

[Shri G. Lakshmanan]

mention of this because the Prime Minister also is fortunately present here. I know his policy, that Hindi shall not be imposed. He is repeating it everywhere. If it is like that, then what is this? Is it not an imposition of Hindi? Therefore, I demand that a committee be appointed....

MR. CHAIRMAN: That you have stated.

SHRI G. LAKSHMANAN....to go into these things and such forms should be immediately done away with so that the people in the non-Hindi speaking areas who do not know Hindi but who know English are able to discharge their functions properly.

MOTION RE. THE DRAFT FIVE YEAR PLAN, 1978—83

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRI MORARJI R. DESAI): Sir, I beg to move:

"That the 'Draft Five Year Plan 1978-83', laid on the Table of the Rajya Sabha on April 27, 1978, be taken into consideration."

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA (West Bengal): A bogus Plan to be taken into consideration.

SHRI MORARJI R. DESAI: My hon. friend has always something ridiculous to say. But he would not want to hear. What can I do?

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: I said only one sentence. All that I said was that we had to take into consideration a bogus Plan.

SHRI MORARJI R. DESAI: Well, bogus people will always consider everything bogus.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: A bogus Government has brought a bogus Plan, and I hope, Mr. Morarji Desai will not be a bogus Prime Minister.

SHRI MORARJI R. DESAI: Well, the Government is real and Plan it has prepared is also real, how can it be otherwise? But one who is jaundiced is always bound to have a coloured view of everything. That is the position of my hon. friend. I have great sympathy for him.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Both have sympathy for each other.

SHRI MORARJI R. DESAI: I do not think, he has any sympathy for me. I have sympathy for him. I do not think, he has sympathy for me.

MR. CHAIRMAN: He also has.

SHRI S. W. DHABE (Maharashtra): Sir, I want to move amendments.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Not now. Let him make the statement.

SHRI MORARJI R. DESAI: I thought, young men were in a hurry, not others.

This Plan has been prepared by the new Government which took office last year as a result of the elections. It is the policy of Government to give priority now to those areas which needed that priority to be given to them but which did receive it before. It is, therefore, that we have put a greater emphasis on some aspects of development which have not been given much emphasis before. We, therefore, felt it necessary that we should end the Five-Year Plan at the end of the fourth year so that we did not have to wait for one year in our planning for the new goals. Therefore, the Fifth Plan, had to be discontinued at the end of the last year, and the Sixth Plan has come into force from this year. The time available to us was not enough for doing all the exercises. But before we came to the House we had placed it before National Development Council. They approved the broad objectives and strategy of the Plan and agreed to the Plan for the first year so that it comes into effect immediately.

We have encountered with several difficulties and have seen the deficiencies in implementation in the past Plans which also we have taken into account so that we can avoid those difficulties and remove those deficiencies now before this Plan gets under way. It is, therefore, that the concept of the rolling plan was introduced. It is not a new concept at all, nor was it given a new name by me or by somebody else here, it is a known concept. Perhaps it is not known to some friends here; that is possible. But the main purpose of the change is that when the Plans were prepared before, they were prepared for five years. But as soon as three years of the Plan were over, the preparation of the next Plan was taken up in hand, no attention was paid in the meanwhile to the current Plan. Faulty implementation was the bane of the Planning. An assessment of the Plan at the end of every year was not done in the past as it should have been done, with the result that the implementation was not as it should have been. It is, therefore, that we have decided that we should assess the Plan at the end of every year so that we know what deficiencies have crept in, whether any difficulties have been encountered, whether resources need to be strengthened further. These propositions will help the next Five-Year Plan to be even better than this one. So it becomes a continuous Plan. It is for five years at a time. And the first year's Plan has been discussed with the States to their general satisfaction. I cannot say, to their full satisfaction. But there were no objections raised before me in this matter. And they have accepted the first year Plan in this Five Year Plan. The Plan for the other four years could not be discussed with them because there was not much time. It was brought before the National Development Council as the Draft Plan. And there all the Chief Ministers approved the broad objectives of the Plan and the general strategy of the Plan. But we will hold discussions with the

