

[Mr. Sudarshan]

balance has become adverse to the tune of Rs. 1,000 crores. This is because of natural calamities i.e. droughts and various other difficulties. We had to import a lot of foodgrains from other countries at a very high value. We had also to import fertilisers at a very heavy cost. We had also to import oil at a very fantastic price, which is four fold to the normal price. All these factors have been responsible for the adverse balance of trade. The Commerce Ministry alone cannot be responsible for this adverse balance of trade; this is because of the natural calamities and various other factors.

On the export side we showed do better. The international inflation was there and the environment for exports was also very good because of various other global reasons. Still we have to do a lot to create more surpluses. Unless we create more surplus, we cannot have more exports. Both in the agricultural sector and in the industrial sector, we have to do a lot. We need the support of the State Governments and also the various other Union Ministers to increase the surpluses.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The hon. Member may continue tomorrow. We have to take up the half-an-hour discussion.

HALF-AN-HOUR DISCUSSION

MAHARASHTRA-KARNATAKA BOUNDARY DISPUTE

MR. CHAIRMAN : The House will now take up the half-an-hour discussion to be raised by Prof. Madhu Dandavate. Before he starts, let me remind the hon. members of the rule so that, later on, they do not put me in an awkward position. Rule 55(5) is very clear. It says:

"There shall be no formal motion before the House nor voting. The member who has given notice may make a short statement and the Minister concerned shall reply shortly. Any member who has previously intimated to the Speaker may be permitted to ask a question for the purpose of further elucidating any matter of fact."

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE (Rajapur) : That is, like a call-attention.

MR. CHAIRMAN : I am not going to convert this into a call-attention. Please do not do that.

28.00 hrs.

I will, therefore, request the hon. Members whose names have come in the ballot to formulate their questions right now and ask a question and not put me later on in an awkward position.

SHRI B. V. NAIK (Kanara) : What are the compelling circumstances for us to be reminded of the rule because a certain amount of latitude is allowed in these debates.

MR. CHAIRMAN : I will give you the latitude of lengthening the question, but don't stretch it too far.

SHRI DHAMANKAR (Bhawandi) : All the persons who have come in the ballot are not present. So you please allow me to put a question.

MR. CHAIRMAN : If anyone of them is not present, I will give you a chance.

Shri Dandavate.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : I consider it a proud privilege to initiate this Half-an-hour discussion on the eve of a demonstration that people from the Maharashtra-Karnataka border areas are going to stage before the Parliament tomorrow, to welcome the assurance given by the former Home Minister that the dispute will be settled before the forthcoming General Elections and that an amicable settlement will be arrived at. About a thousand persons from the Maharashtra border areas have already come to the capital and they will be submitting a memorandum to the Prime Minister tomorrow. The Prime Minister has already given them an appointment. She will meet the deputation of the Maharashtra Ekikatan Samiti at 3 p.m. and I will be very happy if the discussion that goes on this evening will help the Prime Minister in arriving at a suitable solution.

I might recall that when the situation in the border areas was very tense in December last, in reply to my letter to the Prime Minister, the Prime Minister had said in her letter of December 8, 1973—'I will only reproduce the first part of her letter which is very relevant:

"The Home Minister is seized of the general question and will soon take initiative to find a satisfactory solution of the border dispute."

After that, when we found that no fresh efforts were being made, a memorandum that was signed by leaders of all the Parties in the Parliament, was sent to the Prime Minister on 9th December 1973. The memorandum said :

"We strongly feel that settlement of the border dispute centred on the basis of sound principles without any further delay is the only way to put an end to an ugly fratricidal war between the peoples of these two States. We, therefore, earnestly request you to initiate prompt efforts to settle the border dispute in the wider interests of national integration."

This memorandum was signed by Shri Samar Mukherjee of CPM, Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee of Bharatiya Jana Sangh, Shri Hiren Mukherjee of CPI, Shri Shyamandan Mishra of Cong. (O), Shri H. M. Patel of the then Swatantra Party, Shri Era Soahyan of DMK, Shri Sulaiman Sait of the Muslim League, Shri Samar Guba of the Socialist Party, Shri S. B. Giri of the Telangana Praja Samiti, Shri Shiv Kumar Shastri of BKD and Mr. P. G. Mavalankar (Independent). In my letter addressed to the Prime Minister, I have said that many Members of the Ruling Congress Party have also expressed their agreement with the spirit of the memorandum though for technical reasons they have not appended their signatures. This was the background.

After that, a happy development was when a discussion was initiated in the House—again it was an half-an-hour discussion—the then Home Minister, Shri Uma Shankar Dikshitji, was kind enough to give a categorical assurance after members of the House from both sides repeatedly demanded that a categorical assurance should be made regarding the time limit for the solution of the problem and Shri Uma Shankar Dikshitji then said—and the Prime Minister also later on supported that—on the floor of the House, "We will try to expedite the solution of the Karnataka-Maharashtra border dispute and in no circumstances the solution will be arrived at a stage later than the forthcoming general elections to the Parliament."

