

«

**THE BUDGET (GENERAL), 1985-86  
GENERAL DISCUSSION—Contd.**

SHRI JASWANT SINGH (Rajasthan): Madam Deputy Chairman, the Budget for 1985-86 was anticipated with anxiety because it has ascertain contextual relevance which is not ordinarily attributed to Annual Budgets. That contextual relevance was an account of the fact a new Government had been voted into power. There have been certain utterances before the voting into power of this new Government. We were expecting that with this Budget, the economic philosophy, the resultant fiscal policy, and in-as much as these are inseperable from the pirotical philogophy and, therefore, the political contours of the real identity of this Government, that would be revealed through the medium of this Budget.

There was yet another aspect to this Budget which was its coincidence with the launching of the Seventh Five Year Plan. Various adjectives have been used to describe this Budget not only by the speakers in this House and the other House but also in the media. I find it somewhat difficult to classify Budgets as good, as dynamic as breath-taking *etc* because this is an exercise which should be divorced from any rhetoric and removed from all adjectives which really convey nothing.

I feel, Madam, that in my attempts at now commenting or putting across what I feel about this Budget we have to adopt certain as far as possible, objective criteria. Those objective criteria are determined, in my attempts to comment upon this Budget, by answering what are the problems facing the country. It is not as if there would be a significant or great deal of difference between ambulation of the problems facing the country but, quote merely because the author has been across the point rather succinctly and well. Therefore, I quote: "That the main problem is the mobilisation of\* resources and bringing about stntc-

tural changes to accelerate the rate of growth of economy to make the country strong and independence meaningful to the people at large and to give content and direction to India's independence".

Madam, the Approach Paper to the Seventh Five Year Plan talked about food, work, productivity. Therefore, when one attempts to talk comment upon this Budget, one has to take a line which judges, or attempts to judge, what is being done By that criteria; how far does the Budget harmonise with the objectives which the Government has itself pronounced as. the problems facing the country - We then have to look at the Bidget as an instrument of fiscal policy to achieve those -objectives.

At the very beginning. Madam Deputy Chairman I would like to say that I think the most singular distinction of this Budget is its ability to break free from the tyranny of *suitus quo*, and when I refer to the ability to break free from the tyranny of *stains Uno* I am not judging merely by the simplistic yardstick of what has been done to direct taxes or what has been left undone. If we have broken from the tyranny of the *status quo* and yet there is disquiet in my mind, I would request the hon. Minister to understand that that disquiet arises on some very crucial questions which have been thrown up merely because you have attempted to break free from the *status quo*

What, Madam, is the sectoral situation with which the country is faced? The GDP in the current year is 4 per cent while the growth of population is 3 per cent. The per capita income in the Sixth Plan period would have increased by just about 3 per cent which means it is just keeping pace with growth of population. Agricultural production which increased by 13.8 per cent in 1983-84, for which there are certain specific reasons has gone up only by 1 per cent in 1984-85. The rate of growth of foodgrains has reached

[Shri Jaswant Singh]

its plateau and on Government's own admission has been 'negligible'—'negligible' is your word—during the current financial year. The compound rate of growth therefore works out to 3.5 per cent. The industrial sector has failed to reach in growth target fixed by the Planning Commission in each of the last three Plans. The infrastructure—the Government has itself admitted—is one of the disquieting features inasmuch as the performance in this sector with the pace of addition in new power generating capacity in 1984-85 has slowed down. Inflationary pressure, which is certainly of the significant achievements both of the previous Government as also the previous Finance Minister, continues to be in single digit and that is a matter which is reassuring and at the same time creates in its own wake a question which needs to be answered. External environment for resource mobilisation is not very encouraging and here, because my time is limited, I would not quote what the Government has itself said; but it has talked about invisibles becoming more difficult. Inflows from non-residents also, on account of dollar hike and interest rate being higher outside etc., have become more difficult. The sum total being that environment for resource mobilisation is becoming much more difficult. Now this being sectoral situation, it is in this context that the Budget is presented. Further the context of the Budget is of 38 crore or 380 million Indians who do not get food twice. Yet another context is that the resource gap in the Seventh Five-Year Plan is to the extent of "Rs. 40,000 crore. Yet another aspect deserving underlining is that agricultural production in the country, which is cyclical has reached yet another plateau and we are not likely to see \* growth which we witnessed earlier in cyclical form in agricultural production. Therefore unfortunately, the launching of the Seventh Five-year Plan—it is admitted—and Budget-making has coincided with the Plateau of agri-

cultural production. The nexus between agriculture and industry in Indian economy is very close. It is established that industrial production rises those years in which agricultural production has risen. Therefore if agriculture has reached a plateau, then the targeted requirements of industrial production of around 8 per cent with industry in the state in which it is of obsolescence, of obsolete technology, of high cost combined with the plateau in agriculture, raise questions and it is with that yardstick that we have to examine this Budget.

On some of the other non-developmental expenditure, the Government itself has talked about, Defence, subsidies and interest constituting about 75 per cent of the non-developmental expenditure. We have therefore, come a full circle in resource gathering, resource mobilisation. The Government had, little option, as Prof. Raj Krishna put it that there was little choice on account of remorseless increases, because expenditure has increased by 18 per cent, defence expenditure by 15 per cent Central subsidy by 12 per cent interest on debt by 21 per cent and salaries—75 per cent per year. Now, it is the combination of these challenges, these criteria these factors which were the background in which this Budget has been presented to the country.

What has been the Government's response was firstly hinted at by the Prime Minister in certain vague statement that we will usher in a new era. Broadly and at its most macro level, what the Government has done in the face of these challenges is to play with the 3 per cent of the revenue cake, which is the direct tax portion. The major effort into reform of the Indian fiscal system has been concentrated on direct taxes. Direct taxes contribute 3 per cent to revenue.

Direct taxes are paid by four million

By themselves the reforms which have taken place are welcome. Direct tax reforms are welcome. These are reforms which our Party has been advocating. Indeed, we have incorporated them in our manifesto. But we did not stop short merely at these reforms. Because these reforms in regard to direct taxes relate only to four million Indians and the balance of 746 million Indians are left outside the wake of these reforms. (Interruption) we are today about 75 crores. What has the Government done for them.

Instead of increasing the Plan outlays, the Government have actually cut down Plan allocations. The allocation for petroleum has gone down from Rs. 3,127 crores to Rs. 3,085 crores; fertiliser—from Rs. 579, to Rs. 544 crores; coal and lignite—from Rs. 1117 crores to Rs. 997 crores and the allocation for drugs and pharmaceuticals has gone down from Rs. 66 crores, to Rs. 51 crores. By itself this is a shaving down of Plan allocations on items which are of vital importance not only for these four million Indians, but to the entire segment of 746 million Indians. This creates disturbance and doubt. Not as much however. As the curtailing of allocation in regard to anti-poverty programmes. The figures about anti-poverty programmes are very disturbing and revealing. I call them anti-poverty programmes because they relate to that section of the Indian population which comprise the balance of this 746 million.

The allocation for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes has been reduced from Rs. 71 crores to Rs. 42 crores; for housing from Rs. 84 crores to Rs. 30 crores; for NREP—howsoever unsatisfactory it may have been,—from Rs. 236 crores to Rs. 230 crores, for Khadi from Rs. 134 crores to Rs. 115 crores, for self-employment programmes for the educated unemployed; from Rs. 149 crores to Rs. 65 crores; for desert development a measly sum of Rs. 10 crores was allotted last year

and this has further been reduced to Rs. 6 crores; dairy from Rs. 90 crores to Rs. 88 crores; agricultural financial institutions from Rs. 297 crores to virtually half, to Rs. 155 crores; rural water—a marginal increase from Rs. 293 crores to just Rs. 300 crores; IRDB—from Rs. 214 crores to Rs. 215 crores.

These are programmes', Madam, which directly relate to those 746 million. Without taking into account the fall in the purchasing value of the rupee, if, between 1984-85 and 1985-86, which is the current year, there has been a reduction in each of these items, then there has been a reduction in absolute terms, but there has been a reduction in relative terms also because of the fall in money value. This is what disturbs us. The Plan allocation has somewhat increased and this is around Rs. 18,500 crores, which is a rise of about 6 per cent, if my statistics and percentages are right, whereas non-Plan expenditure,—about which there is an admission by the Finance Minister in his speech that non-development expenditure has gone up and that this would be curtailed,—is near about Rs. 24,000 crores, which actually reflects a rise of about 23 per cent.

Therefore, the basic difficulties which we face in assessing the Budget—are on account of structural imbalances and conceptual disharmony in this document. There is a right identification of the ills afflicting the Indian economy. Whereas the identification of the ills is right—in whatever minority I may be I state that—the remedies applied are timid, the remedies applied do not go to the needed extent in following the logic of the identification of the ill\*.

There is a statement by Finance Minister in his speech that he does not believe any more that fiscal reforms can be used as an instrument for bringing about social equality. I will go on now to say that the reverse is also equally applicable. If fiscal reforms cannot bring social equality, fiscal reforms—

[Shri Jaswant" Singh]

form can certainly create social inequality and this comes to light not only by the examples that I have earlier given but by my now highlighting some of the enigmas of the remedies that the Govt." have suggested and which face us.

As I started by 'saying there has been rationalisation of direct taxes which relate only to the 3 per cent of the revenue and only a miniscule fraction of the Indian population. Even in the rationalisation of direct taxes I am unable to, understand why when in the preamble to the Gift Tax Act it is stated that the Gift Tax Act is specifically promulgated so as to prevent people attempting to defeat the provisions' of estate duty. You remove estate duty, but you leave Gift Tax Act there..The two Acts are interrelated and I am unable to find a rationalisation for this.

One of the pronouncements made before these measures were known was that a reform of direct taxes would be undertaken so that black money is eliminated. Now, however, unconvinced, I may be on the subject I find yet another enigma in direct taxes concept. One single source which generates the maximum amount of black money is the capital gains tax. Whereas other items have been played with, capital gains tax is left where it is. It is because of that that I say that whereas you have taken the right step, you may have moved in the right direction as far as direct tax reform is concerned, you have not followed the logic inherent in the remedies that you have yourself suggested.

The greatest difficulty that I find with this budget is in the treatment of the indirect taxes. Indirect taxes contribute 78 per cent of tax revenue. They add as much as 36 per cent to, in certain cases 60 per cent of the cost of

products. It is indirect tax which cause even the poorest of the poor who may not be earning more than three to four rupees a day has to pay an invisible tax amounting to as much as 7 per cent of his earnings. This is all on account of the incidence of the indirect taxes. Madam, the Government have left the field of indirect taxes untouched. The chief resource raising device that they have employed is Rs. 620 odd crores on petroleum product. As a commentator the other day remarked, though the impost is Rs. 620 odd crores, far as the citizen is concerned, by a curious alchemy it will actually result in a thousand crore of rupees being taken out of his pocket. Then there is a two per cent hike on 68 items of excise duty, which are mostly intermediate goods. The difficulty with the excise hike on goods is that it immediately leads to an inflationary situation because prices tend to rise. There is 6% in commercial vehicles, resulting in gathering of a certain amount which I cannot immediately rectollect. There is then a hike in cement, vegetable oils, bidi, etc. Now combined with railway of Rs. 465 crores, there is going to be a total resource mobilisation of around Rs. 1700 to 1800 crores. This entire 17-18 hundred crores resource mobilisation indirectly—not directly—is going to result in making things more expensive, I will just come to my difficulties about the inflationary situation and related to that, why I feel, there is difficulty with inflation. I would be happy if the Minister sets at rest the doubts that arise in our minds. But before I go on to that, however, I would like to say that one of the avowed objects of the Budget and the policy announced by the Government is enhancing and encouraging industrial production. Industrial products where industry is obsolescent, where cost-output ratio is as high as it is with us cannot be encouraged, will not get the impetus that you need to give if you keep on raising indirect taxes.

My next difficulty, as far as the Budget is concerned, arises on the inflationary aspect. As I said, we are starting the Seventh Plan with a resource gap of Rs. 40 thousand crores. There is yet another five year plan—the Defence Five Year Plan—about which nothing is spoken here. The Defence Five Year Plan is also being launched with the Seventh Five Year Plan. In that the figures needed for the Defence Five Year Plan are also in the region of Rs. 35—40 thousand crores. That is over and above the resource gap of the Seventh Five Year Plan. We have witnessed a deficit financing of Rs. 3900 crores in the last year. And there is an open, above-board deficit of around Rs. 3100 crores in the current year, Bank credit to Government and Government borrowings which are, what I call, above-the-line deficits, will be around Rs. 5,100 crores. Now in the face of all these, and I cannot get away from the figures when I talk about them, what the Government has done is to reduce direct taxes which by nature are deflationary. Money taken out of my pocket and put into the Government's pocket prevents me from spending on what I like. When I have more money, the direct tax reform now makes me think I am going to buy more books, or spend more on my children, or if I feel inclined, I may spend more on my whisky. But the Central idea is to spend more. This direct tax reforms has not been linked with savings. If there had been a simultaneous encouragement to savings, then the inflationary push would have been contained. This direct tax reforms therefore will result in demand pull. The indirect taxes of the kind of hike in railway freight and duty on cement etc. will make things more costly and will result in cost push. But, Madam, who is going to be affected? All those middle class beneficiaries of the direct tax reform and all the remaining of the 746 million Indians,

Madam, I appreciate the time constraint, but I will just take two three minutes more. My next difficulty is about debt servicing and the balance of payment situation. I will take a minute on this because it is an aspect which I believe somehow the other speakers have not been covering. Now an idea of the magnitude of the total debt servicing that the country is faced with today can be had only in the light of the fact that public internal debt today is in the region of Rs. 120 thousand crores. The debt service burden can be seen from the data made available by World Bank, on which I will not take the time of the House except to read out just one of two portions. "India's debt service ratio...," which is roughly estimated at 11 per cent now and which is a reasonable and manageable figure, "may go up to about 29 per cent in 1985-86. This is very disturbing because this kind of debt servicing ratio of 28 per cent—these figures are not figures of my making; it is a World Bank study—is an exceedingly high ratio. But as if that is."

