

related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Science and Technology, Environment and Forests on Action Taken by the Departments of Biotechnology, Electronics and Ocean Development on Committee's Thirty-fourth, Thirty-second and Thirty-fifth Reports on Demands for Grants (1996-97) respectively.

11.08 hrs.

## MOTION OF CONFIDENCE IN THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS

[English]

**THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRI I.K. GUJRAL)**: Mr. Speaker, Sir, with your permission, I beg to move :

"That this House expresses its confidence in the Council of Ministers."

[Translation]

Mr. Speaker, Sir, while I am putting forth this point before the House, I am well aware that the term of my Government is beginning today, therefore it would be better to talk of days to come since it would be suiting the occasion and praiseworthy too. But whenever we talk about policies and days to come in India, it becomes necessary to glance at the past and it is easy too, specially in the year when India is celebrating fiftieth anniversary of its independence, a number of people like me and Chandra Shekharji are present in the House who have participated in the freedom struggle of India. That was Uinque moment.

Only yesterday, I visited Gandhi Memorial. Where Shri Bommaiji had made arrangements for bringing some papers related to Gandhiji which have been made public today. While talking about Gandhi, I started recalling some fond memories of my life. I would like to reiterate which I have already said that I had the first glimpse of Gandhiji at the age of 11 years. The session of congress was going on in Lahore where Gandhiji had come and I heard him as a child he was uttering that India must get freedom this time. This occasion cast an impression on my thought. I had said one more thing about Gandhiji. When Gandhiji said about starting Dandi March, my parents were already attached to him. The day on which satyagrah was to be started, some friends came to met my father that evening. My father was an advocate, and they were good friends of my father. I always remember what one of his friends uttered to him, "you are an educated person, that old fellow has gone mad because he thinks that this strong Government will fall down by making a pinch of salt. Now, I remember those utterances as to how the pinch of salt had changed the history of India because the pinch of salt had given a new turn to our traditions. It had taken a pledge from the countrymen that we will

remain faithful to the religion propounded by Gandhiji i.e. Satyagraha, non-violence and friendship.

Some newspapers had written about me that I have nostalgia of Lahore. I accept that it is true. My first nostalgia is that I had seen the session of Congress and whenever I go to Lahore, I remember three places very much. One of them being Central Jail where my father was prisoned, Secondly women's Jail where my mother was prisoned and the third children's jail where I was kept. Whenever I visit these places, I remember all the fond memories and traditions and think as to how many promises we have been able to fulfil and how many are still to be fulfilled.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru had uttered a very important thing from this seat which he termed 'trust with destiny. Talking about Jawaharlal Nehru is like lighting the course of the Sun. Now, I can claim that our policies have been formulated on the promises which were made by Jawaharlal Nehru and to which he always sticked and again the policies likely to be formulated by this Government will find inspiration from 'trust with destiny' made by Jawaharlal Nehru. Those promises are promises made by the country and not the promises made by congress party, neither by a tradition nor by any particular community. Atalji, Jaswantji, Chandra Shekharji and a number of names are covered by the same promise.

Today, I am on my legs to say only one thing that when I ask for your vote, I ask it in the name of confidence, to fulfil those promises which are witness to all the past and traditions having roots of secularism.

I remember one more thing. The session of congress party was going on. Since my father was in congress men, he took me also with him; then I was a child. For the first time Congress passed a resolution that since this country is a country of diversities, its unity will remain in diversity. The people have different religions, different langwages and wear different dresses, still we are one. The promise made during the Congress session to maintain that unity still exists. That time congress or Parliamentary congress was a platform, a movement which was leading the country towards the freedom. They were named as secularism afterwards. We started saying that there is unity in diversity irrespective of religion, place of residence and language. I make another promise in the name of this unity and that is — this Government will uphold all the traditions of secularism. But the secularism has not take help of revivalism. If we look back, we find that we have strong roots, we have own culture about which we are proud but with that we have to look forward. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru used to say that we should think scientifically. We should not wonder on the lighting of a bulb but we should explain a child as to how the bulb lits up. It is not a matter of surprise, it is scientific temper. Much before Gandhiji, Buddha was born in the country. I always remember a thing said by lord Buddha

[English]

"Do not believe me because I say so. Do not believe it because in such and such a book it is so written. Always question" That questioning mind is what is called scientific temper.

