

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI R. R. MORARKA): Mr. Madhavan, what is the question you want to put? Only question and nothing more. From your party, Mr. Kulkarni has already spoken.

SHRI K. K. MADHAVAN: I wanted to supplement what my hon. friend, Mr. Chathunni Master, has said.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI R. R. MORARKA): You can put only a question, if you want.

SHRI K. K. MADHAVAN: I refuse to put.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI R. R. MORARKA): Now. Special Mentions. Mr. Manubhai Patel.

SHRI K. K. MADHAVAN: Then you should have told me that I would be asked only to put questions. No. I refuse. What is this?

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI R. R. MORARKA): Yes, Mr. Manubhai Patel.

REFERENCE TO THE REPORTED UNBECOMING AND ABUSIVE LANGUAGE USED AGAINST MAHATMA GANDHI AND SHRI RAVISHANKAR MAHARAJ AT AN ANTI-PROHIBITION RALLY ORGANISED IN BARODA ON JUNE 8, 1980.

SHRI MANUBHAI PATEL (Gujarat): Sir, I am raising a very serious issue about an incident which took place on the 8th June at Baroda where the platform of the Congress (I) was utilised for organising an anti-prohibition rally. And in that rally derogatory remarks were used against the Father of the Nation, Mahatma Gandhi and against the oldest constructive worker and a colleague of Mahatma Gandhi and Sardar Patel, Shri Ravi Shankar Maharaj, who is 97 years old. Derogatory remarks were used against them, as a result of which the feelings of the people of Gujarat are wounded. Sir, non-political persons from the literary field, from the medical profession, journalists and educationalists, non-party people, requested the Gov-

ernment to allow them to organise a public meeting in order to express resentment against these derogatory remarks, etc. But it was not allowed. Sir, instead of describing whole incident, I will just quote a few relevant portions from a report in the Indian Express of June 9:

"The first spectacular thing to happen in the State after the Solanki Cabinet was sworn in is the voice raised against prohibition at a meeting organised by the Raopura youths inspired by the Congress (I). Dr. Jatin Mody, prominent Congress (I) leader was the main speaker.... The same platform from which Shri Sanat Mehta was felicitated in the morning was utilised. However, Mr. Mehta was not present in the meeting."

"The anti-prohibition rally was followed by a procession of 200 youths who came out with banners against prohibition from Mahakaleswar Temple nearby. The banners read: 'liquor could turn devil into a donor,'—'liquor killed 3,000 a year but water killed 60,000 a year.'"

The most serious and objectionable remark was by an advocate, Mr. Sayed, Secretary of the City Congress (I) who said, "Prohibition was nothing but a mint for the police." "He pleaded that people should organise 'wet protest' by openly drinking and breaking the law". Another advocate, Mr. Vipin Bhatt, said "It was unfortunate that Gandhiji was born in Gujarat and Ravi Shanker Maharaj of Kaira had no other business."

The prominent citizens of Baroda, Mr. Haribhai Desai, who is President of the Premanand Sahitya Sabha, Mr. Kamlashanker Pandya, a veteran educationist and social worker, Mr. Kirit Bhatt, a journalist, Mrs. Sharadaben Shah, president of Mahila Parishad, Mr. Jagdish Shah, Secretary, Sarvodaya Mandal, Dr. Nane who is contributing articles to the Illustrated Weekly of India under the name of Dadil, Mr. Jayant Shastri—these are

all non-political people asked for permission to hold a public meeting but were not allowed, were not given permission by the authorities. So, these are the two serious things. Apart from prohibition which was the established law there in Gujarat, the ruling party, supported by their leaders and youth leaders, office-bearers, have propagated and pleaded to break the law openly—that was one serious thing. A more serious thing was to use derogatory remarks against the Father of the Nation and Ravishanker Maharaj. Yet another serious thing was that the authorities gave protection to anti-social people and did not give protection to representatives of different constructive non-political institutions and who were the cream of the society. and who represent the feelings of the elite of the society. The authorities did not give protection to the society but they gave protection to anti-social people. These serious things should be brought to the notice of the Government of Gujarat. These non-party leaders have sent a telegram to the Prime Minister also on 15th when their meeting was not allowed to be held. Their telegram reads:

“To resent unbecoming abuses on Gandhiji and Ravishanker Maharaj by anti-prohibitionists publicly in Baroda. A public meeting by non-party social workers was not permitted by the authorities. We strongly resent and draw the attention of the Government and request to make inquiry in the matter.”

The signatories are Ramanbhai Patel, Mayor, Baroda, Kamalashanker Pandya and Haribhai Desai.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI R. R. MORARKA). The House stands adjourned till 2.15 P.M.

The House then adjourned for lunch at twenty-four minutes past one of the clock.

The House reassembled after lunch at eighteen minutes past two of the

clock **The Vice-Chairman (Shri Dinesh Goswami)** in the Chair.

THE BUDGET (RAILWAYS) 1980-81 GENERAL DISCUSSION—Contd.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI DINESH GOSWAMI): Mr. Ghan-shyambhai Oza,

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI (Maharashtra): Where is the Railway Minister?

SHRI ERA SEZHIYAN (Tamil Nadu): Is there nobody to represent Railway Ministry?

SHRI KALYAN ROY (West Bengal): Neither the Cabinet Minister for Railways nor the Minister of State for Railways is here. This has not happened before.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SITARAM KESRI): He is in the toilet. He is coming.

SHRI GHANSHYAMBHAI OZA (Gujarat): The reply to the debate can be given by those sitting in the box.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI DINESH GOSWAMI): For personal reasons, he has gone. He is coming.

SHRI GHANSHYAMBHAI OZA: I was referring to the officials in the box because that will be more effective.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI DINESH GOSWAMI): Do not take notice of the officers. You may continue your speech.

SHRI GHANSHYAMBHAI OZA: Sir, many years ago, the Railway Budget was separated from the General Budget and also, we constituted the Railway Board. Now, in all humility, I am asking why we did so. Did we not reconstitute all these things for better administrative efficiency, for better financial management and for better operational efficiency? We did this only with these ends in view. Now, if you want to judge the performance of the Rail-