States in the next few months and then call the National Development Council again in November or December after Finance Commission's Report is received. Then the Five Year Plan will be finalised. In the meanwhile, discussions will go on with the States, was, therefore, that we could not complete the consideration of the whole Plan and put it as a final Plan through the National Development Council for discussion here. It is, therefore, considered a draft Plan. It was discussed in the Lok Sabha, and now it is being discussed here as it should be done. We could have discussed it first here. There is no difference in my view. It so happened that it was discussed there first. Today it would not have been perhaps possible for me to introduce this Motion and, therefore, I had requested you, Sir, to allow the Finance Minister to move the Motion because there is a no-confidence motion moved in the Lok Sabha against the Council of Ministers and I have to be present there; it is going to be taken up today. So it is not possible for me to reply to the debate on the Plan here today. I won't be able to be present here today. I will have to be present there. Therefore, I requested you. But as soon as I could be free from there, I came here so that I gave no opportunity to my friend, Mr. Bhupesh Gupta, to raise any objection in the matter.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Thank you. I am beholden to you.

SHRI MORARJI R. DESAI: I anticipate his objections many a time. But sometimes I am not able to meet them. That is my misfortune. (*Interruption*) Only he does not try to see the other point of view. That is another misfortune.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Sir, it would be a rod-letter day for me if Mr. Morarji Desai, in his wisdom, will ever meet even one of my objections.

SHRI MORARJ R. DESAI: I am glad he is saying: with a smile and not in

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his usual style. There is some improvement. I hope he continues that style. That is all that I want. It is quite an improvement.

Now this Plan which is here has a greater emphasis on rural development because that is a sector which has not been attended to as much as it should have been in the past. Eighty per cent of the people live in villages, and 20 per cent is the urban population. And unless these 80 per cent of the people get a full square deal, it is not possible for the country to claim proper development. And the prosperity of the country also depends on the prosperity of agriculture because that is our basic industry. So, unless we attend to the villages, it is not possible to achieve comprehensive development as much as we have to. Therefore, we have put greater emphasis on agriculture, and the provision made for it in the Five Year Plan is far larger than was ever done before. We have provided far more for power generation; we have provided far more for irrigation. Whereas only 27 million hectares were irrigated during all the past years, we have provided for irrigation of 17 million more hectares in this Five Year Plan which has not been attempted so far by any country. In the matter of energy also we are increasing the production by 18,500 MW. That is also much more significant. It is about 76 per cent or so more than what is already being generated. In the same way we are strengthening the village organisations and the village economy, the village conditions, drinking water supply, roads, housing a cottage industry in every home or wherever it is necessary to give full employment or partial employment. And that is why these priorities have been arranged in this Five Year Plan. But that does not mean that we are neglecting industries, as it is said in some quarters. That is not our idea of development at all. Industries also can develop more purposefully, and

can have proper customers only if the villages have proper purchasing power, otherwise, what will they sell and where? The bulk of the population lives there. Therefore, while attending to industries, we are strengthening them and extending them wherever necessary as we are extending in the matter of fertilizers—we are putting up more plants. In the matter of energy we are doing the same thing wherever it is necessary. That is the way we are going on extending heavy industry also, wherever it is necessary. Some idea has been put forward somewhere that the public sector is being given up. That again is the same imaginary allegation that is made against the Government. The public sector is going to be strengthened more and made more efficient and therefore, more paying to the country and adding to the prosperity of this country.

These are the lines on which this Five Year Plan has been drafted and placed before this honourable House. welcome all the criticism that takes place. They have every right to criticise it, condemn it; we will pay careful attention to whatever they say and reject everything that we consider wrong and accept everything that strengthens the Plan.

Thank You.

The Question was proposed.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Sir, I move—

1. "That at the end of the Motion, the following be added, namely:—

'and having considered the same, this House notes with disappointment and resentment that at no stage in the preparation of the Draft Plan were the Members of Parliament consulted as used to be the practice in the past'."

