

this particular case, it is no one's point. Then, everyone has a chance to say whatever they wish to say; that there should be no prosecution in this matter. By implication, I conclude that it is everyone's point, including my friends' in the Opposition, that the earliest possible finalization of the judicial proceedings and judgment of this matter... (*Interruptions*)... Yes, the trial should be speedy. I quite agree. It is again no one's point that there should be a delay in this matter, because you are charging the Government. The cause of the delay I have already explained.

Sir, in all sincerity, I say that this Bofors matter has taken a very heavy toll. It does not serve anyone's purpose either to politicize it or to drag it. There is only one manner in which it can be dealt with and finished. Let the courts of law now deal with it. Let the courts finally decide. An appeal has been made from the Opposition that the Government intervenes and decides whose name is to be included, whose name is to be excluded, from a particular chargesheet. I think this is really belittling what we are saying about the state of the autonomy of the Central Bureau of Investigation. If the Union Government decides whether a name is to be included in a particular chargesheet, if this Chamber ever took it upon itself to start preparing charge sheet or altering chargesheets, or, amending chargesheet, let me say in all sincerity that this Chamber will not be serving the purpose for which it was intended constitutionally. It is not our function. The investigating agency is charged with the responsibility of doing it. Let the investigating agency do its job; and whoever is aggrieved by what the investigating agency does, let him or her or their representative or their lawyer go to the court of law, to the highest possible court of law. That is the way to have the names cleared. That is the only way of finally finishing this very unhappy saga of Bofors. Thank you, Sir.

MOTION OF THANKS ON THE PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, Motion of thanks on the President's Address. Mr. Arun Shourie.

SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE (West Bengal): Sir, I have just one point on diesel price... (*Interruptions*)...

MR. CHAIRMAN: I have already mentioned(*Interruptions*)... please, please, please. I have already mentioned that the Business Advisory Committee have allotted the time.

SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE: I just want to make only one point This is not fair. In this House, on the 27th Feb., the Finance Minister had said. During his Budget speech, he told the House that the international domestic price of crude oil and petroleum products is unusually soft...(*Interruptions*)... This has been mentioned here. I am making only one

point. People are eager to know as to why there is a hike in the diesel price. I want to say how the Parliament was misled.

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU (Karnataka): Mr. Chairman, Sir, you have already asked Mr. Arun Shourie to initiate the discussion on the Motion of Thanks on the President's Address.

SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE: I have only one point. It is a question of right. Now the Prime Minister is here, he can decide about it. On the 27th February, the Finance Minister said, "the international domestic prices were unusually soft. That is why, for an additional revenue collection, I propose to levy an additional duty of Re. 1 per litre." Sir, in the month of February, when the diesel price was the lowest, Re. 1 was levied. Today, when the diesel price has increased, he has put another Rs. 3. The levy of Re. 1 should be removed immediately. Parliament is entitled to know about it. He should reply to it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now he will not reply. ...*(Interruptions)*... He will not reply now.

SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE: If the international domestic price of crude oil is soft, you levy Re.1 as duty. When the market is hard, you put another Rs. 3.50 per liter on the consumers. Is it justified? What about the levy of Re.1? Let the Prime Minister assure us right now that it would be removed. After that, Parliament is meeting today.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Today in the Business Advisory Committee, I have mentioned that we are going to discuss it. Then, you can raise this issue.

SHRI ARUN SHOURIE (Uttar Pradesh): Sir, I move that an Address be presented to the President in the following terms:

"That the Members of the Rajya Sabha assembled in this Session are deeply grateful to the President for the Address which he has been pleased to deliver to both Houses of Parliament assembled together on October 25, 1999."

Sir, we meet at a moment when there is considerable ground for national satisfaction. We have completed what must be the largest electoral undertaking in the world. We had been through a war in which we have inflicted a decisive victory on the persons who aggressed against us. That country is still reeling under that defeat. It is a circumstance in which we got unprecedented support from all over the world. Also, Sir, in the elections, as the President has pointed out, there has been a clearer verdict and therefore, the Government is better equipped for the future. I also think that we are in better circumstances to deal with the agenda that lies before the country. As you know, Sir, the President has pointed out that our foreign exchange reserves, in spite of the buffeting which has taken place in the last one-and-a-

half years or two years, stand at 33 billion dollars, that the inflation rate is the lowest ever in two decades, that we have had the lowest incidence of communal riots in a decade.

Sir, matters about which this House was so agitated, so concerned, a few months ago are now not even in our collective memory. I remember how Members were agitated, just a few months ago, about the likely effect of the sanctions. But they were dealt with in such a deft way that today, there is not even a trace of their consequences or they had come to a pass. It is also a great achievement for India, and it is a matter of great satisfaction for this House, that today, there is a greater understanding in the world about India, about India's security interests. This was a matter of great concern a year and a half ago—that India will pursue its security interests, but it shall do so responsibly. This was well documented in the case of Kargil itself.

It is for this reason that we meet at a good time, at an appropriate time, at a time of some satisfaction and I think that the Address of the President needs to be doubly complimented. It records this achievement. It has many features which commend it to all of us. You will see that it entirely puts at the back, it resolutely puts at the back, all the bitterness that characterized the last campaign or even the removal of Governments and the attempt to install other Governments.

Secondly, Sir, it is packed with proposals. It resolutely turns its face away from the past and turns us entirely to the future and for that, on every sector, it gives a number of specific proposals. I feel that one of the very important reasons for commending this Address is that it eschews all controversial or contentious issues. It is entirely concerned with building an agenda for the country on common ground shared by a large number of representatives from different parts of the country including, if I may say so, by the principal Opposition Party and others. The Action Programme has been carefully devised keeping the future in mind.

As all of us listened to the President, as you read out in Hindi, Sir, it is not necessary for me to enumerate what the Address contains. I will only draw attention to three features of the Address and then go on to some general remarks about the context in which we should assess this Address and the Programme. The first is that it contains imaginative and necessary specific programmes. It has been a crying criticism here and by academics outside the House, that over the years, the social sector has been neglected. As you see in the Address, this has been given primary importance in literacy, in drinking water and other subjects of this kind, and a very important thing is that even within these, an emphasis has been laid on what everybody has identified as the crucial things that need to be done. For instance, the girl child shall be given free education right up to college level.

including free education in professional courses. That a Development Bank will be set up for women; that primary education, drinking water etc. will be given such emphasis that special departments of the Government are being created to attend to the programmes on that.

The second feature I will commend to you, Sir, is that it carries forward the structural reforms that have been going on throughout the 90's in instalments. But it does so in a comprehensive way, in a well-considered way of building on our past experience. You just see on page 6, the paragraph dealing with the State Electricity Boards, a very comprehensive plan of action has been put forward in that single paragraph. On Railways— Prof. Alag is here; others are here—the finances of the Railways are in a critical stage. For the renewal of track, funds are not available. All this is to be examined by a Railway Finance Commission. The corporatisation of the Department of Telecom, thereby separating policy formulation from service provision expenditure and tax reforms, the removal of obsolete laws, the creation of new States, a comprehensive electoral Bill, a committee of constitutional experts to go into the Constitution and see the experience of fifty years of working that Constitution. Sir, these are all very important structural reforms which are being attempted and the President's Address has listed them as the agenda.

Sir, the third feature which I think is very commendable here is that the Address seeks to reach out and take everyone along as partners in a common endeavour to build a new India. I know that for forty-five of the fifty-two years, at least for forty years, an adversary relationship was created between the persons outside the State apparatus, the private sector and the rest of the governmental apparatus. Through this licence quota-raj, we lost a generation. Now, here, again and again, the Address emphasises how the private sector and others, the corporate sector, will be taken as partners in a common programme. You see that in higher and technical education, in health services, speciality hospitals, diagnostic centres, in the building of ports and airports, in cooperation, on research and development, between governmental laboratories, corporate laboratories and even DRDO, these are very great steps ahead. A final feature which I will commend for your consideration is that it addresses itself specially to the sunrise industries in information technology, in electronics and in an industry in which our firms have already done a lot of work. Even Government laboratories have done world-class work, that is pharmaceuticals. These have been very carefully thought out and become an action programme, not just a statement for the future. For all these reasons, I would commend it and I would like to point out to all Members that there is not a single item in this programme on which there is not a common ground. It was the common comment of editorialists of newpapermen, of other mediamen and other observers. For instance, in

the manifestos, on the economy, there was so much common ground. The action programme in this Address builds only on that common ground. The difficulty in India over the last ten years has been that even when there is a common agreement, we actually contrive differences and thereby impede the progress of the country.

The Address is crafted to overcome this difficulty. As you know, Sir, several parties, whenever they are in Opposition, criticize the Government's policy. I know—I differed with many of my friends in newspapers and others—that when the pioneering work was done, in the early nineties, by Dr. Manmohan Singh and other colleagues of his in liberating us from a crippling licence-quota-raj, many friends talked of it and hurled criticism on it, but when they came to power, in the States in which they were ruling, they were doing exactly those things. This is one of the strengths of India, which the world has come to realize, that there has been a continuity of policy in spite of changes in Government. But this continuity is not allowed to work because each time somebody comes to power, when we are in Opposition, we oppose him, but when somebody here tries to do even the same thing, those who then sit in Opposition, will contrive differences and thereby just bring the matter to a halt and not let that matter proceed except by fits and starts. In different States, you find the same common ground. As regards the changes that are proposed in this Address on State Electricity Boards, you know, Sir, that there will be opposition even in this House. Before that happens, may I remind you that the first State to do it well in restructuring the State Electricity Boards, both in tariffs and in separating, corporatising the provisions of services, of generation and distribution of electricity, has been Orissa? After that, Andhra Pradesh, Haryana, Rajasthan, under different parties, have done it, but each time the Central Government attempts it, the Opposition will try to impede it and always find fault with it. That kind of a thing really does create difficulties for us, and I want to commend to you that there is a conscious decision; the Address sought to seek a common ground and build only a programme around that.

Sir, the second point I would like to emphasise in this context is the urgency of allowing the Government to proceed with this programme. Sir, time does not stop because we are involved in our own problems. We keep talking of the 21st century. From today, Sir, it is only nine weeks ahead. The world does not stop because we are mired in our small problems. Technologies continue to gallop. The entire technologies continue to be replaced by new technologies. Not just a product, but also a technology is replaced every two years. The gap between China and India which is already two-fold—we are half at their level—continues to grow. When we are growing at six per cent, they are growing at 11-12 per cent. Then, naturally,

the gap doubles every 12 years. And that gap is just not in per capita income, but in defence capabilities, in every thing else too.

Sir, our problems do not abate just because we are involved in other things. In the last three years, this is the fourth Government. In the last three years, our population has increased by 45 millions. In these six months, from the last sitting of the House to this sitting of the House, our population has increased by six to seven millions. If we now do not act with the urgency, as the Buddha would say of a man whose hair is on fire, we will be guilty of a criminal neglect *vis-a-vis* the interests of our country.

Sir, there are other grave problems. These are not problems, which are due to one Government or the other. I don't want to blame any Government for this, but the fact of this matter is that a combined deficit, of Centre and States, of 8 per cent of GDP would be enough to alarm anyone who has any understanding of financial matters.

Our development expenditure, as a proportion of the GDP, which in 1985—90, was about 11.4 per cent, has fallen to 8 per cent. Our plan expenditure, as a proportion of the GDP, which in the 80's was 7 per cent, has now fallen to about 4.25 per cent. Seventy per cent of our tax revenues are today taken up just by debt servicing. None of these problems is going to go away because we are involved in elections, or, in toppling, or, installing Governments. We are the Council of States, and these things have to be looked at together. It cannot be that the Centre does something and the States do something else. In the States, the plan expenditure is now met entirely by the Centre. In fact, devices have been made by which to pay even the salaries from the plan allocation provided by the Centre. That is one of the reasons why these projects are left incomplete. It is an accounting reason because, if the project is completed, then the salaries in regard to that project have to be paid by the State Government. If you do not complete it, you can keep using your plan allocation available from the Centre for paying even the salaries. In the case of the States, the balance from current revenue finances 40 per cent of the State plans. It was 40 per cent in the 6th Plan. In the 8th Plan, it financed zero per cent. These problems cry for such urgent attention. I could give you a number of examples on this.

The first point is common ground. The Agenda is built on a common ground. Secondly, we must attend to these matters and to this Agenda and facilitate it with that sense of urgency. It is not just finances. Sir, the entire system, to which the Address draws our attention, has broken down. I will give you an instance. There are 992 public sector enterprises of the States. A former Deputy Controller and Auditor General's Report shows that in 784 of these companies the accounts have not been finalized for up to ten years. Forget their performance, the accounts have not been finalized for ten years.

In many cases, they have not been finalized since the inception of those State undertakings. The system has broken down in front of our eyes. Therefore, if we do not attend to it, we are just pushing the country over the abyss. This is not because of one Government. I do not want to say that at all. We can go on playing this debating point to and fro that whenever a problem is mentioned from here, we should say that it is because of 45 years of rule of somebody else. And from there it should be said that no, it is because of current mismanagement. But nobody gains. The country loses and a great cancer grows. It is the collective failure of the political class. Unless we pull together now, Sir, and these tasks, which are outlined by the President, are attended forthwith, irretrievable problems will explode. But, if we do work together, there is not a single problem, which cannot be attend to. This is specially so, Sir, because in the early 90's when the Leader of Opposition and others took these architectonic steps for reforms, many of the reforms were really reforms that could be accomplished by announcements. You just say that the industrial licensing is ended, and it is ended. Now, the type of reforms, which the President has enumerated, cannot be accomplished merely by announcement.

1.00 P.M.

They will require adjustment of persons, retraining of persons, mergers, etc.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Members, it is 1 o'clock. We adjourn the House till 2 o'clock.

The House then adjourned for lunch at one of the clock.

The House reassembled after Lunch at four minutes past two of the Clock.

[The Vice-Chairman (Shri Adhik Shirodkar) *in the Chair*]

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (Shri Adhik Shirodkar): Mr. Arun Shourie, please continue.

SHRI ARUN SHOURIE: Sir, I was explaining two points. One, that there is a large degree of agreement that the agenda is drafted around that agreement and second, that there is an urgent need to implement the agenda. Sir, Pakistan is a standing warning to us a living example of what happens when countries neglect these problems for any length of time. As I mentioned, in spite of this vast area of agreement on almost all sectors of the Indian political and economic life, from foreign policy to education to economy, we continue to come in each others' way. I would, therefore, plead that we should recognize that there will be some difference. We had a difference of opinion on all sides of the House on one matter which is of not immediate operational significance on which the House cannot do something. But we devoted this morning to that. Now that kind of a proceeding in a sense is very reassuring because the matter has been talked in a gentle and

persuasive manner by all sides. But, sir, I am struck up by some apprehension which I will share with you. Some minatory noises have been made outside the House by very responsible persons that unless this particular demand is met this sort of cooperation which the President pleaded for, which the Government has been pleading for would be called into question. These were the statements made by very important persons of a leading party and they are cause of apprehension. I, therefore, appeal to everybody, please act on the consensus which is there. Where there are differences, please confine them to those items. We have, after all, learnt to deal with other countries of the world in spite of differences with them and we do get through agendas with them. If we cannot get through in our own cases in the interest of our own country, it would be nothing short of a crime. The second point which I want to urge is really to look at the things liberated from the past categories. I think that in many points of the agenda which are required we must really think in new terms. If we keep thinking of setting up yet more committees on improving the efficiency of public sector undertakings, or each time there is a more innovative proposal, we read motives into it or some of us try to instigate those who may be directly affected by that particular move, then in a weakened State, in a confused elite, if I may say so, in a confused society, those reform proposals will also just be rivulets in desert. I have seen in the last one and a half years that so much time has been spent in this House on just this artificial respiration for perennially sick enterprises. Nothing comes of that. Instead of that we should shift our focus to the new industries that are coming up. As the Address does on information technology, on pharmaceuticals, on biotechnology, on several other matters and in each of the solutions which we attempt. Telecom policy is a good example. In 1994 a sincere attempt was made to come to terms with the new era of technology. But within four years the technology had advanced so much that a new policy is called for. Many very responsible and big people urged that change in the policy. Lawyers of great eminence argued for those changes in the policy. An expert group recommends that. The Attorney General recommends conditions on it. The change is made, but all sorts of motives get attributed. Not only do all sorts of motives get attributed, the results of that change are already visible. The firms which would have collapsed by now are alive. They are expanding their network. TRAI has reduced the charges by one-third. A very important infrastructure has been given another lease of life to expand and grow and serve the rest of the society. But so much time was taken up just by fabricating allegations. Even now, I would urge that the way the technology is growing in this sector, you can take it that within two years you will be required to have another look at this new policy.

