

The Lok Sabha re-assembled after lunch at Fourteen of the Clock

[MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER in the Chair]

MOTION OF NO-CONFIDENCE IN THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS

SHRI SHRI CHAND GOEL (Chandigarh) : Sir, I want to raise a point of order before the Prime Minister rises to reply. I have already sent a letter to the Speaker.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : There is nothing before the House now. How can you raise a point of order.

SHRI SHRI CHAND GOEL : I want to raise a point of order under rule 352 which lays down that a member while speaking shall not refer to any matter of fact on which a judicial decision is pending. Sir, two writ petitions have already been filed in this matter.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : This is altogether anticipatory. In case a reference is made to it, you will be justified in raising it. How are you justified at the present juncture ?

SHRI SHRI CHAND GOEL : In one of the writ petitions, the Prime Minister has been impleaded as a party and the prayer in that writ petition is that the Prime Minister be restrained from giving effect to the award given by the tribunal.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : All sorts of petitions may be made to the High Court or the Supreme Court. Are we going to make a plea on that basis on the floor of this House ?

SHRI SHRI CHAND GOEL : She is the Prime Minister and she is going to make an important statement, which has vital implications. She is going to bind the whole nation by her statement. I am seeking the assistance of this rule....

डा० महाबल प्रसाद (महाराजगंज) : अगर यह अविश्वास-प्रस्ताव वापस ले लिया जाये, तो प्रधान मंत्री को कुछ कहने की आवश्यकता नहीं रहेगी, अन्यथा उन्होंने इस प्रस्ताव पर हुई विसफास का जवाब तो देना ही है।

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : You are expressing your own fears. In case a re-

ference is made to the matter before the court, I will allow him to raise it.

श्री ब्रह्म सिंहारी बाजपेयी (बलरामपुर) : इस सम्बन्ध में दो तरीके हैं। एक तरीका यह है कि जो रिट पेटिशन अदालत में दायर की गई है, उस की तरफ सदन का ध्यान खींच कर आप के द्वारा प्रधान मंत्री से कहा जाये कि वह ऐसी कोई बात न कहें, जो अदालत द्वारा न्याय-दान में बाधा पैदा करें। दूसरा तरीका यह है कि जब प्रधान मंत्री इस सम्बन्ध में बोलें, तब पायंट ऑफ आर्डर रोज किया जाये। मैं दोनों के लिए तैयार हूँ। मैं श्री गायल को कहूंगा कि वह प्रधान मंत्री को बोलने दें और उपयुक्त समय पर पायंट ऑफ आर्डर उठावें।

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : It is a word of caution, not a point of order.

श्री अ० सि० सहगल (बिलासपुर) : उपाध्यक्ष महोदय, पहले तो हमें यह देखना होगा कि आया वह रिट पेटिशन एडमिट हो गई है या नहीं। अगर वह रिट पेटिशन एडमिट हो गई है, तो प्रधान मंत्री उस को दृष्टि में रख कर इस विसफास का जवाब दे सकती हैं।

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : I have already ruled that it is not a point of order. If a petition is presented, it is yet to come before the court. It has nothing to do with this debate.

THE PRIME MINISTER, MINISTER OF ATOMIC ENERGY, MINISTER OF PLANNING AND MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI) : Before I begin, I would like

to say that the simplest way to deal with this matter would be for the Hon'ble Members to withdraw the motion. Once they have brought forward the motion, they cannot say that I should not reply to the discussion. That is very simple.

SHRI SHRI CHAND GOEL : The statements of other members are not so vital and important. But whatever the Prime Minister is going to say, that is going to bind the whole nation. Therefore, she

[Shri Shri Chand Goel]

should be very careful and cautious. (*Interruptions*).

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: I have already ruled that she is perfectly with her rights to reply to the debate. So there is no point of order.

SHRI PILOO MODY (Godhra): Sir, may I make a suggestion? The Prime Minister can speak without saying anything.

SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI: I leave that honour to the hon. Member.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker, actually the Government's point of view has been stated very clearly and cogently by my colleague, the Deputy Prime Minister, yesterday. So it is not that I am making any new pronouncement just now. I want to say that I welcome this discussion and the opportunity we have had to deliberate on various aspects of this award and the agreement, and I am grateful to the hon. Member for the level of the debate. It is natural that there should be differences in our points of view and in our convictions, but it is not right for any hon. Member to claim a monopoly of patriotism which some of our hon. friends opposite have tried to do. Even when we differ with them we do not attribute motives to their remarks or their reasonings and arguments. We expect the same from them. We, on this side, have had a long record of service to the nation and we are second to none in our determination to uphold national honour and to work for the welfare of our people. We do not wear our patriotism on our sleeves, so to speak.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker, you will appreciate that when we are called upon to form a government, to provide a government, we are of necessity compelled to face the hard facts of life. We cannot escape into emotion nor can we lay the blame on others and escape our responsibility. The approach of the Government, as I said earlier, was made very clear yesterday by the Deputy Prime Minister, and this morning my colleague the Home Minister also has spoken.

When all is said and the patriotic fervour and emotion spent in very legitimate expression, we are left with the fact that the freely elected government of this country entered into an agreement, an international

agreement. That agreement was placed before both Houses of Parliament which endorsed it by an overwhelming majority. I cannot understand how a democracy can function unless the Members are prepared to accept majority decisions. That is the whole point of democratic functioning. Nor can I understand the logic of the argument that the decision reached by Parliament, by a majority, is not binding on us all.

A few hon. Members have argued that we can retreat from our obligation to implement the decision of the Tribunal, and references have been made by some hon. Members to what they have called the compulsions of international public opinion. Naturally, we do not ignore international public opinion in many matters, but where national interest is concerned we think that it is national interest which must come before everything else, and I should like to assure the House that international opinion is certainly not the guiding factor in whatever decision the Government has taken. What is important is that India should not do anything which is not right and proper. The Government must honour its commitments which is that the decision of the Tribunal—and I am now speaking in quotes, a single sentence which has been quoted by other hon. Members,—“shall be binding on both the governments and shall not be questioned on any grounds whatsoever”. Many hon. Members who have spoken from the opposition, even though they have disagreed with us on other matters, have supported this view.

The Tribunal had to determine the boundary alignment and, I might add that the alignment claimed by India has been substantially accepted. The opinion of the Chairman of the Tribunal, which was concurred in by Judge Entezam, contains the following sentence:

“It might be added that the boundary proposed by me for the greater part of its length roughly coincides with the boundary proposed by my learned colleague, Mr. Bebler.”

I cannot say that I am satisfied with the Award. I expressed my views the other day when I made a statement. I entirely agree with what the Home Minister said a little

earlier. However, our natural disappointment at having succeeded only to the extent of 90 per cent, and not 100 per cent as we would naturally have liked, should not colour our judgment as to where our duty lies. We propose to honour our international commitment in the earnest hope that the settlement of this issue will close an unfortunate chapter of conflict and promote the development of normal relations between these two neighbouring countries.

The assertion by some hon. Members that the dispute between India and Pakistan did not exist is somewhat strange. How can hon. Members forget that there was not only a dispute but that there were bilateral talks about it and there was even a conflict? Since these failed to produce the desired results, the matter was referred to arbitration with the approval of our Parliament. I should like to recall the words of the late Prime Minister, Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri, as to what the Tribunal was meant to do and has done. He had stated :

"I would, at this stage, like to explain why the agreement referred both to the determination and demarcation of the boundary. It has been the Government of India's consistent stand that the boundary in question is already well established and officially settled and that what remains to be done is its demarcation on the ground. On this point, however, Pakistan has had a difference of opinion with us. Pakistan's contention has been that the boundary is yet to be determined. This difference had to be resolved either by negotiations or by reference to an impartial tribunal."

He went on to say :

"Once the boundary has been determined in this manner, the next step of demarcation on the ground will be taken."

The Tribunal has now determined the boundary alignment, and I should like to express our appreciation of Judge Bebler's fine judgment. I should also like to place on record Government's thanks to Secretary-General, UThant for the help provided to the Tribunal by the United Nations and, finally, I should like to express our deep appreciation of the services rendered by all our eminent counsel and concerned officials. They have worked with great thoroughness

and a deep sense of devotion and those who read the entire report of the Award will be impressed by their work.

Some hon. Members referred to the views of the hon. Member, Shri N. Chatterjee. He is away in the Andamans. But when he heard certain radio reports of the views expressed, he sent me a telegram. He has stated that the terms of the cease-fire agreement between India and Pakistan definitely commit them to two things—acceptance of the Award by both the countries and execution of the Award by the Tribunal in the event of any difficulty in the actual delineation of the boundary as declared by the Tribunal. He has further added that the presentation of India's case was both comprehensive and cogent and full justice was done to India's case by the members of the Indian Delegation.