2. "That at the end of the Motion, the following be added, namely:—

'and having considered the same this House views with grave concern that Government are trying to distort and in some ways, even reverse the direction, priorities and basic principles of the planned development so essential for achieving self-reliance, full implementation of radical agrarian reforms, the building of a modern industrial economy with the public sector being given decisively the commanding height in our economy'."

3. "That at the end of the Motion, the following be added, namely:—

and having considered the same, this House deplores the concept of "rolling plan" which can only result in the dismantling of planning while retaining the facade'."

4. "That at the end of the Motion, the following be added, namely:—

'and having considered the same, this House notes with concern that despite all the glittering official talks there are no effective proposals for measures of social justice and for uplifting, in particular, the Harijans, agricultural labourers and other downtrodden masses'."

5. "That at the end of the Motion, the following be added, namely:—

'and having considered the same, this House notes that there is no real hope of the staggering unemployment and underemployment being even combated or reduced under the Draft Plan, the prospect rather being that the problem would become more acute'."

6. "That at the end of the Motion, the following be added, namely:—

'and having considered the same, this House notes that the Draft Plan is being inaugurated amidst the plethora of reckless concessions to the monopoly houses and other exploiting classes on a bigger scale than before with the unconcealed aim of promoting 'free market' economy any intensified exploitation'."

7. "That at the end of the Motion, the following be added, namely:—

'and having considered the same, this House notes that the multinationals are being encouraged, not withstanding the fact that most of the 5000 so-called collaboration agreements are working to the detriment of the national economy and standing in the way of achieving self-reliance, apart from resulting in a heavy drain on our resources through foreign remittances'."

8. "That at the end of the Motion, the following be added, namely:—

'and having considered the same, this House notes that the Draft Plan is completely oblivious of the urgency of a fair, democratic wage policy, which would be socially just and at the same time provide the requisite material incentives to workers'."

9. "That at the end of the Motion, the following be added, namely:—

'and having considered the same, this House is astonished that the Draft Plan, far from learning from the failures of the previous plans, relies on the very forces and factors that led to such failures and, in some crucial respects, accepts the approach and even prescriptions of the monopolists and other vested interests, the saboteurs of planning'."

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10. "That at the end of the Motion, the following be added, namely:—

'and having considered the same, this House is disturbed to note that the Draft Plan has no effective and just proposal for resource-mobilisation from those who are in a position to pay with the result that the burden of financing the plan is sure to fall even more heavily than before on the common man'."

11. "That at the end of the Motion, the following be added, namely:—

'and having considered the same, this House is surprised to note than even after three decades of planning it is not realised that no all-round rapid growth with social justice could be ensured without radical structural changes in our economy, which the Draft has preferred to totally ignore'."

12. "That at the end of the Motion, the following be added, namely:—

'and having considered the same, this House is amazed to note that the relevance of prices to planning is not correctly understood at all not only from the point of view of the fate of the physical targets but also that of improving the living standards of the masses'."

13. "That at the end of the Motion, the following be added, namely:—

'and having considered the same, this House notes that social welfare does not receive the due attention in the scheme of the Draft Plan'."

14. "That at the end of the Motion, the following be added, namely:—

'and having considered the same, this House cannot but express its concern that there is no new proposal to involve the State

Governments and their planning bodies more meaningfully with the formulation and implementation of the Plan'."

15. "That at the end of the Motion, the following be added, namely:—

'and having considered the same, this House notes that Draft Plan rejects the urgency of nationalisation of certain big monopoly concerns including those engaged in production of the consumer goods such as textiles, sugar as well as the essential drugs under foreign control'."

16. "That at the end of the Motion, the following be added, namely:—

'and having considered the same, the House cannot help but to record that the official talk about the 'primacy of agriculture' is only a camouflage for bolstering the rural rich including landlords and promoting capitalism in agriculture'."