The convergence that is coming about voice over the Internet, for instance, has already cut the telephone rates in Europe and in America so drastically,

that just on internet, very, very big companies are facing great competition from private operators. For Rs. 25(y- you can buy a small instrument and you don't require a phone line to get through your voice, and you can talk and pass on messages everywhere. That kind of convergence, that kind of technological change, will come in India. So, I will urge new thinking, and whenever we come to a solution, we should regard that as an interim solution so that we can keep up with the technological changes. Sir, indeed, I have been struck by the contrast between the discourses made very often in this House and the other House and the picture outside. Even India is changing; we don't see this. If you just see the first ten big companies today which are doing path-breaking work, none of them was even born ten years ago;— whether it is Infosys or Wipro— these are world leaders now. The market capitalisation of one firm is eleven-and-a-half billion dollars. By a single move, an aggressive entrepreneur like Rupert Murdoch was waited out and he surrendered his shares of one company; the market capitalisation went up from Rs. 6,000 crores to Rs. 11,000 crores in one week. Unless we, in this House, keep up with this kind of change in India, we would really be going nowhere. Things are progressing in our own country. Sir, I have just one suggestion for the Government and one suggestion for the consideration of this House. While great emphasis has been placed in the Address for new institutions and for doing things the new way, I would urge upon the Government to pay equal attention to reviving and energising the existing institutions. It is all right—the Prime Minister has said and the President has repeated that—that on corruption, there would be zero tolerance, and for that, they are going in for a revised Lokpal Bill. It will be the seventh time that this Bill would be brought before our Houses. But, Sir, after all, for 15 years, we have had Lok Ayuktas in our States. Lok Ayuktas had screened and shouted about infirmities in the legislation of the States which prevent them from discharging their duties. But they have not been able to bring any convictions after all their labour. I would urge upon the Government to get together with the Chief Ministers and set up a group of former and existing Lok Ayuktas and codify the changes that would be desirable. Similarly, in the office of the Comptroller and Auditor General, I was astonished to learn that there are almost 20,000 employees. These 20,000 persons actually produce almost hundred reports every year. These run into 15,000 to 20,000 pages. These are full of excellent details, often very disheartening details. But I would be surprised if any Member of the House can recall a single Act which would have followed, a single consequence which would have followed, as a result of all this labour. Why can't we get together with the present CAGs and the previous CAGs and see how this valuable institution can be made to do some useful work for the agenda which is common to everybody, for instance, in curbing corruption? There is a very good example of the way we forget things—Mr. Hansraj Bhardwaj is not here at the movement—in

1988, he piloted a Bill on Benami Transactions (Provisions) Act. You would remember, Sir, that it was so important. It was such a major step towards stopping corruption and the use of blackmoney, that it was first brought about by way of an Ordinance, and then an Act was passed. That was in 1988. In Section S of that Act, it said that a procedure shall be laid down for the acquisition of benami properties when there are other grounds.

It will be no surprise to anybody that the procedure has not been laid down till today, though eleven years have gone by. That doesn't show that we are serious. Similarly, it is wonderful that the President has said that at last the Central Vigilance Commission is going to be made a statutory and, therefore, a powerful body. To curb corruption, the present CVC as well as the Chairman of the Law Commission have drafted a Bill on the acquisition of property by civil servants, the acquisition that they cannot explain. Now, these suggestions from existing institutions meant for energising and making effective the existing institutions should be pursued by the Government so that the agenda can be furthered.

Sir, I have just one final point to make and that is one the question of security with which the President dealt. If you feel I am overstepping the time-limit...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI ADHIK SHIRODKAR): You have five minutes to go.

SHRI ARUN SHOURIE: I feel that the experience of Kargil is before all of us and very often persons like me have felt in this House that we have almost lampooned those who were trying to alert us to the security dangers that this country faced. I remember that whenever the Home Minister tried to alert us, a year ago, about the spreading activities of the ISI, many friends tried to portray this as a deliberate attempt by the Home Minister to sabotage the Peaceful intentions and programmes of the Prime Minister. When he came back from Colombo, in this very House, these kinds of suggestions were put forward. I would urge, as the first point, that we should just see the great danger that faces us, by a determined enemy who sees his identity as the identity of one wanting to break India, Please see the jehadisation of the Pakistani society as a whole, and the setting up of terrorist groups by the state apparatus, by the ISI, by the army. You saw in the tapes Gen. Musharraf talking to Gen. Aziz saying *fc VjQ \$ j\ **It *?*1fc& 11* that their tuft is in our hands.

This was their discription of the terrorist organisations they had set up. Not only that, the jehadisation of the society and, within that society, the absolute power is now going to the most jehadites of those institutions, that is, the army; and, within the army, the power now being seized by the person who was the architect of Kargil. So, please, we must remain alert to this. Meeting

this threat will cost us. We must support the increase in expenditure on that account.

SHRI BRATIN SENGUPTA (West Bengal): Why was the army not supplied the requisite equipment? This was raised by one Brigadier and it has come in the newspapers also.

SHRI ARUN SHOURIE: If you want me to talk about that, fine. But I do hope we will talk about Kargil at some stage; if not in this session, in the next one, and I will love to assist the House on that because I have done some work even on the Brigadier and you will see when we talk on that matter. On these things, we cannot go in for stop-go operations. Actually, there cannot be any dispute. If something was not supplied, we should find out how it was not supplied. So, I do not want to get into that just now.

On the stop-go operations, I want to suggest that very often, in India, and, for instance, even in a State for which I have great fondness, that is, Assam, whenever things deteriorate, we call out the army. The moment it is effective and it is beginning to get a grip on it, politicians of all hues start shouting, "Get the army back to the barracks". That way the task remains incomplete, the sacrifices go in vain and great expenditure is incurred and it has to be restarted all over again.

I have the final suggestions for Government's consideration. The expansion of this kind of terrorism, invoking a particularly venomous form of a particular religion is creating a natural common ground among several countries and we should extend our cooperation with Israel, the United States, China and Iran, which is facing the same kind of threat from Afghanistan in this context. The most important is that we should awaken the world to what is happening. These people from the United States keep giving us lectures on human rights, but when six persons of theirs are killed at the World Trade Centre, they suddenly feel that terrorism is a very big problem.

In our case, in Punjab, 21,000 persons were killed; in Kashmir, 15,000 persons were killed, and we were the ones who were always put on the defensive, "Provide us proof." So, I think, we must energetically convince the world about this problem, and provide them full evidence...(*Time bell*)... I will just finish in one sentence. The publications from Pakistan are full of the activities and aims and objectives and preparations and deeds of these terrorist groups. This should be enough to convince the world about what we are facing as a front-line state in this matter. So, with these words and with these two suggestions, I commend the Address most highly and warmly to the House and reiterate the Motion that I have suggested earlier of Thanks to the President. Thank you very much.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI ADHIK SHIRODKAR): Shri Virumbi to make his speech seconding the Motion. Sorry, you have got nine minutes. ...*(Interruptions)*... I stand corrected. It is 16 minutes.

SHRI S. VIDUTHALAI VIRUMBI (TAMIL NADU): I hope you will be considerate. Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, I rise to second the Motion of Thanks on the President's Address initiated by my learned friend, hon. Arun Shourie, that the Members of the Rajya Sabha assembled in the Session are deeply grateful to the President for the Address which he has been pleased to deliver to both Houses of Parliament assembled together on October 25, 1999.

Sir, I feel that it is an auspicious occasion. With great pleasure, I second the Motion. In the recent election, the people of India have given a clear and loud mandate to the NDA. We are practising the Westminster Cabinet System, but the recently held election was like a presidential election, identifying the captain of the army. Sir, the people from Kashmir to Kanyakumari voted for a stable government at the Centre. All sections of the society are represented in the National Democratic Alliance. The successful conduct of the elections is a great success not only for Indian democracy, but also for the Indian people because even the population of USA, Canada and the Europe put together, I think, is less than our population. In spite of it, the elections were conducted in a very peaceful manner. Therefore, it is a historic one. This is a tribute to the Indian people. We can hold our head high amongst the comity of nations. Therefore, we are proud that the NDA is a representative of both the national interests and regional aspirations. After all, the NDA is nothing but the mirror image of our nation's unity in multi-faceted diversity, rich pluralism and federalism.

Sir, you know that we stand for federalism. We support secularism without any reservations. Sir, not only federalism and secularism; we are striving hard day-in-and-day-out to see that social justice is rendered to the masses. Therefore, the coalition Government has decided that it would strive to attain federalism in a full and proper sense. We also have to preserve secularism. We have committed ourselves to secularism as well as social justice. However, still some people still have doubts whether it can be achieved by this Government.

However, what I want to say is that the coalition Government has come of age and it is going to stay here. The days of monolithic politics are over. An alliance of 11 parties represents the Council of Ministers, with a common agenda, that too a pre-poll agenda; it is far better than parties consisting of Members pulling in different directions. The undercurrent of all the constituents of the NDA is for faster development of our nation. That is the cementing force for the NDA. The people exhibited anger in the elections

against divisive forces and have taught a lesson by giving a clear-cut majority to the NDA.

Therefore, the NDA is new; the NDA is the future; and the NDA is a broad-based movement for progress and justice. If somebody still has doubts lingering in his mind, we want to make it clear as to what the NDA is.

With regard to BJP, the 'Economist' has quoted. It is published from London. Recently, they said, the Congress faithfuls must feel a beat like the British Conservative before they lost to new Labour in 1997. I repeat, 'The Congress faithfuls must feel a beat like the British conservative before they lost to new Labour in 1997.' Now, the BJP has chosen the secular ideology. Therefore, it is beyond doubt that secularism is an accepted truth. When it is so, I hope, the doubts lingering in the minds of those people would be cleared at least now.

Now I will come to the important issues that are being dealt with in the Presidents Address. Sir, in the President's Address, at the outset, as I told you, it has said that we are for secularism. I will tell you how actually it is mentioned in the President's Address at page-9, para-32. I quote: Internal Security is an integral part of national security. The Government is committed to ensure safety and security to all citizens of India, irrespective of their caste, religion, gender, or language. The Government is already engaged in taking effective steps to create a riot-free and terrorism-free India. ^^

From this assertion, it is very clear that the present Government is committed to saving secularism and that is number one. It is not only in the President's Address; even in the election manifesto, we have given an assurance to the people. What assurance we have given to the people is mentioned in the President's Address. Sir, I quote from the NDA agenda, page-3: We reach out to the minorities and even at the cost of repetition, we proclaim that we will safeguard the rights as enshrined in the Constitution. NDA is the political arm of the nation and the Indian people as a whole. No one will be cast aside. Fairness and justice will be rendered to one and all. We assure you that there will not be any discrimination.

This is the assurance we are giving to the nation at large, through this august House. They can take it for granted that secularism will be kept intact. This is number one. Number two is with regard to federalism. With regard to federalism, in the President's Address, the Government has given a categorical assurance to the people of India as to how they are going to act on it. I quote from page 11, para-36: "harmonious Centre-State relations are fundamental to a healthy federal polity and to achieve balanced socio-economic development. The pending recommendations of the Sarkaria Commission's report in this regard will be considered for expeditious

implementation. My Government believes that the States should have greater financial and administrative powers and that there should be decentralisation right up to the grassroots through the Panchayati Raj System."

Sir, what I want to say is that regarding Centre-State relations they have agreed that they are going to implement the recommendations of the Sarkaria Commission. To this I can add further the Government will take care of the situation that has come up after the publication of this Report. I hope they will take care of it when they are coming to some conclusions regarding the federal principle. Now it is a quasi-federal system. We can say neither is it unitary nor is it federal. It is a quasi-federal system with full powers to the Centre. We have been fighting for the last four decades or rather five decades for true federalism. I hope the Government will also act in this regard because we have given an assurance to the people to this effect. I hope the Government will act keeping in view the present situation prevailing in our country and broaden the issue of federalism even if it is required to go beyond the recommendations of the Sarkaria Commission. Regarding federalism we have already given an assurance. The third point that I want to make here is regarding the reservation policy. How BJP have further improved upon it, I would like to quote that. In the last elections in their manifesto what they stated I would like to quote that. They stated, "The BJP will continue with its existing policy of reservations till social and economic equity is achieved." This was the stand taken by the BJP during the 1998 elections. They have further improved upon it while at the time of the formulation of the National Agenda for Governance in which they have stated "The interests of the SC/ST and other backward classes will be adequately safeguarded by appropriate legal, executive and societal efforts by large scale education and empowerment. We will provide legal protection to the existing percentages of reservation in the educational institutions at the State level." Sir, they stated that they would provide legal protection to existing percentages of reservation in the educational institutions at the State level. We find in the President's Address that they have further improved upon it. What has been stated in Para 39 of the Address I would like to quote. It is stated, "The reservation for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes will be extended for another ten year and the reservation percentages above 50 per cent followed by some States will be sanctified through a legislative measure." Many States of India have requested this. Cutting across party lines, I would say that his problem is affecting the whole nation. In Tamil Nadu we have 69 per cent reservation. When we gave this reservation, we tried to incorporate this in the Ninth Schedule of the Constitution. We, the Members of the DMK Party, met all the leaders and we were able to obtain their support. When I met Chavanji I told him that we wanted to ensure that this should be incorporated in the Ninth Schedule of the Constitution. Mr. Chavan told me that all the Party Leaders should accept it

and it should be unanimous. We also convened a meeting of the leaders of the opposition parties. All of them agreed to this. Actually a Bill was also placed before the House. When the Bill was placed on that day the House was adjourned for some time. It was last day of that Session. Everybody knew how curious we were. Then again we approached the Chairperson. Subsequently it was introduced and incorporated in the Ninth Schedule. It was stuck up for one and a half month. When it is stated in the Address that reservation above 50 per cent will be protected, we welcome this statement. We also welcome the statement made by Shri Arun Shourie in this regard. Apart from reservation, I want to add one more thing. Now, apart from Hindi, the Government is considering giving official status to the other languages also. For that, a Committee has been constituted. It will go into that issue. I hope the Government will take up this matter very seriously. My appeal is, when we take up the language issue, Tamil should also be given an official language status. We hope the Government will expedite this matter and see that Tamil is given the official language status.