In the event however that exports do not pick up in 1985-86 the "dated service ratio, will go up to 35 per cent by the end of the Seventh Five Year Plan". Now I would like to take this opportunity to say that the "debt service ratio which is about 11 to 12 per cent, at the most up to 20 per cent is conservative and manageable ratio. But when we talk of 29 per cent in 1985-86 and a possible 35 per cent by the end of the Seventh Five Year Plan, it is a very disturbing aspect. And there is very little in the Budget which encourages me about export promotion. The IMF loan which was taken by India in 1981 is going to come up for repayment, and that is also, going to compound our difficulties. From here, where will we go I am going to conclude now, Madam.

I cannot help but re-emphasize that this budget is a shift, is certainly a break, from the tyranny of the

[Shri Jaswant Singh]

past, but it fails to emphasize agriculture which is the backbone of this country, it fails to speak with the kind of concern that is necessary in the Indian context for the poor of this country.—the budgetary figures themselves speak it—it fails to meet the requirements of the time and an anti-poverty programme. I am gravely disturbed about the debt service position and I am gravely disturbed about the possible inflationary aspect of this budget.

I will conclude, Madam, by giving just two or three proposals to the honourable the Finance Minister. Please reform indirect taxation. You have moved in the right direction. But if you do not reform indirect taxation, the result is going to be inflation, the result will not be a boosting of industrial production, the result is going to be a boosting of our exports. Please reduce the capital output ratio of Indian industry. Unless you reduce the capital output ratio, Indian industry is not going to become competitive. Today the capital output ratio in the country is exceedingly high. Please consider reduction of the high cost that is being borne by the Exchequer on the storage of foodgrains. Currently the country stores huge amounts of foodgrains. Why should we continue to keep capital locked up and lose so much interest on it? Please reduce non-developmental expenditure. Rationalise Defence.

I would conclude, Madam, by saying what I said in the debate which followed the President's Address to the two Houses. I had occasion then to mention that the Government's articulation of its concern for the poorest of the poor in this country is not convincing; it does not exist. I had then taken the opportunity to quote Mahatma Gandhi who had said—not his exact words but words to the effect—that "Whenever you are faced with a dilemma, try and recollect the

place of the poorest, of the lowliest Indian that you may have seen apply\* this standard, this yardstick. What are your policies are going to do \* to that poorest of poor Indian. Is it going to revive his spirit, is it going to make feel more an Indian?" I find very great difficulty, when I apply that yardstick to this budget, of being convinced the Government has thought of the poor, has thought of those 740 million who remain unaffected by whatever you may have done" for direct taxes. That is my single greatest objection to this budget. Thank you, Madam.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I would like to inform the House that the Minister for External Affairs, Shri Khursheed Alam Khan, will make a statement today at 3.30 PM regarding "the missing official of the Soviet Embassy, Mr. Igor Gueja, Now, Mr. Anand - Sharma ..... (7 interruptions) >..

SHRI ANAND SHARMA (Himachal Pradesh): Madam Deputy Chairman, I rise here to support the budget which has been presented by the Finance Minister.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Would you like to come and speak from the place where there is a mike—one seat ahead? I think it will make a difference .... (Interruptions)

SHRI ANAND SHARMA: Madam, in my opinion this budget is innovative and courageous, with a very bold approach to bring about the much-needed departure in view of the mood of the nation which is one of optimism and self-confidence. The budget reflects this new mood. The Prime Minister had made a promise, a commitment, to the people to prepare, to equip the nation for the 21st century so that India moves Ahead at a fast pace and is able to find its rightful place in the comity of nations. The 21st century is not very far from us. We are all fully

aware of the revolution of high technology and electronics which has overtaken the world. The priorities have been very rightly chosen. We cannot afford to lag behind. We cannot afford to miss this revolution. The Prime Minister had said, and I quote:

"Improvement in productivity, absorption of modern technology and fuller utilisation of capacity must acquire the status of a national campaign."

And that is exactly what the Finance Minister has tried to do by his budgetary proposals. I am sure he has tried to ensure that it invigorate the economy, it will stimulate growth, which alone can ensure the progress and development of the country and the people.

It also express the Government's commitment to development. And the most distinctive feature of this Budget is that the benefits percolates to all sections. There is not even a single section which has not been benefited by it. The employees, the farmers, the wage-earners, the industrial workers, the tax-payers, all the sections have benefited from this Budget. This is the most distinctive feature.

If we have a look at the Budget, when we talk of a change, this change is very much within the framework of continuity, continuity of the time-tested policies, those policies which have industrial and agricultural growth as the nucleus and promotion of employment and reduction of pov-

erty as the goals. It is within the framework of these policies that a change has to be brought about.

We should have an honest appraisal of the economy. We have heard during the course of the Budget speeches from our friends in the Opposition, who have presented a very dismal picture in the last few days. When they talked about the health of the economy they tried to show as if there was very small productivity which this nations had achieved, that the achievements were insignificant and the targets had not been achieved. I think this is not an honest appraisal of the health of our economy. In my opinion, our economy is in a very sound health. We have achieved foodgrains production of 151 million tonnes. It is expected to be 153 million tonnes today, this year. The power generation has gone up 13.6 per cent, and it is expected to increase by 50 per cent this year itself with an addition of 14,000 mw more. The production of coal has gone up. The irrigation facilities have increased. Our esteemed friend who spoke before me just very fact that India has voluntarily mentioned about the IMF loan. The stopped drawing from the IMF loan, scrapped the loan, speaks of the health of the economy. Had the economy been in a bad shape, the Finance Minister or the Government of India would not have done this.

And also related to the health of the economy are the inflation rate, the price increase, the industrial growth of the national income. Today our industrial growth is 7 per cent. The growth in national income has gone up by 4 per cent. Today it stands at more than 11 per cent. Similarly, the inflation has come down to 4 per cent. It has not only been continued, but is being consistently brought down. Madam, Deputy Chairman, those who talk about it they forget the dismal picture when

[Shri Anand Sharma]

they were given an opportunity to handle the nation's economy how inflation had swelled; and how the economy was derailed. That was a period of anxiety— a period of stagnation. And to put that economy back on rail, to bring down that inflation, and to ensure the industrial growth—where it had once reached almost a cipher—zero is no mean achievement at all. This nation has registered achievements in all fields, be it science and technology, agriculture or industry. I would not like to go into the details. This cannot be denied by anyone. Even all our friends on the other side knew that since the day we attained Independence, this nation has made giant strides. The credit for that definitely goes to our farmers, engineers and industrial workers. But, at the same time, it is also due to the policies and programmes of the Government and of Congress.

Fortunately India had for most of the years after Independence the pragmatic leadership of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru the dynamic leader of Mrs Gandhi and today the leadership of Shri Rajiv Gandhi.

Madam, it is very unfortunate that our friends on the opposite side always refuse to accept these achievements. Whenever they speak on any subject, be it budget or any other matter they will always belittle these achievements. I am yet to find a session, when they will come forward and acknowledge what this nation has achieved. I am not the one who says that there is no scope for further improvement. There is always a scope for improvement. And that is what we are striving for; and that is what the Congress Government is determined to do. It is most unfortunate if any friends in the Opposition disown the achievements we have made. They create an atmosphere of

cynicism. If this impression is allowed to be created that this nation has not progressed and developed, it will add to the cynicism and it will not benefit the nation of the posterity. All these achievements which are enough to make any Indian proud, have been a result of time-tested policies and the leadership which inspired the national effort. These policies had been evolved during the course of freedom struggle. The path of progress was chosen at that time. But today questions are put about the ideology and policies of the Congress Government.

Let me remind my friends that it was at the time when the people of India were fighting to liberate this nation from the shackles of slavery, it was then that Mahatma Gandhi and Pandit Nehru realised the hopes and aspirations of the Indian people. They understood the needs of the Indian people and they evolved a policy. After independence, the Congress has redeemed that pledge, the pledge to ensure social and economic justice to the people of India. If we look at the steps which have been taken ever since independence, Pandit Nehru gave the concept of planned development. And it is for anyone to see what we have achieved through our Five Year Plans. He gave the concept of a mixed economy. He allowed both the public sector and the private sector to develop. And we can see that the public sector, too, has made a very important contribution in the nation's development. All these steps were being taken to ensure socio-economic justice to the people of India because the identification of the Congress and its leadership with the poor people was total and complete. I can cite various reforms which this nation has seen, be it the land reforms, be it the abolition of jagirdari or zamindari, abolition of privy purses or the nationalisation of banks or the 20-point programme of our late departed leader Shrimati Indira Gandhi. They speak of the commitment of the Congress to uplift the poor and downtrodden millions of India. They prove the credentials of the Congress whose identification with the Indian people has always been total. That is why



I say that the Congress has redeemed the pledge, it has fulfilled the promise which it made to the people of India during the course of the independence struggle. And through this budget also—and that is why we say it is innovative and courageous—the Government has tried to give relief to all sections, those sections which needed this relief. There was a promise made by the Congress in its election manifesto, a promise made by our leadership, to the employees to abolish the Compulsory Deposit. The same has been done by the Finance Minister in this budget. There are other reliefs which have been given to the employees, be it the housing schemes for the Government employees or the pensionary benefits to retiring employees. If we talk of workers, the workers have been given reliefs which I will term revolutionary. The limit of bonus, as far as salary is concerned, has been raised from Rs. 750 to Rs. 1600. In the case of retrenchment, the monetary compensation has been raised from Rs. 20,000 to Rs. 5,000. And a revolutionary step is that in case of closure of a company, the dues of the workers have been brought at par with those of the secured creditors. They will get precedence over the dues of the Government. The social security scheme for the workers to cover the risk of death by accident will give much-needed and timely relief to the poor families when they need it most. There has been talk of agriculture and farmers. The crop insurance scheme is a revolutionary step. It is unfortunate that when some of our friends speak on the Budget, they refuse to acknowledge even the good things which are there. The same goes for the new taxation policy, the tax reliefs. As far as income tax is concerned, wealth tax is concerned of the abolition of estate duty, all these give a relief to the wage earners. I have heard some friends speaking on the tax reliefs; they have called it a Budget meant for the elite, the affluent, sections of the society. May I ask; do they describe wage earner, the industrial worker, the poor farmer, as affluent? If relief is given to them, should the Government be condemned for giving that relief? They say that when income tax relief is given, a very small segment, a very small section of the society benefits. They forget that the direct tax base in this country is very

narrow; in a nation of 700 million people only 5 million people have been paying taxes. How can you extend the benefit of these reliefs to those who are not tax payers? If you look at the limit, it goes up from Rs. 15,000 to Rs. 18,000 and it helps only the wage earners. If estate duty is abolished, it saves the poor people from harassment. Hitherto, whenever there was a death in the family, the bereaved family members used to be harassed for estate duty. I feel that the Government and the Finance Minister deserve to be complimented on these steps. When incentives have been given to industry—for example, raising of ceiling for small scale industries, ancillary units—there has been a criticism that more incentives have been given to the private sector. When we talk of growth, when we talk of increasing productivity, incentives are given to the private sector, it is wrong to say that public sector has been ignored, that the importance of public sector has been minimised. In his Budget Speech the Finance Minister clearly mentioned so. Let the public sector also generate its own resources. If you release more energy into the private sector, if investment is more in the private sector, it will help increasing the growth, and that is what you require today. Particularly in important fields like electronics Government has rightly given relief because this is the industry for future, this is the industry which can ensure that India develops at a rapid pace and achieves its rightful place in the world. And for all this, power generation has to be, and has been, given due importance; the outlay for power generation has been increased from Rs. 1496 crores to Rs. 2090 crores.

And we expect an increase of 50 per cent this year as far as power generation capacity is concerned. More importance has been given however, to the thermal sector, I would like to take this opportunity to say that hydel sector deserves more consideration; This nation has tremendous hydel potential and we should go in for hydel projects. May be the initial investment is more. But later on they are more productive and more beneficial.