17. "That at the end of the Motion, the following be added, namely:—

'and having considered the same, this House notes that the Draft Plan will have to unduly rely on the so-called 'foreign aid' from the West, thereby enabling these external sources to pressurise the Government and force their concepts and terms on the latter, or at least to create difficulties'."

18. "That at the end of the Motion, the following be added, namely:—

'and having considered the same, this House deems it necessary to remind the nation that capitalism which is in an insoluble and deepening crisis can never solve the fundamental problems of the masses, or of our nation-building, and that to pursue the capital path, whether by waving the flag of planning or otherwise,

is to condemn our toiling people to poverty, unemployment, hunger, illiteracy, disease and endless sorrow and suffering'."

19. "That at the end of the Motion, the following be added namely:—

'and having considered the same, this House is firmly of the view that it is high time this country broke away from the capitalist path of development with resolute measures, to begin with, against monopoly capital and foreign capital neocolonialism, against all survivals of feudalism and landlord oppression and exploitation and for socialist orientation'."

20. "That at the end of the Motion, the following be added, namely:—

'and having considered the same, this House is of the view that no kind of bourgeois rule, which stands self-condemned, is capable of formulating and implementing any plan that would strike at the root of exploitation and social injustice and unleash in full measure the creative energy of our working people on the one hand and ensure all-sided rapid development and social progress on the other which alone can make this great nation truly strong and its people happy'."

21. "That at the end of the Motion, the following be added, namely:—

'and having considered the same, this House recommends the redrafting of the Draft Sixth Five Year Plan with a view to ensuring—

(i) rapid all-round economic development with social justice;

(ii) the implementation of radical land reforms for a radical reorganisation of agriculture;

(iii) the speediest possible attainment of self-reliance;

(iv) the priority in the promotion and expansion of the public sector in industries and its democratisation;

(v) the curbing and elimination of the monopolies particularly the multinationals and other foreign private business concerns in the country;

(vi) the maximum possible mobilisation of the resources from the the monopolists and other wealthy sections of the people;

(vii) the avoidance of the economic burdens being put on the toiling masses;

(viii) the avoidance of all measures that create inflationary pressures;

(ix) measures to raise the standard of living of the masses and to narrow income disparities through such measures as well as curbing profits and concentration of wealth in the hands of the few;

(x) a democratic and just wage policy in the interest of the working people;

(xi) higher allocations for social welfare activities and services particularly with a view to uplifting the backward and weaker sections of the community;

(xii) the effective participation of the workers at all levels of management;

(xiii) the promotion of the maximum possible development of science and technology;

(xiv) the rapid reduction of unemployment on the basis of the time-bound concrete programmes;

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(xv) purposeful measures for structural changes in the economy with the perspective of socio-economic transformations."

SHRI L. R. NAIK (Karnataka):
Sir, I move—

22. "That at the end of the Motion, the following be added, namely:—

'and having considered the same, this House notes with dismay that the Draft Plan is silent about making specific provision for the advancement of socially and educationally backward classes other than Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.'"

SHRI S. W. DHABE (Maharashtra):
Sir, I move—

23. "That at the end of the Motion, the following be added, namely:—

'and having considered the same, this House recommends the restructuring of the Draft Five Year Plan 1978—83 with a view to fulfilling the following objectives:—

(a) to ensure complete prohibition of the consumption of intoxicating drinks and of drugs which are injurious to health within four years, lay down a policy for the same and further to take other steps for implementing the Directive Principles enunciated in Article 47 of the Constitution of India;

(b) to provide wage and job security for the agricultural workers, formulate the programme to implement labour legislations and draw a comprehensive labour policy to ensure them higher standard of living and make them partners in the process of agriculture and rural development.'"

श्री शिव चन्द्र झा (बिहार) : श्रीमन्, मैं ग्रमेंडमेट 24 मूव नहीं करता हूं, मैं वापस लेता हूं लेकिन कुछ बोलना चाहता हूं।

MR. CHAIRMAN: Not now.

