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PREFACE

**REPLY ON MOTION OF THANKS ON
THE PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS**

5 April, 1977

Madam Chairman, while replying to the debate on the President's Address, I would like to take care to see that I am not provoked into using a language which was used by my hon. friend, Shri Sathe, or even by the hon. the Leader of the Opposition. I do not want to set a wrong example from this side of the House. But, if members of the Opposition make provocative speeches and if replies are given to those speeches by members on this side, I do not think that there can be any legitimate cause for complaint. It would only be proper if neither this side nor that side uses any derogatory language against anybody or nobody makes uncharitable remarks which are not consistent with anybody's self-respect. That is what I would beg of all the members of this House to do. I hope I will not fail in setting an example in this matter.

I was, therefore, pained to hear the Leader of the Opposition comparing Janata Party to a strange animal. I wish he had not used those words. I do not want to retaliate. We are all strange animals in one sense. Ultimately we belong to the animal species. But man is different from an animal in the sense that man has more discretion and intelligence which animals do not have. But if we forget that, then we relapse into animal terminology. I hope that will not be done in the future. That is all I beg of him to do.

I was also surprised because even in spite of his experience of many years as a member of the Government that he should have used such language. The new experience he is now having of sitting on the Opposition Benches for the first time in his life is rich experience which I had sometime ago and by which I benefited and I am sure he will also benefit but it will take some time for him and his colleagues because they are not very easily corrigible. They do not follow the system of self-introspection. That is where the difficulty comes in. I hope they will do so now. Then the improvement will be quick. But who am I to improve them? It is not for me to do that. It is for them to think about it.

But I was surprised when he said that nothing was said in the President's Address about the economic programme. I do not know whether he cared to hear it or to read it afterwards. We have very clearly stated what the policy of Government will be in regard to economic programmes. Does he realise that

we hardly got even two days to prepare the Address after assumption of office and in that did he expect that we formulate detailed programmes? I do not know if he has the capacity. At least I do not have it. But we have mentioned what requires to be done and what we are going to do. We will be judged only by what we do in future and we will certainly welcome all criticism in this matter if we fail in our undertaking and we will not try to retaliate as they are trying to do. And yet, it is said that we are retaliating. Where are we retaliating? At least I have not done so. I was surprised when my hon. friend, Shri Sathe or rather, I should not be surprised because I know him very well.

I have never heard anything else from him in this House during the years he was here and I was on the other side. What he referred to had happened 21 years ago. He is not bothered about what happened 21 months ago but he does not mind mentioning and repeating *ad nauseam* what happened 21 years ago. I have replied to him in this very House from the Opposition Benches and let him refresh his memory from the records of this debate. I will not, therefore, reply him here. I have said what I have to say not on one occasion but on several occasions and still he goes on repeating these matters after 21 years in the knowledge that he is not distorting facts.

He quotes from my autobiography. I am very happy that he did to me the honour of reading it at any rate. But I am sorry that he has only looked at some controversial points which have little relevance here and he did not have the courtesy to read the whole thing together. Apart from that it would be wrong for me to say that he misappropriated the time of the House. He went on speaking even though the Chair asked him to cut short his speech. But then he objected to other people interjecting whereas some Member on this side spoke, he began to interject. Is that the way how he will set a good example? May I request him to have more patience now as he is in the Opposition. I could not restrain him before nor do I wish to restrain him now. It is difficult for anybody to restrain him. Even it was not possible for Mrs. Gandhi to restrain him when he spoke from this side. I know that. He spoke anything that he liked. Let him do so. It will hurt him. It does not hurt me. But in this House if I do like wise, will not somebody be justified in paying me back in the same coin. How would I complain about that? But he goes on complaining about us.

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See what happened in Delhi. Who burnt it, who bulldozed it? It was the Administration of the past Government which did it. I do not want to say that the former Prime Minister did it. I do not know who did it. But it was done in her regime. Therefore, that regime has to be blamed. The buildings were bulldozed without any proper notice. Notice of a few hours! Is that the way to deal with the people? Have I ever dealt with like that? I am sorry my hon. friend tries to compare those happenings with the happenings of Emergency. Delhi was burning. How did it happen?

I am glad he recognised it, that there was a meeting attended by five lakhs of people. Of course the police report at that time was that it was attended by only 50,000. I am glad that the knowledge has dawned on him today, that they were 5 lakhs. But what does that show? That shows the feelings of the people, and the feelings of those who attended; otherwise they would not have attended it. We were not in Government. We were non-officials. How would people have come there? We had no money to bring them in trucks. They came on their own and they heard us patiently. And it is objected to on the ground that we declared Satyagraha there. Does he understand what Satyagraha means? I don't know whether he has ever practised Satyagraha. I don't know whether he is capable of practising Satyagraha. Satyagraha does not mean that any force can be used by anybody. I would be the last person to do it. If anybody were to do it. I would certainly protest about it. He referred to Gujarat happenings. Who were responsible for those happenings? It is these Congress people, not the opposition, who have encouraged them, and gave money to the young people. Who protested about it? I protested and said that they should never do any wrong thing and if they persisted then I will have to sacrifice my life. And it was therefore that I undertook a fast to stop violence and to stop other things also.

Therefore, it is not for my learned friend to advise me. I only hope he takes a lesson from this. That is all that I hope. I do not know whether my hope is too much. At any rate one could hope for the best and be prepared for the worst!

Let us not, in our anxiety to defend the indefensible, say things which unnecessarily cause repercussions. When he said that people were fired upon like that, does he realise that Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru phoned to me that very evening when the riot started in Bombay and asked me to call the military; to call the tanks but asked me to finish it as quickly as I can. I told him. I am very

sorry. I won't call the military. If I had called the military the casualties would have been five times of what they were, and the police would have lost their morale. I did not want to use maximum force. I wanted to have minimum force. I told him that if I was not able to control it in two days I would resign and get out of Government but I will not call the military. This is what I had told him. Therefore, please be careful about what you say.

After all, I would not find fault with any Government if they meet violence with force. I would not find fault with any Government for that matter. I would not find fault with the post Government. Government has to use force to suppress violence. I have always said that. I will say it even now. But when there is no violence why should force be used? I cannot understand this. These are the standing instructions. They were the standing instructions when I was there and even now when I am here.

There was a strike going in Madras the other day soon after we took charge. The Governor phoned to me. They said, they are doing dharnas, not allowing people to do their work. I told him, if they do it and there is no violence, don't use any force, no tear-gas, no lathi-charge. You can arrest them and prosecute them. These are the instructions which I gave. These are the instructions of this Government.

But, if some State Governments which are not under our control do something, I will not be responsible for it. But we will certainly take action to see that that does not happen. That I can certainly assure you.

Then, the hon. the leader of the Opposition said—that we had not mentioned any programme. I would refer him only to page 3 from the second paragraph onwards. The programme has been given. But, does he expect that we can spell it out immediately? Did they spell it out their Twenty-point programme? They only said twenty-points and, like mantras, they went on repeating all the while and nothing was spelt out. I have not objected to any of them. They said twenty-five and then it became twelve in their manifesto. That is the tragedy of it. What is the use of saying all these? I have gone into it very deeply. I do not neglect whatever comes from you. I want to benefit from it if I can. That is all I would like to add.

Therefore, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would only beg my friends to have more patience in this matter and not to compare the Janata Party to a strange animal. I hope more restraint will be observed in future. That is all

I expect. If it does not, I shall go on using restraint from my side. That I can assure him. We have started implementing our professions and the Leader of the Opposition will be broadcasting to the nation today. He did not ask for it. We have requested him to do it. Is that not true?

This is what we are going to do. Indeed I had mentioned and I can assure my hon. friend, Shri Sathe also that if he has any complaint about any administrative actions resulting in any oppression, I would request him to tell me. I can assure him that all grievances capable of redress would be looked into. That is the attitude of this Government in the matter of law and order, in the matter of economic order, in the matter of social order and in the matter of administration. We have, mentioned all these things. But we cannot put details into that address. That is what ought to be appreciated. They wish that the Janata Party will break up—this is what the Leader of the Opposition said that the Janata Party will break-up in no time and that it cannot last. If wishes were horses, then everybody will ride on them. It is not possible. As a matter of fact, it is the wrong desire that leads to the downfall of the people. That has happened. That is the tragedy of it.

Let us take a lesson from it and not have wrong desires. After all, how will it benefit the Opposition? If he thinks that the two party system should function and if it is good for democracy, should we not wish that this should last? If you defeat this party legitimately when the occasion comes I will not resist. Even if they so desire the Janata Party will not break up. I do not know what will happen in the future. But I only hope and trust that this wish will not be fulfilled. This will not benefit him at all. He said that they have been defeated. It is true that the people declared themselves against the Emergency and therefore they had been defeated. If we had not won, then how are we here? I do not know if the people did not prefer us to them, how would we have got the votes? I cannot understand this which is such a simple matter. I never thought that he was not using his common sense in this matter. I am afraid if his desire is to see that the Janata Party goes out he will be in possession of office, this is an indiscreet statement. That is all I can say.

Sir, as long as the Janata Party is in Government, we will see to it that we will establish democratic traditions by our behaviour not by asking other people to do it if our performance falls short of the expectations. I shall be thankful to the Leader of the Opposition to point it out to me or for that matter any member of the opposition can point that out to me so that we can

improve upon it. No man is wise enough not to learn from others. And that was the fault committed by the previous Government. That was the fault committed, and I may be pardoned if I say, by the then Prime Minister. If that had not happened, then all that happened would not have happened. But whatever happened is for the best in my view. If sufferings come, they come to chasten us. And it is then that we can improve. Even three years ago, I told my friend that what is happening is for the good of the country. This country would not have learnt a lesson until it suffered. We got freedom very easily because of Mahatma Gandhi. I have always felt that we did not pay sufficient price and therefore, this country did not realise the value of freedom. We had to pay a price. We have paid that price during the last twenty months and I hope we will not have to pay a further price now. At any rate we will see to it that we will not extract any price from the Opposition. Let me assure the Opposition. That is not our intention to do so. If any price is to be paid, we will pay it, but we will not make others pay it. That will be our attitude in his matter. What do we want? I am quite sure our aims are common. I do not doubt that they also want to see that this country becomes great, happy, strong and to help the human society to be happy. That is our aim. I am quite sure the aims are common. But aims may be anything. Unless the means are pure, nothing can be free from blemish. That is what the Father of the Nation taught us. It is possible that we will make mistakes. After all, we are not angels nor can we say that we have no faults. All have faults. But let us not try to take advantage of faults of each other but try to help each other in removing them. If we do that, I am quite sure the future of the country is very good. I have no doubt that it has been my faith for years that this country cannot go down, it is bound to go up and become happy and in the terms of Mahatma Gandhi, it would establish "*Ram Raj*". If that happens in this country, then we will be able to be of some service to the world in creating those conditions by our example. We do not have to advise other people or to give sermons to other people. It is enough if we serve ourselves by promoting peace and goodwill in the world. Well, that will be our foreign policy. Of course, there is difference in the foreign policy of non-alignment. Non-alignment must be there. It is not a policy which is in doubt, but sometimes aberrations enter in that policy. We will try to see that aberrations will not come. That is all that we can say. I don't say that formerly aberrations had come deliberately or by mischief. That is not my contention at all. But I would say that in human efforts, sometimes weaknesses do come. We have got to guard against them and that is what we are trying to learn by experience.

Non-alignment can be practised only if there is freedom from fear and fortunately this country passed through such fears in the last twenty months that I can never compare this condition to any other conditions in the history of this country. But we have got to live it down. We have got now to see that such fear does not recur again in this country. We must have freedom from fear in this country. Otherwise, we will not grow at all. If anything has plagued us in this country, it is this fear which has plagued us and it is that which comes in the way of development on all sides. Unless we are able to restore this freedom from fear in this country, all our efforts at development are not going to succeed and in that common endeavour of removing that fear, I would appeal to my friends in the Opposition to help us in seeing that fear is removed from the minds of the people at large. But that can happen only when we ourselves shed fear. We are not afraid if we have to get out of this Government. That was the fear from which the past Government suffered. It was, therefore, that emergency came; otherwise Emergency would not have come. And my friend, the Leader of the Opposition has said that this was a vote against emergency. Can there be a greater criticism of it than that? And who had supported the Emergency very strongly? He himself. But I suppose he was not free to do otherwise. It is that freedom which we want to restore to everybody not only here but to all of you. This is what we would like to do. There will be no democracy unless there is freedom from fear and it is this which we have got to restore and everything that we have will be directed towards that end.

Therefore, I want my hon. friend, Shri Sathe, to be free from fear. But I also want him to be free from bravado; Bravado does not give fearlessness. It brings for him more fear. Therefore, may I suggest to him to see this. If he does not wish to see it, I shall have no quarrel with him. I have not considered him as anything but a friend. I know that when I was in the Opposition benches he was talking to me very freely. But when it came to speaking here he spoke in a different language. Now, this is what we ought to avoid. I know he will want to say one thing and then say another thing. Even now in his speech here I saw that. He respects me and also condemns me. Both things are done.

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We ought to be more careful about it that there should be fearlessness in practising truth. If that is not realised, I am afraid we will never acquire freedom from fear.

I do not want, Sir, to take up time of this honourable House because I do not see there was much criticism of what is done because there is not much done yet. Things are being done. Therefore, how can there be much criticism? The criticism is only in the air and I have nothing to reply about it. I have only to appeal to my hon. friends to see that we work together in cooperation. That does not mean that they should not criticise us. We welcome every criticism that you make. But let us make in such a manner that we don't hurt each other. That is all my request, Sir. Thank you.

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BACK NOTE

Reply on Motion of Thanks on the President's Address. 5 April, 1977

1 SHRI VASANT SATHE: I quoted facts. I quoted from the debate.

SHRI MORARJI DESAI: I do not know whether my hon. friend has any regard for facts. Does he ever bother about facts, I do not know?

SHRI VASANT SATHE: You said, "Do not forget? Let memories be sharp".

SHRI MORARJI DESAI: Now he is getting excited like that. He complains about people having been shot in Bombay. I had said he does not bother about facts. That is all right. Why restrain him if he does not wish to restrain himself.

Does he realise that in Bombay, all the members of my party, the majority of whom were Maharashtrians, never raised a protest before me about what had happened in all those years. Was that not a sufficient support for what had happened? He was nowhere at that time. Twenty years ago, I do not know what he was and what he was doing. Let him learn a lesson from that as also from the leader of the Opposition. Let him ask him whether he had told me that I had done wrong. Then he will be justified in saying what he is saying. Therefore, what I did at that time was not done without pain. But I was forced to do that. That is, the police were forced to do it. It was not that I went and gave orders. Of course, it is true, that if I had said that, no police man would have fired. Then no one should have fired. That is true.

I do not deny that responsibility. But what had happened then? The whole of the Bombay city would have been finished. Nothing else would have remained in Bombay city if it had not been done. Who did it? It was done by the Maharashtrian officers. It was not done by anybody else.

2 SHRI VASANT SATHE: Is it not freedom from fear?

SHRI MORARJI DESAI: This is not freedom from fear. This is freedom from truth. Therefore, let us be more careful about it.

3. SHRI O.V. ALAGESAN: I am going to ask the Government to give a categorical assurance that they will continue the work of the Sarkaria Commission. Will the Prime Minister be pleased to say something on it? That is what I want.

SHRI MORARJI DESAI: May I say, Sir, that the Sarkaria Commission's work is going on? It is not complete and I cannot take any definite action unless that is complete and I have requested Mr. Sarkaria to complete his work as soon as it is possible and he has said that he will do it in four months.

**STATEMENT REGARDING PARTICIPATION
IN COMMONWEALTH PRIME MINISTERS'
CONFERENCE IN LONDON**

17 June, 1977

Sir, as the House is aware, I returned this morning after attending the meeting of the Commonwealth Heads of Government. In this tour I also stopped off for a few hours in Tehran at the invitation of His Imperial Majesty Shahanshah¹ and for a day in Paris as guest of the President of France. Both of them are old and valued friends with whom I was very happy to renew friendships. In my discussions we were able to advance the cause of mutual collaboration and cooperation in matters of common concern and we found a great deal of similarity of approach to world problems particularly those pertaining to energy.

This was my first trip abroad after the assumption of office by our Government. It was a matter of great satisfaction to find that following our democratic elections and the orderly change of Government, the esteem and prestige of India had not only been restored but demonstrably enhanced in the international community. In my talks not only with the Shahanshah, the leaders of the British Government and those of France, but also with other Heads of Government attending the Commonwealth Conference, in the contacts with the press media and indeed with people in all walks of life. There was admiration for the maturity of the Indian people in their dedication and commitment to the democratic system of Government. When questioned, on various occasions, I pointed out that the tradition of democracy was rooted in the ancient civilization of India. Foreign rule and such aberrations like the period of 'Emergency' were contrary to our values and our national ethos. The elections have shown that in the final instance the Indian people have an inherent moral courage to judge and elect their own rulers without fear. Privately and publicly, I assured all concerned that the new Government of India, buoyed by the trust of the Indian people are totally dedicated to the principles of democracy and would ensure that our constitutional principles can never again be perverted. In turn, I was told that the extraordinary courage and sagacity of the Indian people was an asset and an encouragement to like-minded people all over the world. I, therefore, regard whatever success I achieved and attention and respect I received, as a tribute to our people who proclaimed to the whole world through their verdict, their faith in democratic values, their disapproval

¹ Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi

of authoritarianism and their judgment and capacity to choose a Government which they could trust to serve them.

The Conference of Heads of Government of the Commonwealth was held in London after a lapse of eight years. The Commonwealth is, I would emphasise, an association of independent States, entirely free in their internal and external policies, some still owing allegiance to the British Crown, others with monarchies of their own and some like ourselves with a purely republican constitution, but all free to express themselves as suits the interests of their own country and motivated by securing a consensus on problems of their common concern.

The Commonwealth, as the House is aware, is a multi-racial and multi-continental community of nations representing one quarter of mankind, some rich and strong, others small and weak. But all recognise the logic of interdependence and commonality of interests. In population, India represents more than half of its total number of inhabitants. Unlike the United Nations, the Commonwealth is not structured or governed by elaborate procedures. It mirrors the diversity of the entire community of nations, but has a character of informality and tradition of cooperation which is perhaps unique. The Commonwealth as it is now constituted, thus provides the kind of balance which we want to see in the world and is an institution which can in course of time set the pattern for a Commonwealth of the whole world.

The Conference met under the Chairmanship of my old friend and Prime Minister of U.K. Mr. James Callaghan. He proved [to be] an admirable Chairman whose bonhomie, cheerful disposition, balance approach to the various issues that came up were contributory to the evolution of a common outlook and approach that underlie the decisions that were reached. I found in him and all the other Heads of Government or leaders of the various countries a keen desire to take a constructive attitude and come together, rather than drift apart. The problems discussed were such sensitive subjects as those of Human Rights, Southern Africa, Indian Ocean, North-South economic relationship, the problems of developing countries, in all of which there could have been valid reasons for differences of opinion. But as the result of the deliberations embodied in the communiqué which were issued at the end would show, all of us showed willingness to reach a consensus without sacrifice of the national viewpoints.