Another problem is regarding agriculture. Everybody, cutting across party lines, agreed that there should be a link between Ganga and Cauvery. But, as a first step, we must try to link the rivers in the South; then the link can be extended to Ganga. Therefore, I hope the Government will pursue this matter with full earnestness and see that the rivers running in the South are linked.

Apart from the issues mentioned, there are other issues which we have to deal with. We have given assurance with regard to federalism; we have given assurance with regard to secularism, and we have given assurance with regard to social justice. Not only social justice but on empowerment of women also we have given assurance through a policy resolution. We are agreeing to that. Therefore, social justice is going to take place in this country very shortly.

Now, I am coming to the issue relating to labour. How is the labour issue going to be addressed by this Government? Sir, para 26, page 8 of the President's Address says, "We are fully committed to promote the interests of labour, especially those in the unorganized sector, in the new environment of economic reforms. The Second Labour Commission will study the changes needed in various labour laws in order to better achieve the welfare of labour, faster generation of additional employment, accelerated industrial growth and exports." As far as our State is concerned, we have already passed a Government Order to protect the unorganized sector. I hope this is going to be extended throughout the country. Once it is extended, India is going to attain the status, with regard to protection of unorganized sector, which Tamil Nadu has already attained.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI ADHIK SHIRODKAR): Mr. Virumbi, kindly conclude.

SHRI S. VIDUTHALAI VIRUMBI: Yes, Sir. Before I conclude, what I want to say is this. I do not intend to hurt the feelings of anybody. At the same time, I would be failing in my duty if I do not recall the fact that an old national party could not come to any conclusion whether to have a coalition Government or not. It became a debating subject for them. Again, I do not want to hurt the feelings of anybody. The fact is, some national parties applied different yardsticks for different States. Sir, in fact, I am happy that although they are supposed to be there as national parties, they acted as if they are regional outfits or regional parties. Before I conclude, what I want to say is this. The people of India, in the last General Elections, have rejected the selfish personal agenda that instigated the gang of the topless. This is the main important thing that has happened in the last General Elections. I conclude by saying that Satyamevayajate is there, but, below that, we have to add, in golden letters, "We are a democracy, beware of people." With these words, I second the Motion initiated by my hon. friend, Mr. Arun Shourie. Thank you.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI ADHIK SHIRODKAR): The Motion is before the House. I have, before me, 243 amendments to this Motion, which may be moved at this stage. Amendment numbers 1 and 2 by Shri N. Thalavai Sundaram.

SHRI N. THALAVAI SUNDARAM (Tamil Nadu): Sir, I move:

1. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—
"but regret that the Address does not mentioned about giving full statehood to the Union Territory of Pondichery."

2. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be added namely:—
"but regret that the Address does not refer to setting of a Committee to study the feasibility of treating all the 18 languages included in VIIIth Schedule of the Constitution as Official Languages."

SHRI S. RAMACHANDRAN PILLAI (Kerala): Sir, I move

3. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—
"but regret that there is no mention in the Address about the specific plan for providing employment to educated unemployed youth in the country."

4. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—
"but regret that there is no mention in the Address about the steps taken by Government of India to protect the Constitutional rights of the Minorities."

5. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—
"but regret that there is no mention in the Address about the rise in prices of
essential and life saving drugs."

6. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—
"but regret that there is no mention in the Address about the rise in prices of
essential commodities which has hit the common people in the country."

7. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—
"but regret that there is no mention in the Address about the enactment of
the Essential Commodities (Amendment) Bill, 1998."

8. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—
but regret that there is no mention in the Address about banning the entry of
private sector, indigenous or foreign, in the Insurance Sector."

9. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:— "but
regret that there is no mention in the Address about the eradication of
illiteracy from the country."

10. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—
"but regret that there is no mention in the Address about the need to control
widespread land erosion which is taking place in Murshidabad, Nadia,
Hooghly and Bardhaman districts of West Bengal."

11. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—
"but regret that there is no mention in the Address about the equality of
rights and equal wages etc. for the women."

12. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—
"but regret that there is no mention in the Address about women health and
child care."

13. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:— "but
regret that there is no mention in the Address about land reforms."

14. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—
"but regret that there is no mention in the Address about Government's
desire to formulate a policy on youth."

15. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—
"but regret that the Address shows no concern about the growing corruption
in the administrative machinery at various levels and the effective
measures to eradicate it."

16. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—
"but regret that the Address shows no concern about the formulation of a policy to remove regional imbalances and have uniform development of all the regions in the country."
17. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—
"but regret that the Address shows no concern about the revival of sick industrial units in the public sector and rehabilitation of the displaced workers."
18. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—
"but regret that the Address shows no concern about providing remunerative prices to the farmers for the agricultural produce in consonance with the rising cost of the inputs."
19. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—
"but regret that the Address shows no concern about the unprecedented rise in the prices of essential commodities thus making them beyond the reach of the common man."
20. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—
"but regret that the Address shows no concern about the failure of the Public Distribution System to provide essential commodities to the poorer sections in remote areas."
21. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—
"but regret that the Address shows no concern about formulating a time-bound programme to provide employment opportunities in the rural areas to prevent exodus of educated youth to the urban areas seeking job opportunities."
22. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—
"but regret that the Address shows no concern about the steps to be taken to check unabated brain-drain of doctors, scientists, technicians and experts."
23. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—
"but regret that the Address shows no concern about the growing unemployment in the country and the need to provide unemployment allowance to the unemployed educated youths to mitigate their hardship."
24. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—
"but regret that the Address shows no concern about the closing down of 90 collieries of ECL, thus throwing out 1 lakh workers out of job."

25. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—
"but regret that the Address shows no concern about reducing custom duties and increasing excise duties to benefit steel and other industries."
26. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—
"but regret that the Address shows no concern about the Bill for providing minimum wages to agricultural workers."
27. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—
"but regret that the Address shows no concern about the removal of lacuna in 73rd and 74th amendments to constitution which can bound the State Governments to conduct election after every five years."
28. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—
"but regret that the Address shows no concern about the need to monitor the effective implementation of land reform in the country."
29. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—
"but regret that the Address shows no concern about any scheme of all round development of under developed districts in States."
30. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—
"but regret that the Address shows no concern about the repair of existing national highways and construction of new national highways in Eastern Zone."
31. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—
"but regret that the Address shows no concern about taking all necessary steps for implementing the programmes to safeguard the interests of the minorities in the country."
32. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—
"but regret that the Address shows no concern about constructing more dwelling units for the economically weaker sections of society in the country."
33. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—
"but regret that the Address shows no concern about introducing an integrated Crop Insurance Scheme to save the poor farmer community from natural calamities."
34. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—
"but regret that the Address shows no concern about bringing forward a comprehensive Legislation to arrange pension for the most neglected rural labourers who are not in a position to eke out their livelihood nor their children are in a position to support their parents."

35. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—

"but regret that the Address shows no concern about taking effective measures to make primary education compulsory."

36. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—

"but regret that the Address shows no concern about measures for providing facilities of cold storage marketing of farm produce particularly vegetables, fruits etc. in order to enable the farmer to get suitable remunerative price."

37. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—

"but regret that the Address shows no concern about the distribution of barren land to the local farmers to grow trees."

38. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—

"but regret that the Address shows no concern about providing vocation courses to the rural unemployed youth and women to make them self-reliant."

39. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—

"but regret that the Address shows no concern about the measures to encourage constructions of Highways and Ports."

40. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—

"but regret that the Address shows no concern about checking the cost of electricity for the use of consumers."

41. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—

"but regret that the Address shows no concern about the role of NGOs in building the infrastructure in the rural areas and providing employment opportunity."

42. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—

"but regret that the Address shows no concern about the failure to curb atrocities on Dalits."

43. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—

"but regret that the Address shows no concern about bringing a legislation for protection, welfare and all round development of minorities."

44. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—

"but regret that the Address shows no concern about a comprehensive plan to provide basic needs of food, clothing and shelter to the poor people in the country."

45. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—
"but regret that the Address shows no concern about the measures to check the growing menace of poverty, unemployment, disparity and price rise in the country."
46. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—
"but regret that the Address shows no concern about the businessmen and the multinational companies minting money at the expense of common man."
47. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—
"but regret that the Address shows no concern about the deteriorating economic situation in the country leading to closure of public sector undertakings."
48. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—
"but regret that the Address shows no concern about improvement in cattle breeding and also checking spread of disease in them."
49. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—
"but regret that the Address shows no concern about the spurt of the diseases like Hepatitis-B, T.B., H.I.V. and kidney and heart ailments and various poverty related diseases in the country and providing timely medical facilities for them."
50. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—
"but regret that the Address shows no concern about the schemes for the development of primary education, secondary education and higher education."
51. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—
"but regret that the Address shows no concern about making arrangements for augmenting the production of foodgrains, pulses, oil in proportion to the increasing population of the country."
52. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—
"but regret that the Address shows no concern about the measures for checking price rise of potatoes, onions, oils, pulses and other essential commodities in the country."
53. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—
"but regret that the Address shows no concern about the measures of pulling the country out of the crisis of deficit financing, unearthing black money and preventing tax-evasion."

54. That at the *end* of the motion, the following be *added* namely:—
"but regret that the Address shows no concern about effective measures to check hoarding, black marketing, profiteering and adulteration etc."
55. That at the *end* of the motion, the following be *added* namely:—
"but regret that the Address shows no concern about the scheme to save various States from the fury of floods and the loss incurred by the people and the State Governments."
56. That at the *end* of the motion, the following be *added* namely:—
"but regret that the Address shows no concern about linking all the villages by roads."
57. That at the *end* of the motion, the following be *added* namely:—
"but regret that the Address shows no concern about the construction of pucca houses for the people belonging to Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Minorities and weaker sections in the country."
58. That at the *end* of the motion, the following be *added* namely:—
"but regret that the Address shows no concern about the installation of hand-pumps for providing potable water for the poor people in States."
59. That at the *end* of the motion, the following be *added* namely:—
"but regret that the Address shows no concern about national loss due to recurrent of floods and droughts in the country and effective steps to be taken to control the menace."
60. That at the *end* of the motion, the following be *added* namely:—
"but regret that the Address shows no concern about the measures to check rampant corruption in the country."
61. That at the *end* of the motion, the following be *added* namely:—
"but regret that the Address shows no concern about the measures to check child labour and prostitution."
62. That at the *end* of the motion, the following be *added* namely:—
"but regret that the Address shows no concern about the development schemes for farmers, labourers, youth and women."
63. That at the *end* of the motion, the following be *added* namely:—
"but regret that the Address shows no concern about the increasing number of sick people and general deterioration of the health of the people in the country."

64. That at the *end* of the motion, the following be *added* namely:—
"but regret that the Address shows no concern about the miserable performance of India in international sports and games in spite of larger population than many other countries." .
65. That at the *end* of the motion, the following be *added* namely:—
"but regret that the Address shows no concern about the meagre investments in the field of science and technology in public and private sectors."
66. That at the *end* of the motion, the following be *added* namely:—
"but regret that the Address shows no concern about the increasing hegemony of United States of America."
- SHRI R. MAGRABANDU (Tamil Nadu): Sir, I move:
- 67. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—
"but regret that the Address does not mention about different type of Rehabilitation measures to the families of those who laid down their life for the nation."
68. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—
"but regret that the Address does not mention about the measures to be taken by Government to curb the terrorism in the border and inner land."
69. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—
"but regret that the Address does not mention about the steps to be taken for poverty alleviation and unemployment."
70. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—
"but regret that the Address does not mention about welfare measures for old age persons, widows, orphans and under privileged."
71. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—
"but regret that the Address does not mention about the Water and Air pollution rendering life unsafe."
72. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—
"but regret that the Address does not mention about exploitation of underground water resources."
73. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—
"but regret that the Address does not mention about the National Judicial Commission."

74. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—

"but regret that the Address does not mention about reducing the delay in dispensing with justice."

75. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—

"but regret that the Address does not mention about the check in rise of price of essential commodities which affects the common men."

76. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—

"but regret that the Address does not mention about specific schemes for the upliftment of women."

BY SHRI KHAGEN DAS (Tripura): I move:

77. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—

"but regret that the Address does not mention about Government's resolve to fight insurgency in the North-East."

78. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—

"but regret that the Address does not mention about the implementation of the Shukla Commission Report which is essential for development of infrastructure in the North-East."

79. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—

"but regret that the Address does not mention about initiating dialogue with the Government of Bangladesh for curbing extremists movement across the international border and also to provide transit facilities through Bangladesh for the betterment of the North-East region."

SHRI SANATAN BISI (Orissa): Sir, I move:

80. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—

"but regret that the Address does not mention about not giving an opportunity to the Rajya Sabha to discuss the Kargil issue, at that time thereby depriving members an opportunity to congratulate the armed forces and put Parliaments appreciation on record."

81. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—

"but regret that the Address does not mention about the Nuclear doctrine not being laid in both the Houses of Parliament for a thorough debate."

82. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—

"but regret that the Address does not mention about the Lahore declaration not being laid in the Parliament and adopted as was the case with Shimla Agreement."

[Amendments 83 to 117 were not moved]

SHRI DIPANKER MUKHERJEE (West Bengal): Sir, I move:

118. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—

"but regret that the Address does not mention about the recent hike in the diesel prices by 40% and its cascading effect on the prices of essential commodities."

119. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—

"but regret that the Address does not mention about the failure of the Government to fulfil its commitment that no deficit will be allowed to occur in the Oil Pool Account w.e.f. 1.4.98."

120. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—

"but regret that the Address does not mention about the Government's failure to get all the funds collected under provisions of Oil Industry (Development) Act, 1974 for development of the Petroleum sector."

121. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—

"but regret that the Address does not mention about the measures to recover the excess subsidy to the tune of Rs. 1000 crores drawn by some private urea manufacturing companies through 'gold-plating' of nameplate specifications."

122. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—

"but regret that the Address does not mention how the resources will be mobilised to step up investment substantially in the infrastructure sector."

123. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—

"but regret that the Address does not mention what specific measures will be taken to reach out to the under-privileged and unemployed."

124. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—

"but regret that the Address does not mention any specific steps to involve the labour as equal partner in national reconstruction."

125. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—

"but regret that the Address does not mention about the socio-economic impact of the Government's decision to privatise or corporatise core sector industries like power, coal, oil, airports, ports, etc."

126. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—

"but regret that the Address does not mention about the sickness of industries and steps to arrest the industrial- sickness." -

127. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—
"but regret that the Address does not mention about revival of sick public sector units like IISCO, National Instrument, MAMC, BOGL. Tyre Corporation of India, Hindustan Cables, Durgapur and Haldia units of Hindustan Fertilizer Corporation, NTC, NJMC, Jute Corporation of India, Bengal Immunity, Smith Stanistreet, Cycle Corporation of India etc."
128. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—
"but regret that the Address does not mention about payment of statutory dues to Central public sector units workers."
129. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—
"but regret that the Address does not mention about guaranteeing minimum wages to agricultural labour."
130. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—
"but regret that the Address does not mention about recognition of single trade union through secret ballot."
131. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—
"but regret that the Address does not mention about the severe impact on Eastern zone States because of the hike in power tariff by more than 40% by NTPC in the Eastern zone power stations in Farakka, Kahalgaon and Talchci-."
132. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—
"but regret that the Address does not mention about the hardships caused to the common man due to lowering of interest rates from small saving schemes."
133. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—
"but regret that the Address does not mention about improving Public Distribution System."
134. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—
"but regret that the Address does not mention about the steps to curb the activities of the organisations directly or indirectly involved in inciting and organising attacks on minorities."
- SHRI O.S. MANIAN (Tamil Nadu): Sir, I move:
135. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—
"but regret that the Address does not mention about Water Policy for providing efficient and prompt settlement of water disputes and their time bound implementation." [Amendments 136 to 164 were not moved]

SHRI NILOTPAL BASU (West Bengal): Sir, I move.:

165. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—

"but regret that the Address does not mention about the recent hike in the diesel prices by 40% and its cascading effect on the prices of essential commodities.

166. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—

"but regret that the Address does not mention about the failure of the Government to fulfil its commitment that no deficit will be allowed to occur in the Oil Pool Account w.e.f. 1.4.98.

167. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—

"but regret that the Address does not mention about the Government's failure to get all the funds collected under provisions of Oil Industry (Development) Act, 1974 for development of the Petroleum sector.

168. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—

"but regret that the Address does not mention about the measures to recover the excess subsidy to the tune of Rs. 1000 crores drawn by some private urea manufacturing companies through 'gold-plating' of nameplate specifications.

169. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—

"but regret that the Address does not mention how the resources will be mobilised to step up investment substantially in the infrastructure sector."

170. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—

"but regret that the Address does not mention what specific measures will be taken to reach out the under-privileged and unemployed."

171. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—

"but regret that the Address does not mention any specific steps to involve the labour as equal partner in national reconstruction."

172. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—

"but regret that the Address does not mention about the socio-economic impact of the Government's decision to privatize or corporatize core sector industries like power, coal, oil, airports, ports, etc."

173. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—

"but regret that the Address does not mention about the sickness of industries and steps to arrest the industrial sickness."

174. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—

"but regret that the Address does not mention about revival of sick public sector units like IISCO, National Instrument, MAMC, BOGL, Tyre Corporation of India, Hindustan Cables, Durgapur and Haldia units of Hindustan Fertilizer Corporation, NTC, NJMC, Jute Corporation of India, Bengal Immunity, Smith Stanistreet, Cycle Corporation of india etc.

175. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—

"but regret that the Address does not mention about payment of statutory dues to Central public sector units workers."

176. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—

"but regret that the Address does not mention about guaranteeing minimum wages to agricultural labour."

177. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—

"but regret' that the Address does not mention about recognition of single trade union through secret ballot."

178. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—

"but regret that the Address does not mention about the severe impact on Eastern zone States because of the hike in power tariff by more than 40% by NTPC in the Eastern zone power stations in Farakka, Kahalgaon and Talcher."

179. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—

"but regret that the Address does not mention about the hardships caused to the common man due to lowering of interest rates for small saving schemes."

180. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—

"but regret that the Address does not mention about improving Public Distribution System."

181. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—

"but regret that the Address does not mention about the steps to curb the activities of the organisations directly or indirectly involved in inciting and organising attacks on minorities."

182. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—

"but regret that the Address does not mention the importance of strengthening the non-aligned movement."

183. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—

"but regret that the Address does not mention the need for taking up thoroughgoing agrarian reforms by the States to battle poverty and unemployment."

SHRI VAYALAR RAVI (Kerala): Sir, I move:

184. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—

"but deeply regret that the Address does not mention about the strong measures against atrocities on women."

185. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—

"but deeply regret that the Address does not mention about literacy programme for rural women."

186. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—

"but deeply regret that the Address does not mention about improvement of the welfare of the Children and steps taken to prevent malnutrition and diseases."

187. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—

"but deeply regret that the Address does not mention about gender discrimination and disparity in wages."

188. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—

"but deeply regret that the Address does not mention about programmes for involvement of the youth in nation building."

189. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—

"but deeply regret that the Address does not mention about steps taken to check price rise."

190. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—

"but deeply regret that the Address does not mention about steps taken to maintain communal harmony."

191. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—

"but deeply regret that the Address does not mention about the formation of Ex-serviceman Financial Corporation for the benefit of the Ex-servicemen defending the nation."

192. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely:—

"but deeply regret that the Address does not mention about providing second employment to the Ex-servicemen."

193. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added* namely: _____
"but deeply regret that the Address does not mention about offering one rank one pension scheme."

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE (West Bengal): Sir, I move:

228. That at the *end* of the Motion,, the following be *added* namely: _____
"but deeply regret that the Address does not mention the failure of the Central Government to protect the religious minorities from continuous persecution in different parts of the country."

The questions were proposed.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI ADHIK SHIRODKAR): The Motions and amendments moved thereto are now open for discussion, except those which have not been moved. Now, Dr. Manmohan Singh.

DR. MANMOHAN SINGH (Assam): Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, I thank the hon. President for his gracious Address. The President's Address contains a long catalogue of wishlists and objectives, with many of which I do not disagree. But, I regret to note that the Address does not contain an essence of priority. In many cases it has not mentioned the time-phase. In many cases it has not mentioned any concrete action-programme, except the establishment of new Ministries, new departments and some task forces. I hope when this Government settles down it will come forward with a much more clear-headed, well-prioritized programme of action to meet the challenges of the 21st Century, which is now on the horizon. Sir, as we enter the 21st century we face immense challenges as well as opportunities and the collective task before our nation ought to be to work unitedly to meet those challenges and exploit those opportunities so that India can occupy its rightful place in the comity of nations and emerge as a front-ranking economic power about whose achievements our children and grand children can take legitimate pride.

Sir, I notice that the President concludes his Address by reminding Members of Parliament of highly challenging, but equally rewarding tasks that lie ahead. The President has expressed hope that the proceedings in Parliament will be of the highest standard marked by consensus and cooperation among all Members cutting across party lines. Sir, this was the spirit of cooperation and consensus which our party had proposed would guide our conduct. But, Sir, I must confess to you my extreme anguish and disappointment that the ruling party in its handling of the Bofors' chargesheet has grossly misused the processes of law to malign our respected leader and former Prime Minister, the late Shri Rajiv Gandhi. In bringing forward a

wholly politically motivated chargesheet seeking to defame Shri Rajiv Gandhi, the ruling party has grievously hurt the process of building a viable national consensus which we need if we are to tackle and meet the formidable challenges of the 21st century. I hope even at this late hour the ruling party will give up this approach. This morning this matter came up for discussion and our party had made known its feelings with a great sense of anguish and anxiety and we do hope that wise counsel will prevail with the Government.

Sir, I now come to certain issues which have been mentioned in the President's Address. Mr. Viduthalai Virumbi, speaking before me, felt reassured about this Government's commitment to secularism. I do notice that the President's Address at page 2 in paragraph 6 mentions the commitment to the principles of secularism. I also notice that the National Agenda for Governance of the ruling party talks of the principle of commitment to secularism, emotional harmony of all Indians and full protection of minorities. Yet, Sir, we all know that the B.J.P's rule has coincided with the most acute harassment of the tiny Christian minority leading to ugly and tragic incidents in Gujarat and in Orissa. Sir, the Government has promised a kindlier and gentler face. But, there is a contradiction between those declared social aims and actual means. This Government has not completed even one month and what we are witnessing that the Hindu Parishad and Bajrang Dal are demanding that the Pope during his forthcoming visit to India apologise for the conversion of Hindus and seek forgiveness for whatever that had happened in Goa more than three centuries ago. The Rath Yatra from Goa to Delhi, which has been planned by the affiliates of the BJP, can only add to communal disharmony and ill-will.

Sir, it has been reported in the newspapers that the Gujarat Government has circulated draft Bill, laying down serious sanctions against forced conversions. I wish to make it quite clear that we are completely against forced conversions. We do not defend any forced conversion. But, it is being said and it is being feared that the wording of the Gujarat Bill is so vague that dubbing a conversion as a forced one would be easy and difficult to disprove. This will, and can, become another major source of harassment of the minorities in our country.

Sir, the Prime Minister has said and the President's Address also mentions about zero tolerance for terrorism. We support all the efforts to combat the evil of terrorism, but it must not lead to unjustifiable and unreasonable curbs on civil liberties, particularly because, the minorities in our country many a time become innocent victims of these attempts to curb terrorism. I repeat, we are not against attempts to curb the evil of terrorism, but in combating this menace, we must not give up the norms of civilised behaviour worthy of our civilization and our culture.

Sir, I have gone through the Agenda of the-ruling group. Once again, it talks of genuine secularism. At one time, the present ruling group used to talk of genuine non-alignment. Now, they talk of genuine secularism. But the incidents that I have mentioned and what has happened during the last two weeks, involving the activities of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad and Bajrang Dal, I hope, will persuade my friends like Mr. Virumbi to exert their influence so that this mischief is stopped before it can do an irreparable damage to the cause of communal harmony and communal goodwill.

SHRI SANGH PRIYA GAUTAM (Uttar Pradesh): Sir, mischief is an unparliamentary word. It should be removed from the records. You are attributing something. (*Interruptions*)

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI ADHIK SHIRODKAR): Order, please. I will look into it. (*Interruptions*) Please allow him to complete uninterrupted.

SHRI MANMOHAN SINGH: Now, I would like to say a few words about the Kargil affair. We salute India's gallant armed forces. We will, for ever, be grateful to those sons of Mother India, who have laid down their lives and those who were disabled while • defending our country's honour, its sovereignty and integrity. Sir, we would urge the Government to see that the families of those, who have lost their lives and those who have been disabled in this conflict are provided proper relief and rehabilitation on a top priority basis. There must be a proper implementation mechanism for the purpose. This Parliament must be informed from time to time about the pace of the implementation of those relief and rehabilitation measures.

Sir, the morale of Indias armed forces has to be kept at the highest level. There have been grievances about the non-fulfilment of one-rank-one-pension. I do hope that the Government would look into all these matters so that our gallant Armed Forces have the satisfaction that this Parliament is fully conscious of its obligations towards these brave sons of our country. Ex-servicemen do face problems. We have made efforts to resolve those problems. But I think the time has come to review the existing schemes and their effectiveness. If there are any loopholes, if there are any gaps, they must be plugged on a priority basis.

Sir, as I said, we are very proud of our Armed Forces. In our view, nothing should be done to affect in any manner their a political character. We must never again use Armed Forces representatives to brief exclusively a political party, must we allow pictures of gallant Generals as part of political parties and political meetings.

Sir, the Kargil conflict has brought to focus gaps in our security system. No one can believe that thousands of intruders could enter our territory; only in the first week of May when they were first detected. Sir, weaknesses of our security systems must be examined on a priority basis and these weaknesses must be plugged without any further loss of time.

I would have been happy, we would have all liked that if the Committee which the Government has set up to look into this matter its personnel and its terms of reference had been decided upon after wide-ranging consultations. This has not happened. But that is a matter of the past. In our view, this is not the right way to handle a delicate affair like this one involving the national security system.

Sir, during the Kargil conflict a good deal of public attention got focussed on the so-called track-two diplomacy. Let me say that we are not against the use of track two diplomacy mechanism. We live in a complex world and the Government have to rely upon various instrumentalities to reach out to their interlocutors. But, now, Sir, that the conflict is over and judging by some of the statements of Mr. Niaz Naik, contentious issues like the future of Jammu and Kashmir, figured extensively in these discussions under track two diplomacy. Now that the conflict is over, I would urge the Government to take the House into confidence as to what was the scope and nature of these discussions.

Sir, we all know that there are some mysterious things. My friend, Mr. Arun Shourie, referred to the telephone tapes of Gen. Musharraf and one of his senior Generals. Several newspapers have carried different stories. "How did these tapes come into our possession?" Someone said. These are originally given by the CIA." Some others said, "No, these were given by the Pakistan's Prime Minister to our Government." I think, yesterday, one of the newspapers said, "That by no default; it is our ingenuity which taped those conversations and we made those conversations available through track two diplomacy to the Pakistan Government. I would like the Government, at some stage, to take the House into confidence as to what the authoritative state of this matter is, if they consider this it is appropriate, this information should be shared with the House. 3.00 P.M.

Sir, my friend, Shri Arun Shourie is entirely right that we have to be very cautious, we have to be very careful in dealing with Pakistan particularly, given the antecedents and the background of the present ruling group in Pakistan. We must be ever vigilant in defending India's territorial integrity. There can be no compromise on that. Nor can there be any compromise with cross-border terrorism. But, Sir, I would respectfully submit that in discussing the Indo-Pak relations, we must avoid the tendency to view the conflict as having its origin in a worldwide Islamic conspiracy. I am sorry that some spokesmen of the Government have this tendency. In his address to the General Assembly, I am told, the External Affairs Minister spoke of the scimitar of narco-terrorism that cuts across the Caucuses to the South Asian sub-continent. The 'scimitar', his western audiences would have realised, is an obvious allusion to the Crescent of Islam. My own request to the

Government is, we must not buy these western theories. We must have an objective view of what is happening in our neighbourhood and this blind copying of these theories of racial conflict having roots in history can lead this Sub-Continent into a crisis which we may not be able to overcome.

Sir, the turmoil and the fragility of democracy in Pakistan is bad news for all of us. Pakistan is armed to the teeth. It is economically bankrupt and ruled by Generals. And this can destabilise the entire Sub-Continent and make it a risky place to invest in and can also lead to an unavoidable hike in India's defence expenditure. Therefore, we should not waste any time to gloat over Pakistan's failing state. We must be vigilant. But I must submit that while we must use all instrumentalities to persuade Pakistan to give up this proxy war, to give up this attempt by fanning cross-border terrorism, we must still pursue a pro-active policy. Our two countries have very many common ties of history, culture and geography and that wider perspective of aiming at an amity of hearts and harmony in the Sub-Continent must not be given up despite what has happened in the recent past in this unfortunate Sub-Continent of ours.

Sir, I should now say a few words about the nuclear policy. Sir, the Government has missed a golden opportunity to evolve a genuine national consensus on an issue which has a vital bearing on our national security. The Advisory Board and the National Security Council prepared a Draft Nuclear Doctrine. Just three weeks before the first phase of elections, that document was published with the obvious intention to draw political mileage. Sir, this is not the right way to handle such a serious matter. The proper course would have been, this document which seemingly originated from a political expert, which has very many good points, should have been discussed in Parliament, at other expert levels rather than thrown open as a part of pre-election propaganda. Any way, what has happened has happened. But our concern is that the debate on the nuclear policy adoption should be an informed debate, and in my view, it is very important for us to be assured that the credible, minimum, effective deterrent that we talk about, is truly a least cost option. The triad approach which is mentioned in the draft statement, many people feel will land our country in an expensive nuclear expenditure which will cut very severely into the money that is available for development. This matter, therefore, needs careful looking into. Our nuclear doctrine must continue to be characterised by restraint and responsibility, and at the same time, we must ensure that while creating a viable, effective nuclear deterrent, we do not unnecessarily fan an uncontrollable arms race in this region of ours. Sir, these are the only things that I wanted to say, and I would, again urge that the Government must find a way to build up a strong national consensus on this supremely important nuclear issue.