[Translation]

And for that purpose, my third promise is that we have to had the country towards scientific temper.

I promise you one thing more. This country is of poor and down trodden people, who have been deprived of justice for the ages. To be untouched was considered their fault. Not to talk of touching them, even their shadow was considered unholy. We have been trying to remove it for the last fifty years and have succeeded in it, but not to that extent. Untouchability has not been removed from the country. It now would not be fine to say that scheduled castes and Scheduled Tribes people have got their rights. Therefore, it would be the endeavour of my Government to provide justice these backward people who have been dinoted justice for the ages, whether it is called social justice or socialism or any other name, our country cannot progress until all of us unit no matter to which caste or religion, history we belongs.

One thing should also be kept in mind that we people think that we are kind to some are if are gets his right. We cannot be kind to any body. This country belongs to all. This House represents this democratic country. This House represents those traditions which India wants to cherish and would continue to cherish and I also want to contribute in it. So, I want to make one more promise for the progress of the country that we have established new traditions in this country. We make national casually on the fundamental issues. We talk of national consensus even in foreign policy. We should try to make national consensus in respect of economic policy also.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, basically in democracy we cannot see profit in respect of everything. In democracy we argue on common things. We may have same opinion or divergent opinion on some issues. But we are not enemy of each other. We may have different opinions, but we don't oppose each other. The same relation should continue and this is the way of running the democracy. I would try that this tradition may be maintained. The country would progress if this tradition is maintained. Today the country was entered the age of coalition. There is coalition everywhere. It was there in the Government of Atalji and also in other Governments.

It is easy to form coalition Government, but it takes time to learn the culture of coalition Government. Today when the Government are formed and fall I see it with positive attitude that at last we have decided politically to make coalition Government but we have to learn how to behave with each other, how to fulfilled promises, how to co-operate with one another and not to do any-

thing for which we have to feel sorry. Many a times I feel disappointed, but we should not give up hope. We have to find a way out of this state of despair.

There are many problems before us which require consensus, my friend Mr. Soz is here who represents Kashmir. Kashmir has taken a new turn today. Election has been conducted there, Government have been formed and members are representing the people. It does not mean that the tribulations have ended. They are still there. When I address my brothers, they also include my sister. When I am talking about Sushmaji, I want talk about women. Women have not received their due in this country. It is a reality. We may say that it is written in our religion, but women have not received their due in politics. It would be my endeavour that women receive their due. Gandhiji had also said it many a times. When Governments were formed for the first time in the year 1937...(Interruptions) Why are you talking ...(Interruptions).

KUMARI UMA BHARATI (Khajuraho) : Women are expressing their happiness on your point...(Interruptions)

SHRI I.K. GUJRAL : I am saying one more thing. When the Government were formed in the year 1937 for the first time during the British rule, Gandhiji had insisted on two things. One thing, he had said that there would not be any Government in which there was no woman Minister. Second thing, he had said that there would not be any such Government in which there was no Minister belonging to scheduled castes and scheduled tribes. We have to fulfil what Gandhi had demanded for. I am saying these things basically...(Interruptions) I am promising you one thing more that we should not forget that the population of the country has been increasing rapidly. There is no clock in my room so far but early when I used to go to the room of the Prime Minister, there was a population clock there. When I used to see the current date of population, I would not sleep the whole night. Today, our population is more than 95 crores. We have talked much that we would do this and that. We have achieved success to same extent, but not to the required extent. One thing should be kept in mind that family planning would succeed only when women would get their right. The illiteracy among women would not end until we create an atmosphere in the society for sending women to schools and colleges. I also promise you and I would try to go to that side...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : When the Prime Minister speaks, you should listen carefully.