Sir, on that occasion, I humorously quipped—I hope, you won't postpone the General Election! To-day, my fear is because the national emergency is being continued and there is a possibility that the general elections to Lok Sabha might be postponed indefinitely and, if the postponement is indefinite in that case, the solution of the border dispute which has remained pending for the last eighteen years may also remain pending and therefore . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN : Mr. Dandavate, earlier at one stage, you said you were apprehensive even of a snap poll.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : But apprehensions can be of two types.

MR. CHAIRMAN : But, both the apprehensions are illfounded.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : The other apprehension is this. If there is snap poll, in that case, they would say that now there is no time. So, both ways there is this difficulty. If there is snap poll to be held, they would have hurriedly said that they are busy in the election and there is no time to the solution. There will be indefinite delay. Their commitment is this that the solution will be before the election. There is greater urgency to this. May I say that you need not link up with the forthcoming Parliamentary elections. Before the election, you should try to settle this issue. In fact, some of my colleagues had suggested that before the task of Delimitation of the Constituencies is completed, before that, if possible, the solution should be arrived at. So, there should be some finality about the time-limit in which the entire problem would be settled.

Sir, very often we have been told that after all, there is Mahajan Commission's Report and once they have given their decision, it should be something like an award. Why is it that democratically all the parties concerned to the dispute do not accept the findings of the Mahajan Commission ? Here, I would like to quote the resolution of the Government of India by which the Mahajan Commission was appointed. It becomes very clear from that Resolution that the Mahajan Commission's Report is not in the form of an award but it is just a recommendation, as a recommendation of any other Commission. When Government of India

[Prof. Madhu Dandavate]

appointed the Mahajan Commission on 25th October, 1961, the relevant portions of the Resolution said :

"The Commission shall hear the concerned parties and make its recommendations."

There is no question of an award. But, to just quote a parallel, when the entire reorganisation of the States in the country took place and when the Reorganisation Commission was appointed, they were also informed that they had to make the recommendations. When the recommendations of the States' Reorganisation Commission came before the country, a number of alterations were made in the original recommendations of the Reorganisation Commission. The arguments put forward by the late Pandit Nehru himself was that what the S.R.C. had said were just recommendations and nothing more than that. The Government has the sovereign right even to change the recommendations and, Parliament, has ultimately the sovereign right to make any alteration and take the final decision. That was the statement that was made by the late Pandit Nehru and, I am sure, that his daughter will not adopt a different attitude. I am quite confident about it. Therefore, I hope that that attitude will be taken and the Mahajan Commission's Report will not be treated as an award but it will be treated as a recommendation as any other Commission's recommendation. If there are fallacies, if there are any contradictions, if there are contradictory norms followed in settling different disputes which they have tackled, in that case, all the contradictions will have to be resolved by the Government.

Sir, my quarrel with the Government is that they are trying to look at the problems of the Maharashtra-Karnataka border dispute or, for that matter, any other solution to the dispute, on the basis of political expediency and not on the basis of sound uniform principles. The more you try to settle the disputes in this country on the basis of political expediency, the more trouble will be created and more contradictions will be developed. Therefore, it is in the interests of the national integration that you must try to evolve certain uniform sound principles so that even if an unfavourable report goes against any particular linguistic

group, you can tell them that there are uniform sound principles which were evolved for the application to all the disputes throughout the country and, on the basis of these sound principles, once for all, we have settled the matter and there would be no change at all.

Unfortunately, the more you try to evade the evolution of sound and uniform principles for the solution of disputes, more and more linguistic tensions take place and people like us who want national integration to take place are very much disturbed by these engineered tensions in the country which ultimately harm the national integration in the country.

Sir I just would like to briefly mention about some of the contradictions. Sir, Karnataka State was involved in two types of disputes. There was a dispute over Kasargode and on the Maharashtra border, there was a dispute regarding Belgaum and so many other areas like Karwar, Supa and other areas. What types of norms the Mahajan Commission tried to apply? You will be surprised and shocked to know that as far as Kasargode is concerned, the Mahajan Commission says that consecutively three Assembly elections have been won by the protagonists of Mysore, and therefore, Kasargode should be included as an integral part of Karnataka State, the former Mysore State. What happened in Belgaum, the bone of contention? In Belgaum, Sir, right from 1957, in all the elections, the representative, the candidate, of the Maharashtra Ekikaran Samiti has won by an overwhelming majority. They won in 1957, they won in 1962, then won in 1967 and when there was the so-called Indira wave in the country, the Maharashtra Ekikaran Samiti, Shri Balwant Sainak won by an overwhelming majority and I said in a humorous vein that if throughout the country there was Indira wave, as far as the border areas of Maharashtra were concerned, there was Maharashtra Ekikaran Samiti wave; one wave has been able to over-power the other wave. That is why, in spite of the victory of the Congress Party in Karnataka as well as Maharashtra, in this border area of Maharashtra, Shri Balwant Sainak was able to win the elections by an overwhelming majority. For Kasargode, people's wishes were accepted in the form of the verdict in the election. In the case of Belgaum, in spite of the

repeated victories of Maharashtra Ekikaran Samiti, the issue is completely side-tracked.