We participated actively in the discussions on subjects, particularly the review of the international situation, Southern Africa and world economic problems. In the socio-economic context, we highlighted the relevance and significance of evolving and adopting technologies appropriate to the social and economic conditions obtaining in the developing countries. We emphasised that the role of machines was to assist man in increasing his productivity and not make him their slave. We pointed out that development effort and economic progress should focus on the small and the poor and not to astray by the lure of the big and the grandiose. The crucial need for solving the problems of food production, storage and distribution and implementing our integrated programme of rural development and industrialisation were effectively brought out in our statements.

The communiqué issued in London day-before-yesterday which must have received the attention of Honourable Members already, reflects the range of subjects and the depth of discussions, and the broad consensus reached at the conference. It covers all major international problems like Southern Africa, the Middle East, Indian Ocean, Cyprus, and the widening gap between rich and poor nations and makes practical recommendations on economic, trade and functional cooperation within the commonwealth.

A number of Commonwealth countries were greatly concerned over the question of Human Rights in relation to Uganda. The Singapore Declaration of Principles adopted by the Commonwealth Heads of Government in 1971, affirmed the belief of all Commonwealth Government in fundamental rights and respect for human dignity and equality. As the House is only too well aware, we are fully committed to these principles, while the discussions on this subject at the conference were not without differences of opinion; a broadly acceptable formulation was eventually worked out in keeping with the Commonwealth traditions.

It would, I think, be appropriate at this stage to pay tribute to the work of the Commonwealth Secretariat, now under the able leadership of Mr. Ramphal², formerly Foreign Minister of Guyana. Apart from the many activities of the Secretariat to maintain the diverse professional and institutional links among Commonwealth countries and its innovative role in expanding intra-Commonwealth cooperation, the Secretariat has taken very creditable initiatives in the field of economic cooperation among the Commonwealth

² Sir Shridath 'Sonny' Ramphal of Guyana-Secretary General of the Commonwealth (1975 - 1990)

countries. By international standards, the Commonwealth Secretariat's efforts to promote such cooperation have shown beneficial results at comparatively low cost. We in India have been glad not only to contribute to this cooperative programme, but have also benefited from it, especially in our trade promotion efforts.

Besides the deliberations of the conference, the great value of the gathering was that it provided an opportunity for informal and bilateral contacts with so many distinguished leaders of Commonwealth Governments. Apart from renewing my friendship with the British Prime Minister, Mr. Callaghan, I had purposeful discussions with the President of Bangladesh about our regional and bilateral problems. Both President Zia and I agreed that it was in our national and common interests that our relations should be built on the logic of good neighbourly cooperation. With the Canadian Prime Minister, we reviewed the problems which had come up in the way of our harmonious relations and agreed that within the framework of our respective national policies, efforts should be made so that beneficial cooperation in the field of peaceful uses of nuclear science and technology can be resumed and the old tradition of Indo-Canadian friendship revived. The Prime Minister of Australia and I felt that from their respective geographic vantage points the Commonwealth Governments of Asia and the Pacific might, with advantage, establish closer contacts in a region where they share common interests. Similarly, from my conversations with President Kaunda of Zambia, Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam of Mauritius, and other leaders of African nations on the one hand and the Prime Minister of Jamaica and the leaders of the Caribbean on the other, I sensed that Commonwealth countries cherished their relationships with India and expressed a firm desire to intensify and enlarge the established avenues of our cooperation. The Foreign Minister, Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, separately met many of his colleagues, and like myself came away with the impression that every Commonwealth partner sought not merely to maintain but to strengthen its relations with the new Government of India. In his conversations he also covered many important issues concerning our bilateral relations with various Commonwealth countries.

This visit also provided me with opportunities to meet a large number of representatives of the Indian community residing in the United Kingdom and also of the world press and media. Everywhere a new kind of interest in India was now evident. Whether it was the Indian community or the media,

there is a feeling of renewed faith and expectation from democratic India. In the largely attended meeting of the Indian community which was held in London on 12th June, on behalf of our people, I responded with warmth to the dedicated and emotional interest which they have in the land of their birth. At the same time, I called upon them to be worthy of the traditions of this ancient land by winning respect through genuinely motivated efforts towards social adjustment with the people of the country of their present domicile.

Sir, this visit vividly conveyed to me that almost every country sought not only the friendship of our country, but would, I believe, rejoice at our political triumph and our economic achievements. There was no Commonwealth country which, after understanding the policies to which the present Government is pledged, looks upon India with malice or indulges in any unwarranted criticism towards our national objectives. It is recognised that the policy of true non-alignment as enunciated and practised by us not only serves our interests but makes India a coveted partner in their own network of relationships and their view of a stable world order. However, we know only too well that the role we can play in the international forums will ultimately depend on our domestic strength and the progress we make towards economic, scientific and technological self-reliance.

As mentioned earlier, I met His Imperial Majesty the Shahanshah of Iran in Tehran. During the discussions, the Foreign Minister and I had the pleasure of meeting Prime Minister Hoveyda and Foreign Minister Khalatbari. Our discussions were wide ranging in scope and gave abundant proof of Iran's goodwill and the abiding vitality and potential of our collaboration. Moreover, we agreed that our countries have shared interest in the stability and progress of the region to which we both belong.

Similarly, the stopover in Paris on the way back at the request of the President of France accorded to me another opportunity to discuss a number of issues of common interest. My conversations with President Giscard d'Estaing and Prime Minister Barre were extremely friendly and reinforced the prospects of our close and beneficial relations with France.

Questions relating to the use of nuclear energy in the context of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons were raised with me in many conversations. I had the opportunity of reaffirming our position, which had been made clear on many occasions, both in this country and outside, that we are interested in developing nuclear energy for peaceful purposes only.

Sir, we have wider options to develop beneficial relations with the community of nations than ever in the past. In the last three months since we assumed office, within the framework of the positive thrust of non-alignment, we have assured old friends of our abiding commitments and repaired estranged relationships, both near and far. We can claim that our neighbours have greater trust in our friendship and the sub-continent as a whole is less disturbed by tensions and more inclined to cooperation. The Commonwealth Conference and this trip abroad provided me with an opportunity to affirm to the leaders from all parts of the world that this Government of India, sustained in the exhilaration of the trust of its people and inspired once again by the vision and idealism of Gandhiji, will be second to none in its commitment to a world at peace striving towards international social justice.

Altogether, this opportunity of meeting the Heads of more than thirty Commonwealth countries, the Shahanshah of Iran and the President and Prime Minister of France, proved that India commands great goodwill and respect in the international community.

BACK NOTE

**Statement Regarding participation in Commonwealth
Prime Ministers' Conference in London. 17 June, 1977**

- NIL-

STATEMENT REGARDING VISIT TO USSR

14 November, 1977

Mr. Speaker Sir, as the House is aware, I visited the Soviet Union at the invitation of the Soviet leaders extended on their behalf by His Excellency the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the CPSU, President of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union, Mr. Brezhnev¹. I left India on October 21 and returned on the morning of October 27. During my stay in the Soviet Union, I also visited the Black Sea town of Sochi and the capital of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Kiev. The Minister of External Affairs, Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee accompanied me on this visit. Throughout this visit, wherever we went, we were received with warmth and courtesy which exceeded the protocol requirements.

During our stay in Moscow, we had two plenary discussions with the Soviet leaders led by General Secretary Mr. Brezhnev. I also had several informal talks with the Soviet leadership. The exchange of views covered our bilateral relations and dealt on various important international questions. Though, by their very nature, such conversations must be treated as confidential, I have no hesitation in sharing with the House that our discussions were characterised by utmost frankness and cordiality. They revealed mutual appreciation of each other's points of views and a common determination to preserve and strengthen our cooperation and friendship based on mutual respect and equality to serve the enlightened interests of both countries.

For me, this was not my first visit to the Soviet Union. I had visited Moscow and some other cities in the Soviet Union in 1960. Going after 17 years, as I did, I was impressed by the economic and social progress in the places I visited.

When the Janata Government came to power, there were many who believed that Indo-Soviet relations would suffer as a consequence of the change of Government in India. This was not our expectation: the visit has vindicated our faith that notwithstanding differences in our social and political system and approaches on some issues our relationship has in no way suffered. On the contrary, on the principle of promoting beneficial bilateral relations, I believe, there are possibilities of healthy development in the cooperation between the

¹ Leonid Ilyich Brezhnev

two countries in the future. As the Declaration signed by President Brezhnev and myself, acknowledges, Indo-Soviet relations have stood the test of time. It is a relationship which need in no way be feared by any nation as it is anchored in the principles of peaceful co-existence which have universal applicability.

I particularly welcomed this visit as it gave me the opportunity for establishing personal contacts with the Soviet leaders and I have no doubt this could be of great advantage in preserving our relations and correcting misunderstandings which may ever arise amongst us.

Indo-Soviet cooperation has a continuing momentum over many fields: the processes have never been allowed to slacken. During my visit no new technical or economic questions arose because we felt that these could best be discussed at the level of experts. The Declaration, however, mentions that delegations of experts from Soviet Union are likely to visit India in the near future to explore ways and means of further strengthening technical, economic and scientific cooperation between the two countries and thereafter the proposals could be processed through the Indo-Soviet Joint Commission. As the House is aware, there is an Indo-Soviet Joint Commission for Technical, Economic and Scientific Cooperation. The level of this Commission has been recently raised. The Minister of External Affairs will be the Indian Co-Chairman of this Commission and the Soviet Deputy Prime Minister; His Excellency Mr. Arkhipov will be the Soviet Co-Chairman. The Joint Commission will hold its next session sometime early next year in New Delhi.

I have invited President Brezhnev and Chairman Kosygin² to visit India. They have accepted this invitation. Dates for this visit will be decided later.

In conclusion, I would like to state that this visit confirms the essential continuity of India's relationship with the Soviet Union which in turn reinforces our commitment to the principles of peaceful co-existence, non-alignment and friendship in promoting international stability. The visit has in fact given a dimension of stability and strength to Indo-Soviet relationship. The results have been welcomed in our country and in the USSR and I would think the maturity with which it has been reaffirmed will make it an important factor in promoting détente and widening the search for international peace. Both countries have also acknowledged that the relationship does not in any way come in the way of development of relationship with other countries which are motivated by

²Alexei Kosygin

similar objectives of promoting peace and the strengthening of understanding between nations. In brief, the Indo-Soviet relations, as I said in Moscow, can now be looked upon as a model for any two countries to emulate.

BACK NOTE

Statement Regarding visit to USSR. 14 November, 1977

- NIL -

**STATEMENT REGARDING AGREEMENT BETWEEN INDIA AND
BANGLADESH ON SHARING OF THE GANGA
WATERS AT FARAKKA**

14 November, 1977

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Hon'ble Member of this House would have gathered from the press that an agreement between India and Bangladesh on the sharing of the Ganga Waters at Farakka and on augmenting its flows was finally negotiated and signed at the Ministerial Level in Dacca¹ on the 5th November, 1977. I place on the Table of the House a copy of the Agreement which, in accordance with the understanding reached with the Bangladesh Government, was released upon its signature. I must crave the indulgence of the House for the length of this statement. Apart from the importance and the complexity of the problems raised during the negotiations, I have to cover in it most of the criticism which has been voiced regarding this Agreement and consequently it has become necessary to explain the position in its historical perspective and the facts involved. The historic nature of the Agreement and its extraordinary significance for relations between India and Bangladesh and for sub-continental politics have been recognised almost universally abroad and by broad sections of public opinion in India. With the signing of this Agreement and its simultaneous entry into force a major problem which had bedeviled relations between the two countries and vitiated the political atmosphere in the subcontinent for over 25 years has been resolved.

The Hon'ble Members are aware of the long history and complexity of the Farakka problem. The issues involved in the negotiations of the Agreement effected political, economic and cultural interests and sensitivities on both sides. We were seeking to ensure that while not reducing the flows available for flushing the Hooghly below a reasonable limit, arrangements were made at the same time for augmenting the flows in order to adequately meet our upstream and downstream requirements. From the Bangladesh side it was argued that they had to protect the existing consumptive uses and avoid adverse effects on the country's ecology and economy in the future. They further contended that in order to preserve the ecological balance the entire flow of 55,000 cusecs during the leanest period of the dry season should be maintained uninterrupted. The negotiations were necessarily complicated and protracted in order to reconcile these disparate and conflicting objectives from both sides.

¹Also known as Dhaka.

The negotiating problem was further compounded because international law on the rights of riparian is yet to be codified and thus there is no universally recognised criterion to go by in determining equitable sharing. Even though the Helsinki Rules of 1966, which have received broad acceptance by countries as a model of international law, mention some factors to be taken into account, it has been generally recognised that considering the unique features of each international river, equitable sharing can be determined only through bilateral (or multi-lateral) negotiations between the riparian States concerned. And in bilateral negotiations of this nature, it is not possible to arrive at an agreement on the basis of a precise quantitative determination of the rights and entitlements of each co-riparian. A settlement through negotiations is essentially an exercise in the art of compromising from extreme positions taken by the negotiating parties. In this case it involved balancing between differing uses and priorities in the utilisation of waters. The initial position of Bangladesh was the maintenance of the historical flow which amounted to a lower riparian exercising a veto on utilisation of waters by the upper riparian. India's initial position was to be able to withdraw an optimum flow of 40,000 cusecs in order to have maximum beneficial effect for the restoration of the Hooghly river to its normal health and thus for the preservation and improvement of the Calcutta port.

Moreover, a bilateral agreement cannot be based exclusively on the considerations of rights and entitlements; particularly in a situation of the kind that prevails in the lower Ganga basin where during the lean season there is not just enough water to meet the requirements, let alone the entitlements of both the countries. The Agreement, therefore, had to be based on the principle of shared sacrifices and mutual accommodation without affecting the rights and entitlements of either country.

The Hon'ble Members would also appreciate that the negotiations involved not only the sharing of waters between the two countries - nor only augmentation of its flows - but also the political imperative of improving relations with our closest neighbour, which is an acid test of the effectiveness and credibility of our entire foreign policy and for that matter of the principles which India has always advocated should guide relations among nations.

In its attempt to reach an agreement on the Farakka problem, this Government did not have a clean slate to write afresh. The then Government

of Pakistan and later the Bangladesh Government never accepted our right to go ahead with the construction and commissioning of the Farakka Barrage-Project without reaching an agreement with them on the sharing of the Ganga waters. Inter-governmental consultations and negotiations have been held ever since 1951 when preliminary investigations of the project were in progress. In their Joint Declaration of May 1974, the Prime Ministers of India and Bangladesh noted that the Farakka Barrage would be commissioned by the end of 1974, but at the same time they agreed that a mutually acceptable allocation of the water available during periods of minimum flow in the Ganga should be arrived at before commissioning the Barrage, Thus, the Hon'ble Members will note that there was already a basic decision taken by the previous Government that withdrawal of waters by India would follow agreement on allocations with Bangladesh.

The Barrage was commissioned in April 1975 after an agreement with the then Government of President Mujib for withdrawals by India in the range of 11,000 to 16,000 cusecs for the period of 21st April to 31st May. Unfortunately, no agreement for the dry season of 1975-76 could be reached. Though the Government of India took the view that the April 1975 Agreement was valid only till the end of May 1975, and did not bind it in any way so far as withdrawals after that date were concerned, the Bangladesh Government's position was that its share covering the period 21st April to 31st May should in no circumstances fall below the quantum i.e. 39,000-44,000 cusecs agreed with the previous Government to be released for Bangladesh.

When no agreement was reached for the dry season of 1975-76 and when India started drawing close to the feeder canal capacity, the Bangladesh Government made a number of moves to internationalise the Farakka issue, alleging unilateral withdrawal by India. The issue was taken to the Islamic Conference in Istanbul, to the Non-Aligned Summit Conference in Colombo and finally in the form of a formal complaint, to the 31st Session of the United Nations General Assembly. The General Assembly concluded its consideration of the item proposed by the Bangladesh Government with the adoption of a consensus statement which, among others, incorporated the decision of the two Governments to resume bilateral negotiations urgently at the Ministerial Level. This was in keeping with the stand all along taken by India that bilateral problems can be best resolved bilaterally, but it placed on us the responsibility

to negotiate purposefully. Accordingly, four rounds of Ministerial Level talks were held between December 1976 and April 1977. A breakthrough in these negotiations was reached between the leaders of the Minister and the leader of Bangladesh, the details of which were to be elaborated in official level talks and incorporated in a comprehensive agreement between the two countries. An agreement was finally concluded and initiated at the end of the third round of the official level talks on 30th September 1977. These negotiations had aroused great expectations not only in the two countries but, in view of the previous involvement of the General Assembly and particularly friendly non-aligned countries, also in the international community. The conclusion of the Agreement was, therefore, widely regarded as a vindication of the trust placed on the sagacity and reasonableness of the two countries and an example of how developing countries can negotiate to resolve problems affecting their development.

The Farakka Barrage Project has been designed mainly for the protection and improvement of Calcutta Port. No one in India can minimise the importance of this Port for the city of Calcutta and for the economy of the entire eastern region on which depends a vast segment of our population. This Agreement contains the best possible arrangement for realising the objective of the Farakka Project and at the same time meeting the requirements of Bangladesh during the period of distress.

The Members of the House are aware that a number of estimates in the past, including the Farakka Barrage Project document which was approved in 1960, had envisaged that the project would be fully justified even after it was possible to withdraw up to 20,000 cusecs of water during mid-March to mid-May. This and other data were exchanged with the then Government of Pakistan even though it was made clear that they were provisional in nature and subject to modifications in the light of further studies and model experiments. The Agreement concluded provides for a withdrawal of 20,500 to 26,750 cusecs during March-May as well as for a progressive increase in India's share when the flows are above the minimum level of 55,000 cusecs in India's share when the flows on 25 years' observed data. The minimum withdrawal by India is also almost the double of the minimum withdrawal which was permissible under the April 1975 Agreement. India has also been able to secure in this Agreement near optimum level of withdrawals that is 35,000 to 40,000 cusecs for 8 months during the year i.e. from June to January. The Agreement

also provides for a guarantee to Bangladesh of 80 per cent of its share for each 10 day period. This gives a margin of 20 per cent which would make for administrative convenience and minimize the problem of daily questioning of variations in the flows arriving at Farakka.

Hydrology is not an exact science and, therefore, hydrodynamic model studies are not capable of predicting effects of withdrawal within negligible margins of error. However, on the basis of both model experiments and prototype studies of actual effects so far carried out by Indian engineers, it can be stated that the schedule of withdrawals agreed upon in the Agreement, would enable us to arrest further deterioration in the Port of Calcutta and, with the help of such other measures as dredging, river training, prevention of soil erosion, etc. to bring about improvement in the Port. The need to adopt these complementary measures in addition to ensuring maximum amount of head-water supply, has been recognised throughout the period of the formulation and execution of the Farakka Barrage Project.

The Improvement of Calcutta Port as a result of headwater supply from the Farakka Barrage is bound to take time and cannot be achieved too quickly. Meanwhile, as the nation has progressed and as agriculture has modernised, the demand for consumptive and non-consumptive use, particularly for irrigation, of the Ganga waters has increased and is likely to continue to increase even more rapidly in future. Therefore, rational arrangement for increasing the availability of water through some long-term scheme is imperative for meeting both our upstream and downstream requirements, even aside from the needs of Bangladesh. A long-term solution is as important, if not more, for India as it is for Bangladesh and this could best be achieved with the cooperation of both the countries.

