. In 1979 when Chaudhary Saheb formed his government, he secured the official support of the Muslim League, and the President of the Muslim Majlis was taken as Communications Minister. I am not blaming anyone. I am just quoting these facts because of the attempt to project a different picture. In 1980 also both in the Parliament elections and later on in the U.P. elections, they fought together. So, this is how you can be eloquent, you can sound very right but when one digs below the surface, one finds that facts are quite different.

It is quite true that I have said that we would not force Hindi on the southern States. Why? Not because I do not love Hindi or I do not want the country to have one language; I think this is important for the whole of India. I believe strongly in the three-language formula. I think it is important to have Hindi as a national link language. I think it is important to have English as an international link language. In today's world we cannot get on without it, but it should not in any way denigrate the importance of Hindi. This is what we believe in and we have continuously tried to propagate. But what is the situation? The South feels strongly and you know what happened when there was a movement for Hindi in the North, and what the reaction was in the South? I went down there and talked to the students. When I arrived there, they were saying: 'Down, down, Hindi'. I said why don't we all meet together and say up, up Tamil, why say 'down' to anything? Let us have Tamil in your State but I would like you to learn Hindi also." Every time I have been to the South I have stressed this aspect. I am glad to say that a lot of people are learning Hindi even in Tamil Nadu. But they will not learn Hindi if they think that you are

forcing it down their throats. This is the point. They will learn it if they think it is useful to them, they will learn it if you have the proper books in Hindi that are worth reading. I do not mean that Hindi literature is not worth reading but I do mean that books on science, books on various modern subjects which are necessary today are not appearing in Hindi or in our regional languages. This is our great difficulty in promoting these languages. We have been giving them every encouragement but instead of just raising such slogans to have more Hindi, I wish people would interest themselves in getting original writings on these contemporary subjects, getting translations of modern books which come out. In Europe if a book comes out in any one language, within a month or so, it is translated in all other European languages. This is how those languages grow. They are not dependent on the other languages but we are dependent so far as various sophisticated subjects are concerned.

It is true that some people advised our entering the Gurdwara. I am not going to take names. I do not want to start a quarrel nor do I say that it is the entire Opposition but there are individuals in the Opposition who have been saying that we should enter the Gurdwara. I am entirely with the House that no place should be made a sanctuary for those who are wanted for any crime. No place should be allowed to collect arms. But in taking any action we have to calculate the repercussions. Will they be such as would destroy our very aim? That is why at every step we have to go a little slowly. You are blaming me for delaying matters but I can assure you that I have not delayed. There have hardly been a day in these years when I have not been in touch through somebody, when I have not been getting messages, sending messages, meeting people of the Opposition and trying to find some way out. We have done our best to resolve these issues in an amicable and constructive spirit.

I have not got up today, or at any time, to blame any party. My quarrel is not with any political party. It is not

with the Akali leadership. When we fought the British, we did not fight the British as a people; we fought imperialism, We made that distinction continuously.

Today our fight is with this type of extremism, this type of chauvinistic thinking, this type of sectarianism. It does not matter who practises it. It is somebody in my party, certainly that person will be punished. If it is somebody in another party, he also should be dealt with.

When I saw a particular leader of the Opposition, I told him of the posters which his party had brought out and pointed out that they were not conducive to communal harmony. That is why we were worried that there might be trouble and people might get excited. But fortunately, good arrangements were made. People also co-operated and the day passed off peacefully.

But I should like to ask the House, is it a good custom to have bandhs in this manner, whether it is the Government's or the Opposition? I am not going into this argument here...

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE :
Or the Congress Party.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE :
Whether it is in Karnataka or in Delhi.

SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI :
Anywhere.

“This is a question on which we can sit and come to an understanding. It is not we who started this business of bandhs. One can at least understand an opposition party having a bandh. But I am not able to understand how the Government can have a bandh against its Government. I think somewhere...

SHRI SATYASADHAN CHAKRABORTY : Sir, on a point of clarification. What happened when your party was in power in West Bengal? When Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy was the Chief Minister of West Bengal, the Government there organised bandh.

SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY : In Tamil Nadu it can be done.

SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI : I have earlier said it does not matter which party does it. Why do you get so excited?

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : It is nationalisation of the bandh.

SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI : I think the main purpose of this discussion was to condemn some of these unfortunate happenings. I add my voice to such condemnation. I think we all feel very strongly. I have spoken of how criminals are sheltered, the arms collection, the killings, putting people on the ‘hit list’ and shooting absolutely innocent people one by one. It is rightly pointed out that even in the Punjab most of the people killed, I think were Sikhs.

MR. SPEAKER : No.

SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI : I stand corrected. But a number were Nirankaris and others. Now take the latest murder of a young man. He did not have a beard and that was the only reason. I do not know him at all. I only know what I have read in the papers and what I have been told.

MR. SPEAKER : His real brother was with him.

SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI : His real brother was with him and he had a turban and a beard. We condemn all such things.

We equally condemn what has happened in Haryana. It is a matter of shame that any mob should work itself into this

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kind of frenzy and indulge in such acts. I agree that it is no excuse to say that it was a reaction.

