

16.09 hrs.

Title: Discussion on Disinvestment of Public Sector Undertakings. (Concluded).

MR. SPEAKER: The House would now take up item no. 28. Discussion under Rule 193 – Disinvestment of Public Sector Undertakings.

SHRI A.C. JOS (TRICHUR): Sir, what about item no. 18.

MR. SPEAKER: Now, we have to start the discussion under 193.

SHRI A.C. JOS : Sir, would it be taken up tomorrow?

MR. SPEAKER: Yes.

Now, time allotted for this discussion is four hours.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA (BANKURA): Sir, there should not be any time limit for the opening batsman!

Sir, this is for the fourth time that I am initiating a discussion on disinvestment in this House. The hon. Minister for Disinvestment has circulated a document of policy and procedure. But this is not the White Paper that we demanded.

He started with a quotation from Amartya Sen. It says:

"While the case for economic reforms may take good note of the diagnosis that India has too much Government interference in some fields, it ignores the fact that India has insufficient and inefficient Government activity in many other fields including that of basic education, health care, social security, land reforms and promotion of social change. This inertia contributes to the persistence of widespread depravation, economic stagnation and social inequity."

With this quotation of Amartya Sen, the Minister of Disinvestment wants to justify the acts of the Government. In his document the Minister says:

"The resources deployed by the Government for undertaking commercial activity should be unlocked and deployed for social activities."

As to the purpose of disinvestment, of privatisation, of selling out public sector shares; the Minister of Disinvestment has repeatedly said that huge amount is locked up in public sector units which has to be released for social activities, for basic education, for health, for rural development. But, what is the actual position? What has been the allocation in the current year's Budget for elementary education and literacy? It is Rs.4,000 crore. What was the allocation last year? It was Rs.3,729 crore. While the target was Rs.42,000 crore, the achievement was only Rs.22,000 crore. A substantial percentage of this fund has to be spent for elementary education, basic education. But there has not been any increase in the allocation for basic education. Same is the case with women and child development. Allocation was Rs.1460 crore in the year 2000-2001. It has been increased to only Rs.1560 crore in the current year. So, there has been no substantial increase in the allocation for women and child development either. Same is the case with rural development. Allocation for the year 2000-01 was Rs.9,760 crore. This year, it has been increased by only Rs.5 crore to Rs.9,765 crore. For drinking water supply, Rs.2,100 was the allocation for the year 2000-01. Allocation for the current year is Rs.2,160. Where has all the money gone? There has been no substantial increase on these items of expenditure.

Although the Minister had stated that a substantial percentage of the funds that become available following the sale of public sector shares would be spent for rural development, for basic education, for health, etc., nothing of that sort has been done.

Sir, what is the objective of the disinvestment or privatisation of PSUs? It is for restructuring, rehabilitation of the sick units. A number of times, we had wanted to know from the hon. Minister about it. During the Winter Session of Parliament, in December on the debate we asked the hon. Minister as to what had been done for restructuring, rehabilitation and revival of sick public sector undertakings. We had wanted a break-up of all figures.

Sir, today the workers and employees of the PSUs are not getting their wages for months together. Not only the wages, even the statutory dues to the extent of more than Rs. 2,000 crore has not been paid to the employees who

had opted for VRS or who have retired on natural retirement.

Sir, I can furnish a list of workers who have died of starvation. But they are saying that all care is being taken to protect the interests of workers. Repeatedly, the hon. Minister has been saying that the main purpose of disinvestment is that a substantial percentage of the funds, which would be available out of disinvestment, would be spent for revival of sick units. But the fact is that nothing has been spent on revival of any sick public sector undertaking. If it is done then why the Minister of Textile has to take a decision to close down more than 75 sick mills of National Textile Corporation?

Sir, what the Minister is trying here is to show that the public sector undertakings are insufficient, they are a burden on economy and they are not contributing to the nation. He is saying so as if the private sector companies are more efficient than the public sector undertakings.

About the financial performance of the corporations, I have the figures for two years, namely, 1997-98 and 1998-99. What was the rate of return on investment? It was just 10.1 per cent. He is trying to twist the figures here in this document. SCOPE, Standing Conference of Public Sector Enterprises had made a study only a few months ago. They have brought out a report. In the report, we find that most of the public sector undertakings are more efficient than the private sector companies. But the hon. Minister is trying to say that the private sector companies are more efficient.

Sir, their return is just 10.1 per cent and 7.8 per cent in the following years. The rate of return on investment expected was 15 per cent from the public sector undertakings.

Sir, 1,452 companies or about 60 per cent of the companies which are listed ones did not declare any dividend during 1998-99. The comparative share of non-dividend declaring companies in two sectors is like this. In the case of PSUs, it is 24 per cent whereas in the case of private sector companies, it is 60.5 per cent. Nearly, 62 per cent of PSUs have declared dividend exceeding 10 per cent.

In case of private sector, it is 35.6 per cent. Their declared dividend is exceeding 10 per cent. Thousands of private sector companies listed in the stock exchanges have never declared any dividend at all. Non-payment of dividend should normally lead to profit retention of the company which should result in higher capital marketisation. About 41 per cent of the public sector companies had an earning per share that is exceeding Rs.10 against only 16.5 per cent of the private sector. In spite of that, Mr. Minister, you are trying to justify that the private sector is more efficient than the public sector and you privatise not only the public sectors which are sick, chronically non-viable but also profit-making Blue Chip Companies which are earning crores and crores of rupees.

Nearly 32.7 per cent of the private sector has registered nil or negative EPS against only 17 per cent in case of public sector. In case of gross margin on the capital employed, it has risen from 17.9 per cent in 1990-91 – that was the year when the Government of India took the policy of liberalisation or economic reforms – to 23.6 per cent in 1997-98 in case of CPU. Tax to equity ratio has escalated from 20.1 per cent in 1990-91 to 20.9 per cent in 1997-98. In taxes also, the Government share from these enterprises, return grows impressively from 8 per cent to 29.4 per cent. Umpteen times the Government has said that huge amount has been invested and there is no return from the investment. What is the total investment? In 1998-99 it was Rs.2301.40 billion. In all 240 CPU, the percentage of paid up capital is only 33.5 per cent. The balance was in the form of long term loans. Of the total paid up capital, the share of the Government of India was approximately 84 per cent and the loan share was much lower than 22 per cent. Sir, the Government does contribute Rs. 967.17 billion or 42 per cent and not Rs.2,300 billion which is generally perceived. Against the investment of 967.17 billion, what is the earning? The national exchequer earns or receives, including taxes, Rs.469.24 billion or 48.5 per cent. This was the figure for 1998-99.

It increased in the year 1999-2000 also. In spite of that, the Minister says that the public sector is less efficient than private sector. The total receipts of the Government work out to be Rs.165.50 billion over those three years on an average investment of Rs.929.53 billion. It means the Government has received Rs.1538.35 billion against a total cumulative investment of Rs.967.20 billion which is an inconceivable equation to anybody who is interested in this subject of national importance. Sir, even if the share of profit is excluded, the total receipts to the Exchequer comes to Rs.1282.25 billion which is 138 per cent. What is the purpose that has been explained here by the Minister in the document? Why is there disinvestment? Why shares are sold out even at below the market price? I quote what he has stated:

"Moreover, the removal of quantitative restrictions on imports, lowering of import tariff, and removal of restrictions of other kinds of global trade services and capital, pursuant to our acceptance of WTO regime and various economic reforms have made it imperative that public sector is privatised at the earliest, failing which, it will soon fall sick."

Sir, he has admitted that it will soon fall sick. It is because of removal of quantitative restriction and reduction in import tariff of the public sector. Even blue-chip companies like NTPC, BHEL, VSNL, GAIL, ONGC, IOC, etc. all will fall sick. The Vishakhapatnam Steel Plant has already fallen sick since it started commercial production. He further says:

"Failing which, it will soon fall sick and find it extremely difficult to survive in the new competitive environment."

Then, why do you not privatise everything including your Government? Then, he has put a question which is very important. He said:

"Whether taxpayers money can be saved from commercial risk by transferring risk to the private sector wherever the private sector is willing to step in and assume such risks."

You cannot take risk in the public sector. You want to transfer the risk to the private sector. Mr. Minister, when there is a risk how much dividend you have received? Very cleverly you have excluded LIC and GIC. I do not understand why you have excluded LIC and GIC. What was their equity when they were nationalised? It was only Rs.5 crore. What was the paid up capital? It was only Rs.5 crore. How much have you received during these years? You have received crores of rupees. Sir, we cannot compare public sector with private sector.

We have taken over a large number of public sector companies. We have taken over more than one hundred NTC Mills. It is not wrong. You may say that it was a wrong decision. But I would say that it was a correct decision. The taking over of IISCO in 1973 was also a correct decision. You may again say that the taking over of coal companies or nationalisation of some companies was a wrong decision. But I would say it was a correct decision not only to save the coal industry, but also to save the nation itself.

A large number of companies have been taken over and nationalised. But no step was taken to modernise them. I know one company. We raised the issue of the Scooter India Ltd. The Government of India had taken a decision to close it down and we protested against it. Then the Government of India reviewed the decision and the orders to close it down were withdrawn. Today it has become a viable company from a non-viable company.

The main issue is about the evaluation. The President of India in his Address to the joint sitting of Parliament this year stated that the disinvestment process should be transparent. But, is this really transparent? I have the report of C&AG on Modern Food Industries Ltd. with me. How was its evaluation done? There are four methods of evaluation and the C&AG mentions in his document what are those methods. They are: firstly, Discounted Cash Flow, DCF which he is adopting; secondly, Balance Sheet; thirdly, Transaction Multiple; and fourthly, Asset Evaluation.

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Basu Deb Acharia, you have already taken 25 minutes.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : I am initiating the debate, Sir. I always take fifty minutes. Please give me some more time.

MR. SPEAKER: Your Party has got a total of 15 minutes only.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : I will take another 15 minutes, Sir.

SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN (BALASORE): This has become a ritual, a *karmakand*. So, please allow him to finish the *karmakand*. He does it in every Session.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : What is the loss to the Exchequer? I am not talking of your period, Mr. Minister. I am talking of 1992 because you will refer to that also and I know what would be your reply. In 1992 the loss to the Exchequer was more than Rs.3,000 crore. Shri Jag Mohan says a number of times that the unanimous resolution or decision or recommendation of any Standing Committee of Parliament should be honoured. Are you honouring the unanimous recommendation of the Standing Committee on Industry? What is the loss to the Exchequer as pointed out by the Standing Committee during the period from 1992 to 2001? It is Rs.10,000 crore. It is all because of under-evaluation. Evaluation has not been properly done in the case of Modern Food Industries Ltd. What has been stated by C&AG in this regard? The global agency which computed the value through Asset Evaluation Method is the only evaluation conducted by the asset evaluator appointed by the Ministry.

On Hindustan Lever Limited, their estimate was Rs. 168 crore and the global advisor's estimate was Rs. 105 crore. Why is this difference? This difference is because you adopted the discounted cash flow method, but the only proper method should be the asset valuation method. You have not counted the replacement.

Sir, the asset valuation method essentially estimates the replacement cost of the asset offered for sale. While

disinvesting the equity or offering strategic sale of blue chips in strategic sectors like oil and petroleum, telecommunications, air transport - Air India and Indian Airlines - fertilisers, etc. it must be worked out as to what cost the country would incur in establishing such an enterprise at the current market price. You have stated in the Manual or the document as:

"The asset evaluation normally reflects the amount which may need to be spent to create similar infrastructure as that of a business to value or value which may be realised by liquidation of a company through sale."

Is this being done or not? If you are doing it, then why has the price of Modern Food Industries Limited been undervalued?

The Comptroller and Auditor-General has already pointed it out. In the case of BALCO, we have raised a number of points. How has the evaluation of Rs.550 crore been done? What is the price of the land? What is the price of the deposits in the mines? What is the price of the building and plant and machinery? It is because all calculations have been made and then evaluation has been done. If you calculate all this, then the value of the assets of BALCO should be more than Rs.3000 crore. आप सिर पर हाथ रख रहे हैं।

विनिवेश विभाग के राज्यमंत्री तथा योजना मंत्रालय में राज्यमंत्री, सांस्थिकी और कार्यक्रम कार्यान्वयन मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री, कार्मिक लोक शिकायत और पेंशन मंत्रालय के प्रशासनिक सुधार और लोक शिकायत विभाग में राज्य मंत्री (श्री अरुण शौरी): पांच हजार से तीन हजार कम कैसे हो गया, पहले तो पांच हजार करोड़ रुपये था।

श्री बसुदेव आचार्य : तीन हजार से ज्यादा बोल रहे हैं, पांच हजार भी हो सकता है, आपके द्वारा अभी भी सिर पर हाथ रखने से कैसे चलेगा।

SHRI ARUN SHOURIE: It is very instructive. You are probably educating us. For instance, on Air India, I have seen evaluations coming down from Rs.25,000 crore to Rs.24,000 crore, to Rs.14,000 crore, to Rs. 9,000 crore and to Rs.6000 – Rs.7000 crore in the other House. So, it is a range of evaluations by great experts like yourself. It is very good to educate us.

श्री सुन्दर लाल तिवारी (रीवा) : अन्दर वाली बात तो मंत्री जी को मालूम होगी कि कितना है।

श्री अरुण शौरी : हम तो आपसे पूछ रहे हैं, आप बता दें।

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : But you have taken a decision to disinvest 26 per cent to one bidder. You have excluded another bidder, Mr. Hinduja. On the same ground, the Sterlite Company was blacklisted. But how was the Sterlite Company qualified for BALCO? We pointed it out on the floor of the House also. How a blacklisted company could be qualified for taking over a giant aluminium company? You have no answer, Mr. Shourie. In the case of Air India, in the past also, we had pointed it out. I have the Report of the Standing Committee on Surface Transport and Civil Aviation.

What was the recommendation of the Committee? It says:

"The Committee also strongly disapproves the idea of the Government to offer 26 per cent equity and the management control of Air India to the foreign strategic partner."

You are offering 26 per cent equity along with management control. Nowhere in the world has this happened. It further says:

"The Committee fails to understand as to why the Government is permitting, at one go, the foreign strategic partner to acquire 26 per cent equity and the management control whereas even countries like the United States, China, Taiwan, Australia, Canada etc., which have earned a big name as the champions of liberalisation and privatisation, are not allowing total management control to the foreign partners."

But you are offering both, 26 per cent equity as well as total management control. You have given total management control to Suzuki. Mr. Speaker, Sir, in your Chamber we had a meeting which was represented by all political parties and we came to an agreement with the MUL management to stop victimisation by MUL.

SHRI ARUN SHOURIE: In 1992 the MUL was made a private company by handing over majority shares to Suzuki and complete management control to them. That happened in 1992.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Then, you have put the nail on the coffin. Why should you follow Congress Party's footprint? You always say that this process was started by Congress Party during Shri P.V. Narasimha Rao's regime. But Shri Narasimha Rao himself is speaking against liberalisation, privatisation and disinvestment. Last time

I quoted from his article. Why are you offering the management control also to one bidder? Why is there only one bidder? The flagship company, Air India, would be handed over to a multi-national company, Tata Singapore Airlines. This Government is doing such a shameful act. They are calling themselves *swadeshis*. In the name of *swadeshis*, they are inviting *videshis*. They are *pucca videshis*.

I would like to quote a few lines from the same Report. It says:

"The Committee, therefore, recommends that the Government must keep in mind the national interests and that, while going in for disinvestment, the sovereign rights of the country, with regard to the safety and security of the country, must be protected."

How will safety and security be protected when you hand over the entire management control to a foreign company? What will happen to BSNL? The Committee's recommendations were unanimous. The Committee consisted of Members from BJP and its allies like DMK, BJD, and Trinamool Congress. Nobody has dissented.

In another place, it says:

"In the opinion of the Committee, the 'strategic sale' route needs to be reviewed in particular. They also desire that widest possible consultations must be held with the workers at an appropriate stage invariably, with a view to fully safeguard their interests in all the cases of disinvestment."

Sir, take, for example, the case of disinvestment in Sri Lankan Airlines. We have seen what happened to the workers of Sri Lankan Airlines after disinvestment. Are these consultations taking place with the workers?

I have not seen a single case where consultation has taken place with the workers. I am saying this because umpteen times, this Government has been saying that the interest of the workers will be protected.

Similar is the case of VSNL. What is the reserve fund lying with the VSNL? Thousands and thousands of crores of rupees are lying there. Mr. Minister, why are you disinvesting it? Why are you trying to disinvest other companies and blue chip companies? I would like to know whether they are not contributing to the exchequer. This is nothing but outright loot of our public asset.

MR. SPEAKER: So, I think, you are now concluding.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : I am now coming to the concluding remarks.

Sir, why are we defending the public sector undertakings? We are defending the public sector undertakings in order to defend our economic sovereignty. By selling out the shares of public sector undertakings outright, our economic sovereignty is undermined. He has mentioned here about BALCO that after the debate in Parliament, the deal was approved by the Lok Sabha. I am quite surprised to hear this. The Lok Sabha has not approved the deal. There was a debate under Rule 184. But that does not mean that it was approved.

SHRI ARUN SHOURIE: It was voted upon.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Of course, it was voted upon. But it does not mean that Parliament approved it. Mr. Minister, you are misleading the House. If it was debated, did it mean Parliament approved it?

SHRI KIRIT SOMAIYA (MUMBAI NORTH EAST): It had already been voted upon. In Parliament, when the Budget is debated, from the Opposition side, you oppose it. But when the Budget is voted, it means that it is approved. Do you agree with me or not?...(Interruptions)

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : What was the Motion?

SHRI KIRIT SOMAIYA : You brought that Motion under Rule 184. It was not discussed under Rule 193. You asked for voting. It was voted upon.

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL (HOOGLY): So what? Was it approved?

SHRI KIRIT SOMAIYA : That Motion was debated,
voted upon and approved.

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL : Was it approved? Does it mean that? I think it does not mean that....(Interruptions)

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : The House debated the Motion. That does not mean that the House had approved it.

SHRI KIRIT SOMAIYA : We do not know what is said about it in communist West Bengal, but here, in Lok Sabha, it is said that it is approved.

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL : No. You may kindly find it out.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Sir, he has misled the House by saying this in the booklet. He has circulated three booklets. One is on Lagan Jute Mills; the second one is on the Modern Food Industries and the third one is about BALCO. I stress that nowhere in the world there is a Minister of Disinvestment. I would request him to tell us where there is a Minister of Disinvestment. The Minister concerned does not know what will happen to the undertakings under his control. He is doing everything. The Minister of Civil Aviation, Shri Sharad Yadav, is opposing it. He does not want it. That is why, he is absent today. He does not want the shares of Air India and the Indian Airlines disinvested. If the management control of Air India and Indian Airlines goes away, what will happen to the Ministry of Civil Aviation?

Sir, a single Minister is doing disinvestment of public sector undertakings of all the Ministries. Nowhere in the world is there a Minister for Disinvestment. Such a Minister is there only in our country.

SHRI ARUN SHOURIE : Mr. Speaker, Sir, he is a Member of the Cabinet Committee on Disinvestment. He was present in the meeting. It is his decision along with the other Members of the Cabinet Committee on Disinvestment. I was not even the Minister of Disinvestment at that time.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : But he was opposed to that decision. He did not agree to it.

Sir, there are also other Ministers like the Heavy Industries Minister, Shri Manohar Joshi, who are very much against this policy of disinvestment of public sector undertakings. When Gas Authority of India Limited was disinvested, we opposed that and pointed out as to how the shares were sold below the market price. So, we wanted a probe on that, but that was not done.

Sir, we are not satisfied with this document titled "Disinvestment: Policy and Procedures" which has been circulated by the Government. We demand a White Paper on Disinvestment. We also demand – this is a request to you – that a separate Standing Committee on Disinvestment should be constituted and that Committee should scrutinise each and every disinvestment proposal of the Government. Now, only one Minister is doing everything and there is no transparency.

SHRI TARIT BARAN TOPDAR (BARRACKPORE): There is already a Committee on Public Undertakings, but it has no powers.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Who cares for Committee on Public Undertakings? I was the Chairman of the Committee on Public Undertakings for more than a year and I know its functions.

SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN : The Standing Committee on Finance has been given that responsibility now.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Sir, it cannot do the job. Why can we not have a separate Standing Committee on Disinvestment? Why is he objecting to it?

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Basu Deb Acharia, I am going to call Shri Venkaiah Naidu now. Please conclude.

SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL (CHANDIGARH): Mr. Speaker, Sir, are there only Ministers to defend the Government? Are there no Members from their party to defend the Government? Shri Arun Jaitley also intervened in a similar debate as the first speaker from the Treasury Benches on an earlier occasion. But this has never happened. ...*(Interruptions)* The Minister of Disinvestment is finally going to reply to the debate. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Sir, I demand that the process of disinvestment should be stopped forthwith and all efforts should be taken to revive and strengthen public sector undertakings.

Sir, the first Prime Minister of our country, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, while inaugurating the first public sector undertaking at Sindhri in the erstwhile State of Bihar, said that today we are inaugurating a temple of modern India. But now, the NDA Government is not only destroying *masjids*, but they are also destroying the temples of modern India, the public sector undertakings.

Sir, we strongly oppose the selling out of our public sector undertakings, the outright loot that is being done, which is causing a loss of thousands of crores of rupees to the Exchequer. This should be stopped. The Government should reverse this policy. If the Government fails to reverse this policy, this Government should quit.

SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL : Mr. Speaker, Sir, is the Minister of Rural Development going to announce that he is winding up the Ministry of Rural Development also?

THE MINISTER OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I thank you for giving me this opportunity to intervene in this discussion. ...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI TARIT BARAN TOPDAR : Sir, he will be speaking on behalf of the BJP. ...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: Hon. Speaker knows under what rule he is allowing me to speak.

SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL : At times, there is a question of propriety. We never had Ministers being the first speakers from the Government side to intervene in the discussion.

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: There is nothing wrong in it.

SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL : Last time, we had Shri Arun Shourie. This time, we have you. This has never happened before.

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: Whether first or second, what is the problem in this? I understand that there is no problem.

MR. SPEAKER: There is no problem.

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: This House has discussed the issue umpteen number of times. A voting has taken place in this House. But I am not able to understand it.

SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL : Members from Rajya Sabha are being asked to speak....(*Interruptions*)

SHRIMATI SHYAMA SINGH (AURANGABAD, BIHAR): I think, probably, he has a better decorum. Why is Shri Venkaiah Naidu being allowed to speak?

MR. SPEAKER: Do not create disturbance.

SHRI ARUN SHOURIE : There is a special perspective on which Shri Venkaiah Naidu has a view. We want to hear that also. He has a special perspective on this whole matter.

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: The House is discussing the issue. As a Member of the Government, I am trying to put forth a point of view for consideration of the House. As a Minister for Rural Development, I have a particular perspective about this entire issue. Any number of strong words condemning the Government are not going to suffice for the simple reason that this very House has discussed it umpteen number of times and has come to certain conclusions. This is not the problem. We have not initiated this disinvestment. This Government has not initiated privatisation. When they were in power, they disinvested. They referred it to the Disinvestment Commission. They appointed Ramakrishna Commission. They appointed Rangarajan Commission. They took their recommendations. Now, they say as if we are trying to sell away everything and then doing some injustice to the country.

The point is very simple. I want to say that there is nothing wrong in disinvestment. The disinvestment is done in the interest of the nation. The disinvestment is done in the interest of the work force and the industry. The disinvestment is done in order to have social security and equitable distribution of the wealth. I am not able to understand it. In the 50s, during Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's regime, a correct decision was taken to create public sector and also to set up industries in different parts of the country, particularly in backward areas, because of lack of capital and technology. At that time, we did not have IDBIs, ICICIs or the IFCIs or the rich people. Now, there are Tatas, Birlas, Ambanis, Singhaniyas and other rich people who can invest some capital in private industry. That was the scenario at that time. So, the Government of the day, at that time, had taken a correct decision to end the regional imbalance, to provide support to the backward areas and also to give the needed technological support to those areas where it was not available. That was the background.

Today, my point is that I am speaking not only as a Minister but also as a person coming from a rural area. I would like to know as to what is the thinking of the entire House and the entire country. Today, let us see the situation. After so many years, we are now discussing more and more about the organised sector, that is, white-collared people. I am trying to impress upon the House that there is a need to take care of sections whose voices were not heard. The total workforce in the State Governments, the Central Government and in private organisations is 27 million. In the Central public sector undertakings, it is two million. In the rural side of the country, that is, the unorganised sector of the country, including urban areas, the workforce is 355 million. What about those people? Are we not concerned about them? Are we not agitated about them? After 53 years of Independence, is it not our duty to take care of those sections also? I do not think anybody can disagree with this. The agricultural labour, the

weaver, the fishermen, the goldsmith, the blacksmith in the rural areas are also looking towards the Government for some sort of self-employment and also help.

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The rural people are also looking towards the Government for infrastructure creation...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL : What are they doing for them?

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: What they could not do in 53 years, we are trying to do our best now...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL : It is not the answer. Please tell us what this Government is doing for them? If the hon. Minister has a perspective that he was referring to, he should please tell us what he is doing for them and how does he intend to do something more for them with this disinvestment...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: If the hon. Speaker directs me to speak on rural development, the programmes, the policies, the initiatives taken by our Government, I will be happy to do it...*(Interruptions)*

कुंवर अखिलेश सिंह (महाराजगंज, उ.प्र.) : मंत्री जी ने रुरल डेवलपमेंट की बात कही है, लेकिन उत्तर प्रदेश में प्रधान मंत्री सङ्कर योजना का पैसा तनखाहों में दिया जा रहा है। â€^* (यवधान)

श्री पवन कुमार बंसल : अब मंत्री महोदय ने दूसरी बात कहनी शुरू कर दी है। â€^* (यवधान)

SHRI K.H. MUNIYAPPA (KOLAR): What will be the fate of 27 lakh workers?

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Muniyappa, he is not yielding. Please take your seat.

...(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing should go on record except hon. Minister'''s submission.

(Interruptions) â€
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SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA (GUNA): Sir, I can only offer my condolences to the Treasury Benches, because now-a-days Lok Sabha seems to be devoid of people who can initiate the debate. Shri Arun Jaitley, Member of Rajya Sabha will initiate one debate and Shri Venkaiah Nadu initiates another debate. This is a very sad state of affairs. There is no Lok Sabha Member, who can initiate the debate. I am very sorry for the Treasury Benchesâ€**(Interruptions)*

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: Sir, I am not initiating the debate. The debate was initiated by the hon. Member of Lok Sabha from that side. Shri Scindia was not there at that time...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA : I am talking about their sideâ€**(Interruptions)*

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: Sir, there is no need to go into the technicalities. The House is the House and Parliament is Parliament! (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: No, please. What are you doing?

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: Yes, I am not a Member of this House, I am aware of this...(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Not like this please. This is not a Question-Answer session.

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA : But there are no people who can initiate the debate.

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: There are enough number of people. There will not be people to match that side to create that sort of disturbance, but there are people who can put up some sensible things also and they have been doing it.

* Not Recorded

Sir, my point is very simple. If they are not interested in rural development, that is a different matter. I leave it to them. My point is that after 53 years, let us see the situation of the country today. The point which I am trying to make is that let us think about those people whose voice was not heard, think about those sections about whom we have not been able to take care. My suggestion is that by disinvesting, by privatising to the extent possible, wherever it is feasible, invest that money in the social sector, invest that money in the infrastructure, invest that money for the sake of those people whose interest was not taken care of so far to the extent that was required. This is the point that I am trying to make.

After 53 years, today, we have a situation that 80,000 major villages do not have electricity connections. More than 2,30,000 villages do not have telephone connections; 1,40,000 villages do not have *pucca* serviceable roads.

श्री चन्द्रनाथ सिंह (मछलीशहर) : अभी आपको बताया गया कि तनख्याहों में योजनाओं का पैसा बंट रहा है। **â€œ** (व्यवधान)

श्री एम. वैकल्पि नायडू : आपको ग्रामीण विकास के बारे में चिन्ता है। आज सुबह आपकी पार्टी किसानों के बारे में बात कह रही थी। मेरी बात सुनिए, फिर उसको काउन्टर कीजिए। मुझसे ज्यादा हिन्दी पर आपका कमान्ड है।

Sir, the point I was trying to make is that even today, after all our efforts, around two lakh habitations of the country do not have assured protected regular water supply and 82 per cent of the rural people do not have the sanitation facilities even today, after 53 years.

For these sanitation facilities, we require an additional sum of Rs.20,000 crore, for the sake of rural road connectivity, which I have mentioned, we require a sum of Rs.60,000 crore. For the sake of remaining work to be completed in drinking water, we require a sum of Rs.40,000 crore. To bring the area, which is now treated as a wasteland, we need a huge amount of money.

My submission is that they are also countrymen, they are also people of this country, and they are also contributing for the welfare of this country. So, we should be also equally concerned about those people.

The point is that today, the country's financial position is known to everybody. It is not a one-day creation. It has been moving in that direction for the last 50 years with a little difference here and there. Today, the situation is that the country is having Rs. 12 lakh crore debt, internal as well as external; roughly Rs. 1,12,000 crore interest payment; and Rs. 1,20,000 crore principal repayment. What is your total revenue? It is Rs. 2,07,000 crore. Then, if you go by the revenue deficit and the fiscal deficit, the interest payment and principal repayment, then where is the money for all these?