In the Agreement, the two Governments have not only agreed to study all available long-term proposals, but they have also set a time limit of three years to complete such a study. The Agreement provides for the two Governments to select in good faith a scheme or schemes on the basis of the recommendations of the study and to take necessary measure to implement it as speedily as possible.

We have thus accepted the short term sacrifice involved in the arrangement for sharing because it is also linked to measures for finding a solution to the long-term problem. The Agreement is valid for an initial period of 5 years and

provides for a review after 3 years entailing consideration of the working, impact and progress in its implementation, including progress towards long-term solution.

The Agreement, we hope, would not only lead to a solution of the long-term problem of augmenting the flow of the Ganga, but would also pave the way for the optimum utilisation of the water resources of the region as a whole. The activation of the Joint Rivers Commission under the terms of the Agreement should result in increasing cooperation between India and Bangladesh for flood control and in other problem areas affecting the interests of the other party.

In considering this Agreement one should cast one's mind back to the long years of differences, suspicions and even hostility that have prevailed in our subcontinent. One should also remember that India is a nation which by its tradition and the principles that it has upheld both nationally and internationally is committed to policies of cooperation and friendly relations with other nations. This Government has recognized that for the sake of our own development and the effectiveness of our foreign policy, the crucial test is whether or not we could make this subcontinent free of friction, allowing us to concentrate our resources on our primary task of development and the welfare of our people. If we are convinced that India's own interest is also served in the prosperity of our neighbours, then we cannot but make serious attempt to resolve such problems which affect development in both countries.

We were also committed to resolving the Farakka issue bilaterally, without the involvement or interference of a third country or party. In reaching this Agreement through bilateral negotiations and, in particular, by providing for settlement of differences and disputes strictly within bilateral framework, we have demonstrated that all issues, howsoever complex, between close neighbours, can be resolved bilaterally in a spirit of shared sacrifice and mutual accommodation.

The approach and spirit which have made this Agreement possible should, if applied to the larger spectrum of our relations with Bangladesh, lead to an ever-widening cooperation between the two countries, both bilaterally and in multilateral forums. This should also contribute to the furtherance of our objectives of promoting peace and development in the subcontinent and of working together towards a better world order.

With anticipated increase in demands for water for diverse uses, it was clear that as time went by, the problem would become more complex and intractable. This would have not only involved tremendous opportunity costs for the two countries in not taking timely action to solve the long-term problem, but would have also made it extremely difficult to make arrangements for short-term sharing. Therefore, if an Agreement was to be reached, the common interests of the two countries lay in reaching it sooner rather than later.

The Farakka problem has been a national issue in Bangladesh transcending political parties and regimes. All the political parties and groups in Bangladesh have been united in demanding much larger shares and a speedy settlement of the dispute.

In India also, the Farakka problem must be seen as a non-partisan national issue. We have gone on to finalise the Agreement respecting the commitment made by the previous Government. May I seek the indulgence of the House to treat this Agreement in the same spirit sinking inter-party differences and in the wider perspective of the overall objective of our foreign policy and specifically the well-being of the two countries?

BACK NOTE

Statement Regarding Agreement between India and Bangladesh on sharing of the Ganga Waters at Farakka. 14 November, 1977

-NIL-

STATEMENT REGARDING VISIT TO NEPAL

12 December, 1977

Mr. Speaker, as the House is aware, I returned from Nepal yesterday and I would like to make a brief statement on my visit to our friendly neighbour. In the wake of the change of Government in Nepal in September this year, the new Prime Minister of Nepal, the Rt. Hon. Kirti Nidhi Bista, was kind enough to extend to me an invitation to visit Nepal. Considering the great importance we attach to improvement of relations with our neighbours, I readily accepted the invitation. I was accompanied by and had the benefit of advice of my colleague, the Foreign Minister, Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee.

We are bound to Nepal by ties of geography and mutual economic interests, and by religious, social and cultural bonds between our two peoples in a unique fashion with no close parallel anywhere in the world. I was glad to have had an opportunity to convey on behalf of the Government of India to His Majesty, his Government and through them to the people of Nepal that India cherishes the friendship of this ancient kingdom and seeks to promote our relationship in a manner which respects their independence, advances mutual interests and brings benefits to both. I was deeply touched by the spontaneity and the warmth of the reception from all sections of the people and His Majesty's Government of Nepal. I also met His Majesty the King and had extensive discussions with Prime Minister Bista. The Joint communiqué issued at the end of my visit and placed on the Table of the House indicates the wide range of discussions that took place and the mutually advantageous agreements reached.

As the hon'ble Members will observe from the Joint communiqué, there was acknowledgement on both sides of the urgent need to further strengthen our economic cooperation on the basis of equality and mutual benefit. In this spirit we agreed that priority should be given to projects on the rivers linking our two countries for multiple benefits, and the Devighat Power Project to which the Government of Nepal attaches great importance. The scope, significance and urgency of such cooperative effort cannot be exaggerated and the loss to both by delaying this cannot be minimised. Nature's bounty from the Himalayas can be immense and neglect can be very injurious to our interest in future. Specific measures interests have been agreed to set in motion

the process of expeditiously executing four projects on the rivers Karnali, Mahakali, Rapti and Trisuli.

Hon'ble Members are aware that the Indo-Nepalese Treaty of Trade and Transit of 1971, which had expired in August 1976, had been allowed to roll on while finalisation of new arrangements for this purpose was pending. Discussions at official level had been held in the past to work out new arrangements. During my visit we reviewed the discussions held so far and it was agreed that while trade was a bilateral matter, arrangements for Nepal's transit trade with third countries were separate subjects.

There is a special feature in our economic relations arising out of the open common border. While neither country can deny the other's independent right to determine economic and trade policies, the Prime Minister of Nepal and I readily recognised that we must make every effort to curb in the interests of both our countries unauthorised flow of goods which might cause injury to our economy. We have therefore, decided that separate agreement should be reached which would embody effective measures to control such flows across our open border. The decision to have two treaties and a separate agreement is a reflection of the spirit of respect of each other's independence as well as sensitivity that each country's economic policies do not harm the other.

Hon'ble Members are well aware that both India and Nepal are committed to the policy of non-alignment and peaceful co-existence. The two Governments are also pledged to adhere to the principles of non-interference in the internal affairs of each other. These principles are most conducive to creating a climate of trust and confidence and imparting an assurance of our friendly interest in the well-being of each other. The further strengthening of Indo-Nepal ties would be in accordance with our deliberate effort to promote true cooperation and thus peace and stability in the entire region.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to His Majesty's Government and the Prime Minister of Nepal for the warmth of hospitality and cordiality of reception that they extended to me and the members of my delegation during our stay. I would also like to extend my very sincere thanks to His Majesty, the King and the Queen of Nepal for their hospitality and for the very cordial and frank discussion I had with his Majesty on subjects of common concern. My visit, the discussion which I had and the

general atmosphere of warmth and cordiality lead me to believe that apprehensions and misgivings about India's attitude have been removed. The relations have to be restored to one of trustful friendship, as is appropriate between countries whose abiding compulsion must link us in peace and progress.

BACK NOTE

Statement Regarding visit to Nepal. 12 December, 1977

-NIL-

STATEMENT REGARDING APPOINTMENT OF A COMMITTEE ON PANCHAYATI RAJ INSTITUTIONS

12 December, 1977

I would like to inform the House that Government has today appointed a Committee, with Shri Asoka Mehta as Chairman, to inquire into the working of Panchayati Raj Institutions. A copy of the Resolution, which contains the composition of the Committee as well as the terms of reference, is placed on the Table of the House.

RESOLUTION

The Government accords the highest priority to rural development, so as to increase agricultural production, create employment, eradicate poverty and bring about an all round improvement in the rural economy. The Government considers that the maximum degree of decentralisation, both in planning and in implementation, is necessary for the attainment of these objectives. It has accordingly been decided, in consultation with the State Governments and Union Territories, to set up a Committee to inquire into the working of the Panchayati Raj Institutions, and to suggest measures to strengthen them, so as to enable a decentralised system of planning and development to be effective.

2. The composition of the Committee is:

1. Shri Asoka Mehta, Chairman
2. Shri Karpoori Thakur, Chief Minister, Bihar
3. Shri Prakash Singh Badal, Chief Minister, Punjab
4. Shri M.G. Ramchandran, Chief Minister, Tamil Nadu
5. Shri B. Sivaraman, Member, Planning Commission
6. Shri Mangal Deo, M.P.
7. Shri Kunwar Mahmood Ali Khan, M.P.
8. Shri Annasaheb P. Shinde, M.P.
9. Shri E.M.S. Namboodripad, Trivandrum

10. Shri S.K. Dey, New Delhi
 11. Shri Sidharaj Dhadda, Jaipur
 12. Prof. Iqbal Narain, University of Rajasthan, Jaipur
 13. Shri Vallabhbai Patel, President, Zila Panchayat, Rajkot
3. The Committee would have the following terms of reference:
- (1) To review the existing situation regarding democratic decentralisation in the States and the Union Territories, and the working of the Panchayati Raj Institutions from the district to the village levels, so as to identify shortcomings and defects. In particular, to examine the working of these institutions in respect of—
 - (a) mobilisation of resources;
 - (b) planning and implementation of schemes for rural development in an objective and optimal manner, and in looking after the interests of the weaker sections of society.
 - (2) To examine the methods of constituting the Panchayati Raj Institutions, including the system of elections, and to assess their effect on the performance of the Panchayati Raj System.
 - (3) To suggest the role of Panchayati Raj Institutions, and the objectives which could be attained through them, for integrated rural development in the future.
 - (4) To suggest measures for reorganising the Panchayati Raj System, and removing the shortcomings and defects, with a view to enable these institutions to fulfill their future role.
 - (5) To recommend the form and content of the relationship that should exist between the Panchayati Raj Institutions, the official administrative machinery, and the cooperative and voluntary institutions involved in rural development.
 - (6) To make such other recommendations, including those on financial matters, as may be necessary to ensure adequate availability of funds for the discharge of the responsibilities that may be entrusted to the Panchayati Raj Institutions.

4. The Committee should complete its inquiry and submit its report within a period of six months and may also submit an interim report, if it deems it necessary, or if so required by Government.
 5. Secretarial and other assistance to the Committee would be provided by the Department of Rural Development in the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation.
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BACK NOTE

**Statement Regarding Appointment of a Committee on Panchayati
Raj Institutions. 12 December, 1977**

-NIL-

**STATEMENT REGARDING PARTICIPATION IN THE
COMMONWEALTH HEADS OF GOVERNMENT
REGIONAL MEETING HELD IN SYDNEY**

24 February, 1978

On the 17th of February I returned from the meeting of the Commonwealth Heads of Government of Asian and Pacific Region, which was held in Sydney for the first time. The initiative for this Conference was taken by Prime Minister Fraser of Australia at the Commonwealth Conference held in London last June. Even at that time, I had welcomed the proposal since I believed that a smaller regional meeting could be more useful and effective in initiating and pursuing plans for cooperation in a number of fields, mainly economic. We were glad to note that the Sydney meeting was attended by the Heads of Government of all the 12 countries in the region. I was accompanied by a delegation which included the Minister for External Affairs.

From India's point of view, the Conference served an important purpose in bringing together the leaders of the Commonwealth countries in the Asian and the Pacific region, some of them from small countries like Nauru, West Samoa and Tonga, with which we have not had close contacts. I also had a valuable opportunity to renew my acquaintance with President Zia-ur-Rahman of Bangladesh, President Jayawerdene of Sri Lanka, Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew of Singapore, Prime Minister Hussain Onn of Malaysia, Prime Minister Ratu Sir Kamsese Mara of Fiji, Prime Minister Muldoon of New Zealand and also Prime Minister Fraser who, as host, was in the Chair.

Though the meeting was sought to be disrupted by a deplorable act of terrorism at the venue of the Conference, by unanimous agreement the Conference went on as scheduled. The Australian Government spared no pains to protect the delegations from the hazards of sabotage. Their arrangements and hospitality won admiration from all participants. I would also like to record my thanks to our Australian hosts through this statement.

During the regular and informal discussions, we covered a great number of topics which are reflected in the Joint communiqué, which is consistent with our basic views and aspirations. These included international relations in South Asia, South-East Asia and the Pacific, questions like terrorism, disarmament, the Indian ocean, Southern Africa and the Middle East. The main emphasis was on international economic issues, the danger of protectionism and the need for freer trade, Commodities and the Common Fund, measures to promote

industrial development, debt burdens; plans and prospects for regional economic and functional cooperation on energy, human resources, food production and rural development, curbing drug trafficking, and the special problems of small island States.

It was decided to set up two consultative groups on trade and energy respectively and two working groups on terrorism and illicit drugs respectively. The reference paper presented by India on alternative sources of energy and my initiating the discussions aroused earnest interest, as a result of which India was asked to coordinate the group on energy. The meeting also decided that special Commonwealth programmes to assist small States should be presented for further consideration.

As announced in the press, one of the important decisions concerning India is that we have agreed to host the next regional meeting at Delhi in 1980. This request came at the suggestion of several member countries. It was gratifying to note the esteem which India is regarded by the countries in the region and the possibilities for strengthening our cooperation with them in many fields. The diversity of India and the range of its developmental experience are beginning to be noted as relevant patterns of growth for several developing countries. This meeting enabled me to assure my colleagues from these countries that India would be happy to share whatever knowledge and experience we have gathered in the difficult process of economic diversification and development.

To sum up, the Sydney meeting was a worthwhile innovation because it was both regional and functional. This forum does not subsume or substitute other agencies for regional cooperation such as ESCAP and ASEAN. The very flexibility and informality of the group may be expected to provide a suitable framework for furthering our bilateral and multi-lateral contacts in the Asian and Pacific region. We shall associate ourselves actively in the follow-up measures which are planned by the working groups in order to make the Delhi meeting in 1980 a worthy successor to the Sydney meeting.

BACK NOTE

**Statement Regarding Participation in the Commonwealth Heads of
Government Regional meeting held in Sydney. 24 February, 1978**

-NIL-

**REPLY ON MOTION OF THANKS ON THE
PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS**

6 March, 1978

May I say, Sir, that it is very unfortunate that all this time should have been taken for doing what they have done now. I do not think it helps any cause. Yet, I cannot quarrel with their liberty to do even wrong things which they want to do. Why have I to say anything? But I do say that, when they think about what has happened, they will realise that they have said all this for nothing; for nothing they spent their energy, and the time of the House. I do not know how much money has been wasted. But all these things are inescapable in Parliamentary life and, therefore, I have no quarrel about it. But in this matter I do not see how this Government is to be blamed for anything. We have issued no directions whatsoever; we cannot issue directions in this matter, and we will not issue any directions in this matter. Even now if they want me to say, 'Expedite it', I cannot do that. But if the Governor acts wrongly, then certainly I can take action, but I cannot force him to do anything. That must be understood by the hon. friends. But they cannot forget their habits they have acquired. That is the difficulty. If they want me to act as they did in the past, I am not going to do that, I am not going to act in that manner whatever may be the provocation. That is all that I can say.

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I was surprised that the same arguments are being repeated every time even when satisfactory explanations were given, it was said that the President should not have been apologetic for his inability to deliver the Address in Hindi. He was not apologetic at all. I do not know why the President should be apologetic. Those who are against Constitutional propriety ought to be apologetic. It is not for him to be apologetic. That must be realised. There is no question of this Government wanting to force Hindi on anybody. That is not the idea at all. But that does not mean that those who want Hindi cannot say that there should be Hindi. If they call them fanatics they are greater fanatics. They are fanatics against the Constitution; if I may say so. What is the meaning of saying such things? That does not help anybody. I have explained that Government will not force this issue, but the compulsion of patriotism will force it, and I am waiting for that to happen. And that will happen; I have no doubt about it.

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Then, it was said that Hindi Communications go from the Centre to Kerala and other non-Hindi speaking States. I do not know from which office. This is not the practice of the Central Government. We send Communications in English and a copy of that in Hindi is sent along with it. I do not know why that should be objected to. That is the policy.

No Chief Minister has complained to me. I have met the Chief Minister and he has not told me about it at all. If any Government department does that, I will certainly hold it up for action. I do not want any department to do that kind of a thing. That will not be done. Point out to me if there is any failure in that matter.

This is not the way to deal with the whole matter. I do not stop him even when he shouts. Why does he want to stop me when I am speaking? He can speak when he has a chance to speak, when he has occasion to speak, but he must not go on interrupting in this manner. I have said very clearly that whenever instances are brought to my notice, I will certainly take action and see that it is not repeated anywhere.

One inadvertent thing had happened. When a reply was sent to a Member who had written in Hindi, and it was sent to me. I found, that no English version was sent and asked for it. They said it was a mistake that the English version was not sent along with it to me. But that was a solitary instance where it was a mistake. When a mistake was admitted as a mistake, there was, therefore, no question of forcing anybody in this matter; force cannot do anything. My Hon. friends ought to recognise that they cannot force me to do what they want me to do. That must be recognised. I cannot force them to do anything and they cannot force me to do anything. It would not be right and it is not provided in the Constitution.

But what surprised me was when some Hon. Member said that the address was imposed on the President, that he was not allowed to say what he wanted to say. Being a Member of Parliament, he does not even know what the Constitutional practice is and what the functions of the President and the Government are ! When the President gives an Address on the opening day of Parliament it is always the statement of Government policy. It is not the first time that the President has delivered an Address. But when nothing could be said, what else would be said ?

I was more surprised when it was said that the President's Address lacks sharpness, inspiration and direction. Now, we do not want to be sharp with

anybody: that is left to my hon. friends. I don't like to be sharp at all with anybody, nor would the President like to do that.

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Then, Sir, it was said that it was disappointing. If they are disappointed, they are disappointed, how can I say they should be satisfied? I cannot order satisfaction. But I do not see any evidence of disappointment on their faces. That is all I can say.

Then, it was said that it contains half truths. Now, what are the half truths that we have given? It was said that there are half truths about prices. What are half truths? Is it not a fact that the prices today are not higher than the prices in March last? There have been fluctuations in wholesale prices during the year, that also we have admitted. We have not kept back anything: we have published them from time to time.

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Then, a very serious thing was said that we are not acknowledging Opposition's cooperation. This is very unkind. I have tried as best, as I could, to take as much cooperation and I have received cooperation in some matters, not in all matters, but this is not for me to complain. But to say that I did not acknowledge this is not right. I have said that we are bringing in constitutional amendments for undoing some of the things we all disapprove and that we want to take the Opposition with us and we are in the process of it. I am very thankful to them that they have agreed on many things. I have said that and said that publicly at many places, and I wish we continue to do that more and more. If the Speaker was elected unanimously, it was due to the Opposition's cooperation. It was true about the election of the President also. I have publicly acknowledged it. I have thanked them for it. If we take the credit for achieving this cooperation for the first time in thirty years, are we very wrong in it? Why is it said that our claim is wrong?

It is only when we give cooperation that we receive cooperation. Cooperation is always given, not demanded. I do not demand cooperation, therefore both of us have got to give cooperation without demanding it. Who oblige whom? We oblige each other, not anybody else. We are doing our duty to the country and to the Parliament. That is all I would say.