[Translation]

SHRI I.K. GUJRAL : One more thing should also be kept in mind. Once there was a Conference in Sweden and the issue of environment was raised in that. At that time I was the Housing Minister. I also had the opportunity of accompanying Indiraji. One thing has



[Shri I.K. Gujral]

emerged there that pollution and poverty are the two sides of the same coin and our environment cannot be improved until we remove poverty. So, as long as poverty would be there we cannot remove illiteracy. Someone had said :

[English]

"Tell me one country which has literacy and is backward, and tell me another country which has illiteracy and is advanced."

[Translation]

We would also have to promise that we would pay particular need towards literacy. I would not speak in details but briefly.

I was associated with the earlier Government that Government had formulated a foreign policy. You all are supporting me in regard to that foreign policy. One same foreign policy would continue, we would go ahead with the same foreign policy. New relations would be established with the help of it. When I sat in my office for five minutes today, I received messages and telephone from our neighbouring countries. It is part of the changed atmosphere which we admire. It has not been done by me.

It has been done with your consensus and it would be the basic policy of this country to maintain consensus. We have made that consensus on our policies and also to go ahead with them. Consensus has taken the place above social justice in our country.

Fortunately, there is no such party, which does not agree with it we have to take more steps in this regard. I want to make one or two more promises.

One promise is this that till I remain Prime Minister in this Government, it would be transparent. It would try to be accountable. Whenever you would like to know anything, I would not mind that. Whenever you would say that we have committed mistake - many mistakes are committed honestly, I would ask for your indulgence for that and you can criticise us for the mistakes committed with bad intentions and for that I would take the responsibility of each of my colleague I would not protect any of my colleague for that. At the same time I would not allow witch hunting in this country. That atmosphere would not be created.

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE (Lucknow) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, what is the need of saying that witch hunting will not be allowed. Has there been any witch hunting? It has happened so far? You want to hush up those pending cases by saying that witch hunting would not be allowed.

SHRI I.K. GUJRAL : Atalji, I have been in power just for the last 24 hours. I have not been the files ... (Interruptions)

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN (Mumbai - North East) : You have repeated it twice... (Interruptions)

SHRI INDER KUMAR GUJRAL : I have not yet seen the files.

If you had asked me about the file related to Bangladesh or C.T.B.T. I would have explained. But, let me see the relevant papers to enable me to report to your queries. That is why I am making a promise that after looking into the papers, whatever you ask me, I shall report and for that I shall be accountable to you.

[English]

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV (Silchar) : Whenever the Congress Party has supported this Government, it has never asked and will never ask them to do anything in any case which the court will decide. We want to say that we have not decided it. These people were unnecessarily saying that.

[Translation]

SHRI INDER KUMAR GUJRAL : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I feel that Shri Sontosh Mohan Dev could not understand my utterances in Hindi. I have never said that some body has recommended it to me.

I have never said that I have raised my finger towards anyone. I don't know what he understands ... (Interruptions) I am speaking in Hindi or Urdu. Today, we speak in a different language. I can neither call it Hindi... (Interruptions). The language in which I am interacting with you is the language of communication and I am using the same one.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Please do not interrupt like that.

[Translation]

SHRI INDER KUMAR GUJRAL : I must make one thing very clear that the farming community is the very basis and pride of this nation. As long as this Government keeps its close rapport with the farmers of India, safeguard their interests and makes earnest efforts for their welfare, it would be stable and become more strong. I solemnly assure the farmers and mill workers who toil throughout the day to earn their livelihood that the Government would pay more attention to their grievance than before.

I would not speak at length now. In the evening, when all brothers would have expressed their views, I would speak.

[English]

I hope, Sir, you will give me another charge in the evening and I then will be able to meet these points.

[Translation]

At the moment, I would only like to say that our nation faced a challenge today i.e. the challenge of

internal as well as external stability. Internal stability could be achieved through social justice, secularism and communal harmony and external stability through mutual discussion and consensus. Before concluding, I would like to touch upon one basic point. This government will function as far as it is possible and perhaps little longer than possible. This would be possible only when we have consensus on the major issues. My friend Shri Chidambaram is sitting beside me and I would like to mention his name before I conclude.