As far as relative majority is concerned—I will briefly mention—in 1951 census, the Marathi population in Belgaum was more than 51% and at a later stage, by manipulation of certain areas of cantonment and township, it was brought down to 46%. But, even then, in areas like Belgaum, the largest majority group is that of the Marathi speaking population. In spite of that, Belgaum does not become part and parcel of Maharashtra as also other areas like Karwar, Supa and other areas.

You must set up certain norms—the wishes of the people, geographic contiguity, relative majority and so many other factors. Therefore, the important factors will be geographic contiguity, relative majority, village as a unit and people's wishes. If these norms are accepted, I am sure, you will be able to find out a workable solution. Sir, occasionally, a lot of reports go on coming up. Maharashtra Times has reported some time back that probably the Government of India has already taken the decision that the crucial Belgaum city, where the Maharashtra Ekikaran Samiti has won all the elections, would probably become part and parcel of Karnataka and that some adjustments will be made as far as other villages are concerned. Sir, Belgaum is the crux of the problem, where they have won all the elections. If the wishes of the people have been accepted in Kasargod, how can the wishes of the people be flouted in Belgaum? That is the plain and simple question that I would like to put before you.

Sir, repeated references are made that the Chief Ministers of Maharashtra and Karnataka must try to find out a solution. But, Sir, left to themselves, they will not be able to find out a solution at all. The other day, when the Members of the Maharashtra Ekikaran Samiti, about thousand in number, marched to the Maharashtra State Assembly, the Chief Minister of Maharashtra showed the courtesy of addressing these members who had come from the border areas, and publicly, he has given them an assurance that "if any formula is put before us, unless I take the consent of the Maharashtra

Ekikaran Samiti, unless I consult them—unless I consult the leaders of the opposition parties, I will not make any commitment to the Centre". For the first time, a very categorical commitment has been given to the people of Maharashtra by the Chief Minister of Maharashtra. He cannot go back from that commitment. Therefore, do not leave it to them. When the Chief Minister of Maharashtra himself says 'I am not going to be the final arbiter; even if the proposal comes from the Centre, I will consult the Maharashtra Ekikaran Samiti first' it is very clear that even the Centre will have to reckon with the power of the Maharashtra Ekikaran Samiti, which is the representative organ of the Marathi-speaking people of Maharashtra-Karnataka border areas, and therefore, they will have to be consulted. You sit with them. There is no sense in sitting merely with the Chief Ministers. They will not be able to deliver the goods. You remember, even at the time of bilingual Bombay, the Chief Minister told you that they will work out a solution. Mr. Chavan told you that they will work out a bigger bilingual State of Bombay. But, ultimately, when people were on the side of creating a State of Sanyukta Maharashtra and a State of Gujarat the wishes of the Chief Ministers did not reign supreme but the wishes of the people of Gujarat and Maharashtra reigned supreme. That is the history from which you will have to learn the lesson. Therefore, do not leave the matter to the wishes of the Chief Ministers, but, leave them to the wishes of the people of Maharashtra and the wishes of the people in Karnataka. That is the way the problem has to be tackled.

In conclusion, I will say that there is one economic consequence of this particular pending issue. If you go to Belgaum and so many other areas, you will find that whether the people belong to the Kannada-speaking group or to the Marathi-speaking group there are among them stalwarts of the freedom struggle who have suffered in the freedom struggle. There are men like Baburao Thakur and Dr. Yashji. These are the men who have suffered imprisonment in the freedom struggle. They would like to participate in the mainstream of the political life. They would like to participate in the reconstruction of the country; they would not like to reconstruct Belgaum only, they would like to reconstruct the entire country.

[Prof. Madhu Dandavate]

But they always tell us that when plans are being formulated, when the country is attacked, when tensions are built up in the country, these of us who are freedom struggle leaders, who would like to devote ourselves to the task of national reconstruction and integration are bogged down in small problems which are created by the Governments of both the States. We do not want the people of Karnataka and the people of Maharashtra to fight.

Therefore, in the interest of national integration and in order to bring the people of both the areas into the mainstream of our political life because with this matter kept pending neither Karnataka nor Maharashtra has any stake in building up educational institutions, in having economic development, it is necessary to find a solution to this problem. Now you find that even when sanctions are made, they remain unspent. I pointed out on one occasion that when some grants were made for some small irrigation project by the Central Government to the Karnataka Government, since the area happens to be disputed they did not spend those amounts in the border areas because they were not sure where the area would be at a later stage. As a result, economic development is also kept pending there. This is the economic consequence of keeping the dispute pending.

Therefore, from the point of national integration, from the point of view of respecting the democratic wishes of the people, from the point of view of the sound principles that have been evolved and from the point of view of ensuring better and speedy economic development of the border areas as a part and parcel of India as an entire entity, it is very necessary that this dispute should be settled quickly. Without striking any partisan note at all—on both sides of the House, we have certain common points of view—I would earnestly make this request to the Home Minister. Let him expedite the matter so that an early solution is arrived at which will be on the basis of firm and sound principles.