Well, at any rate, I am glad that my hon. friend approved of the President not coming in a horse carriage. At any rate, there is some approval of what has been done. I am glad, he wants us to go further; that will happen in course of time. I wish, they had begun it and not left it to us, is it also not the first?

Then it is said that the Janata Government claims credit as if things are now being done for the first time in the history of the country, I think, that is a caricature of what we meant to say. The country has advanced in thirty years. Who can deny that? We cannot say that all that has been done has not yet reached the people. It has not reached the majority, that is all we have been saying. We want therefore to give a new direction. That is all we are claiming. If the country had not advanced, where would we have been? Not only that, but I have always said that everything that was done by the last Government cannot be wrong. There can be some things which were wrong, but not all. We have affirmed that we will honour all the obligations which have been undertaken even in our foreign relations as well as all agreements and treaties, etc. We are bound to honour them. We did not start on a blank state. The only difficulty is that we started on a muddled state. Therefore, it takes time to clear it up before we can write. That is my difficulty. That is what is sought to be pointed out. I am sorry. I could not point it out in manner that the muddle could be cloaked and given a different meaning. How can I do that? I have not got that capacity.

Then, it is said that the law and order problem is not mentioned at all. I do not know what was to be mentioned. It is said that the law and order situation has not improved much. I have no objection to it. But why has it come to this pass? Are we responsible for this? Or are those who were carrying on before us responsible for this thing in the country? If we did not say that, should we be made to say that? That was not done because we did not want ill-feeling to arise. That is why we did not say some of those things.

Then, it was said that MISA is being continued. MISA is not being continued. The old Preventive Detention Law which has been there all the while and which was vitiated and made terrible during the two years of emergency is being done away with. But law is required to cope with violence. I would even earnestly plead with my hon'ble friends opposite that we have to find some methods of solving these problems. Is it good for all of us that we should spend time in the manner it was spent in the first 45 minutes? Can we not do it more peacefully and more usefully? If a method is not found, then some way has to be found to see that we do not spend our time for nothing.

Therefore, let us not always find fault with everything that is being done with the best of intentions and in the interests of the country in the conditions as they exist.

Then, it was said that the liberty of the individual would be permanently damaged if MISA continues. MISA does not continue but the preventive law is

introduced and is put in the Criminal Procedure Code and it is done in a more straight forward manner.

There are provisions already in the Criminal Procedure Code where people can be taken up without a judicial trial. It is being introduced in the relevant chapter for violent people. It is not being done for political work at all, but if political work becomes violent, then it will get into that category. That also must be understood.

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In the same breath it has been said that the policies of the Government are the same as that of the Swatantra Party. What I have to say is that party's policies are policies of the Janata Party and we have said that we will follow the Gandhian lines to the best of our capacity.

Then it is said Government should bring out a White Paper on minorities, Hill States and weaker sections. I do not know what kind of White Paper they want. If they tell me or if they inform me, I can consider.

There is again a reference to the Centre - State relations here and also in the other House. It is said that there should be a national debate. Well national debate is probably being carried on in newspapers. But I cannot arrange a special national debate on this matter. I am not going to do it. Let it be understood. But I am prepared to discuss with anybody who wants to discuss it as many times as he wants. Until we convince each other we can go on discussing. I am going to do that.

Then the question of unemployment was raised saying that it has not been mentioned in the Address at all. But it has been mentioned positively what steps are being taken for economic improvement. That is a matter to relieve unemployment. Therefore, if it is felt that nothing specific has been said, we will be more careful about it next time. That is all I can say.

I do not know how it was said that there is concentration of economic power in a few hands. Well, we have not done it. We have several things and if there was more concentration, it was during the last six or seven years than ever before at any time. One firm or one family whose assets were Rs. 300 crores have risen to Rs. 1200 crores in this period. Who is responsible for it? Are we responsible for it? There are other houses like that. We are not responsible for it. Why throw dust in our eyes?

You do all the harm and we do all the good. We want to do it, but it will take time. It is easy to destroy a house. It is not so easy to construct a house. That takes time. We are doing it.

We are going to see that concentration does not remain. It cannot be one overnight. I know the philosophy of my hon'ble friends. In this matter we differ.

Well, I have already said about prices. We are taking positive steps. It is not as if no positive steps were taken. We have taken positive steps, especially, in the matter of articles which are in short supply and those which can be imported we have imported them and the prices have come down. In respect of several things where exports were allowed and therefore prices were going up, the prices have come down.

Sugar prices have come down and people are now clamouring for a rise in sugar prices. One interest says that prices should come down whereas another interest says that prices should go up. We have to balance all these interests. We cannot only say that one interest is right and not the other interests.

The real interest, the paramount interest, is that of the consumers. But the paramount interest of the consumers cannot be safeguarded unless the interest of the producers is legitimately safeguarded.

Therefore, we have to balance both these things. And that is what we are trying to do. I am sure that results will be seen as time goes on and as measures become more effective.

But, the most surprising thing of all was when Commissions of Enquiries were referred to by my hon'ble friend, the Leader of the Opposition. Well he protected himself by saying that he had made no research. That means, he said things based on what he had heard or what he had perhaps seen in some irresponsible newspapers. Can we expect that from the Leader of the Opposition? And, what are the facts? He said, 49 Commissions are appointed. The Centre has appointed seven Commissions of Enquiry. One has already submitted its report. Therefore it is not as though they will go on indefinitely. We will see that they do not go on for more than three to four years and that they must end as soon as possible.

But, when he came to the statement about expenditure on them I don't know what happened. He said Rs. 900 crores will be spent. I don't know how I did not know that he had even this kind of imagination that when it is not even Rs. 9 crores it goes to Rs. 900 crores.

It won't go beyond Rs. 1 crore whatever happens, and yet he says Rs. 900 crores. So far on these Commissions, Rs. 35 lakhs have been spent.

And we want to see that they are completed as early as possible. More has been spent in the case of one Commission because it has to make enquiries in all the States and therefore Enquiry and Investigating Teams have to be appointed which has involved this expenditure. Otherwise it would not have been even this.

18 Commissions or so are appointed by the States with which the Centre had nothing to do. Out of these 10, 10 are appointed in the States where my hon'ble friends are ruling. Now should that also be laid at my door? Does that not mean that it is necessary to have them? When they also think it is necessary how is it right to say that it should not be necessary for us?

Then there was reference about Land Reforms. It was said that Governments policies will benefit only the rich farmers. That may have been so in the last few years perhaps I had started this crusade against big farmers or big landlords in Bombay in 1937. My hon'ble friend the Leader of the Opposition was a partner in it from 1946 and he knows that in Bombay we made the tenants owners of the land and we abolished all crop sharing and the rents were reduced to a proper reasonable thing in cash.

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Then a suggestion was made that wages should be linked with production. I agree entirely. We are trying to do whatever we can in this matter.

Then it is said the rate of industrial and agricultural production was much higher during the Congress Rule. That is just not true. Yes, a year before last the rate of industrial production was higher than the rate of industrial production last year. That is some what true. But the agricultural production has been higher last year than that of previous years. This is not to take credit but we have mentioned it. There are many such things which have happened.

The per capita income in rural sector is lower—not now but it has been lower. We want to see that it comes up and up. That is why we are making a drive for rural development and we are giving it the first priority. All that is being done, I do not want to advertise these things which are being done but only those things that actually serve the people so that no paper propaganda is necessary. I do not want to make paper propaganda without action being taken afterwards and feel satisfied that everything is good in the state of Rome. We do not believe in this kind of a policy. And the most surprising statement made was that the public sector is being diluted. I do not know

where it is being diluted. Public sector receives not only much attention but better attention today. We are making it more efficient and wherever public sector is required, we will have it. There is no question of that at all. What we want is that there should not be such wrong attitude. Both public sector and private sector must work in cooperation and supplement each other. Then alone the country can thrive. There is a common policy, accepted by all of us except perhaps some, that there should be a mixed economy. And that is what is being followed.

Therefore, let there be no apprehension that public sector is going to be diluted in any way. It will be made stronger, more efficient and more profitable, more productive and more serviceable to the people. It is said that the latest Economic Survey is a bonus document. I do not know if hon'ble Member has any restraint on language. I do not want to name him. I am sorry, I was not present during the debate. I could not be. I must apologise I am not saying it to you. I am saying that somebody said it. I am also sorry that some of my colleagues were not present during the debate and at one stage it was complained that there was no Cabinet Minister present. That is against all of us. So, we will all have to be careful in this matter.

Again a statement is made about the commissions, namely, the commissions are appointed to give employment to persons. What a fantastic statement to make. Let it be pointed out as to who from the party have been provided in these commissions and I will give a reply to it.

In the matter of family planning, it was said that this programme has got to be reoriented and strengthened. I agree it has to be strengthened. We attach the highest importance to it. But we suffer from a reaction which was caused on account of some forcible operations during the Emergency. But I am quite sure that the reaction is now ending and we will have much better results during the next two years.

It was said that anti-Defection Bill should be brought before the Parliament soon. I should like to bring it tomorrow if my hon'ble friends agree. I should like to have it passed without further delay.

And it was said by an hon'ble Member that Lokpal Bill should cover PM and judges of High Court but not MPs Why? Is it because MP is the reverse of PM ? I do not know why that distinction should be made. All should be

included in it because all have to be above board. Members of Parliament are the source of Ministers and if the Members of Parliament do not have that reputation, what will Ministers alone do. Therefore, we must have MPs also included in it. I do not have any doubt about it.

I would now touch only the last two points where it was asked. Why should there be special relations with Iran and Japan? There is no question of special relations with anybody. We have equal friendly relations with everybody. That is what we want. But if some people understand it more and are more helpful than some others, that cannot be helped. That depends upon the conditions in every country. That also is not a question of unwillingness. But I must admit and acknowledge with thanks that all the countries are cooperating with us even better than I can do with them. Therefore, I am very happy about it. This is also a condition for which Janata Government can certainly claim a legitimate satisfaction. We have improved our position in the whole region. Now the conditions are much better and they are going to be so well-sorted out in a friendly manner that there will be no ripple of any kind in future. That is what we are attempting to do.

In regard to the prohibition programme, it was said that it should be implemented immediately, and it was also said that it should be given up as it was fad. I do not know how it is a fad. It is in the Constitution. Is the Constitution a fad? I do not understand. Are people now wiser than the framers of the Constitution, the fathers of the Constitution? It was put in there unanimously. There were Members of the Constituent Assembly who were addicted to it and they also agreed with it. Therefore, where is the question of going back on it.

Prohibition is meant for the uplift of the poor more than anything else. The condition of the poor is getting worse as a result of this temptation of shops and they throw all their income in that and their families starve and are naked without clothes, and unless this is stopped, unless this temptation is removed from their path their position will never improve. That is the peculiar position in this country. Therefore prohibition is an imperative necessity and one who opposes prohibition is an enemy of the poor I should say.

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One last point which I will make, which was referred to also here, is that the action of this Government in removing the Ministry in Karnataka before elections was wrong. It must have been seen that there were elections at that time in six States. We did not remove ministry in any State except in this State, where we did not create conditions for it. It is their split and their quarrels which created a situation of complete instability and therefore we had to do it to ensure that the election was free and fair and it must have been seen that the election was fair otherwise you would not have come back to power. What more proof is required for the election to be fair under this Government ? It is the best proof for it. Whatever you see it will have to be freely acknowledged. Therefore, I would request my hon. friends to look at matters, more objectively and dispassionately. *They have every right to find fault with me. Wherever they see a fault I shall be grateful if they point out those faults to me. But please do not see where there is no fault to find.* Unnecessarily you will expose yourself to another criticism.

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I thought I had spoken about it twice or thrice in this House and that it was not necessary for me to reiterate. I have made that clear and I thought that was clear. I am keen, I should like to emphasise that I feel keenly, but not more keenly than members of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes can feel because I am not in that position; therefore I cannot claim that, but I want to see that this complaint does not remain at all and it is therefore that we appointed a permanent commission. I have issued instructions, or suggestions if I may say so—because I cannot call them instructions, I do not want to interfere with the state in any matter; it would be wrong and so it would be a wrong use of the word. I have advised them that they should take prompt action against officers where any such instance takes place so that they are always careful to see that these things do not happen, that is in the case of not only all Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes but also all backward classes, particularly in the matter of communal tension or violence, they must be alive to it and take preventive action before anything happens and if something does happen they must take prompt action against persons concerned. If any officer is found wanting, he will not be able to continue in service; that is what I have

said. I do not think I need to say more. This is a national question and I hope all parties will make it a point to co-operate in this matter so that we remove permanently this evil blot on the life of this country and get rid of it.

BACK NOTE

Reply on Motion of Thanks on the President's Address. 6 March, 1978

1. SHRI A. BALA PAJANOR (Pondicherry): Sir, I want to make a clarification.

SHRI MORARJI DESAI: He can make his clarifications afterwards.

2. AN HON. MEMBER: You cannot force it.

SHRI MORARJI DESAI: I cannot force anybody to be good; I know the result will be otherwise. Therefore, I never make that attempt.

3. SHRI YESHWANTRAO CHAVAN (Satara): You are always blunt!

SHRI MORARJI DESAI: I am not blunt: I am truthful. If what I am saying now is bluntness. I cannot help it.

4. SHRI C. M. STEPHEN (Idukki): What about consumer prices?

SHRI MORARJI DESAI: Consumer prices are also being regulated, they are also coming down.

SHRI YESHWANTRAO CHAVAN: I have read out a para from the Economic Review which shows what is the rise in prices in different areas, particularly the consumer prices so far as the people are concerned.

SHRI MORARJI DESAI: That quotation proves that we have not kept back anything.

SHRI YESHWANTRAO CHAVAN: We are discussing President's Address.

SHRI MORARJI DESAI: I am also doing that.

5. SHRI MORARJI DESAI: My hon'ble friends opposite cannot say that the same thing was done in emergency. It is we who can say what was done in emergency and not they.

SHRI A. BALA PAJANOR: When the Prime Minister says something against facts we have to protest. We are a separate party having a separate identity. He says there is the merger and I want to know the clarification from them also. When I said that this was the tone Mrs. Gandhi used when she introduced MISA. I was present here. It was the same kind of tone that she used.

SHRI MORARJI DESAI: My hon'ble friend does not realise what I am saying.

SHRI SAMAR MUKHERJEE (Howrah): It is correct what my friend is saying. Similar arguments were given when MISA was introduced. But we have our life's bitter experience. Out of the bitter experience we have the same apprehension. By another time you are keeping this MISA.

SHRI MORARJI DESAI: Well, is it the time for arguing this matter ? I do not know why my hon'ble friend is interrupting in this manner. I do not know why this should be brought up just now.

SHRI SAMAR MUKHERJEE: Our silence should not be taken as a consent. MISA should go lock stock and barrel. It should be brought in no other form. It should not be kept in any other form.

SHRI MORARJI DESAI: They can say it at the proper time when the Bill is here and when it is discussed, they will have full time to say. Why drag me into discussion on this? I have to say about these matters because these things were mentioned in the debate on the President's Address, otherwise I would not have mentioned it at all here.

Mention has been made about the Minorities Commission. It was a very unkind thing said by an hon'ble Member that Shri Minoo Masani is pro-Israel and anti-Arab. This is totally wrong.

SHRI MORARJI DESAI: I do not want to go into that just now. But this is not correct.

6. SHRI YESHWANTRAO CHAVAN: That is the tradition in Maharashtra. But what about the Guarantee Act for employment?

SHRI MORARJI DESAI: Guarantee Act may be all right but to give doles, I am dead against doles because it creates beggary and the experience, all the world-over, where this has been given is that those who are given what you call unemployment allowance do not want to work when it is given to them because they get allowance without work. This mentality cannot be allowed. And I won't be a party to it, whatever happens on that score. Give work and pay. This is all that should be done and that is what we seek to do now. We are now doing what you omitted to do. That is all I wish to say, I wish a line had been said about it.

7. SHRI K. LAKKAPPA: What about Shri Subramaniam Swamy's statement.

SHRI MORARJI DESAI: After all they are all bound by my statement. That must also be understood. Every member is bound by my statement and they are. They are not to be told about that. But if you want to create difference you will fail. Be sure of it that you are not going to succeed in this matter at all.

SHRI A. BALA PAJANOR: Not on prohibition?

SHRI MORARJI DESAI: On any matter.

SHRI C. M. STEPHEN (Idukki): Your Members will agree with that, but will continue to be drinking.

SHRI MORARJI DESAI: Well I am glad that you came back now.

8. Dr. KARAN SINGH (Udhampur) : May I with your permission, Sir, ask the Prime Minister one small clarification? The entire House and the nation welcomes the setting of the Minorities Commission, because it is a sacred duty that the minorities must be fully protected. I just want to point out that there are some States where only the Hindus are in minority. Will the hon. Prime Minister kindly clarify and confirm that in those States where the Hindus are in a minority the Minorities Commission will also be applicable and will bring it under its purview?

SHRI MORARJI DESAI: It is a very peculiar position in this country that every community can claim to be a minority everywhere or somewhere. It is left to the Commission to decide.

DR. KARAN SINGH: Will Jammu & Kashmir come within their purview?

SHRI MORARJI DESAI: That will be for the Commission to decide

SHRI RAMDHAN (Lalganj) : May I seek a small clarification from the hon. Prime Minister. He has not uttered a single word about scheduled castes and scheduled tribes. Would he throw some light on it?

**REPORTED DECISION OF UNITED STATES TO PUT OFF
RELEASE OF ENRICHED URANIUM FOR TARAPUR
ATOMIC POWER STATION**

23 March, 1978

Mr. Speaker, Sir, enriched uranium which is not produced in India is required for the manufacture of fuel for the Tarapur Atomic Power Station but not for any of our other nuclear power stations which are of different designs. The bilateral agreement for cooperation between the Government of the United States and the Government of India provides that all requirements of enriched uranium for use as fuel at Tarapur shall be made available by the U.S. and that India shall not obtain these from any other sources. Accordingly, enriched uranium is being imported only from the U.S.A. On an average about 17 to 21 tonnes of enriched uranium is being imported only from the USA every year. In accordance with the current procedures in the United States, consignments of enriched uranium required for Tarapur Atomic Power Station are subject to an export licence to be given by the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (USNRC), a *quasi judicial* body which is Independent of the U.S. Government Executive Branch. These export licence applications for enriched uranium are considered by the USNRC after clearance is conveyed by the Executive Branch. Presently two licences are pending with U.S. Department of Energy for 7.6 tonnes and 16.7 tonnes of enriched uranium respectively. The consignment of 7.6 tonnes was due to have been shipped in September 1977 and Licence XSNM 1222 applied for on 1st November, 1977 is scheduled for shipment between April and October 1978. These requirements closely follow the schedule worked out in consultation with experts deputed by the U.S.A. for this purpose in September, 1976.