[English]

And I hope, my message is reaching him through translation, otherwise I will speak in English.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE (Bolpur) : We will send him there.

SHRI I.K. GUJRAL : Then I will speak in English. And I am speaking in English to appeal to him to please come back and take charge...(Interruptions)

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE : He spoke from here last time when he was there. Now, he is sitting next to me...(Interruptions) He will be sent there...(Interruptions)

SHRI I.K. GUJRAL : He is welcome here.

SHRI A.C. JOS (Idukki) : Shri Somnath Chatterjee is the only obstruction for him to cross over to that side...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI INDER KUMAR GUJRAL : Secondly, I would like to appeal Shri Moopnar in this House. He may bear grudge against some people, who might have offended him. I had gone to see him, earlier, I again visited him in the morning also. I had quoted a Saying in Punjabi to him. In Punjabi, there is a saying, "Khare Dadhi Wala, Dakada Jaye Mooneltoon wala". It means to dark up the wrong tree. Why are you after me? What have I done?...(Interruptions)

DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI (Allahabad) : Hon'ble Prime Minister, Sir, it is just opposite here, "Kiya Moonahlon Wale Ne Hai, Aur Pakada Dadhi Wala Gaya Hai"...(Interruptions)

SHRI INDER KUMAR GUJRAL : I sincerely hope that my appeal will be reported to and I am very grateful and again repeat that the views put forth before you by me will be supported by the entire House. Thanks.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Motion moved :

"That this House expresses its confidence in the Council of Ministers."

At the outset, may I appeal to all the hon. Members who are participating in this debate to be very very brief? I think, it is the content of the speech and not the

length of the speech which the people are looking for. So, please be very brief.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ (South Delhi) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I on behalf of my party rise to oppose the confidence motion moved by the new Prime Minister of India, Shri Inder Kumar Gujral for discussion in the House.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I was viewing your interview on Doordarshan the day before yesterday in which you said that the 11th Lok Sabha of which you have got the privilege to become the Speaker, would be talked about for having taken up in maximum number of confidence motions...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Sir, This is absolutely correct. Out of the nine confidence motions taken up so far four or five confidence motions have been taken up in this Lok Sabha only.

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ : Mr. Speaker, Sir, you are absolutely correct. Infact, it is first time that a former Information and Broadcasting Minister has been elected as the Speaker of the Lok Sabha. Therefore, this Government has decided to make a serial on the confidence motion and we are here seeing the third episode of this serial...(Interruptions) Mr. Speaker, Sir, while moving the confidence motion, the Prime Minister said in the very first sentence of his speech that it would be better if he spoke on some issues which may confront us in future. We heard these points but it would have been better if he had spoken on some past events. We all will see what this Government does in the future but he had better spoken about the events which led to the formation of this Government. Mr. Speaker, Sir, the events of past 10 days on the political front of this country are utterly shameful. The history of last 10 days is that of disloyalty. Those minister who are sitting on this side today...(Interruptions) Mr. Speaker, Sir, When I was entering the House on the day the confidence motion was to be moved, one journalist asked me as to what would happen that day, I had replied that either the Government would fall or loose its honour but, I had never imagined that the Government would fall one day and loose its honour the next day.

The same Government which fall on 11th April, after loosing its honour and indulged in open calamy of the largest democracy of the world, has resurrected again. Those minister who were swearing to swim and sink with Shri H.D. Devegowda in this very House, are today again sitting. On that side under the leadership of Shri Inder Kumar Gujral. It was not you and I alone who viewed the proceedings of that day, but millions of Indians also viewed it as it was telecast live on Doordarshan, Shri Ramvilas Paswan had vehemently opposed the demand of the congressmen to change the leader and questioned if it was a matter of fun to change the leader. I have with me the copy of his speech. I would like to read it out sentence by sentence.