We often hear in this House and also in the other House that people want more money to be given for old age pension. I do agree with them. People want that the sanitation programme should be completed at the earliest. I do agree with them. People want that the rural road connectivity should be taken up on a war footing. We also agree with them. People want that drinking water facilities should be provided to the rural people at the earliest. I also agree with them and I support their idea. But the point is, money can be raised only through two ways. One is, you increase the taxation. People are already overburdened. Many of us are not willing to do that. The second one is, you borrow money. When you borrow money – you know about the interest payment – the debt situation will further aggravate. What is the other way? I want to share my agony as a Minister. As a rural person coming from a village, I would like to plead with the House and with different political parties that we are not against the organised sector, we are not against the public sector and we have been helping them all these 50 years. Even after my Government

came, there are figures that more than Rs. 11,000 crore have been given to the public sector by way of revival package and loans in this short span of period. It is not an ordinary amount. More than Rs. 11,000 crore have been given to the public sector for revival or for help or whatever activity it is. My point is very simple. We are all elected representatives. When we talk of people, the priority should be given to those people who have not had their due all these years. I am not trying to blame this party or that party. It is not the time to apportion the responsibility also. I can take up a separate occasion for discussing about those political aspects. The aspect, which I am trying to impress upon the House in my own humble way, is that in these 53 years we could not take care of those people. Seventy per cent of the people are living in the rural areas. Thirty-eight per cent of the people are illiterates even today. Twenty-six per cent of the people are living below the poverty line. Two lakh villages, as I have told you earlier, do not have the basic requirements. That being the case, the reason for my intervention in this debate is to plead with the House and to plead with the spectrum of political opinion in the country is to seriously discuss this issue and then try to find out the ways and means to address this important problem.

Procurement requires money. Storage requires money. We need huge storage facility in the country and particularly in the rural areas. Without having the storage facility, you cannot assure remunerative price to the farmers. The perishable goods are all getting destroyed because there is no storage facility, and for that, you need cold storage. That also requires huge amount of money. If that is the case – either it is the Finance Minister from this side, who is in the Government for a while, or the Finance Minister from that side when they were in the Government – money is limited and the resources are limited. And within those resources, we have to take care of those sections. I am pleading with the House that we have taken care of the public sector to the extent possible. After all, the industry has to survive. The employment has to continue and their interest should be taken care. Yes, it is agreed. We are all very senior people who are sitting here. Shri Basu Deb Acharia has made a point as if we are looting this and that. After all, we are all patriots and we are also nationalists. You may say that we are not nationalists and only you are nationalists. I am happy that a word is coming from your mouth that you are nationalists. I am happy about it. But the point is simple that this money has to be mobilised from within the country. Do you go for taxation to do this or do you go for disinvestment to the extent possible and invest that money in this priority area? As a student in my childhood, I had walked three to four kilometres a day to go to the school.

I have read under the lantern in the early days of my education. In the present day generation, you have wireless; you have Internet; you have Website; and then you have all these modern facilities that are confined to a particular section of people in the country. Do you want those countrymen to suffer for a longer period? Is it not our joint responsibility to think in terms of withdrawing the money from that sector and investing the money in this sector? What is wrong in this? What is anti-national in this? What is anti-worker in this? I am not able to understand that. Do you want those companies to just go on like that and then tell the people, that particular company is incurring losses, so I am taxing you? Then I want to give salaries to the workers of that company. Is it fair? Is it honest on the part of any politician worth the name? Is it the policy?

Regarding earnings also, I have seen how many companies, either profit-making or loss-making, were referred during the Congress regime to the Disinvestment Commission. I am not going into those details. There are other people who will take care of it. I do not want to get myself detracted to that issue. I am talking on a very vital issue from the bottom of my heart. I have not intervened simply to score any brownie point or political point or make any sort of controversy. I would like to provoke people to address themselves to this very, very burning issue. How long you want the people to be there in the rural areas without these basic minimum necessities?

डॉ. रघुवंश प्रसाद सिंह (वैशाली) : आपको गरीबों का इतना ही ध्यान है तो डिस-इन्वेस्टमेंट पर आपके दत्तोपतं ठेंगड़ी क्या कहते हैं, वह बताइये?

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: We hear occasionally demand for linking up Ganga-Cauvery. Ganga-Cauvery was estimated to cost around Rs.70,000 crore in 1995. If you take the present day expenditure, this cost will go up to rupees two lakh crore minimum. Where is the money?

SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL : Do you have a plan to do that now?

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: Yes, the major, medium and on-going irrigation projects are around 430. The estimated cost of completion of all these projects together is rupees two lakh crore. Are we doing justice by distributing money here two per cent, three per cent, 50 per cent, 100 per cent or 200 per cent depending on the demands of the Members of Parliament or Members of Legislative Assemblies of respective States? Are we not doing injustice to those people? Should they be made to wait for such a longer period even after 53 years?

Another thing as I told you earlier is about housing. There is a massive shortage in the rural areas about the housing programme. For that also, we need money. Whether the money comes from the Central Government or from the State Government or from the bank, it remains the people's money. That money has to be invested here. The kitty is limited. जितना आता उतनी रोटी। You have this much money. You distribute it among various people whether it is organised sector or unorganised sector or electricity. My friend, Shri Suresh Prabhu was telling me that to meet the demand of power supply in the coming 10 years, you require a huge amount of rupees eight lakh crore. Today

we find some people saying that हमको बिजली मुफ्त में दो और कुछ लोग ऐसा वायदा कर भी रहे हैं। Whatever side they may be, that side or this side, I want to ask them this question. The simple point today is this. Give connectivity to those people. We are also having four-way highway project. It requires another huge investment of Rs.58,000 crore for the national highway. We require another Rs.50,000 crore for the *Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana*. We require Rs.40,000 crore for drinking water. We require rupees two lakh crore for Ganga-Cauvery linkage. With all this, my humble submission is this.

श्री चन्द्रनाथ सिंह : आप जो बिजली के बारे में, पानी के बारे में, सड़क के बारे में कह रहे हैं तो गरीबों को तो कुछ भी नहीं मिलता है।

अध्यक्ष महोदय : आप बैठे-बैठे कैसे बीच में बोल रहे हैं?

श्री एम. वैक्कया नायदू : मैं तो मंत्रिमंडल में अभी-अभी आया हूं और हमें सत्ता में तीन साल हुए हैं लेकिन जो लोग 50 साल से राज कर रहे थे उनको तो भूलने के लिए आप तैयार हैं। दोनों को मिलकर काम करना चाहिए। This is a challenge before the system. This is a challenge before the country. That is why I am saying this. I want to put a straight question. You have taken care of the organised sector. You have taken care of the white collars. Please take care of those people who are not organised. This is the crux of my intervention in this debate. If you are not doing it, then you will be doing injustice. You can say no, give rupees one lakh crore or Rs.10,000 crore to that or Rs.50,000 crore to this. Anybody can make any demand. We have been hearing it. During Question Hour, we also came across suggestions from the hon. Members. But the question is this. Where is the money?

The money is, again, limited.

What is the position of the State public sector undertakings? What is happening in West Bengal? More than 50 units are running in losses. Actually, there are 54 units running in losses. Under the Government of India, if something goes wrong, everything is found to be wrong with the Government of India; if something goes wrong in West Bengal, nothing is found to have gone wrong in West Bengal. Will this approach help us?

In my own State, Andhra Pradesh, more than 20 units are going to be privatised. Privatisation and disinvestment are taking place even in Madhya Pradesh. The Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh, who spoke against the disinvestment in BALCO, next day, had the audacity to say that 29 of the public sector undertakings in the State had outlived their purpose ...(*Interruptions*)

I am sorry, I stand corrected. It was the Chief Minister of Chhattisgarh. After opposing the BALCO disinvestment tooth and nail and going to the extent of making allegations, the same State Government decides the next day that 29 public sector units have outlived their purpose. This list of 29 includes welfare organisations. I have the list and if you want I can give it to you. ...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA : We said that we would entertain disinvestment only where there is an absolutely chronic loss-making unit, which has no hope of revival. Also, we are against disinvestment in an industry that has a record of making profits, especially in the competitive environment. You are disinvesting in even those units. This is what we cannot understand. We cannot understand why you are in such a hurry to do it. If they are making a profit in a competitive environment, why should you disinvest?

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: In 1996, on the 1st September, this big list of industries was referred to the Disinvestment Commission. Among them, certain companies were profit-making companies. Maruti Udyog Limited, to my knowledge, was making profits all through. Why was it disinvested? Even if it was ten per cent, twenty per cent or thirty per cent, what was the reason? If you go by the policy that profit-making public sector undertakings should not be privatised, let us stick to that. But is it the consensus? Is it what is happening in different States?

Even in Karnataka, more than 20 units – 26 to be precise – are going to be privatised. I am not trying to find fault with the Chief Minister. If the Chief Minister is trying to move progressively, I appreciate him. If something goes wrong, there is an Assembly to take care of the Chief Minister and his activities. I do not want to drag his name and make unnecessary allegations. I did not make any allegation even against the Chief Minister of Chhattisgarh. I only pointed out the contradiction in the stand taken.

I have also gone through the speech of the Leader of the Opposition in the Bangalore conference of the Congress Party subsequently where she has said, 'Per se, we are not against privatisation.' Of course, there was a rider, as Shri Madhavrao Scindia had rightly said, that we have to take care of their interests. There was also a demand from the Congress Party on one of those days. It was asked, 'Why should there be a Disinvestment Department and a Minister and all that? Let it be closed down.' That demand was also there.

As far as the other shade is concerned, we have seen what has happened to Kerala and what the financial situation of Kerala is. The new Chief Minister who has taken over has published a White Paper to bring out the financial position of that State. State after State, we are seeing that they are all able to understand the gravity of the situation

about the financial situation of their particular States with regard to the functioning of the public sector units at the State level. I do not want to take the time of the House by going into those details State-wise though I have a list of all the State-wise units available with me. My thrust is, when we are in Opposition, we say something; when we are in position, we say something else. Should we not put a full stop to this attitude of any party on this very vital issue?

Please understand, I am trying to link the entire activity of getting some money, be it Rs.5,000, Rs.10,000 or Rs.20,000. During 1991-98, that is, till we came to the Government, around Rs.18,000 crore were disinvested from various companies, including some profit-making companies. If somebody says that that money was being used to adjust the Budget deficit, I can agree with that. But the question is, if the House, in its collective wisdom, decides that we should disinvest and utilise the money for infrastructure creation and providing basic services to the people, should we not think in that direction?

People are talking about Modern Food Industries and Modern Bread. I do not have the experience of hon. Members like Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi and other senior Members. I am not able to understand whether it is the duty of the Government to make bread.

SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL : Is it not the duty of the Government to ensure that the national interest is not compromised?

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: There is no question of compromising the national interest or the workers' interests. I am told, after privatisation, in Modern Food Industries, the salary of employees has gone up by Rs.1,600 per month.

If I am wrong, please correct me. Those employees are getting Rs. 1,600 more per month. Is it not a welfare of the workers? Should we not feel happy about it? You insist that we take all precautions; tell that 'these are the shortcomings and these are the remedial measures that are available with us and please consider these'. If anybody gives such meaningful suggestions, I can understand it. अगर सरकार स्कूटर बनाती है, साईकल चलाती है, ब्रेड बनाना, होटल चलाना - Is it the duty of the Government to run hotels? After this experience, is it the duty of the Government to run hotels? We sometimes go to that big hotel, Centaur hotel in Mumbai. It has such a big property and a massive building. They have a hotel in Delhi also. Those people do business and they incur losses and they want the ordinary taxpayers and the rickshaw-pullers to pay for their fault. This is the question that I am trying to ask. I am not putting a blame on anybody. Sir, there are 31 hotels in the public sector. ...(*Interruptions*)

कुंवर अखिलेश सिंह : घाटे के कारणों को दूर कर उसे प्रोफिटेबल बनाना है।

SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL : Sir, there is a contradiction. On the one hand, he talks of losses and, on the other, he says like this. ...(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: You have the chance to rebut it.

श्री श्यामाचरण शुक्ल (महासमुन्द) : अध्यक्ष महोदय, मंत्री जी बहुत ज़ोरों से कह रहे हैं कि हम यह करना चाहते हैं, वो करना हैं लेकिन थो-अवे प्राइसेज पर कीमती चीज़ों को बेच रहे हैं। इनमें मार्डन ब्रेड की बहुत सारी प्रापर्टी कीमती थी जिसे बहुत सस्ते दामों पर निकाल दिया। बालकों के इतने कीमती असैट्स थे, उनको कम दाम में निकाल दिया। इसलिये ऐसी कीमती चीज़ों को जो औने-पौने दामों पर बेचा जा रहा है, इस पर लोगों को आबैक्षण है। आप अपनी कैपिटल खत्म करके अपना बजट बैलेंस कर रहे हैं और सारे असैट्स बेच रहे हैं। जिसका दिवाला निकल जाता है, वही अपनी पूँजी खत्म करता है। यह सरकार प्राइवेट सैक्टर के शेयर बेचकर थोड़ा बहुत डिसइनवेस्टमेंट में पैसा लगायेगी। इससे एक साल या दो साल तक काम चलेगा लेकिन देश का आप कितना नुकसान करेंगे। ये भी सोचें।

SHRI ARUN SHOURIE : Sir, if this intervention is allowed, I have a cross-question to make.

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Arun Shourie, you can do it during the reply.

...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA : Sir, hon. Minister Shri Venkaiah Naidu has been very kind to yield.

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: If my yielding and intervention is going to help to arrive at some broad consensus, I will

be happy to do it umpteen number of times. This is not a political point where I would like to fight with any political party. As I told in the beginning, I am speaking from the bottom of my heart, with a heavy heart. The reason is very simple.

श्री राशिद अलवी (अमरोहा) : अध्यक्ष जी, मंत्री जी कह रहे हैं कि सरकार नहीं चला पाई है, इसलिये बेच दिया जाये। टाटा अपने होटल ठीक से चला रहा है लेकिन आपसे नहीं चल रहे हैं।

श्री एम.वैंकया नायदू : वह हमारा काम नहीं है। प्राइवेट वाले चला रहे हैं या नहीं चला रहे हैं, वह उनका बिजनेस है, हमारा काम नहीं है। आपने बहुत अच्छा स वाल उठाया This is not the business of the Government to run hotels. This is the point I want to make. Should the Government run hotels and restaurants, prepare bread and bun and leave drinking water, electricity, sanitation, etc. to others? Is it the duty of the Government to make hair oil? ...*(Interruptions)* Should we not focus the attention of this House as well as of the Government to those burning issues which have been neglected all these years?

श्री राशिद अलवी : कल कहीं ऐसा न हो कि आप कहें कि सरकार नहीं चलती और टाटा को सरकार चलाने के लिये दे दें।

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: If you do not agree with my theory or ideology, it is different. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI K.H. MUNIYAPPA : On the issue of 70 per cent of population we are really welcoming what you have said. Please clarify one point. In Udaipur you have one hotel, the actual cost of which is Rs. 150 crore and you are selling it for Rs. 30 crore. What is the patriotism or the commitment of the Government here?...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI KIRIT SOMAIYA : We will give it to you. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI K.H. MUNIYAPPA : I am in the Committee on Industries. I went there. We discussed with the unions. The tender cost is going on but the actual cost is going down. Where is the patriotism here? ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI ARUN SHOURIE: It is not correct. The position is different. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Arun Shourie, you have a chance to reply.

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: Sir, out of 31 hotels which are run by the Government, 30 are in losses. My point is simple. My humble request is to please withdraw from this business and then see how you proceed with it and how you get back the money. ...*(Interruptions)* श्री बसुदेव आचार्य 50 मिनट तक बोलते रहे, कुछ नहीं हो पाया। मुझे थोड़ा तो बोलने के लिये मौका दें।

Sir, I would like to take your permission to quote Prof. Amartya Sen. He said:

"While the case of economic reforms may take good note of the diacritics that India has too much Government interference in some fields, it ignores the fact that India also has insufficient Government activity in many other fields, including basic education, health care, social security, land reforms and the promotion of social change. This inertia too contributes to the persistence of a widespread deprivation, economic stagnation and social inequity. "

SHRI TARIT BARAN TOPDAR : This quotation of Noble Laureate Prof. Amartya Sen does not suggest ominous disinvestment that you are doing.

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: I have no hesitation to say that I have taken care of you for 50 years; please take care of me in the rural areas. This is my approach. If you have any objection to my approach, then I will leave it to you. ...*(Interruptions)* There is a contradiction. This is the amount of money available and this is the demand. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL : Is the hon. Minister aware of what has happened?

MR. SPEAKER: How many times are you going to obstruct the Minister? What is this? You will also get a chance.

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: Sir, in this country, there are public sector organisations where the average emoluments of an employee are in thousands. Some people say that it is Rs. 60,000 per month. There are people who are working as agricultural labourers in the village, as a porter, who are not getting even the prescribed minimum wage of Rs. 35 or Rs. 45. ...*(Interruptions)* My point is take care of those people, move your entire focus from this side to that side. You have taken enough care of these people. They have been taken care of and they are capable of standing on their own today.

The other day I had been to Visakhapatnam. The steel plant employees came and met me and gave a memorandum wherein they said, "as a students' leader of University, you were very active. Please save Visakhapatnam Steel Plant". All the unions came to me. They had told in their memorandum that they had increased the production from 165 tonnes to 240 tonnes. I said 'fine'. At the end of it, I gave the memorandum back to them.

SHRI M.V.V.S. MURTHI : At one time, you faced bullet to save it. Kindly save it now.

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: Sir, He is an MP from Visakhapatnam, so, he is concerned. I am also a product of that University.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Minister, you have already taken thirty minutes.

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: Sir, you must also calculate and exclude the time of queries by other Members. Also have some mercy on the rural people.

Sir, the point I was making is that they gave me a memorandum in which they told that they had increased production from 165 tonnes to 240 tonnes and asked me to help. I said, "I sympathise with you." Then, I gave the memorandum back to them and said 'namaskar'. They said that I was giving the memorandum back to them. I told them that saving the steel plant was in their hands. They asked how it was in their hands. I told them that if they could increase the production from 165 tonnes to 240 tonnes, they had the capacity to see that it ran on profitable basis. I said, "You do your effort and we will do our effort." This is what I said. It is a sort of accountability for those people, that has to be felt by the workforce. I am happy that accountability is slowly picking up now in different spheres of public activity. But we as politicians from different political parties have to promote this concept of accountability because we are answerable not only to these people but those people also. But the tendency is to go because there is a readymade organisation, readymade people, organised people. They are more vocal. So, we are more accountable to them and then we are less accountable to those people who are not able to collect together. This is the angle which has to be kept in mind by all of us while deciding the priority.

Sir, a former Chief Minister of West Bengal – I do not want to take his name – had also written a letter to the then Prime Minister in 1992 about IISCO at Burnpur in West Bengal. At the end of it, that Chief Minister says that if nothing is possible so and so industrialist, so and so private person is waiting. He is ready to invest and you please get him involved into this project. If a Communist Chief Minister, with all the experience of 22 years, can realise the reality of the situation and take such a realistic view, I appeal to the other comrade friends to try to understand the reality of the situation and do not be carried away by the slogans.

Today, I have the big list of China. Privatisation is going on in China; privatisation is going on in the erstwhile East Germany.

SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL : East Germany! Which country is 'East Germany'?

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: I am referring to the erstwhile East Germany.

SHRIMATI SHYAMA SINGH : In East Germany, when they tried to privatise a section of the public sector, the East German people have taken away the PSUs.

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: In the erstwhile East Germany, at that time, there was a particular ideological regime. That is why, I mentioned it like that, and there is nothing wrong in it. People remember 'North Bengal' even now; people remember 'Karachi' and 'Sind' even now. It is a part of the history, and let us not try to score points on this. My knowledge of history may not be as good as that of Shri Pawan Kumar Bansal. I give full marks to him for that. Knowing the history of West Germany and East Germany, they must really support this. Knowing what had happened to East Germany -- they realised and, therefore, they removed the Berlin Wall -- one should really understand the reality of the situation.

The exact figures are available for 2000-2001 -- the revenue receipts of the Government of India were Rs. 2,31,745 crore, interest payment was Rs. 1,12,300 crore, and the principal repayment was Rs. 1,20,000 crore. Where is the money for developmental activities? I am not saying that money should come only from disinvestment or privatisation. I am only saying that this is also one source through which we can get money and invest it for proper development of those neglected areas.

We often hear slogans. Recently, when I went to Hyderabad -- at that time, the Chairman of the World Bank came to Hyderabad -- some people were shouting, "World Bank's Chairman go back, CM down, down". Then, I posed this question to myself, "What about the loans?" I got the reply, "No pay back; Chairman, World Bank -- go back; loans - no pay back; prices -- roll back; power -- to be given free". Is it possible?

I will conclude soon because I do not want to take much of your time. Moreover, our friends are feeling a little uneasy, and I do not know the reason.

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV (SILCHAR): We are enjoying your speech.

श्री चन्द्रनाथ सिंह : क्या एक बात बताएंगे? आपने कहा कि 53 वाँ में आज गांवों की वही समस्या है, न बिजली है, न पानी है, न सड़क है। 53 वाँ से सिस्टम

गड़बड़ रहा। जो करप्शन उसमें इनवॉल्ड रहा, अगर उसी को केवल सुधार दें तो किसी चीज़ को बेचने की आवश्यकता नहीं है। उसमें जितना पैसा जाता है, उतना ही विकास के लिए बहुत ज्यादा है। उस पैसे का केवल 5 प्रतिशत उपयोग होता है, बाकी 95 प्रतिशत दुरुपयोग होता है।

श्री एम.वैंकैया नायडू : जो फिर्स आप दे रहे हैं, मैं उससे सहमत नहीं हूँ। आपको भी मालूम है कि यह फैडरल सिस्टम है।

श्री चन्द्रनाथ सिंह : मैं भी गाँव का रहने वाला हूँ, गाँवों में जितना पैसा जाता है, 5 प्रतिशत ही वहां लग रहा है। 54 वाँ में इस देश का इतना विकास हो जाता कि हम बहुत आगे पहुँच जाते।

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: This is one aspect where you say that if the money was spent properly, then the things would have been different to some extent. I have no disagreement on that. But you cannot condemn the entire system saying that money is not reaching the villages at all. In the last three years, we have constructed more than 70 lakh houses for the poor people. The former Prime Minister expressed his concern on this. Yesterday, the present Prime Minister has expressed his concern on the same.

My point is that you are all aware, senior Members, that this responsibility of spending the money is with the State, District and *Panchayati Raj* institutions. Let us all join together to try, improve and do better targeting so that the benefits reach the needy people. For that, I have a four-point programme -- awareness, transparency, people's participation, strengthening the *gram sabhas* and social audit. That is one aspect.

The second aspect is, even if you spend this money fully, cent per cent, and see that the benefits reach the people, still, the gap will be wider. This is what I am trying to submit to the House. I need Rs. 40,000 crore for providing drinking water; I need Rs. 60,000 crore for laying the roads, that too for connecting only those villages with a population of 500. There are villages in Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Goa, Uttaranchal, in various parts of Himachal Pradesh and in the North-Eastern States where the population is only 100. Can we say that we will not lay the roads there? Recently, when I visited some of the villages in the North-East, they asked me, "You talk about villages with a population of 500 or 1,000, but what about those villages that have a population of only 250 or 150?" I said, "First of all, I want to exhaust the present list." They said, "We do not have villages with a population of 1,000 in our entire State. So, you have to reduce that figure." I said, "Fine, we will try to address that problem." If you take that also into consideration, you need a huge amount of money.

So, these are the available resources with us. So let us think seriously and come out with real business wherever possible. Let us strengthen the hands of the Government and create the right atmosphere for disinvestment to the extent required and possible. Let us get the best returns out of it and protect the interest of the workers. Let us join hands together. Let us on one side take care of those workers and on the other side utilise the money to take care of the interests of the workers in the unorganised sector in the rural areas. This is the thrust of my entire argument.

Sir, I have tried to do my bit in this presentation. I would like to request all the hon. Members that instead of trying to score political points on this, let us apply our minds, if not today, tomorrow to address this problem. They are becoming restive. We are talking of Internet, they are saying no net to villages. We are talking of the WLL, they are saying सर, हमारे गाँव में वायरलैस है। We are talking of highway, they are saying 'no way'. We are talking of over-head tanks, they are saying that give us ordinary tanks. They are saying as to what the Government is doing. Rupees ten thousand crore has been announced by the hon. Prime Minister for new schemes to take care of the rural people and provide employment to them. Employment does not mean Government jobs alone. No Government worth the name can give the required jobs in the Government sector in the coming years. We can provide self-employment. We can provide the needed infrastructure by providing the needed facilities that are available.

Sir, I would conclude by giving just one example. Hon. Members are waiting to get their chance. I had been to Madanapalle recently. This is near Bangalore. We have the Jiddu Krishnamurthy Foundation there. I found bundles of tomatoes stored on both sides of the road. I asked one of them there if there is likely to be any cinema shooting of Shri Raghavendra Rao or Krishna Reddy – who are popular film-makers in our area -- in that place. I was told that no cinema shooting was going to take place there. Those tomatoes have been stored on the road side because they are waiting for somebody to come from Bangalore to purchase those tomatoes. I waited there a while and then I went to the market place in Madanapalle. I saw there that auction has started. I enquired as to what the price was. I was told it was Rs. 16/- . I was really surprised at the first instance to find out that at Madanapalle tomatoes were selling at Rs. 16 a kilo. One of the farmers then told me that it was Rs. 16/- for a basket of ten kilos of tomatoes. That means, it cost, Rs. 1.60 per kilo.

Sir, I reached Bangalore that evening and was in my sister's place. I asked her at price tomatoes were selling in Bangalore. She told me that it was about Rs. 6/- to Rs. 8/- per kilo. I was surprised to find that just 132 kilometres behind, at Madanapalle it was selling at just Rs. 1.60 per kilogram. I had spent that evening in Bangalore and next day I came to Delhi. I asked my wife at what price tomatoes were selling in Delhi. She told me that it was selling at a variable price between Rs. 12/- and Rs. 18/-.

Sir, the reason for this is very simple. There is no storage facilities for the farmers. Tomatoes are perishable items

and we have not been able to create enough infrastructure for godowns and cold storage for them in order that they could preserve them. Moreover, all these years they did not have adequate information also. Now, should we not make efforts to create cold storage for them? Last year the storage capacity of the cold storage was 12 lakhs tonnes. Ten lakh forty thousand tonnes of more capacity has been added this year.

Sir, myself and my friend, Shri Pramod Mahajan went to Nasik and we were addressing a public meeting there. Suddenly, somebody threw something at us. I thought somebody has thrown a bomb at us. The police ran after the person and caught him. But the police caught hold of a farmer only. We asked the police men -- किसान को क्यों पकड़ा? The policeman told us that he was the man who had thrown that material at us. हमने किसान से पूछा - तुमने क्या फेंका। किसान ने कहा आज। क्यों कि आज नासिक में इतना होता है कि इसे कोई लेने वाला नहीं है। हमने सोचा प्रमोद महाजन आए हैं, उनका ध्यान आज उत्पादकों की ओर आकर्षित हो, इसलिए हमने आज फेंका। लेकिन आप तो पार्टी प्रवक्ता हैं। मैं आपको बताना चाहता हूं कि यह उस समय की बात है जब मैं मंत्री नहीं था, केवल पार्टी प्रवक्ता था।

Sir, we came back and told the hon. Prime Minister that there is need for providing cold storage facilities for those people. Also, there is need for creating opportunities for them to export their goods. These are practical problems which we have not been able to address because they are noticeable only in tiny villages and remote rural centres.

Sir, what I am trying to say is that let us all come together and give priority to those items and to those sections of society who have been deprived. We should disinvest in one sector to invest in another. We should invest in the rural sector and in the social sector. This is what I am saying.

कुंवर अखिलेश सिंह : आप कह किससे रहे हैं। प्रमोद महाजन तो सदन में हैं ही नहीं।

श्री एम. वैंकैया नायडू : उससे पहले भी हमको खुद याद है, अखबार वाले जो दिल्ली में बैठते हैं, उनको ऐसे अनुभव के द्वारा ही समझ में आता है लेकिन हम गांव में रहने वाले लोगों को मालूम है कि किसान की स्थिति क्या है। I do not want to make a bold statement on the bias of this entire country towards rural people. Have we really focussed enough attention on this sector all these years forgetting the political spectrum, right from the Planning Commission to the politicians and everybody else? We have not. We should admit this fact. There is no meaning in finding fault with each other. I find fault with Congress and they find fault with me.

That is why, in spite of provocation I was trying not to get provoked because I did not want to lose the main track of my appeal to all of you. Please, understand the rationale from this point of view also and support the programme of the Government. This is my request and this is my appeal to the House.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI (RAIGANJ): Mr. Speaker, Sir, first of all I thank the Disinvestment Minister Shri Arun Shourie for having been very successful in motivating the Rural Development Minister with an assurance that all the disinvestment proceeds would go to the Rural Development Fund, which seems to be the reason why Shri Naidu has come to rescue him in the House.

Sir, the Minister who just intervened, my dear friend Venkaiah Naiduji, was very candid in his confession over the plight of the farmers under this regime in Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh, and his account of the sufferings of farmers in general. The only aberration is, if he had supported the Adjournment Motion on farmers' problems moved by our leader Shrimati Sonia Gandhi, it would have justified his concern.

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: If the Adjournment Motion is going to get the desired result of solving all the problems of farmers, I would request my party also to join the Adjournment Motion.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : Thank you. If you had done that, at least the farmers would have come to know that you have genuine sympathy for their plight and concern for redressal of their grievances.

Sir, our late lamented leader Rajiv Gandhi, and prior to him the late Indira Gandhi, laid emphasis on rural development and Panchayati Raj institutions for the first time in the history of Indian republic. ...*(Interruptions)* The late Indira Gandhi and later on the late Rajiv Gandhi made declarations in this House that rural development should get the highest priority in the Budget of a Government. Shri Naidu cannot deny the fact that the benefits of the process that started then percolated down to the Panchayati Raj system. If there are a few omissions and commissions here and there, we could sit across the table and decide.

I am amused to hear Shri Naidu's long lecture on the Grants of his Rural Development Ministry. He probably thought that the Grants of his Ministry are never discussed on the floor, that he would never get a chance to speak on them and so he should take this opportunity and intervene. I thank him for doing so. But today's subject matter is not somebody being against or for disinvestment. Our party made it abundantly clear umpteen times that we are not opposed to disinvestment *per se*. Our Deputy Leader just gave clarification on our Bangalore Resolution. We are not here to question the Government as to why it is attempting to disinvest. Our question is just on three counts -

(a) transparency, (b) national interest, and (c) interest of the workers working in public sector units.