The despatch of the first consignment was delayed because the Non-Proliferation Bill dealing with long-term policy of the U.S. Government was under the consideration of the Congress. Nevertheless during his visit to India in January, 1978, President Carter announced in Parliament that the shipments of nuclear fuel will be made for the Tarapur Reactor. On 26th January, 1978, the Executive Branch of the U.S. Government recommended to the U.S. NRC that the licence for the pending application for 7.6 tonnes of enriched uranium be issued. On February 13, 1978, three environmentalists Groups in the U.S.A. namely, the National Resources Defence Council, the Union of Concerned

Scientist and the Sierra Club who had also objected to an earlier shipment submitted a motion requesting the NRC to reopen the public hearing of May 7, 1976 on the Tarapur fuel exports and to consolidate the proceedings on both the pending licences for 7.6 tonnes and 16.7 tonnes. On February 21, 1978 the Executive Branch urged the NRC that the issue at the pending licence for 7.6 tonnes for which executive clearance had been given should not be further delayed. The U.S. NRC has not yet taken a decision whether or not to hold public hearings on the export licence application for Tarapur Atomic Power Station which is presently pending with them. It is reported that a decision could not be taken on this question at meetings held by the U.S. NRC on 16th March, 1978 and 20th March, 1978 on account of the absence of two members. The Chairman of the NRC has deferred decision pending consultation with the other two members.

Government have constantly been impressing upon the US authorities the necessity of maintaining continued supplies of enriched uranium for the Tarapur Atomic Power Station in accordance with the inter-governmental agreement and the subsequent sale contract between the two countries. It has been pointed out that delays in supplies of enriched uranium have already adversely affected the functioning of Nuclear Fuel Complex at Hyderabad and also resulted in involuntary reduction in the output of power at Tarapur. The delay is not due, however, to any policy issue but on account of procedural requirements. We believe that the U.S. Administration is doing its best to expedite the disposal of the objections taken but the final decision on the objections is not in their hands.

As a result of the delay the power output is also suffering. We are trying to ensure supplies to avoid a complete shut-down and already there has been partial adverse effect on production of energy. In the circumstances we are faced with, this is inevitable. I only hope that the US Administration will succeed in getting the objections overruled and shipments would be resumed before long.

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We have taken up the matter with the United States and we are doing our level best to sort out the difficulties which are not quite of our creation; but they did arise from the explosion that was made here three or four years ago. This is not to say that they were justified in doing this. The agreement did

not warrant any break of it by the other side. That also I have pointed out to them but the position is that we cannot use any other fuel except enriched uranium in this plant and we are bound by the agreement that we cannot obtain it from elsewhere as long as they do not say they cannot supply it. If they say so, then all other avenues are open to us, even the processing of the used material will be open to us. Then we will not be bound by any restrictions. Therefore, we can find out many things. I do not think that we should say everything now and create more difficulties. Therefore, I am only requesting my hon. friends not to go on making this issue wider and wider which might create more difficulties for us. We have to find out a remedy and I hope we shall be able to find out a remedy.

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BACK NOTE

Reported decision of United States to put off release of enriched Uranium for Tarapur Atomic Power Station. 23 March, 1978

1 SHRI OM PRAKASH TYAGI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, just now hon'ble Prime Minister has presented very important facts in this regard before us. After hearing these facts it seems that our Tarapur plant on which we have spent 300 crore rupees of foreign exchange has landed in trouble. You have accepted it in your statement that on this issue decision of Government of America is not enough, there is another institution involved in it too.

"U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (USNRC), a *quasi judicial* body which is independent of the U.S. Government Executive Branch. These export licence applications for enriched uranium are considered by the USNRC after clearance is conveyed by the Executive Branch."

Not only that there is an environment group over and above it, there are two-three bodies like this. Seeing their different functioning it seems that the assurance given by Mr. Carter to the members of Parliament here has fallen in trouble after he left. Another thing which has emerged—

"The delay is not due, however, to any policy issue but on account of procedural requirements, we believe that the U.S. Administration is doing its best to expedite the disposal of the objections taken but the final decision on the objections is not in their hands."

You have accepted this fact. The first thing which I would like to ask you is that when Mr. Carter had come here and given an assurance in this regard, in spite of his assurance whereas there were 7.6 tonne enriched Uranium due to arrive by September, 1977, why it has not arrived yet? N.R.C. has.....

SHRI OM PRAKASH TYAGI: I am asking the question. The meeting which has taken place it is stated that 2 members attended it and 2 members didn't turn up and the meeting was postponed. The date of next meeting was not finalized and the environment group has ordered that NRC may hold a public hearing on this issue. When this public hearing will take place? Nobody knows about it and no information in this regard has been shared in the statement. That's why I would like to have special information in this regard. Such kind of policy is of America and keeping in view the inability of the Government of America and where committees are together in spite of order

of American administration they have withheld it and another thing is according to the act which has been passed by American Government enriched uranium will be given to only those countries who will sign the non-proliferation treaty. In the light of this, I want to know what are you going to do to protect Tarapur plant so that in future it keeps on functioning. Now it is not a matter of only 7.6 tonne but for maintaining regular supply in future also have you entered into an agreement with Government of America or else are you going to amend your policy in regard to non-proliferation treaty or after severing these agreements will you enter into an agreement with any other country, I would like to know what steps are you going to take in this regard, another thing which I would like to know.....

SHRI OM PRAKASH TYAGI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have experienced that on the day when my calling attention is listed, you remember the rules, I do not know why?

SHRI OM PRAKASH TYAGI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, this is an important question, it is not a general question.

SHRI OM PRAKASH TYAGI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, now there is one more important question and it is related to spent fuel. Suppose if you get 7.6 and 16.7 tonne then also it is a matter of spent fuel storage. There is a provision of 500 spent fuel rods capacity in the country and 600 have already arrived. Now the spent fuel rods which are already there, where will you store them as America is not taking them back. As per agreement he had to take it back but it is not taking it back. Then how will you resolve this issue?

Along with it Mr. Speaker, Sir, there is another issue. I have come to know about it today itself. If you go for reprocessing of fuel then the matter which is generated from it, which is called plutonium, one can make atom bomb from it. American government has installed two cameras.

SHRI OM PRAKASH TYAGI: There are two cameras installed in it and whosoever will touch it for reprocessing, the experts of America will come to know about it. They are not allowing us to process and neither allowing us to take it. When they are not even giving you uranium in such a situation how will you resolve all these issues? Is the government making efforts to develop it along with thorium technology? I want to know.

SHRI MORARJI DESAI: It seems I have made a mistake by providing a detailed statement. I was hoping that after getting a detailed statement hon.

Members will understand our difficulties. It is not in our hand to run the Government of America. Neither it is in our hand to change their practices. Whatever President Carter has stated he will follow it. I hope so. But if we show hurriedness and want that it should be done at once then it is not going to happen. We hope that it will be resolved finally as soon as possible and our agony will be reduced. But we cannot hope that after one year we will be getting it in future also because another law which they have enacted will come into force. So we have to think about it and we are doing so. A hand is pressed below a trunk. By crying or by asking questions and answers I cannot remove it from there. With some skill, peacefully, patiently, I can remove it and we are trying to do that. Whatever we have to do, is not proper to be disclosed at once and not beneficial too. The hon. Members should satisfy themselves with it, that is my prayer to them.

SHRI G. M. BANATWALLA (Ponnani): Sir, the Prime Minister is seized of this important question which has been coming up in the House again and again. It is rather unfortunate that the supply of enriched uranium should get delayed continuously. Now, Sir, it is quite apparent that this Government has thrown up its hands in despair and it is also not prepared to take this House into confidence with respect to alternatives that are being thought of. There is a mere hope that President Carter will fulfil his promise. But we have been told that in addition to the United States executive there is also a *quasi judicial* body and the granting of the export licence is in the hands of the United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission. Now, Sir, they have to hold public hearings also. I can understand that all these are not in the hands of our Government, but at the same time, we have to take cognisance of these various factors that have come up again and again with respect to our projects. We have one treaty with the United States and this bilateral agreement with the United States provides that India shall not obtain this enriched uranium from any other sources. Now, my question is whether the Government has taken up this matter with the United States that in case there are delays and continuous delays, whether we will be in a position to arrange for the supply of enriched uranium from alternative sources. Whether any such proposal is in the mind of the Government and whether the matter has been taken up with the United States? I do not need to suggest a complete reversal of the agreement but only with respect to this particular point, whether the question has been taken up

and what is the reaction of the US Government about our obtaining the supply from alternative sources in case of delay?

A further point that has come up is that we are groping in the dark. We do not even know how much delay will occur as a result of all these procedural requirements. We are told that there are no policy difficulties but only procedural requirements. But my basic and fundamental question is whether the Government is really happy with the attitude of the United States authorities and whether it really, sincerely and firmly believes that the supply of enriched uranium will continue to come from them, especially in the context of the situation, the altered situation, which has already been placed before the Government by the previous speaker.

SHRI MORARJI DESAI: I do not quite follow what the hon. Member wants me to do.

2. SHRI VASANT SATHE: He was just now saying: why have uranium? You could have used uranium. This is going from the sublime to the ridiculous. I want to know from the hon. Prime Minister why he is still wavering and hesitant in going in straightaway for an alternate source, after taking the country into confidence because that is the only alternative; today or tomorrow you will have to go after that act; why not do it now when it is the right time before Tarapur Plant comes to a grinding halt?

SHRI MORARJI DESAI: Well, Sir, my hon. friend's interpretation that the agreement has already been broken is not correct in my view, though I have perhaps less knowledge of law than he has. I do not know how much he has. But I do agree that I do not have more than he has. It is clear to me that there is no breach of agreement yet. They have not yet refused. The supply is only delayed. Some of it did come and some of it is going to come. That is what they say. Therefore, the agreement is not broken. If the agreement is broken, we are free to take whatever action we may want to take. There will be no binding on us in any case. I will take action on it most certainly and quickly. But until then, I cannot break the agreement myself. My hon'ble friend may or may not have that sense of honour. Otherwise, he would not have suggested this to me.

3. SHRI VASANT SATHE: Was it a part of the agreement that by the objection of NRC, it can be delayed?

SHRI MORARJI DESAI: It is not outside the agreement. America is bound to act on its own procedure as we are bound to act on our procedure. Therefore, I cannot find fault with them. That you have to understand. Where is the question of submission? We do not want to surrender anything. Yes, if I had agreed to sign the treaty, I would have got a copious supply immediately. But I am not going to do it. Even if Tarapur has to close, I am not going to do it. If it closes, I cannot help it. It is not in my hands. But I will try to see that it does not close. I will strain every nerve to see that Tarapur does not close. For keeping the self-respect of this country, if the cost is to close it, I will close it without hesitation. Let my honourable friend understand that.

SHRI VASANT SATHE: I am satisfied.

SHRI MORARJI DESAI: Nobody is going to pressurise me, not even he.

SHRI RAMJI SINGH (Bhagalpur): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am very much satisfied with the statement of the Prime Minister. Under the agreement we can get supply of uranium only from U.S.A. In my opinion this should not be provided in the agreement.

Our atomic scientists are of the opinion that for the development of energy, it is necessary to develop the atomic power. We should, therefore, achieve self-sufficiency in atomic power. There is no alternative. I would like to know whether such a policy will be laid down during the next 5 years under which we will be able to achieve self-reliance in this matter.

SHRI MORARJI DESAI: We are making every effort to achieve self-reliance in this matter.

**REPORTED PLANTING OF NUCLEAR DEVICE BY CIA
IN NANDA DEVI**

17 April, 1978

Mr. Speaker. Sir, Honourable Members are quite understandably exercised over the reports that have appeared in the Press here based on a news-item which appeared in the United States about the attempt to locate a nuclear-fuelled power-pack on the heights of Nanda Devi. The failure in this attempt which has raised just apprehensions about the possibility of contamination of the water of our sacred river Ganga. I can assure the House that all of us share this concern of the Honourable Members as well as by the people at large at the possible hazards to our environment and people.

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The House is aware that as soon as these reports came to our attention, we expressed our grave concern to the US authorities and have subsequently been in touch with them in New Delhi and in Washington. We have also made thorough enquiries at our end to obtain as complete details as possible in the last few days. In the light of international situation prevailing at that time and scientific developments which were taking place both far and near it was decided by the Government of India and the Government of United States of America at the highest level that a remote sensing device with nuclear powerpack should be installed near the highest point of Nanda Devi with the object of securing information about missile developments.

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Accordingly, a mountaineering expedition manned only by Indian mountaineers went up the Nanda Devi followed by a Joint Indo-American expedition scientifically equipped with the device with a view to installing it at a height of 25,000 feet.

When the expedition was approaching the summit, it was overtaken by a blizzard which made further ascent impossible and facing fatal hazards to the party, they were obliged to retreat to the lower camp at a height of 23,000 ft. In the precipitate descent under very trying and exacting conditions they had to leave the powerpack securely cached. With the onslaught of winter, no attempt to locate and retrieve the device was immediately possible and had to be postponed. Another expedition was mounted in May 1968 that is in the

following spring. With the intention of retrieving and installing the device, however the expedition party on arrival at the area discovered that a major avalanche had occurred around the area and the device could not be located. Every attempt was made by ground and aerial search aided by supersensitive scientific equipment to trace the power pack but these efforts proved in vain. After all such attempts the conclusion reached by our experts which included scientists was that if the powerpack had broken, it would have been detected through these means and the likelihood was that the device got buried deep somewhere after having been smothered or carried into neighbouring crevice by the avalanche.

Searches both on the ground and by helicopters were organised every year over a wide area and continued till late 1968 but without the equipment being sighted or detected by scientific means.

Simultaneously samples of the water were taken up to 1970 and were under observation for some years but no trace of contamination was detected.

In 1967, a new device was taken to the same area and was duly installed on a neighbouring peak. This functioned normally for a while but was removed subsequently in 1968 and the equipment was returned to the United States. These operations as I said, were apparently carried out predominantly by Indian personnel but under joint auspices and were in the know of and with the approval at the highest political level of the Government of India at that time.

After the news reports appeared a few days ago we have assembled relevant details and background of these expeditions with reference to available record and in consultation with both the US Government and the Indian Departments who were involved in this project.

We have tried to get as much technical information about the device as was possible. According to information obtained and published literature on the subject, the device comprises of a power system energised by 2 to 3 lbs. of plutonium-238 metal alloy which is contained in several doubly encapsulated leaktight capsules. The inner capsules enclosing the plutonium are made of 20 mm thick tantalum-refractory metal. The primary function of tantalum is to inhibit corrosive action of the Plutonium fuel. The outer capsules are of Nickel alloy having high strength and temperature resistant properties. The capsules are encased in a Graphite heat block which along with the thermo-electrical modules in turn is encased in a cylindrical aluminium casing which is 14 inches in diameter and 13 inches high. The total weight of the entire assembly was 38 lbs.

According to the records it is clear that at that time all aspects of safety, including the possible hazards to the operating hands and general public, were taken into account and conclusion was reached that no undue hazard existed. The tests, which have been carried out by the United States, indicate that even under extremely unlikely conditions of complete instantaneous fuel exposure to water, there is little, if any, possibility of pollution attaining unsafe limits. We understand that even in such an unlikely eventuality, a flow of 5,000 gallons per day would itself dilute the dissolved material to safe drinking water levels. It is also believed by scientists that the dangers of pollution on instantaneous exposure to air are also minimal. In brief, they claim that the design details and protective systems are such as to ensure the maximum possible safety against splintering and consequential contamination and environmental hazards.

Notwithstanding the safety factor in the design and the results of physical search and scientific detection now that our Government's attention has been drawn to it, we are making renewed efforts to make ourselves triply sure. It is proposed to appoint a committee of scientists to study and assess the problem and with the help of all possible expert advice, to recommend such further action as may be considered necessary to safeguard against future hazards to the environment and to the people. We have taken immediate action to obtain fresh samples of the water from the upper reaches.

As I mentioned we have been in touch with the American Government. The US authorities had provided technical details, scientific cooperation and sophisticated equipment at the time when the search operations for the missing powerpack were being made in the summer of 1966.

Mr. Speaker, I can recall the critical situation with which we were faced during those days of concern, apprehension and anxiety. The authorities concerned in India at the highest level assessed the situation in terms of certain precautionary and effective devices to identify the various threats and contingencies and decided upon the measures which I have outlined above. It is clear from the records that as far as human agencies could provide against hazards they were taken into account. It is unfortunate that nature intervened to present for the future as we now find it a continuing source of apprehension and anxiety.

However, as far as I see no cause for alarm on grounds of health or environmental hazards exists. The indirect evidence so far is that the safety precautions built into the pack may be as effective as has been claimed and if so pollution effects may not take place in the future. It is gratifying that none

have been detected so far. I would also like to assure the House that to our knowledge, no other device of this kind exists on Indian soil and no such operations which carry potential national hazards would be permitted by us.

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BACK NOTE

Reported Planting of Nuclear device by CIA in Nanda Devi. 17 April, 1978

1. SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: What are you doing about it?

SHRI MORARJI DESAI: Will you have some patience?

2. SHRI SHYAMNANDAN MISHRA: Which year?

SHRI MORARJI DESAI: It started in 1964.

SHRI MORARJI DESAI: It started.

3. SHRI DALPAT SINGH PARASTE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the holy places where population of India congregates, whether it is emerging place of the Ganges, Narmada or Tapti, if we leave such polluting plants at the emerging points of these holy rivers and the people of India are left in a state of confusion fretting and fuming then it is quite natural for the people of India and members of the house to become anxious.

Through you, I would like to know from the Prime Minister clearly whether C.I.A. agents are active in all countries of the world? Whether former American ambassador Robert F. Gohain has sent a message to the American Government about the Indian Government knowing about this? Whether thirteen years ago in the year 1975 this plutonium power run device was hidden at the emerging point of the river Ganges in the mountain range of Nanda Devi to know about the nuclear bombing plot of China? Whether it is a fact that such kind of plants have a self life of one year and if Plutonium is scattered then using the polluted water can result in spread of cancer and other diseases?

America's Central Intelligence Agency is a discredited organization and when it kept this deadly device in Indian territory then at that time whether Government of India was knowing about it or not?

Whether there were involvement of anti social elements and institutions of India in helping the American Central Intelligence agency?

In the past in the year 1967, Ministry of Home Affairs had taken a special decision that in comparison to economic assistance being received from other countries assistance from America and Russia are continuing in large scale. The Ministry of Home Affairs had presented a proposal before the

government that the certified organizations receiving financial assistance from C.I.A. should be banned.

Whether Nuclear Power Corporation should be asked to inquire whether water of river Ganges and its tributaries have become polluted or not?

SHRI MORARJI DESAI: It seems that the honourable member has not listened patiently what I had stated. There is no need to bring in C.I.A. into it. This has been done by our government in consultation with them. Our government had sent people from here for getting training there and it was done accordingly. So there is no need to blame C.I.A. for this. It is a matter between two governments. It is not a matter of this agency only. Yes, definitely agency will work on the orders of the government and what has happened has happened because of the orders of the government. There is no agency involved illegally in it. And for the risk which was involved in it these precautionary measures were taken. In such a fretting and fuming situation whether it should be done or not is another question. If, I had to do then I had not done this I can't say. But the people who get jitters what benefits they have reaped out of it, they have done it after deliberations and in the interest of the nation and they had done it with much precaution that is what I had also stated. So, there is no question of blaming anybody in it.

4. SHRI K. LAKKAPPA: This is not a small matter. This was brought to light because of the television interview programme in the "Today Show" of the National Broadcasting Company. Mr. Kohn's version, is to be printed in the May issue of "Outside" magazine, a new monthly publication from "Rolling Stone" publications. So, all these things are going to establish that certain outside forces are operating in this country. If there are no such things which he has stated—there is no alarming situation of contamination of sacred Ganga water; there is no health hazard—these are all not conclusive proof of the statement, because no scientist of our country has gone there and fully investigated the matter. And they have been operating throughout the Himalayan region.