The hon. Member, Shri Pashabhai Patel, has spoken of the possibility of the utilisation of the Narmada project in reclamation work in Kutch. The position is that the Narmada Water Resources Development Committee has recommended a master plan for the optimum and integrated development of the water resources of the river Narmada. This envisages the irrigation of 3 lakhs of acres in the little Rann and 4.5 lakhs acres in the Great Rann of Kutch. I appreciate the constructive suggestion made by the hon. Member. Now that the Award has settled the boundary, we should get down to work and develop this area so that it can also contribute to the prosperity of the country.

The debate has raised the general issue of our relations with Pakistan. Shri Madhok contended that we could never have good relations with Pakistan. This, at best, is a counsel of despair. The Government cannot proceed on the presumption of perpetual hostility. However distant the prospect might be of fashioning our relations with Pakistan so that they become peaceful, normal and friendly and however tortuous the route, it must always be our endeavour to work constantly to make Pakistan realise that its interests too lie in friendly and co-operative relations with India.

I was glad to find that there was an understanding among some hon. Members of the Opposition that as a Government we

[Shrimati Indira Gandhi]

must take a responsible and reasonable position in the matter of Indo-Pakistani relations.

Some hon. Members have expressed concern regarding the defence and security of this important border area. I quite appreciate their concern and also, of course, the concern specially of the people of Gujarat. Once the Kutch boundary has been delineated after this award, no one should be in any doubt that that border, like any other border of the country, shall be defended by the combined strength of the nation and by the valour of our valiant armed forces.

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE (Kanpur) : Sardar Swaran Singh should note it.

SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI : Once more we have before us what one hon. Member on the other side took pains to describe as a simple motion. The Home Minister also referred to this matter. I presume it was made "simple" so that all our friends opposite could get together on the motion. For the rest, as the House is aware, the mover of the motion, hon. Member Professor Madhok, spent some time criticizing his other colleagues who had joined him in this motion. I have no desire to defend his colleagues or those parties. Some of them have spoken for themselves and I am sure, they can defend themselves. But I should only like to remind the House that notwithstanding such confessions of regard for each other as are made on the floor of the House, Professor Madhok's party has not hesitated to combine with Professor Mukerjee's party to form governments in more than one State. However, I leave them to their own devices. I do not want to say anything further on this. . . . (Interruption). I am glad, they think that it is the same thing. That is not the impression I got from Professor Madhok's speech.

Although the motion brought before the House purports to be a general one, the debate, in fact, has centred around the Kutch Award almost exclusively and very few other points were raised. Anyhow, I have dealt with most of the economic and other matters just a few days ago when I was replying to the debate on the President's Address. Hon. Members have talked of the unity and the integrity of the

country. As I just now mentioned, we do not call their patriotism into question. I believe that they are sincerely concerned with these important questions and that is why I draw their attention to these issues time and time again.

I was very glad to hear hon. Member, Shri Krishnamoorthy, denounce the burning of the national flag in Coimbatore, Madurai and other places and the insult to the national anthem on another occasion. What has happened, whether in Coimbatore or in Madurai or in Assam, is naturally something which saddens us all. I sincerely hope that the misguided young people will realise the folly of their actions and that all responsible leaders, no matter to what party they belong, will join together to uphold the dignity of our national emblems.

All movements, all attitudes which create tension or fissiparous tendencies or separatist feelings, whether they are between people who speak different languages or live in different States or whether they are between people who profess different religions, castes and creeds, must be put down strongly. It is only then that we can build a firm base from which we can defend and strengthen our unity and our integrity.

SHRI BAL RAJ MADHOK : Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I have heard with great attention the utterances of the hon. Prime Minister, the Deputy Prime Minister, the Home Minister and a number of hon. Members from the Congress Benches who have spoken on this motion. The very fact that such senior-most members of the ruling party found it necessary to intervene shows that the arguments that we had put forth, that the case we had presented, has proved to be effective.

Sir, I am sorry to say that while replying to the debate, they have depended more on invectives, more on references, to the late Prime Minister, Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri, for whom we have as much respect. . . .

THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI MORARJI DESAI) : Please cite the invectives.

SHRI BAL RAJ MADHOK : . . . as the Congress Benches have. I look upon him as the first, really, truly, Indian Prime