Sir, Air India should not be treated on par with units like Modern Foods and BALCO. Air India is the pride of the nation. It has a long and proud heritage. For several decades, it never sought financial support from the Government, even during the Congress regime. It ran on its own resources. The distinguished Minister Shri Naidu was trying to generalise by saying that public sector undertakings are a drain on the national exchequer. I will not enter into a debate on that now, but Air India is different. Air India is not going to be a drain on the national exchequer. In 46 out of 53 years of its existence it made profits. It has just turned around this year and posted a net profit for the first quarter. So, Air India should not be treated in the way it is being treated.

I agree with the hon. Minister that the process of disinvestment had been referred to the Disinvestment Commission right in 1996 and prior to that we planned for it in our Government.

In 1998, it was referred to the Disinvestment Commission. There is no dispute about it. We have never said as to why it was referred to the Disinvestment Commission.

Now, I come to the main point. For the last several months through various questions and answers in Parliament I have been trying to concentrate as to what is the direction of the Government.

On Air India, at least 3,000 press clippings are with me from India and abroad on the basic question of transparency. I met the trade unions. I met the workers. I met the Air India personnel, I will not take their names. I met three people from the Government. Many documents came to us even from the companies which tried to contest this bid by post, by newspaper publications and by trade unions also. We studied them objectively.

Then I wrote a letter to the hon. Prime Minister on 2nd July, 2001 where I stated that we never raised any objection, *per se*, to disinvestment. Recently, in our Bangalore Resolution of the AICC, it was made clear as to where we stand on the matter of disinvestment. Sir, I wrote to the hon. Prime Minister and a copy of it I referred to the ex-Prime Ministers. Most of them have responded to me. This is what I wrote:

"Mr. Prime Minister, do you, as a political soul, can convince yourself that after 51 years of freedom and republic, mighty India's sovereign National Carrier in the globe shall be dictated by Government of Singapore in all practical manner? Can you accept this surrender and compromise? Late Prime Minister, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Late Prime Minister Shrimati Indira Gandhi, Late Prime Minister Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri, Late Prime Minister Shri Morarji Desai, Late Prime Minister Choudhary Charan Singh, Late Prime Minister Shri Rajiv Gandhi and ex-Prime Ministers Shri P.V. Narasimha Rao, Shri Chandra Shekhar, Shri H.D. Deve Gowda, Shri I.K. Gujral, could any one of them concede that our national honour, pride and sovereign authority of determining the policy of our National Carrier which will carry our Flag, shall be subjugated to the whims and dictate, designs and plans of another foreign Airlines, whose Government will scrutinise the operation behind the screen and shall dominate our sky and our space in a manner that they prefer better for them? I wonder how your Government and Ministers can enjoy this surrender in such a manner."

Sir, I further wrote:

"Mr. Prime Minister, having grown with your own style of patriotic devotions through RSS and other activities of Jan Sangh and Swadeshi Manch in the recent times, could you encourage this surrender?"

The hon. Prime Minister was kind enough to acknowledge this letter. Thereafter, where was it referred to I do not know. ...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU : You will one day become a *Swayam Sewak*...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : Sir, I now quote certain lines. I will later on disclose where from I quoted. It says:

"As is well aware, the process of disinvestment of Air India has been facing numerous problems especially in the area of according security clearance to one bidder and thereafter having the process become a single bidder system along with the issue of Investment Advisers role.

It is believed and observed that wherever the Government has tried to observe a single bidder system, there has been a lot of hue and cry for executing the disinvestment in Parliament leading to various allegations. While Modern Foods is an often quoted case, however, the two cannot be compared since Air India is an asset which carries a lot of emotion being the National Carrier of the country. Hence, the

argument that a minimum reserve price and single bidder will be appropriate does not hold good in ensuring a smooth disinvestment process through Parliament and Government.

It is proposed that in case the Government does not have more than one bidder, we should review the process, and try to make Air India more profitable by reviewing issues like 38 per cent tax on ATF among others so that viability of the airline can be divested with value having been added to ensure a better price. It is being felt in certain sections of Government and Parliament that the Government is engaged in an exercise to give away a valuable asset rather than extract the value from it. We should look at the Aviation Policy as a whole rather than keep changing the policies to either suit the process or the objective that we are trying to accomplish in a transparent manner."

I used the word 'transparency'. It further says:

"The hon. Prime Minister may like to take a view on how we need to proceed further in this case."

This was written by the Cabinet Secretary on July, 17....(Interruptions) It is the Cabinet Secretary's note. I wrote a letter to the Prime Minister on 2nd July. I did not consult the Cabinet Secretary. I spoke on my own about the emotions attached with Air India, the national security, the value, the pride of India, the process and so on. And the Cabinet Secretary on July 17, I am prepared to authenticate it, drew the attention of the Prime Minister himself. The Cabinet Secretary is not from the Opposition Party. He is a respected bureaucrat. It is his observations, questioning the transparency.

Sir, the Government, while replying to a question in the Parliament, on August 13, 2001, made it clear that the Air India became a loss-making organisation since 1995-96 and prior to this the position in Air India was profitable. In 1992-93, it was Rs.330 crore, 1993-94 it was Rs.210 crore, in 1994-95 it was Rs.040.80 crore and the loss was only in 1995-96. Thanks to the Civil Aviation Minister, Shri Sharad Yadav, who monitored it in such a manner that profit started coming to Air India. Yet, I think the poor Minister is helpless because of the situation he is placed in.

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU : The former Minister also took a lot of interest. It seems you have forgotten that....(Interruptions)

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: The Disinvestment Minister is placed in a situation where he is also helpless. I do not know from where the direction comes! He has to consult Civil Aviation, Finance or maybe the whole Cabinet. I agree. But we demanded a very small thing for transparency. Our distinguished Leader of Opposition wrote a letter that on such important matters of national interest, where disinvestment is there, we ought to have a separate Standing Committee. Rightly or wrongly, now the Finance Committee is looking at it. On such important matters, what is wrong in placing the entire thing before the Standing Committee just as the Budget proposals are placed? Let it peruse the whole matter and report to the Parliament. The Parliament can then react and take a decision. We have nothing against or in favour of anybody. Unfortunately, that was not accepted.

I now come to a very-very vital and important matter, that is the stage-wise-stage development of disinvestment. I will confine to transparency and national interest. Through you, Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the Minister who is busy confabulating with others. Would you, please, Sir, give direction to the Minister?...(Interruptions)

SHRI ARUN SHOURIE: Shri Sharad Yadav was just telling me that when the decision regarding the Air India was taken, he was present and that I was not present because I was not a Minister at that time.

कुंवर अखिलेश सिंह : व्यक्तिगत जानकारी के आधार पर हम लोग कहना चाहते हैं कि शरद यादव जी एयर इंडिया के विनिवेश के खिलाफ हैं।

नागर विमानन मंत्री (श्री शरद यादव) : अध्यक्ष महोदय, तीन-चार सदस्यों ने मेरा नाम लिया। मैं इतना ही कहना चाहूंगा कि जो विनिवेश का निर्णय है, उसमें हम सभी थे और अनंत कुमार जी भी थे। उस पर काफी लम्बी बहस हुई थी। निश्चित तौर पर एक मामले में मतभेद था, हमारी और अरुण जी की राय थी कि इंडियन एयरलाइंस का जो इक्विटी रेशो है, वही हो, बाकी सब लोगों की भी वही राय थी। हम सबने एक राय से निर्णय लिया था। सरकार में इसे लेकर कोई मतभेद नहीं है। वशेशकर अरुण शौरी जी और मेरे बीच में कोई मतभेद नहीं है। डिबेट में इस तरह की चीज लाकर परेशानी पैदा नहीं करनी चाहिए।

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : I do not want to embarrass the hon. Minister any more. I will now come to the fact on the point of transparency. The Government appointed a global adviser. Please listen to me. I am talking with facts and if the Government demand these facts, I am prepared to authenticate it and lay it on the Table of the House. Transparency is the criteria in disposing a national asset.

The first task of the Government was to appoint a Global Adviser. It appointed a Global Adviser called J.M. Stanley Morgan. The Government also has a right to terminate an adviser if it finds that there is a conflict of interest. Is it not a fact that in various committees of Unit Trust, one of the companies who is on the Mutual Fund Board is a

nivesh company representing the same unit of Mutual fund allocation? I had quoted it the other day. Is it also not a fact that in the recent UTI scandal, it is the Tata Power who gained Rs.150 crore from stock market? Is it a fact that the same J.M. Stanley Morgan has been chosen by the Government as an Adviser for the disinvestment process and he had also joined the Indian Hotel Company of Tata Group as a Director? The Minister replied to me that he was not appointed by Tatas and that there is a direction by SEBI that any corporate house or some independent director should be appointed and the Tatas chose him as an independent director when the disinvestment process was on. Is it not a fact that the same nivesh company had to resign due to the pressure of media and due to the hue and cry of a few MPs? Is it not a fact that the same J.M. Stanley Morgan has now been engaged by Tatas as an Adviser of the VSNL disinvestment process? How do you justify that this is transparent? How do you justify that it is clear? Is it also not a fact that without terminating him, you have terminated the services of another company due to conflict of interest? I know its name and I am going to quote that. You did not terminate him and later on for the public consumption and knowing full well that the Parliament Session is nearing, you chose to appoint another two Advisers. You have appointed very recently two more advisers to make evaluation of assets. How can a bidder who is from Tatas can engage the same Adviser as the Director of the company? Till the matter is not disposed of, how can you engage him as an Adviser for disinvestment of Tata-VSNL? Are these not conflicts of interest? You can say that there is no conflict of interest.

Now, I would come to your general guidelines which you told us in this House while replying to a question. What are the guidelines of the bidders? You said that one of the major guidelines of the bidder is that he should not be involved in the eyes of the Government in any kind of offence or crime or any kind of conviction or anything of this nature. The full guideline is with me. But I do not want to take the time of the House in narrating the guideline. The guideline is that if the Adviser is having conflict of interest, his services would be terminated. If the bidder is under clout in any way, he should not be taken into confidence. The Minister of Law knew full well that Videocon was issued strictures by SEBI. Yet on 10th May, the Ministry of Law gave clearance that they can remain in the bidding process. Did you object to it? At the end of the day, you kept them out? Is your Government not aware of the fact that CBI is investigating into the matters of Bofors and prosecution is pending against Hindujas and he is being brought back to India? During that course of time, you allowed Hindujas and everybody to go to the more sensitive sector of the Air India called the data room. You allowed him to go inside the operation data room. You did not object. Is this transparency? Is it fair?

I have no disregard for any individual working in the Government or in any company. In my letter to the Prime Minister, I praised profusely the Tata emperor. Jamshed G. Tata was no less patriot of the country. He has a stake in our fast industrial revolution. Shri J.R.D. Tata is a great son of India. I feel proud of him. Take for example his son, Ratan Tata. Nobody is our enemy.

18.00 hrs.

But, as an institution of the Government you did not look into it. The guidelines say you should take someone in the bidding process who is free from clout. Did you do that? I do not think you did that.

I am revealing a very sensitive thing today, Mr. Speaker, for the attention of the Government. Till now, today at 6 o'clock, a company is directly under investigation for FERA violation to the tune of more than \$ 300 million. The investigation is going on. The whole document of the investigation is in my possession now. Which is that company? It is not important to say this; but it is freedom of information. ...(*Interruptions*) Shri Arun Shourie, I do not intend to explode you, but I want to explode your transparency claim.

Shri R.K. Pandey, Deputy Director, Enforcement Directorate has issued an order on 20.3.2000 in supersession of the order of 13.12.1999 in the case pertaining to IHCL and Cox and Kings. The investigation revelations are terrific. Should I read out the report page by page? I would just say one point about the nexus. The Investigation Officer of the Enforcement, at the Taj International Hotel, Hong Kong, received the following payments on behalf of IHCL in which Nivesh Company joined as a Director and later on resigned. The deposit received on behalf of Singapore Airlines was \$ 49,61,301; deposit received on behalf of Cathay Pacific was \$ 1.5 million; other amounts received were \$ 3,39,90,03,362. Further investigation is being carried out to find out the purpose of these deposits and why these payments were received by this Tata Group. Furthermore, I may reveal that the estimated total deviation and siphoning off of foreign exchange is to the tune of \$ 250 million to \$ 300 million and the estimate further says that it could exceed this figure.

Is it also not a fact that for the last one month the same IFCL is negotiating with Singapore Air Traffic Terminal and Cathay Pacific for another deal with the same advisor called J.M. Stanley Morgan? Can you deny all these facts? When I say this, I speak with authority. The entire Enforcement Directorate report is in my hand. You will be surprised to know that the money taken with the permission of the RBI was \$ 13 million for a particular purpose and without the permission of the RBI they utilised \$ 5 million and \$ 8 million has been siphoned off. Where was it

taken? To one bank in Switzerland. They opened three accounts in London without the permission of the RBI. The amount of money in the ARRA Group in Hong Kong that has been siphoned off is \$ 20 million and the total siphoned off money is \$ 320 million.

RBI said, you appoint an independent auditor. The independent auditor also said the same thing. Now the investigation is being conducted by the Enforcement Directorate at Mumbai. The latest is of 27.2.2000 on the above subject. Details have come. Where does the Singapore Airline figure in all this?

SHRI ARUN SHOURIE: I would like to seek a clarification just for my own education because you are making some important point. You are referring to the guidelines and trying to say that some method is under investigation about a corporate house. The guideline says:

"In regard to matters other than the security and integrity of the country, any conviction by a court of law or indictment or adverse order by a regulatory authority."

So, there are two things. You are half-a-lawyer. It is said "conviction by a Court of Law or adverse order or indictment by a regulatory authority" You show me about conviction please and then we will proceed.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : I never said 'conviction'. I will quote again.

"Any conviction by a Court of Law or indictment/adverse order by a regulatory authority for a grave offence against the advising concern or its sister concern would constitute a disqualification."

SHRI ARUN SHOURIE: You are reading a wrong guideline.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : Mr. Shourie, should I not conclude and then you intervene? I have authenticated everything on the Table of the House. I have written a letter to the Finance Minister, Shri Yaswant Sinha. He has acknowledged my letter and he is examining the matter. I have not come here empty-handed. I know how things are operating in the country.

SHRI ARUN SHOURIE: You are reading the guideline which is for the advisor. You have to read the guideline for the bidder. There is a separate guideline for the bidders.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : I quote:

"In regard to matters relating to the security and integrity of the country, any charge-sheet by an agency of the Government/conviction by a Court of Law for an offence committed by the bidding party or by any sister concern of the bidding party would result in disqualification. The decision in regard to the relationship between the sister concerns would be taken, based on the relevant facts and after examining whether the two concerns are substantially controlled by the same person/persons."

Now comes the charge-sheet by the agency of the Government.

SHRI ARUN SHOURIE: The next paragraph is on matters relating to security.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: You kindly read paragraph (b) of the letter dated 13.7.2001. It says:

"In regard to matters relating to the security and integrity of the country, any charge-sheet by an agency of the Government/conviction by a Court of Law for an offence committed by the bidding party or by any sister concern of the bidding party would result in disqualification."

It is said "for an offence".

SHRI ARUN SHOURIE: That is about security.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : No. I will again read it out. Let the House judge it. I will read line by line.

SHRI ARUN SHOURIE: There are two separate paragraphs so that nobody gets misled. One is on security and that is what you have read. The next paragraph is on guidelines other than security like FERA violations which you are talking about. In that second paragraph, it is said conviction by a Court of Law...*(Interruptions)*

श्री किरीट सोमैया : "खोदा पहाड़ निकला चूहा"â€|(व्यवधान)

श्री अरुण शौरी : वह भी गलत चूहा।

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : Sir, this is not the way to speak. I will read paragraph (b) again.

"In regard to matters relating to security and integrity of the country, any charge-sheet by any agency of the Government/conviction by a Court of Lawâ€!"

SHRI ARUN SHOURIE: You are looking into FERA violations.

1808 hours (Dr. Raghuvansh Prasad Singh *in the Chair*)

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : You listen to me and then you may justify.

"â€!any charge-sheet by any agency of the Government/conviction by a Court of Law for an offence committed by the bidding party or by any sister concern of the bidding partyâ€!"

I draw the attention of the hon. Minister to one point. Was Hinduja, was Sterlite, was Videocon convicted by any Court of Law? They have not been convicted. The Law Ministry took a decision. Since you feel that there is a stricture, you feel that you should not encourage them in that process. There is a general perception that Sterlite got a stricture and now they cannot enter into any bidding of the public sector undertakings. Is it right or wrong?

SHRI ARUN SHOURIE: Let me just clarify so that nobody is in a misunderstanding. I assure you that if your point is right, I will move exactly as you say. But let me tell you what the scheme of guidelines says. There is no difference of opinion between any of us on this matter.

There are three sets of guidelines. One is on security-related issues. On those charge-sheets, anybody who is charge-sheeted – conviction is not necessary – or may be the entire group will go. So, even if the sister concern is charge-sheeted, then the whole group goes.

In matters like FERA, which is in the next para which you are not reading, the scheme is, it has to be not a charge-sheet but a conviction of that particular concern, not of any sister concern.

The third point is about advisors. As far as advisors are concerned, it is a conviction or an adverse order by regulatory authorities, like SEBI, and it is for the group as a whole and not only for the particular concern. That is why, for instance, CSFC has been given the show cause notice. That is exactly why in the case of Hindujas who have not been convicted but charge sheeted, the entire group has been given the show cause notice.

If we are wrong in applying the guidelines, I give you an assurance that we will correct everything. But the case that you were quoting about FERA violation comes in the second step, where you require a conviction by a court of law and you are not answering that question. If you can educate me and lead me to a conviction that has been given, I assure you that we will issue a show cause notice tomorrow.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : I think the Minister is trying to misunderstand me or trying to confuse the House.

I have never said that a particular bidder has been convicted. I only asked a question as to whether it is not a fact that Videocon and Sterlite have been indicted by SEBI and, therefore, they are not in the race of bidding. As per the guidelines, they should have been either convicted or charge sheeted.

SHRI ARUN SHOURIE: Videocon withdrew.

सभापति महोदय : माननीय मंत्री जी, उत्तर देते समय आपको पर्याप्त समय मिलेगा।

श्री अरुण शौरी : सर, यह गलत बात कह रहे हैं कि वीडियोकॉन पर शो-कोज क्यों नहीं हुआ। वीडियोकॉन अगर विद-ब्रॉकर जाए तो शो-कोज किसको दें?

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : I just quote a news item in *Business Standard* of 6th July. It says:

"DOD has proposed barring companies named by Sebi in its final orders from bidding. The idea was to exclude the kind of company which defrauds small investors. The Law Ministry, however, is of the view that Sebi has issued orders against companies over a wide range of other issues also. These factors do not restrict the ability of these companies to turn around public sector companies."

The Ministry has also said Sebi orders alone cannot be considered for disqualifying companies. Cases slapped against companies by the Enforcement Directorate and Income Tax Tribunal also constitute a serious breach of conduct."

Can you deny that you did not say so?

SHRI ARUN SHOURIE: No, I have never said so.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : Then the newspaper is absolutely wrong. I think the *Business Standard* is telling untruth.

SHRI ARUN SHOURIE: It is absolutely wrong and I pointed it out to the *Business Standard* also.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : I accept it.

SHRI ARUN SHOURIE: You please go by the guidelines that have been approved by the Cabinet and not by the newspaper reports.

समापति महोदय : मंत्री जी, आप कागज-कलम लेकर पाइंट्स नोट कर लें और जवाब देते समय उत्तर में क्लीयर कर दें।

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : Is it not a fact that James Morgan Stanley was indicted by the stock market? Is it not a fact that you have terminated one of the global advisors recently on this count? You will say 'no' to that also.

SHRI ARUN SHOURIE: No.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : I take the name. Let the Minister deny. He has not done it. Morgan Stanley and Credit Swiss Cox Boston both have been recently indicted for their role in major stock market scam by the Security Exchange Commission. Swiss Cox Boston is considered by the Department to have been terminated as advisor. If you say no, it is fine. I will take the Minister's version and I will say that this Paper is lying. I would accept the Minister's version only and not anybody else's.

SHRI ARUN SHOURIE: No.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : This is good. Now the Government's position has been exposed. If there is indictment by the Stock Exchange, till it is convicted, it will not be out of the advisory panel.

There is a FERA violation to the tune of \$300 million. It has been siphoned off from India and transferred abroad. It will come into operation. Foreign Exchange is the only element in Air India that will be collected. It is accepted. I put up my letter to the hon. Finance Minister for immediate investigation. The correct agency to look into such a matter of FERA violation is only the Enforcement Directorate and nothing else. The observation of the Enforcement Directorate is that violation has been proved beyond doubt and prosecution has to begin. Shall I quote it? The Office of the Enforcement Directorate sought permission for further action from the Headquarters, Delhi. Shri R.K. Pandey, the Deputy Director, Mumbai Office sought further permission from the Central Office. But permission has not been given till date. I am not talking of any individual. What I say is that it is a scandalous matter. If I read the report and observations of the Enforcement Directorate, it will take whole night. It is scandalous. The Gulf Air Chief Salim Assiyabi transferred \$ one million. There is no account. There is no information from the RBI in this regard. ARRA in Hong Kong transferred \$35 million. There is no account. There is the corporate guarantee by IHCL of US \$ 35 million in favour of City Bank to Taj, Hong Kong. It was done without the permission of the RBI. IHCL transferred US \$ 35 million through Citi Bank to Hong Kong without permission of the RBI. All these have been approved by the Board meeting. It was questioned by RBI and referred to an independent auditor. The independent auditor has also subscribed to this issue. I have with me the report of the independent auditor. This is the status. Mr. Minister, you are saying that the whole thing is done in a transparent manner.

Now, I come back to the national asset valuation. I am not a competent man. I agree with you. I know what is the value. Sometimes statements come and say that the value is 10,000. Sometimes, the media write that the value is 20,000. I know about it. I congratulate the hon. Minister for one action he has taken. Mr. Minister, I wrote you a letter two months back. You did take action. I am grateful to you. The entire planning was mooted by the Air India man who is now under suspension. It was to present a projection that Air India would make loss. So, the net asset value was reduced to suit the bidder to get it at a cheaper price. I brought it to the notice of the hon. Minister and also to Mr. Mascarenhas. The hon. Minister got it investigated and he took action. I got that projection list which proved to be totally wrong in the existing operation. Let the Minister deny it if I am wrong. It was claimed that IHCL, James Morgan, Singapore Airlines etc. have planned these things. The Government is not telling the truth. The Government knows about the role of Hindujas and Videocon. The Government knows everything. I am sorry to say that when Dr. Manmohan Singh and Shrimati Sonia Gandhi said about transparency, they accused them as fools. As a Parliamentarian, I talk to trade unions and companies. I got their papers. I examined them. I produced it to the Minister. Is it right and wrong? I am neither for Reliance nor for the British Airways. I am neither for the Jet Airlines nor for the Reliance; nor for any other company. I am not against the Tatas. I am saying how the Government is disposing of the property of Air India without taking care of all these issues into account. Is it not a fact that the Singapore Airlines is controlled by the Singapore Government? My hon. Prime Minister will fly in a chartered aircraft

outside India. Who will control the entire matter? It is at the dictates of the Singapore Airlines. Is it not a fact that you are also thinking of giving the same support to the same company, which you gave to Air India as a public sector undertaking for seven years under the bilateral protection agreement? What for? What my company gave, why should he get? These are the matters which concern the entire nation. It is not against your CRB. You know about it from my letter which you have gone through. I praise the Singapore Airlines because it is a very highly managed professional company. In their country, they are very good. I give one example for your understanding. You can contact your Ambassador just now. I was in Argentina one month back. The then President of Argentina Mr. Mecon, who is now in jail, recklessly disposed of the *Aerolínea Argentina* to *Iberia* in the name of disinvestment. The entire trade union people point it out and pleaded to protect their roots and business.

Then, another American company, M/s Iberia took part in the process and said that they were not interested in Aerolínea. Now, the former Prime Minister, Mr. Mecon is in jail. The Ambassador explained the whole thing to me while I was having lunch with him. I said, it is a good example and we must be cautious in our country.

Sir, I never said that the hon. Minister is indulging in something or any individual is indulging in something. But is this Government taking enough care and caution before disposing of such a property of the nation which is linked with national emotions? How could Shri Sharad Yadav manage the same Air India and give a profit projection in the last eight years and six months? Why does the Government not strengthen his hands by providing him what he wants? What is wrong in it? Why do they not terminate M/s James Morgan Stanley? What is the reason?

I gave him four examples. Can he deny even one example? Can he deny that the recent scam did not benefit M/s Tata Power to the tune of Rs.150 crore? Can he deny that M/s James Morgan Stanley was not appointed by Tata again as advisor in the VSNL disinvestment process? Can he deny that? Can he deny that IHCL and M/s James Morgan Stanley are not negotiating with Singapore Airport Terminal for another business? There is no transparency in all this. This is my contention. I feel really pained. Tata is not my enemy. In fact, individually I am highly benefited by Tata, as the President of the All India Football Federation. They are very kind towards sports and promote sports. But when I find that these things are going on, as a public representative, it is my bounden duty to draw the attention of the Government. I wrote to the Finance Minister last week and he acknowledged my letter. I requested him to investigate before taking a decision on this matter.

Sir, Air India generates huge amount of foreign exchange to our country, but the Government is placing it to a bidder whose credentials are under a cloud and under investigation in a case involving \$300 million. Is it fair? That is why, in my letter to the hon. Prime Minister, I wrote, "awake and respond" and I am glad that the Cabinet Secretary almost echoed the sentiments of the nation, sentiments of the people and the sentiments of all the hon. Members, cutting across party lines, in this House. Therefore, I would request the Minister not to misinterpret the views of the Congress Party. I agree that we have a lot of differences between our party and the Left Parties on many economic issues, but we said, in the Resolution that we passed at our party's Bangalore Session, that we are not averse to disinvestment, provided it is done in a transparent manner and it takes care of the national interests and workers' interests. We said that if a company is trying to grow, the Government should not put any hurdle, but if a company is dooming, the Government should try to protect it.

Sir, just a few minutes before, the Minister of Rural Development gave a lecture and said that the Government requires money. The Minister of Disinvestment has said many times in the House during the debate on disinvestment that the process of disinvestment should be strengthened further and that the sick units should be revived to earn profit so that the revenue of the Government will get a boost. I agree with him on this point. But, if disinvestment process is to give money to national exchequer, as I now understand, I would like to ask one question to the hon. Minister of Rural Development - he is not present in the House now. Where did they get money while the Kargil war was going on and our *jawans* were giving their lives? The Government was a caretaker Government at that time. It did not have people's mandate or Parliament's authority. But, at that time, the Government allowed migration package for telecom companies, risking an amount of Rs.50,000 crore. The big shots of this country were supposed to pay licence fee and they went to the court. Under the National Telecom Policy of 1994, they got migration and Shri Jag Mohan had to change his portfolio because of that.

Sir, the present Minister of Rural Development was the spokesman of the BJP at that time. Had he been a Minister of the Government at that time, he would have prevented this from happening. He would have told the Prime Minister that Kargil war is going now, we are not a Government with the mandate of the people and, so, let us not make a hara-kiri. Just two days before the announcement of elections by the Election Commission, the Government announced this package to the tune of Rs.50,000 crore.

So, let them not accuse us now. We ruled for 50 years and the nation will scrutinise whether we did right or wrong. The nation will continue to scrutinise. It is part of history. I cannot change it. The Minister of Disinvestment was a probing journalist throughout his whole professional career and he is also a Magsaysay Award winner. So, let him take care of all these things, be more vigilant and objective in the disinvestment process. Without casting any

aspersions on the Minister and his colleagues in the Cabinet, I tried to defend this matter on my own argument and I am not against any individual. I would like to say that the entire process of disinvestment is non-transparent, which has been echoed by Dr. Manmohan Singh.

The entire arrangement is cloudy. Do not destroy Air India, a national pride, in this shameless deal. Do not try to do it at the cost of the nation and under a cloud.

My other colleagues will deal with VSNL and MTNL.

With these words, I request the Government to reconsider the matter, send it to the Standing Committee with full Report, and wait for the report till the next Session. If possible, take care of all these things that I told today in this Parliament. Take its cognisance. I will pass on the unfortunate Report to you also for your perusal. Then, you take a decision. Otherwise, hara-kiri will not help you, me or the nation at this critical juncture.

I again look forward to Shri Sharad Yadav, with whom my heart bleeds, to please try to convince the Government. He can put Air India's pride and honour and take a leap towards profit and make it a giant to fly our flag throughout the world. Here is the Air India. Mighty nuclear India is not a subject under the Singapore Government.

SHRI M.V.V.S. MURTHI (VISAKHAPATNAM): Mr. Chairman, Sir, either fortunately or unfortunately, I am a Member of the Consultative Committee for Civil Aviation. The other day I pleaded with the hon. Minister that our National Flag should fly high and Air India should be the last one to disinvest. I have made that request to him and that should be the last one in this whole deal. I think, AIR India this is a national pride. Because of this, I am not talking about the politics. But I am talking about the national pride, national security and national integrity. All these things are to be taken into consideration. On AIR India our Ministers will fly. Our hon. President will fly. Our Prime Minister will fly. So, there should be a national carrier. Our national carrier should be preserved. It is not a difficult thing. Till 1995-96, AIR India was making profit. ...(*Interruptions*)

At the time of Kargil War, it had also given a lot of service. Only after 1995-96, it is sliding down gradually. You know, today many people have spoken on several issues of disinvestment. I will take the other dimension. How many public sector undertakings today are having heads? How many have been managed efficiently? How many public sector undertakings are having Chairmen and Managing Directors. A lot of them do not have them. All of them are working on an *ad hoc* basis. You know that business has to be run on commercially viable lines, on a market intelligence basis, and taking decisions under several conditions. Today, our market is open. It is not a protected market like before. Once upon a time, the Indian industry – mostly the public sector undertakings – thrived because they were having a monopoly business. The Indian markets were controlled. We used to buy whatever they produced. Today, the situation is different. We have to compete globally. We have to make our goods competitive. We have to make our services competitive. We have to take this situation into consideration. How many PSUs are being managed effectively? Today also, every institution is feeling insecure and they do not know when they would be disinvested. Then, how long will they remain silent? Normally, when there is an amount of uncertainty, the people feel: "Let us make hay while the sun shines." This is one aspect of the matter. You must control this situation. I would like to tell the hon. Minister for Disinvestment that there are several theories and still you can be called a Minister for Investment instead of Disinvestment. Investment is also a part of taking money. As hon. Minister Shri Venkaiah Naidu said, invest in the social security system.