MR. SPEAKER: Please come to your question.

SHRI K. LAKKAPPA: The conclusion drawn by the hon. Prime Minister is very premature. Therefore, I would like to pose this question. If according

to the contradictory statement given by Mr. A. B. Vajpayee there are: sensational revelations—I do not know if there are—and if such things are investigated into by an impartial body consisting of our eminent scientists who will give their correct findings on these issues, then they will have to come out again and clarify and explain to the whole country. That responsibility is vested in them.

I would like to know what were the expedition teams involved in this at that time, the officers concerned involved in these things and the advice of the scientists on this issue. I want an impartial high level scientific body to go into all the aspects of this question, to give the ultimate analysis and conclusions and explanation to this country.

SHRI MORARJI DESAI: My hon. friend seems to have taken a vow of not wanting to be satisfied by the fullest facts. That is what I see. I have given the facts in great detail. I do not know what has been kept back. And then he tries to compare it with what my colleague has said to some press. Well, I do not know what he has said to the press. Therefore, I cannot say anything about it. He will have sufficient opportunity to tell you when the time comes. What is the use of bringing in CIA, CIB? When the decision is taken at the highest level of the Government in both the countries, then the agencies would certainly be agencies like those utilised by them. I do not say that they are not the agencies which worked. It is not only those two agencies, but there were scientific agencies too. I do not want to name all of them. But they were all under Government at the highest level, of the Prime Minister. There were three Prime Ministers involved, not one. It begins from 1964; it does not begin in 1966; it begins in the early part of 1964. Therefore, all the three were there, and they did it, as I said, because of the extraordinary situation that had arisen round about our country. That is why, they thought that they must have some protection from the consequences of that situation, and they tried to find out which danger's if any were involved. They took the precautions also to train the people here and not entrust the work to other people. That is why, people were trained. Then it was taken up by our own people, kept there again. With their help, all enquiries were made; they were made continuously for three years. He finds fault with me when I said that there are no health hazards. Would my hon. friend be happy if I frightened him to death by saying that he will be dead tomorrow by this contamination? Then if my hon. colleague has said that this will be a bombshell, what is wrong with it? I do not use this

language. I know that I cannot compete with my friend in the matter of criticism or condemnation or things like that. I do not want to condemn anybody. But this is a serious matter, on which we ought not to be less than serious. This is a matter where the Government is concerned, where the country is concerned. It was under the instructions of Government that this was done at the highest level. Therefore, what is the use of finding fault with other agencies? Nobody acted on his own here. It was done with the best of intentions, if I may say so and, proper precautions were taken. But hazards are always inherent in it. Why do I say that I have nothing to do with atomic weapons and nothing to do with making of atomic weapons? It is because of these hazards. That is why I don't want to do that. That is why I don't want to take any risk. But everybody does not think like that. If it comes to that even my hon. friend will tell one that he will have atomic weapons: I am quite sure. Therefore, let us think about it rationally and properly and not doubt the *bona fides* of people in this manner. That is all that I say.

MOTION OF NO CONFIDENCE IN THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS

11 May, 1978

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have been patiently hearing all that has been said by the Leader of the Opposition and all others who have spoken in support of the No Confidence Motion moved by the Leader of the Opposition.

I thought I would benefit by what he said and that it would help Government in rectifying mistakes which required to be rectified. The Opposition has a right of moving No Confidence Motions—whether they do it responsibly or irresponsibly it is their business. It is not for me to judge. It is not for me to object to it. That is why I welcomed it immediately and said, let it be discussed immediately. But then I heard nothing now. I have been hearing all these things ever since this Government assumed office.

The same things are being repeated over and over again from the very beginning. I can prove it by records if they want to have any proof. It is there if anybody wants to see the record. But I do not want to take the time of the House in recounting these things all over again. Only two new arguments were advanced, two new charges, if I may say so. It is good that they have come out with these charges so that the people may know what the truth is. The two new charges are that my Principal Secretary is running the whole show. There was a caucus before and there is a caucus now and that my son is doing something like this. Now, there cannot be a more fantastic statement than whatever has been said in this connection. The Principal Secretary has nothing to do with the selection of officers. The appointment of officers emanates from the Ministries concerned and the decision is made by three persons, namely the Minister concerned, the Home Minister and the Prime Minister. This is not a new practice. This practice has been there since 1947. And there is no question of my Principal Secretary trying to influence me in any way. If he tries to interfere, he will not remain in my office even for a day. I would, therefore, be obliged to the hon. Members if they can give me one instance where he has influenced my decision and got one man in who should not have got in I shall be very thankful for it.

Whom did he influence? That was the old style. This is not the style now. Even the Prime Minister does not influence other Ministers. They are free to make the recommendations that they want. And I have never suggested any name to the Ministers. Therefore, what is the use of saying this kind of thing? And then a case was made about my son making an unscheduled flight at Tehran. I do not know what is unscheduled flight....

It was the plane which stopped over at Tehran. It was not done for him. When I had gone earlier, there was also unscheduled halt then. It was not for him. What is the meaning of saying that he made an unscheduled flight? He went to London from Moscow *via* Tehran. If he had come here and then gone there, it would have cost him more money. It was not the Government money that was spent on him. I have made it clear so many times before whenever somebody asked me about it. Then it was asked why he went there. This was in September last. He went there at his own expense to sever the last connection of business he had acquired in 1970. He used to go there before every year with the full knowledge and permission of the Reserve Bank of India. He wanted to get out of it so that there is no connection left with any business whatsoever. He had severed all other connections with business here in 1964, but this had remained. He thought that it was necessary that he should get out even from this so that nobody could raise a finger. But what can one say of people who always want to see something wrong in everything which they want to imagine?

That is a different matter altogether. The Home Minister can say and I can also tell him. That shows the freedom with which we work among ourselves; it does not mean anything else.

If anything *prima facie* is established, I would be the first man to prosecute him.

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I have known Blitz for the last thirty years and I always treated it with contempt. I do not want to take notice of yellow papers; nor do I want to take notice of those who deal in yellow journalism. I can only sympathise with them for their want of prudence. But if they don't have it, who am I to give them

prudence? I do not want to offer any advice in this matter. But this shows on whom the opposition depends to show that there is no confidence in this government. What have they come to? I thought that they would change by years' experience and give up their old methods. But I find that they are still fond of them. I cannot help them. Who am I to say that they should not do so? But if they feel that by this method they will be able to break the Janata Party, they are very much mistaken. I agree and I would not say that there is nothing wrong with you. I will be the last man to say so; no party can claim that there is no difference anywhere, in any party. Show me any party, even in England, even in America, even in Germany wherever you go, you will find differences. There were no open differences during the last few years in their party. But I was told of the inner differences that were there. I do not want to speak about them; I am not like them, I do not believe in resorting to such methods to condemn anybody. But these are matters where if they were careful, I do not think they would have done what they have done here. I cannot compliment them on their performance. What have we done, they ask. Is this not a great change, the change that has taken place? The change is so remarkable that the world knows it. If there is no full satisfaction, I can understand. I cannot say that there is full satisfaction nor can I say that full satisfaction can be given in a year in every matter. But there is nothing of which we have to be ashamed nor is there anything that we have not done which we could have done or that we have failed in doing it. There is no item on which anybody can say that.

They cited many things. They cited prices. Are not prices more this March than what they were in March last? If they deny the figures what am I to do? We do not claim that they have one down. If they have to go down they have to be stable first. And if after ten years record of inflation every year, barring six months of Emergency, we have halted rise in prices, is that not some achievement?

But why should they admit it? They, they have to condemn themselves which they are not yet prepared to do. Yes, I know, there are several hon. Members on the other side who had quietly suffered all kinds of things during the Emergency and even before. They have now begun to admit, some in public and some in private, that Emergency was wrong and should not have been there.

They say now that there is no change. Is this a small change that everybody is free to say what he likes throughout the country? Is it not the greatest change from the times when we tried to point out the shortcomings of the Government but were taken away in the darkness of night, whisked away somewhere without letting anybody know where we were taken? Thousands of them were taken away and crowds were brought here in lorries and trucks, Government military trucks to prove that people had confidence in them.

How can I give any sense of shame to people who do not know what shame is? How can I give it? It is not possible for me to give any sense of proportion when there is none? How am I to do it?

It is my misfortune that I have to reply to this debate. It is no pleasure for me to have to say these things. I am not happy but I have to reply to it; otherwise, things will go by default. The change you see is that can go about without let or hinderance, they can say whatever they like.

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There is complete freedom of press, so much so that what we say may not be published but what they say is published with big headlines. I can prove it by production of those newspapers, if they want to see.

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Then, on the media who is getting publicity? It is given to everybody. If at all, they get more publicity than they deserved at any time. Was opposition ever heard on media before? Yet they say there is no change. It has been done for the first time in this country, that in the elections the Opposition had the facility of speaking on the radio as much as the ruling party. For the first time this is done.

We are also trying to see that media become independent and do not remain subservient to Government. But it requires careful consideration. We had appointed a committee. The report has come. We will soon take a decision. But to say that we have done nothing, has no meaning.

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If any law is violated, certainly Government will step in. But that is only when law is violated; and the action can be taken in a court of law. But for that, we will not interfere in any manner whatever.' I have never asked any

Editor or Correspondent to see me, unless he wanted to come and see me. And there also, I have never said, "You should do this or should not do that". I only say, "You better ascertain the facts and write as you like." We don't want to interfere with the freedom of the Press in any manner.

Take the Opposition. Is the Opposition now in the same cramped state in which it was before? The Leader of the Opposition has been recognized fully. And it was for the first time in history that the speaker and the Deputy Speaker were elected unanimously in this House.

I agree that credit goes to the House. The Opposition would have been willing to do that even before; but it was never consulted. Not only that. It was defamed in every possible way. We don't believe in retaliation. Not only that. The President has also been elected unanimously. I don't say that the credit is not due to you. I say that credit goes to all.

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Look at food supplies. There is more food available today. And those whom I met in Bombay and in other cities have said that whenever they wanted things, they get them. Formerly all those things were not available. There is now more production Industry is doing better. It has not done enough, I am quite sure. But it takes time. A year or 13 months is not enough to change everything and bring Heaven in this country. We have never promised that. We don't do it.

There is Education. It requires to be changed; but we cannot change it by ourselves, as they were doing. We want to take the educationists with us in this matter. Therefore we are discussing education with those who are concerned with it and trying to come to a consensus in the same manner as we are doing in this House on many matters. That is why it takes time. The Constitutional Amendment should have been done much earlier. But we did not want it without taking the opposition with us, as much as possible. We have been able to come to a large measure of agreement even in the anti-Defections Bill; it is delayed because we wanted to consult the Opposition so that it has a smooth passage and it becomes more effective. I must say I was very happy this morning when in our discussions we could come to agreed conclusions and reached a consensus. That is why we have to have patience in this matter.

If my hon. friends think we can wash out every wrong thing they did in

thirteen months, then I would like to say that we have washed out some; other things still remain to be washed out. That takes a little time; but it will not take more than a year more to wash out the remaining dirt.

..... **xxx** **xxx** **xxx**⁷

This, I know; but it is not my business to expose anybody. I have never done it and I would not do it. If you come to me privately, I will tell you what I know, on condition that you do not publish it. But this is not the way to do it.

..... **xxx**..... **xxx** **xxx**⁸

That is how the world is. I do not find fault with them. We all have feet of clay; everybody has some failing or the other. Who am I to find fault with them? But they want us to be saints whereas they want to remain what they were, I think that is not the way to increase our capacity or make the Government more effective.

Let there be responsible dignified criticism. Criticism can be made, provided it is made with dignity. When they go on shouting at those who speak from here, they do not see anything wrong in it; they say that is their right. But when some people from here have a dig at them, all of them get up and ask "what is going on" ? This is not the way to meet arguments. What does the hon. Member think he is doing? He is demonstrating how he interrupts all the while. I have not interfered with anybody; I have not interrupted anybody. This is not the way to do it. But they pop up and down all the while, because that seems to be the only exercise they know. If it had been really an exercise in dignity with cogent arguments, I would have been very thankful to them.

As I said before, I welcome this no-confidence motion, because I am glad that it brings the two factions together. Those who have factions are now talking about factions? In my party where are the factions? Yes, there are differences of views as my colleague, Shri Jagjivan Ram, said, it is an unprecedented thing in history that five parties, differing from one another but all believing in democracy, fighting against one another for 30 years, criticising one another, come together voluntarily without any pressure from anybody, except the pressure of the people, who wanted democracy to be saved. Therefore, we came together and emerged practically as a new party, which was not fully formed constitutionally in the normal sense, wins the Lok Sabha elections in a

striking manner, which opens the eyes of the world, but not the eyes of my hon. friends. Those who have eyes, but do not see—what can I tell them? I can lead a blind man, but I cannot lead a person who can see, but does not want to see. What can I do to them?

And then it was also said by Jagjivanramji that we are working together. It does not mean that all our hearts have come together. Therefore, there are bound to be some differences, differences of opinions and views. That is not healthy in my views, I do agree, but it is not an unusual phenomenon. It is natural. If it did not happen, it would have been unnatural. We would not have lasted. It is because of this that it will be cemented.

And I want their factions also to be cemented. I want a strong opposition. I do not want a weak opposition. It is the business of the opposition to show the faults of the Government, and also try to see that they get the mandate of the people to replace the Government in a constitutional manner. It is their right. That is what democracy means. And that is why I want that they should recognise this.

I believe what is happening is natural in the conditions in which we have come together, but that also will settle down. We will not oblige you. Don't think that you are likely to come here soon. But if you behave like this, you will never come here again.

I only want that they should be dignified in what they say, that they must have more regard for facts and truth, rather than only eagerness to attack and make us feel. That way nobody feels anything. I wish they had said something which would have made me think. I do not know what reply to give because there is nothing on which I can say anything to them, there is nothing which requires any telling. But my hon. friends go on saying what they like. Let them do so. After all, it is they who have to pick up wisdom, not I. I am trying to pick up such wisdom from them, as is therein them. Everybody can have wisdom I cannot say that there is anybody without any wisdom whatsoever, I can never say that. I am trying to learn from them. I do not want them to learn from me if they do not want to.

On the one side they give me a compliment that I am a Gandhian. On the other side, they depict me as a fool or a convener. That is not the way.

They bring here cases of oppression, terrorism of oppression of Harijans, law and order problems, but these are not problems which only relate to us, they relate to all. I do not want to go on with this argument. This has been happening. And we have got to stop it. We are not able to stop it much, I agree, but this is also a legacy that we have got, and it is not created only by those people; these are also inherent in the conditions of the country. I do not want to blame anybody for these things, but these are things which we have got to stop. Formerly these incidents were not published. The Harijans, the tribals and the backward classes had no courage to fight it or speak about it. I am very happy that they are able to fight and speak out today, and that is why when my colleagues here on this side speak very strongly about it, I have patience with them, I appreciate their feelings.

But, do my hon. friends want to spoil the atmosphere further and not make it better? If they are interested in improving the situation and making this country great for the benefit of all of us, this is not the way to go about it. That is all that I can plead with them.

I have nothing to advise them. This is no sermon. It is my business as Leader of the House to advise them if necessary, but I know that advice must not be given to anybody who does not want it. One who does that would be stupid. That I learnt when I was young, not now. If they say many things and I have got to reply to them, they consider it a sermon. God help them again. Do they expect that I must not say anything which I must say to refute what they are saying in a wrong manner? If I say that, how does it become a sermon. If I say that I want the opposition to be strong, would I be giving a sermon? I say that the opposition will be strong only if it becomes dignified and disciplined in the House because it goes out from the House outside and I was simply very unhappy when I was told in one argument that this House does not represent the conditions in the country. The people outside represent them. Are we not representatives? Is it not derogatory to the Parliament and its authority? This House represents the best in the country, whatever they may be.

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I am thankful to the hon. Leader of the Opposition for making an exhibition once again of what weaknesses they are suffering from. If they want

to press the no-confidence motion, they are free to do so. But that will not add to the dignity in any way. That is all I have to say. Thank you.

BACK NOTE

Motion of No Confidence in the Council of Ministers. 11 May, 1978

1 SHRI VASANT SATHE: The Home Minister says that there is *prima facie* case.

SHRI MORARJI DESAI: He has not said that. That is all wrong. He has never said so; that is a lie if anybody says so.

2 SHRI A. C. GEORGE: What does he say?

SHRI MORARJI DESAI: I am not going to tell you and oblige you in this matter. My hon. friends depend upon Blitz—God help them a paper which has always been a tissue of lies.

3 SHRI A. C. GEORGE: May I just say one sentence? The fearlessness had led to one thing in the United States. I may just quote a few lines from 'India Abroad'. An advertisement has appeared in it and it is this:

"SERVICES—We deliver rupees in India. Competitive rates—fast action. Any amount, at any place. Transaction through banks, Easiest way of doing it—everything done by telephone. Personalized services, satisfaction guaranteed. H. Parikh (Financial Consultant) Orient Express, Journal Square. Jersey City."

An advertisement has come that they will make compensatory payment. That is where the fearlessness had led to. This is published in the United States.

SHRI MORARJI DESAI: These are legacies which we have received from my hon. friend and it is that legacy which is making it difficult for this Government to get over everything and make faster progress.

SHRI A. C. GEORGE: Since he mentioned about fearlessness, I mentioned that. An advertisement is put that rupees will be paid in India for dollars in 'India Abroad', a magazine published in the United States and so many Indians read it.

SHRI MORARJI DESAI: They are sorry that we are undoing the wrongs that they heaped upon us people. We have not yet been able to remove all wrongs completely and that is our misfortune. But the wrongs are so many that they cannot be removed quickly. What we could do quickly, we have already done and you see the result of it.

4 SHRI VASANT SATHE: That is why the yellow press is there.

SHRI MORARJI DESAI: It is not the yellow press, yellow press is a very small part of it. A large part of it is not yellow press.

5. SHRI VASANT SATHE: Media has been captured by one organization.

SHRI MORARJI DESAI: By whom has it been captured? The agencies were merged into one in the past regime. There was one 'Samachar' only; and all were bundled into it, and made to do what they liked. All that has been separated and they are made independent. And we don't interfere with them in any manner whatsoever, Not only that. I have told the Press; 'If you want to have your own arrangement, you must have it. I don't want to nominate anybody on the press Council. You should look after the Press yourselves and regulate it yourselves.

6. SHRI VASANT SATHE: Dr. G. S. Dhillon was elected unanimously.

SHRI MORARJI DESAI: The Speaker was not elected unanimously— not in the real sense. Therefore, to say that nothing has happened, is only denying facts. I can say nothing more than that.

7. SHRI VASANT SATHE: Do not wash them in public.

SHRI MORARJI DESAI: That is left to you. If you want me to do it, I do not know whether you will be able to stand up to it.

8. AN. HON. MEMBER: What about your secrets ?

SHRI MORARJI DESAI: I have no secrets. If I have, let anybody find them. But, somehow, over the years I was close with many of them. So, I know what they really are.

9. SHRI MOHD. SHAFI QURESHI: Nobody said this.

SHRI MORARJI DESAI: It was said here. I will show it from the record. That is not right. It has been said from the front benches opposite. It has not been said from the back benches.