Sir, I now come to some aspects of our negotiations with the United States. For several months now, we have been having negotiations with the United States on security and non-proliferation issue. I understand that the U.S. Energy Secretary is going to be here later this week. The hon'ble Foreign Minister had many discussions with his counterpart of the United States. We would like to know what the state of affairs is. Last year, the hon: Foreign Minister wrote an article in Foreign affairs in which, if I quote from memory, he said: "India is already complying with all the provisions of the C.T.B.T. All that is necessary is to append our signatures." This article was published in the United States in September-October issue 1998 in Foreign Affairs. Much water has flown since then. I would like to know from the Government as to what is the current state of discussions with the United States particularly, after the failure of the US senate to ratify the C.T.B.T. While on this subject, I would like to know from the Government whether the U.S. pressure on India on the nuclear issue has been reduced. What is the outcome of Shri Brijesh Mishra's recent visit to U.S. or U.S. Energy Secretary's recent suggestion or the U.S. Energy Secretary's recent statement which suggests that there is no big change in U.S. thinking! I would like the Government to clarify its position. I would also urge the Government to pay a lot more attention to Japan. In the last few months, there have been occasions when our point of view was appreciated in the U.S., in Europe, but the Japanese were rather late in coming on board. I think this is indicative of our neglect of developing and fostering our relations with Japan. I would urge the Government to pay a lot more attention in developing our relations with Japan. We need to engage the Japanese much more intensively in what may be described as an essay in mutual comprehension.

Japan, after all, is an important world power, and we cannot ignore Japan as we seem to have done in the past. Sir, we must simultaneously take active interest in SAARC notwithstanding the deterioration in Indo Pakistan relations. The vision of this region as a region of peace, as a region where development can be accelerated, where there are tremendous human resources waiting to be exploited, we must find ways and means of realizing that vision, notwithstanding the frustrations in dealing with Pakistan. It is our obligation to put before the people of South Asia a new vision, a vision of hope, a vision which generates self-confidence, a vision which promotes amity and brotherhood. So, this is an obligation we must not shirk, notwithstanding the problems that we face in our relations with Pakistan.

In the same way, in the world affairs there are important negotiations going to take place at SEATTLE under the auspices of World Trade Organisation. I read in the newspapers that this Government's attitude has been that we have nothing to do with the new round of trade negotiations. Sir, I would submit to this Government that that is not the proper way to go

about. That was the view that the V.P. Singh Government took in 1989 when the Uruguay Round negotiations were conducted; we were non-participants. The result was that our concerns on trade matters were never taken on board and we were then presented with a *fait accompli*, take it or leave it. If we repeat that strategy, that would not be in India's national interests. It is important that India should clearly, unambiguously, work out what it is that the world trading system has to offer us, and then it should work out concrete viable strategies to persuade the rest of the world through deal-making processes which are an integral part of trade negotiations, that our objectives are realized. If we once again repeat the Uruguay Round strategy, we will then have an outcome of which we will not be able to opt out, but in whose making we would have had no hand. I urge, therefore, upon this Government to take a lot more active interest in preparations for the Uruguay Round, consult all interested parties, including the political parties. We have the hon. Shri Pranab Mukherjee who has wealth of knowledge, wisdom and experience in dealing with these issues. We would be very happy to cooperate with the Government in working out a strategy which seeks to realize our national objectives in the trade field.

Sir, I shall now say a few words about the technology policy. I am very happy the President's Address talks about the information technology revolution and of securing for our country exports of \$50 billion dollars of software by the year 2008. We must work to realize that vision. But, I am not sure—I hope I am wrong—that merely setting up a Ministry of Information Technology is the way to go about. Very many times, bureaucratic mechanisms in our country become excessively regulatory mechanisms and they become fetters on realizing the vast latent potential of creativity and enterprise that exists in our country. I hope that would not happen. That, in its setting out the work programme of the new Ministry, it would be ensured that its role would move promotional and not merely regulatory. Sir, the President in paragraph 22 has said, "I am happy to note that India is well on the way to ensure Y2 K compliance with all our critical computer systems before the end of the year." He also said, "A legislation to promote electronic commerce will be introduced soon." But, Sir, only last month, I saw a statement from the US State Department, which has categorized India as a country that would be critically affected by the millennium, or, the year 2000 bug. I know the Secretary of the Department of Electronics has contradicted this statement, but an authoritative statement from the Government is necessary with regard to our preparedness to meet this Y2 K problem, which has been highlighted from time to time. I have read a statement that the NASSCOM (National Association of Software and Service Manufacturers) has suggested to the Government to come out with an Ordinance on Y2 K compliance which

should stipulate that all companies and Government Departments should have at least one test run on Y2 K compliance before the actual turn of the millennium. Perhaps, the Ordinance was to notify a draft Bill prepared by the Action Task Force on Y2 K to regulate the supply of software, to ensure Y2 K compliance and safeguard the users against the sale of fake solutions. I would like to know the state of that Government legislation. When is that legislation going to be brought forth? Sir, it is essential that with reference to Y2 K, change-over,, all Government Departments become complaint; that they disclose all the computer processing problems; test results of compliance upgrading keep offices open on January, 1 and 2,2000 and solve any residual problems by January 2, 2000, which is a Sunday; set-up Y2 K Crisis Management Centres in all major cities as well as District Headquarters, setup a Central Clearance House for collecting and disseminating Y2 K-related information, as well as for resolving this thing. I laid emphasis on Y2 K compliance because, in the coming months, this will be regarded as one single test on India's technological*. I have heard several institutional investors in our country. They have reported to me in recent months that they want to send a lot of money to India, but they are nervous about our institutions' ability to comply with the Y2 K problems. Now, if this problem is not linked and not resolved effectively, it can affect investors' sentiment. Therefore I would urge the Government to pay a lot of attention to assure the country that everything is under control; that the work on Y2 K compliance is done to the fullest satisfaction of all concerned. Sir, there has been talk of encouraging private gateways. I understand, the Government have received 8 applications from broadcasters and internet service-providers for permission to set up private gateways. The decision on private internet gateways and the procedures of licensing and regulations, need to be made explicit. The terms of licenses likely to be cleared, these must be brought to Parliament for its information so that there is full transparency in the decision-making process. Sir, we need new mechanisms, particularly, the Venture Capital mechanism, if we have to harness the vast potential of information technology. It is the Venture Capital Funds which have made the Silicon Valley what it is today. Venture capital is still a scarce, commodity in our country. Some months ago I learnt that the Government had set up a fund of one billion rupees and placed at the disposal of SIDBI to set up a subsidiary to launch a Venture Capital Fund for information technology. I am told that that Fund has still not become operational. I also feel that the whole legal paraphernalia, the legal system regulating the conduct of Venture Capital Funds requires a fresh examination. For years in our country there has been a demand for a Limited Partnership Act. But somehow our legal system has not encouraged that line of thinking. If we do want Venture Capital Funds to make progress in our country to tap the tremendous reservoir of creativity, enterprise and adventure that exist in our country.

then we must be prepared to experiment with the new machanisms like the Limited Partnership act as a means of promoting the growth of venture capital system.

Sir, I now come to the state of our economy. My friend, Mr. Arun Shourie, rightly said that in some way economic situation is quite good right now. The economy is out of the recession. By all accounts industrial growth this year promises to be about six per cent. The Government in the President's Address projects a growth rate of six per cent. There may be slight differences about that. But certainly the economy is now coming out of the recession of last year. That is undeniable. Foreign exchange reserve is comfortable. Inflation rate is also low. But I do believe that 7-8 per cent growth rate which the President's Address talks about and which it considers as essential to realize our objectives of removal of poverty and mass deprivation cannot materialise unless some hard decisions are taken. To move from 6 per cent to 7-8 per cent growth rate will require tough decisions with regards to fiscal management, decisions with regard to infrastructure management, decisions with regard to improving the absorptive capacity of our system, reforms of the administrative system and, above all, reforms of the public finance and administrative system of the State Governments to which not much attention is being paid. The President's Address talks of the departure from the past and it is in that context he talks of emphasis on the social sector. This is nothing new. All the Governments in the last decade have talked about our obligations to do a lot more for social development, for primary education, for the girl child, for health care, etc. Yet, we all have not been able to do what ought to be doing. Why is it so? The plain truth is that intentions have not been matched by action. For years we talked in terms of providing 6 per cent of our GDP for expenditure on education. How does that figure come about? No serious work was done. Way back in 1960 the Kothari Commission came up with this figure and it has become a mantra. If we are serious about meeting the educational challenge, we must properly cost what it will take to universalize access to elementary education. A few months ago the Thapas Majumdar Committee has done this laborious exercise. We have today a blueprint, including the cost that is needed to make good the constitutional directive of providing compulsory free elementary education to all our children up to the age of 14. Unfortunately, in the President's Address, we see only cliches and not any strategy. We are not going to solve this problem merely by setting up a Department of Primary Education. On the other hand, this will only add to the bureaucratic expenditure of the Central Governments. Primary education is largely a subject-matter dealt with by the State Government. If we do not deal with the problem of resource availability, all these will remain only pious wishes. Therefore, I suggest that if this country is really serious about universalizing

the access to elementary education, let there be a cess for ten years on all Central taxes and that cess should be earmarked and distributed through a new National Commission which, in turn, will distribute that money among the States on an objective basis, so that, over a period of ten years, this country would get rid of this ancient scourge of ignorance and all our children would have access to quality primary education. I invite this Government to come up with a concrete action programme; and we would not be lacking in any way in extending our cooperation. In the same way, when I read what is said on the health sector, it is nothing short of clichés. We have talked about primary health care, not today, but 30 years ago, 20 years ago. What are the problems bedevilling India's health care system? My worry today is that India's health problems are being dealt within a manner which will make the health care system increasingly non-accessible to the poor people. I am not against the involvement of the private sector in health or education. But I am also of the view that excessive privatization of the health care system and the education system is not the answer to deal with the problems that this country faces. Primary education, elementary education, etc. Ultimately has to be the responsibility of the State and I do not believe that primary health care can become the primary responsibility of the private sector. We must strengthen the public sector capability in the field of elementary education, in the field of primary health. When I look at the condition of State finances, I find them in a very bad shape. This is not a problem in one State, but all the States are affected by this problem. Today, even in an advanced State like Punjab, rural dispensaries are not having a proper mix of doctors, nurses, or even medicines. If this is the state of affairs in one of the richest States of our Union, what would be the state of affairs in the poorer States? So, we have a major crisis of Indian education, a major crisis of Indian health care. This problem deserves more seriousness than, I think that has been given to it in the President's Address. Sir, it has now become fashionable to say that higher education can be taken care of by the private sector. I do not object to private sector involvement, but, today, India's university system has been suffering from serious maladies. If we do not wake up now, I think we will have to import quality graduates from foreign universities and that would be a sad day for India. When I look at the Universities like Delhi University, which has a lot of talent, which has contributed so much to the educational advancement of our country, even that university is in serious difficulties. So, do not go away with the idea that with the involvement of the private sector in higher education the public sector can wish away its responsibility. If we have any ambition of becoming an information superhighway, then we must pay greater attention to the health of the university system. If we have ambitions to become a major creator of new ideas, then there must be greater cooperation, greater liaison

between the university system and the national laboratories. The Prime Minister is here. In his presence I would urge that the present state of the university system is far from encouraging. Do not get away with the feeling that these things can be left to the private sector. You cannot tinker with the fees. I have never been one of those who believe that fees should be allowed to rise to the levels where the higher education would be outside the reach of the middle class families. If the norms which are being talked about for higher education fees were applied in the past, people like me could have never gone to the university. So I am not in favour of this excessive enthusiasm for privatization of higher education. As I said earlier, elementary education and primary health care are not the activities which can be left to the private sector. But we can deal with them only if we deal with the fiscal problems in our country. If we do not deal with the fiscal problem, we will merely pay a lot more lip sympathy. The Finance Minister will talk about these things. The Prime Minister will talk about these things. The President's Address will talk about these things as has happened in the last decade. But nothing concrete will be done. Sir, India today faces a deep fiscal crisis and if we do not tackle this fiscal crisis, we will have to say goodbye to all your attempts to achieve high a rate of growth, to achieve social justice or to ensure social development of the type that we all need. We need a new compact between the Centre and the States. I think this dichotomy that has existed in our system between the Planning Commission and the Finance Commission, must be given up. A truly holistic attempt must be made to look at all State finances. The fiscal system cannot be reformed if we look at the fiscal problem in isolation at the Centre. The fiscal malice in the States today is so deep that most States do not have money even to pay salaries. In the last couple of years many States have been borrowing from the banking system through their corporations, not for development but for financing their revenue expenditures. Sir, the time has come when all these things must receive proper attention. Unless you attend to the fiscal problem the development or acceleration of growth to seven or eight per cent that we talk about cannot become a reality.

Sir, I would like to say a few words about infrastructure. The President's Address says right things about what needs to be done in the infrastructure sector. But we all know what the problems are. We all know that the State Electricity Boards are financially getting from bad to worse. So we need to fix them which are set realistically. We need new management systems in the State Electricity Boards. We need regulatory mechanisms which would inspire confidence among investors. In the same way, in the railway system there is the problem of obsolescence and if we do not deal with this problem we will have a lot more accidents. These are not the problems which are going to be resolved by merely setting up the Railway Reforms Commission. There are

umpteensuch reports already in the corridors of the Railway Ministry. What is necessary is to pick up their recommendations for implementation.

In the same way, so far as roads are concerned, this Government took some initiative. A cess was levied on diesel. Money is available. But today the bottleneck on the road front is not lack of money but absorptive capacity of the National Highway Authority of India. I would say that in departments where we have money, we do not have in place administrative systems which are equal to the task, equal to the new responsibility demanded of them if we are to meet the challenge of the 21st century.

Sir, when we talk of development, I think, it is one of the failures of the economists, that we have never recognised that public administration is also a very scarce factor of production in most developing countries. We have reduced development of policy making, savings and investment. But there is such a thing as absorptive capacity, and India's administrative system—whether we talk of administrative system at the municipal level, at the local level, at the State level or at the Central level—has failed to keep pace with the changing needs of time, and unless we improve upon this system, India's growth ambition, India's ambition for greater social justice and India's ambition to reach out to the most deprived section of our society—cannot become a reality. With these words, I once again thank the hon. President for his gracious Address and I hope what I have said would receive Government's serious attention.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI ADHIK SHIRODKAR): Dr. Manmohan Singh, you have used the word 'which has been objected to as unparliamentary. I have gone through the book. It says, it is unparliamentary. I, on my part, feel that the word is(*Interruptions*)

DR. MANMOHAN SINGH: It was not my intention....

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN: (SHRI ADHIK SHIRODKAR) I knew it. Personally I don't agree with this ruling...

DR. MANMOHAN SINGH: If the word * is unparliamentary, I apologise, and it can be expunged.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI ADHIK SHIRODKAR): Yes. Now, I would request Shri E. Balanandan.

SHRI E. BALANANDAN (Kerala): Sir, this time, the President's Address has brought forth very serious issues which have a very, very serious bearing on the total polity of the country. Sir, I do not wish to deal with all the issues mentioned in the President's Address. But I want to confine myself

*Expunged as ordered by the Chair.

to certain issues. First of all, I must thank my friend, Shri Arun Shouries, who has explained properly the President's Address.