Shri Auand Sharma] For education there has been an increase in allocation. Education today is a core development factor and the Prime Minister has rightly promised that educational planning and economic planning will be inter-linked. The increase is Rs. 20 crores and for technical education the increase is Rs. 11 crores. This, I somehow feel, will prove to be inadequate in view of what we plan to do particularly lisation of the education tem to equip and prepare our young men to meet the requirements of high technology industries, and electronic industries, would urge the Government to allot more funds to technical education in order to maintain a balance between educational planning and economic planning.

Before I conclude I would like to say a word about rural development and self-oyment programmes. My esteemed friends, on the other side have criticised the Government. They said that these two important sectors have been ignored or overlooked. But that in fact is not true. Before me, Mr. Jaswant Singh, who is not present now in the House, was reeling off statistics. The other day another esteemed friend from the opposition benches had touched that subject. If we have a look at the IRDP, NREP and RLGP in the budget, you will see that the money is more or less the same as it was in the previous budget. For IRDP they have given 215 crores. For NREP the amount is the same and same is the case with, RLGP. In the Sixth Plan on rural development, that is, for rural water supply schemes, the Government had spent Rs. 600 ' crores morx than what was the originally outlay. It was said that the outlay for schemes meant for educated unemployed youth has been reduced from Rs. 149 crores to Rs. 69 crores. T ast year it was not Rs. 149 crores; it was only Rs. 25 cr6res. I would like to remind Shri Jaswant Singh that it was not Rs. 149 crores. That is why I compliment the Government. They spend more for rural development and rural employment. So, our Government deserve to be complimented for this and not to be condemned. And there is no reason why the Govern-

ment cannol increase this outlaj this also because that is the commitment of the Government and policy of the Government. I also warn to compliment the Government for increasing Central As-States in spite of the fact that the resources mobilisation picture of the States is far from encouraging.

But, by increasing it from four thousand crores to six thousand crores, the Government has definitely shown its sincere intention to assist the Stales and to ensure a uniforra and regular development throughout the country.

I heard the speeches of my friends from the opposite side. Professor Chatterjee is not present today. But, in his opening speech, he had talked lot about Centre-State relations and some more ads from that side were regularly doing so. I would one thing that the Centre has always tried to give the maximum possible assistance and the charge by some friends that there has been, discrimination is incorrect, baseless and deceiving. Why do I say so? If you look at the statistics, you will find that there has never been any political discrimination by the Centre between the Congress (I)-ruted States and the Opposition-ruled States. Rather, the Opposition-ruled States have got more. But who is to be blamed if the developmental grants and the funds which meant for irrigation schemes, for roads, for other big projects, are diverted to meet the requirments of some populist schemes which alone can sustain those particular Governments in power? It is not the Centre which is to be blamed for that. But, particularly about West Bengal, x would say that West Bengal is the only State and it will be the only State, by the end of (he Sixth Five Year Plan, which would rail to spend even fifty per cent of outlay, even fifty percent. And. Madam, if we have a look at the statistics. ...

SHRI ANAND SHARMA: You kindly (West Bangal); This is all wrong information(*Interruptions*) You should discuss the Other States also.

SHRI ANAND SHARMA: You Kindly listen, to me. You kindly listen to me and then refuse me. (*Interruptions*) . I have

done my home work. You listen and then refute me. So far as West Bengal is concerned, out of a total Rs. 3,500 crores, it has spent only Rs. 1,791 crores. When I say this, let me remind my friends that West Bengal is the only State which has been and which is *cm overdraft* for 200 days in a year ever since 1977-78.

SHRIMATI KANAK MUKHERJEE: You take into account all the figures with regard to all the States.

SHRI ANAND SHARMA: I say this because there was a big sermon from them. *(Interruptions)*.

SHRIMATI KANAK MUKHERJEE: What about UP and other States? You discuss those States also.

SHRI P. N. SUKUL: (Uttar Pradesh): The maximum overdraft is in respect of West Bengal.

SHRIMATI KANAK MUKHERJEE: But West Bengal was deprived of Rs. 25 crores.

Why don't you mention that also? *(Interruptions)*.

SHRI K. MOHANAN (Kerala): It is not West Bengal alone. It is the same case wWv Kerala, with UP, and with many other States because the<sup>1</sup> Central Government itself is in deficit So, what can we do?

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Mhoanan, please take your seat, if you want you can reply when your time comes.

SHRI ANAND SHARMA: It is this attitude which we saw when we heard their speeches on the Budget. when we listened to the criticism, unjustified criticism, from the friends of the Opposition that I deplore and as far as the achievements of the Government and policies are concerned, I think what they are objecting to is our right or my right to put the record straight. *(Interruption)*; Madam, when the honourable Member from the other side was speaking, I was only listening patiently and none of our friends tried to interrupt the Member. What I am stating is the truth and truth is very bitter to digest. It is very bitter for them to digest. *(Interruptions)*. What I am telling here in this House is the truth, if the reality. *(Interruptions)*

SHRI K. MOHANAN: You can speak the truth, not untruths.

SHRI ANAND SHARMA: I am stating the truth and I drive home my point. I would not have given all this. But let me tell my friends from West Bengal and other places, because they have been giving long sermons, as to how they can improve the economic conditions of the poor people. The State's contribution for the Sixth Plan should have been Rs. 2,20\* crores.

And what has been the contribution? Rs. 152 crores—less than 1/10th. That has been the contribution. The State of West Bengal will finally be spending Rs. 2200 crores by the end of the Sixth Plan. The contribution of the Centre alone will be Rs. 2000 crores. I do not want to speak of the loans and overdrafts. But I just want to say one thing. There has been a talk of policy and ideology. It is very easy to talk in terms of ideological rhetorics, talk in terms of those ideas which are outdated and irrelevant, which are not in practice in those countries where they were written. We talk of a policy and ideology which has stood the test of time. *(Interruptions)*

SHRIMATI KANAK MUKHERJEE: Are we discussing the Budget or ideology. If you want to discuss ideology, let us discuss ideology.

SHRI ANAND SHARMA: You are depending on irrelevant ideology. *(Interruptions)* I am not yielding. *(Interruptions)* I would reiterate what I have said. *(Interruptions)* I am proud of my ideology. *(Interruptions)*.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: When our member was speaking, Mr. Anand Sharma did not interrupt. You should also not interrupt when he is speaking. *(Interruptions)* Please conclude now.

SHRI ANAND SHARMA: I am concluding in a minute, I would have concluded long time back but for the unjustified and frequent interruptions by my friends who are afraid to face the reality.

[Shri Anand Sharma]

For so many years have' the so called champions of proletariat been improvertsh-ing West Bengal. Calcutta is the only city in the country... (Interruptions) I am not giving the figures; I am giving the picture, Calcutta is the only city in the country where they have failed to improve the lot of poor people. You find half-a-million people virtual skeletons. (Interruptions) Pulling rickshaws....(Interruptions) They have failed to improve their condition. These are not statistics. Anybody can go to Calcutta; in the streets he can see which ideology has been practical. And if you look at the picture of India. . . . (interruptions) I am just making a comparison of the two ideology, our ideology and... (Interruptions) The ideology which changed the picture of India, which changed the face of India.... (Interruptions)

SHRIMATI MONIKA DAS (Karna taka More than six lakhs of the, people in Calcutta are living in slum areas. (Inter ruption^)

SHRI ANAND SHARMA; J will fust conclude, Madam (Interruptions)

SHRIMATI MONIKA DAS: What is the reason? Why so many small industries are not working? If you have done so much work.... (Interruptions)

. SHRI ANAND SHARMA; I would have confined strictly to the Budget, had my friends on the other side chosen to do so. They have questioned the ideology which, was evolved during the course of the freedom struggle keeping in view the requirements of the Indian people, the condition of the Indian people. But they have fried to question the path which was chosen by Mahatma Gandhi and Pt. Nehru. They have chosen to question those goals and to ridicule and condemn those goals. This nation has chosen to achieve those goals of our departed leader had strived for them throughout her life. I hat is why I made a comparison of ideologies. Our concept is the concept of democratic socialism. There are nations in the world, the western nations, who talk in terms of democracy. But they don't talk in terms of social and econo-

mic justice. There are the champions of the proletariat who talk of socialism. But they do not talk in terms of democracy. They do not have the right, to. vote. They do not have the right to speak. India is the, only nation which has combined these two concepts. That is why I say that I am proud of this ideology. It is on the basis of this ideology that this nation has developed and made achievements which they are trying to question and nullify. But the entire world is acknowledging the achievements made by India. In 37 years, we have come to that stage. When you compare, I know what you are comparing. You are comparing the standard of living. The standard of living cannot be compared. You should compare the achievements in the field of science and technology, space science and nuclear science. Let us not forget that,

Before concluding, I would like to remind our friends that the nations about which they talk have been enjoying the fruits of industrial revolution for the last 300 years. They had the industrial revolution some more than 200 years before India attained its independence 37. years before. What they have achieved in 300 years. we have achieved in 37 years. That is why I say that we are proud of the achievements. We are proud of the efforts of our engineers, our farmers, our scientists and above all our leadership. Who have inspired all- this. I conclude by saying that today is the period of innovation and changes. The mood of the nation is one of optimism. That is what the Finance Minister, through his Budget, has tried to do. He has tried to prepare this nation to march into the 21st century as a powerful and self-reliant nation so that India finds its rightful place in this world. Today, this nation has the capacity to do it. It has the political will and the leadership, scientific temper and the dynamic leadership of Shri Rajiv Gandhi. We have the legacy of Shrimati Tndira. Gandhi and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. Our farmers and our engineers have the necessary ability and knowledge. What is required today is a sincere national effort. I will appeal to my friends in the opposition not to

-riticise and condemn this budge only in pursuance of their policy of confrontation and negation, but to join in this national effort and at least appreciate what has been done for the farmers, for the employees and for this nation, through this budget. I do hope that for a change we will all join hands to ensure that India enters the 21st century which U hardly 5400 days away, as a self-reliant nation and as a developed nation. We should all make our contribution for that. With these -words, I once again support this budget and compliment the Government and the Finance Minister and thank my friends in the opposition for constantly hackling me.

श्री बोरेंद्र वर्मा (उत्तर प्रदेश) : महोदया,

उपसभापति : बीच में इन्टरप्ट न करना पड़े, इसलिए मैं आपको बता दूँ कि आपकी पार्टी के 16 मिनट हैं, आप 16 मिनट में अपनी बात कह दें।

श्री बोरेंद्र वर्मा : बहिन जी, मुझे भी मालूम है, सबका टाइम फिक्स्ड है, लेकिन आपने 20 से 40 मिनट दिया है।

उपसभापति : कांग्रेस पार्टी के 5 घंटे 46 मिनट हैं, वह पाँच घंटे 46 मिनट तक बोल सकते हैं।

श्री सत्यपाल मलिक (उत्तर प्रदेश) : मेरा व्यवस्था का प्रश्न है। चेयर किसी की बहिन जी नहीं होती, वह निकलवा दीजिए।

श्री बोरेंद्र वर्मा : माननीय डिपुटी चेयरमैन महोदया, माननीय वित्त मंत्री जी का भाषण मैंने बड़े ध्यान से सुना, पढ़ा और समझने की कोशिश की।

[उपसभाध्यक्ष (श्रीमती कमल मुखर्जी) पीठासीन हुई]

वित्त मंत्री जी ने दिल खोलकर उद्योगपतियों, पूँजीपतियों और बड़े व्यापारियों को, अनेकों प्रकार की रियायतें प्रदान की हैं। इस देश में

केवल 40 लाख अर्द्धमियों से आयकर लिया जाता है। उसमें से भी 10 लाख अर्द्धमियों को छोड़ दिया गया है। जो अधिभार उन पर लगाया गया था वह भी हटा दिया गया है। इसका मतलब यह हुआ कि 200 करोड़ इनकम टैक्स की छूट और 197 करोड़ अधिभार की छूट इन पूँजीपति लोगों को प्रदान कर दी गयी और ऐसे समय में प्रदान की गयी जब कि इस विकासशील देश के लिए पूँजी-निवेश की बड़ी आवश्यकता थी। पिछले चार वर्षों से बजट के घाटे को देखें तो 82-83 में 1350 करोड़ का घाटा था, 83-84 में 1515 करोड़ का, 84-85 में 1773 करोड़ का और अब की दफा 3349 करोड़ रुपये का घाटा दिखाया गया है। इतना बड़ा घाटा दिखाये जाने के पश्चात् इस प्रकार की राहतें प्रदान करना मेरी श्रद्धा से बाहर है। केवल आयकर में ही छूट नहीं दी गयी, धन-कर में भी, उत्पादन कर में भी, सीमा-शुल्क में भी और दूसरे कारपोरेट टैक्सों में भी अनेक प्रकार की सहूलियतें धनी वर्ग को प्रदान की गयी हैं। इस धनी वर्ग के ऊपर 30 सितम्बर 1984 तक 1169.91 करोड़ रुपये आयकर के बकाया थे। यह आपने लोक सभा में बयान दिया था। क्या इस देश में एक गरीब आदमी को, जिस पर 111 रुपये बकाया हों उसे हवालात में नहीं जाना पड़ता? लेकिन इतने बड़े-बड़े पूँजीपतियों पर इतनी बड़ी बड़ी रकमें इतने दिनों तक बकाया रहती हैं और उनमें से कोई हवालात नहीं जाता। उनके खिलाफ कोई कठोर कदम नहीं उठाया जाते। दूसरी तरफ ग्रामीण विकास कार्यक्रमों में, जिसे एकीकृत ग्रामीण विकास कार्यक्रम कहते हैं या राष्ट्रीय ग्रामीण रोजगार कार्यक्रम या ग्रामीण रोजगार गारन्टी कार्यक्रम या सुखे में फसे इलाकों का कार्यक्रम, मध्यम विकास कार्यक्रम—इन सारे कार्यक्रमों में गत वर्ष जितना रुपया रखा गया था उससे लगभग 8 करोड़ रुपया इस वर्ष कम रखा गया है। जिस हिसाब से महंगाई बढ़ी है उस हिसाब से जिस धन का आपने प्रोजेक्ट किया है उससे उतना भी काम होने वाला नहीं इस विकासशील देश में जितना गत वर्ष आपने करने का इरादा किया था। और माननीया, अकेले यही बात नहीं, बल्कि शिशित बेरोजगार युवकों को निजी रोजगार योजना में 149 करोड़ रुपया गत वर्ष के बजट में रखा था, अब की वर्ष में केवल 65 करोड़ रुपया रखा गया है। खादी