SHRI ANNASAHEB GOTKHINDE (Sangli) : The country was glad when the Prime Minister made an announcement and assured as that the then Union

Home Minister, Shri Uma Shankar Dikshit, would take the initiative to find a satisfactory solution to this vexed border dispute. The country was expecting that a solution on the basis of sound and recognised principles would be found.

I was glad to know and hear from the then Home Minister when he intervened in the half an hour discussion held last year and said that the gap had been narrowed down, some alternative proposals had been made twice or thrice and some amicable settlement was being worked out. Now this process has been carried on by our present Home Minister, Shri Reddy. I am not in a position to know to what extent he has been able to narrow this particular gap between the two sides. I think and I hope that our present Home Minister would be able to build a bridge of goodwill over this gap. If he succeeds in the matter, I for one would call him not Shri Brahmananda Reddy but Shri Sarvananda Reddy.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE :
I will joint him.

SHRI ANNASAHEB GOTKHINDE : People living in the disputed area heaved a sense of satisfaction when it was categorically stated that a solution would be found 'well before the 1976 parliamentary elections.' I underline this word 'well before'. We take for granted that elections are not going to be held before 1976. So, what do the Government mean by this phrase 'well before the 1976 parliamentary elections'? In order to relieve the tension and insecurity that is being felt by the people in that area, this decision should be taken as expeditiously as possible.

I have received a letter from my friend Shri Saynak who is at present a member of the Maharashtra Ekikaran Samiti in the Karnataka Assembly. I quote a few sentences from this letter 12th February 1975 :

"काश्मिरचा प्रश्न सुटला आहे. आता आमचा सोसा प्रश्न तेवढा शिल्लक राहिला आहे. कितो दिवस तुम्ही आम्हाला लढावयाला सांगणार आहात. आमचा आमरण उपोषण करून मरण्याचोही तयारी आहे."

It means: "the Prime Minister and the country had been able to solve the Kashmir problem. The vexed border dispute is still remaining. How long are you expecting us to carry on the struggle in this way? We are even prepared to undertake fast unto death." He is one of my good friends. On many occasions we do disagree, particularly on the manner in which this particular question would be solved. We the Congress Members from Maharashtra in Parliament, in fact all the Congress Members believe that the Prime Minister has the capacity and the will to decide this issue amicably and expeditiously. At the same time I must confess that I personally and Members from the Maharashtra respect the sentiments expressed by Mr. Saynak in this letter. Now I would ask one or two questions of the Home Minister.

When Karnataka State was renamed from Mysore to Karnataka all the Karnataka people were rejoicing at this renaming. We also respect the sentiments of those persons. On that very day then the whole of Karnataka was celebrating, I had been invited to one of the places viz. Mangsuli which was situated in the disputed area and people residing there celebrated it as *suthak diwas*, mourning day. I want to know from the Karnataka Chief Minister. I also expressed my sentiments in that meeting. I want to know the Government's reaction also. Why does the Karnataka Government want to retain the area in Karnataka when the people residing in that area are unwilling to remain in Karnataka?

Secondly the then Home Minister had assured that he would take the concerned MPs into confidence, not on the floor of the House but in discussions in sorting out the problem. I want to know from the present Home Minister and the Government whether efforts would be made to associate the concerned M.Ps. My constituency, Sangli, borders on Karnataka. There may be some M.Ps who were elected from Karnataka whose constituencies might be bordering Maharashtra. Would such M.Ps. be associated in the decision-making process? When we represent the wishes of the people, we want to convey those wishes and feelings to the powers here who decide the matter. They may be having consultations with the Chief Minister concerned, but the

MPs also should be taken into confidence while deciding the matter.

I request the Government to decide this issue as expeditiously as possible. I welcome the morcha of the people numbering about a thousand, who have come all along from the disputed border area. I fully share their sentiments and expect that the Government will respond to their feelings.

SHRI B. V. NAIK : Sir, this discussion arises out of the reply to Unstarred Question No. 1277 dated 20-11-74. The reply was :

"Efforts in evolving an equitable solution which would command maximum acceptability are actively proceeding."

This is the usual modality of the Government to say the least or sometimes nothing at all. Most of us do appreciate that the decisions should find maximum acceptability and all the efforts are being made, but it does not say anything. This was on 20-11-74. The previous discussion for half an hour took place on 19-8-74 with reference to a question to which a similarly vague and non committal answer had been given—Started Question by Shri Shankar Rao Savant on 24-7-74. As far as the essence of the replies to Mr. Savant on all the three occasions, including the half-hour discussion on 19-8-74 is concerned, we are not in any confusion. But we are in a confusion, like all mortals would be, about what was stated by the then Home Minister, Shri Uma Shankar Dixhit on 19-8-74. The discussion was held in identical circumstances. My hon. friend Prof. Dandavate, Mr. Dhamankar and all of us were there including Mr. Sawant. It was an open debate. At the fag end, when there was no possibility of putting any further questions without interrupting the debate, we were told by the then Home Minister—

"Our friend Mr. Savant was mostly giving the history etc. of the dispute. He and other hon. members had referred to the Mahajan Report. I do not understand the logic of referring to the Mahajan Report. Mahajan report was after all made by the former Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. A better reputed person or a higher judicial authority could not have been found." Then he added the sentence, Sir : "But what happened?"