It may have been a reaction, but now we must move out of these attitudes where we have such reactions. This is where we seek the cooperation of all the Opposition. If they want to blame me, Sir, let them. I have faced blame and opposition since I was three or four years old, from the time of our freedom struggle.

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE : We were not there then.

SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI : You were not there, but I was. And I have faced it not from you at that time but from others like you. Whatever it is, I am only saying that I am used to it. It does not bother me. But it does bother me when in a moment of such grave crisis you are more concerned with blaming rather than with finding a way out. This is what is worrying me.

On the very first day, this House has expressed its deep sympathy and condolences with the families of these who have lost their lives. I think we should once again express those sentiments. Our hearts are also with all those who have suffered in other ways whether because their religious symbols have been desecrated or for whatever reason. Perhaps in other parts of the world such matters do not have much meaning, but for Indians they do. So, regardless of which religion we belong to or do not belong to, we should be understanding and sympathetic towards the religious feelings of others. Therefore, to them also we express our deepest sympathy. Let us join in a strong desire to work for a society where this sort of a thing does not happen. Sir, we need to take this whole problem above the political plan. But, unfortunately politics has come into it.

Somebody has said we should have a broader base. In an election, some win and some lose. If the person who loses says that he will not wait until the next election but must have some government post immediately, then our type of democracy cannot last. This matter has to be considered. (*Interruptions*). No, a Presidential system will not solve the problem because elections to Parliament will remain and should remain.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : We are not asking portfolios for the Opposition.

SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI : Well, I don't know what you are asking for. I don't mean you personally.

AN HON. MEMBER : Power without portfolio.

SHRIMATI PRAMILA DANDAVATE : Why is Bhindrawale not arrested ?

SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI : I think that is pretty obvious to everybody. The question is whether one should enter the Golden Temple : in what manner should one enter and so on. These are not things which can be discussed here.

AN HON. MEMBER : Why did he come to Delhi ?

SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI : The police slipped up. For myself I can assure the House that we had ordered his arrest. I don't know when and why he came to Delhi. We hoped he would be arrested in Bombay. That is where the warrant had been issued.

Sir, I don't want to take more time of the House, but I should like to repeat that the real point which we have to stress is how to keep vigilant. I know the Opposition Members sometimes get irritated when I talk of the wider aspects.

But I don't believe that these problems in India are isolated incidents. Some aspects are local, some are national and some are international. But any kind of divisive atmosphere gives opportunity for outside interference. I have no doubt that such interference does take place, such provocation does take place. I have earlier said that this is so not only within India. I do not feel that there are elements which do not want this sub-continent to cooperate and to speak with one voice on various problems. So it does not. There are powerful elements whom it does not suit that we should be strong. By 'we' I mean not only India, but our region. You can see it in global economic policies and in the many pressures that are put on developing countries. India is not unique in this. India is not the only one which suffers. But India can stand up because we are big. We can stand up because we have a tradition; we can stand up because the whole nature of our freedom fight was such that we still have the flame of freedom in us. It is not so easy for smaller countries. That is the reason why the people look to us. It is not something for us to be proud of or to boast about. We consider other developing countries as our partners and I hope they consider us as their partners. But they know that we can speak up on various issues where they themselves could get into great trouble. These are the wide questions we face. In trying to always bring the debate down to a low level, I do not think we are serving our country or our people.

Once again my plea is that no matter what our differences—we obviously will always have them, we would not be sitting on opposite sides if we did not have them, many of you who are sitting together also have differences, they may not surface now, but nevertheless we know that they are there and you know that they are there—but the question is that in spite of these differences, we should see on what items can we get together, on what times can we show to the world that we are united.

Prof. Dandavate said something about

the British Parliament sitting during the war and our Parliament during the Bangladesh war. There is a big difference. At that time we were united against an outside force; this time there may be an invisible outside force, but we are not in a war. Here, the fight, the quarrel, is amongst ourselves and once a quarrel takes on this kind of communal overtones, we know from experience how a little word can be misinterpreted and spark off a fire. I have seen communal riots sparking not today, but way back in the thirties in the U.P. Two boys on bicycles collide. If they are both Hindus, nothing happens; if they are both Muslims, nothing happens. But if one happens to be a Hindu and one happens to be a Muslim, in no time trouble can start. When you have this atmosphere, then you have to be much more careful than in any other situation. I do not know whether all of us have a communal streak. Sometimes it seems the secularism is only skin-deep with some of us. Unless we combine to root out this evil from our country, we shall not be able to go ahead in any direction and this Parliament will not be serving its real duty. As somebody said, we are here, each of us is elected from one constituency, but once we come to Parliament we represent the nation, we do not merely represent one region or constituency. So it is with this attitude that we should function.

Sir, I have taken much of your time, I meant to speak only for a few minutes, but I do feel very strong on this issue, I have spoken up on communalism before. I think that many of my own personal troubles have arisen because of this forthrightness. For a long time I have been the target of attack, but I shall continue to speak up because this is the biggest divisive factor in our country and if the country is divided, then the country cannot be strong and if the country is not strong, obviously we cannot guard our freedom or anything else.

SHRI BHOGENDRA JHA (Madhubani): Mr. Speaker, Sir, we were expecting the Prime Minister to spell out some positive steps that he proposes to take or that will help to solve the problem