SHRI MORARJI DESAI: I can tell you but I do not want to name people. It is not said by one but by two. If they did not say it and if they say, they did not say it, I accept it. I have no difficulty about it. But let them see afterwards what they have said in a hurry without knowing what they are saying. That also is a malady from which we are suffering here. I hope, we do not suffer from that malady as a result of this no-confidence motion.

STATEMENT REGARDING RECENT VISIT TO BELGIUM, U.K. AND U.S.A.

20 July, 1978

With your permission, Sir, I would like to make a short statement on my visit abroad from June 5 to 17. But it is not so short, if I may say so.

During a short technical halt in Tehran, I met His Imperial Majesty the Shahanshah of Iran at his invitation. At the invitation of the Prime Ministers of Belgium, the United Kingdom and the President of the United States, I visited their respective countries. I also addressed the Special Session of the U.N. General Assembly on Disarmament. The Minister of External Affairs, Shri A. B. Vajpayee, joined me in London and thereafter assisted me.

IRAN

2. At Tehran I had a useful exchange of views with His Imperial Majesty the Shahanshah of Iran and briefly reviewed the regional situation in the light of developments since his visit to India in February last. The exchange helped to harmonise our understanding and reinforce our interest in the political stability of and economic cooperation amongst the nations of our region. I am happy to say that we reached a broad measure of understanding on these issues.

BELGIUM

3. My visit to Belgium was the first at the political level since 1972. We have no political problems with Belgium, but the exchange of views with the Belgian Prime Minister was useful and ranged over the problems of Europe, Asia and Africa. In particular, we covered recent events in Zaire and agreed that the problem of security of the area should be left to the Africans themselves under the overall guidance of O.A.U. I was also received by His Majesty the King of Belgium.

4. In Brussels I had also meaningful talks with the President of the European Commission, Mr. Roy Jenkins, and Mr. W. Haferkamp, Vice-President in charge of External Affairs of the Community, and his colleagues. I urged upon them that as a major trading partner, we do expect the E.E.C. to facilitate trade and resist the logic of short term problems and restrictive policies. It was agreed that negotiations for the renewal of our agreement with the E.E.C. due to expire next year, should commence at a high level soon. It was also decided

to set up appropriate centres for India and the E.E.C. in Brussels and New Delhi respectively.

U.K.

5. I was in London from 6 to 8 June. I had audience with Her Majesty the Queen and we held official talks with the British Prime Minister, Mr. James Callaghan, while Shri Vajpayee had separate talks with his British colleague, Dr. David Owen. We had also bilateral discussions at the official level. I also met the Leader of the Opposition and the Conservative Party, Mrs. Margaret Thatcher, as well as the Leader of the Liberal Party, Dr. David Steel. It was particularly useful to be able to meet a cross-section of British Members of Parliament in the House of Commons. In our discussions with the British Government, we covered matters of international and bilateral interest, particularly Southern Africa and North-South economic problems. We emphasised the necessity of avoiding any formula enabling Mr. Ian Smith to perpetuate racist minority rule in Rhodesia by one ruse or another. Our British colleagues assured us that they stood the main principles of the Anglo-American proposals and would strive to bring about a negotiated settlement between all the parties concerned. We discussed *inter alia* the nuclear non-proliferation matters in the context of U.S. Non-proliferation Act of 1978 and in the context of the Special Session of the U.N. on Disarmament.

U.N. Special Session on Disarmament:

6. India participated very actively in the Special Session of the United Nations on Disarmament and I place before the House a copy of my statement before the General Assembly on June 9. I submitted that commitment to disarmament must be total and it was futile to try to secure partial disarmament through a policy of balancing of forces in an atmosphere of mutual suspicion and fear. The Non-Proliferation Treaty has failed to arrest the growth of nuclear armaments either qualitatively or quantitatively, and I proposed that the Special Session should take a first step in nuclear disarmament through qualitative and quantitative limitations and a time-bound programme for gradual reduction of the existing stockpiles of nuclear weapons with a view to achieving their total elimination and mentioned in particular our own commitment to the pursuit of atomic energy and development for peaceful purpose and to eschew any utilization of this energy for explosion. I also emphasised the importance of expeditious achievement of a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. While the results of the Special Session fell short of our expectations, due largely to difficult attitude adopted by nuclear military powers, we believe that

the Final Document adopted at the conclusion of the Session has some positive elements. In any case, we have still the opportunity to raise the residuary issues before the General Assembly.

7. In New York, I called on the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Dr. Kurt Waldheim and the President of the Special Session.

U.S.A.

8. I had two days of discussions with the President of USA and met with members of the U.S. Congress. I also talked with eminent Americans in different walks of life.

9. My trip to Washington was part of my continuing dialogue with President Carter and the U.S. Administration. I was once again impressed by the President's frank, sincere and friendly approach in all our discussions. A spirit of mutual confidence and a genuine desire to understand each other's point of view obtains between us. This, I believe, provides a firm foundation for building mutually beneficial relations between the United States and India.

10. Our discussions in Washington covered a wide range of subjects connected with bilateral and international relations that are reflected in the Joint communiqué, of which I place a copy on the Table. [Placed in Library. See No. LT-2420/78]

11. I took the opportunity to impress upon President Carter and others the obligation of the two main powers, the United States and the Soviet Union, to set an example in nuclear disarmament, a field in which the nuclear-weapon powers had failed to make any significant progress. President Carter gave us a detailed account of the progress being made in their talks with the Soviet Union, on the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and Strategic Arms Limitation. I found him keen to move towards an early conclusion of Agreements in both these fields.

12. The nuclear issue is no doubt an important point of difference between the two countries. While President Carter explained the provisions of the U.S. Nuclear Non-Proliferation Act of 1978, I reiterated that we could not be asked to accept full scope safeguards by countries who themselves have nuclear weapons and who do not accept safeguards on their own nuclear military establishments. I argued that the U.S. legislation sought unilaterally to modify its obligations when we have strictly observed ours. In my view, the United States is obligated to supply enriched uranium to Tarapur until 1993 and cannot unilaterally stop the supplies.

¹ Juanita M. Kreps, US Secretary of Commerce (1977-1979).

13. I explained our point of view to members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and the House of Representatives Committee on International Affairs. The House Committee, which had held up its vote till it heard me, decided by an overwhelming vote the next day to clear the consignment of fuel for Tarapur. A few days later, similar action was taken by the Senate Committee. As you know, the House of Representatives has now approved President Carter's Executive Order for the shipment of 7.6 metric tons of enriched uranium.

14. Neither they nor we wish to underestimate the difference of opinion on the continuing supply of fuel for Tarapur. However, I have reason to believe that there is a wider and better understanding of our nuclear policy and approach to nuclear cooperation than in the past. We have, therefore, agreed to continue our dialogue on the nuclear issue.

15. I also discussed with President Carter and his two colleagues concerned with commerce and international trade negotiations, the necessity of controlling the growing trend towards protectionism in developed countries: I also referred to the difficulties being encountered in the USA by our exporters of cotton textiles and engineering goods. It was agreed that there was considerable potential for expanding trade and other economic exchange between India and the U.S.A. Accordingly, the U.S. Secretary for Commerce, Mrs. Kreps¹, would be visiting India later this year to explore the potential. I am glad that my discussions have resulted in the U.S. Department concerned relaxing in their attitude regarding consignments of textiles which had been held up.

16. Naturally, I met members and representatives of the Indian communities wherever I went. They are increasing in size and in the nature of occupations. This raises complex problems. We are interested in their welfare and commend all efforts leading to multi-racial harmony, enabling them to live in dignity. This demands of our Indian brethren abroad, acceptance of the laws of the land wherever they may be and adjustment to their economic and social environment in keeping with the ancient Indian tradition of tolerance. I advised our countrymen that by their conduct, they should prove themselves to be worthy of India, the country of their origin. In Britain, the immigrant Indian community was apprehensive of a worsening of racial relations. I drew the attention of British leaders to these apprehensions and conveyed to them as well as leaders of the Indian community the need for promoting mutual confidence and harmony between different ethnic groups. This was widely accepted as the best course.

Conclusion

17. I have come away with the impression from the countries I visited that there is a friendly and warm interest in India. There is a wide appreciation of the constructive approach we have made to international issues and the policy of genuine non-alignment. Our measures to restore and safeguard democratic norms and personal freedoms have been warmly welcomed. There is also an awareness and appreciation of our efforts at economic development, devoting special attention to agriculture and the rural areas. Our desire to achieve self-reliance has been studied with understanding. There is understanding and admiration for the new orientation in our foreign policy. Most leaders felicitated us in the improved climate which prevails in South Asia and would like to see it continued and consolidated. The House can confidently feel satisfied that in a troubled world India's standing is higher and the world would like to see India grow in stability and traverse its chosen paths at home and abroad.

BACK NOTE

**Statement Regarding recent visit to Belgium, U.K. and U.S.A.
20 July, 1978**

-NIL-

STATEMENT REGARDING APPOINTMENT OF BACKWARD CLASSES COMMISSION

20 December, 1978

Sir, the question of the welfare of backward classes has been engaging the attention of Government for quite some time. The Government had already set up in July 1978 a Commission for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

I am glad to inform the House that the Government have now decided to set up under the provisions of Article 340 of the Constitution a Commission to investigate the conditions of socially and educationally backward classes. Accordingly a Commission consisting of the following has been constituted for this purpose:—

1. Shri B.P. Mandal, MP, Chairman
2. Shri Dewan Mohan Lal, Member
3. Shri R.R. Bhole, Member
4. Shri K. Subramaniam, Member
5. Shri Dina Bandhu Saha, Member

The terms of reference to the Commission will be:

(I) to determine the criteria for defining the socially and educationally backward classes;

(II) to recommend steps to be for the advancement of the socially educationally backward classes and of citizens so identified;

(III) to examine the desirability of otherwise of making provision for the reservation of appointments or posts in favour of such backward classes citizens which are not adequately represented in the services of both the Central and State Governments/Union Territory Administrations; and

(IV) present a report setting out the facts as found by them and making such recommendations as they think proper.

The Commission shall present their Report not later than 31st December, 1979.

BACK NOTE

**Statement Regarding Appointment of Backward Classes Commission.
20 December, 1978**

-NIL-

STATEMENT REGARDING VISIT TO SRI LANKA

20 February, 1979

Sir, on the invitation of the President of Sri Lanka I visited the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka from February 3rd to February 6th. I was also invited by the President of Sri Lanka to be the Chief Guest at their National Day celebrations on February the 4th in Kandy. I was accompanied by Shri Samrendra Kundu, Minister of State for External Affairs.

A copy of the Joint Press Statement issued at the end of my visit is placed on the Table of the House. [Placed in Library. See No. LT-3251/79]

During the visit, I had several opportunities to discuss with the President, the Prime Minister and other Ministers of the Government of Sri Lanka a wide range of subjects of bilateral interest and to exchange views on regional and international issues. I am happy to note that we agreed that there are no bilateral outstanding problems between India and Sri Lanka. Our discussions centred mainly around ways and means of bringing about closer cooperation between the two countries in all fields especially in the areas of trade and economic exchanges as well as cultural and scientific relations.

I met members of the Indian communities both in Kandy and Colombo and representatives of various Indo-Sri Lanka Associations. It is gratifying that they are contributing significantly not only to closer bilateral relations but also to the development of Sri Lanka. I had an opportunity of discussing the problems faced by some of the persons who are to be repatriated to India. Our missions are already seized of their problems and I have directed them to facilitate the formalities required for repatriation. I reviewed with the Sri Lanka leaders the implementation of the India-Sri Lanka Agreement of 1964. The officials on both sides have been asked to streamline and improve various procedures in this regard. I also had a useful talk with the Leader of the Opposition.

I also participated in the inauguration ceremonies of the Kotmale Multi-purpose Reservoir Project which is part of the prestigious Mahavali Development Scheme. The scheme will add considerably to agricultural production and power generation in Sri Lanka, and has good potentialities of development of Sri Lanka's economy. Hon'ble Members are no doubt aware that the feasibility study for this project was financed by the Government of India and prepared by an Indian company, Water and Power Development Consultants

Ltd. India does not have very large material resources; yet we do provide assistance to our friends and neighbours in their national development and I would like to take this opportunity to restate our firm intention to do whatever is possible within our resources to assist in their growth.

During my visit, I was given the privilege of addressing members of the Sri Lanka Parliament. I was able to join with the colleagues of that August body in reaffirming the common dedication of our two countries to the democratic process and its relevance even to developing societies.

Sir, the main impression that I bring back from my visit is the overwhelming warmth and cordiality which the people and Government of Sri Lanka have for India and which I was personally able to experience and reciprocate. It is only natural should that India and Sri Lanka should strengthen these deep bonds of friendship and work towards closer economic and material cooperation to the benefit of both our countries. But over and beyond that we share a common dedication to a democratic way of life, a belief in similar spiritual values and ethics.

I would be failing in my duty if I did not place on record my gratitude to President Jayewardene and Prime Minister Premadasa for the warmth and cordiality of the reception accorded to me and also for the many gestures of personal affection which they extended to me and my party during our entire visit.

BACK NOTE

Statement Regarding visit to Sri Lanka. 20 February, 1979

-NIL-

REPLY ON MOTION OF THANKS ON THE PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

28 February, 1979

Mr. Speaker, Sir, though I had not the opportunity to hear every speech of my hon. friends who spoke on the President's Address, I have been careful enough to be acquainted with the criticisms that have been made and I must express my thanks to all the hon. Members for taking a keen interest in the Address even though it was described as something which was complacent, which is without any meaning, which is full of half truths, which concealed facts and all that. All kinds of things were said and yet that it has generated that much interest amongst all of them is a very significant factor. But that is usual.

I must also thank them for pointing out many things, right or wrong, because it was from these things one always benefits and that is how I take nil the criticism. But, when criticism is overdone, it becomes difficult to benefit by it. That also ought to be recognised and realised. Where criticism is justified, it can be very severe also and I have no quarrel with that, but, where criticism is not justified but serious criticism is made, then one becomes a bit sceptic in looking at the criticism. There is a danger involved in taking up that line which I would venture to bring to the notice of my hon. friends.

One hon. member went to the length of saying that it is a document par excellence which conceals government's dismal performance. I do not know what is the dismal performance? At any rate, he has called it performance, even if it is dismal. He was not heard to say that we did not do anything; and that there was no performance. But I do not see how that is justified.

If we look at the various points of criticism made, I think all reasonable persons will have to agree that the record as given in the President's Address of government's performance is neither dismal nor unsatisfactory under the circumstances in which we are working and considering also that after all we are human beings who deal with it and cannot claim perfection. There may be shortcomings no doubt, but they have to be viewed in a reasonable manner so that we can improve them. If we look at the whole criticism from this point of view, I am sure my hon. friends will see some relevance in what I am telling them.

In the first place, it was said that there is an atmosphere of violence prevailing in the country. Who is responsible for it? Is the Government

responsible for it? The Government is trying to meet it as best as it can. But would not my hon. friends look within their own conscience and see if they have not been responsible for the violence? What happened after the privilege motion had been passed in this hon. House? I can understand people who disagree with it, but to go in the streets and organise demonstrations revel in them and then if you say that there is violence, who is responsible for it? If we are dealing with it in a civilised manner, it must not be understood that we will allow it to go on.

Yesterday, a judgment was given by court against Shri Shukla and Shri Sanjay Gandhi. And see what scene was created in the court by some of these people? They belong to the Opposition camp; they cannot deny it. Otherwise, they would not be there. Outside also they were attacking buses; there were very few people and not many. But, this is how this thing goes on. I had drawn the attention of my hon. friend, the Leader of the Opposition, after the Privilege Motion that things were taken to the streets by some of them and they revelled in them. So many people had taken part in the demonstrations. I asked: 'Is this right? And he agreed with me that there should be no violence?' But, did he condemn it publicly? He knows the answer himself. It is these matters which ought to be considered. Is violence the concern only of Government? Is it not also the concern of my hon. friends? Have they not the same interest of the country at heart? If that is so, we ought to find ways and means for which I am trying my level best. We have been consulting the Opposition Leaders in all these matters. We also consulted the Opposition Leaders in the matter of communal disturbances and reprisals against the Harijans. And Government have appointed now a Committee under my colleague, the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Defence representing all parties to go into this question and to see what can be done. And we shall certainly take action accordingly.

That is what we had said. Therefore, is it not necessary for my hon'ble friends to be more appreciative of this action and to cooperate in it rather than to encourage violence when it suits somebody? That is all I can plead with them in this matter. The charge is not relevant against the Government. Let those who make that charge examine their conscience and they will find where the fault lies. We are trying to do our level best. I hope they will help us. Even if they do not help us, we shall still try to do better and see that we contain it.

Then it is said that there is a mad import policy, I do not know whether they know what the word 'mad' means. If 'sane' is called 'mad' then I have no objection. After all what is the import policy? We have imported articles which were scarce here and their prices had gone up. Edible oils had become scarce and very costly. We had therefore to import it and the prices have been made steady. Now was that import sane or mad? If one goes to a lunatic asylum, the visitor is considered mad.

Then, Sir, Science and Technology also came in for criticism and it is said that Science and Technology is not making progress, that it has been relegated to the background. They don't want even to know the facts.

And then it is said, nuclear energy programme also is being reversed. On the contrary we are taking things out of the morass in which they had plunged them on account of some actions.

And then it is said, we are allowing even our nuclear installations to be inspected. Whoever told them that? In spite of my clear enunciation of the whole position in this House, this is what they say by way of criticism. What can I say? I only sympathise with their want of material to criticise us. That is all that I can say.

After all, we are not going to make any compromise in this matter and we have said that inspection of our installations can take place only if inspection of all installations in all the countries take place. Otherwise how are we going to allow it? We are prepared to undergo any difficulties in the matter but we are not prepared to surrender national self-respect.

And then it is said, we are going with the U.S. and then they will apply 'S' and 'R' to it and then say, U.S.S.R. We are friends with all of them. Therefore, we don't surrender ourselves to anybody. It is on equal terms that our relations are with everybody. And we are happy that that is acknowledged by all of them. But they are jealous that we have better relations today than they had even after surrendering. And that is how the foreign policy is judged. When the Foreign Minister goes to China at their invitation and on their suggestion that we should solve our problems by discussion, and then, agreeing to it, if the Foreign Minister goes. I don't think how they can say it is ill-timed. What is the time? I don't know whether they are astrologers to give us auspicious time. But they are political astrologers as it suits their convenience. (An hon. Member Shri Madhu Limaye). We don't do like that, whether it is

Shri Madhu Limaye or whether it is my hon. friends; I make no difference in this matter. Facts are facts. One has got to look at facts as they are. What have we done? If the Foreign Minister went there, has he compromised in anything? The moment he found that they had attacked Vietnam he cut short his tour and came away. What greater protest than that could have been made there? I doubt if his predecessors had any courage to do that. It is they who set up the consular agencies there, it is they who sent ambassador there, not we. Therefore, it was they who started it and if we now try to work it better, why are they feeling aggrieved about it? I cannot understand.