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : He accepted the supremacy of the Parliament over the judiciary.

SHRI B. V. NAIK : What happened was that the subsequent part of the sentence was a complete somersault from what was said earlier. It was a volte face. What he says later is this :

"Although it was said earlier that both the parties, particularly Maharashtra, wanted that the decisions or the award or the recommendation of the Mahajan Commission should be final and binding, it was not accepted so; and for good reasons."

I would repeat the words 'for good reasons'. I would ask, "Whose good reasons?" When did this wisdom dawn on the Ministry of Home Affairs in the Government of India? I will quote the 'good reasons' in brief :

"If Maharashtra thought that their case had not been fairly considered, the Central Government found that there was some force in that argument."

This is the first time, to be fair to all concerned, that we were absolutely taken by surprise; and the rules of parliamentary procedure did not provide for the redressal on the spot. A senior parliamentarian and respected person like Mr. Hanumanthaiya was also present. He was also not able to function effectively in the given frame of reference. I would, therefore, request the hon. Home Minister to say whether the position as stated by his esteemed predecessor, our venerated Uma Shankar Dikshit Ji, stands as it stood on the 19th August 1974, or does the reply to the answer which is under debate now—which only states what was stated in reply to the Starred Question; and does the present reply that "the matter is under active consideration for the maximum acceptability", go back on the *ex tempore, impromptu*, statement at the time of the discussion on half-an-hour debate on the 19th August 1974—i.e. has there been any change? Mr. Chairman, Sir, as far as the timing of the decision to be taken is concerned, there is no dispute, viz. "Before the next general elections." If the Government of India, in its wisdom, wants to have the decision now, wants to take it tomorrow or the day after, or before the next general elections, it is absolutely within their wisdom as well as within their competence; on that there is no dispute. But if

you are going to base your decision on the statement that "there are good reasons" which was sprung as a surprise on us. I would like to make a point which the hon. Minister might make clear. This is not the first award. You call it as a commission or by any other name. Rose will smell as sweet by any other name. (Interruptions). I hope I am not provoking. This is absolutely an academic discussion. The report of Mr. Mahajan, the worthy father of our colleague Mr. Vikram Mahajan, has been prepared after great pains; if you see the report, which gives the list of persons and associations who have sent memoranda to the Commission on Maharashtra—Mysore—Kerala Boundary Dispute, it runs from 1 to 2240 pages. It is completely categorized. There is also the list of memoranda presented to the Commission on Maharashtra—Kerala dispute running to 1292 pages. The list of persons, and organizations which gave evidence, after making a tremendous amount of effort, before the Maharashtra—Mysore—Kerala Commission, contains a staggering figure, viz. 3218 Pages.

A superhuman work has been done.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Is it more than the votes cast?

SHRI B. V. NAIK : So far as votes cast is concerned, one may win or lose a seat by a margin of one vote.

MR. CHAIRMAN : You may better urge that point. As a lawyer, I may say that would be a better point.

SHRI B. V. NAIK : The point which Prof. Madhu Dandavate raised was about the electoral results. I am personally a very good friend of Shri Neelakanta Desai of Kanapur, having worked with him in my elections. I will come to the operative part later on.

The hon. Minister had stated, for good reasons, "we are going to change the Mahajan report", a report which in categorical terms stated that the claims of the town of Belgaum is disallowed and the city is not recommended for transfer to the State of Maharashtra. A Supreme Court judge in unequivocal terms has solved this problem with no ambiguity in his report.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : Like the Golak Nath case.

SHRI B. V. NAIK : This was once after in 1955 the States Reorganisation Commission has put its stamp.

The whole history of Maharashtra Karnataka boundary dispute is so well-known, that time and again the same case has been raised, replies have been given in identical situations, till the 19th August 1974, when the Home Minister said that he is going to modify the Mahajan Report. Are you going to modify it on the same grounds as Professor Dandavate stated, namely, grounds of political expediency, and that too simply because Karnataka is a small State with 27 M.Ps. while Maharashtra is amongst the six major States of West Bengal, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu, who virtually command a majority in this House ?

MR. CHAIRMAN : Ours is only 45 as against 27.

SHRI B. V. NAIK : States with more than 40 M.Ps are running the whole country. We are less than three dozens

MR. CHAIRMAN : One Shri B. V. Naik is equivalent to so many others.

SHRI B. V. NAIK : The hon. Chair has been kind enough to say that.

Now Belgaum has been made into a status symbol, a prestige issue. Here I am raising the larger question. It does not matter whether Karnataka is a party to the dispute. Here is the report of the Chief Justice, which was given after the report of the S.R.C. Now the Home Minister as the responsibility to decide this question. Let him decide it the way he likes. But, let him not spring a surprise. Last time what happened was that he sprung a surprise at the tag end. I think that will put down completely the credibility of the Central Government. I say that it may happen in many States. May be, it is happening in Karnataka today, in Maharashtra tomorrow and in another State the day after. This tripping up of a surprise is what hurts us. We were all taken by surprise.