How can the hon. Minister be called the Minister for Disinvestment? He can be called the Minister for Investment in the right direction.

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): He should be called Minister for Reinvestment.

SHRI K. YERRANNAIDU : Yes, that is the proper word.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE (BOLPUR): Where is he investing the money? Budgetary Gap!

SHRI K. YERRANNAIDU : Our Minister is reinvesting the amount that he is getting in our country.

SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM (THANJAVUR): As has been told by Shri Venkaiah Nadu, the money is being invested in the rural areas.

SHRI M.V.V.S. MURTHI : There are a number of public sector undertakings, which are to be streamlined. Once

they streamline them, they will get more money. The first task is to streamline them, to put them on the track of profit making, so that the others may come and buy them at higher rates.

Today, if I offer something, which is not worth, I will not get much. If a cow is not giving milk, nobody will buy it. One will have to make the cow to give milk first.

श्री चन्द्रनाथ सिंह : थोड़ा श्री चंद्रबाबू नायडू से सीखें।

SHRI M.V.V.S. MURTHI : So, there are issues. Today, there is a field of uncertainty and every hon. Minister says, "do not disinvest public sector undertakings under my Ministry, please push it to somebody else." Instead of making that, there must be a plan of action, which makes these public sector undertakings profitable. If continuously you cannot make them profitable and if they are loss making industries, why are they making losses should also be taken into consideration? If they are continuously loss making, then something has to be done. If they are potentially sick and loss-making, you will have to adopt another situation. If they are really profit-making, you should take another path of action.

Today we are talking about Air India. Yesterday, we talked about BALCO and in between we talked about Modern Bread. There is no other thing we are talking about.

SHRI K. YERRANNAIDU : Modern Foods!

SHRI M.V.V.S. MURTHI : Normally, we call it as Modern Bakery in Hyderabad. It is Modern Foods. Primarily they make bread and nothing else.

If this is the way, then there are so many industries. As and when issue come to surface, and as and when somebody asks the hon. Minister, is he going to sell it? He says, ""yes, I am going to sell it." But where is the situation to make them viable and profitable. The hon. Minister should appoint CMDs for such industries so that they are put on the profit making path. Then if he offers them, naturally somebody will come and give a higher price.

Today, the hon. Minister is making all industries sick because of the uncertainty. He must have a clean and clear image before him as to what he wanted to sell and for how much he wants to sell and all that. One of my friends have pointed out the case of Morgan Stanley. But there are conflicting interests that also we should not take into consideration.

There are several issues to bring to light. This is a national wealth. Everybody is worried whether our national wealth is protected or not. When once we sell it, whether it could be invested properly or not or in which sector it would be invested. There is also a fear in this House that this money is being utilised to cover the fiscal deficit. That also is to be answered. This is not to cover the fiscal deficit. This money, whatever money that comes by way of wise-disinvestment, by transparent means of disinvestment, by making it acceptable to everybody, should be invested again for the upliftment of the poorer sections, the less fortunate sector and they are voiceless people of this country.

The Prime Minister was stating the other day that this money should go to them. At least, it should improve their way of life.

There is no point in selling away the milching cows and using them only to cover the fiscal deficit. The hon. Minister must clarify it to this House. This money has to be not only reinvested but also it should be productively reinvested so that it again gives fruits.

Another thing the hon. Minister has said is that they have a target of Rs. 10,000 crore. I read it somewhere.
...(Interruptions)

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : It is Rs. 12,000 crore. ...
...(Interruptions)

SHRI M.V.V.S. MURTHI : What is the question of a target? I am sure that you would not resort to a desperate sale to reach target. You cannot have a desperate sale. Unless you get your price and unless you think that it is a wise decision to disinvest, you would not make it. ...
...(Interruptions)

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : To achieve the target, there will be a desperate sale. ...
...(Interruptions)

SHRI M.V.V.S. MURTHI : He says that there is a target. He wanted to disinvest as and when he is satisfied with the terms of disinvestment. ...
...(Interruptions) We have discussed this issue time and again. Please do not get angry that we are discussing it time and again because it is a national wealth and it is the national interest. When the national interest is involved and when the national security is involved, we always want to know whether we are doing a wise thing or not and whether we are getting a right type of collaboration or investor to get this investment. So, you should take this into consideration.

The whole thing should be transparent. You have recently sent us a booklet giving the procedures and other things. I have read it. It does not give clarity that is required. What we require is that you must have an assessment of each and every company and also how to improve upon its image, before you disinvest, unless you take that into consideration, you cannot get the desired results. You must improve the image of each and every company. First of all, you must appoint the CMDs where you do not have the CMD. You must ask them to clear the debris and also ask them to make it running. Once they are in the path of running and once they are in the limelight, you will get a better price. Instead of doing that, towards its closure you do not get anything.

I was asking for the last one year whether we could do something for Visakhapatnam Steel Plant. They require a sum of Rs. 1,700 crore to expand it so that it would become more profitable. I have requested for it time and again. My Chief Minister, Shri Chandrababu Naidu had also made a request. Shri K. Yerranna Naidu also had made a request. In such circumstances, I feel that even today if there is a required investment, you should give it immediately and make it more profitable. Ultimately, the Government will have more money with them by this Oct. Instead of that, you are keeping them as it is and they are becoming deadwood. If they do not run, nobody will buy. Take the case of our *Navaratna* companies. What had happened to some of them today? They are no more *Navaratnas*. Take the example of SAIL. It is not a *navaratna* any more and it is in the neck deep trouble and incurring loss. We are having some of the best companies like GAIL, IOC, ONGC, and Air India. You should not think of disinvesting them immediately. Those companies are the wealth and health of this nation. How can you disinvest them? Please do not do so. Ultimately, what I would like to say is that you must go in a very discreet manner and in the bargain you should disinvest only the loss-making companies, which cannot be revived.

So, you cannot ultimately revive them. Once you cannot revive them, at least, your money, your wealth will not come down. Somebody else will pump in money and do it. In stead of that, you are coming from the top. You are offering the profit-making all *Navratna* companies or all the good companies. That way the country will lose. Later, nobody will buy all these loss-making companies. They will go for a song. So, instead of that, make them a little viable and offer them on

a platter so that, at least, the country's wealth will improve. Either it is in the Government sector or in the private sector, ultimately the Government will get money by way of employment.

You must also ensure employment. Today the nation's biggest problem is employment. The younger generation is not getting sufficient employment. We are not able to create employment for the youth of this country. Again by way of disinvestment, you may be creating unemployment flare up because in the private sector, they do not ensure employment to all those who are aspiring for employment. In the beginning, Private Sector may say or accept that they will give employment to each and everybody. But you talk of two years guarantee. Last time in some cases you were mentioning this. But after two years, what will happen? What will happen to their employment? Can you give them lifelong employment? So, this is an important situation. We are concerned about giving employment to the youth of this nation. We are concerned about the pride of this nation. We are concerned about the infrastructural industries of this nation. In the first instance, they should not be disinvested. Otherwise, you would not have infrastructure industries like steel, cement and coal. Without these things, you cannot build the nation.

How is the private sector interested in the nation building? It is interested only in money making. So, you must have a very good mix. Before doing all these things, the Government's business is that if you feel you cannot revive those loss-making companies for ever, you can make money out of them by disinvesting. But you cannot make money out of the profit-making companies by disinvesting them in the long run.

Also, you are not aware as to how many companies are not having Chairmen and Managing Directors even till today. Everything is done on *ad hoc* basis. So, kindly take this into consideration. We are not against your wishes. But have a proper judgement and take the whole House into confidence. Nobody is against you. But take them along with you, make the nation prosper and make the nation come along with you and do not loose. With these words, I take leave of you.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE (BOLPUR): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I believe this is a matter obviously of great importance to our economy. Our distinguished Minister has already disinvested himself because his entire outlook has changed. Earlier before he joined, he was very active. Before he became an activist of BJP, RSS, we used to read his articles. Now, of course, I do not. He has also no time except for making speeches. Every speech he delivers goes for two to three hours. Now, he is there to dismantle this country's very economy. You are being utilised by the BJP and RSS. You do not understand that. Why have you left your own profession? I do not know.

Look here who is sitting by your side. He is one of the most distressed persons, a distinguished member of this Government. I do not know why he is sitting there in that Government. But even now through you, they are dismantling one of the precious jewels of our country. You will be the scapegoat. You are now made to preside over this Civil Aviation Ministry. Through you, they will get this nefarious object fulfilled.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would once more like to know if there is any policy of this Government towards disinvestment. They have published a booklet *Disinvestment: Policy and procedures*. They have tried to trace the policy from the Congress's days. They have mentioned that certain decisions were taken by the UF Government, which could not be implemented – thanks to my friends on this side. Then, their era has started.

What is the policy? What are the main elements of the policy? Nowadays, as you know, phrases like strategic partners, strategic considerations, restructuring, social sector, etc. are being used. What is the policy? First, to restructure and revive potentially viable units. I would like to know which are those potentially viable units and how many of them have been revived. Second is to close down PSEs which cannot be revived. How are they decided? Next is, to bring down Government equity in all non-strategic PSEs to 26 per cent or lower, if necessary; to fully protect the interests of the workers; to put in place a mechanism to raise resources from the market against the securities of PSEs' assets; to establish a systematic policy approach to disinvestment and privatisation; to emphasise increasingly on strategic sale of PSEs; to use the entire receipt from disinvestment and privatisation for meeting expenditure in the social sector, restructuring of PSEs and retiring public debt. All these are jargons and nothing else.

Let us see what their achievement has been. Of course, I am against whatever they have done. Let us see their targets and achievements. Their target for 1999-2000 was Rs.10,000 crore but they have received only Rs.1,584 crore. ...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI K. YERRANNAIDU : They have never achieved their targets in any year.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE : So, why do we have a Minister, a Department and all the paraphernalia? Why do we have a discussion in the House on selling away important assets?

Now, Rs.10,000 crore was the target and only Rs.1,584 crore was achieved. In 2000-2001, the receipt has been R.1,868 crore. If there were any policy, I would like to know how this target was fixed and why it has not been reached.

What is a strategic PSE? It means, arms and ammunition and allied items of defence equipment, aircraft and warships, atomic energy, except in areas related to nuclear power, railway transport, etc. In each one of them, they are now introducing the private sector. Shri M.V.V.S. Murthi knows that arms production is going to be in the private sector. Also, the defence equipment sector is no longer strategic. So far as railway transportation is concerned, they are going to privatise that also. So, what remains? What is strategic in this country? So far as my good friend Shri Murthi is concerned, in spite of all these things, he supports them. If it is for him to support them, what can I do? They said, 'We must have this little prestige of having a national carrier'; now, on the ground that it is non-strategic, they are saying that it should go. VSNL is a profit making institution and one of the best units in the country. It has to be sold because it is non-strategic.

I had the distinction and still have the distinction of being the Chairman of the Committee on Information Technology. Unanimous Reports have been filed; each Report has been unanimous. We said that the Indian Telephone Industry was in doldrums because the Government's assistance was not given.

Some monetary input for working capital was not given. There was hardly any attention paid. Today, I can humbly claim credit as the Chairman, along with all the Members of the Committee, that because of our continued recommendations, at least some attention was paid by the Ministry to ITI and ITI is now revived. It is now making profit. Now they say since it is making profit, it should be sold now.

You take the case of Hindustan Teleprinters. Today teleprinters have gone out of circulation because nobody uses teleprinters. These are the days of FAX and all that.

SHRI M.V.V.S. MURTHI : It is not even FAX but it is of e-mail.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE : My friend Shri Murthi is an advanced technologist. He does not use even FAX. It is very well. My problem is there.

Therefore, teleprinters have gone. But they are now producing many many items in the telecom sector which have tremendous market. They have increased their turnover. There is a good R&D section as in ITI. Young and bright engineers are there. But suddenly the Government decided that it must be sold away. These young engineers and the technologists whom we met say : 'what is our future? We have been contributing to this country's development in a public sector undertaking. We are trying to do our best to evolve new products.' I am happy and proud to say that these engineers of our country and these young technologists have equipped themselves in extreme difficulty. They do not have even proper laboratories. They do not get enough facility for R&D. But, in spite of all that, they are manufacturing telecom items which can compete on equal terms with anything in this world, anywhere it has

been made. We felt proud of it when we had seen them during our Committee's visit. We have felt proud. Shri Pawan Kumar Bansal, a very distinguished Member of the Committee is here. In spite of repeated requests that the Hindustan Teleprinters Limited should not be privatised or should not be disinvested, they have taken a decision. Even on VSNL they are taking a decision. What are the criteria for this and what are they going to do with the money? Is it for the social sector?

Sir, I would like to know from the hon. Minister as to money they have realised so far, how far they have utilised for social sector and how far they have utilised for meeting the budgetary deficit and how far they have utilised for the benefit of the workers. How much money has been spent for this and in what areas it has been spent? How much money has been utilised so far from the money that has been realised? There are serious allegations about the method of valuation, about the selection of the enterprises also. I think I shall not go into the aspect whether it was transparent or not. I will not go into it as the time is short. Hon. Members Shri Basu Deb Acharia and Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi have mentioned many of those issues.

I would like, first of all, to know as to how the selections are made and what is the method of valuation and how do you select the bidders out of them. As we know, in Air India from 14 or 12 it came down to two and even one of them is disqualified. Why is it so? So far as the Modern Foods is concerned, serious allegations are there. Regarding BALCO there are serious allegations.

By use of your majority here, you may try to say that the Parliament has approved or Parliament has sanctioned these sales. You may have that temporary satisfaction. But our country's interests are not being protected. I would like to know as to for whose benefit that this is being done.

If the budgetary gaps are there, kindly see what the hon. Minister has said in his Budget speech for 2001-2002. He said – 'The purpose is restructuring assistance to PSUs'. Mr. Minister, I would like to know as to how many of them have been restructured and what assistance has been given out of these funds and to which PSUs has this been given.

Secondly, it mentions of safety net to workers. Give us the figures. What is meant by 'safety net'? Does it mean only providing VRS? Is that the safety net? In this country, young people between the ages of 35, 40 and 45 have nothing to do. They give them some money, ask them to go away, and do whatever they like. Where shall they go? Interest rate is reducing day by day in the banks and financial institutions. It cuts both ways. For industry, they need loans with cheaper interest, but so far as people who have to live on their pension fund and gratuity fund are concerned, every day we are receiving letters from senior citizens, from pensioners that their problem is that the interest rate is coming down. Now, what safety net has been provided to the workers? It is the bounden duty of the Government to express their policy.

Then, it talks of reduction of debt burden. Here comes the crunch. Whose debt burden is it? It is the debt burden of the Government. They are taking loan indiscriminately, without any consideration, and go on increasing the national debt and international debt. The country is in a debt trap. For that purpose, they will sell away good undertakings, giving the workers some money and let them go to hell, and their future is not their concern. No new job is created. What has happened to the promise of creation of one crore jobs every year? Where is it being done? Whom are they fooling? Even if there is reduction of debt burden, we would like to know how much debt burden has been reduced, how much interest saving they are making or they have made since they have come to power.

Then, it mentions of additional budgetary support for the Plan, primarily in the social and infrastructure sector contingent upon the realisation of the anticipated receipts. They anticipated receipts of Rs. 12,000 crore. How much has been received? Then, what is the priority they are now giving amongst restructuring assistance to the PSUs, safety net to workers, reduction of debt burden, additional budgetary support for the Plan, primarily the social and infrastructure sector. Therefore, let them give the priority in which the money has been utilised. Then, we will realise what is their priority. What is happening? Is this Government really concerned about the health of our public sector undertakings? They are left at the mercy of financial marauders and all sorts of persons are eyeing upon these valuable public sector enterprises, trying to get them for a song. When Indian entrepreneurs have no money, they go either to our financial institutions which have become sick or to the foreign countries, and anything foreign or American is very much acceptable to them.

Is this the way the country is to be run? Now, what is happening to major financial institutions in this country? We have seen what has happened to UTI; we have seen what has happened to IFCI. The Government has to give them about Rs. 1100 crore, if I am not mistaken, to bail them out. Then, IDBI is facing problem now. LIC is facing a problem. It will soon face problems. What is happening to our financial institutions is because of the NPAs. Why are there NPAs? They are there because of these big private monopolists, big industrial houses. These non-performing assets are because of loans and advances given to these private sector undertakings. ...*(Interruptions)* Dr. Sengupta is a much more knowledgeable man. I do not know why he is sitting there. ...*(Interruptions)* Some things cannot be understood.

SHRI ARUN SHOURIE: So many things cannot be understood.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE : Yes, like your becoming a Minister. ...(*Interruptions*) Shri Sharad Yadav cannot be understood. ...(*Interruptions*) Shri Arun Shourie, at one time, I was very great admirer of you.

SHRI ARUN SHOURIE: And you are not my admirer since I wrote about 1942.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE : No. What you wrote about 1942 is an aberration.

19.00 hrs

Now, Sir, may I read one of the great observations of our Finance Minister?

"Given this advanced stage of the process of disinvestment in many of these companies, I am emboldened to take credit for receipt of Rs. 12,000 crore from disinvestment during the next year. An amount of Rs. 7,000 crore out of this will be used for providing restructuring assistance to PSUs, safety net to workers, and reduction of debt burden."

I have no doubt about that because Shri Murthi had thumped the desk at that time when this was said. Each one of them remains unfulfilled. Then, what remains of this Government's policy on disinvestment? Why should we have a Minister for Disinvestment? I had said, it was sought to be a joke though, that every country has a Minister for Investment, but India has a Minister for Disinvestment. It is a unique Government; it is a hotchpotch, motley combination. It has no policies, no programmes, and no concern for the common people. When people are coming and when people are going out, nobody knows. At a particular time, even they do not know who their partners were.

Look at the eyes of this hon. Member, who is fondly waiting. He is hoping that the Prime Minister's attention will be drawn towards him and his leader. The other day, they criticised Shri George Fernandes and demanded his resignation. ...(*Interruptions*)

DR. NITISH SENGUPTA (CONT'D): We have not criticised him. We only said, "He has submitted his resignation and that should be accepted." We did not criticise him.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE : Very well, they did not criticise him. In a very friendly manner, they demanded the acceptance of the letter of resignation of Shri George Fernandes. As it was not done, they resigned from the Ministry, again in a friendly manner. In an expression of great friendship for Shri George Fernandes, they resigned and went away, joined hands with the Congress, left the BJP in the lurch. ...(*Interruptions*)

DR. NITISH SENGUPTA : Please stick to the subject.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE : The subject matter is that this country's future is doomed in your hands. This is the present situation. Therefore, I am saying that this motley combination of opportunistic parties/people masquerading as a political entity will be finishing this country. The country's security, which is very important, is in jeopardy in every sector -- in Defence, Civil Aviation and what not. You have opened the doors. Anybody can come in.

You take great pride in *Navratnas*. You get rid of one of them, come here and say, "Well, here are the Communists. They oppose our great attempt to restore the financial condition of this country. Here, they are objecting; here, the workers are objecting." Why should not the workers object? They are citizens of India. They are working; whatever has happened, they have contributed to this. What is the Government's contribution? How much money has been put in? When the whole world is becoming more and more technology-oriented, what is the amount of money they have spent for providing modern technology in these public sector undertakings? Nobody knows that. We know that the undertakings have become sick because of the Government's apathy.

We demand this Government must explain properly. They must show the real reason for the sale of these undertakings. They have been a complete failure in all fronts. In the name of disinvestment, we cannot allow them to barter away the freedom and self-respect of this country, the real *Navratnas* of this country. The people of this country -- the working-class, the common people -- will oppose this Government. As their representatives, we shall oppose them here, and outside, the people of this country will oppose them in the streets of the country.

श्री किरीट सोमेया (मुम्बई उत्तर पूर्व) : माननीय सभापति जी, देश में कल गणेश चतुर्थी मनाई गयी और मुम्बई और महाराष्ट्र में जो डेढ़ दिन का गणपति जिसको कहते हैं उसका विसर्जन चल रहा है और यह विसर्जन करते-करते सभी गणेश-भक्त नारा लगाते हैं कि "गणपति बप्पा मोरिया, पुरचा बरसी लौकरिया।" **â€œ!** (**व्यवधान**) वहां पर इस प्रकार के नारे लगते हैं। मेरे ख्याल से सातवीं बार हम डिस-इन्वेस्टमेंट पर चर्चा कर रहे हैं और हर वर्ष जिस प्रकार से गणेश-भक्त गणेश जी को टाटा करते हैं और फिर गणेश-चतुर्थी मनाते हैं, उसी प्रकार से हर साल हर सत्र में हम डिस-इन्वेस्टमेंट पर चर्चा करते हैं। हम करते हैं कि "डिस-इन्वेस्टमेंट पर

चर्चा करुया, पुरचा सत्रा पुनः करुया"। इसका मतलब यह है कि जिस प्रकार से गणेश बापा को हम मैसेज देते हैं वैसे ही नेता घोषणा करते हैं कि डिस-इन्वेस्टमेंट पर चर्चा करेंगे, अगले सत्र में पुनः करेंगे और प्रत्येक सत्र में करते रहेंगे। (व्यवधान) मैं कहना चाहता हूं कि माननीय दासमुंशी जी ने एयर-इंडिया पर बहुत लम्बा भाषण दिया। मुझे लगा था कि वे डिस-इन्वेस्टमेंट पर बोलेंगे लेकिन एक विशेष बिडर जिसको माननीय अरुण शौरी जी ने डिस-क्वालिफाई किया या डिपार्टमेंट ने डिस-क्वालिफाई किया, उसी पर वे चर्चा करते रहे और वही एयर-इंडिया, एयर-इंडिया का राग अलपाते रहे। नेता और अभिनेता में अंतर क्या है? देखने में लगा कि वही नेता है और वही अभिनेता भी है। उसी आवेग में, हर क्षेत्र में, डिस-इन्वेस्टमेंट पर आदरणीय सोमनाथ जी भाषण करते हैं। (व्यवधान)

डॉ. नीतीश सेनगुप्ता : नेता सब अभिनेता हैं लेकिन सब अभिनेता नेता नहीं हैं।

श्रीमती श्यामा सिंह : ऑनरेबल मैम्बर, आप तो बोलने के लिए राज्य सभा से मिनिस्टर्स को बुलाकर ले आते हैं, यह क्या होता है?

श्री किरीट सोमैया : नेता और अभिनेता में अंतर होता है। अभिनेता हर वक्त नयी एकिंग करता है लेकिन नेता? कहावत है कि "ओल्ड वाइन इन न्यू बोटल"। लेकिन बसुदेव दा और प्रियरंजन दास जी तो बोल भी वही है, वाइन भी वही है और आर्गूमेंट्स भी वही हैं। मुझे ऐसा लगा था कि वे बातें कम और काम ज्यादा वाली कहावत चरितार्थ करेंगे लेकिन आदरणीय सोमनाथ दा तो इस प्रकार से अरुण शौरी जी से बातें कर रहे थे कि आपने इतना पैसा इकट्ठा कर लिया, हजारों करोड़ों रुपया एनडीए ने इकट्ठा कर लिया और वह कहां पर लगाया? गांव के पानी में लगाया या कहां पर लगाया? मैं सिर्फ उनसे यही पूछना चाहता हूं कि एनडीए सरकार में टोटल डिस-इन्वेस्टमेंट से कितना पैसा आया? सन् 1999-2000 में 1824 करोड़, 2000-2001 में 551 करोड़ आया। बाकी जो आप फिर्स्ट दे रहे थे कि 18000 करोड़ -

मैं डिसइनवैस्टमेंट मिनिस्टर साहब से कहना चाहता हूं कि आप इन्हें एक बार हिसाब दे दें। 18 हजार करोड़ रुपए में से दो-तीन हजार करोड़ रुपए अभी आए, बाकी पहला पैसा कहां गया? क्या वह गांव में पानी पिलाने में गया और पब्लिक सैक्टर अंडरटेकिंग्स का रिस्ट्रक्टर करने में गया - वह पैसा कहां गया, कभी उसकी भी चर्चा करें। हिपोक्रेसी की भी हद होती है। अभिनेता नाटक करता है लेकिन वह कहता है कि मैं अभिनय करता हूं। आप राज्य में अलग भावा प्रयोग करते हैं, फिर्की में जाते हैं, सीआईआई में जाते हैं तो अलग भावा प्रयोग करते हैं। (व्यवधान)

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : Sir, is he making an accusation that hon. Members are hypocrites and actors?

SHRI KIRIT SOMAIYA : Sir, what is wrong in it? I have talked about people in general. If the hon. Member has done nothing wrong, there is no reason why he should take it personally. I have not named him. I have not taken anybody's name. आप राज्य में एक बात करते हैं और लोक सभा में दूसरी बात करते हैं। अगर नहीं करते हैं तो (व्यवधान)

श्री बसुदेव आचार्य : हम अन्दर और बाहर वही बात करते हैं। कोई दूसरी बात नहीं करते हैं।

श्री किरीट सोमैया : क्या आप छत्तीसगढ़ में अलग भावा प्रयोग नहीं करते हैं? (व्यवधान) एक तरफ बाल्को का मुद्दा उठाते हैं और दूसरी तरफ छत्तीसगढ़ कारपोरेशन के डिसइनवैस्टमेंट की बात करते हैं। In Karnataka, the present Government had appointed a Commission, on the lines of the Disinvestment Commission, to privatise, to find a strategic partner. फिर्की, सीआईआई और विजनेस आर्गेनाइजेशन के यहां जाने पर दूसरी भावा प्रयोग करते हैं। जब अमेरिका जाते हैं तो दासमुंशी जी और मणिशंकर जी को लेकर नहीं जाते हैं, उस समय माननीय मनमोहन सिंह जी और माननीय जयराम रमेश को लेकर जाते हैं। वे वहां दूसरी भावा प्रयोग करते हैं। हाथी के दांत खाने के और दिखाने के और होते हैं। आप कौन सी देशभक्ति नैशनल स्पिरिट और ट्रांसपेरेंसी की बात करते हैं? मुझे ऐसा लगा कि आज अरुण शौरी जी की छुट्टी होने वाली है क्योंकि दासमुंशी जी बहुत से पेपर यहां लेकर आए। उन्होंने यहां बहुत सी बातें कीं लेकिन क्या हुआ, खोदा पहाड़ और निकला छोटा सा चूहा। You are talking about Air India. Who recommended disinvestment of Air India? In whose regime was Disinvestment Commission constituted? The Disinvestment Commission was constituted during 1996 and 1998 by the then Government which was supported by the hon. Member's party. That Commission recommended that Air India must be disinvested first. It recommended disinvestment to the extent not of 40 per cent but of 60 per cent of the shares. The hon. Member can go and refer to it. Where was he at that time? उस समय आप कहां थे? क्या उस समय लोक सभा में यह भाषण माननीय सदस्य नहीं कर रहे थे कि क्या कर रहे हो, सत्ता के लिए एअर इंडिया और तिरंगा झंडा आकाश के नीचे आ जाएगा। उस समय आपकी देशभक्ति, नैशनल स्पिरिट और ट्रांसपेरेंसी कहां गई थी? It is a result of the process of privatisation initiated by you, the process of disinvestment started by you, the WTO agreement signed by you and the process of globalisation initiated by you. यदि आपने दरवाजा खोला नहीं होता तो कोई नहीं आता। आपने दरवाजा खोला है। हिन्दुस्तान की जनता के हाथ-पैर वर्ल्ड ट्रेड ऑर्गेनाइजेशन में अगर किसी ने काट कर रखे तो आपने रखे। उसे वाजपेयी जी ने नहीं रखा। (व्यवधान) अभी मेरी बात सुनिए। आपने ग्लोबलाइजेशन शुरू किया। You are talking about profit-making industries. How can MTNL remain a profit-making industry if the entire cellular and communications industry is thrown open for private participation? डॉल्फिन का क्या हुआ?

Just because I wanted to quote, I will quote some lines. Who started disinvestment and opened the sector of communication? एक और पब्लिक सैक्टर अंडरटेकिंग्ज में कारपोरेटाइजेशन नहीं करेंगे, till the end, the public sector undertakings were making profits. It is world rule. It is the economy. मोनोपोली होगी, पब्लिक सैक्टर अंडरटेकिंग्स प्रोफिट करेगा। वी.एस.एन.एल. का 1.4.2002 से जो भी प्रोफिट होगा, यह मोनोपोली की वजह से है, क्या आप उसे ओपन करेंगे? You are opening the gateway. These are the terms and conditions signed which were signed by the then Government, their hon. Government and not by Shri Yashwant Sinha. क्या आपने ऐसा साइन किया, क्या आपने समर्थन किया कि 2002 में वी.एस.एन.एल. की मोनोपोली डिसकंटीन्यू होगी? सैलुलर लाइसेंसेज का प्रोसेस किसने स्टार्ट किया था?