Before making my comments, I must mention that we are an ancient country, a big nation in the world, a country which has multi-ethnic culture, and we are a country united within the framework of the Constitution. Now, in spite of the promises made by the NDA in its programmes as well as in the President's Address, a serious situation is going on. In the next two days, when Pope is expected to come to India already a big agitation is going on demanding that he should apologise for the so-called gross mistakes committed four hundred years back. Such kind of demands and agitations are going on. Christian community not only in India but the world over are worried about this. He has to apologise for something which happened 400 years back! This*kind of things really create a lot of tension amongst the Christian community in our country. In spite of the promises that contentious issues will not be raised, even today the VHP people are demanding that Muslims should give up the mosque at Ayodhya, that they should give up the mosque at Varanasi and the other mosques at Madurai. Ours is a country of multi-religion, multi-culture, etc. I request that no Government which is in power should touch this framework that is sacred to us.

Our country's unity is sacred. The Government should come out against this kind of utterances which disturb the unity of our country. This is the first point that I want to make.

Secondly, para 13 of the President's Address States the direction for the total, policy Of the Government. It says, "Experience, both domestic and international, suggests that rapid and multi-sectoral growth is possible only by pursuing a bold strategy of economic reforms. The nation's reoriented strategy of development will have to rest on a triad in which the Government provides a strong policy and regulatory leadership; the private sector brings the dynamism and efficiency of the competitive environment...". So, a change is coming, a drastic change in which the Government wants to entrust the private sector the dynamic growth of the country. And in that also, I do not want to talk about the international experience. Sir, in this House we had discussed when this new policy of reforms came. Everybody was talking about the development in the East Asian countries, which were called the economic tigers. I do not want to explain but there is no tiger in East Asia now, we have only cats there. If we look at the word economy today, according to the experts, after the end of this millennium, it will be the mighty economy of the United States where the crisis is going to start. I do not want to explain, Mr. Prime Minister, but the question is this that today the world economy under capitalism is facing a serious crisis and not only in Japan, not only in Germany, but in the United States too. That is the

position. Therefore, the international experiences do not support the argument that reforms will save us. That is all I want to say.

I had just been to the United States recently. We were discussing the report of Mr. Koffi Annan there and people were saying that liberalisation means that it will make the Governments function only because it will look into only the law and order question. The total economic question will be transferred to the private sector and the private sector operation of the economy will result in marginalisation of the weaker sections and the weaker nations and within each country economic differences will develop. Large sections of people are going to be pauperised, multinational corporations will develop, the Third World Countries will get marginalised. This is how the story goes. I do not want to go into that. Therefore, the second stage of reforms to be implemented by the Government will not help us. This is the point. They say that the private sector brings dynamism, efficiency and competitive environment. At the same time, in paragraph 19 of the President's Address, they have said that the Government will privatise electricity. They have given a detailed statement on that. In paragraph 20, there is a mention of setting up of Railway Reforms Commission, etc. In paragraph 19 itself, they have said that the oil sector will be privatised. That is what your plan is. It is also said that the Coal Nationalisation Act will be changed. If we follow the list, we find that railways, ports, telecom, etc., will be privatised. I don't want to go into the details, but one thing we should not forget, and that is in 1948—in 1947 we attained freedom—our country was a backward country. Then, we envisaged a plan for development. From 1950 onwards, we had a planned development under which the public sector has been developed. From a backward country, our country very soon became an industrialised country, and we were having self-reliant development in the basic sectors of Indian economy. For example, you take the power sector. At that time, we had no power plants. We were producing only 1,553 MWs of power at that time. Now, it has gone up to 70,000 MWs. But, that is now going to be privatised. In that field alone, we have attained technological and engineering skills to produce various kinds of machines. Those machines can quality-wise and price-wise compete worldover. Now, we can produce power at a cheaper rate. So, this is what we have achieved in this sector. The other sector of which we were boasting of, is the atomic sector. There was talk of Pokhran nuclear tests. How was it possible for India to do those tests? The development of science and technology and engineering skills was possible with the coming into being of the public sector. That is why we could produce the devices for Pokhran nuclear tests.

Sir, with the present development, when we go into the new era of privatisation, we should not forget that India's total development has been planned the other way round. Now, India can compete the worldover in

many sector of economy. We can become a challenge for them. Now, we are going into a new era of privatisation. I have just cited the example of power sector, and I don't want to take much time of the House. Now, I would just say something about two Five Year Plans. In the Eighth Plan, the target was 43 per cent; and by the end of the Ninth Plan, we will achieve' 69 per cent. That means, we are going to meet power crisis within this Plan. This privatisation is not going to materialise. When is it going to come? The per unit price of power will come to five to seven rupees, and it is boasted that we are having a plan from Orissa. I don't want to go into all this. I would say only one thing, that after privatisation, the rate of power has gone up. The effect of all this is that there is privatisation of profits and nationalisation of losses. That is what has happened. Seven lakh crores of rupees are invested in the power sector in different States. If the power boards are going to be privatised, then, this seven lakh crores of rupees are going to be given to the private sector for a song. This is what is being done these days.

Another important point to be stated is that the basic development of the country in areas like agriculture, industry, etc, hinges primarily on the power sector. Today, in India, we are having self-sufficiency in food. How did we get that? It is through cheaper power. Therefore, Sir, a change in the policy must be done with necessary caution.

Then, coming to privatisation of the other sectors, the basic energy sectors are oil and coal. In today's environment, even the U.S. policy, in their National Security published in December, 1998 tells us their intention to capture the energy sector in countries like Iran, Iraq, the Balcan countries and Afghanistan. They want to capture the energy sector for themselves. Here, cheaper energy should be made available in our country. Oil should be handled with care; with regard to coal, you have to handle with care because privatisation means only one God and that is profit and nothing else. National interest is given a go-bye and they go in for only profit. This will not help us.

Then, Civil Aviation and Corporatisation also means privatisation.

Coming to 'Telecom Policy...private sector has to be helped...etc.,' the essential factor is that India is a country with backward areas and forward areas, villages and towns. If it is given to the private sector, backward areas will not be catered to. Their interests will not be protected. Therefore, that also will not help us. So, Sir, a change in the policy, to completely go in for privatisation of the public sector, will not help us and this, instead of taking the country forward, would push the country backward because, in this way, the cost of energy will be more and industrial production cost will go up and we will not be able to enter the international competition. India will again face the danger of becoming a market for others. That is the danger.

Therefore, we have to handle it carefully. I think, this is a wrong policy which needs to be changed.

Coming to FDI, so many millions are being sought. The international economic situation today is that the capital flows are very fast. With regard to temporary investments, we have seen the crisis in Korea created by temporary investments coming into that country, without control. After the experience of East Asian crisis, every State has decided to have control on FDI. Therefore, this has to be handled with care.

The other thing which is being talked of is about the labour being treated fairly. The Second Labour Commission has been appointed. Sir, in all the so-called privatisation, what is going to happen is reduction of labour. The first attack comes on the labour in the name of efficiency and profit. In several industries, lakhs and lakhs of workers are going to be sent out. As a part of liberalisation one theory that is being worked out is that the labour should be liberalised, that is, existing labour laws should be liberalised so that freedom of hire and fire is given to the managements or the employers. Therefore, the Labour Commission is thinking of changing the existing labour laws to suit the international environment. The international environment is that the system of stability of labour employment should not be there and there should be hire and fire according to the will of the employer. That is the international environment. On the basis of that the labour laws are going to be re-cast or modified which means that the existing privileges of a worker becoming permanent after some days will go. The Contract Labour Act is going to be changed to suit them so that only whenever they want the labour they can take it and otherwise they can be sent out. So, this way the main casualty will not only be our economy but our labour will also be a casualty. The assurance given by the Government that this Labour Commission will look after the interests of the workers is absolutely wrong. While doing so, and if at all a Commission is to be appointed, the labour organisations should > be given a proper representation. One trade union or the other is connected with the Government. Others may not be connected with the Government. While choosing these unions, there was a tripartite system in which almost all the Central trade unions were taken for consultation before deciding any policy framework. In this case they have not done that. So, this Labour Commission is a device to see that whatever privileges being enjoyed by the workers are taken away. Sir, that cannot be a step in the right direction. It is prelude to an attack on the working class. On the question of information technology. IT, certain steps are required to be taken in this regard. The information technology is of vital importance. Through this anything can be transferred within no time; any transaction can be made within no time. So time is not there. This border is not there. These things are going out of date now because of information technology. But the theory that only the private

sector should handle the IT should be given up. I am not against some private companies coming in. But our experience in India is that the public sector was playing an important role in this field. Regarding scientific integration, I would like to quote Para 29 of the Address that says, "The Government will intensify the promotion of science and technology in education, basic research, and application for meeting the critical challenges of socio-economic development. Interaction between Indian industry, CSIR laboratories, universities, UTs, DRDO, ICAR, ICMR, and the departments of Space, Atomic Energy..." Here also the private sector can really cooperate.

4.00 P.M.

But we were doing good work in this field. It should not be given to the private sector, but it should be kept under the public sector then only can make the intended progress.

I will now come to what is stated in the Government's policy with regard to the United States. It is correct that we should have good relations with the United States. But, at the same time you must understand, in today's context the stand of the United States. The United States is taking a stand—we wanted to democratize the United Nations. They are against it. Not only they are against it, but they also want to change the Charter of the United Nations, under the premise of human rights violations. When the question of human rights violations come, every State expects the United States to intervene, unilaterally, without consulting the United Nations. Therefore, they want to keep them under their thumb so that they can intervene whenever they want. Therefore, this stand of the United States to dominate the world should not be forgotten by saying that we must have good relations with the United States.

Finally—I do not want to take your time because my time is limited—I only say that the new economic policy, which is sought to be implemented in the name of "Second Installment of Reforms", is an anti-Indian, an anti-national development policy, an anti-working class policy and it is a war against the people of India, especially the working class. Therefore, the working class and the people will strongly oppose this policy. With these words, I conclude. Thank you.

SHRI RANGANATH MISHRA (Orissa): Thank you, Mr. Vice-Chairman. I have read all the 48 paragraph of the President's Address. I find that there is no reference to environment, ecology and pollution. These are the items, which probably, should have the high priority by any Government which is running the administration of India. Sir, Delhi is our capital. It is said to be one of the most polluted cities of the world. Reports indicate that about 36-37 per cent of children suffer on account of pollution; and the

ecological situation in India is, probably, beyond the permissible limit. In view of this situation and the challenge to human existence and the fact that whoever lives in Delhi is going through a slow-die process", this should have had the priority of attention. I regret that there is no reference at all to this.

The second thing, is population. Control of population is again a high priority matter. There is not much reference to this also. I find, the test that is being applied to literacy is that, if you are able to put your signature, you are a literate. This classification of cheating must go and the State Governments or the Government of India must adopt a uniform principle, test, that unless you know your *kriyas*, you would not be called a literate. I have particularly drawn your attention to the Steel Authority of India (SAIL)'S PLANT at Rourkela. It was erected in 50's with German assistance and it was one of the best steel plants in India. These days it is making a loss of Rs. 2 crores a day. Fifty per cent of its functional aspects have been closed down. 102 satellite industries had grown, 68 of them have closed down. The steel plant is not in a position to make payments of its dues for more than 2-3 years. Our first Prime Minister described this institution as "one of the best temples of modern India", and we are about to lose it. I would suggest that immediate attention should be bestowed on it. The new Minister for Steel comes from this area and this is within his constituency. I would plead that he should devote immediate attention and take care of it; and before this institution is declared to be totally in the red, and is suggested to be closed down, its resurrection process should start. We had promised to the children that we shall educate them up to the age of 14. It is the part of the mandate given in the Constitution. We had guaranteed them that they will not be made to work, that there will be no hazardous employment for them up to the age of 14. Instead of that, they should be undergoing the schooling process. We have actually cheated them for about 50 years. They are not in a position to form unions and make the enforcement of their entitlements through any demanding process. I suggest that the Government should immediately pay attention to that which is necessary to be done so that these two provisions of the Constitution, the two articles of the Constitution, are fulfilled. Now, I come to paragraph 11. It has been stated in it that the rate of inflation has been the lowest one. I am sorry to find that within three or four days of the President's Address, the inflation rate has gone up by one per cent. It is three per cent now. And, today's newspapers indicate that it is likely to go up to five per cent "therefore, there is nothing to take credit in saying that it is a low rate. The* only other thing to which I would like to draw your kind attention is the "youth power". The President's Address refers to the youth power as "dynamo". I entirely agree that the youth power can be a dynamo. But, no action has been taken to channelise this dynamo power in order to take the best advantage for the nation from the youth

power. The youth has got to be regulated, properly channelised and directed so that the nation may benefit out of it. Though there has been a reference in one of the paragraphs to youth power, yet I do not find any real channelisation indicated therein. The Government's policy has, therefore, not been enunciated as to how it has to be done. I suggest that our national ethos should be improved. We should not only be mentally prepared to enter into the new millennium after eight or nine weeks, but the nation must be effectively prepared, thoroughly overhauled and be in a position to enter into what legitimately is ours. We should be at the top of the world. For that purpose, there should be no politics. This should be a total 'National Agenda', and all of us must work together to take it into its new position.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI ADHIK SHIRODKAR): Shri C. Ramachandraiah—and you have five minutes.

DR. ALLADI P. RAJKUMAR (Andhra Pradesh): Sir, I have requested for some more time since we have got 24 minutes for our party.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (Shri Adhik Shirodkar): Yes, please; and you have got five speakers. If my mathematics is correct, each Member gets five minutes.

DR. ALLADI P. RAJKUMAR: Sir, one of the names has been dropped.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (Shri Adhik Shirodkar): Very well. Thank you. So, you get one minute more.

SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH (Andhra Pradesh): Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, I stand to support the Motion of Thanks on the Address given by the President of India in Parliament. Sir, for a moment, I feel that I have gone to the A.P. Assembly and reading the Address of the A.P. Governor. The initiatives that have been enunciated in this document, the policies that have been announced in this document, are already being implemented in our State with more success. Andhra Pradesh has been made a laboratory for execution of all these policies. Sir, we are lucky that we have got a popular Government and it is a rebuff to the forces of destabilisation. The people have rejected these forces. The forces were whimsical in dethroning the Government without any rationalisation, without any ideological discrimination. Sir, in Andhra too, the people gave a verdict to our party that is led by Mr. Chandrababu Naidu. I consider this victory as a vote for performance. Unlike in some other neighbouring States, the people gave a mandate for us to implement the agenda of development. The Andhra Pradesh experiment shows that when leaders are sincere in their approach, introduce transparency in administration, involve various sections of the down trodden people in their development activities, the people respond by reposing their confidence in them. Their action needs to be appreciated by the new political class of the society in this country. Let there be

development through the politics. We can play politics only at the time of elections. Sir, I appeal to Prime Minister to implement the National Agenda of Governance which is a consensus document, which he could successfully bring out among 24 coalition partners. In a democracy, one has to take the people of various shades of opinion along, but in the interest of the nation, there should a common minimum programme on which we should all agree. Sir, just now, the Leader of the Opposition, Shri Manmohan Singh, said that when you are striving for a consensus, chargesheeting of their leader need not thwart the spirit of consensus. This is what I have understood from his speech. Sir, consensus is required on issues, on policies; it will never be based on personal considerations. I think, the B.J.P. Government is trying to evolve a consensus on policies and not on personal considerations. Sir, we should agree to abolish illiteracy. We should abolish child labour. There are umpteen number of ills that are being faced by the society. What the Government had to do is to initiate some measures. The biggest challenge before this Government is to sustain the popular confidence that has been reposed in them. It can be done only if it has got the ability to sustain this confidence and it depends on its ability to manage the multiple coalition to speak and act with reasonable degree of coherence on the key issues confronting the polity and the economy.