The question is the maximum acceptability. Here you have first to cut the Gordian knot before you go to the other States.

In regard to Khanapur, I represent that area. As I rightly said, they are my friends. In 1971 we all were together. In 1972 the local legislator, Mr. Sardesai, who got elected after defeating our ruling Congress candidate said that except in respect of this Maharashtra issue, he was in absolute identity with the views of our Government and party.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : Did you ever contest for the Assembly election from Khanapur ?

SHRI B. V. NAIK : I am reinforcing your statement. About Khanapur, the verdict is that so many villages from Khanapur should join Maharashtra. I happen to be a worthy representative from that area. I am not contesting it. Therefore, why are you not accepting the principle of first minimising the area of divergence, reducing the area of differences ? Why not the hon. Minister accept the recommendations of Mr. Mahajan in pieces at least about these villages, in instalments, in small volumes, leaving the major problems aside ? They can be solved by stages. Is it not possible for you ?

Prof. Dandavate in a brilliant piece of oratory said that he did not mind what happened, but then he roundly accused and condemned Mr. Mahajan, Mr. Mahajan, coming from Himachal Pradesh, is a former Chief Justice of India, on whose verdict many people may have been hanged or saved from the gallows. So, why is he to be condemned ? How can this double think be permitted ? Is it not playing hypocrisy. First he says let any decision be taken, and then he says that this Report of Mr. Mahajan is absolutely untrue, false etc., because of electoral results. If we have to take electoral results as the only guideline for demarcating our boundaries, for making distinction between one area and the other, writing off all past history, then I think no national boundary will be peace or secure. There will be no border areas without friction. Electoral results should not, therefore, be made the criterion for this purpose.

Taking it for granted for the Maharashtra are in larger number in Belgaum, why don't you trust us to take as good care, if not better care, of the Maharashtra in Belgaum than they are

[Shri B. V. Naik]

taken care of in Satara or Sangli or other places? It is for this purpose that the Linguistic Minorities Commissioner and other things are there. Therefore, being an integrated Indian like you, Mr. Chairman, having become a distinct indianised entity, not feeling uncomfortable whether in Nasik or Poona or Banaras or Bombay or Bangalore, I do not attach much importance to these linguistic and other affiliations, but we should take into consideration administrative convenience, the existing divisional headquarters, district Headquarters, taluka headquarters etc. All of a sudden, after 25 years of history of free India, one fine morning we should not tell them to go here or there. That will disrupt the whole system.

I hope I have tried to be objective. If out of circumstances and compulsions I have been a bit more than duly critical of Shri Umashankar Dikshit, I may kindly be forgiven. I apologise for it in my personal capacity, but in my political capacity what I have said is the truth.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Shri Dhamankar. Kindly ask only a question.

SHRI DHAMANKAR (Bhiwandi) : My case has been very effectively argued by my hon. friend Shri Naik. He has pointed that the then Home Minister very clearly stated that there was force in the argument put forward by the Maharashtrians. The election results are there. For 15 years this issue has been kept pending. I do not know if the Government feels that by keeping issues pending, they will evaporate and there will remain no issues. It is not possible. For 15 years continuously, these friends from the border areas are striving hard to see that the issue is settled once and for all.

My hon. friend, Shri B. V. Naik, just now said, you solve it by piecemeal. I would request the hon. Home Minister not to solve it by piecemeal. Take a firm decision and see that there is no more issue left between Karnataka and Maharashtra. It should be solved on some principles which should be applicable for all the issues that are still pending. On some principles, the issue should be settled and it should be settled once and for all.

The Mahajan Commission's Report was not an award. The then Prime Minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, also very clearly said that it was a report and the Government was not bound to accept it in toto. Some recommendations are accepted when the reports are submitted by even the Judges of the Supreme Court. It is not binding on the Government to accept the report in toto. If the Government feels that certain recommendations are acceptable, the Government accepts them and certain recommendations are not accepted.

This issue has been kept pending for the last 15 years. A feeling has been created on the borders, on both sides, in Kolhapur and Sangli on one side and in Belgaum, on the other side, and the people feel that they are second-rate citizens and that step-motherly treatment is being meted out to them. The people from Maharashtra side feel that Marathi schools are being closed on the Karnataka side and, at the same time, the people from the Karnataka side feel that Kannada schools are being closed on the Maharashtra side. It is not a very healthy thing to continue. The people must feel that they are one with other people. How will they feel like that? It is only when they are living in an atmosphere where they feel that they are treated at equal level with others. This feeling of second-rate citizenship or step-motherly attitude is very ruinous and dangerous from the point of national integrity.

I would request the hon. Home Minister to see that this issue is settled on some principles and that too as promised by the then Home Minister, Shri Umashankar Dikshit, before the next General Elections and there should not be any border issue between Maharashtra and Karnataka and the people on both sides should live as brothers and held towards the development of not only both the areas but also help towards the development of the country.

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI K. BRAHMANANDA REDDY) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, this matter has come up on the floor of Parliament quite a few times. The House will appreciate that the issue of a border dispute between the States is a fairly complex one. Any objective considera-

tion of the merits of the matter often times gets clouded by sentiment and other emotions.