Now, the MTNL has got only 10,000 customers as against the 7 lakh customers in Mumbai as private cellular operators. I am not opposing that. Try to understand that हम जिसे प्राफिट मेकिंग कम्पनी कहते हैं। माननीय मूर्ति जी, मैं श्री चन्द्रबाबू नायडू को डिसइनवैस्टमेंट के बारे में कोट करना चाहूंगा। अभी श्री माधवराव सिन्धिया यहां नहीं हैं। हम प्रोफिट-मेकिंग कम्पनीज को डिसइनवैस्टमेंट क्यों करते हैं? जब लॉस में होगा, तब उस कौन खरीदेगा? क्या कोई खरीद कर रहा है? पब्लिक सैक्टर अंडरटेकिंग्स डिसइनवैस्टमेंट पर है। It is not in the State. It is not in the Centre. Forget about the Centre. It is said: "आपमें कला नहीं है, आप होशियार नहीं हैं, कैपेबल नहीं हैं। Who will do it? Why will they

purchase?"...(Interruptions)

I am not asking about your views. You please listen.â€ (Interruptions)

I am going to say about Shri Chandrababu Naidu in a positive way. Please listen to me...(Interruptions)

The Air India has got 23 aircraft. What is its number of employees? It is 18,000.

Sir, hon. Chandrababu Naidu at one place mentioned this:

"Over the years, however, degeneration has stepped in the working of the public sector undertakings both at the Centre and State levels.

PSUs lose their autonomy and professional management which is subjected to political, bureaucratic interference. The PSUs today suffer from constraints due to delay in decision making. "

Sir, he further says:

"With the virtual collapse of Indian economy in early Ninties, we started on the path of liberalisation adopting delicensing, privatisation as an important component of economic reforms programme. Unfortunately, there has been a lack of clarity at all political levels on the privatisation policy. It is unfortunate that the political parties are unable to take clear stand on privatisation and disinvestment. "

What I would like to request is that let all the parties sit together. Let us have a uniform policy at both the State and Centre levels.

I was saying about MTNL and VSNL. *The Business World*, a good magazine, has written in its editorial about the curious behaviour of all the political parties. The editor of this magazine has mentioned about three principal factors guiding the price of anything being sold. First factor is 'supplies'. The second is the number of buyers. The third is the freshness, novelty of the product.

आज हमारे लोग डिसइनवैस्टमेंट चला रहे हैं लेकिन उसकी क्या पोजीशन है? सभापति जी, मैं आपसे एअर इंडिया की सिक्यूरिटी की बात कहना चाहता हूं।

I was listening to the speech of hon. Shri Priyaranjan Dasmunsi. श्री दासमुंशी जी की स्पीच थी, वह क्या थी - कि हिन्दूजा को डिस्क वालिफाई क्यों किया गया? Tata Power loss was of Rs. 150 crore in scam but the small investors have lost Rs. 5,000 crore due to disinvestment. सन् 1991-95 के बीच में नकली डिसइनवैस्टमेंट हुआ। पब्लिक सैक्टर अंडरटेकिंग के 10 हजार करोड़ रुपये के शेयर्स म्युचुअल फंड में बेचे गये।

यू.टी.आई., आई.डी.बी.आई., और एल.आई.सी. के शेयरों की वैल्यू आज साढ़े तीन हजार करोड़ रुपये हैं, Is this according to you the transparency? Is this the national spirit? Is this the way you talk about the common man? साढ़े छः हजार करोड़ रुपये इस प्रकार से आपने लूट लिये, लेकिन तब भी कुछ नहीं हुआ। 1996-1998 में क्या पोजीशन थी? We appointed a Disinvestment Commission. What did it recommend? The Disinvestment Commission appointed by the Government published a list of 49 companies, out of which 27 were profit-making companies. That Report and that recommendation was given by a Commission appointed by the then Government. Whose Government was it and who supported it?

मैं एक और बिन्दु पर आपका ध्यान आकर्ति करना चाहूंगा। The Disinvestment Commission this time also suggested a change in the ownership and strategic sale of 29 companies; trade sale of 8 companies and different types of disinvestment in case of others. यह स्ट्रैटेजिक सैल किसके दिमाग की उपज है, कौन यह लेकर आया। एक दूसरी बात भी मैं आपके ध्यान में लाना चाहता हूं। When we are talking about the manufacturing concerns, what is their position? Have you ever tried to study, almost all the profit-making companies are monopolistic companies? ऑयल सैक्टर के पी.एस.यू.ज. हैं, कम्युनिकेशन के पी.एस.यू.ज. हैं और डिफैन्स के पी.एस.यू.ज. हैं। They are making profits. What about the manufacturing companies? Do you want to know the profitability of the public sector enterprises as compared to the private sector enterprises? From 1990 to 1991, it was (-) 450 and it has remained the same ranging from 4 per cent to 6 per cent. What are you talking about? कितना पैसा दिया, क्या तुम जानते हो? About 23 public sector companies were identified as the sick companies for restructuring. How much money have we spent since 1991? We have spent Rs.20,946 crore and indirectly Rs.1358 crore on them. Thus, in total we spent Rs.34,000 crore on restructuring of these sick PSUs. Out of these 23 companies identified as sick, not a single company has turned around. माननीय वैक्या नायदू होते तो मैं उनसे कहता कि अगर यह 34 हजार करोड़ रुपये हमने ग्रामीण क्षेत्र में अस्पतालों में यूज किये होते, इस पैसे से सड़कें बनाई होती तो कितना अच्छा होता। For whom have we spent this money? 23 कम्पनीज में कितने पब्लिक सैक्टर्स को क्या-क्या प्रोफिट मिला? How many employees are there in these 23 companies? There are only 1,78,000 employees and we are spending Rs.34,000 crore on them. We are accountable or responsible to whom? For whom are we going to do all these things?

माननीय सभापति महोदय, मैं अनेकों उदाहरण दे सकता हूं। Just go and see our neighbour China. What have they done? चाइना ने क्या किया, उसने एक झटके में डिसीजन लिया। In 1998, China started the market report and immediately appointed a State-owned Enterprises Commission. आगे उन्होंने जो कहा है कि 75 परसेन्ट इंडस्ट्रियल आउटपुट अभी प्राइवेट में होने लगा। I would only request you to see what is happening in the States. Out of 77 State Enterprises in Karnataka, 17 are marked for disinvestment. In Rajasthan out of 24 State Enterprises, 11 are marked for disinvestment. In Andhra Pradesh, out of 51 State Enterprises, 21 are marked for disinvestment.

अंत में, मैं कहना चाहूँगा कि हम इस प्रकार की भावा में इस प्रकार की बातों में न जाएं अगर इसे हम पोलिटीसाइज करेंगे तो इससे देश का नुकसान होगा। इसके लिए हम थोड़ा सा उमर उठकर बात करें कि इसमें किसको फायदा होगा और किसको नुकसान होगा।

अंत में मैं इतना ही कहना चाहूँगा कि Out of 361 Central Government PSUs कितने लॉसेज कर रहे हैं? Account for receipts of 270 PSUs and 34 पी.एस.यूज के अभी तक अकाउंट नहीं आए हैं। Total investment is Rs.72,000 crore in equitable capital and others by loans and subsidy. The losses are more than that. मैं आपको कहना चाहूँगा कि जो लॉस मेकिंग पी.एस.यूज 1997-98 में 104 थे It went to 111. In 1999-2000, it went to 116 and net loss of these PSUs amount to Rs.10904 crore. मैं बहुत आंकड़े आपको दे सकता हूं। मैं स्टेट के फिगर्स भी दे सकता हूं लेकिन मुझे ऐसा लगता है कि हमें कहीं पर आकर सोचना चाहिए। There is no short cut to success. Dr. Manmohan Singh might have started it with a good intention. But he adopted a short cut for public sector undertakings' disinvestment. उसमें क्या हुआ? इसकी टोपी उसके सिर पर डाल दी। सोमनाथ जी बात करते थे, certainly, some time we will have to discuss the performance of financial sector and PSUs like IDBI, IFCI and others. We must discuss them. मैं यह नहीं कहना चाहूँगा कि उस समय एन.पी.एज. किसके राज में हुए? भूल जाइए, किसी के राज में भी हुए होंगे, लेकिन हिन्दुस्तान की जनता की प्रॉब्लम है। 23000 करोड़ रु. का एन.पी.एज. है। How to recover it? How to get it back? We must discuss that also.

माननीय सभापति जी, मैं आपके द्वारा स्पीकर साहब से भी प्रार्थना करना चाहूँगा कि let us have a debate and an open discussion with good and positive mind about the public sector financial institutions. किसने यहां किया, वहां किया, 93000 करोड़ रुपये का पैसा किसको जाने वाला है IDBI का 1450 करोड़, IFCI को 1000 करोड़। अगर सरकार पैसा नहीं देगी तो किसकी क्रैडिविलिटी बराबद होगी? They do not have money to repay as they had invested money in the bonds. बॉन्ड में किसने पैसा लगाया? वह पैसा IDBI और IFCI नहीं देगी तो हिन्दुस्तान की सरकार की क्या प्रतिक्रिया रहेगी? At that time, this Government and प्रधान मंत्री ने यह नहीं कहा कि यह पहले की सरकार ने किया था, उनसे पैसा लेकर आओ। We cannot say this.

इसलिए अंत में मैं यह प्रार्थना करूँगा कि गणपति को विद्यापति भी कहते हैं, विद्या का देवता उसे कहा जाता है। हमें पता है कि वेदव्यास जी ने जब महाभारत लिखी थी तो गणपति उनके सामने बैठे थे। गणपति विद्यापति हैं और उन विद्यापति से हमें विद्या प्राप्त करनी चाहिए। गणपति को यह भी कहा जाता है हमारी मराठी में - "तू सुख कर्ता, तू दुख हर्ता।" जो गणपति की आरती है - सुख कर्ता, दुख हर्ता, हम उससे प्रार्थना करते हैं कि तू सुख करता है, यानी तू आम आदमी को सुख देता है। तू दुख हर्ता यानी तू दुख ले लेता है। तू विघ्न हर्ता यानी हम पर आने वाले विघ्न तू ले ले। इस देश पर आने वाले विघ्न का तू हरण कर और भगवान गणपति का नाम हम किसी भी शुभ कार्य से पहले लेते हैं। गणपति का नाम लेकर हम काम प्रारंभ करते हैं, हम श्रीगणेशाय नमः करते हैं।

आइए, हम एक अच्छा वातावरण बनाएं और इस देश को प्रगति की ओर ले जाने के लिए श्रीगणेशाय नमः करें।

श्री अखिलेश यादव (कन्नौज) : सभापति जी, मैं आपको धन्यवाद देना चाहूँगा कि आपने मुझे बोलने के लिए समय दिया।

डिसइनवैस्टमेंट पर चर्चा चल रही है, यह ठीक है कि उन कारखानों का डिसइनवैस्टमेंट हो जो कारखाने रिवाइव नहीं हो सकते, लेकिन सरकार की गलत नीतियों की वजह से जान-बूझकर उन कारखानों को घाटे में दिखाया जा रहा है जिनको रिवाइव किया जा सकता था और वह कारखाने इसलिए घाटे में चले कि उनमें मिसमैनेजमेंट हुआ। सरकारी अधिकारियों की लापरवाही रही या उस समय की सरकारों ने उसमें लापरवाही बरती जिसकी वजह से वे कारखाने घाटे में चले गए।

सभापति महोदय, आज जब डिसइनवैस्टमेंट हो रहा है और सार्वजनिक क्षेत्र को निजीकरण में बदला जा रहा है, मुझे लगता है कि कहीं न कहीं, कुछ न कुछ इसमें हेरा-फेरी चल रही है। अभी जैसा बताया जा रहा था और एक माननीय सांसद कह रहे थे कि पूरा का पूरा हिसाब, जो अपोजीशन मांगती है, वह एक बार में दे दिया जाएगा, लेकिन वह हिसाब कौन सा होगा, जो आम आदमी को मालूम है, जो जानकारी समाचारपत्रों से मिली है, वह हिसाब तो दे दिया जाएगा, लेकिन जो पैसा आपकी जेब में गया है, उसका हिसाब कौन देगा?

सभापति महोदय, दलाली दी और ली जाती है, या हेरा-फेरी होती है, पैसा खाया जाता है, कुछ लोगों को फायदा पहुँचाया जाता है, यह सब अभी तक इस देश की जनता ने सुना ही था, देखा नहीं। लेकिन आजादी के 53 वर्ष के पश्चात्, तहलका डॉट कॉम ने उजागर कर दिया कि किस तरह से इन्होंने पैसा खाया है। जिस समय बालकों को बेचे जाने की चर्चा हुई, उस समय में भी सांसद था। कैसे बालकों में पैसे की हेरा-फेरी हुई है, जितने में वह बिकना चाहिए था, उतना पैसा सरकार की तरफ से रखा ही नहीं गया और काफी कम पैसे में उसे बेच दिया गया। इसी प्रकार से मॉडर्न फूडस कंपनी को बेचने में घपला हुआ और अब एअर इंडिया और आई.टी.डी.सी. को बेचने की बात हो रही है। इससे मुझे लगता है कि सरकार ठीक प्रकार से कार्य नहीं कर रही है, बल्कि कुछ लोगों को फायदा पहुँचाने में लगी हुई है।

सभापति महोदय, जिस तरह से डिसइनवैस्टमेंट के बारे में कहा जा रहा है कि सरकार 12 हजार करोड़ रुपए इसके माध्यम से प्राप्त करेगी, मैं सरकार से पूछना चाहता हूं कि इस धन को क्या वित्त मंत्रालय का जो वित्तीय घाटा है, उसको पूरा करने में लगाया जाएगा या कुछ इंडस्ट्रीज को रिवाइव करने के लिए या जिस तरह से रुरल डिवेलपमेंट के बारे में अभी रुरल डिवेलपमेंट मंत्री बता रहे थे, वहां इसको खर्च किया जाएगा? अभी कहा जा रहा था कि डिसइनवैस्टमेंट के जरिए जितना भी धन प्राप्त होगा उसे रुरल डिवेलपमेंट पर व्यय किया जाएगा। यदि ऐसा किया जाए, तो अच्छा है, लेकिन मुझे इसमें संदेह है।

सभापति महोदय, आज आजादी के 52-53 साल के बाद भी गांवों की जो हालत है, वह किसी से छिपी नहीं है। देश के गांवों में सड़कें नहीं हैं, पानी की व्यवस्था नहीं है, बिजली की व्यवस्था नहीं है और सिंचाई की व्यवस्था नहीं है। यदि डिसइनवैस्टमेंट से मिला पैसा वहां खर्च किया जाए, तो देश के गांव बहुत तरक्की करेंगे। मैं कहना चाहता हूं कि डिसइनवैस्टमेंट का पैसा यदि वहां न लगे तो भी जो धन ग्रामीण विकास के लिए अभी दिया जा रहा है, उसमें यदि धांधली बंद कर दी जाए, उसमें जो कर्मचारी धांधली करके धन को बीच में हड्डप जाते हैं, यदि वह रोक दिया जाए और सही ढंग से धन व्यय हो, तो मैं समझता हूं कि रुरल डिवेलपमेंट काफी हद तक हो सकता है।

सभापति महोदय, जैसा मैंने पहले कहा और सरकार ने भी कहा कि रोजगार के अवसर खत्म नहीं होंगे और इस पार्टी ने अपने चुनाव घोषणापत्र में यह भी लिखा था कि यदि उनकी सरकार बनेगी तो हर साल एक करोड़ नौकरियां दी जाएंगी, लेकिन मुझे नहीं लगता कि आपके द्वारा डिसइनवेस्टमेंट किए जाने, प्राइवेट कंपनियों को बढ़ावा दिए जाने और मल्टीनेशनल कंपनियों के यहां आने से रोजगार के अवसर बढ़ेंगे, बल्कि मैं समझता हूं कि रोजगार के अवसर कम होंगे। हो सकता है प्रारंभ में ये कंपनियां लोगों को न निकालें, लेकिन बाद में रोजगार खत्म किए जाएंगे, यह सुनिश्चित है। यदि डिसइनवेस्टमेंट किया जाता है और प्राइवेट कंपनियों को बढ़ावा दिया जाता है, तो हर हाल में रोजगार के अवसर कम होते जाएंगे। सरकार ने भी एक तरफ तो रोजगार प्रदान करने की बाद कही है, लेकिन दूसरी तरफ स्वयं कहा है कि 10 प्रतिशत सरकारी नौकरियां समाप्त की जाएंगी। इस प्रकार एक तरफ सरकार 10 प्रतिशत सरकारी नौकरियों को समाप्त कर रही है और प्राइवेट कंपनियों को बढ़ावा दे रही है और दूसरी तरफ रोजगार के अवसर बढ़ाने की बात कह रही है। सरकार के कार्यों को देखने से मुझे रोजगार बढ़ने के कोई आसार नजर नहीं आ रहे हैं।

सभापति महोदय, अन्त में मैं इतना ही कहना चाहूंगा कि जिस तरह से बालकों में धांधली हुई या मॉडर्न फूड में धांधली हुई, उसी प्रकार से मुझे एअर इंडिया और आई.टी.डी.सी. के डिसइनवेस्टमेंट में कहीं न कहीं घपला नजर आ रहा है।

सरकार को पारदर्शिता अपनानी चाहिए और जिस तरह सदन और इस देश को गुमराह किया जा रहा है, वह न किया जाए। एक श्वेत पत्र जारी किया जाए और डिसइन्वैस्टमेंट में पारदर्शिता अपनाई जाए और ज्यादा से ज्यादा डिसइन्वैस्टमेंट से जो पैसा मिले, उसे रुरल डैवलपमेंट में खर्च किया जाए, चाहे वह शिक्षा और हैन्थ का फील्ड हो या सड़कों के बनाने का फील्ड हो।

SHRI PRABHAT SAMANTRAY (KENDRAPARA): Sir, this is a subject that has drawn the attention of both the sides of the House with very peculiar views. People talking something some time past are now talking exactly opposing views today and we people who talked something on this particular subject in the past are talking just the reverse. I believe, if people who spoke in the House in 1958 are alive today and watching the television, they would be laughing at us. There was a Resolution passed by this House to create public sector undertakings. Unfortunately, when it started, there was no competition. It was a monopoly and it was a necessity to have State-owned public sector undertakings. But after 1965, they have been mismanaged. Government has never taken care of them. This resulted in huge losses. The Congress Government never discussed it in 1991 when it introduced structural revision of Economic Policy of this country. They never discussed as to why we have failed in this area. Now, the position is that we will be selling the property that has been acquired out of the public sector undertakings which we have invested in the last so many years and we have created infrastructure in the social sectors. I have my own apprehensions on this point. It might have been the same encouragement and feeling in 1958, when those Members passed the Resolution to create the public sector undertakings and when the country had created huge infrastructure. When they failed to manage those undertakings, nobody pointed it out or nobody pinpointed as to who made these losses. It has never been thought of as to whether professionals who were managing the PSUs were responsible for losses or somebody else. It has been left to the people to decide. Will those people who are at the moment managing the state of affairs, after investing 26 per cent, represent the Government's interests in those companies? I have got my own apprehensions on that. How the interests of the State and Central Governments be protected there.

I draw the attention of the hon. Minister to one point. You are talking about the money that has been created on disinvestment and if it does not match the requirements of the Government after providing the money to rural sectors for developing the country, then what is left with you to sell? We have experienced that in those years and we have never thought about where we have gone wrong and what steps we should have taken to tackle that problem. Who were the persons who had guided the mismanagement of the PSUs. Is it the workers or the people of India? Is the policy makers who are coming for five years and going away? Is it the professionals who have ever been managing the PSUs? Nobody has questioned on this aspect. And the same people are advising us, after making such huge money from out of the tax payers' contributions. They are advising us that if we sell it out and surrender to the private party and to the foreign countries, then we will be creating a big infrastructure providing social security to our people.

Who knows as to where this money goes? Who knows whether this money goes to the social sector or not. Nobody bothered to see whether it is giving desired results or not. I am not going into the details as to who is at fault. I am only pointing out to the Government as to why the Government is not insisting to find out what mistakes had been committed in the management of the public sector undertakings. How many Chairmen or Managing Directors of public sector undertakings have been punished for their faults? In the year 1993, I raised this question in the other House when I was a Member of that House. At that time nearly fifty per cent of the public sector undertakings were without heads and the Government was managing with the bureaucrats from the Ministries. Nobody questioned it because they were the great people. They were in reality ruling the country for nearly forty years. People who are analysing the situation would know that we are playing ping-pong and we are throwing dirt at each other. It is the fault of the same people who have handed over the reigns of administration to these people.

Sir, at the moment, 58 public sector undertakings have been identified by the Government for disinvestment. Out of these, 52 have been sent to the Disinvestment Commission for consideration and preparation of reports. Out of these 52 undertakings, I have got figures for 49 undertakings. The value of their reserve is one lakh crores of rupees. Their annual revenue is Rs. 3,50,000 crore. They are providing about Rs. 2,000 crore as dividends from the public sector. But the market value of these companies today is only Rs. 95,000 crore. What is the method of valuation? I do not understand that. I belong to a village. There I have seen moneylenders, after getting a decree from the court, started auctioning the assets of those people to whom they have given money at a lesser amount.

These public sector undertakings have one lakh crores of rupees as reserve and Rs. 3,50,000 crore as annual revenue. I am not able to even make out the total money involved in this. But that has been assessed only at Rs. 95,000 crore. Is it all? The public sector undertakings used to be the blue-eyed organisations of our country. People used to look up to them for employment and for security. So, we should not think of selling them at a throwaway price. There is still time. Why are we in a hurry to sell them off? Why should we not assess as to what should be our price? Why sickness is forced on public sector undertakings? Due to the 'go stop' policy of the Government for the last four or five years, public sector undertakings have been forced to become sick. In the process, it is going to be sold to the people at a peanut price. Who are the losers? It is neither you nor me. The ultimate losers are the 100 crore people of India. I would like to talk about one public sector unit of Orissa. It is Paradip Phosphates Ltd. It was considered a mini *ratna*. It was considered to be Asia's largest DAP plant.

It had been sent to the Disinvestment Commission. The Disinvestment Commission has made certain recommendations. It was said that 51 per cent shares were said to be disinvested. But I found from the Government's proposal that it has been to the extent of 74 per cent. The recommendation of the Disinvestment Commission has been violated by the Government itself by not restructuring the finances. By not restructuring, what we are going to do is that we are selling it to the bidders at a price of their wish.

I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister and the Government of India to the fact that we should not be in a hurry. These are our assets. These are not liabilities. Mr. Minister, you do not have a target to achieve or a deadline is there that you must do this or you have to quit. There is nothing like that. The country is not going to fall if you are not going to sell it in this condition. Our feeling is that if you are turning the liability into asset, we are with you. I hope and believe that you must lead the public sector. The public sector should not be sold to the parties at a throw away price. It must achieve its desired goal. The people who have set the ball rolling right from 1958 should not be treated as a liability to the country. Rather they are an asset to the country.

With these words, I appeal to you to listen to our plea. I conclude.

SHRI T.M. SELVAGANPATHI (SALEM): Hon. Chairman, Sir, I am thankful to you for allowing me to participate in this discussion. My earnest request is that the serious issue of disinvestment should not be sidelined by a trivial issue and, of course, a letter that is subject to verification. Instead we come to the core issue. Why have we been agitating? As Shri Kirit Somaiya has been pointing it out, we have been discussing this issue in every Session in one form or the other. Why are we discussing it again and again? There is absolutely no unanimity as far as this issue is concerned. Allegations and counter-allegations are made. It is because of the reason that the Government has not spelt out its disinvestment policy in unambiguous terms and it is still in everyone's mind. The whole country is concerned about it because of the reason that 49 public sector undertakings, which are slated for disinvestment or privatisation, have over rupees one lakh crore as reserves. Why is it concerning us? It is because all these 49 units fetch us the revenue of Rs. 3,50,000 crore and give a dividend of Rs. 2,000 crore to the Government of India. It concerns us because these units employ one million workmen in their units. Can we simply keep quiet on this issue? With all these values, the market value of these companies is estimated to be less than Rs. 95,000 crore. These public sector undertakings have almost been built up over half a century and have got tremendous potential. We, in the Opposition, are not totally against disinvestment *per se*. We are not opposing it *in toto*. But our opposition is about the way in which the disinvestment is being carried out by the present regime.

A separate Department was formed to disinvest. They have the sole agenda. The entire Government is for disinvestment, nothing but disinvestment. We have been demanding transparency in all the deals. Time and again, in all the Government documents and the reply of the hon. Minister, he maintains that there is transparency. My simple query is that there is a separate Department for Disinvestment. But why should there not be a separate Standing Committee for the Department of Disinvestment? This has been demanded on several occasions. Even the hon. Leader of the Opposition had written to the Prime Minister to form a separate Standing Committee for the Department of Disinvestment. If you say that all your deal is transparent, why are you hesitating to form that Committee?

20.00 hrs.

He has extended the Disinvestment Commission. Now, whether the Commission was formed by the previous regime, the erstwhile Congress regime, or now, what is the background of it? If he says that it is transparent, then why is he not giving autonomy to that Commission? Rather the Commission's work is only recommendatory in nature and it is not binding on the Government.

There was an earlier report too. I would like to know whether the Government has carried out the recommendations of that report. The answer is ""No"". There are two serious issues, on Modern Foods and BALCO deal, which were totally against the recommendations of the Committee. Where once originally they say, 40 per cent equity should be

disinvested, later on they decide to disinvest 51 per cent in BALCO. The method of valuation that they carried has been scathingly attacked by the C&AG.

SHRI ARUN SHOURIE: There is no report of the C&AG. I do not know why the hon. Members go by just the Press reports. I have mentioned it again and again, we have not received any final report from the C&AG on Modern Foods or BALCO as yet. इसका क्या किया जाए?

SHRI T.M. SELVAGANPATHI : That is a fact. There are enough reports in the Press. Why is the hon. Minister not denying the Press reports?

SHRI ARUN SHOURIE: They are by corporate rivals. I will show him that. When he reads out the Standing Committee report, I will show him the origin of those very words and the illustrations of Korea, Australia and all.

SHRI T.M. SELVAGANPATHI : But it is a fact that BALCO, worth about several hundred thousands crore, has been given like that.

SHRI ARUN SHOURIE: This Rs.7,00,000 crore is two and a half times the total value of equity in public sector enterprises.

SHRI T.M. SELVAGANPATHI : This is our point.

SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL : Sir, the hon. Minister should reply at the end.

सभापति महोदय : मंत्री जी, बार-बार उठकर जवाब देना ठीक नहीं है। आप पाइंट्स नोट कर लें और अंत में सबका जवाब दें।

SHRI T.M. SELVAGANPATHI : This is basically our point. The precious wealth of the nation is given for a song and BALCO, where there is one of the richest ore mine available, was sold for Rs.550 crore.

This is basically our point where lakhs and lakhs worth of public sector undertakings have been sold for a song and their market value is estimated to be only Rs.95,000 crore. What target have they fixed, whether it is the previous regime or the present NDA regime, since 1990-91 to the present day? From 1991-92 to 2001-2002, the total target estimated was Rs.66,300 crore. What have they achieved? Were they able to realise it? Why is the target time and again fixed? When they have fixed the target for ten years to be Rs.66,300 crore, they have been able to realise only Rs.19,184 crore till date. So, they are unable to achieve the target. Sir, neither they are able to get a fancy or favourable price or real price worth of the undertaking, nor are they able to achieve the target. Then why are they fixing the target?

Our apprehension is that this is purely to bridge the budgetary gap. Why has the hon. Finance Minister come out to the Parliament stating that this particular year the target is fixed for Rs.12,000 crore. If it is not to bridge the budgetary gap, why is this announced in the Budget?

Sir, our apprehension is, what are you doing with the proceeds that you get out of it? Now, a sum of Rs. 18,000 crore was received as proceeds from the disinvestment. How was it spent? Have you got statistics on that? Our demand was that you form a corpus and whatever proceeds you get, you put them in that corpus. Your object is to pay the public debt. Is the Government relying only through this disinvestment to pay the public debt? You say that this money is being ploughed into the social sector and these proceeds are utilised for the welfare of the State. How much have you spent on that? There is no data available. You say that this is being utilised for revitalising the existing public sector units. How much have you spent on that? There is no point in saying that this has gone to the Consolidated Fund, whereby it goes back to the welfare of the State. That is not our point.

There is no accountability. Your target is Rs. 66,000 crore, you are realising Rs. 18,000 crore, you are not able to account it, and you say that it has gone to the Consolidated Fund.

Sir, what is the problem now? After the last year ...(*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please conclude.

SHRI T.M. SELVAGANPATHI : Sir, you have been gracious enough in giving more time. There are more points to be elucidated. This is the problem with the speakers who come at the fag end. Almost we will have to meet out the points made by Shri Kirit Somaiah and Shri Venkaiah Naidu. Sir, kindly give me some more time.

2007 hours (Shri Basu Deb Acharia *in the Chair*)

Since 1989-90, the last normal year of the old closed economy, the share of the Central and State Governments spending on development has fallen from 21 per cent to less than 12 per cent of the GDP. That amount you spend today is only 12 per cent of the GDP. How was it ploughed back? You say that Rs. 20,000 crore are being spent

every year for the sick PSUs. This is not the first time you are doing it. This has been a routine affair. Have you taken out any administrative reform with regard to the PSUs? Why are they running at loss? Are we not supposed to go to the root of the problem? Have we concerned about the management of those public sector units? Rather, we have been hurrying up in disinvesting even some of the pride institutions like Air India.

Sir, the hon. Member, Shri Kirit Somaiah was referring to Lord Ganapati. Even Lord Ganapati will not forget this Government.

Mr. Minister, as a person who admire you, if Air India is disinvested, you will become unpopular in the entire nation. This is something a pride of the nation. Tomorrow, even for the Prime Minister leaving the country, you will have to depend on the Singapore Airlines. This is not a business proposal. In calamity and in emergency, these are the institutions, which come to the help of the public, and you want to disinvest them. What is the reason? Why are you hurrying it up? This is our question. Whether the Cabinet Secretary has written a letter or the letter is forged, that is immaterial now. The main issue is that the national carrier like Air India which was incurring a loss of Rs. 200 crore per year, has now been limited to Rs. 29 crore last year. If effective reforms are carried out, Air India would definitely bloom and it may even take the course of profit making industry. Why are you hurrying it up? Our point is to fetch a better price, why can we not wait for a year or two? What is the reason for hurrying it up especially when there is only a single bidder now and also when there is a controversy that the global adviser appointed is alleged to be in connivance or connection or link?