The questions were proposed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Motion and the amendments are now open for discussion. Mr. Pranab Mukherjee.

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE (West Bengal): Mr. Chairman, Sir, while introducing the Motion before this House the honourable Prime Minister has highlighted some of the important aspects of the document. But I fail to understand what the new goal is. If he had said, this was the outcome after the installation of the new Government at the Centre, one could understand it. But what is the new goal that the Prime Minister wants to arrive at? If I understand correctly from the document, the goal which he wants to arrive at and the goal which he wanted to arrive at even when he was the Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister during the previous Government, are the same. And it is clearly mentioned in the Plan document that the objectives are eradication of poverty, reduction of disparities between the various sections of people, full employment and to have a welfare society. They may have different modalities to arrive at these goals. The ultimate objective of the Plan does not change. I do feel that the Prime Minister used the word 'goal' perhaps meaning new modality or new method through which he wants to arrive at this goal.

Sir, this Plan document, like all other previous documents, contains an assessment and review of the previous Plans and at the same time tries to give the direction through which he wants to lead the country during a particular, given period of time.

The concept of the Rolling Plan, as mentioned, is really not a new

one. What is important to know is whether the objective which he wanted to achieve by introducing this concept or by laying emphasis on this concept could be achieved otherwise also. Perhaps it is not correct to say that there was no scope for making any reappraisal. It may not be possible at the end of each annual plan. If I remember aright, in almost every Plan at its mid-term appraisal changes, where necessary, were made which ultimately prepared the ground for the take-off for the next Plan. The question is not whether you add a new nomenclature in that concept. The question is whether you want to keep the planning process under constant review. It could be done even within the existing framework and pattern under which we were working.

No doubt, the Plan is an ambitious one, if we look at it from the various sectoral and total allocations. But the whole question is whether by trying to achieve an ambitious Plan and making allocations with that view in mind, one can have satisfaction by comparing it with the past allocations and past performance. The whole moot question is whether we have the mechanism through which we can achieve these results and objectives. The Plan has set before it a growth rate of 4.7 per cent. One can easily say that in all other previous Plans the growth rate sought to achieve was 5.75 per cent, but the actual achievement was in the order of 3.6, 3.7, 3.8 and so on. Therefore, if we have laid down a growth rate of 4.7 per cent, there is nothing wrong in it. But there is a big question mark. Is even this 4.7 per cent growth rate possible? That is the moot question. Here, I would like to draw the attention of the Prime Minister and the Finance Minister—he is also very much concerned with it—to the resources position. It has been clearly stated in the Plan document itself that we would like to try and mobilise the

resources amidst from other sources by fresh doses of taxation. The Finance Minister in his current year Budget Speech has made it clear that so far as direct taxes are concerned, the scope is extremely limited.

And, Sir, according to the figures, about thirty per cent comes from the direct taxes and seventy per cent comes from the indirect taxes. Sir, I would not like to burden the House with too many figures. But I would like to quote a few figures. So far as the resources are concerned, both the Centre and the States, taken together, want to raise resources to the tune of nearly 13,000 crores of rupees. That is the expectation and that is the objective on which the Government and the planners are working today. But what is the position actually today? If you just add up the total budgetary figures of the State Governments as they are today, you will find that they are having a deficit of nearly seven hundred crores and it is a problem for the Finance Minister to adjust the amount of Rs. 414 crores which they have given as advance Plan assistance and they should make serious efforts to mop up their own resources; but the State Governments, all of them taken together, are not in a position to wipe out the deficit of seven hundred crores. Is it possible and realistic to expect, when we are talking so much of realism nowadays, that the State Governments would be in a position to mop up resources to the extent indicated and accepted in the Budget document? Then, Sir, the second point is this: They have started with a very big "if". If the non-Plan expenditure remains static or if it has a modest rise of five per cent or so, it would be possible for them to mop up these resources within the existing framework of taxation or even with the help of additional taxation. But is it possible? Is there any indication? The Finance Minister himself has said, while replying to the