[श्री बीरेन्द्र वर्मा]

और ग्रामोद्योग योजनाओं में गत वर्ष में 134 करोड़ के मुकाबले में वर्तमान बजट में 115 करोड़ रुपया रखा गया है और जहाँ तक अनुसूचित जाति और जन जातियों और पिछड़े वर्ग के लोगों के उत्थान और कल्याण की मदें हैं उनमें भी गत वर्ष 73 करोड़ रुपया रखा गया था और इस बजट में केवल 42 करोड़ रुपये रखे गये हैं। सिंचाई, बाढ़ और नौपरिवहन योजनाओं में भी 1 करोड़ रुपया कम कर दिया गया है। मत्स्य पालन, मछली उत्पादन की योजनाओं में, जिन में गरीब आदमी लगा है, देश के लिये जिसकी आवश्यकता है, उसके बजट में भी एक करोड़ की कमी की गयी है और इसके अतिरिक्त जो टैक्स की अधिकतम सीमा 5 प्रतिशत थी वह घटा कर दो प्रतिशत कर दी गयी है। फल-स्वरूप घर बैठे धनी वर्ग की जेबों में 70 करोड़ रुपया चला जायगा। इन दोनों सदनों के माननीय सदस्य प्रतिवर्ष यह मांग करते रहे और कोशिश करते रहे कि एकाधिकार पर नियंत्रण किया जाय। पं० जवाहर लाल नेहरू जब प्रधान मंत्री थे तो एकाधिकार नियंत्रण कानून बना और उसके बाद उस पर और कड़ाई की गयी। जून 1977 में पुनः सन्धर कमिटी गठित की गयी और 1978 में सन्धर कमिटी ने अपनी रिपोर्ट दी। उसने एकाधिकार नियंत्रण कानून में और कड़ाई करने की सिफारिश की लेकिन इस बजट में एकाधिकार नियंत्रण कानून में और ढील दे दी गयी। 25 करोड़ रुपये से सौ करोड़ रुपये तक की छूट बड़े उद्योगपतियों को मिल गयी और यह इस कारण कि उत्पादन को और प्रोत्साहन मिले। तो इस का मतलब क्या मैं यह समझूँ कि एकाधिकार पर नियंत्रण का कानून उत्पादन में बाधक हो रहा है। अगर बाधक है तो वह बनाया ही क्यों था और अगर बाधक नहीं है तो इतनी झड़ी रियायत क्यों दी गयी? माननीया, आज नए टैक्स भी बहुत लगाए गए हैं। बड़े बड़े आदमियों को टैक्स की छूट दी गयी और राहतें प्रदान की गयीं। लेकिन बीड़ी वालों पर टैक्स लगाया गया, साबुन पर टैक्स लगाया गया, मिट्टी के तेल पर टैक्स लगाया गया। डिजिल पर टैक्स लगाया गया। पेट्रोल पर टैक्स लगाया गया, कूड़े आयल पर टैक्स

लगाया गया। आपेक कंट्रोल जो संसार के तेल पैदा करने वाले देश हैं वे तेल की कीमतें घटा रहे हैं और यह गरीब देश जहाँ संसार में तेल की सब से ज्यादा कीमतें हैं वह अपने तेल की कीमत बढ़ा रहा है। उधर रेल का किराया बढ़ा है और इधर तेल की कीमतों में वृद्धि हो गयी जिस का असर पड़ेगा अनाज की कीमतों पर, हर वस्तु की कीमत पर इस का असर पड़ेगा और उन की कीमतें बढ़ेंगी। लोग-बाग जो सफर करते हैं उन पर असर पड़ेगा। आम आदमी पर असर पड़ेगा। जितनी छूट प्रदान की गयी है वह गिने चुने लोगों के लिए है और बड़े आदमियों को उससे राहत मिलेगी और जितना टैक्स बढ़ेगा वह गरीब और छोटे आदमियों पर बढ़ेगा। माननीया, नारा है समाजवादी व्यवस्था की स्थापना। बड़े आदमियों को इस प्रकार की छूट देना, पूंजीपतियों को, उद्योगपतियों को, धनी वर्ग के लोगों को छूट देना और छोटे आदमियों पर इस प्रकार का टैक्सेशन करना, क्या यह उस समाजवादी व्यवस्था के सूत्रों के प्रतिकूल नहीं है? मैं महसूस करता हूँ कि वित्त मंत्री जी ने पूंजी निवेश में वृद्धि करने का विशेष प्रयास नहीं किया वल्कि जो सार्वजनिक क्षेत्र है, उन सार्वजनिक क्षेत्रों में भी गत वर्ष की तुलना में 4 करोड़ रुपया कम रखा गया है। माननीया, गत वर्ष 11751 करोड़ रुपए का प्रावधान था सार्वजनिक क्षेत्रों की योजनाओं के लिए और इस बजट में 11747 करोड़ रुपए का यानी 4 करोड़ रुपए कम का प्रावधान बजट में किया गया है।

जहाँ तक रासायनिक खादों की कीयले वगैरह की और जो चीजें सार्वजनिक क्षेत्र के उद्योगों, कंपनियों, कारपोरेशनों या अंडरटेकिंग के लिए आवश्यक हैं, उनको अपनी योजनाओं के लिए 289 करोड़ का धन जुटाना है। इस प्रकार आदेश भेजा गया है। संचार मंत्रालय के लिये भी जितना पिछले वर्ष रुपया रखा गया था उससे इस वर्ष कम रुपया रखा गया है। उन्हें भी 580

करोड़ रुपये अतिरिक्त अपने बजट के लिये प्रावधान करने का निर्देश मिला है। एक तरफ जय नेल की कीमतें बढ़ी हैं, जब गैस की कीमतें बढ़ी है और इन अंडरटेकिंग के लिये आदेश दिया है कि अपनी विकास योजनाओं के लिए स्वयं धन की व्यवस्था करें तो निश्चित ही खाद वर्गगृह की कीमतें बढ़ाई जाएंगी। मैं आपको माध्यम से माननीय वित्त मंत्री जी से यह जानना चाहूंगा कि वह स्पष्टतः बतायें कि खाद की कीमतें बढ़ाने पर उनकी क्या प्रतिक्रिया है? उनकी हिसाब से खाद की कीमतें बढ़ाने वाली है।

माननीया, हमारे देश में 6 ऐसी मजदूरी खाद कंपनियां हैं जिनमें से चार कंपनियां हैं—नेशनल फर्टिलाइजर्स लिमिटेड, राष्ट्रीय कैमिकल्स एण्ड फर्टिलाइजर्स लिमिटेड, फर्टिलाइजर्स कारपोरेशन आफ इंडिया लिमिटेड तथा हिन्दुस्तान फर्टिलाइजर्स कारपोरेशन लिमिटेड। इन चारों कंपनियों में 218 करोड़ रुपये का घाटा सरकार को उठाना पड़ा है। इतना बड़ा घाटा तो टैक्स लगाकर पूरा कर सकेंगे। उसमें मरीज आदमियों के लिये किस प्रकार सुद्रा-स्फीति रोक सकेंगे और किस प्रकार की मूल्य वृद्धि रोक सकेंगे, यह मेरी अवल के बाहर है।

माननीया, पिछले वर्ष 1773 करोड़ रुपये का घाटा था, जो रिवाईंड गेस्टमैट्स के अनुसार 3985 करोड़ रुपये हो गया। तो जो 3349 करोड़ रुपये का घाटा इसी हिसाब से क्या वह बढ़ते बढ़ते 7 हजार करोड़ रुपये होने की संभावना नहीं होगी? यह मेरा अपना खयाल है और अगर इतना घाटा बढ़ता है तो सुद्रा-स्फीति भी बढ़ेगी, आप रोक नहीं सकेंगे, मूल्य वृद्धि भी होगी, आप रोक नहीं सकेंगे। जिस मूल्य वृद्धि के लिये आपने पहले से 300 करोड़ रुपये तनख्वाहों में मंहगाई भना देने के लिये प्रावधान भी कर लिया है। अब मैं चंद मुझाव देकर माननीया समाप्त करता हूँ।

पहला मुझाव है काला धन। वित्त मंत्री जी ने काला धन रोकने की चर्चा की है। प्रधान मंत्री जी ने चुनाव के दौरान काला धन रोकने की बहुत चर्चा की है। आपका ध्यान होगा कि भारत के संविधान में प्रिवि पर्स और स्पेशल प्रिविलेज गारण्टीज थे लेकिन हिन्दुस्तान के हित में यह आवश्यक समझा गया कि प्रिवि पर्स और स्पेशल प्रिविलेज को समाप्त किया जाए। संविधान में अमेंडमेंट किया गया। मैं आपके माध्यम से वित्त मंत्री जी तक अपना यह मुझाव पहुंचा देना चाहता हूँ कि काला धन रोकने के लिये पूर्व सरकार ने जो ब्लैक मनी बॉइन किये थे क्या उनको समाप्त करने पर विचार करेंगे? अगर उनका इरादा है काला धन को समाप्त करने का तो ब्लैक मनी बॉइन को भी समाप्त करें। जिस आधार पर हिन्दुस्तान के संविधान में अमेंडमेंट किया जा सकता है तो ब्लैक मनी को समाप्त करने के लिये भी वह ध्यान दें।

माननीया, अभी पर्यो, चौथे दिन श्री बूटा सिंह जी ने गेहूं की कीमतों में पांच रुपये क्विंटल की वृद्धि की है। वह वृद्धि 3.35 प्रतिशत की है मत वर्ष की तुलना में। (समय का घंट) मैं अभी समाप्त कर रहा हूँ। मजदूरी आंकड़ों के अनुसार कृषि उत्पादन व्यय 10 परसेंट बढ़ गया है। 10 परसेंट कृषि का उत्पादन व्यय बढ़ा हो, 3.35 परसेंट गेहूं का मूल्य आपने बढ़ाया हो तो इससे किसानों, मेहनतकश गरीब किसानों का भना होन वाला नहीं है। क्या वित्त मंत्री जी कृषि जल्य पदार्थों और औद्योगिक पदार्थों के मूल्यों में समानता की गारण्टी देंगे? कृषि मूल्यों में वृद्धि पीने दो परसेंट हुई है और इंडस्ट्रियल गुड्स के मूल्यों में वृद्धि 13 परसेंट हुई है। अगर कार्तकार अपनी आवश्यक वस्तुओं की ऊंचे मूल्य पर खरीदता रहे और उनके पैदावार की वस्तुएं निश्चित मूल्य पर बिकती रहें तो किसान का कभी लाभ होने वाला नहीं है। इससे डिमैण्टी आफ इंकम बढ़ेगी। आमदनी का अन्तर बढ़ेगा। जहां इतनी छूट दी है, 12 आइटम्स पर भारत सरकार ने एक्साइज ड्यूटी, कस्टम ड्यूटी वगैरहा की छूट

[ श्री वारेन्द्र वर्मा ]

दी है, कम्यूटर पर छूट दी है तो कोट-नाशक दवाइयों पर क्यों नहीं दी ? विदेशों में इतने ऊँचे दाम पर दवाइयाँ आती हैं उन पर छूट क्यों नहीं दी ? (समय की घंटी) मैं केवल आधे मिनिट में खत्म कर रहा हूँ। कोटनाशक दवाइयों जो ऊँची कीमतें पर आयात की जाती हैं उन पर छूट क्यों नहीं दें ? बड़े-बड़े उद्योगधंधों पर छूट दी जाती है। ट्रैक्टर पर कोई छूट नहीं, टायर और ट्यूब पर नये टैक्स लगाने दिये, उन पर एक्साइज इण्टी की कोई छूट नहीं। आज ट्रैक्टर मस्ती परंपरा कायम में आता है, मिनिट के दिने काम में आता है, मचन खेतों के काम में भी आता है और ट्रॉन्पोट के भी काम आता है। इनमें सब्सिडी की जरूरत के भी काम आता है। इनमेंसे उसकी तरफ भी आपका ध्यान होना चाहिये था।