So, these are all the apprehensions. The people of this nation question you. Why are you hurrying up with a single bidder?

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please conclude now.

SHRI T.M. SELVAGANPATHI : Why did the British Airways back out? Why did the other international Airlines back out of this bid? You have altered the agreement. These are all the reports and apprehensions we bring to the notice of the Government. When there is, especially, a demand for a Joint Parliamentary Committee on all these issues, if you say that you are transparent in all these deals, can you assure this House that every deal which you make in your Department gets the approval of this Parliament?

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think this is your last point.

SHRI T.M. SELVAGANPATHI : Are you not accountable to this Parliament? There is nearly rupees three lakh and fifty thousand crore revenue. Therefore, we demand that every issue, every decision you make on PSUs would get the approval of Parliament and then you decide on the issue. There is no unanimity also among the Ministries. When you take the Maruti Udyog Limited, the Minister of Heavy Industries, Shri Manohar Joshi, is not in conformity with the decision taken by the Disinvestment Ministry. It may be politics. The same thing happened to the Indian Airlines.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude.

SHRI T.M. SELVAGANPATHI : Please give me one or two minutes more.

Our apprehension is that the whole thing should be transparent. Therefore, we demand that a Committee should be appointed and a White Paper should be laid. This should be left to the scrutiny of the Parliamentary Standing Committee.

Shri Venkaiah Naidu was here. He was eloquent in pleading for the rural poor and pleading for his own Ministry. But unfortunately he could not answer this House as to whether this Government is going to privatise or disinvest the Visakhapatnam Steel Industry. I will be happy, I will be hailing him and I will be grateful to Shri Venkaiah Naidu if he has asserted that this Government is going to disinvest Visakhapatnam Steel Industry. They cannot do it because that is the politics of convenience, that is the politics of opportunism. If they do it in Visakhapatnam, then they will lose their jobs. That is the condition today. Whereas a step-motherly attitude is being shown to the Salem Steel Plant in Tamil Nadu. That is the Steel Plant which lies in my constituency.

MR. CHAIRMAN: This is your last point.

SHRI T.M. SELVAGANPATHI : Sir, that is the only stainless steel making industry. If that is also disinvested and given in the hands of the private entrepreneurs, there will not be any stainless steel making industry in the Government. Whoever is bidding for it will hold the monopoly. What are we asking for? We are asking for a revival package of Rs.350 crore. After all why are you disinvesting? Two years back, Rs.880 crore was ploughed back to Salem Steel Plant for revival, for starting a hot-rolled mill.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude.

SHRI T.M. SELVAGANPATHI : I will just take one minute.

Now, the Government has decided to disinvest after spending about Rs.800 crore. Is this the transparency? Is this the methodology with which you do it? After spending Rs.880 crore, they have decided to disinvest it to the benefit of the private entrepreneurs.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude and take your seat.

SHRI T.M. SELVAGANPATHI : I just conclude. Sir, the whole Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly was unanimous in passing a Resolution that this industry should not be disinvested. That was passed on to the Government also. But the then regime which is a part of the present NDA Government failed to pursue this issue and took no action on the Resolution passed by the Tamil Nadu Assembly. They could not get a favourable reply.

My earnest urge and demand, on behalf of the AIADMK Party, is that Salem Steel Plant is a pride in the entire State.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please take your seat.

SHRI T.M. SELVAGANPATHI : If that could be disinvested, we will have no faith in the Ministry....(*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Nothing will go on record.

(*Interruptions*) * *

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please take your seat. You have spoken for 20 minutes.

* Not Recorded

DR. (SHRIMATI) C. SUGUNA KUMARI (PEDDAPALLI): Respected Chairman, Sir, thank you for giving me this opportunity today.

We are discussing a very important subject – 'Disinvestment in PSEs'. Whenever we hear the word 'disinvestment', many questions appear in front of us. Why are we going in for disinvestment? What are the various methods? What are the positive points and negative points? What precautions should we keep in mind when we go in for disinvestment?

The Industrial Policy Resolution of 1956 was guided by various problems India was facing in 1947, at the time of Independence, 55 years ago. Then, the agrarian economy with a weak industrial base and infrastructure guided the Industrial Policy. Owing to poverty, inequalities in income, serious regional imbalances and lack of trained manpower, the State was forced to take up the challenge. Thus, it resulted in the intervention of the Government of the day in all sectors as the private sector was not ready to take up responsibilities because of various reasons like lack of technical skills and the will to take up the challenge.

The core sectors like nuclear power, defence, railways and telecommunications and the like needed Government control so that multinational private monopolies do not hold the country to ransom. Apart from developing critical sectors, the Government also needed to improve tourism, food processing, pharmaceutical industries, in addition to industries that made available articles of mass consumption. These factors led the Government to develop over 240 PSEs with over Rs.2,30,000 crore investment. These PSEs had about Rs.4 lakh crore as source of funds. They have utilised almost the same amount in 1998-99. About 75 PSEs are in the service sector while 160 are in the manufacturing sector.

In the year 1951, there were only five PSEs, with an investment of Rs.25 crore. In the year 1999, there were about 240 PSEs with an investment of Rs.2,30,000 crore operating in the country. Out of these, 126 PSEs are profit-making and 106 are loss-making. All of them put together have yielded a profit of Rs.2,715 crore. This is not even one per cent of profit on the capital employed. What have these PSEs given to the nation? They have given

dividend, interest, royalty, knowhow fee, professional and consultation fee, sales tax, corporate tax, excise duty, customs duty and so on, put together to the extent of Rs.46,000 crore. If this had been private sector, they would not have given even ten per cent of this. They contributed to the creation of jobs, production of power, coal, lignite, petroleum, fertilizer, metals and the like.

When in 1951 the PSEs were created, the managers and the workers of these PSEs were feeling as if they were newly wed sons-in-law of the Government. The sons-in law of the family, at the appropriate age, shed their newly wed groom *avatar* and behave like one of the family members but even after 40 years, the managers and workers of PSEs are feeling like newly wed grooms.

For various reasons known to us, the PSEs have reached a stage of maturity for private management. The Industrial Policy Statement of 24.7.1991 envisaged disinvestment of a part of the Government's shareholding in select PSEs to improve performance and discipline. The Disinvestment Commission was constituted by the Government *vide* Resolution dated 23.8.1996. The power sector scenario in the country is very dark. The country needs an additional 50,000 MW of power, which demands approximately Rs.2,50,000 crore investment. This is more than the Government of India's total investment in all the PSEs put together today.

This developing country is not in a position to generate such an investment on its own. There are about 19 lakh employees in the PSEs out of which 2.27 lakh have applied for VRS which again demands a huge financial burden. All this explains the necessity and rationality for the disinvestment.

Under the able guidance of our hon. Chief Minister Shri Nara Chandrababu Naidu garu, the TDP and I personally welcome disinvestment, albeit with caution. The core sectors like nuclear power, defence and others should not be touched now. We are requesting the Government to take all the points into consideration and to give a very appropriate and generous VRS package or as it is publicised as a golden handshake. The employees should not be put to any trouble because of these schemes. The disinvestment process should be worked out with extreme caution. The brand equity should be taken into consideration. The huge inventories should be accounted. The value of real estate which was procured or acquired decades ago should be re-evaluated in the present scenario. Only strategic and dynamic partners and alliances should be encouraged. Known defaulters or companies which created NPAs to financial institutions – that is they have created personal assets to themselves – shall not be allowed to take over the PSEs. Known business groups with business interests in our non-friendly countries should not be allowed to grab our PSEs. The interests of the workers and interests of the nation should not be jeopardised. The Government should have the power to intervene to direct corrective steps in the process.

The Government should go with caution and every 3 to 6 months assess the impact of disinvestment, learn from the experience, tread with caution, and go ahead steadily applying corrective steps as and when required.

I am satisfied that the Government under the able leadership of hon. Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, the able guidance of the hon. Minister of Finance, the hon. Minister of Planning and Disinvestment, and the able advice of our hon. Chief Minister Shri Chandrababu Naidu garu surely will strive into the golden future for the country.

SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL (CHANDIGARH): Mr. Chairman, Sir, an hon. Member from the Treasury Benches sought to ridicule us for repeatedly seeking discussion on disinvestment. Perhaps the hon. Minister would also say so. He has been saying so in the past. But I am sorry that the response of the Government to the fact that we are seeking discussion on this important matter repeatedly for a purpose is not what should be the response of a responsible Government.

The public sector undertakings were built up over the years, brick by brick with the sweat and toil of the people of India. Today the Government seems to be demonstrating its congenital dislike for these temples of modern India. Running down the PSEs, every effort is being made to demolish the same.

I heard the hon. Minister of Rural Development, Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu dwell at length about his perspective of disinvestment so that the resources generated thereby could be deployed for the social sector – that is education, health and what not.

But the Government is not in a position to really point out as to what it has done so far in those important sectors. I would not like to go in detail about the philosophy of disinvestment as pursued by this Government.

It has been said on behalf of our party that we do not oppose disinvestment *per se*, but we have certain serious objections to the way the whole exercise is being conducted, the way the Government is going about it.

Sir, I would like to give only the example of VSNL, Videsh Sanchar Nigam Limited and confine myself to that. It was in response to a question on 31.7.2000 that the Minister for Communications had said that the Government did not

propose to privatise VSNL. That was on 31.7.2000. Thereafter, Shri Arun Shourie, hon. Minister for Disinvestment in response to another question, one month after the earlier one, had said that the Government had not taken any decision for further disinvestment in case of MTNL and VSNL. Thereafter again on 1.12.2000, this House was told by the hon. Minister:

"The consideration for proposals of disinvestment in public sector undertakings is a continuing process. No decision has been taken for reducing the Government's holding in VSNL to minority level."

Thereafter, suddenly, in my view, the Cabinet takes a decision on 1.2.2001 to disinvest 26.97 per cent of the shares of VSNL. I refer to this because it is my charge against the Government that while it is the duty of the Government to ensure that if it decides to put a public sector undertaking under the hammer, its all out effort should be to ensure that the particular company earns the maximum amount to be ploughed back into the social sector which they repeatedly talk of.

But what really happens? Sir, I would like to again refer to another answer given in this House on 20.11.2000. The hon. Minister for Communications had agreed to the query that the acceleration of reforms in the telecom sector had resulted in the crash of over 50 per cent in the value of shares of VSNL and MTNL. Sir, the reasons admittedly given by the Government was:

"VSNL share price has come down more than 50 per cent during the last six months. The downward price movement is attributed largely to two factors, firstly because of decline in the overall Sensex and secondly because of certain announcements by the Government on premature withdrawal of VSNL's monopoly on international telephony, including cable connectivity."

This is the point. Even according to the WTO Agreement, the monopoly of VSNL over international telephony was to be retained up to 31.3.2004. For reasons best known to this Government. I do not know at whose bidding it was decided to postpone that by two years. Here, the Government is accepting that it is because of this announcement of the Government that the share value of VSNL fell down by 50 per cent. So far, the stand of the Government - which I have pointed out earlier - as put across in the House, was that the Government did not propose to disinvest in the VSNL.

My charge is that the Government actually had a mind to disinvest. The Government did not share that decision with the Parliament. On the other hand, certain conscious decisions were taken which have harmed the VSNL immensely. Now, when you sell the VSNL, maybe, 26.97 per cent of the shares, what price will you get for it? Way back in 1997-99, when the Government had disinvested this *Navratna* to some extent through GDRs etc., at that time, an assurance was given that the monopoly of VSNL in international telephony would continue up to 2004. Now, is this the way the Government behaves? Is this what this Government has learnt from the US, which imposes certain conditions on them, but backs out from its own commitments and forces down conditions which it had made others to agree? Is this what this Government is now up to? It had given a solemn assurance to the people all over when it had solicited certain participation in equity a few years back. Now, what have they done to those people? What is their reaction? If my information is correct, people who had invested in VSNL earlier are feeling cheated about it because the Government took a decision to postpone the termination of the monopoly, which has resulted in steep fall in the shares, and the Government now wishes to sell off. This is the approach of the Government on which we have serious objections.

Not only this, after a decision was taken to postpone the termination of monopoly, VSNL thought, "Well, let us try to diversify ourselves into different areas" and, therefore, VSNL decided to apply for the fourth cellular licence. That was understandable. It was a prudent decision. I must say that over the years VSNL, because of professional management of its affairs had done extremely well. In 1999, when certain shares were supposed to be offloaded in the domestic market, the offer was oversubscribed over seven times. That showed the credibility or the worth of this public sector undertaking in the public perception. After the Government had thrust a decision upon VSNL about its postponement of the termination of the monopoly in the international telephony, VSNL thought of diversifying into cellular services. And aghast we were to know that the Government directed VSNL not to apply for it on the most specious, most untenable ground that since there is Government equity in VSNL and BSNL, that is, Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited, which is already operating the cellular services, so two Government companies cannot bid for the same sectors in the mobile services. This was a strange argument. The net result of it is that VSNL has been emaciated, incapacitated to develop, to progress and to improve its worth. Therefore, when it is put under the hammer, as the Minister has decided to do it, the result is before us to see.

Sir, I say that we do not mind, if the Government really wishes to disinvest. But how are they proceeding in these matters? Are they interested in garnering the maximum possible price or their real obsession is to do away with the public sector undertakings which have been built up over the years? Going by the conduct of the Government, one

is only forced to come to this conclusion that they just could not care less as to what the disinvestment really gets.

I was going through the documents. In their documents, they say that, "It is not really important whether the company is making profit or not."

That is not the consideration for the Government. Government has decided to dispose of all these companies. This is what they say. The hon. Leader of the CPI(M) Party in Lok Sabha was referring to some of the Corporations and Companies under the Ministry of Telecommunications to point out the amount of consistent profits made by all these companies. Maybe, their fate would also be the same.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please conclude now.

SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL : Sir, I will sit down if you say so. I have not really taken much time.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. You continue.

SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL : Sir, I am always conscious to take the least possible time.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay, you continue now.

SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL : Sir, the first two speakers on the debate had taken almost 50 minutes each. How much have I taken?

MR. CHAIRMAN: I am telling you continue.

SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL : Anyway, I will not be able to continue now.

DR. NITISH SENGUPTA (CONT'D): Sir, thank you for giving me this opportunity to speak on the debate. But at the fag end of the discussion I do not really wish to take much of your time. I shall raise only a few issues.

Sir, first of all, disinvestment is not an end in itself. It is a means to an end. The real end is whether Government is going to get out of the tremendous financial responsibility it has, willy nally, assumed for itself in relation to the public sector which does not make it possible to discharge its elementary duties in many other areas. A Government that cannot provide for free primary education in all the villages of the country; a Government that cannot provide for drinking water in all the villages in the country has no right to waste money on making bicycles and running of hotels or running Air India. That is the whole point.

Sir, somebody had mentioned that rupees two lakh crore has been invested in the public sector. My estimate – which I made some time ago – is that in the entire public sector of India a sum of rupees six lakh crore has been invested. I have included the Electricity Boards as well as the transport companies in this. It is a big critical mass in our economy. Any attempt to improve the economy must concentrate on turning around the public sector. My regret is that sometimes disinvestment is not viewed as a means to an end. If the public sector system were to give a return of five or even ten per cent, then that itself would make the condition of the entire financial system of the Government much better than it is now.

Sir, we must learn from the global experience. Disinvestment, or shall I say Government withdrawing money from the non-critical areas and handing them over to the private sector is a global phenomenon. It is a global movement from Brazil to Bangladesh and from Russia and China to Seychelles and Mauritius. This is taking place all over the world. India has been one of the notable exceptions that has resisted it.

Sir, my regret is that when my friends from the CPI(M) and the Congress were in the Treasury Benches, they did not oppose disinvestment. We can go through all the documents of that time. They supported disinvestment. I appeal to them not to try to settle political scores on the issue of disinvestment but let us view disinvestment dispassionately and not make it a political issue.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : Sir, we in the Congress never opposed disinvestment. I made it clear.

DR. NITISH SENGUPTA : I am only referring to the policy documents which came out during the time when the Congress and the CPI(M) were in the Treasury Benches. Why is the CPI(M) also trying to disinvest in West Bengal? The example of Great Eastern hotel is there before us.

Sir, I personally feel that if a Government has to discharge its responsibilities, then there should be priority to certain things which the Government alone can do and others cannot do and there are many other points which could be left to others to deal with. Today, Indian economy is much more diversified than in the past.

Sir, the example of Air India was given. How is it that at a point of time Air India was flying so high and small airlines, in comparison to Air India at that point of time, like Singapore Airlines and Thai Airlines are today flying above Air

India? It is because Air India is a Government undertaking. To get a new aircraft for Air India, they have to first approach the Ministry of Civil Aviation and then the Ministry of Finance and then the Planning Commission. Having been in the Planning Commission, I can tell you that when Planning Commission arbitrates between the needs of Air India and the Urban Transportation system on the basis of the limited funds that they have, they would say that Air India need not have an aircraft at this moment and that the Planning Commission would give money to the Urban Transportation System. So, Air India suffers in comparison with Singapore Airlines or Thai Airlines.

Take it out of the apron strings of the Government. Get at least the Government shareholding, reduced to below 50 per cent. It will not be a Government company then. Then, funds will be no problem. In the international market there are any number of financiers who would be willing to give their money to Air India then and Air India will be able to compete much better. Take the example of the companies I mentioned – Thai, Singapore and Taiwanese airlines. They were all Government companies. We can see how much better they are performing today after having been handed over to private sector initiative. What has been the experience of the British Airways? So, privatisation or disinvestment is not something to be pooh-poohed or laughed aside. It is inevitable and irreversible. One can say that there is no way the Government can get away, in the near future, from disinvestment or privatisation on a massive scale, if the Government has to discharge its duties.

Having said that, I should say how the conditions now are. Are they right for disinvestment? I do not think so. First of all, the public sector has to be turned around. Otherwise, nobody will be interested in buying many of them. Secondly, what is the condition of the capital market today? For the last one year, there has not been a single case of public issue in the capital market. It is something unheard of. It all started from the time when capital issues control was abolished. I am sorry to say that under the pressure of IMF, the Government in the 90s abolished the capital issues control which was the only control that was working soundly and helping the cause of the common investor. The common investor was driven out then. Free pricing was introduced. In place of controller of capital issues guidelines for fixing of prices of shares, free pricing was allowed. To that alone I attribute many of the subsequent ills. The common investor was thrown to the lap of greedy merchant bankers and dishonest company promoters. The common investor burnt his fingers and decided to leave the capital market. It has never happened before. Capital market is like a dead duck now. When primary market is like this, where will the buyers come from? Who are the buyers? Even the secondary market has become a dead duck for the last many months. There is no liquidity. Nobody can buy; nobody can sell. We are in a wonderful position where much as we dream of disinvestment, it will be not be possible. The things are just not right.

First of all the public sector enterprises have to be turned around. Where they have turned around or are making money on a monopolistic basis, it is possible to disinvest. But then, do bring down the Government shareholding to less than 50 per cent so that they get out of the stigma of the Government enterprise having to approach the Government at any and every stage. Subject the public sector system on the whole to the discipline of the balance sheet and the profit and loss statement. This applies to the loss-making companies also. Once that is done, once they are also turned around, then I can assure that there will be no dearth of buyers. Therefore, this is not the right time to talk about disinvestment very seriously.

The other reason is psychological. We have been giving an impression as if we are making a distress sale and the Government is anxious to dispose of its shares in the public sector. The buyers are also very clever people. How is it that all these people are coming in and going away? They know that Government will have to willy-nilly go to them. I wish the Government spokesman would go a bit slow, a bit quiet, and a bit discreet and not make pronouncements merrily like in the case of VSNL, which Shri Pawan Kumar Bansal pointed out. Basically, disinvestment has to wait for a little more time. This time should be utilised to turn around the public sector enterprise.

There are many public sector enterprises which are in a shocking condition partly because of the wrong investment decisions and partly because the Government willy-nilly took over a lot of private enterprises which were already sick. The National Textile Corporation has been mentioned. Well, it is the then Commerce Minister, who subsequently became the Prime Minister, who went to Bombay and just announced that all those companies which were on strike were being taken over by the Government. The Finance Ministry was not even consulted at that time. I am talking about the situation in the early 80s. They all came to Government management but they came duds at a time when in the economy there is no need for integrated mills because the technology had changed. We have to assume that technology changed and, therefore, everything was being done through *Bhiwandiwalas*, the powerlooms. There was no need for integrated mill any longer. That was the time when the Government, out of political compulsion decided to nationalise those companies.

Ever since we have only been able to meet the cash losses. Nothing more. We have never given a proper thought to make them diversified.

So, Sir, the first point should be that attention should be given to turning around the public sector enterprises. In

disinvestment, I personally think that the Government should review its shareholding and not think in terms of getting away completely except those unviable enterprises which can be sold on 'as is where is basis" where there is no scope for any revival, which would be a kind of drag on the Government for all time to come.

There was the Rangarajan Committee, which gave a beautiful formula about how shareholding should be reduced, and all that. I personally feel that the Disinvestment Commission has not done very much. In any case, when the Ministry has been created, why should there be a Disinvestment Commission at all? It is again for political reasons. Sir, between you and me, Shri Arun Shourie has been a very good friend for three decades now. I am fond of disinvestment idea but I think the setting up of the Ministry of Disinvestment was not a right decision. I think, it should have been left to the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Public Enterprises and the Administrative Ministry to decide on it. I think, the Ministry of Disinvestment can almost be a fifth wheel which will not really help matters. Mind you, they are very sincere people but I think this is not the right time for disinvestment. The capital market factor should have been given importance.

Sir, my last point is about the share evaluation. They should try to go back to the CCI guidelines. It is being mentioned repeatedly about discounted cash flow. In my experience, I have not seen that discounted cash flow is a very common criterion in evaluating shares. I do not know who introduced it in the Government. Some time in the Nineties it was introduced. But even now, it is being followed. Go back to the C.C.I guidelines.

So, I should say that disinvestment is unavoidable in the long run but this is not the right time. A lot more thought should be given to turning around the public sector enterprises to a state when they are profitable and saleable, and the infrastructure should be improved especially the conditions of the capital market.

With these words, I conclude.

डॉ. रघुवंश प्रसाद सिंह (वैशाली) : सभापति महोदय, विनिवेश नीति पर अनेक बार बहस हो चुकी है। माननीय मंत्री जी उत्तर देते समय कहेंगे कि बार-बार इस पर बहस हो रही है और बहुत से सवालों का हम उत्तर दे रहे हैं फिर भी लोग बहस से नहीं मान रहे हैं। अफरा-तफरी की हुई है कि जल्दी-जल्दी बेचो। पहले डिसइंवेस्टमेंट कमीशन था, उसे उन्होंने खत्म कर दिया था लेकिन फिर सुनते हैं कि डिसइंवेस्टमेंट कमीशन बना दिया है और दावा किया है कि इसलिए बनाया है ताकि जल्दी-जल्दी बेचें। पहले विनिवेशीकरण, निजीकरण, विदेशीकरण और फिर देश-बेचीकरण- यह सब क्या है, जिस पर बता रहे हैं। नाम इसका विनिवेशीकरण है लेकिन यह निजीकरण कर रहे हैं, फिर विदेशीकरण और फिर इसके बाद देश-बेचीकरण कहेंगे। यह काम धंधा है और इस संबंध में हम लोगों ने ट्रांसपैरेंसी का सवाल उठाया। पहले डिसइंवेस्टमेंट के खिलाफ हम बोले हैं तो कह दिया कि कांग्रेस पार्टी ने इसे शुरू किया। हम लोगों के जमाने को कह देते हैं कि यूनाइटेड फ्रंट में भी यह जारी था। मान लिया कि डिसइंवेस्टमेंट करने का विचार था और यह पहले से भी होता रहा है लेकिन क्या हमने सात-पांच में उन्हें बेच दिया? माननीय मंत्री जी की यह परिभाषा में है क्योंकि उन्होंने जवाब में कहा था कि सीएजी को दे देंगे। सीएजी को जांच के लिए दे देंगे और जांच में यदि घोटाला पाएंगे तो फिर हमारी सम्पत्ति कैसे लौटेगी, उस पर क्या कार्रवाई होगी? माननीय मंत्री जी बड़े मशहूर पत्रकार रहे हैं और लिखा-पढ़ी में होशियार हैं। वह खोजी-पत्रकारिता के भी पक्षधर हैं।

तहलका की जांच के लिए वैकट स्वामी कमीशन बना। उसकी टेप लीक हुई। इन्हीं के अखबारों में लिखा है। माननीय मंत्री जी बैठे हुए हैं, इन्होंने सफाई में बयान दे दिया कि लीक रिपोर्ट पर कार्रवाई करेंगे। कहा कि यह खराब चीज इस्तेमाल हुई है। माननीय मंत्री जी कहते हैं, खोजी पत्रकारिता में किसी चीज का इस्तेमाल करके, ठीक कहा जो पत्रकार रहे हैं। एक माननीय मंत्री जी यहां बैठे हैं, संसदीय कार्य मंत्री जी ने कह दिया, ब्यान दे दिया कि खोजी पत्रकारिता पर कार्रवाई करेंगे। इस तरह से दोहरा मापदंड चल रहा है, इस सरकार में **â€!(व्यवधान)** जनसत्ता ग्रुप का है इंडियन एक्सप्रेस, एक हिन्दी में है और दूसरा अंग्रेजी में है। हिन्दी वाले में जो छपा है, सीएंडएजी ने भी माना कि मार्डन फूड के सौदे में घपला था। यह हैंडिंग है और नीचे सारी रिपोर्ट छपी है। कहते हैं कि रिपोर्ट नहीं निकली है और सीएंडएजी की नहीं। अब आप पर हमारा आरोप है कि आप सीएंडएजी की रिपोर्ट को दबा दिए हैं **â€!(व्यवधान)** आप जिस ग्रुप में थे, वह अखबार छापा है। हम कैसे इसको डिनाई करें। नियन्त्रण एवं महालेखाकार परीक्षक, सीएंडएजी, की रिपोर्ट सरकार ने उजागर हो जाने दी, तो विनिवेश नीति की कलई खुल जाएगी। आपकी कलई उत्तर रहा है यह अखबार। जिस ग्रुप में आप थे। इसके अब कैसे कहें कि गलत है। इसमें एक-एक बात है। विनिवेश विभाग ने इन आपत्तियों पर जो जवाब दिए हैं, उन पर नजर डालने से साफ हो जाता है कि विनिवेश मामले में सरकार किसके हक में सोच रही है। इतनी डिटेल्ड रिपोर्ट छापी हुई है। उसको दबाकर कहते हैं कि नहीं मिली। मतलब यह कि कहां-कहां धूमकर चिट्ठी गई, लेकिन कहते हैं कि हमको नहीं मिली। इसकी जांच होनी चाहिए। अखबारों में तो डिटेल्ड रिपोर्ट छपी है। खास करके जिस अखबार में, जिस ग्रुप में आप थे, उस वाले अखबार में लिखा है, उसको नहीं कह रहा हूँ छापा है। देस-सवेर होगी, आप इस स्थिति को कबूल करें, यदि सीएंडएजी की रिपोर्ट आ जाएगी कि मार्डन फूड में घपला हुआ है, तो आपको कौन दंड मिलना चाहिए। क्योंकि ट्रांसपैरेंसी के नाम पर कह दिया है कि सीएंडएजी को दे दिया है। सीएंडएजी अगर आपको कसूरावार सावित कर दे कि घपला हुआ है, तो क्या इलाज होगा और आप उस समय दंड के क्या भागी होंगे **â€!(व्यवधान)** ज वाहरलाल नेहरू विश्वविद्यालय की अर्थशास्त्री की प्रोफैसर, श्रीमती जयती घो, हैं। राट्रीय सहारा में छापा है - लूट खसोट का नया तरीका है, विनिवेश। अर्थशास्त्री के प्रोफैसर साहब ने लिखा है **â€!(व्यवधान)** आप तो पढ़े-लिखे होशियार हैं। पत्रकार हैं **â€!(व्यवधान)** महोदय, हम कभी कभी पूर्जा लेकर भाण नहीं दिए हैं, लेकिन आज मन हुआ कि कल जो इंडियन एक्सप्रेस में छपा है और उस पर जो धूमधड़ाका हो रहा है, तहलका पर, मन हुआ कि सहारा लैं। इसको बतायें कि क्या अखबार हैं और क्या ये लोग हैं तथा क्या ये लिखते हैं। अभी बोलेंगे, उस समय लिखते थे, अभी लिखते हैं, कौन बात सही है **â€!(व्यवधान)** अखबार लिखता है और प्रोफैसर साहिबा लिखती हैं - यह कड़वा सच कहा जाए, तो निजीकरण के माध्यम से सरकार में बैठे लोग काली कमाई कर रहे हैं। पहले बड़े टैन्डर्स, कोटा, परमिट के आवंटन में भ्राताचार के जरिए धन कमाते थे, परन्तु उदारीकरण के बाद लाइसेंस, कोटा, परमिट राज खत्म हुआ, सरकार के बड़े अधिकारियों में खलबली मची और अब सरकारी उपक्रमों को सस्ते दामों में बेचकर काली कमाई करने का आसान रास्ता मिल गया है।

प्रो. साहिबा श्रीमती जयती घो, जो जेएनयू में अर्थशास्त्र पढ़ाती हैं उन्होंने लिखा है कि जो गाइडलाइन्स हैं वे भगवान ने बनाई हैं या आपने बनाई हैं? आपने ऐसी गाइडलाइन्स बनाई हैं जो इन पूंजीपतियों और धनपतियों के फेवर में जाती हैं। **â€!(व्यवधान)** जहां सरकार विक्रेता है और ये पूंजीपति और धनपति क्रेता हैं। फिर कहते हैं कि बोली लगाएंगे। बोली लगाने में ठेकेदारी होती है और जो ये धनपति चाहते हैं ले लेते हैं। **â€!(व्यवधान)** इन धनपतियों के आगे सरकार की कुछ चलती नहीं है और वे अपने फायदे के लिए सब कुछ सरकार से करा लेते हैं।

सभापति महोदय : अब आप समाप्त कीजिए।

डॉ. रघुवंश प्रसाद सिंह : दूसरा मैं सीमेंट कॉरपोरेशन के बारे में बताना चाहता हूँ कि वहां क्या हो रहा है? पहले ये धनपति उसको बंद करा देते हैं जिससे उसमें

मंदी हो जाए और बाद में ये खरीद लें। इस तरह से ये सब बड़े-बड़े धनपति एक राय कर लेते हैं। अब अगर उसकी कम से कम बौली लगा देंगे तो मैं पूछना चाहता हूं कि किसने आपको अधिकार दिया है कि आप उसको सस्ते में बेचें। वह सब उन धनपतियों के हाथ में है वे जैसा चाहते हैं सरकार से करा लेते हैं। इन सब बातों पर सरकार की ओर से सफाई की जरूरत है। ये तो राज्य सभा से आ गये। ये सब लोग मिलकर जो कहेंगे, क्योंकि पढ़े-लिखे लोग हैं तो इनको बुद्धि वाला विभाग दे दिया, लेकिन कब पकड़े जायेंगे। बाल्कि मामला प्राइम-फेसी देखने से लगता है कि मोटी-मोटी सम्पत्तियों को ये लोग बहुत कम दाम पर बिकवा रहे हैं, यह बात प्रो. साहिबा लिख रही हैं कि ये सब कम दाम में बिक रहा है।

दूसरा, उसमें जो काम करने वाले कर्मचारी और मजदूर हैं उनको खतरा है कि उनको निजीकरण के नाम पर निकाल दिया जाएगा। मारुति में 50-50 प्रतिशत की भागीदारी है। जो हैवी-इंडस्ट्री के मंत्री हैं वह सुजुकी के कर्मचारी की तरह काम कर रहे हैं। यह ठीक है कि हड्डियां का राइट है लेकिन उसमें काम करने वाले 40 लोगों को निकाल दिया गया है और दस को बर्खास्त कर दिया गया है।

21.00 hrs.