Now, as you are all aware, after the recommendations of the States Reorganisation Commission, Maharashtra Government raised an objection in the Zonal Council meeting and various attempts were later on made to resolve the issue both in discussions with the Chief Ministers concerned and even at other levels. You are also aware that there was an attempt to resolve it by discussion between the States themselves or the representatives of the States themselves. There were two persons on behalf of the Karnataka Government and two persons on behalf of the Maharashtra Government. They discussed the matter. But, unfortunately, the representatives of each Government stated the positions which their Governments themselves had taken. Ultimately the Mahajan Commission was appointed. Unfortunately, after the recommendations of the Mahajan Commission were published, it has been found that they have not received that universal acceptability.

Therefore, it was stated on the floor of this House that, so far as the positive recommendations made by the Mahajan Commission were concerned, they should be accepted. As has been stated earlier on the floor of this House by the Prime Minister in 1970 or thereabout, what a Commission like the Mahajan Commission can do is to make only recommendations. But it has also been said that those recommendations must be given the best of consideration that the Government can give. That is the position which none of us disputes. It is not as if the Government were not anxious to resolve it, if possible, with possibilities of wider acceptance. Later, some proposals were formulated and communicated to the respective Governments. But, unfortunately, the Governments, both Karnataka and Maharashtra, were not agreeable to that formulation and as usual, as can be expected, they stated or reiterated their earlier stand or points of view. Therefore, in this context, my predecessor, Shri Umashankar Dikshit, the Prime Minister and myself, after I came into this Ministry, have been making efforts to find something which would command the maximum acceptability. It should also be stated that, in matters of this kind, it would be very difficult to expect the complete agreement of the

Chief Ministers concerned. However, it should be our effort and our endeavour to continue these efforts and speak to the Chief Ministers concerned. It is true that the opinion of the people also counts to some extent and, as a representative of public opinion in each State, naturally, the Governments or the Chief Ministers would also figure very much in the discussions.

When we look into this problem, I quite agree, at any rate, I will not disagree, if hon Prof. Madhu Dandavate or my friend, Shri Dhamankar or my friend Shri Naik say, if the, decision, whatever it may be, creates a feeling that it is a political one because of political expediency or because of the pressure of any particular group or because of the strength of the M.Ps coming from each State, then it is possible that we may be treading a ground which will involve us in greater difficulties. Therefore, any approach to this problem should be as objective as possible and, if possible, gather as much acceptability as possible from the respective States and, at the same time, command credibility amongst other sections of the people who may not be directly involved in this affair. Unfortunately, sometimes, when friends make their points here to the general proposition, namely, that this should be based on some acceptable principles, to that extent, is all right, but...

MR. CHAIRMAN : Mr. Dandavate's Question was why don't you accept the well-known principle of people's verdict being acceptable in this case also ?

SHRI K. BRAHMANANDA REDDY : I will come to that before I go to the other one.

In matters of this type, it would be wise if one has to take into account the volume of opinion in a disputed area. But, if you base your decision on the election results, probably, in my opinion, it will lead to greater difficulties not only here but elsewhere as well.

SHRI DHAMANKAR : We have done that in the case of Goa.

SHRI K. BRAHMANANDA REDDY : Goa is a different thing. That was an opinion poll. This is not on parallel with Goa. You have stated your position.

They have stated their positions.

[Shri K. Brahmananda Reddy]

19.00 hrs.

In border disputes if emotions are built in on account of language and various other factors and if elections are alone to guide the decision, in my humble opinion, it will lead to farfetched difficulties not only in this area... (*interruptions*).

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : Sorry to interrupt you. None of us suggested that the election results alone should determine this particular dispute but also the geographic contiguity, religious majority, wishes of the people, family and the village as a unit.

SHRI K. BRAHMANANDA REDDY : No, I am coming to that. So far as that aspect which the Chairman has put is concerned, you have mentioned that and even Shri Naik has also mentioned it just now. If you would obviously conclude that if that type of thing were to be adopted, there is no need for any committee or Commission or discussion with anybody at all. I do think, if you reflect for a while on that question, you would yourself feel that it is a very unsafe thing and very undependable thing. There can not be any rule about. Certainly, the volume of opinion should also be taken into consideration. Of course, I need not go into it. As I have said just now and as has been stated earlier also in this House, so far as positive recommendations of the Mahajan Commission are concerned, they should be accepted. It has been made clear even earlier.

Therefore, it has been our attempt or our endeavour to see that a decision, whatever it may be, ultimately is not based on more political expediency but based on some rationale approach to this problem. It has been stated by you, Mr. Dandavate—you were referring to the memorandum submitted by several leaders of the parties.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : By all.

SHRI K. BRAHMANANDA REDDY : May be by all. Absolutely, nobody has any quarrel when the principles are stated. But, in stating the principles also, we have to be very careful in seeing to it that a certain principle does not lead to a more bitter controversy.