Sir, the document consists of various measures, but a prudent man generally gets doubt with the state of the economy in which the country is placed today. Will it be possible for the Government to take hard decisions? Unfortunately, these hard decisions should be palatable to the people. I emphasise the word 'palatable'. They should be palatable. They have to revive the economy, they have to improve the exports, they have to improve the balance of payments, they have to contain the inflation, they have to improve the industrial production in the core sectors. These are all the things that they have to achieve. It can be possible only by taking hard decisions. They should have the endurance not only to introduce hard decisions, but also to talk to the people, communicate with them effectively impressing upon them that these are the policies formulated for their benefit and for the benefit of the future generation. Here, that dexterity is required. That is where our Chandrababu Naidu has very successfully demonstrated in our State, with great success.

Sir, we can take the example of 1991—96, the first phase of economic reforms. It has boomeranged. The reason is that they had ignored the social costs. Therefore, they have paid the political price. The Government has proclaimed that it is going to introduce the economic reforms with more vigour, but I advise the Government to keep in mind the social costs. Take economically sound decisions. Though they are hard decisions, but you take them to the people and convince them. Take them along with you. Then only

you will be successful. Otherwise the 1991—96 performance will be repeated and that will lead to a catastrophe.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI ADHIK SHIRODKAR): Please conclude.

SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Kindly give me a few more minutes. I can request one of my colleagues to sacrifice his time for me.

Sir, this is a very confusing concept in our country now. Let not populism come in the way of reforms. Instead, we need people's reorientation in our development. In our State, we have introduced highly innovate schemes like Janma Bhoomi, Adarna and Deepam. Representatives from most of the other States are coming and studying the implementation of these schemes. We have successfully implemented them.

Sir, there are some more advices to be given to the Government. Irrespective of the development that we are going to achieve, as you have proclaimed in your Document, unless you contain the population growth rate to zero level, it is very difficult to make the people satisfied. This is because generation of wealth is not commensurate with the growth rate in our population. This is the need of the hour and the Government has to pay more attention to achieving the zero growth level in population.

Last time, this coalition was composed of 18 partners. This time it has got 24 partners. I wish the Prime Minister is able to have the dexterity and the skill to manage and to keep all the 24 coalition partners satisfied, in the interest of the nation, in the interest of the stability of the country and in the interest of the development of the country. Let him not come to the House and say that he has got his own coalition compulsions because of which he could not achieve this thing. Let that hour not come. As far as the TDP is concerned, we are a dependable ally. Though we have not joined this Government, the NDA can take us a very reliable and dependable ally. Our advice to you is to deliver the goods as you have promised, provide clean and transparent administration, and, as long as you fulfil your promises to the people, as you have announced, we will be with you. Implement all these schemes with conviction. And without this conviction, no Government is going to achieve the objective. For example, the Congress party in Andhra Pradesh had promised free power to the farming community. They tried to hoodwink the people with false promises. The people have not believed them, because they had not done anything in good faith.

So, whatever promises were made to the people which were not in good faith, people are not going to accept them. They are very wise, very mature. The Government led by the National Democratic Alliance should realize that. Whatever promises they have made, they have to implement them

without fail. I wish this Government a full tenure of five years. Thank you.
Sir.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI ADHIK SHIRODKAR): Mr. K.R. Malkani, you have got eight minutes.

SHRI K.R. MALKANI (Delhi): Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, I rise to support the Motion of thanks on the President's Address. Before I say anything else, I would like to make a small point. While reading the President's Address, it gives us a feeling that something new is being said. It has certain flavour about it. It has a certain sugandh about it. It talks—of this ancient country, our great civilization and our eternal values. I think, this is the first time that any President has mentioned these things. If you make cognizance of these facts, we can take India very far, very high.

The President has candidly said that there has been missed opportunities. The country has been developing, but not developing as fast as it could have and it should have. For example, recently, the GDP was just 3 per cent. It is a matter of joy that, today, it is 6 per cent. Hopefully, it would be 7 per cent, 8 per cent, in the years to come. The same is the case with the price level. There was a time when we used to have a double digit inflation. Today, it* has come down to 2 per cent. It may become 3 per cent. I hope it does not. But it is a great improvement over what it had been before. It is also a matter of satisfaction today that we have got something like \$33 billion in foreign exchange reserves. ...*(Interruptions)*... This is the speciality of my friend. I hope this will not be counted against my time.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI ADHIK SHIRODKAR): You will have your time.

SHRI K.R. MALKANI: Sir, it makes me very happy to know that, for the first time, the Government has decided to set up a Department of Drinking Water. From the First Plan onwards we have been hearing about providing drinking water for all the villages. But nothing has happened. In Plan after Plan, they used to say, "We will carry water to the villages through iron pipes." Then, everybody knew that there were not enough pipes even for the city, what to talk of the villages. Nothing has been happening. So, this is an improvement. This Department should give a new impetus to solving this problem.

There is also a new Ministry of Information Technology. I think before long, India could become the information technology Centre of the world. Bangalore has become the world's capital of information technology.

The Government has decided to have an Expenditure Commission. We have not only to increase our revenues, but we have to cut down our expenses also. I hope enough will be done in that direction.

SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: By having 70 Ministers in the Cabinet, you have contributed enough.

SHRI K.R. MALKANI: This also should not be counted against my time.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI ADHIK SHIRODKAR): I was wondering why both of you have been so quiet today.

SHRI K.R. MALKANI: They are making up for having been quiet so far.

SHRI S. RAMACHANDRAN PILLAI: They were waiting for him to speak.

SHRI K.R. MALKANI: Too many people are evading taxes. Recently, there was a report in the "Times of India". A few months ago, a distinguished economist visited a village in Madhya Pradesh, came back and reported. He said, "In a big village, there are hundreds of cars, hundreds of TV. sets, quite a few temples. A new temple, worth a crore of rupees is coming up. Nobody was paying any income-tax." So, we have not only to cut down our expenses, but we have to increase our revenues also.

Sir, it is a matter of satisfaction that there is a proposal to corporatise the State Electricity Boards. The State Electricity Boards should make profits, not incur losses. ...*(Interruptions)*... When there are certain hobby horses, I cannot take you off the toes.

So, there are going to be different departments for power generation, power transmission and power distribution. Let us hope that that works better and gives results. I am glad to note that the Government proposes to move a Bill to have a fixed term for legislatures, State Assemblies and Parliament. But I am somewhat disappointed that there is no reference to the promised ban on foreign-born nationals holding high offices in India. I hope the Government gives a second thought to that proposal.

We expect to modernize defence. Many friends ask, "Where is the money?". I would only remind them of the earlier Budgets. Ten years back, something like 3.5 per cent of the GDP was being devoted to defence. In the last ten years, it was brought down to 2.5 per cent. The Chinese defence budget remained pegged at 4.5 plus per cent; Pakistan's defence budget was pegged at 5.5 plus per cent. And, ours was brought down by one full per cent? This was a gross neglect of national defence. I am sure that the Government will be able to make good ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: It had a devastating effect in Pakistan.

SHRI K.R. MALKANI: The President's Address also says that we expect 10 billion dollars by Foreign Direct Investment in India. I do not know whether to be happy or unhappy about it. It all depends on where this investment is applied. The Government of the National Democratic Alliance

is pledged to 'Swadeshi'. It is pledged to build only by Indians. It has repeatedly said that we can, India can and shall be built by Indians. We must stick to that. This Foreign Direct Investment must not go into the consumer industry. They must go only in high-tech and capital-intensive industry, nowhere else. If it is less than 10 billion dollars, it does not matter. But it must not go into the wrong sectors.

Mr. Manmohan Singh referred to the WTO, the World Trade Organisation, and said that we have to take due note of it, we have to study it, otherwise we will suffer. He also said that Mr. V.P. Singh's Government did not give due thought to the WTO issue, I do not hold any brief for MR. V.P. Singh. But I think that facts have to be stated and records made straight. These negotiations started when the Congress was in power; Mr. Rajiv Gandhi was the Prime Minister. These were negotiations for the GATT, General Agreement on Trade and Tariff. How is it and why is it that the Government of India suddenly changes its position and allows to consider Foreign Direct Investment in the negotiations? It is something mysterious. I would suggest a parliamentary probe. I hope many of you, friends, have read Chitra Subramaniam's book, INDIA FOR SALE. (*Interruptions*). Will you please keep quiet for God's sake?

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU (Kernataka): They do not believe in God!

SHRI K.R. MALKANI: All right. For Karl Marx' sake, for Stalin's sake, for Lenin's sake.

Secondly, Mr. V.P. Singh was followed by Mr. Chandrashekhar. The Chandrashekhar Government was supported by the Congress. The Chandrashekhar Government had* a particular gentleman, the great Subramaniam Swamy who was the Commerce Minister and he was put in charge of this. So, the Congress cannot disown responsibility for whatever was going on and these negotiations ultimately culminated in that. Again there was the Congress Government, Mr. Rao was in power. And Mr. Mukherjee himself has signed it. He specially went to Marrakkesh for that. You cannot disown responsibility for that. You are only responsible for the WTO. So, you cannot disown responsibility.

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE: I am not disowning. I Own it. But the point Dr. Manmohan Singh raised was totally different. We want to engage ourselves in the negotiations. We do not run away from the negotiations.

SHRI K.R. MALKANI: You surrendered to the negotiations. You. did not negotiate properly. You let down India's case. In the booming name of globalisation, all kinds of wrong things are happening. Foreign capital is coming into the sectors where it should not be there at all. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI PRANAB MUKHARJEE: That is why you are asking ten billion dollars.

SHRI K.R. MALKANI: They are taking over all the established Indian industries even the Tatas and Godrej. Globalisation has become gobblisation, gobble up things, eat this, eat that, grab this, grab that. This must be stopped. I hope the Government is fully conscious of that. The globalisation has become global pillage and global loot is going on. I will conclude by saying...(Interruptions) Sir, Mr. Nilotpal Basu is probably too young. He has entered the Rajya Sabha too soon. I will only conclude with a couple of quotes from George Soros, the high priest of capitalism. In his recent book "The Crisis of Global Capitalism" published only last year, that is, in 1998 and which is very much available in our Parliament House Library, just see what this high priest of capitalism has to say about the so called globalisation. I quote:

"The ideology of market fundamentalism is profoundly and irredeemably blurred.

Market fundamentalism is today a greater threat to open society than any totalitarian ideology.

Market fundamentalism seeks to impose the supremacy of market values over all other political and social values.

And in conclusion, he says on page 103, "what I predict is the immense disintegration of the global capital system."

So, we in this country should not bank too much upon W.T.O., globalisation and the rest of it. We must depend upon swadeshi and build up the country. Thank you very much.

SHRI SANATAN BISI: Thank you Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, for giving me this opportunity to speak on the President's Address. I have gone through the Address. It appears that there are several paragraphs. The present Government is thinking that they are going to implement some of the things mentioned in the President's Address immediately. There is a mention of certain legislations in the President's Address. So far as those legislations are concerned, they are very much attractive for their coalition partners. They might want to imbibe something in them to keep them together and to give an impression to the nation as a whole that whatever they are going to do, they are going to do very soon. We have seen their thirteen months' rule. At that time also, there was a President's Address and the same was discussed at length in this very House.

First of all, I would like to refer to the Kargil issue. This news had appeared in almost all the newspapers that the Members of Rajya Sabha had

very honestly requested the President of India to convene a Special Session of the Rajya Sabha to discuss the Kargil issue. They requested that the Members of Rajya Sabha should be given a chance to discuss the Kargil issue at length, covering all its aspects. It should not only be convened to congratulate the Army but also to consider the other aspects. But they were not given the opportunity to do so. It pained me a lot when I read in the newspaper that several senior Members of Rajya Sabha, including Dr. Najma Heptulla, had requested the President of India to convene a Special Session of Rajya Sabha and their request was not acceded to by him. I will narrate everything through this Constitution. What does article 85 say? Furthermore, so far as the President's Address is concerned, what does the President's Address normally contain as per the book "Rajya Sabha at Work? At page 181 of this book, it has been stated that it contains a review of the activities and achievements of the Government during the previous year. What have they done during the last thirteen months? Furthermore, it contains the policy with regard to important internal and international problems and Government programmes of business. But it does not cover the entire probable legislative business. But they have mentioned more about the legislations. So far as various legislations are concerned, they are very much there. But it does not cover the entire legislative business to be transacted during all the Sessions of this year. Therefore, after the President's Address, a separate bulletin is issued informing the Members of the probable Government decisions and other business expected to be taken up during the Session. So, first of all, I would say that these are the great infirmities. They have mentioned that they would bring core legislations.

The second thing I would like to say is that so far as our democratic right is concerned, it is an insult to the Institution Article 85 of the Constitution clearly states that "the President shall, from time to time, summon each House of Parliament to meet at such time and date as he thinks fit." When the Members of Rajya Sabha met the President and submitted a memorandum that the Rajya Sabha should be convened, it is the pleasure of the President. But it is unfortunate that the Prime Minister of the country in the newspapers stated "No. There will be an all-party meeting. In the all-party meeting, we will discuss everything about Kargil, everything about the national security." But that is not the forum. The forum should have been Rajya Sabha. Unfortunately, we are getting salaries. We are Members of the Rajya Sabha. We could not get the opportunity. So indirectly, the respect was not shown to the Constitution. This is the occasion when, through the Chair, I pray to the Prime Minister that the Prime Minister should give an assurance to the House that in future he would not deny summoning the Rajya Sabha, whatever the circumstances may be. ...*[Interruptions]*.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI ADHIK SHIRODKAR): Are you expecting another Kargil for that reason?

SHRI SANATAN BISI: No, no, no. Sir, it is not the case of Kargil. Here I will cite an instance when Rajya Sabha was convened. It is given at page 15. Some portion is given at page 14 and some portion is given at page 15.

"If any proclamation is issued at a time when the Lok Sabha is dissolved or the dissolution of the Lok Sabha takes place during the prescribed period for approval of the proclamation, the Rajya Sabha has been given power to pass such a legislation, and the Lok Sabha can pass it later after it is constituted. In 1977, the Rajya Sabha was specifically convened for a brief Session to extend the President's rule in Tamil Nadu, Nagaland, and again in 1991, for approval of the President's rule in Haryana. On both the occasions, the Lok Sabha was under dissolution."

There were instances when the Rajya Sabha was convened. So, as and when we demand, whenever it is essential, the Rajya Sabha should be convened because, after all, it is an institution. We should not ignore the Institution. I may be there, you may be there or somebody else may be there. We should have been given a chance to express our views. We should have participated in the discussion. After all, it is an institution. In democracy, the debate is important. We should participate in the debate. The Members of Rajya Sabha should participate in the debate on every thing. The hon. Prime Minister should give an assurance- as happened in the past. Whatever amendments we have moved, it is the duty of the House to see that we are allowed to speak. It is not simply for the sake of moving. They have some meaning. Whenever we submitted something, it has some bearing. In 1989, the first amendment was moved. So, I submit that we should be allowed to speak.