हमने इस बारे में सवाल उठाया था कि उन्हें काम से क्यों निकाला जा रहा है? मजदूरों के खिलाफ कार्रवाई हो रही है। ये अपने ढंग से इसका डाइवर्शन कर रहे हैं। इससे वर्कर्स का अहित हो रहा है। इन दोनों चीजों पर सरकार ने स्पष्ट जवाब नहीं दिया है। सरकार इस बारे में गम्भीर नहीं है। वह उनके साथ दुश्मन जैसा व्यवहार कर रही है। हम इस पर घोर आपत्ति प्रकट करना चाहते हैं। डिसइनवैस्टमेंट नाम के बल धोखा देने के लिए है। यह निजीकरण है और देश बेचीकरण है। इनके साथी जो पुराने विचारक हैं, उन्होंने कहा कि देश बिक रहा है, अपराध हो रहा है। इस सम्बन्ध में आपका क्या कहना है?

SHRI ANADI SAHU (BERHAMPUR, ORISSA): Mr. Chairman Sir, before I speak on this matter of disinvestment, after hearing Dr. Raghuvansh Prasad Singh, I am inclined to quote from Shakespeare.

"Never did I know that so full voice

issues from so empty a heart."

I think that is applicable to his speech and not the person concerned.

When I stand here to speak on disinvestment, after a lot of discussion under Rules 193 and 184, I have a feeling that the Opposition has lost all its arrows from the quiver. Now it is only grunt or ranting. And you would kindly appreciate that many of the leaders of Opposition try to take recourse to one of the beautiful philosophical school of thought in India. That school of thought is "Nyaya Vaisheshikas". Now, "Nyaya Vaisheshikas" means reasoning and arguments are uppermost. But there is one point to be mentioned. It has been indicated that when one does not have any reasoning or logic or argument, he takes recourse to *vitanda*. In Sanskrit, *vitanda* means illogical, unreasonable or without any facts to bringforth the arguments. And the Members of the Opposition have taken recourse to *vitanda* for almost last three hours. In taking recourse to *vitanda*, they have tried to pick holes in the transparency and valuation methods. I am sorry to say that Mr. Dasmunsi had tried to attack transparency by looking into forged letters or letters which had not gone through the regular course or channels which are used in official transactions, by reading letters which had not been properly typed and by reading forged letters. By attributing to different types of things on those letters, I think he has developed cataract and once a person has cataract... (Interruptions)

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : Sir, I said and I stand by what I said. Let the letter be investigated by a proper agency called the CBI and if the investigation result is that the documents are forged, then as I said earlier, my argument is withdrawn on my point and I will personally come and apologise to the House. But if the investigation proves that the letter is genuine, then let the Government express its apology. That is all.

I also stand by what I said on the documents related to Enforcement Directorate. I shall refer that to the Minister. He would inquire into it. If he finds that it is forged, ... (Interruptions)

SHRI ANADI SAHU : Sir, kindly allow me to speak. Let him not interrupt my stream of thoughts. I was saying that the Members of the Opposition have had an opaque vision and it is opaque vision in the sense that they try to see things which are not existing at all. The NDA Government and the able Minister, Shri Arun Shourie are very transparent like the front windscreens of a motor car and the disinvestment process has been absolutely transparent. I will not go into the details of transparency because I feel that time will be the greatest constraint.

In the booklet that has been provided and in the earlier booklets also, it has been indicated as to how transparency could be obtained by taking into consideration the opinion of Group of Ministers, Group of Secretaries and all other paraphernalia that is there. So, there should be no doubt in the minds of anybody about the transparency so far as disinvestment is concerned. The second *vithanda* came from no less a person than Shri Somnath Chatterjee regarding Assets Valuation Methods. I would request the Members to kindly go through the papers that have been distributed earlier also. Under the heading Assets Valuation Method, it says:

"This estimates the amount that will be available to the stakeholders if the assets were disposed of or the amount that is required to create a similar asset. But this methodology is rarely used for valuation of

business as a going concern, in view of the serious shortcomings of this methodology."

The depth of capital market has to be taken into consideration while thinking of the valuation. I did not go into the other three methods because that would take a lot of time. I will come to the disinvestment part of it. Before I formulate certain facts, I would like to give a brief genesis of the public sector undertakings. In 1956, statesmen of those days, including Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, thought that since funds are not available, since technology is not advanced, since the gestation period is too long, the public sector should come up. To begin with, five undertakings came up. That was during the First Plan period. In the Second Plan period, there were eight objectives. Of the eight, the third objective is very important for us. The third objective is that the Public Sector Undertakings to earn return on investments and thus generate resources for development. Without going to the other intervening plans, I will come to the Fifth Plan. During the Fifth Plan, a creeping doubt had come into the minds of the administrators and planners. The doubt was whether the public sector could be viable and whether private sector should be brought in or not. That is why at that time, the plan envisaged foreign collaboration as well as development of existing indigenous capability and both were viewed as part of one package. The necessity of collaboration and participation outside the public sector was orchestrated in 1980. Now, let me come to the Eighth Plan. In the Eighth Plan, it was found that resource mobilisation was a constraint. Now, you would kindly appreciate that in the Budgets that were prepared right from 1991 till date, internal and extra Budgetary resources for the public sector undertakings were thought of. But in the last eight to nine years, public sector undertakings could mobilise only 47 per cent revenue, in spite of issuing tax free bonds, that were not bought by the people. The gap was always filled up by budgetary support.

Here a proverb comes to my mind. That is, 'Rob Peter to pay Paul'. Peter and Paul were very important holy men of the Christian faith. One holy man is being robbed to pay another holy man. In the last ten years, tax payers have been robbed to ensure that the public sector remains viable. I give you a few instances to show as to how the tax payers are being robbed. Take for example, last three years' Budget performance. See the amount spent on waivers. In 1998-99 the loans and repayments waived was Rs. 572.99 crore.

Interest waived was about Rs.1360.37 crore. Penal interest waived was Rs.257.78 crore. Loan repayments on which moratorium was allowed were Rs.779 crore. Altogether, in one year, the sum of Rs.2970.65 was only in respect of loan waivers which should have come as revenue. I am not talking of the funds that have been pumped in. The C&AG has said that funds pumped in are to the tune of Rs.60,000 crore. The C&AG has very correctly said that had it been utilised in some other way, it would have brought a lot of dividend. The dividend that the public sector undertakings have brought is only to the extent of 6.1 per cent whereas mere Bank deposits would have brought 9.5%. How can the economy thrive with such type of public sector undertakings being put into operation by taking the money from the taxpayers to pay the public sector undertakings? That is why, it is necessary that slowly there should be disinvestment.

Sir, there are about 240 public sector undertakings. Out of them, only about 55 or so are viable units. When you see from the Mid-Term Appraisal of the Ninth Plan, you will come to know that the planners thought that disinvestment would bring Rs.10,000 crore. But nothing has come out of that. Hardly Rs.1500 crore has come. You will find from the papers that have been given to us how much money is being squandered in 127 public sector undertakings. The loss in one year only has been to the extent of Rs.9274 crore. How can the economy survive with so much of loss and so much of difficulties? That is why, it is necessary to have disinvestment.

Some hon. Members said as to why we should not disinvest the loss-making concerns. The point is that nobody would touch with a bargepole a loss-making concern. It is only a profit-making concern that can be disinvested or privatised. I would suggest that it would be better to have privatisation rather than going in for disinvestment. As Shri Venkaiah Naidu Said, why should the Government sell bread or change the linen? It is not at all necessary. Along with liberalisation and globalisation, other things have come. Why should we not go into those things instead of pumping money to these sectors.

What was the necessity for which disinvestment was thought of? It was thought of because we wanted to put this money into developmental work which has been very clearly indicated by other hon. Members earlier. We wanted to have roads, health measures and all other developmental things which have been very clearly indicated by the Disinvestment Commission. I need not go into them. Once disinvestment takes place, the money that is generated will go for developmental work.

I would conclude now. Before that, I would like to recite a part of a poem from Wordsworth, a Victorian Poet who said that one good thing can help the other. Of course, he did not mean disinvestment. He had given an allegory. It

says:

"Small service is a true service while it lasts;
of humblest friends, bright creature scorn not one;
The Daisy, by the shadow it casts
Protects the lingering dew-drop from the sun."

The Daisy protects the dew drops. So, let us disinvest here and give the money for developmental purpose.

With these words, I conclude.

SHRI AJOY CHAKRABORTY (BASIRHAT): Sir, at the outset, I thank you for giving me this opportunity. Due to time constraint, I will conclude my speech before you ring the bell.

First, I would submit that nowhere in the country and nowhere in the world excepting our country, this Department is functioning in the Government. Perhaps, this Department has been created in order to dismantle the public sector undertakings. After Shri Arun Jaitley, Shri Arun Shourie has been entrusted with the job to pay special attention to the question of disinvestment. The possible reason is that the Government is very much anxious about the disinvestment process to be extended not only to public sector units but also to joint ventures which you are now doing.

Sir, the disinvestment of shares of public sector undertakings was proceeding quiet a first pace, but it appears that the Government was not satisfied with that. Now, they want the whole process to be expedited further. We strongly oppose the policy of the Government because disinvestment is another name for dismantling and demolishing the whole structure of public sector undertakings, which has been built up over many years costing thousands of crores of rupees of public money.

The public sector undertakings have played a very important and strategic role in strengthening the whole industrial sector. Of course, our good friend, Shri Arun Shourie will certainly throw some light as to whether the Government is very eager to sell off our country to the foreign business partners and foreign business interests.

Sir, disinvestment may be a very polite word, but it amounts to dismantling the public sector undertakings. They are taking the public sector undertakings one-by-one and transferring them to the private sector. Therefore, I am totally opposed to the policy of this Government. I urge all the hon. Members of this House to be vigilant and resist them, by all means, so that they cannot implement the entire process of disinvestment and thereby sell out our country to foreign business interests.

श्री हरीभाऊ शंकर महाले (मालेगांव) : सभापति महोदय, मुझे आपने बोलने का समय दिया, इसके लिए मैं आपका आभारी हूँ। मेरे शहर नासिक में रामजन्मोत्सव मनाया जाता है। भारतीय जनता पार्टी वाले राम का नाम तो लेते हैं पर इन कार्यक्रमों में हाजिर नहीं होते हैं। हमारे लोग ही वहां हाजिर रहते हैं। वैसे ही किरीट सोमैया साहब ने गणपति का वर्णन किया और प्रार्थना की कि हे प्रभु ठीक से देश चलाया जाए। गणपति का तो वर्णन किया, लेकिन उनके देखने के दाँत और खाने के दाँत अलग हैं, ऐसा नहीं है। दाँत भी बड़े हैं और पेट भी बड़ा है। कान भी बड़े हैं मगर आँखें भी बहुत सूक्ष्म हैं। मेरी सरकार से विनती है कि इस विनिवेश के बारे में सूक्ष्म दृष्टि से देखना चाहिए।

महोदय, अमेरिका बहुत बड़ा राट्र है। वहां टेलीफोन व्यवस्था का निजीकरण किया गया लेकिन वहां भी ग्रामीण इलाकों में वे सेवाएं अच्छी तरह से नहीं देते। भारत में 30 प्रतिशत टेलीफोन सेवाओं का निजीकरण हो गया है लेकिन वे लोग भी ग्रामीण इलाकों में नहीं जाते। एस.टी.ए. की बसों का भी वही हाल है। वे लेट तो जाती ही हैं मगर ठीक से सेवा भी नहीं देती।

सभापति महोदय, प्राइवेट गाड़ी नहीं जाती है। प्राइवेट गाड़ी बीच में ही छोड़ देती है। इसलिए प्राइवेटाइजेशन के बारे में सरकार को अच्छी तरह से सोच कर ही प्राइवेटाइजेशन करना चाहिए।

सभापति जी, मेरे निर्वाचन क्षेत्र में एक रेलवे जंक्शन मारवाड़ है। उसके बारे में महाजन साहब को मालूम है। वहां 1100 वर्कर्स काम करते हैं। रेलवे ने कारखाने के कामगारों को अभी-अभी नोटिस दिया है कि रेलवे को यह कारखाना बन्द करना है। मैं बताना चाहता हूँ कि इस कारखाने के कामगारों ने बहुत अच्छा काम किया जिसके कारण उन्हें पांच-पांच गोल्ड मैडल मिले, लेकिन रेलवे ने उन्हें काम से हटाने का नोटिस देकर उनकी हालत खराब कर दी है।

सभापति जी, जैसा अभी रघुवंश बाबू ने कहा कि यह प्राइवेटाइजेशन नहीं, उदारीकरण नहीं, यह तो बेचीकरण है। इसलिए मेरा आपके माध्यम से सरकार से निवेदन है कि सरकार को इस बारे में सूक्ष्म नज़र रखकर सोचना चाहिए। धन्यवाद।

श्री रवि प्रकाश वर्मा (खीरी) : सभापति महोदय, आज हम लोग विनिवेश पर चर्चा कर रहे हैं। इस पर पहले भी कई बार चर्चा हो चुकी है और सत्ता पक्ष तथा F वपक्ष के तर्क सुनने के बाद मंत्री जी जवाब दे चुके हैं, लेकिन यह बहस आज भी जारी है। इसलिए कि आज जिस मोड़ पर हिन्दुस्तान खड़ा है, जिस मोड़ पर हम पहुँचे हैं, हिन्दुस्तान का जो समाज है, देश की जो जनता है, वह बड़े गौर से देख रही है कि हम किस दिशा में जा रहे हैं।

मान्यवर, इस संसद ने और संविधान ने हिन्दुस्तान के आम आदमी से वायदा किया था कि उसकी आजादी को बरकरार रखेंगे, उसे आत्मनिर्भर बनाएंगे और इसीलिए निर्णय किया गया कि सार्वजनिक क्षेत्र के उपकरण खड़े किए जाएंगे ताकि रीजनल इम्बैलेस खत्म हो सके और हम आत्मनिर्भर हो सकें। आज जिस मोड़ पर हमारा देश खड़ा है, वहां हमें सोचना पड़ता है कि सेंट्रल हाल में जिन नेताओं की तर्सीरें लगी हैं, जिन नेताओं की कुरबानियों की कहानियां हम लोग पढ़ा करते हैं, क्या वे लोग गलत थे या उनका रास्ता गलत था या जिस रास्ते पर हम अब जा रहे हैं वह दिशा गलत है ?

सभापति महोदय, अभी ग्रामीण विकास मंत्री बता रहे थे कि आज ऐसी परिस्थितियां बन चुकी हैं कि ग्रामीण विकास के लिए हमें पैसे की जरूरत है, लेकिन हमारे पास पैसा नहीं है। इसीलिए डिसइनवेस्टमेंट की जरूरत है। डिसइनवेस्टमेंट के बारे में आज एक आम सहमति बन चुकी है, चाहे पक्ष हो या विपक्ष हो कि संसाधनों का निर्माण इस तरीके से किया जा सकता है, लेकिन जैसा कि बास-बार कहा जा रहा है, इस उद्देश्य के लिए कितना पैसा खर्च किया जा सकेगा, जिसके लिए डिसइनवेस्टमेंट किया जा रहा है, जिस चीज को लेकर हमने अपने रास्ते बदले हैं, अपने लक्ष्य बदले हैं, क्या उस पर अपना पैसा लगा पाएंगे ?

सभापति महोदय, हमारे एक पूर्व प्रधान मंत्री थे जिन्होंने इस बात को स्वीकार किया था कि भारत सरकार के जितने भी ऐसैट्स हैं, संसाधन हैं, उनका एक बहुत बड़ा हिस्सा, लगभग 80 प्रतिशत भाग इस्टाब्लिशमेंट पर खर्च हो जाता है और जो विकास का उद्देश्य है, जो व्यवस्था का उद्देश्य है, उसके लिए जो उपलब्ध पैसा है, वह बहुत कम है, वह केवल 10 या 12 प्रतिशत रह जाता है। सोचने का सवाल है कि आज हमारे वित्त मंत्री जब बास-बार आर्थिक सुधार की बात करते हैं, अर्थव्यवस्था के पुनर्गठन की बात करते हैं, तो यह एक बहुत आवश्यक सवाल पैदा होता है कि प्रशासनिक सुधारों पर कोई चर्चा क्यों नहीं होती ?

हमने संविधान के माध्यम से, संसद के माध्यम से जो लक्ष्य तय किए थे, आज वे लक्ष्य बदल दिए हैं। हमने अपनी कमज़ोरियों को एक नए तरीके से स्वीकार किया है। लेकिन वे चुनौतियां जो हमारे सामने थीं, आज भी वहीं की वर्ती हैं। आज डिसइन्वैस्टमेंट के माध्यम से संसाधनों की रचना की जा रही है। सरकार एक बदहवास स्थिति में है, हिन्दुस्तान के अंदर या तो कर्ज ले रही है या उपक्रम बेच कर पैसा निकाल रही है। अमेरिका ने भी कहा था कि यह एक ऐसा देव है जो सोया हुआ है, जिस दिन जागेगा, पूरी धरती के लिए चुनौती बन जाएगा। हमें लगता है कि कहीं न कहीं गड़बड़ हुई है। हमारे पास संसाधन थे, हमारे पास मैनपावर है, हमारे पास भौतिक संसाधन थे, हमारे पास वैचारिक संसाधन भी थे, लेकिन यह दुर्भाग्य है कि आज हम समय के ऐसे मोड़ पर खड़े हैं जहां राजनैतिक और सामाजिक विघ्नन की प्रक्रिया जारी है, आदमी को आदमी से मतभेद है, इन्हें व्यापक स्तर पर पर मतभेद है कि पूरा समाज एक कम्पार्टमेंट में बंट गया है। जिन संसाधनों की रचना हम न विनिर्माण के लिए कर सकते थे, आज वे हमारी लायबिलिटी बन गए हैं। एक तरफ हम ही समाज को विभाजित करते हैं, दूसरी तरफ हम ही सोचते हैं कि हमारे पास संसाधन नहीं हैं। हमें यह महसूस करना पड़ेगा कि गलती कहां हुई। निश्चित रूप से हिन्दुस्तान जैसे मुल्क में संसाधनों की कमी नहीं है। मैंने आपको पहले ही बताया कि हमारी जो व्यवस्था है, तंत्र है, डिलीवरी सिस्टम है, उसमें संवैधानिक उद्देश्यों को पूरे तौर पर डिलीवर नहीं किया गया है। आज पानी, बिजली, सड़क, सुरक्षा, स्वास्थ्य, शिक्षा, रोजगार, जिसके लिए हमारे मंत्री जी कह रहे थे, उसमें इन्वैस्ट करने की जरूरत है। **I am coming to the point. I will conclude within a minute.** यह कहा जा रहा था कि जिन चीजों पर इन्वैस्टमेंट करने की जरूरत है, हम देख रहे हैं कि हमारा डिलीवरी सिस्टम, सरकारें आई हैं, गई हैं, हमारा जो तंत्र है, हमारे जो उद्देश्य थे, जिनसे हम आत्मनिर्भर होना चाहते थे, उसे वह पूरे तौर पर डिलीवर नहीं कर सका है।

मैंने इसी सदन में एक दिन माननीय वित्त मंत्री जी से कहा था कि पिछले पचास वर्षों में हमारा पूरा तंत्र, हमने जो लक्ष्य तय किए थे, वह डिलीवर नहीं कर पाया है। आप सीमित समय में, आपने जो नए उद्देश्य तय किए हैं, उनको कैसे डिलीवर कर सकेंगे, इस पर स्पष्टीकरण दीजिए। आज हमारे सामने बहुत बड़ा सवाल है। जैसे मैंने आपसे कहा, आप संसाधनों का निर्माण कर रहे हैं, आपने डिसइन्वैस्टमेंट किया है, जो ट्रांसपेरेंसी अपेक्षित है, उस पर लोगों को शंका है। आज पूरे हिन्दुस्तान में यह संदेश जा रहा है कि किसी न किसी तरह से पिलक्रेज हो रहा है, चोरी हो रही है और उस संबंध में कहीं न कहीं अखबारों में छप रहा है। आपने इस बात को बीच में टोका कि नहीं, वह सब गलत है, तो आपको यह भी कदम उठाना चाहिए कि सरकार यह सुनिश्चित करे कि जो पत्रकारिता हो रही है, जो तथ्य सामने लाए जा रहे हैं, कम से कम वे तथ्य पूर्ण तथ्य रहें और उनसे समाज में किसी किस्म का धोखा न फैले। आज सच्चाई यह है कि पूरे समाज में दूरदराज तक यह संदेश पहुंच रहा है कि कहीं न कहीं कोई गड़बड़ है, बड़े-बड़े इंस्टीट्यूशन्स, जो हमारे हिन्दुस्तान की तकदीर बने हुए थे, की डिस्ट्रेस सेल हो रही है। एक संदेश जा रहा है, एक ऐप्पीहैनशन फैल रही है और आपकी यह जिम्मेदारी है कि आप उसकी सफाई दें। **I am coming to the point. I will conclude within a minute.** क्योंकि समय बहुत कम रह गया है, मैं अपनी बात समाप्त करना चाहता हूं। सब लोगों ने बातें कहीं हैं, मूल रूप से ट्रांसपेरेंसी पर इनसिस्ट किया है। मेरा आपके माध्यम से इस सरकार से अनुरोध है कि सौ प्रतिशत ट्रांसपेरेंसी गारंटी करें जिससे राट्रू में जो विपरीत संदेश जा रहा है, उसको संभाला जा सके। जैसे मैंने आपको बताया, ऐडमिनिस्ट्रेटिव रिफॉर्म्स की बहुत सख्त जरूरत है, ऐकाउंटेबिलिटी की बहुत सख्त जरूरत है। अगर आप उसे ऐचीव कर पाएंगे तो निश्चित रूप से जो उपक्रम आज घाटे में हैं, कल वे लाभ में होंगे और उसके बाद जैसे उचित समझेंगे, उनका डिस्पोज़ल कर सकेंगे। धन्यवाद।

SHRI ARUN SHOURIE : Mr. Chairman, could I make an important announcement? Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi had read a letter ostensibly from the Cabinet Secretary to the Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister on Air India. That was one of the main points that he made. He was kind enough to give me a photocopy of the letter that he was reading. I sent it personally to the Cabinet Secretary. He has informed me that he confirmed that it is a forged letter....(Interruptions) I sent the Secretary of my Department to first ring him up. The Cabinet Secretary said that he had not written such a letter. I then sent the letter itself with the Joint Secretary of our Ministry saying that a responsible Member of Parliament has read it in the House. The Member said that he would authenticate it. That is what the phrase he used. He has said it. The Secretary has written to us just now. The Cabinet Secretary has confirmed in writing that it is a forged letter. Shri Amitab Bhattacharya, our Joint Secretary, is coming back because he took the letter to the Cabinet Secretary. The Cabinet Secretary is also faxing a letter to this effect here. These are the points I will come to when I reply. But because this is a very important announcement, I would hope that our friends who report Parliamentary proceedings in the Press also will make sure that they carry the facts that the Cabinet Secretary has confirmed that this is a forged letter which has been put in the House and read in the House by such a responsible Member....(Interruptions)

I am not attributing any motives....(Interruptions)

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : I think this is my chance to speak, not you....(Interruptions) I am not supposed to disclose the source. But the Cabinet Secretary has himself confirmed it to the hon. Minister....(Interruptions)

Since the Cabinet Secretary has confirmed just now that the purported copy of the letter is a forged one, I accept it for the hon. Minister's sake. But I also make a demand that the signature of the Cabinet Secretary on that letter should be inquired into. I demand an inquiry to find out whether the signature is a forged or a genuine one.^(Interruptions)

SHRI ARUN SHOURIE: This is a serious matter. Have a full inquiry....^(Interruptions)

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : In my Parliamentary career, I never involved in such matters....^(Interruptions) It is my right to reply. It is a serious allegation.

Sir, I repeat that I referred to two matters in my speech. One is related to the Note of the Cabinet Secretary, which I quoted. The hon. Minister came to me and said that he wanted to cross-check it. I immediately gave him a copy. He cross-checked and has just now conveyed to the House that the Cabinet Secretary himself admitted that it is a forged one.

SHRI ARUN SHOURIE: He has not 'admitted'. He said that it is a forged one.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : All right. I will also supply the hon. Minister a copy of the document relating to the Enforcement Directorate which I referred to in my speech and which I have not yet authenticated, but I would request him that he should examine that also and inform the House tomorrow whether that is also forged. Since the Cabinet Secretary himself informed the Minister, I take the Minister's words as it is and I withdraw all my allegations in this regard, but since the signature of the Cabinet Secretary is involved, I demand that this should be inquired into by the hon. Speaker, to find out whether it is genuine or forged. ...^(Interruptions) Sir, I have not given it to the Press. This should be inquired into because I referred to it in Parliament. ...^(Interruptions)

SHRI ARUN SHOURIE: Sir, for the information of the hon. Member, I would like to say that I did not just check with the Cabinet Secretary. I sent my Secretary to contact and meet the officers of the Prime Minister's Office to whom, he said, the letter had gone. But they also have not received any letter of this kind. ...^(Interruptions)

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : The Minister has said that it is a forged signature. It is a serious matter. So, it must be inquired into. If the signature is a forged one, it must be inquired into. ...^(Interruptions)

SHRI ARUN SHOURIE: I agree with him and I will ensure that it is inquired into by the CBI. ...^(Interruptions)

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : I agree. Let it be inquired into by the CBI and let them report whether his signature is forged or not. ...^(Interruptions) First of all, I demand that the letter should be referred to the CBI. I would also give a copy of the document of the Enforcement Directorate, which I referred in my speech, to the hon. Minister. ...^(Interruptions)

SHRI ARUN SHOURIE: Sir, I will go into that document also. I respect Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi for his fighting qualities, but as I have said earlier also, as a friend, he is receiving information from interested parties. Now, we have come to know that the letter is a forged one. It is a very serious matter because it involves the Cabinet Secretary of India. But he has relied on it as his main point and said that he was prepared to authenticate it. What would he have authenticated? ...^(Interruptions)

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : Sir, I would request the hon. Minister, through you, to refer the letter to the CBI for immediate investigation. Then, I will also give a copy of the document of the Enforcement Directorate to the hon. Minister. He may refer that also to the CBI.

सभापति महोदय : अभी इसी जगह पर क्या आप तय कर लेंगे? चेयर का भी कुछ होता है।

^(व्यवधान)

सभापति महोदय : आपका क्या प्वाइंट ऑर्डर है?

श्री किरीट सोमैया : कैबिनेट स्क्रेटरी के लैटर को कोट किया गया है। उसकी ऑथेंटिसिटी से संबंधित है। यह रिकार्ड में से निकाल देना चाहिए।

सभापति महोदय : उन्होंने सवाल उठाया, माननीय मंत्री जी ने कन्फर्म किया। फिर उन्होंने एलीगेशन वापस लिया और जांच करने को कहा, मामला खत्म हो गया। इसमें क्या यहां सदन में कुछ निश्चय होगा?

â€|(व्यवधान)

SHRI ARUN SHOURIE: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I have been directed by none other than the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs to be absolutely brief. So, I will deal with just a few of the points that have been made. Sir, you have made very important points in the beginning. ...(*Interruptions*)

कुंवर अखिलेश सिंह (महाराजगंज, उ.प्र.) : हम लोग आपको सुनने के लिए गम्भीरता से बैठे हैं।

संसदीय कार्य मंत्री तथा सूचना प्रौद्योगिकी मंत्री (श्री प्रमोद महाजन) : मैंने समझा कि आप रवि जी को सुनने के लिए बैठे हैं।

श्री अरुण शौरी : आप जितनी देर कहेंगे, मैं तो सारे पाइंट्स को डील करने के लिए बहुत उत्सुक हूं, मगर जैसा प्रमोद जी ने मुझे कहा कि पिछले डेढ़ साल में दो कम्पनियां डिसइन्वेस्ट हुई हैं और यह नौर्वी डिबेट है। इस दौरान पिछले बजट सैशन से आज तक we have answered 529 Questions in Parliament on disinvestment. I would really like to know what is missing in any of these.