Now, you may also remember that against a total of 868 villages claimed by Maharashtra, the Commission had made positive recommendations for the transfer of 264 villages covering an area of about 656 square miles with a total population of about 2.81 lakhs, of which over 79% is Marathi speaking. Though the claim of Karnataka was for 528 villages, the then Government of Bombay, at one stage, offered to transfer to Karnataka 260 villages. The Mahajan Commission had made positive recommendations for the transfer of 247 villages covering an area of about 1368 square miles with a population of 3.49 lakhs, of which about 58% are Kannada speaking. Now, I do not think it would be advantageous to take the suggestion of my hon. friend, Mr. Naik, to solve this problem by stages. I would seem inclined to agree with my friend, Mr. Dhamankar, that whatever the decision may be, it would be good if the dispute is settled . . .

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : Once and for all.

SHRI K. BRAHMANANDA REDDY : Once and for all, if you want to add that word.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : You accepted that word.

SHRI K. BRAHMANANDA REDDY : Therefore, now, I will come to the main thing. I would like to take the House into confidence and express the hope that some consensus on the basic features of our present approach may not be difficult. In the first place, we had made it clear that the positive recommendations of the Mahajan Commission, which I said earlier and which was stated earlier also in this House for transfer of territories from one State to another State, should be implemented. So far as this aspect is concerned, there has not been any serious controversy. The second aspect regarding which also there is no serious controversy, is that any further adjustments to be made, should be only on the basis of continuity of the areas in question. Both of you agree. Thirdly, for any given administrative unit to qualify for transfer, the majority of persons inhabiting it should be speakers of the language on whose behalf the transfer is sought.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : We are almost agreed.

SHRI K. BRAHMANANDA REDDY : Now, this approach, Sir, may require to be qualified in the interest of some major developmental projects or administrative convenience. It is the implications of this approach that are still under consideration. We have every reason to hope that proposals based on the above would find maximum acceptability and would be equitable to all concerned.

Now, in this connection, I may also submit that some conflicting reports, mutually conflicting reports, are appearing in the Maharashtra Press as well as in the Karnataka Press. I would appeal to all sections of the House, to the people in this area and to the local Press, not to give publicity to mere speculations and not to give credence to such speculative reports.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Not to queer the pitch.

SHRI K. BRAHMANANDA REDDY : As has been rightly said by Mr. Dhaman- kar, whatever, you do, Sir, naturally, there are bound to be linguistic minorities. Whatever you do, whatever is the decision, there are bound to be minorities, in each area, either under the Maharashtra Government or under the Karnataka Government.

It is in this connection that at every zonal council meeting—recently, we had the Southern and Eastern Zonal Council meetings—it has been specifically and pointedly mentioned to the Chief Ministers that much of our trouble in border areas is due to the fact that there is grievances among the people of the minority group, that opportunity is not being given, that developmental work is not taken care of, that in educational and technical institutions, they have not been given seats and even small children are not given the benefit of education in their mother tongue and that opportunities are not being afforded by the respective States, mentioned in this regard.

It is these things, in my opinion, that not only generate but increase the volume of emotions also in this regard. Therefore, it has been my effort, and in fact the Prime Minister had written to the two Chief Ministers of Maharashtra and Karnataka, that in this matter particular attention should be paid by the Chief Ministers to see that this grievance is not

nursed by the minority groups in those areas. This is absolutely necessary. In all areas in our country, there are bound to be minority groups in the border of each and every State. In fact, it is my appeal and my submission also that the Chief Ministers concerned or the Education Ministers concerned should take a very generous view of this matter. A few lakhs spent or a few admissions given or a few jobs given to these minority groups will not only give satisfaction to these minorities but also, in my experience, in my opinion, give more strength to the Chief Ministers concerned. After all, minorities look to the Government for protection for many other things more than the majority and, therefore, it should be the special concern of the Chief Ministers concerned to pay much attention and give no scope for the minority representatives or minorities to nurse any complaint.

I certainly join my friend, Shri Dhama- nkar, in appealing to you all and to other representatives and to all organisations in this connection—that whatever be the decision—I can make it abundantly clear to you—the Government of India will not be guided by any other consideration except certain principles which cannot be doubted very much, and you should help...

SHRI SURENDRA MOHANTY (Kendrapara) : Very much.

SHRI K. BRAHMANANDA REDDY : ... all of you should help to see that an atmosphere is created where they live and continue to live as brothers and work for the benefit of that State in which they live.

MR. CHAIRMAN : You have not answered one question. What is your concept of 'well before the next elections'? That was asked by many members. They would like to know.

SHRI SURENDRA MOHANTY : The Chair seems to be very much involved in this question.

SHRI K. BRAHMANANDA REDDY : As I have submitted already, it is our endeavour and sincere effort to solve this matter as early as possible, as soon as possible (*Interruptions*). I mean it, Sir.

PROF. MADHU DANAVATE :
That 'soon' is definitely before the elec-
tions.

SHRI K. BRAHMANANDA REDDY :
Let us all hope so.

SHRI C. K. CHANDRAPPAN : Now
it is going back.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The House stands
adjourned to meet again at 11 A.M.
tomorrow.

10.15 hrs.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned till eleven
of the clock on Tuesday, April 22, 1975/
Vatsika 2, 1897 (Sukh).