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debate on the Finance Bill yesterday, "Well, the wholesale price index has not indicated much increase." But what about the consumer price index? Now, when he has come forward with his budgetary proposals and with a deficit of Rs. 1,050 crores and with a 5 per cent rise in the excise duty across the table, can he come to the conclusion merely from the market trend of eight weeks or so that there will be no inflation at all? I do not know how it has escaped the notice of a veteran financial manager like Mr. H. M. Patel. It is for the first time in so many years that there has been a shortfall in the revenue from both excise duty and indirect taxes. He has somewhat made it up by additional dues of taxes from Customs. But there is a shortfall in the revenue to the tune of about a hundred crores. Now, Sir, when he is in command and when he has an excellent tax-collecting machinery, there is a shortfall in the revenue realisation. Can we expect that the State Governments would be in a position to mop up additional resources which they are expecting? According to the Plan documents, the entire foreign assistance will be offset to meet the import needs and keep the balance of trade. Therefore, you cannot add anything so far as foreign assistance is concerned. You have to mop up your own resources. But where is the area? Even if there is any area, have you the political will? That is the question and that is the most important question so far as the question of resource mobilisation is concerned. Sir, in his own "Economic Survey", it has been suggested that we have extended benefit to a considerable extent to the rural peasantry in the form of subsidies for fertilizers and other agricultural equipment and it was the recommendation of the "Economic Survey" also that we should bring them within the tax net.

Is he politically in a position to bring them within the tax net? Or the position is completely different that he will have to go on extending more concessions. Sir, the Finance Minister in his wishful thinking may consider: I am going to reduce the subsidy and I will keep it under constant review. No doubt, he may keep it under constant review, but the outcome of the review would be just to extend more concessions in the form of hidden subsidies to the lobbies which control and which can pressurise this Government. Therefore, look at the performance of this Government during the last one year. It is theoretically easy to convince the people that they will be in a position to make greater utilisation of capacities so far as industries are concerned. What has been the actual utilisation of capacities, installed capacities, of industries in various sectors? Sir, if I remember correctly, according to the Economic Times, on account of failure of power and man-days lost alone in the last year, the total industrial production went down to the extent of Rs. 500 crores. What are the reasons? I am not talking of transport bottle-necks. Almost every day we find from newspapers strikes and stoppage of work in ports and other areas. Therefore, the presumptions with which the basic document starts cannot be materialised in reality. Yet, if there be no strong political determination and the will to act, is it possible to act? In the document it has been suggested that only 25 per cent of the surplus land has been distributed to the landless people. Well, today, it has become a fashion to say that nothing has happened during the last thirty years, conveniently forgetting that many of the persons who are occupying the treasury benches today were at the helm of affairs in most of the period of the past thirty years. And if the past regime with its administrative machinery, bureaucratic machinery,

through which you are to translate your ideas into action, into reality—if they failed to do it, what other mechanism are you contemplating to do this?

Sir, I read from the speech of the Prime Minister while replying to such debate in the Lok Sabha that he wants to involve a large number of people even at the village level through Panchayat system, and for that he referred to the Report of the Asoka Mehta Committee. I do not know how many committees have been set up to streamline the Panchayat system in this country, and how many more committees are yet to be formed, and also what is the state of affairs of the Panchayati Raj in this country. Does he expect that within this period he would be in a position, on the recommendations of committees appointed under some experts, to get the guidelines and to involve the masses in large numbers to implement it and to improve the implementing machinery? What has happened to co-operative societies? Last year the Finance Minister, when I talked about regional rural banks and branch expansion of commercial banks in the rural areas, said: we are going to utilise the co-operative sector. For one year they have been in power. Are they in a position to make a simple proposition that universal membership should be extended to co-operative societies? Are they in a position to do so? Sir, two recommendations of expert bodies we failed to implement. Here I am not taking into consideration their past association with the Government during the last thirty years, for which they claim that nothing has been done. But even during this one year these two major recommendations could not be implemented. They claim: we are going to improve the co-operative system which you failed to do and

we are in a position to do. Is he in a position to do it? These are to professionalise the management of co-operative societies and make the membership of co-operative societies universal. There is always a gap between what we say, what we aspire to be and what we are in a position to be. And this gap has to be bridged. He may do it with the concept of rolling plan; he may try to do it with any other concept. But the question is