अखिर मैं मैं केवल यह कह कर बैठ जाना चाहता हूँ कि सरकार ने बीपी मंडल आयोग बनाया था। उसकी रिपोर्ट 31 दिसम्बर, 1980 में प्राप्ति हो गई थी। उस पर कोई एक्शन कोई कार्रवाई अभी तक सरकार ने नहीं की और न ही अपने कोई विचार स्पष्ट करते कि वह पिछड़े लोगों को उठाने में दिलचस्पी रखती है अथवा नहीं। अगर ऐसा नहीं किया जाता है तो ऐसे कमीशन बनाना निरर्थक है, इन पर पैसा लगाना निरर्थक है, व्यर्थ है। इन शब्दों के साथ मैं बैठ जाता हूँ।

SHRI M. M. JACOB (Kerala): Madam vice-Chairman, I rise to support the Budget presented by the Finance Minister. A few minutes back, I was listening to an hon. Member from the Opposition who mentioned about the low priority given to agriculture in this Budget. I was surprised to hear that because the whole thrust of this budget is on increased production in agriculture, industry and other fields. In this budget the Finance Minister has provided Rs. 1722 crores for agricultural developed rural development. He has also

provided Rs. 1801 crores for fertiliser subsidy whereas som-hon. Members were telling that fertiliser is completely neglected. Over and above the support given fertiliser industry, the massive subsidy by the Government will certainly enhance the intake of fertiliser in this country. In the same way food subsidy of Rs. 1100 crores is certainly an important landmark for the upliftment of the poor

runtry. In several other areas this has provided more funds than the previous year. Especially scientific departments are getting more. The atomic energy department has got an increase of Rs. 222 crores. Like that you find a substantial increase in this year's budget so far as departments of space, electronics, ocean development, science and technology, scientific industrial research, etc. are concerned.

Madam, we must appreciate the situation from where the Finance Minister had to start. On page 4 of his speech he himself has mentioned various constraints and lack of resources at (his moment). In his speech he has mentioned the resource limitation because of the world-wide economic problems as well as the inflation worldwide. He has also understood and appreciated, to a certain extent, the high cost economy that is coming up, where you find the capital output ratio is going up. That constraint is already there before him. He has also mentioned in his speech about the public sector. From an investment of Rs. 29 crores in five public sector undertakings in 1951 we have reached the investment of about Rs. 30,000 crores in over 200 public sector undertakings. Now we expect and the nation expects rightly that the public sector undertakings in this country must give adequate return, commensurate to the investment already made. So, the Finance Minister in his budget honestly hopes that the public sector will produce substantial results. In this connection, I may also add that the Bureau of Public Enterprises (BPE) which is supposed to give guidelines to the public sector undertakings in this country may have to examine little more closely their programmes of action because, to my mind, mere sending of circulars by the BPE may not be helpful



in enhancing or increasing productivity even adding to productivity. On the other hand, if [here is involvement by the BPH in the management techniques and in suggesting methods by which the management can be restructured or streamlined, there can be substantial progress in production. The BPE should also ensure labour involvement and after going through all these factors, the BPE should place concrete proposals before the public sector undertakings, so that public sector undertakings produced substantial results... in terms of quantum of contribution to the Indian economy. As the Finance Minister has rightly said there is hardening and tightening of credit resource from foreign sources. In a way it is good. We have to depend on our own strength and our own resources. But this is a fact that the foreign resources are limited and our borrowings will have to be seen in that light.

In the same way we are not happy about the trade deficits. I personally am not very happy. We are happy that we are able to increase our exports. But we are not happy to see that the trade deficit also is there in a substantial manner. Unless we increase our exports and bring more money by way of foreign exchange, it will be difficult to present before the very positive budget. But with all these constraints of foreign resources and increase in the rate of the dollar before Finance Minister, Mr. Vishwanath Pratap Singh Ji. is able to present a very very promising and dynamic budget, so the overall impact of this first budget of the new Government when we are also going to launch the Seventh Five Year plan is that it has largely indicated the expectations of the people from Shri Rajiv Gandhi and his lead. Given the nature of the package and the strategy that has been drawn up, the budget has been designed to impart a new dynamism to the economy, while it has taken care to avoid populism.

The resource mobilisation is estimated at a moderate sum of Rs. 443 crores nett. The budget has left an uncovered gap of Rs. 3349 crores. Of course this is likely to increase inflation. But if the productivity and production are able to be

increased, with financial discipline this will never lead to increased inflation. At the same time it will correct the imbalance in the economy.

The proposals in the field of direct taxes are designed to create an environment for growth, productivity and savings. Substantial relief has been granted through reduction in the income and wealth tax rates and the abolition of surcharge in income tax. Abolition of Compulsory Deposit Scheme is appreciated not only by the employees but by all sections of the people. There is also complete withdrawal of Estate Duty. A shift towards simplification is reflected in the reduction of the number of income tax and wealth tax slabs. This will certainly increase the efficiency of the Income Tax Department by reducing the number of petty cases.

Change in the rates of corporate tax will certainly help in modernisation and diversification of the industry. The package of measures announced will help corporate bodies generate more resources which will enable them to plough back larger shares of the profits for productive purposes. The lowering of the interest rate and the reduction in the rates of corporate income tax should spur the industrial sector towards faster expansion and diversification.

In the field of indirect taxes, the Finance Minister has resorted to raising the bulk of the resources through non-sharable customs duty on petroleum products and higher excise duties on cement etc. which would be sharable with the States. He has also announced a number of concessions for computers and electronic products which are thought to be the keystone of the emerging industrial structure. Export duty on several items has been taken away. All this will add to the efficiency of the Indian economy. And the Finance Minister has sought to combine the tax concession in high income brackets with welfare measures for the poor like social security scheme for the landless labourers and small farmers. There is also the welcome proposal to provide free education to girls up to the secondary stage because there is a huge potential for social liberation and for raising the labour productivity by providing education to all the girls.

[Shri M. M. Jacob]

Madam, before concluding I must congratulate the Finance Minister for presenting a very honest budget because the crux of the budget, as I see it, is honesty. He expects the nation to be honest, the industry to be honest and the people to be honest. That means that with this he is also trying to eradicate black money and the growth of parallel economy.

In this connection, permit me, Madam, to draw your attention to the existence of private financial institutions in certain parts of the country. With deposits running into several hundred crores, the private financial banking system is impairing the functioning of the commercial banks and becoming a key source of financing for speculative practices. This is a very dangerous trend. I am quoting a news item which appeared in the *Economic Times* of Monday, July 16:—

"To the depositors the financial companies offer an interest rate of 24 per cent per annum on deposits—a return which is not only higher than what are established banks give but superior to the yield on most company shares. Though paying an interest rate (39.5—42 per cent) which is higher than the average bank rate, the borrowers too prefer to take a loan from these companies because they are an extremely easy source of finance when compared to the banks.

The high interest rates which these companies charge on loans have earned them the derogatory name "black companies" in popular parlance."

I mention this because this is a source of depositing black money, generating black money and running a parallel economy. There is no limit to the interest charged by these private financial institutions. So, I request the Government to come out with a very bold policy of action to prevent all these mushroom private financial companies where exorbitant rates of interest are charged and the economy is jeopardized.

I once again support the honest and sincere budget presented by our eminent Finance Minister because this budget is the key for the various ills that the Indian

economy is facing today and I hope that this budget will usher in a new era in our country, will strengthen the base of the economy and the country will go forward wiping out the poverty of the masses in this country. Thank you.

PROF. C. LAKSHMANNA (Andhra Pradesh): Madam Vice-Chairman, looking at the present budget, one cannot but come to a sad conclusion, that it is "a leap • backwards," a leap into darkness. I would call this as Shri Rajiv Gandhi's "Raw Deal Budget."<sup>7</sup> It is raw deal to the poor, it is raw deal to the underprivileged and it is raw deal to the downtrodden people of this country. What has happened to the area slogan—which emanated in the 1970s of *Garibi Hatao*? May I ask?

If one carefully looks at this budget, examines it, it is a direct attack on the poor, not on poverty. I feel that it is an attempt to eliminate the poor, not poverty because when we look at the various aspects of this budget we come to the conclusion that it is a budget which has primarily been meant to help those who are already rich to become richer and to make the poor poorer and poorer so that they could get emaciated and eliminated. That, I think is the whole objective of this particular budget.

Some of my friends have been saying that it is a bold, outspoken and revolutionary budget. I am prepared to say it is a bold budget, bold because for the first time one Finance Minister could give a go-by also, to all the socialist slogans that have been put forward by this Government and its predecessors for about thirty-seven years. To that extent, it is a bold Budget, it is an outspoken Budget. I am inclined to agree with this also because it is an outspoken Budget with the primary objective of building a capitalist economy in the country. To that extent, I do not mind even congratulating Raja Viswanath, Pratap Singh, how I wish [ could say Maharaja Rajiv Gandhi—for making bold to say before the countrymen that they do not any longer stand for the socialist pretensions which perhaps the previous Prime Ministers did hold. But, if it is a departure, if it is a revolutionary departure as claimed to bring in Thatcherism and Keynesianism as one noted economist put it.

what a fall for this country! What happens to the national aspirations? What happens to the various goals that We have laid before ourselves since the Dawn of the Independence in this country? What happens to that? I think it is a very sad day Perhaps, one could take a euphemistic way of saying that Raja Vishwanathi Pratap Singh gave a liberal-economy oriented Budget, thereby claiming that it is a camouflaged capitalist Budget. Therefore, if liberal economy means to strengthen the hands of the rich industrial houses in this country, if liberal economy means to put a very heavy burden on the shoulders of the common man and the poor man, then, let the Finance Minister and the Prime Minister take any amount of pride in calling it a liberal-philosophy-oriented Budget.

I will cite from the writings of no less a person than Mr. Pranab Mukherjee himself, the previous Finance Minister, as written in newspaper. For some other reasons he said, however, something else on the floor of the House. I will only quote how he says that the present Budget will lead to a capitalist type of economy. I quote:

"Dclicensing a number of industries, raising the ceiling of assets limit of monopoly companies and through that mechanism replacing physical control by financial control, permitting the companies to donate to political parties, reducing customs duties on a number of items, reducing the corporate tax and a series of other measures which may follow in future...."

Mr. Pranab Mukherjee says that something follow in future also.

"...will, no doubt, help the private sector to expand its activities"

Please mark it. It is not an Opposition Member saying this. This is what the previous Finance Minister of the country is saying. Of course, having said this he will have, in some way, to retrieve the steps That is a different matter. But in black and white and bold letters he has made the statement.

By providing higher interest rate to non-convertible debentures in non-FERA and non-MRTP companies, the Budget will also help capital market\*

Please mark it.

Friends who say that we will be ushering in a new era of socialist revolution in the country under the dynamic, youthful and ebullient and great Prime Minister and equally great Finance Minister, let those friends think about it. I will again prove it from what Mr. Pranab Mukherjee himself says. I quote.

"The criticism ....."

He refers to the criticism.

that benefits of tax will accrue to the elitist section of the people, may be factually correct."

He admits that the criticism that the benefits will accrue to the elitist may be factually correct. Then he goes on to say something else. I again quote Mr. Pranab Mukherjee if. He admits:

"Direct tax base in India is low."

He bemoans the fact that the base of direct tax is very low. But then he becomes silent on the further reduction of this base in the present budget. On the one hand, he says that the base for direct taxes is very low. But if the present Finance Minister reduces that very base, then he will become silent. I will finally quote once more from what Mr. Pranab Mukherjee says:

'whatever concessions are granted in income tax and wealth tax are bound to benefit the large number of sections of the community Then he further says

"what can the large number of people who don't pay taxes can pay".

There are 48 percent of the population who live below the poverty line and they are struggling even to have next square meal, if they don't pay taxes what is the point in saying that they don't pay taxes.

If they don't pay direct taxes, does it mean that the Government have to impose indirect taxes in order to extract from them and subject them to crucial poverty

[Shri M. M. Jacob] and penury conditions which existed in the country. It is for the friends of that side to ponder over it.

Now, one great claim has been made on behalf of this budget that it is 'growth oriented' and that it will not have inflation. But anybody's imagination goes flat when somebody says that there won't be inflation in spite of the fact that there is a deficit of Rs. 3,349 crores. Madam, on the floor of the House Mr. Pranab Mukherjee said while discussing about the past few previous years' deficits he said that 1979-80 was one year when the deficit became double and in subsequent years there had been a little increase excepting last year when it became a little more than double. Even though it has happened, the Indian economy has a remarkable capacity, he claimed for absorption. Hence in the coming year the deficit which has been shown as Rs. 3,349 crores will not go beyond reasonable limits. Madam, somebody else says that, it is bound to go up to Rs. 5,000 crores or even Rs. 6,000 crores. The answer is we have to watch and see. Madam, by the next year when general budget will be presented in this House—in this month, I am pretty sure that the deficit would have increased much more than what all these pundits of finances in this House are predicting.