Sir, the points that have been made are very serious ones. I also feel that there is progress because if you look around us, you can see the attendance now. This thin attendance shows that the subject has been exhausted and no new points are coming up. Everybody is making the same points. But this time, we have made a further advance. I would like to start with that because there is a very important cautionary tale in what has transpired this afternoon and evening before us.

Sir, I will start by reading the letter that I have received from the Secretary of our Department. This is the letter from the Cabinet Secretary and I would like to bring it on record because of the importance of the matter. It is on his letterhead. It is the Cabinet Secretary's letter. It says:

"I have been shown a copy of an alleged note sent from the Office of the Cabinet Secretary to the Principal Secretary to the PM on 17.7.2001 on disinvestment of Air India. It is clearly a forged document. No such communication has been issued from the Cabinet Secretariat on this subject."

Now, Sir, as Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi has rightly said, it is a serious matter. Obviously, none of us doubt his motives. Somebody has planted a forgery on him and I would be writing tomorrow morning itself to the Director of the CBI for a full inquiry into the forgery because if the letters of the Cabinet Secretary of India can be forged, then naturally it is a very serious matter. But I would also like to plead ...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : Could you yield for half a minute, just for your benefit? ...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI ARUN SHOURIE: Let me complete please.

I would hope and beseech the hon. Member, Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi to completely co-operate with the investigation of the CBI into the forgery. ...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : May I just help you? Sir, I have gone through the Parliamentary Practice and Procedure and there, I found that on such matters, it becomes the property of the House and it should be referred to the Privileges Committee or to the Speaker. I would like to draw the attention of the Speaker to this matter tomorrow and the Speaker, either will send it directly to the CBI or it will be referred to the Privileges Committee. I

have gone through these details from the book. ...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI ARUN SHOURIE: As the forged document has come to me, as a Minister I can also act independently on it. ...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : What you claim forged, I may claim not forged. ...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI ARUN SHOURIE: That you will establish to the CBI. ...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI KIRIT SOMAIYA : It can be filed before the CBI also. Both the things will go together. ...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI ARUN SHOURIE: I would urge all of us, in future when such plants are put on us, to at least read what is written. Even a cursory reading would have shown that it was a patent forgery. Just see, how it begins. "As is well aware, the process of disinvestment of Air India" 'As you are all aware' – what? It says: "As is well aware, the process of disinvestment of Air India has been facing numerous problems."

Just see the next sentence. It says: "It is believed and observed that wherever the Government has tried to observe" Is this the sort of language the Cabinet Secretary of India is going to write? At least, the ghost writer, Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi, should be sacked.

If there is no number...(*Interruptions*) Yes, as I mentioned to you, I will certainly write to the Director of the CBI tomorrow and I will report to the House and to the people about the findings on this. I appeal to the Member to co-operate fully with the CBI to establishâ€œ (*Interruptions*)

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : I reserve the right to refer the matter to the Privileges Committee and to the Speaker as per the established rules of the House. I will not depend only on the Minister's guidance. I will depend on the guidance of the rules of the House.

SHRI ARUN SHOURIE: You were so insistent....(*Interruptions*)

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : I will refer that. But I will also refer to the Privileges Committee and to the Speaker.

SHRI ARUN SHOURIE: That you do on your own.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : I shall go by the rules of the House.

SHRI ARUN SHOURIE: You were so insistent on a CBI inquiry. So many Members from your Party were shouting for a CBI inquiry. So, I am all for a CBI inquiry.

...(*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN : Shri Rupchand Pal, he is replying.

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL : The hon. Member has placed something on record on the floor of the House and, you have also placed some other part of the letter or full letter whatever you call it.

SHRI ARUN SHOURIE: It is the full letter.

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL : You have placed the full letter and this can be referred to the Privileges Committee. That is the practice. You cannot again and again refer to CBI. The Government can do anything.â€œ (*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Speaker will decide it.

SHRI ARUN SHOURIE: Forgery is forgery....(*Interruptions*)

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : I shall refer the matter to the hon. Speaker.

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: The hon. Speaker has every right to send anything to the Privileges Committee. But that does not prevent the Government to send something to the CBI....*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL : The Government can do it....*(Interruptions)*

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: We do not know who is claiming whose privilege. I do not know who is claiming whose privilege.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Speaker will decide that.

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL : Whatever it may be....*(Interruptions)*

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: Are we sending our own letters against ourselves to the Privileges Committee?

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : That you cannot debate now.â€œ *(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please take your seat.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : Nobody can debate that. The Government's contention is that the letter is not correct. It is a forged one. My contention is that the letter is correct. Let it be investigated and let the Privileges Committee give its findings. I said it on record. If that Member who used the record is not correct, I am duty bound to apologise to the House. If the Government finds mine right, then the Government will have to apologise. That is the position. It is very clear.

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: We are also from the Government. We are very clear. If the hon. Member, Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi, wants to refer something to the Privileges Committee, he has a right to do and the Speaker will take a decision. As far as the Government is concerned, we will refer it to the CBI.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Kharabela Swain, please take your set.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : Are you doing the same thing for the FERA violation matter?

SHRI ARUN SHOURIE: What I wanted to bring to your attention is this. Unfortunately I find that in each one of our debates. Dr. Raghuvansh Prasad Singh is completely right. I have been cautioning my own friends in the Press also that because of this inter-corporate rivalry, different houses with different interests are using Pressmen like us and other persons for putting forward half-truths and untruths.

I would urge, irrespective of my very high regard for Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi, that all of us should be cautious in this regard. I can tell you what has been one of the most distressing features to me in the last year and a half because an assignment has been given to me. I will get a letter on the definition of NRI. I do not mind naming this person. It is from Shri Ashok Hinduja. Then there are a series of articles making the same point coming in newspapers. Then, a learned Member of Parliament writes an article on that matter. It is exactly the same point. You quoted a report. I do not want to cast any reflection on the Standing Committee. I can tell you that several Members of Parliament have written to me on this 26 per cent, or 25 per cent, and what has been done by Australia, Canada, Korea, Taiwan, and even the USA. The letters are identical. The examples are identical. Unfortunately, it is such a saddening thing that those examples and point have found their way into the reports of even a body like the Standing Committee.

They are exactly the same. If you want, I will read to you just now the letter of the President, FICCI to the Prime

Minister of India. Exactly the same points were made in the same sequence, giving the same countries as examples. It was the then President of FICCI's letter and I read that out in FICCI. They had asked me to give a lecture there. All the big businessmen were there. I said, 'Here is your letter and here is the letter of a Member of Parliament to the Prime Minister. The points in both of them are the same. Here is a second and a third letter from Members of Parliament. It is the same there. All four letters made the same points.' Then, the President, FICCI told me, 'But I just wrote it because it is based on the report of the Civil Aviation Committee.' They have a sub-committee on civil aviation. Who is the head of that Civil Aviation Committee? It is the so-called owner of Jet Airways. "आपही पी वे, आप पिलावे, आप फिरे मतवाला!" - और हम सब ऐसी ताकतों के इस्ट्रॉमेंट्स बन रहे हैं।

It is because of your long association with this House Sir, that through you I appeal to all of us that we should beware of corporate plants. You have been very vigilant against corporate influence in public life. I have made a collection of these letters and articles so that I can use them at some stage.

The second point that I would make is on the question of FERA violations that Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi has talked about in regard to the Indian Hotel Company. Actually, the guidelines are absolutely clear and I assure the House that they have been formulated after great diligence and internal discussion within the Government so as not to preclude or so as not to reduce the number of bidders so that they are not so stern that you rule out the whole of corporate India. At the same time, those companies to whom you cannot trust public sector companies or who are involved in major crimes should not get to participate in the disinvestment process. So, for striking this balance, these guidelines were formulated after detailed internal discussion and discourse.

As I mentioned to you, in the case of bidders, please remember, it is a particular legal entity that matters – so, if it is the Indian Hotel Company – which is convicted not just under investigation, it is ruled out. That is why I kept reading the guideline and there was a difference or altercation at that time. But the provision is explicit. The entity has to be convicted by a court of law or there has to be an indictment by a particular regulatory authority. If Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi or anyone of us could show that any bidder has been convicted by a court of law or indicted by a regulatory authority like the SEBI, I assure that I would apply the guidelines mechanically and blindly.

I do not mind sharing with you some information because I have already had occasion to say this when of a false allegation was made in public in the case of Videocon. Our interest is that in regard to all companies, there should be the maximum number of bidders. The Videocon people were among the companies indicted by the SEBI for having participated in rigging their share prices. I do not know Videocon from Adam but they sent to me a person I have known for 40 years, who happens to be working with them. He is a very honourable person who was my senior in college by four or five years. They sent him to me. He explained to me that in their view the indictment by the SEBI was wrong and therefore a show-cause notice should not be issued to them. They were kind enough to say that if I issued a show-cause notice, there would be a presumption that I had examined their documents and had thereafter come to a conclusion, and this would harm their reputation. So, they requested that we do not issue a show-cause notice because it would harm their reputation. I said, 'Look here, I will apply these guidelines blindly and with my ears blocked. It will be applied mechanically.'

They said then that if the issuing of the notice was delayed by two or three days, they would like to, in that case, withdraw from the process. They withdrew from the process and that is the only reason on account of which, in the case of Videocon, as they are no longer in the process and there is no reason to issue a show-cause notice to them. Whoever is in the process and is indicted, we will issue the show-cause notice, give them an opportunity for hearing, and the guidelines would be applied. So, on the Indian Hotels case, if anybody finds this indictment or an adverse order by a regulatory authority or conviction by a court of law, please bring it to our attention and we will deliver to you the whole thing.

On the third point, the hon. Member from AIADMK is here. I just want to bring one thing to his attention. There is a misunderstanding in regard to the reports of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India. I do not want any confusion to prevail in our minds. What happens is that it goes through three to four stages.

As I had promised in the House, within a week of the conclusion of the BALCO transaction, all papers, every scrap of paper regarding BALCO disinvestment was handed over to them. They may come to an adverse finding and so on. Similarly, the Modern Foods transaction had taken place much earlier. But we sent all the papers on Modern Foods also to them.

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL (HOOGLY): What did the C& AG observe?

SHRI ARUN SHOURIE: Sir, I will repeat what I have already clarified because you were not here, Dr. Raghuvansh Prasad Singh and our hon. friends were quoting from that and that is why I am reporting to you. In the case of C& AG what happens is that they send communications to the Ministry saying 'our preliminary finding is this; what do you say?'. They change their opinion. Sometimes the Ministry is asked to give further explanation for what had happened.

In the first communication that we received from the C & AG there were 12 observations. We gave replies. They came down to three observations. We have sent further replies and I talked to the Deputy C & AG three days ago asking whether they could please finalise their report earlier so that when I get up to speak to you, I could report the fact to you. I would report truthfully to you. But they say - 'No, we go through our internal processes' and they have not finalised the report. They have not sent us any final report. I assure you. ...(*Interruptions*) उन्होंने कहा कि सीएंडएजी की रिपोर्ट को दबाया जाएगा। मैंने आपको कमिटमेंट दी है। मैंने सीएंडएजी को कहा है, आप हमें भेजिए ही मत। आप सीधे पालियामेंट को भेजिए। सीधे पीपल को दीजिए, शूट्रैस।

MR. CHAIRMAN : It has to be presented to the House.

SHRI ARUN SHOURIE: Yes Sir. It will directly come to the House.

कुंवर अखिलेश सिंह : हम यह जानना चाहते हैं कि सीएंडएजी की जिस रिपोर्ट का उद्धरण दिया गया है, रघुवंश प्रसाद जी द्वारा, वह सही है या गलत है ?

श्री अरुण शौरी : गलत इस तरह से है कि वह बेचारा रिपोर्टर स्टेजेज नहीं जानता है या उसने उन्हे नजरअन्दाज किया है। â€œ (व्यवधान) श्री एल.के. झा, प्राइम मिनिस्टर के प्रिसिपल सैक्रेटरी होते थे। बिहार से बहुत फेमस सिविल सर्वैंट थे। उन्होंने कहा था - 'what began as investigative journalism has become inventive journalism'.

SHRI T.M. SELVAGANPATHI : Sir, we stand to correct ourselves. On a point of SEBI indicting in the BALCO deal, was Sterlite also indicted or not? That is a fact we want to know.

SHRI ARUN SHOURIE: It is a very good point. Actually there is a confusion on that also. When the BALCO discussion was taking place, hon. Member Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi read out at that time an opinion of the Solicitor General of India. That was on a transaction in the Ministry of Communications in regard to purchase of cables. What happened was that Sterlite had quoted a particular price. Then they realised, why should they quote such a low price. So, one hour before the tenders were closed, they said that there was a typing mistake in the previous document and they gave a new tender document. They changed the figure from say 123 and they wrote, say 223. The Ministry of Communications rightly said - 'We will hold you to the old price, the lower price.' A dispute arose. Eventually the matter was referred by the Ministry to the Solicitor General of India who said that the Ministry of Communications is right.

Sterlite must be held to the low price, he said and the Ministry is right that the order which had been won by Sterlite should be taken away from them and distributed among other bidders. That was the opinion of the Solicitor-General. I checked with him and he confirmed to me, the Law Minister confirmed to me that that opinion applied only to that particular transaction.

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL : Did the Government not know about 1989 indictment and involvement of Sterlite along with BPL and Videocon?

SHRI ARUN SHOURIE: Sir, you do not know. I am coming to that.

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL : I know that. I had myself gone there for inquiry in that project.

SHRI ARUN SHOURIE: The SEBI indictment is the second indictment that has come now. ...(*Interruptions*) Because of that indictment, a show cause notice has been issued to Sterlite and if they are not able to satisfy Government on this matter, the guidelines will be applied and Sterlite, like BPL and Videocon, will be excluded from participation in all further disinvestment. ...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL : The Government had full knowledge about all these things. There was only a deliberate delay on the part of SEBI with regard to indictment.

SHRI ARUN SHOURIE: Sir, this is the first time that I have heard this allegation.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : Is it also not a fact that SEBI also gave an indictment to James, the Morgan & Stanley in the stock market scam?

SHRI ARUN SHOURIE: No. We have certainly no knowledge of this at all, but since you have mentioned this and you were actually reading out from a newspaper report ...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : Is it correct or not?

SHRI ARUN SHOURIE: Certainly not, to my knowledge, but because you have read out some newspaper report, I will certainly go and verify.

Now, we have just to recall and see what was said last time and what is being said today. Sir, all sorts of allegations have been made on Modern Foods, and the position today is this. In 2000-2001, sales of bread are 31

per cent higher than they were in the previous year. In the first four months of 2001, sales are 80 per cent higher than they were in the first four months of last year. Total wages have increased and not one worker has been retrenched. Wages have increased by Rs. four crore, they have increased by Rs. 1,600 per employee per month. In addition to Rs. 20 crore additional equity being put in, Rs. 29 crore have been put in for modernisation, for product and marketing development for VRS payments. Sir, a VRS more generous than is prevalent in the Government has been instituted at the request of the employees.

The BIFR reference has come about because it was discovered later that there had been under-provisioning by the public sector unit of Rs. 35 crore. Coupled with a loss of Rs. 13 crore in the previous year, this reduced the net worth of the company by 50 per cent. Therefore, under the law that you have passed, the company was obliged to report Modern Foods to BIFR.

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL : Sir, the basis criticism is on the valuation.

SHRI ARUN SHOURIE: My friend, your basic criticism always keeps changing.

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL : It is not that.

SHRI ARUN SHOURIE: Sir, you just keep sitting now. ...(*Interruptions*) If you are prepared to sit till 12 o'clock, I will answer whatever you ask. ...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL : I am here for that purpose only.

SHRI ARUN SHOURIE: There are various steps that have been taken for training of workers, for modernisation of the plant, for plant hygiene and so on which were not there.

Similarly, in the case of BALCO, it is a great tragedy for our country. If you permit me to say, I sincerely feel that because by absolutely misleading people, a loss has been inflicted on the country, not on that company alone, of up to Rs. 200 crore on a rough estimate has been inflicted. Nothing was gained. The plant has now been brought back into operation. Four hundred pots froze. All the linings have to be replaced. The blast furnace froze and that has to be relined. In the meantime, it is no secret that one private company benefited because of closure of BALCO by making extortionate profits. ...(*Interruptions*)

You are getting up all the time . This is not correct. (*Interruptions*) This should not go on record, Sir. (*Interruptions*) When I am on my legs, you go on speaking. You are going to walk-out in any case.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Let the Minister reply.

SHRI ARUN SHOURIE: As was just being pointed out by my friend, Shri Somaiya, the very person who was so vociferous at that time has later said that he is going disinvest 29 public sector undertakings. Not only that, at that time, in this House, it was repeated that a Chief Minister had said, "Oh! Rs. 100 crore have been made by an officer of the Prime Minister's Office, by an officer of the Disinvestment Department, and an officer of the State Government." (*Interruptions*) What is this? This is a 'Jack in the box' behaviour. (*Interruptions*) The Chief Vigilance Commissioner wrote to the Chief Minister that it was his job to enforce the Prevention of Corruption Act and, therefore, the Chief Minister he should send him the names, send him the evidence. The letter was not even answered or acknowledged. That person is now not talking about the allegation, but it was repeated in the House.

Now, Sir, a very important point was made- by three Members on my count- that the Shareholders' Agreement has been altered, and in a very forceful speech, the hon. Member from AIADMK also made this point. You see, again, this is a handout put to the Press by a corporate rival. These very words, "Shareholders' Agreement has been altered". And that, "this is done to favour the single bidder that is left" were used. You have also made the point that they have now been told, "Bilaterals, will be given to you for seven years."

Now, I will draw your attention to the first document sent to all bidders, which is called "The Information Memorandum". In this Memorandum, at pages 46-47, you will find this question of bilaterals is set out. This is the first document sent to every bidder. The implication is that, "Now, something has been done to favour Tata Singapore or the Government is trying to entice them into a deal". It says:

"Under the Draft Civil Aviation Policy, the rights of Air India and Indian Airlines will be guaranteed at the current level for a period of seven years."

Second, on this question of the Shareholders' Agreement, what was sent out in the first instance was entitled, "Draft Shareholders' Agreement". In this blue book that I have circulated to all Members of Parliament, you will find that we have set out the entire procedure. Here, it says:

"The Draft Share Purchase Agreement and the Shareholders' Agreement are also prepared by the advisors with the help of Legal Advisors and given to the prospective bidders for eliciting their reaction."

Then, it says:

"Based on the response received from the prospective bidders, the Share Purchase and Shareholders' Agreement is finalised and vetted by the Ministry of Law and eventually approved by the Cabinet Committee on Disinvestment"

. When the bidders come, they are given a thing called 'Request for proposal. This 'Request for Proposal' at page 8 says:

"Bidders to revert with the initial written comments on Draft Shareholders' Agreement and Draft Share Purchase Agreement on or prior to February 9. Shortlisted bidders to revert with additional and final written comments on the Draft Shareholders' Agreement and Draft Share Purchase Agreement on or prior to April 12."

Then, the sixth step is:

"Circulation for final and non-negotiable Draft of the Shareholders' Agreement and Share Purchase Agreement to shortlisted bidders."

This is at page 8. It is repeated at page 20.

22.00 hrs.

It is repeated at page number 25 also. Yet, a corporate rival puts out a story in the Press and the hon. Members swallow it and then vomit it out. I tell you that we are becoming instruments of corporate rivals.

Sir, the next point that I would like to make is that a lot of rhetoric is being used to show as to how wonderful the public sector is. I wish it were so. Big words like 'Pride of India' and 'honour of India' are being used in regard to Air India. I wish Air India were all that. I would like to ask a question here. Do the hon. Members know the outstanding debt of Air India? Some hon. Members were mentioning that Government has never given any money to Air India. Do you know the outstanding debt of Air India? It is to the tune of Rs. 3,248 crore. In the last seven years the Airlines has not taken a single loan for expansion and for creation of asses. They have been taking loans for working capital, that is for buying fuel and for paying wages...*(Interruptions)* The interest on these working capital loans today amounts to Rs. 100 crore per year. The hearts of the hon. Members, who have been talking about Air India, should bleed for Air India. But this is a comment on our times that they would not know as to what are the accumulated losses of Air India. Let us hear it from the hon. Members here. Do the hon. Members know the accumulated loss of Air India? It is Rs. 930 crore.

Sir, one of the Members was saying वर्कर्स का क्वश्वन है, रोजी-रोटी का क्वश्वन है। I would like to know which hon. Member has taken the trouble to find out the average earnings and emoluments of an Air India employee. Your heart bleeds for them and thus, at least you should have found that out. It is rupees seven lakhs a year for an average Air India employee. It comes to Rs. 60,000 per month for an average Air India employee...*(Interruptions)* Please let me finish.

SHRI T.M. SELVAGANPATHI : Is it not a fact that net loss rate is coming down? Can you not fetch a better price?

SHRI ARUN SHOURIE: If you only knew as to what is happening. If I start disclosing facts then you would start accusing me of lowering the value of Air India. Do you know, as we are talking now, there is a dispute about the balance sheet of Air India? Have you found that out? After due diligence, the prospective bidders have found out, their accountants have shown that there has been an under-provisioning to the extent of Rs. 832 crore...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : Who is responsible for that? You should find that out. Since you have disclosed this fact, definitely some people are responsible...*(Interruptions)* Do you wish this House to book them? ...*(Interruptions)* किसी भी समय का हो। आई (व्यवधान) It might have been any Government...*(Interruptions)* It might have happened in our regime or your regime...*(Interruptions)* He has revealed something very serious.

SHRI ARUN SHOURIE: I am giving you the facts but you do not want to read them. The hon. Members are concerned about the public sector. But how many of us have bothered to go to the library and look up those four volumes of the C&AG Report? You keep talking about the C&AG report. That is available in the library.

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL : Sir, he cannot make a comment like that...*(Interruptions)*

Many of us have been associated with Public Accounts Committee long before he became a Member of Parliament. ...*(Interruptions)* He is trying to mislead the House. ...*(Interruptions)* Just because we are listening to him patiently, he should not assume that whatever he says is correct. ...*(Interruptions)*

प्रो. रासा सिंह रावत (अजमेर) : माननीय मंत्री जी जवाब दे रहे हैं, आप सुनने का धैर्य रखिये। बीच-बीच में यूं ही टोक रहे हैं! (व्यवधान)

SHRI P.S. GADHAVI (KUTCH): What was incorrect in what the Minister has stated?...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : Sir, the Minister is accusing that the Members of Parliament do not go to the Library and that they do not study. ...*(Interruptions)* He is implying that he is the only wise person in Parliament. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL : The attitude of the Minister is not correct. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : The Minister has been asking us to walk right from the beginning. ...*(Interruptions)* We consider it an insult to the Members of Parliament. ...*(Interruptions)* In protest of the Minister's attitude, we walk out.

SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN (BALASORE): Sir, the hon. Minister said right in the beginning of his reply, that the Opposition was going to walk out. ...*(Interruptions)* That is what they are doing now.

2206 hours

*(At this stage, Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi, Shri Rupchand Pal
and some other hon. Members left the House.)*

SHRI T.M. SELVAGANPATHI : It is the Minister who has forced us to walk out. He wanted us to walk out. I do not know what is the reason for this. It appears that he does not want to face a volley of questions from the Opposition. His intention seems to be that he can say what he wants to say if the Opposition walks out. I have got the highest regard for Shri Shourie but I am sorry to hear these words coming from him. I protest it.

2207 hours

(At this stage, Shri T.M. Selvaganpathi left the House.)

SHRI ARUN SHOURIE: Sir, I said right in the beginning that they will walk out and that is exactly what has happened. Each time there is a debate, they do this. It is very easy to forecast. No astrologer is needed for it.

Sir, the situation is that out of 361 public sector undertakings, accounts of only 270 undertakings were made available to the CAG. For 34 companies, accounts are not available for three years or more. In 29 companies, profits have been overstated by Rs.500 crore. Losses have been understated in 20 companies by almost Rs.300 crore. These are the findings of the CAG on this whole matter. They find excess payments, avoidable payments,

and unproductive expenditure.

There was a lot of talk of trying to restructure and revive. Let me give you the example of 77 public sector undertakings. I will give you the findings of CAG in regard to these public sector undertakings and then I will tell you which are these 77 public sector undertakings. In these units, Rs. 10,600 crore have been invested. What is the dividend paid? The dividend paid on Rs. 10,600 is 0.71 crores. That is the total dividend paid. The rate of return is 0.04 per cent in 1998-99, and 0.02 per cent in 1997-98. In these, it was found that of 65 companies, only 15 companies have finalised their accounts. Accounts of fifty of companies are in arrears for different periods. Accounts of these have not been finalised for one year to fifteen years.

Of the 12 corporations, only one corporation has finalised its accounts. Nine corporations have not finalised their accounts from one to nineteen years. In these cases, 40 PSUs' accounts were test-checked and it was found that 25 of them had understated their losses and eight had overstated their profits. About the accumulated losses, of the 46 PSUs whose paid up capital was Rs. 382 crore, the accumulated losses are Rs. 2,078 crore.

Sir, a lot of things were said about the revival of units. I had reported in this House last time that on 23 revival packages, Rs. 40,000 crore sunk and not even a single one turned around. Sir, Rs. 40,000 crore sunk. That is what Shri Venkaiah Naidu's point was.

In the instance of 77 units, in 1973 an Industrial Reconstruction Department was created.

कुंवर अखिलेश सिंह (महाराजगंज, उ.प्र.) : माननीय मंत्री जी, इसमें हम जानना चाहते हैं कि पुनरुद्धार करने के लिए इतना रुपया किस पीरियड में दिया गया।

श्री अरुण शौरी : पिछले दस सालों में दिया गया, सब सरकारों ने कोशिश की, 1973 में एक इंडस्ट्रियल रीकंस्ट्रक्शन डिपार्टमेंट बना, उन्होंने 20 सिक्क यूनिट्स के लिए पैकेजिंग बनाये।

Eighteen units continued to be sick. Their paid-up capital was Rs. 65 crore, and their accumulated losses were to the tune of Rs. 703 crore. This is the fate of revival!

The Transport Corporation makes a loss of Rs. 10 per kilometre in the Metros. In the Northern Region, it makes a loss of Rs. 7.73 per kilometre. Do you know which these companies and corporations are? Mr. Chairman, Sir, you will know that these are West Bengal Government's companies and corporations. What I have narrated are figures about them as recounted by the Comptroller and Auditor General's Report on West Bengal.

So, Sir, I feel that the reality of the public sector units is so out of touch with what we keep saying in our speeches. And these facts are reported again and again. It is a comment on what has happened to our Parliament that not even one of these Reports has any effect on anybody.

Such a learned Member as Shri Somnath Chatterjee was just discoursing on Hindustan Teleprinters Corporation. Now should I go by what he says or should I go by an expert body that was set up by the United Front Government? Hindustan Teleprinters was one of the firms referred to the Disinvestment Commission by the United Front Government. What they say in the Report on ITI and HTL is this:

"The bleak financial future of that company has been brought out. HTL is even more vulnerable than the ITI owing to its substantial dependence on imported components, low value addition and lack of in-house, R&D of products like switches transmission, equipment, etc. The company is unable to meet its expected obligations of debt owing to severe liquidity problems. In the next one or two years, the net worth of the company is likely to be substantially eroded and the company will most probably come under the purview of the BIFR. "

तब से अब तक आप कहते हो कि हम जल्दी कर रहे हैं, मैं आपको बतला रहा हूँ।

Sir, the situation is so serious that actually by every week's delay on this matter, we are ensuring the death of these companies.

I will just finish after covering two points, which have been made by hon. Members. I really plead with the hon. Members to look at the facts. आप कहते हो कि फॉरेनर्स खरीदना चाहते हैं, बिडर्स को दिया जा रहा है, मैं आपको बतला रहा हूँ कि कोई लेने के लिए तैयार नहीं है। अभी किसी ने कहा कि ब्रिटिश एयरवेज बाहर क्यों चला गया, क्वान्टाज क्यों चला गया।

I will tell you that one of the legendary figures in Aviation who has turned a company around was one of the bidders.

After they looked at Air India, this person met me. He said: 'Mr. Minister, we cannot find a reason why we should pay you for your head aches' and they withdrew.

The Ministry of Heavy Industries, referred 18 companies to us. Two of them were returned because they did not come in the purview of the disinvestment at the moment. Of the remaining 16 cases, after one and a half years' work, we have had to return six companies already because there was not a single bidder who wanted to take them. In the case of Air India, we started with nine bidders, we are left with two – and one has been issued a show cause notice. In the case of CMC, we started with 14 bidders, we are left with five; in Hindustan Zinc, we started with nine bidders, we are left with six; in HTL, for whom Shri Somnath Chatterjee was saying that it is a shining example, there were six bidders and only two are left; in Indian Airlines, there were six, only one is left; in NEPA, there were four, only two are left; and in Modern Foods, we started with ten, and eventually there was only one.

So, I would plead with the hon. Members to please wake up to the reality of the situation as it is. I can deal with several points but there is really no time and it is not necessary also as they have been dealt with on other occasions. I assure you that the Government is not pursuing targets. Sir, this was your personal concern and it was the concern of the others also. Actually, when the disinvestment money was used only for filling targets, it was in the initial period before we went for strategic sale because then Rs.18,000 crore were used only for filling the fiscal deficit. That kind of disinvestment did not change the character of the companies. It did not change the management or the work culture of the companies and those companies continued to become sick and sicker and now they are at the point of termination.

So, Government continues to believe that disinvestment is one way to make companies vibrant and revive their health so that they can flourish in a competitive environment. Secondly, this is the only way to safeguard the jobs of the workers for whose welfare everybody's heart bleeds.

Sir, I would have continued to answer other points but it is already 10.15 p.m. So, I think what I have said would be enough. Thank you very much.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The House stands adjourned to meet tomorrow, the 24th August, 2001 at 11.00 a.m.

2217 hours

The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock

on Friday, August 24, 2001/Bhadra 2, 1923 (Saka).