I P.M. whether they have the determination to do it, whether

they have the political capabilities to do it, whether they have the political will to do it. They have brought out a new proposal this year to raise resources—by selling gold. And what was the explanation given? They said, we are going to reduce gold smuggling. I am surprised to see, when the present Prime Minister was in charge of Finance, he followed a particular policy so far as the management of gold was concerned; and today we find a completely different picture, a completely different position and policy. He is expecting to raise resources through gold. He has given an explanation that he is going to control smuggling of gold. How can you control gold smuggling unless you sell gold at the international price in India? And if you are selling gold at the international price in India, are you not going to give a subsidy to the relatively affluent sections of India? Because, after all, it is the affluent sections of India who are going to, who are in a position to, acquire gold. There is production of gold in the Hatti and Kolar Gold Mines. What is the cost of production of that gold? Are you going to subsidise that? If you also want to give a subsidy and sell it at the international price, how do you expect there will be no incentive for gold smuggling.

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ling? Secondly, I would like to....

MR. CHAIRMAN: You will continue after lunch.

The House will rise now and will meet at 2 P.M.

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

The House reassembled after lunch at four minutes past two of the clock, Mr. Deputy Chairman in the Chair.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Joint Sitting of the Houses for the purpose of deliberating, and voting on the Banking Services Commission (Repeal) Bill, 1977—Contd.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA—(West Bengal): Sir, I have a submission to make regarding the joint session. Suddenly an announcement has been made that there will be a joint session, but for what purpose, we do not know.

SHRI SUNDER SINGH BHANDARI (Uttar Pradesh): Sir, Shri Pranab Mukherjee has to continue his speech.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Perhaps it is to regularise the Banking Service Commission (Repeal) Bill, which was to replace the Ordinance, which could not be got through. In this connection, Sir, I, first of all, ask whether this is the best way or the proper way of calling a joint session of the two Houses of Parliament. The second question that I ask is whether the holding of a joint session requires any summons. If so, what is the time for notice required because nothing definite has been provided for in the Rules of this House and there is nothing for us to go by. There is a provision, however, in the Constitution for holding joint session but I think the matter stops

more or less at that point. We had, during my experience at least, only one joint session on the Anti-Dowry Bill and that took place when the Parliament, the two Houses of Parliament, were not in session. After the sessions were over, a special summons was issued specifically for the joint session and there was a joint session. Here, Sir, we are in the midst of a Budget session. Now, the convention is that every year, the first session would be a joint session inaugurated by the President by his Address and that becomes really the Budget session, as we know it. That had been done; that is over. Now, Sir, we are having within the compass of the session, a joint session. As far as the Lok Sabha is concerned, there is no break; as far as the Rajya Sabha is concerned, there has been some break by way of prorogation of the House. That does not apply in the case of the Lok Sabha at all. The Houses had not been prorogued since they met in Budget session. Now, Sir, here, when we are in the midst of a session, a session that began in February—although there was a break, the session continues, namely, the Budget session—we suddenly get an announcement that there would be a joint session, a session within the session. I do not know what the convention says. In any case, Sir, what is the notice? We have our business announced in this House for the whole period and it has not been announced that there would be a joint session. In fact, the joint session cannot form part of the exclusive business of the House. Therefore, I am not blaming the Business Advisory Committee of not including the joint session in the programme of business that was sent to the House or announced in the House. It comes as an extraneous announcement. Who decided it? Government decided it. Did the Chairman of the House and the Speaker of the other House come to the conclusion that there should be a joint session? I should like it to be clarified, Sir. Did they come to this