SHRI P. N. SUKUL:- You are also an astrologer.

PROF. C. LAKSHMANNA: I wish I was one. At least you have a great friend and astrologer and you go more often than not. Again I am coming to Mr. Pranab Mukherjee's remarks, what he says:

"Therefore a deficit of the order envisaged may lead to inflationary pressures".

This is what he has written in the article.

SHRI KALP NATH RAI (Uttar Pradesh): What article?

PROF. C. LAKSHMANNA: He has written an article in "The Times of India" under the caption Rajiv Gandhi's new

deal budget" which I call it as a raw deal budget. There he has written all these things. While writing the article he says that there is a possibility of inflationary pressure. While speaking on the floor of the House he says the budget is geared to absorb and gives a clean chit given by the dynamic Finance Minister. A compliment has to be paid on the floor of the House. With this type of budget, if it does not lead to denationalisation and privatisation what else can we do? Already this trend has started. When I come to those points I will make it known. There is already a trend in the present budget to indicate that in the years to come all the efforts made over a period of 37 or 38 years towards the public sector undertakings, towards the nationalisation, towards commanding heights for public sector are being eroded and destroyed. May be, it will not be long before we will be witnessing unabashedly, unashamedly naked and bankrupt economy in the country. Perhaps, if we avow that we stand for a economy, there is nothing wrong in it. The options will be there before the people. But no Government has the right to say something to the people while they go for the votes and then do exactly the opposite hardly within a period of three months. The ink over the vote has not even dried and the Government does all anti-people activities. Therefore, is this type of commitment to the public sector which this Government has undertaken? Now, if we carefully examine the outlays in this budget, what are the allocations for the public sector? Instead of stepping up the outlay for the improvement of public sector undertakings and public sector projects in this country, it has been scaled down. I will quote from Mr. V. P. Singh himself. After stating that the public sector has attained Commanding heights for "ensuring that there is sufficient internal generation of resources for its own growth". After this avowal of a great goal, he says he will try to create conditions by which this could be done, which means that in the name of strengthening the public sector, he would like to encourage the private sector. See the very logic of it. On the one hand he would like to say that they

have done several things during the last 37 years so that the public sector has come to occupy the commanding heights so on. He says at the same time: with the constraint on resources with which we are grappling, with the problems which are around us, we have to think! in terms of internal generation of resources; therefore, we have to strengthen the private sector. And in that process, we should only help the private sector! That is the conclusion he has drawn and that is how he has presented this budget

This has now come in a particular circumstance. If we scan through the budget and the budget proposals, we will see that there has been a calculated effort on the part of the Finance Minister to scale down the estimates about inflation. While the present Finance Minister or even the past Finance Minister on the floor of the House try to lull us with a lullaby into sleep, is to complacency by saying, "You don't worry about it: there would be no inflation, we are there to look after it", but at the end of the year they will say, "What can we do" Then secondly...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRIMATI KANAK MUKHERJEE): Only one more minute, please.

PROF. C. LAKSHMANNA: I think today at least you will have to give me more time. I do not mind sitting down if you insist.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRIMATI KANAK MUKHERJEE): Take two minutes and finish.

PROF. C. LAKSHMANNA: I will try to finish. The second factor which has also to be kept in mind is a pious hope on the part of the entire country. In that respect I am prepared to pray with them. I do not mind praying with them for continued favourable weather conditions. We had been lucky, we had been fortunate to have two years of favourable weather renditions and two years of good crops. It is something which rarely happens in this country, but it *has* happened. There-

fore, there is a pious hope, a pious prayer. May it will continue. I will join them in [his prayer because I am interested in the well-being of this country. But if the estimates of inflation rates do not come true and they become topsy-turvy and God forbid, if the weather conditions fail us, imagine the type of situation in which! we will find ourselves at the end of one year. Therefore, when we are formulating a budget, we have not to take the extraneous factors also into consideration. If any thing, we have to give a larger margin for them. But this entire budget is camouflaged with a hope, perhaps a rope which is good but which may not be fulfilled. Along with this, there is the other possibility of our whole estimates of the inflation rates, etc. going astray. If they go astray, the country's growth is going to be very badly affected, severely affecting that marginal man, that common man, the man in the street, the man who is struggling to see the light of next day on his hungry stomach. That means life is going to be miserable. For his sake we have to think about it. If we look at the out-lays of the Plan, in all the critical and vital areas there has been a reduction in the amount that has been allotted in the current Budget. Fertilizers: Rs. 573 crores was allotted for 1984-85, this year's Budget has given Rs. 544 crores; petroleum, Rs. 3125 crores last year, this year it is only Rs. 3085 crores; coal, lignite etc. Rs. 1117 crores last year, Rs. 977 crores this year; drugs and pharmaceuticals, Rs. 66 crores for 1984-85, Rs. 51 crores only this year. Now go to Railways. What can you expect from the Railways except increase in fares? It is the common man who is the most hit, whatever may be the statements made by the Railway Minister and others. Last year's Budget was Rs. 1650 crores and this year it is the same Rs. 1650 crores. Iron and steel—from Rs. 1340 crores it came down this year to Rs. 925 crores. When I talk about iron and steel I feel very sad about it. There is a very important steel project and that happens to be in a State for whom they do not have much love lost, and that is the Visakhapatnam Steel Plant. The required amount was Rs. 1000 crores. Last year's estimate was Rs. 652 crores, and the amount that has been sanctioned is only 215 crores at this time the

[Prof. C. Lakshmanna]

period by which the steel plant is to be completed will be lengthened thereby the essential infrastructure facility that has to be built in this country cannot be built over the years. Similarly, another State that unfortunately falls out-side their affection is Karnataka and its Vijayanagar steel plant is to be given only Rs. 1 crore. Then about Orissa's Daitare steel project. I do not know why they have angry with Orissa. Again only Rs. 1 crore for them. Even in iron and steel expansion out of the Rs- 925 crores Bhilai gets Rs. 145 crores and Bokaro Rs. 155 crores only. This is the sort of avocation for such important things. These are all perhaps high industrial sectors. Therefore, they may not be bothered. What about rural water supply and sanitations. Last year, the allotement was Rs. 293 crores and now with Rs. 7 crores added, it is Rs. 300 crores. And they say they are going in a big way to provide drinking water facility all over the country, with just Rs. 7 crores added?

AN HON. MEMBER: Two lakh villages have already been covered by electricity.

PROF. C. LAKSHMANNA: If my friend is happy that they have covered two lakh villages with light, may I ask him what about the other one thirds who are living in darkness? With only Rs. 7 crores added they will be just be tinkering with the problem on the surface, not going more than skin deep. Anyway it is left to the honourable Member, but I will not be satisfied. I will be satisfied only if protected water supply is taken to all the villages on a priority basis.

Now you come to SCST group by whom we swear day in and day out. For SCST and others Rs. 71 crores was allotted last year and only Rs. 42 crores in this Budget. If 42 is deducted from 71, the difference is more than what has been made in the joint programme. Of the things that we wanted to give—food, housing and clothing—what is the attempt made for housing? The Budget allocation is only Rs. 39 crores while the estimates were Rs. 84 crores. If this is

juxta posed against the other one, viz, the levy price, it has gone up—the customs duty has gone up, excise duty has gone up—in the case of cement from over Rs. 100 to Rs. 300 per tonne. It has gone up three times. Even if there is a State—I am very proud that my State has been one like that—which is wanting to provide concrete roof over the heads of these down-trodden and unfortunate people in the villages, the money for that purpose has been watered down. It means that the number of houses has to be reduced because of the cost escalation. This is what is happening in the field of housing.

By raising the level of the asset limits in the case of MRTP companies from Rs. 20 crores to- Rs. 100 crores, several industrial houses will benefit. There were 180 industrial houses which were registered with MRTP. As a result of this raising of the MRTP level about 100 industrial houses will benefit.

There are other undertakings which do not normally belong to industrial houses. There are 1,800 of such undertakings. As a result of the limit being raised, about 11,000 of such undertakings will be benefited.

Therefore if we look at the budget from any point of view it will be seen that it is only leading to increase the miseries of the poor. This was clear from a TV programme. The TV people thought that common people would praise the budget. They asked for the views of three or four women. They were saying: My gas price has gone up; my copra has gone up; oil has gone up; vegetable products have gone up. Suddenly, they withdrew it. I will give an illustration. Gas has gone up by Rs. 5; petrol has gone up by Re. 1. Diesel has gone up by 30 paise; kerosene has gone up by 20 paise; Furnace oil has gone up by 20 paise because you say that you want to improve agriculture production. This furnace oil is used for fertiliser.

Industrial furnace oil has gone up by 30 paise and on top all these, railway fare has gone up. Auto-fares have gone up in Hyderabad and Bombay though in Delhi this has not happened. The State

Transport Corporations and private transporters are anxious to increase the fares. There has been an increase in the price of crude as a result of which even salt of the common man has not been saved. What is it that you see in the Budget which has not been taxed? But concession after concession has been given to industrial houses. Why did you not think of concessions for the common man? Still you preach that you are for the common man and you are for socialist goals. Have you done anything for the poor man? But if there are others who want to do something for the poor man, you find fault with them. You ask: Why should the Rs. 2 per kg. programme be there? Why should the mid-day meal programme be there? Why do you pay pension to the agricultural labour? Why do you pay pension to widows and so on and so forth? These are all meant for the welfare of the weaker sections of our society. You want us to stop all these programmes. You do not do it, nor would you allow others to do it. You want to do good only to those who will contribute to your coffers. All political parties in this Parliament had said that we should clean our politics and we should not allow the monopoly houses to contribute to the political parties. But now we have come out openly that the industrial houses can contribute to the political parties. Who are the beneficiaries? Those parties will be the beneficiaries which can do some good to them, they will be the beneficiaries. It is very clear from this that there is a linkage, a linkage which is very bad for the country, between the industrial houses on the one hand and the Government of Shri Rajiv Gandhi and Raja Vishwanath Pratap Singh on the other, who, I think, have combined to loot this country and to make the common man suffer more and more and if he suffers tomorrow, the responsibility for that rests squarely with the government and with nobody else. Thankyou, Madam.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRIMATI KANAK MUKHERJEE): Now, Mr. Sukul. Please take just 12 minutes so that the other colleagues may get some more time.

SHRI P. N. SUKUL: Thank you very much, Madam. I know how liberal you have been with Shri Lakshmanan just now and I hope you won't discriminate.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRIMATI KANAK MUKHERJEE): I only said that your party has enough time, but you take less time so that your other colleagues may get some more time.

SHRI P. N. SUKUL: Madam Vice-Chairman, notwithstanding the criticism of my friends in the Opposition who perhaps do not see anything good in this Budget, at the very outset, I should like to congratulate our young and new Finance Minister, Shri Vishwanath Pratap Singh, for presenting a wonderfully balanced and popular Budget that has been widely hailed by almost all sections of the society.

Madam, the new Budget has been hailed as a bold, imaginative, growth-oriented innovative and courageous Budget, and even "The Indian Express", is generally very critical of the policies of the Government and the functioning of the Government has hailed it as one of the most important Budgets since Independence. Shri Rajiv Gandhi, our young and dynamic Prime Minister, is determined not only to make united India agriculturally prosperous, industrially advanced and to root out corruption and black money from the society and these policies of the new Government are reflected in the Budget. Therefore, I entirely agree with "The Statesman" when it says that this Budget reflects the new mood of the Government.

Madam, the boldness of the Budget lies in the fact that despite serious constraints in the resources, both external and internal, it seeks to provide more for the planned development of the country with due emphasis on the schemes meant for alleviating poverty, and for generating employment, at least in the rural areas. This boldness becomes more evident when we find that in the face of a deficit of the order of Rs. 3,349 crores, the Budget aims at providing tax relief at almost all levels and seeks to grant special relief to the salaried class including the retired of the retiring personnel who are

[Shri P. N. Sukul]

decidedly the worst-affected by the rise in the cost of living. This boldness is further proved by the total reluctance of the Government to let the country's economy lean on the crutches of any kind of foreign assistance. In preparing the Budget proposals, our imaginative Finance Minister seems to have given serious consideration to the people's capacity to pay as well as the desired growth in the economy. The rise in the exemption limit of Income-Tax from Rs. 15,000 to Rs. 18,000 the abolition of the Compulsory Deposit Scheme, the increase in the ceiling for the payment of bonus from Rs. 750 to Rs. 1,600 the increase in the ceiling for the payment of gratuity from Rs. 36,000 to Rs. 50,000, and the counting of DA as part of pay for the payment of pension—these are some of the welcome measures, Madam, for which the salaried or the fixed-income group people are going to remain ever indebted to the Government of Shri Rajiv Gandhi. The Budget is growth oriented because the rational re-structuring of taxes, both personal and corporate as well as customs duties, will go a long way in mobilizing much more investments and much more savings and also in boosting the tempo of industrial production. More and more entrepreneurs will now be attracted to set up new industries in the country and add to the much needed growth of the country. Thus, the Budget has tried to add a new dimension to our economy and is highly innovative. The innovative spirit of the Finance Minister is also reflected in certain new social welfare programmes announced by him. These programmes show the keenness of the Government to ensure the welfare of the small and marginal farmers as well as the industrial workers. The provision that those responsible for the mis-management of the units will not get any financial assistance... (Interruption) In situations like crop failure, due to drought, etc., the proposed comprehensive scheme for crop insurance is going to prove a real boon to the small and marginal farmers who are now to be compensated for the losses sustained by them. I hope this scheme will be brought before Parliament for our consideration within this very session.

sion. Similarly, Madam, the social security scheme, whereby a sum of Rs. 3000 is proposed to be paid to the dependents of such landless labourers or small or marginal farmers is as desirable as the most welcome. This scheme which is meant for providing the much needed financial assistance to the poorest of the poor families in times of dire need will no doubt be most welcome by all concerned.