We have made it very clear that the problem of the land which they have taken from us, has got to be solved to our satisfaction. We have said that There can be no compromise on that issue at all. Not only that when the Foreign Minister went there and talked with them, they also agreed that they would have no dealings with the rebels from Nagaland and elsewhere. On the Kashmir issue also they have begun to realise their mistake. But it takes time. But to say that we are compromising our position is not correct; I only hope that they find something more tangible for criticism of us. And then to say that we are going with the U.S.A., we are going with this man, we are going with that man, that has no meaning. I have made it very clear to all these friends, and they have agreed, that our relations with any country will not be at the cost of any other country. That is what we have made clear and we want to see that all countries become friends so that war is abolished. That is how we want to help in the whole world situation. But we have got to be considering of ourselves in this country. If we are weakened by my hon. friends here, in this matter, I do not know whether they are serving the national interest. That is all that I have to request them to consider.

In the science and technology field there are some people, who are being put up to say that we are going against those scientists, there is no greater lie than that uttered by anybody. We are trying to see that real scientists are encouraged. But everybody who gets a degree of B.Sc. or M.Sc. is not a Scientist. One who is wedded to Science is a scientist. That is how we are encouraging them. As regards nuclear energy for peaceful purposes it is being pursued and pursued far more vigorously now than before. Not only that. In the Space Science also, we are making further progress. We have allotted more money to Science and Technology and for its advancement than before. Does that mean that we are paying less attention to it? If the arrangement that is

made is more effective in ensuring that the various laboratories function more effectively and more checks are applied to some of the defaulting people who make a grievance of it, should they support those defaulting people or should they support this Government? Is it in the national interest to support those who did not pull their weight but were burdensome? Is it in the interest of science and technology? That is how it ought to have been considered.

Then, when one comes to foreign policy, they also find fault with me by saying that I have refused to interfere, in the matter of the sentence against Mr. Bhutto. I do not understand how they find fault with me in this matter. If I say that I cannot interfere in the affairs of any country, how am I going to say anything else? But look at these very friends who are saying so much about Mr. Bhutto. Have they said anything about what happened in Nepal when two people were executed? Have they said anything about the Generals who were executed in Iran or somewhere else? I do not speak about any of these things because we must be consistent. We cannot interfere in other countries' affairs. It is their concern. Yes, if we discuss with them at any time, we can say whatever we have to say if they have asked for it. But that is a different matter. Otherwise, one cannot say it. How would we like if somebody interferes with our policy? Would we allow them to do so? Then how can we interfere with the affairs of other people? That is why we have to have more consideration in these matters. If all of us are wedded to non-aligned policy, I believe all of us are wedded to non-aligned policy, at least in this respect there is no difference of opinion. I hope. Though in detail sometimes they go away by their own alignments, we are not aligned to anybody. But I cannot say the same thing about all my opposition friends. They are certainly aligned to some or the other, some of them, not all. And then the criticism comes that according to their alignment, I must also show my alignment. How can I do that? We have to be correct in this matter and not merely correct but truthful and that is what we are seeking to do. But the worst part was the criticism made by my hon. friend, the Leader of the Opposition, when he said that the sense of oneness in the country is being lost fast. I do not know what dreams he is dreaming. But is not there a better sense now than before in all the State Governments? There are 7 State Governments which are not of the Janata Party. They are quite different. But our relations with them are the best, they are the same, uniform with all the Governments. Was that achieved in their time? But this has been achieved. I don't want to give my opinion

about it. Ask them. They have publicly stated this. At the National Development Council also, with all kinds of different arguments, ultimately we all come to a conclusion where we don't quarrel. Is that losing oneness ? I don't understand what he means by it.

And then the language problem is brought in. Where are we trying to push anybody against his own wish, desire or understanding ? We are not trying to do that; but does that mean that we should lose sight of the fact that Hindi is the official language, according to our Constitution ? Can I lose sight of that fact ? But I am not pushing it. I have made it very clear. Then, who should be found fault with ? Should the Government be found fault with, or those who are not going with the Constitution ? But I don't ask them to do it, because this is not a matter where we should create a controversy or create unnecessary bad blood anywhere. It is to be done by agreement, by bringing people together and not by propaganda like this; but this is a wrong propaganda that is being made. That is where I would plead with my hon. friends that in the Interests of the country itself, please don't try to increase the controversies or make them worse. We should try to narrow them down. And there, if I have lapsed in any way, I am prepared to be hauled over the coals and pay whatever price they want from me. I won't make such a mistake in spite of any provocations that may be given. And in that very matter, my friend opposite—he is very friendly when we talk, but—when he talks with me there, he says something else.

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May be it is so usually in human societies, I don't know; but I am not like that. I am his friend. Whether he is, or not is his concern.

Then there we referred to Pondicherry. What did I say ? I do believe that Pondicherry cannot remain always apart as a small island territory like that. It is not possible, but it has to be done in a proper manner. I have no doubt about it. Government has not taken any decision—that is what I have said.

..... **xxx**

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We have been trying to have full rapport with the Opposition leaders in various matters and we discuss with them; they were also good enough to discuss with us because if they do not discuss, how could I function ? I am thankful to them for that; we also discussed the communal matters, the

Harijan problem and in a conference it was decided that I should appoint a committee to go into it. We have appointed a committee representing all Opposition Parties as far as possible under the Chairmanship of Shri Jagjivan Ram Ji; It will go into this problem and give suggestions about ways and measures which we will certainly carry out. That is what we want to do.

In the matter of many evils that we have inherited we are trying to solve them. For backward classes also, we have appointed a backward classes Commission who will give us their views after considering everything as to what we should do in this matter and we will not take twenty years as was done before. That will not happen. We will take action on its report. We will take action on their report and see that the matter is satisfactorily solved. That is why we have appointed it. That is why we have appointed a Minorities Commission. That is why we have also appointed a Commission for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. We are trying to see that they work without any let or hindrance, that they work properly and have full scope to do so, so that we can have better understanding and better solution of all these problems. After all, the interest of all of us lies in seeing that this country is fully integrated, that all communities come together, that we work as one body look at the interests of the country and nobody oppresses another. That is what we want to do. But we have to go some way further in order to achieve the results because we are suffering from a very bad inheritance. It is nobody's fault but it is there. We have got to overcome it. We are trying our best to do it. In that, I will always seek the cooperation of my hon. friends because without that we cannot do much and I hope it will always be forthcoming. I am sure here also we will bring in that kind of atmosphere in course of time.

BACK NOTE

Reply on Motion of Thanks on the President's Address. 28 February, 1979

1. SHRI C. SUBRAMANIAM (Palani): May I point out that the consumer index has been continuously rising since you took office?

SHRI MORARJI DESAI: That also requires to be examined further. There is some irrelevancy in the statistics. I have been saying it for quite some time now. But that has not been attended to. I will try to see if we can find a better method of compilation of statistics.

SHRI C. M. STEPHEN (Idukki): To say that the prices are steady for that the statistics are all right and when we say that the prices are moving up the statistics are faulty !

SHRI MORARJI DESAI: Let my friend have the courtesy of hearing me. Let there be some sportsmanship on the part of the Leader of the Opposition. I do not want him to imitate me. Let him show some good sense.

2. THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE): For mathematics he can come to me.

3. MR. SPEAKER: It is the parliamentary way.

SHRI MORARJI DESAI: May be it is so usually in human societies, I don't know; but I am not like that. I am his friend. Whether he is, or not is his concern.

Then there we referred to Pondicherry. What did I say ? I do believe that Pondicherry cannot remain always apart as a small island territory like that. It is not possible, but it has to be done in a proper manner. I have no doubt about it. Government has not taken any decision - that is what I have said.

4. AN HON. MEMBER: What about Goa?

SHRI MORARJI DESAI: Goa is not the same as Pondicherry. Goa is four times Pondicherry. You seem to forget that.

SHRI C. SUBRAMANIAM: Why are you bringing it unnecessarily?

SHRI MORARJI DESAI: I am not. I am saying this because the criticism is made here, and it was also made there. I do not know why that kind of thing is said there. Instead of finding fault with them, they find fault with me. What

did I say ? If I am asked, should I tell a lie ? I am not used to it; and I am not going to do it during my life, for anything. What I believe in, I will say. But that does not mean that I will push the Government into doing what I want. That is the line which is the line of Government also; but it is not to be done in a manner which creates difficulties. That we don't want to do.

About Goa, I have also said that Daman, Diu and Nagar Haveli have to merge in the neighbouring areas. They cannot continue like that. But I cannot do that immediately. But it has to be done. Now people are telling me: Uttar Pradesh must be divided into several parts, Bihar must be divided into several parts. Otherwise they won't function. It may be. But how can I create these problems today, If these small things create problems, how can I talk about it ? We have to wait for better times to consider this; that is all I can say. My personal view is there; I do not cease to have personal views because I am Prime Minister.

SHRI A. BALA PAJANOR (Pondicherry) : That is what I wanted yesterday also; I never said anything beyond that.

SHRI MORARJI DESAI: I would not have written the letter if that was the use to be made of it.

I will be more careful in writing letters to you now.

SHRI A. BALA PAJANOR: I preserve it and I gave it in public.

SHRI MORARJI DESAI: The unkindest cut was; that we were vindictive against the ex-Prime Minister. By what stretch of imagination this is said, I do not know. How ? In what manner have we been vindictive ? Is she not completely free to go about and say whatever she likes to say against us, most of it lies ?

SHRI C. M. STEPHEN: I want to seek a ruling from you. This is the second time the Prime Minister is using the word 'lies'. Earlier he said it with respect to somebody else. He is using it now. I want to get a ruling whether it is parliamentary ? If that is so, it can be used by us also.

SHRI MORARJI DESAI: I do not say so about a Member but if I say that about one who is not a Member I do not think it is unparliamentary.

SHRI C. M. STEPHEN: The question is whether the word 'lie' is parliamentary ?

MR. SPEAKER: I will examine it.. As regards Members it is

unparliamentary. Whether it can be used against others, I shall examine.

SHRI MORARJI DESAI: If you think it is not parliamentary, I will say all right they are untruths. I withdraw that word 'lie', if that satisfies the hon. Member.

SHRI C. M. STEPHEN: I have no objection; I want your ruling; my request for ruling is there.

SHRI MORARJI DESAI: I do not want to quarrel about words; I bother only about the substance and the substance stands. If we have a special court, that is also being done after reference to the Supreme Court, even there what is being done is that there is no special procedure in the special court, the procedure will be the ordinary procedure and we are not making anything special to take away any rights but it is only to expedite the disposal of the cases so that they do not drag on for a long time that we are doing this.

SHRI K. LAKKAPPA (Tumkur): What about special courts for smugglers and blackmarketeers ?

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

AN HON. MEMBER: They are the owners of the Janata Party.

SHRI MORARJI DESAI: If they can refrain from this kind of allegations and counter allegations I will be very happy.

Why give substance to it ? Are not substances being given ? One has to reply. If I do not reply to the point, it is said I have not replied and the President's Address does not mention everything. Of course criticism here may mention everything under the sun. But how can the President's Address say everything under the sun ? Then it will be two or three volumes.

It has to be made only in substance and that is what is sought to be done.

Therefore, I should like my hon. friend to think about those matters and help us in those matters.

STATEMENT REGARDING SOVIET PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT TO INDIA

26 March, 1979

Mr. Speaker, Sir, as the House is aware, the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of USSR, His Excellency Mr. A. N. Kosygin paid an official visit to India from March 9 to 15, 1979. Since his last visit to India in 1968, there had been several changes in the face of Indian economy and agriculture. We therefore, thought that it would be appropriate for us to acquaint him with the pace and quality of Indian development. His programme accordingly included three days of stay in Delhi and two days for visit to outside places. He visited the Heavy Engineering Corporation plant in Ranchi, spent some time at Anand visiting a typical Indian village, the Amul Dairy plant and the National Dairy Development Board. He also visited the Hindustan Machine Tools plant and the Indian Space Research Organisation Centre at Bangalore. Wherever he went he showed keen appreciation of the institutions he visited and the warmth of his reception.

During his stay in Delhi, he had several long discussions with me and with the Deputy Prime Minister (Finance) and Deputy Prime Minister (Defence), the Minister of External Affairs, and the Minister of Industry. We had two plenary meetings with some members of our Government and the senior members of his delegation. The Joint communiqué, a copy of which is placed on the Table of the House, gives a summary on the important points arising out of the various discussions. [Placed in Library. See No. LT-4157A/79]. Since the communiqué contains the important conclusions we reached during our discussions, I am refraining from repeating them here. Indo-Soviet relations are a vivid demonstration of how two countries different in their socio-economic structures can work together for bilateral advantage and on the basis of Panchsheel Cooperation between our two countries has gathered new momentum and constitutes an important factor for peace and stability in Asia, indeed in the world.

Soviet Union recognises the validity of India's policy of non-alignment which is reflected in our independence of judgment and action. We on our part recognise what Soviet Union has done to ensure détente and promoting cooperation in Europe. We would like to see this process of détente extended

to other parts of the globe. It was therefore natural that we viewed with some concern the disturbed situation in South East Asia and also in our West. We agreed that the people of a country should be allowed to develop themselves without outside interference, in a manner of their choice and in a way suited to their own genius. We also agreed that relations between countries must be governed on basic principles such as respect for territorial integrity, sovereignty and non-use of force. We recognized that for peace and stability in Asia, it was necessary for all countries in the region to cooperate with each other for mutual benefit and on the basis of equality and respect for sovereignty.

I am very happy to say that there was a very wide ranging similarity of views between our two countries. As the House is aware, the mutually beneficial cooperation between India and the Soviet Union extends to a very large number of fields. It is a happy tradition in Indo-Soviet relations that the leaders of the two countries periodically meet and exchange views on a number of subjects covering both bilateral relations and the international situation. The present visit has once again demonstrated the great value of such contacts since they serve to bring the two countries even closer together. We are confident that as a result of the discussions held during this visit, Indo-Soviet cooperation will receive a further impetus and the degree of understanding which prevails between us will grow as time goes by.

BACK NOTE

**Statement Regarding Soviet Prime Minister's visit to India.
26 March, 1979**

-NIL-

STATEMENT REGARDING VISIT TO USSR AND EAST EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

9 July, 1979

Sir, I visited the Soviet Union, Poland, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia from 10-21 June, 1979 at the invitation of the leaders of those countries. I was accompanied by the Minister for External Affairs, Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee. The main purpose of my visit was to strengthen India's bilateral relations with these countries and to discuss with the leaders important topical international questions. I am happy to report that in all the capitals I visited, I found a broad similarity of views on most important issues. I place on the Table of the House a copy of the Joint Statement issued at the end of my visit to the Soviet Union and copies of the Joint communiqués issued at the conclusion of my visit to Poland, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia.

In the Soviet Union I visited, besides Moscow, the capital of Uzbekistan-Tashkent and the historic cities of Samarkand and Leningrad. In Moscow my discussions with President Brezhnev and Prime Minister Kosygin were marked by cordiality and warmth reflecting the close relationship between India and the Soviet Union. We had a free and frank exchange of views and the conclusions reached are contained in the Joint Statement.

In Poland, I had discussions with the First Secretary of the Polish United Workers Party, Mr. Gierek and also with the President of Poland, Prof. Jablonski. I also called on the Prime Minister of Poland, Mr. Jaroszewicz, who was recovering from a serious illness and I had a useful, albeit brief, talk with him.

In Czechoslovakia, I had detailed discussions with the President Husak and Premier Strougal on a wide range of subjects.

In Yugoslavia, Prime Minister Djuranovic and I discussed bilateral relations and international questions in Belgrade, I also visited Brioni for official talks with President Tito, which I enjoyed greatly. My talks with him covered not only bilateral issues but also matters relating to the forthcoming summit of non-aligned nations to be held in Havana in September 1979. I was very glad when President Tito expressed his willingness to attend the Summit meeting.

Rather than recite the various issues we discussed in each of the capitals I visited I would like to sum up my impressions of what we agreed

upon as far as the most important international issues are concerned. These are détente, disarmament, and questions connected with the economic development of newly independent and developing countries.

We welcome the process of détente in Europe but in order to be durable this process must be extended to other parts of the globe and made irreversible. We also believe that without disarmament the process of détente cannot be truly durable. Disarmament is also indispensable to a quickened pace of development which the world needs, whether politically or economically. Therefore, the most important task facing mankind today is cessation of arms race and the implementation of effective international control and a diversion of the funds and resources so released to increasing investment on the development of developing countries.

Although in the last three decades a number of colonies have gained political independence the fact remains that economically, and in several other respects, they still remain dependent on their former imperial authorities. Many of them have inherited problems and disputes from the colonial era. We are convinced that the political independence of these countries cannot be consolidated unless their economic emancipation is complete. For this emancipation we must recognise the urgent need for the restructuring of international economic relations on a just and democratic basis.

In all the countries I visited, I reviewed with my hosts important international questions. We were agreed that relations between states should be governed by well recognized principles of international law and peaceful coexistence. Each nation has a right to choose its own political and socio-economic system. Whatever problems a country may have with any country, neighbouring or distant, solutions of such problems must be found through peaceful means. Nations must learn to respect each other's national sovereignty and territorial integrity. They must refrain from interfering in each other's internal affairs under any pretext whatsoever. They must settle their disputes peacefully and bilaterally. We were particularly concerned at the continuing tensions in South East Asia and West Asia.

In the field of bilateral relations, all the countries I visited were keen to strengthen further their existing economic and commercial cooperation with India and discover new avenues for such collaboration. We on our part are prepared to do so.

On my way home I had a brief stop-over in Frankfurt during the course of which I had an hour long meeting with FRG Chancellor Herr Schmidt and also an informal meeting with the representatives of the German Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and other important business interests keen on promoting collaboration in India or in joint ventures abroad. I am happy to report that my discussions with the FRG Chancellor revealed a broad agreement on the few important issues we could discuss within the time available. In my discussions with the representatives of the business interests I found a meaningful attitude towards collaboration in various fields and a keen desire to visit India for the purpose.

I should like to conclude by saying that today, more than ever before, India's foreign policy is being understood and appreciated as a policy in favour of world peace, détente and stability. My visit has served to strengthen India's relations with these countries and opened new avenues for further cooperation to mutual benefit.

I would like to take this opportunity to place on record my thanks to President Brezhnev and Prime Minister Kosygin, to First Secretary Gierek and Prime Minister Jaroszewicz, to President Husak and Prime Minister Strougal, to President Tito and Prime Minister Djuranovic for the cordial welcome and hospitality extended to us during our stay in their countries. I would also like to express my thanks to Chancellor Schmidt for having found the time to come to Frankfurt for a very useful exchange of views.

BACK NOTE

**Statement Regarding visit to USSR and East European Countries.
9 July, 1979**

-NIL-

**STATEMENT REGARDING LATEST INFORMATION
ABOUT SKYLAB**

11 July, 1979

I would like to give the latest information about Skylab.

On the Skylab the latest estimate is that it will fall between 6.18 p.m. and 11.18 p.m. tonight. The impact of it is expected to be within 8° North and 168.3° East. It has also been worked out that the Skylab would most probably crash in orbit No. 18. It is also probable to crash in orbit No. 8 and 28 and partly 38 and 168.3. None of these orbits passes through India. Therefore, according to the latest report, there is no chance of the Skylab crashing on any part of India.

BACK NOTE

**Statement Regarding latest information about Skylab.
11 July, 1979**

-NIL-