Thirdly, so far as the Simla Agreement and the Lahore Declaration are concerned, in the Lahore Declaration there are so many statements. It was not adopted in the House. It was not adopted in the other House. The Lahore Declaration was not laid before this House. It was also not laid before the other House. Then how can we know what the details of the Declaration are? On the contrary, so far as the Simla Agreement it concerned, the Simla Agreement was discussed in both the Houses of Parliament on 1.8.1972 and 3.8.1972. So far as those Agreements were concerned, they were disallowed, but the Lahore Declaration was not disallowed. So far as the Lahore Declaration is concerned, we were not allowed. There is a dispute. Here, I want to point out that the Prime Minister in public declared that there was something wrong in the Lahore Declaration. There was something wrong in the Simla Agreement. Now,

anybody can say and the House can say that there were some defects. But they are saying the Lahore Declaration is an extension. The Lahore Declaration was neither laid before the House nor disallowed. I wrote a letter to the Prime Minister that when you are not convening the House for Kargil, you should have convened the House for endorsing the Lahore Declaration so that it becomes the document of the House.

As far as that is concerned, I will draw the attention of the House to article 253. In article 253, it is very much clear that when there is a treaty. ...(*Interruptions*). Sir, do I have some time?

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI ADHIK SHIRODKAR): Yes.

SHRI SANATAN BISI: So far as article 253 is concerned, it is mentioned that notwithstanding anything in the following provisions of this chapter. Parliament has the power to make any law for the whole or any part of the State of India for implementing any legal treaty, agreement, or, convention. Then, what about the Lahore Declaration? Nothing has been done. These are my amendments. I would request that these amendments be made in the President's Address.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI ADHIK SHIRODKAR): Now, Mr. Eduardo Faleiro. You have got eight minutes.

SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO (Goa): Mr. Vice-Chairman, this is my maiden speech and may I take this opportunity to assure, ...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE: It is your maiden speech in this House.

SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO: Yes, as a Member of this House. May I take this opportunity to assure the Chair of my cooperation at all times, and indeed, to each and every Member of this House? It is, in fact, with this belief that I enter Parliament that the Parliament and all of us must work with the spirit of harmony, with a sense of national unity, with a spirit of brotherhood, so that this message from the very top of our political system percolates to each and every section, each and every corner of our country. Sir, a few years ago, the cold war came to an end. And there was a euphoria because it was largely felt that an era of peace will start. But then, the new world order, to which an American President had referred, turned tragically into a new world disaster. Religious conflicts, ethnic conflicts, have come up everywhere. Take for example, Yugoslavia. Along with India, along with Indonesia, it was a country in the forefront of non-alignment. It was Tito; it was Nehru; it was Sukarno, who were in the forefront of building an era of prosperity, unity, harmony, for the developing countries. Now, I had been there recently, and I say this because I find it strange, Mr. Vice-Chairman, that while we have been sending Ministers to the different republics like Yugoslavia, Serbia, Croatia or even Slovenia, not a single Minister of India,

not a single MP, not a single dignitary, has gone to Bosnia. And that is something which should be rectified. I will come to that in a moment when I briefly touch on the matter of foreign policy. But, at this point of time, I must say that Yugoslavia was one of the most beautiful and prosperous countries of the world. President Tito took maximum advantage of the non-aligned movement and non-alignment to get the benefits from both sides, the East and the West. It was really a beautiful and prosperous country. Today, that country lies in ruins and it lies in ruins due to ethnic and religious fundamentalism and extremism. Extremism in that country did not come from the people. The people were always living harmoniously. They inter-married, they lived together, they had no problems. The Muslims have no problems. They have no problem of food. And nobody is very particular about war; nobody is very particular about religion. But then, it came from the top. For political ambitions, the leaders of Serbia, of Croatia, and of Bosnia created this. They started long marches about the grievances of the past, about the grievances of the Ottoman empire, of the Second World War, like the yatras of the present day India, and that has led to the religious conflagration and, ultimately, to the destruction of that great country. There is a great lesson there for all of us India is at the crossroads of its history. It has been mentioned here and in the President's Address that India has a tremendous potential and it can be an economic superpower in the next century. But it really depends on us. It maintains the unity. That is the basic thing. It maintains the united vision and the united efforts to build this country. If we take the other path at this crossroad, the path of conflict, the path of religious or ethnic strife, then only tragedy can befall us, and all of us who are sitting here, the people of goodwill and the leaders of this country may take into account this because the example are not far to seek. Our Home Minister talks about cultural nationalism. Some people talk about a country which excludes pluralism. Now we don't have to go to Yugoslavia. We see our own neighbours. We see Pakistan, which is a part of us in a very fundamental manner of speaking. It created a theocratic republic and then it broke into two. Fortunately, I hope, it doesn't happen again and again. The strife is not ended. We have another theocratic country in our borders. We have Afghanistan where theocracy is at its extreme. The strife has increased and the misery has increased there. I had been practically to all parts of the world, Mr. Vice-Chairman. Even the remote interior of Africa, if you consider that part as the most undeveloped portion in the world, is better off than Afghanistan today, where all people have got an opportunity to vote, even though pure water is not available, forget about food and other necessities. It is, therefore, a lesson that we must learn in order that we must survive and prosper in this world. I come from a State which is a heaven and you may have some connection with it, Mr. Vice-Chairman. It is a heaven of peace and harmony. Now, what has happened? There come some people,

some terrorists, I should say, with a wrong idea of starting a march against the Inquisition. Now, we are all talking about history. What was the Inquisition? The Inquisition was about the brutal repression and it was one of the several dark chapters of the history of Christian Church. It was the oppression and torture of the Christian converts. That was what the Inquisition was all about. It was the torture of Christian converts because they were not adhering to orthodoxy and they were still keeping some of their traditional beliefs. That was what the inquisition was all about. Now, we are talking about history. How did the conquest of Goa happen? How did Alfonso D' Albuquerque, the Portuguese conqueror, happen to learn that? It was Thimaya, the pilot, who brought him there in order to destroy the Muslim rulers at that point of time. What did Albuquerque do before coming to Goa? He slaughtered, put to the sword, every Muslim and destroyed all the mosques, and having done that he turned towards the Hindus and the religious persecution started. A lot of Hindus had to run away from that State and the temples were destroyed. Having taken care of the Hindus, what did Portuguese do? They turned against the converted Christians, the native Christians and then the inquisition took place. This is a lesson in the history of Goa, and no in the Inquisition so much, for marchers. The lesson is this. When the people of India strive—that has been the history of colonial of India—no country could have conquered this big country but for disharmony and for the help from within. That is what happened in Goa and that should not happen ever again. That is the lesson of history. If you had been to Auschwitz, you would have found a big board outside the Auschwitz Camp where the Jews were burnt. That board says, "Those who do not learn lessons of history are condemned to see it repeated." What we learn in the lessons of history of India is basically this. When we fight, when we get into conflict, all of us lose and somebody comes from outside and conquers us.

Now I would like to mention here about the visit of the Pope. I would like to say that it is very important that we must keep peace and harmony and give him a good reception.

I must say this that if you are talking so much about conversion, I am going to mention it. No conversions were involved so as to have a march there. Actually, the population of the Christians in Goa, as per the Census of 1961 was 36.8%, and, after 30 years as per the Census of 1991 it has gone down to 28%. There has been a sharp decrease and the sharp decrease is not only in the Christian population, but it is in the entire population of Goa.; Christians, Hindus and everybody, in the same proportion, because of the large influx from other parts of the country. Now, Sir, on the visit of the Pope what I would like to say is this. Now the Prime Minister projects himself. Many of us also project him, as a very liberal leader, a national leader, above and beyond sectarian approach, a leader who wants to put the

country together, to prosper. Now this is how he is projected. But he is not doing anything about it. It is very good that in the President's Address, you have mentioned secularism as the cornerstone of this nation. In fact, the President's Address says that secularism is the first cornerstone of this nation. But when the threat is there and once the threat is set, it cannot be rolled back. What is the Prime Minister doing? Why then go on the TV, radio etc. making a public appeal to all the extremist elements to keep peace, to roll back. We roll back so many things. We must go with a strong hand. A soft approach with extremists and fundamentalists will never pay. Therefore, I appeal to the Prime Minister to rise to his image and curb these forces in the same manner as he did in the case of Tiger of Maharashtra, when digging of cricket pitches was going on there. Somebody went there and he stopped him. Don't stop me just because I have mentioned him. Sir, give me a couple of minutes and I will finish. I must mention this on the question of conversion which has created a lot of problem. Now, democracy means pluralism. Pluralism includes religious pluralism. Therefore, respect all religions, all religions are beautiful and are great. It is not only a question of conversion in a technical manner, by force or by fraud. If anybody goes about with conversion, mass conversion of poor people, weak people with the intention of converting them to true faith, it is not correct. What is true faith? All the faiths are equal and true.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI ADHIK SHIRODKAR): Mr. Faleiro, we are speaking on the President's Address and not on the conversion or otherwise. It is an important point but too far away from the President's Address.

SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO: No, no, Sir. I am speaking on the question of secularism. Mr. Vice-Chairman, let me make this point. Words will not take us anywhere. Repeating *ad nauseum* about secularism and doing nothing about threats to it will take us nowhere. These are the issues which everybody is aware of and nobody is speaking about it. And when you speak about it, it would be too late. Therefore, I am speaking here now, appealing here now to all the missionaries, whether Christians, Hindus or belonging to any other religion, to stop mass conversions, stop religious totalitarianism. Let people believe in whatever they like to believe in. Let this pluralism, cultural pluralism, democracy, religious pluralism flourish in this country. Only then there will be peace and harmony and the spirit of brotherhood. Mr. Chairman, please give me two more minutes.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI ADHIK SHIRODKAR): Please.

SHRI EDUARDO FLAEIRO: I just want to make one point on the question of foreign policy. Now the cold war is over. The world has changed radically. From a bipolar world we are now in a unipolar world. Foreign policy

must take note of India's Foreign policy. India's Foreign policy must take note of the weakening of the United Nations and the Non Aligned Movement. India's Foreign Policy must reassert as the cardinal, core, fundamental principle that it must serve national interest. And in addition, India's Foreign Policy must also help the other countries develop solidarity with the non-aligned movement. Therefore, I appeal here and urge upon the Government to prepare a white paper on how it sees the fundamentals of India's Foreign Policy in the decades ahead. Do I have any time? I just want to make, in the context, a reference to two small matters which this House has not mentioned. Now, one is the question of Bosnia. As I have mentioned Bosnia is not a small country, it is a symbol of the sufferings of a Muslim Minority. Now Bosnia has an embassy here. Why don't we have an embassy in Bosnia, when we have an embassy in Belgrade, when we have an embassy in Zagret and when we have embassies in other Republics? Why has nobody from Parliament or from the Government gone to Bosnia? They have gone to Croatia in abundant number. The Speaker of Lok Sabha also visited Zagret. We have gone to Belgrade in abundant number and we keep going there. Why is it so? It gives a wrong signal. There are more things to talk about Bosnia. I will talk about Bosnia some other time. There is no mention about East Timor. East Timor is the result of cold war rivalries. Once the cold war was over, a lot of other things happened. Now that Indonesia has decided to grant independence to East Timor, we must welcome and see to it that East Timor becomes a noble and valuable member of the Non-aligned Movement of the Asian community. Indonesia is upset that the United Nations Peace Keeping Force there is almost entirely composed of Australians and New Zealanders. Indonesia is basically an Asian country. There is only a token presence of Thailand and Singapore. Indonesia has requested the Government of India for an Indian contingent to the UN Peace Keeping Force in East Timor.. We must, in fact, at this moment of crisis in Indonesia, when the unity of that country is threatened, extend all our diplomatic support. Let us send food and humanitarian aid to the camps there. East Timor is full of refugees where cholera plague and other diseases have spread out. They need food. They need medicine and we must come to their succour as a brother of Asia and as a valuable member of the Non-aligned Movement. Thank you. I

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI ADHIK SHIRODKAR): Now Dr. Joshi will make a statement.

SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: Sir, there is a convention that when a *suo motu* statement is read out in the House, the Members of the House seek clarifications on that statement. Now it is 5 of the clock. It would be in the fitness of things if the statement is postponed to tomorrow. Then the

Members would have an opportunity to seek clarifications. Therefore, I seek your indulgence in postponing the statement.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI ADHIK SHIRODKAR): I agree with you. But the conventions are basically meant to help us and not to overpower us. Let the Minister make his statement. We shall sit 15 minutes more and then you can seek your clarifications.

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE: Sir, let the hon. Minister make the statement. We can seek clarifications tomorrow. The Minister is ready with the statement. There have been a number of occasions when we have sought clarifications later on. I do not know what is the content of the statement. There may not be any clarifications at all. If there are any clarifications, we can seek clarifications later on.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI ADHIK SHIRODKAR): I think Dr. Joshi has no objection. Yes, Dr. Joshi.

5.00 P.M.

STATEMENT BY MINISTER

Award of Swarnajayanti Fellowships for the Year 1999-2000

मानव संसाधन विकास और विज्ञान तथा प्रौद्योगिकी मंत्री (डा. मुरली मनोहर जोशी): मैं युवा वैज्ञानिकों के लिए स्वर्ण जयंती फेलोशिप्स पर उनके परिणाम की सूचना सदन को देना चाहता हूँ।

हमारी सभ्यता की परंपरायें सदैव ही तात्पर्य एवं सत्य में वैज्ञानिक जांच के सर्वोच्च महत्व से जुड़ी रही हैं। इस समृद्ध परंपरा के प्रति हार्दिक सम्मान के रूप में सरकार द्वारा हमारी स्वतंत्रता की 50वीं वर्षगांठ के अवसर पर स्वर्ण जयन्ती फेलोशिप स्कीम का शुभारंभ किया गया था। इसका उद्देश्य युवा वैज्ञानिकों को विज्ञान एवं प्रौद्योगिकी के अग्रणी क्षेत्रों में बुनियादी अनुसंधान शुरू करने हेतु प्रोत्साहित करना तथा उत्कृष्टता के मानक प्राप्त करना है, जो विश्व में सर्वोत्तम के साथ स्पर्धा कर सके।

30-40 वर्ष की आयु वर्ग के उत्कृष्ट भारतीय युवा वैज्ञानिक जिनका ट्रेक रिकार्ड प्रमाणित हो चुका हो, इन फेलोशिप के लिए पात्र हैं। चुने गए उम्मीदवारों को प्रतिमाह 25,000/- रुपये की फेलोशिप की आकर्षक राशि दी जाती है तथा उन्हें विज्ञान इंजीनियरी अथवा औषधि के अग्रणी क्षेत्रों में अनुसंधान के एक कार्यक्रम के लिए अधिकतम 5 वर्षों की अवधि के लिए सहयोग दिया जाता है। इस परियोजना के तहत दिए जाने वाले सहयोग में उपस्कर, मानवशक्ति, आकस्मिकताएं, उपभोज्य, अन्तरराष्ट्रीय यात्रा सहित यात्रा तथा प्रशासनिक एवं बुनियादी सुविधाएं शामिल हैं।

इस कार्यक्रम को देश तथा विदेशों के वैज्ञानिकों के बीच व्यापक रूप से प्रचारित किया गया है। आवेदन पत्रों की जांच हेतु एक सुदृढ़ प्रक्रिया अपनाई गई है। इसमें 6 विषय क्षेत्रों, नामतः जीवविज्ञान, रासायनिक विज्ञान, भौतिक विज्ञान, इंजीनियरी विज्ञान, गणितीय विज्ञान एवं भू एवं वायुमंडलीय विज्ञान में विशेषज्ञ समिति, एक स्वर्ण जयन्ती फेलोशिप के लिए उम्मीदवार के चयन की पूरी प्रक्रिया अब पूरी हो गई