Then, Madam, the scheme for setting up a Board for industrial reconstruction, for looking into the sickness of units in the large and medium sectors is undoubtedly a new and welcome step. The provision that those responsible for mismanagement of the units will not get any financial assistance even for new ventures will induce financial discipline and result in saving of units from getting into sickness. Also, Government's intention to bring about legislation for payment of dues to the workers of sick units from banks in the event of closure of the venture is a real innovation and I congratulate the Finance Minister for taking these steps to come to the rescue of the workers of sick units. It shows, Madam, how much concerned the new Government of Shri Rajiv Gandhi is about the welfare of the industrial workers, and there is no doubt about it that these workers will feel highly obliged to the present Government for the steps being taken to mitigate their sufferings.

It is indeed a matter of great satisfaction that our country's economy which was completely shattered by the erstwhile Janata and the Lok Dal Government is now at a take-off stage. In foodgrains we are not only self-sufficient but also in a position to assist some African countries afflicted by famine to the tune of more than 100,000 metric tonnes of foodgrains. The industrial growth of 7 per cent is quite satisfactory. The addition of 14,000 MW power generating capacity during the Sixth Plan period, that is, 50 per cent increase in the power generating capacity of the country in one Plan period only, is one of the most commendable achievements of the Government of Shrimati Indira Gandhi. Simi-



larily, Madam, about 160 per cent increase in the production of crude during the Sixth Plan in five years only is another milestone in our progressive march towards self-reliance and prosperity; and, no doubt, it is another feather in the cap of Shrimati Indira Gandhi's Government. Still Prof. Lakshmanan calls it a leap into the darkness and a Budget that will build up the capitalist society. Moreover, the fact is that the rate of inflation has been brought down from 10 per cent to 5.2 per cent within a period of one year. It speaks volumes about the real strength of our economy and its most successful handling by our Government. Today the rate of inflation is much higher elsewhere in the world. The situation in the communist countries may be somewhat better. But we must not forget that in 1980-81 even the Chinese Government had to defer the execution of new and major programme of planned development to control inflation while in India, in spite of all the constraints, our Government went ahead with the Sixth Plan and was also able to contain inflation and keep it within one digit only. This shows the wisdom of our planners and the soundness of our planning.

Madam, we have had a unique history of planned development in a democracy. The main architect of the modern India, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, while speaking in the Lok Sabha, on the 22nd of August, 1963, said:

"Planning has, of course, been done in other countries, but not through democratic processes. Other countries which are democratic have not accepted planning, but the combination of these two concepts is rather unique."

So, Madam, it is no mean achievement that despite being a democratic country and in fact the biggest democracy in the world, we have accepted the concept of planned development and notwithstanding the problems of population growth as well as illiteracy coupled with all kinds of superstitions, we have already executed six five year plans successfully and the Seventh Plan is now on the anvil.

SHRI NIRMAL CHATTERJEE (West Bengal): Would you permit me an interruption? There is an inaccuracy in that statement.

SHRI DEBA PRASAD RAY (West Bengal): When Prof. Lakshmanan was speaking, I wanted to interrupt, but I was not allowed.

SHRI NIRMAL CHATTERJEE: There have been plans in France and England.

SHRI P. N. SIKUL: Mr. Chatterjee, there were so many inaccuracies in what you said. Some of them were pointed out by Mr. Pranab Mukherjee, but not while you were speaking. Just now, a friend from this side was telling about West Bengal. You were not there. He was saying that the West Bengal Government has failed to utilise even 50 per cent of the Central allocation for planned development under the Sixth Plan. He also said that out of 2200 crores that the West Bengal Government had to raised from its own resources in the plan sector, they could raised only 152 crores. Even then, Madam, so many people from that side tried to rebut the statement although it was very accurate. What our Government is trying to do is to lift the people above the poverty line. It is no joke. We are very sincere about it. The West Bengal Government is a very progressive Government. The West Bengal Government has the maximum overdrafts in the country and even then the West Bengal Government—I should say despite misappropriating funds from this side or that side—has not been able to pay even the bonus to all its employees, teachers and workers till today. The Central Government and the Congress Governments in various States have already paid it. The West Bengal Government has not been able to pay it. Now they will just agitate against the Central Government for more funds, but they won't like to improve upon their mismanagement. They won't like to help the down-trodden people and the working people. Still they have the cheek to find inaccuracies in our statement and in the budget. What can I do? Madam, I will take another five minutes because I have to make certain suggestions. With that, I will finish

[Shri P. N. Sukul]

As I was saying, Madam, the Seventh Plan is now on the anvil. And with food, work and productivity as its main objectives, the Seventh Plan is, perhaps, going to reduce the population living below the poverty line by about 14 or 15 per cent during the Seventh Plan period. It will provide us with more food, more employment opportunities and better growth in agricultural as well as industrial sectors. The future of the Country, Madam, is therefore safe, secure and more pro-raising in the hands of Shri Rajiv Gandhi and his Government. And that is why, Madam, I advise my friends in the Opposition to wait patiently for and help in the successful execution of the Seventh Five-Year Plan, that is bound to go a long way in solving, our basic problems of food, employment, productivity and social justice.

However, Madam, there are certain areas to which I would like to attract the attention of the Finance Minister and make a few suggestions for the consideration of the Government. My first suggestion—it is a general suggestion and I with that suggestion and, therefore, I am making that suggestion—is the proposed hike of 26 paise per litre in the price of kerosene must be withdrawn. Nearly 40 per cent of our population lives below the poverty line and the people in far flung areas and in hill areas where there is no electrification use only kerosene oil for lighting their lamps. Their children read with the help of those lamps. So, I would like to request our Government to reconsider their decision and not to increase the price of kerosene oil. And at least what they can do in this connection is that in such villages where there is no electricity and where the backward people and economically backward people live, they should allow three to four litres of kerosene to each family at the old rate, and if they want to have more, of course, they can have it from the open market at the market price.

My second suggestion is that the price of common salt which is consumed by everybody—right from the President to the most down-trodden man and the

weakest man in our society—should not be allowed to rise. The price of common salt must not be allowed to rise either because of the hike in the railway freight charges or because of the hike in the transportation charges due to the rise in the price of diesel and petrol. I agree that if it is not possible for the Railways to subsidise on that most essential commodity, then some other Ministry should come forward and subsidise the price of common salt so that despite this hike, even the poorest of the poor living in villages gets common salt at least to take his bread with that.

My third suggestion is that the exemption limit of income-tax should be further raised to at least Rs. 20,000 if not Rs. 25,000 because I feel that it will be entirely commensurate with the rise in the cost of living during the last few years.

Madam, my fourth and very important suggestion is that the whole class of salaried public servants should be totally exempted from the payment of income-tax. The whole class of salaried public servants right from the non-gazetted, officer up to the very Cabinet Secretary should be exempted. Why? It is because the entire collection of income-tax from these public servants is not more than five per cent of our total collection of income-tax. That should be looked into by the Finance Minister. If it is just 5 per cent or 7 per cent of the total collection of income-tax, then what I feel is that the entire salaried class, at least in the public sector must be exempted from the payment of income-tax because that will not mean a material change in our resources. But, on the other hand it will give a great incentive to our employees, to our workers, to our salaried people to refrain from corruption if at all there is any corruption among them and to work hard for the fulfilment of their duties and for the proper discharge of their duties and responsibilities. Madam, my fifth suggestion is that bonus should be paid to the Government employees also at the rate of 8.33 per cent. Once the Government has agreed to pay bonus, then call it *ex gratia* payment, but that is bonus, than the minimum rate admissible

to other workers in the matter of bonus also be paid to Government servants, non-gazetted employees and others and there should be no discrimination in this regard. The minimum bonus should be the same. In the maximum, there may be a difference. My sixth suggestion is that there should be a national formula on dearness allowance evolved for the entire salaried class. Madam, it is mainly due to our planned development and due to our deficit financing that there is rise in the prices of essential commodities all over the country and this rise is practically the same all over the country. Whatever it is in Hyderabad, the same is in Delhi and the same is in Assam. So, it becomes the bounden duty of the Government to compensate the salaried class and workers equally throughout India, whether they are State employees, or Central employees or teachers or employees of local bodies. At least, if you cannot help rise in dearness, you should not deprive them of their due share in the dearness allowance. My seventh suggestion, Madam, is that similarly there should be a national formula for payment of the need-based minimum wage to all the workers in the country. We have not yet been able to evolve such a formula with the result that wages differ. The present minimum wages differ from place to place and if our Government is a socialist Government, having faith in socialism, socialist ideals, as the case is, I know, then our Government must consider the need for evolving this national formula for payment of need-based minimum wage also.

Now, Madam, my last and most important suggestion is that for containing the evil growth of black money a new and strong currency should be introduced without any avoidable delay. Madam, our Prime Minister's announcement to root out corruption and black money from the society is indeed most laudable. The black money is running a parallel economy in this country and we have had so many discussions in this House and the other House on black money. While the Winchoo Committee estimated that in 1961-62 the amount of black money in circulation in the country at that time was

Rs. 811 crores, today Mr. Madhu Mehta, the convenor of the Hindustani Andolan says that the black money in circulation in the country is to the tune of Rs. 65 thousand crores. All our persuasive measures like the Bearer Bonds Scheme and all our punitive measures and all our administrative measures have failed miserably in unearthing this black money, which our Prime Minister wants to root out. Therefore, Madam, whatever may be the other ways the best way to check the accumulation of black money and unearthing the black money, that exists today, is to introduce a new and strong currency.

Madam, with these words, I support the Budget.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRIMATI KANAK MUKHERJEE): I request the friends on this side: Please take only 12 minutes as allotted to you so that your party colleagues may get some more time to speak. Yes, Mr. Aliba Imti, you have eight minutes.

SHRI T. ALIBA IMTI (Nagaland) : Madam Vice-Chairman, the eight minutes time given to me is very short. Last year, your predecessor was very considerate to give me more than 45 minutes. Even then, Madam Vice-Chairman, I am thankful to you for giving me time to participate in the Budget discussion. I have been participating in the Budget Discussion for the last several years. A Budget has got both the elements: it has a bright side and also the dark side. In this manner, in this particular budget also, I find both these elements, are involved. There are friends who are absolutely not happy, but there are some points, according to me, which go against the people but there are many points which are very relevant and which are advantageous to the people.

Before I come to the point, since I was absent during the last session, I want to put on record have our deep and profound sorrow and my personal sorrow at the untimely demise of our late Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi. She was affectionate, she was kind to Naga people. Naga people liked her in spite of political differences, sometimes ideological differences,

[Shri T. Aliba Inti]

ces and opinion; yet she understood our psychology. She set our trends of thought in many ways, and her very untimely departure from this world, particularly falling prey at the hands of an assassin, was a great shock to the people of Nagaland, and on behalf of the Naga people, I put this on record.

After the last elections and the massive mandate given by the people of India, and when the Anti-Defection Bill was passed, we were watching this new Government with very keen interest. They got the maximum support from the people of India, and as a first step, they have passed the Anti-Defection Bill in one sitting. This was a very admirable thing. As a matter of fact in our small State of Nagaland, my party, Naga National Democratic Party, brought out this Anti-Defection Bill even as early as 1981. In 1982, we passed a resolution because we had no constituted authority to pass a bill and when the Bill was passed here, we were very happy that a new turn, a new approach, to the whole political aspect of India, shall come forward. Alongwith this, we were waiting anxiously for the Budget. There are some friends who are very critical and they were critical in the Railway budget. Of course, Government has to collect taxes in order to meet the requirements. It has to depend on the collection of taxes. But the Railway budget was also something far beyond our own expectations, as against the welfare of the common people. And as we were still discussing the pros and cons of the Railway budget, this new Budget has come.

Since I have only 8 or 9 minutes, I would not like to go chapter by chapter or paragraph-wise. There are only two or three points about which I am not very happy personally. Our respected Finance Minister started his speech by quoting a sentence from our late Prime Minister's utterance; quote—"No section of our vast and diverse population should feel forgotten. Their neglect is our collective loss." That is what he quoted. No section of our vast and diverse population should be forgotten. If we forget

them, the loss is not only of that particular section, but it is a common loss.

(The Vice-Chairman, Shri R. Rama-Krishnan in the Chair.)

Alongwith that, I want to quote two sentences from the mouth of our late Prime Minister. She said, quote "I am among those who believe that no revival of the North is possible without the development of the South and (the East)". She also said "Where there is bondage anywhere, we ourselves cannot be fully free; where there is oppression anywhere, we ourselves cannot soar high". Our Finance Minister has quoted the late Prime Minister, and which is supplemented by the two sentences which I have quoted above. But I find that the spirit of the Budget, in many places, is contradictory to the opening paragraph!

I find, we are neglected, we are ignored. The Finance Minister says, we will not neglect, we should not neglect and we should not ignore. But I find we are neglected, we are ignored. As I said, a Budget cannot be hundred per cent good and it cannot be hundred per cent bad either. I have seen the Budgets of the last five years. I have been participating in the Budget discussion every time. I have come to the conclusion that it is a question of give and take in the Budget.

Sir, our Finance Minister has made the Budget speech in about 160 paragraphs. This includes the taxation side also. But I am very much unhappy to see that he did not care to mention about the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes even in one paragraph. His speech contains about 160 paragraphs, as I said. But out of this, he did not think it proper and necessary to mention about the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes even in one paragraph. In the last year's Budget, paragraphs 41, 42, 45, 49 and 51, if I remember rightly, elaborately dealt with the welfare programmes of the Government of India in regard to the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes. As you know, Sir, these people and other weaker sections of the society form about 30 per cent of the population in our

country. But our Finance Minister found it not necessary to mention about them. This passes my understanding. He may have an argument that these programmes are a continuing process, that these are going on and, therefore, it was found not necessary to mention about them. He may argue like that. Perhaps, he may have some good reasons for this. But many people in India do not go through the Budget speech. They read about it only in the newspapers. They know about it through the media. When Castes and other people find that nothing about them, it really discourages them; it hurts them. It hurts people like us. *(Time bell ringsP)* Sir, I think, you have wanted me too early. I have taken only five-six minutes.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI R. RAMAKRISHNAN): You have already taken ten minutes.

SHRI T. ALIBA IMTI: Another point which I would like to mention is about the increase in the prices of petroleum products. Things differ from State to it may be all right for industrialised and developed areas. But what about places like Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram and Meghalaya, where there is no railway service, there is no air service. We do not have bullock-carts. We do not have hand-driven carts. Our transport is only two legs and motor vehicles. If the price of petrol is increased, naturally the expenditure on administrative machinery and non-Plan projects will go up and the general developmental work will suffer. I have been seeing that the petroleum prices here have been going up every year. In OPEC countries one litre of petrol costs 25 paise, whereas we have to pay Re. 6.50 or 7.01 paise per litre. Imagine how it is going up. Increased tax on petrol and petroleum products is something which will deprive us from attending to even our normal activities. Electricity and power generation in our State is so short that 90 per cent of the houses in Nagaland are using kerosene oil. Even the price for this product is going up. In bigger towns like Kohima, Dimapur, where firewood was mostly used, how we are shifting to cooking gas

but the price of cooking gas is also going up. So, this is the problem. Whatever you have mentioned in the budget about other developmental things, about multipurpose projects, installation of electricity programmes and all that, it is all right, but the States of Mizoram, Meghalaya, Manipur and Nagaland are the worst sufferers in all respects. There is a tax on kerosene and other things like that. So, I request the Government and the Minister to see if the prices of these essential commodities could be reduced, mobiles have become a part of life of the Naga tribal people. Without automobiles it is impossible to do even the daily work. So, I request the Government once again not to raise the tax or increase the price of these commodities. *(Time bell rings.)* Just one sentence more. Only two or three minutes.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI R. RAMAKRISHNAN): For one sentence do you want two or three minutes?

SHRI T. ALIBA IMTI: Just one minute more. You must have been hearing now and then that our age-old political problems are going on. Even now it is going on. Sometimes somebody's head will be chopped off or somebody will be killed in ambush etc. etc. I have been pronouncing and announcing about this problem in this very House not in a small way but in a very serious way, but the situation has not become better. I declare from here that the situation has become worse. I am not speaking about Assam, Manipur or Mizoram. As far as Nagaland is concerned, political underground elements are growing up by leaps and bounds and the position is worsening day by day. For the purpose of pleasing the Government or the Home Minister or the Prime Minister in Delhi, may be, some of the spokesmen from the local Government in Nagaland might be announcing that everything is all right, but I tell you that the things are worse. Hundreds of young Naga people are crossing borders, going to Burma and China to get new arms and ammunition. So, once again I am requesting the authorities in Delhi to regard the Nagaland political problem as an important one and solve it as early as possible.

उपसभाध्यक्ष : श्री आर. रामाकृष्णन :  
बैच में साढ़े तीन बजे मिनिस्टर का स्टेटमेंट  
है, आइये स्टैंड करना है ।

श्रीमती प्रतिभा सिंह (बिहार) : कितने  
बजे ?

उपसभाध्यक्ष (श्री आर. रामाकृष्णन) :  
इस मिनट के बाद, साढ़े तीन बजे ।

SHRIMATI PRATIBHA SINGH: Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, as our Prime Minister Shri Rajiv Gandhi, says we have to create a dynamic country that is equal to any other country in the world. We have to modernise India. We have to change the thinking of the people to look ahead in the future and not too much in the past. Sir, this in a nutshell is the projection what the present Government envisages and in what shape it wants India to grow.

I welcome the budget. The budget reflects the mood of the Government and its intention of having pragmatism and progress, which in an indirect way reflects the mood of the people. This budget is production and better investment-oriented and not only tax-oriented. The Finance Minister believes that a tax, however laudable it may be, should have no place in the statute book if it has outlived its utility. And that is what it has shown in many of the reliefs that it has given to the different categories of tax payers.

The quality of the budget is judged by the factors of honesty, economic efficiency, simplicity, equity and social justice. These are the basic factors on which you can judge a budget whether it is good or bad. Some of the smaller countries like Thailand and South Korea were at the same economic level as India in 1950. What is the condition today? Today the per capita income of these small countries like Thailand is 800 U.S. dollars and it is 1900 U.S. dollars in South Korea. As compared to that in India it is only 270 U.S. dollars. Therefore a new thrust has to be given. Trade of Hong Kong is twice that of India, though population-wise it is only 1 per cent. How and why it is so has to be taken into account and studied if we want India really to pull faster and get prepared for the 21st century. Prosperity will go to the country which has the right fiscal and economic

policies India has spare human resources which, if properly utilised, can be a blessing instead of a problem. This was foreseen by a great poet like Rabindranath Tagore who said: Every hand in India is a potential power to develop it to any height possible in this world. Of course he mentioned

those days विश्व की प्रतिभा भरी  
as the population was less. But of course today it is much more. And China has shown that hands do count for progress. Today the number of jobless is nearly 45 million in this country. We must be clear in our minds what exactly we want. Unless there is growth in industry, trade, commerce, however pious our desire may be to boost up growth, increase employment, we cannot do so. For example, again we have to come to West Bengal. What has happened there? Nine hundred industries are facing closure. The labour employed is sitting idle. Therefore the glorious desire to remove poverty is not fulfilled. Today the world has progressed so fast that words coined fifty years before like "proletariat" and "bourgeois" are not going to fill the bellies. We have to think, we have to project and take up new ideas and new decisions though temporarily they will not be so much relished by certain sections. It is for these reasons that I welcome and support the budget and congratulate the Finance Minister for his pragmatism and boldness.

Emphasis has been shifted from regulation to development and growth both in personal and corporate tax structures. This year's budget allows the tax payer to put his savings wherever he likes. Up till now it was with some constraints, that it should be put in some savings account or Unit Trust or something like that, but this year he has been left free to do as he likes.

Some of the salient features in this budget are—I won't go into details—schemes like crop insurance. In the case of crop insurance I would only like to caution the Governments that they should frame such easy rules so that the farmer even at the lowest level can benefit from this scheme. Second is the abolition of CDS. Third is raising of ceiling of bonus to Government employees. Then

consider the raising of exemption limit for personal income tax. Here I would request that since it is only Rs. 18,000 it may be increased a little higher. This time, for the first time the legitimate dues of workers in sick industries have been ranked *pari passu* with secured creditors such as banks in the event of closure of a company. So far the legitimate dues of the workers were always put as the end. The abolition of death duty is a great relief. The expenses on collection was more than what used to be realised on this account and the Public Accounts Committee also had recommended abolition of this duty. So, I would only say that at least by this abolition—because it was fetching very small sums—you have relieved people of the fear of death! मरने के भय से कम से कम मकिल तो मिल गई।

The asset criterion under the MRTP Act has been raised from Rs. 20 crores to 100 crores. This will help the medium companies to spend less time on project clearance. So far they had to run from office to office and they used to change many pairs of shoes in running about. Deregulation of 25 industries has removed the rigours of official regulations. Girls' education has been made free up to higher secondary. This has to be complimented because without the education of women—if 50 per cent of the population is left uneducated—no country can progress. More funds have been provided for rural water supply. Now it is Rs. 925 crores instead of Rs. 600 crores. The only caution I would like to give here is that it must be monitored and evaluated and wherever defects or loopholes are found, they should be plugged so that maximum utilisation of funds is made in each connection.

[The Vice-Chairman (Shri Santosh Kumar Sahu) in the chair.]

The IRDP, NREP and the Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme and the programme for providing self-employment opportunities to educated unemployed are to be strengthened and improved. I would urge, Sir, that these

should also be monitored and results studied because the time has come when only—as I said—pious intentions won't work. The benefits, the results must be seen and evaluated. It has come to our notice that the banks do not cooperate as much as is required of them in the matter of self-employment schemes and this being so, we are not able to generate self-employment as desired. In many States people came and represented that they had so many rules and so many difficulties with the result that what we want is not achieved. Then, one thing more, I want to point out, Sir, about harassment of some people who have taken the bank loans. When you take a bank loan, you have to put security worth the loan. When people had deposited even three-fourth of the money, the bank officers have taken too much time, and the people have been harassed. I would request the Finance Minister to look into this aspect and give direction that the cases are cleared without delay. I have got a number of cases like these in which the people have been harassed for six months, seven months, one year, two years, at the lowest level of the bank officers.

Sir, the excise duty on bidies must be reduced. Bidies are consumed by the labour, whether it is in farms or in factories. It is the only luxury to these economically lowest strata of people.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR SAHU): How much more time will you take?

SHRIMATI PRATIBHA SINGH: A little more, Sir. You have given 40 minutes to others.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR SAHU): There is a statement. That is why I am asking.

SHRIMATI PRATIBHA SINGH: He can make the statement. You allow him. I do not mind. I would not waste even a minute.

THE VIC&CHAIRMAN (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR SAHU): Would you wait for the Minister to make his statement\*

SHRIMATI PRATIBHA SINGH: Yes.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR SAHU): Thank you.

#### STATEMENT BY MINISTER

*Re, Missing official of soviet Embassy, Mr. Igor Gueja.*

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI KHURSHID ALAM KHAN): Sir, I would like to inform Hon'ble Member about the latest development relating to the disappearance last week of Mr Igor Gezha; attache in the Information wing of the Embassy of the USSR in New Delhi.

An official of the USSR Embassy had reported to the Delhi Police authorities on the evening of Sunday, March 17, that Mr. Gezha had left his residence early that morning for the Lodhi Garden for his customary walk, and had not returned. The official expressed anxiety over this and conveyed the USSR Embassy's request for assistance of the Government of India in locating Mr. Gezha's whereabouts. The matter was also formally brought to the notice of the Ministry of

External Affairs, the next morning, by the USSR Embassy.

An intensive search was launched by the Police authorities to ascertain the whereabouts of the missing Soviet diplomat. All possible measures in this regard had been taken by them over the last week, but had not yielded any results.

Meanwhile, the USSR Embassy had been conveying its anxiety that something untoward may have happened to Mr. Gezha. They also indicated on the night of March 23rd, the possibility that he might be in the premises of the US Embassy in New Delhi.

In view of the gravity of the apprehensions expressed<sup>1</sup> by the Soviet Embassy and Government's own serious concern to establish the facts of the case, we then asked for an urgent clarification in this regard from the US Embassy.

In response to our query, the US Embassy conveyed to the Ministry of External Affairs yesterday March 24 that "an employee of the Soviet Embassy Information Department in New Delhi had sought and been granted political asylum by the US Government at a point outside India", and further, that "he is safe and well in the USA". This information was thereafter conveyed by us the same day to the USSR Embassy.

We have made known our serious concern to the US Government about this incident and asked them to let us have full details surrounding it. Government of India are also examining all aspects of the case as to how an official of the Soviet Embassy could have left India clandestinely, in the circumstances mentioned above.