

Another thing that we have always mentioned is that so far as the prospects are concerned, the emoluments, incentives and facilities, there should not be any discrimination or distinction between the staff that belong to the Lok Sabha and the staff that belong to the Rajya Sabha because they perform the same duties. They have been treated on par and that should always be maintained. I certainly think that those, whom you had been kind enough to nominate to the Security Committee, will take up this matter again, as we have done already.

श्री बालकवि बैरागी (मध्य प्रदेश) : सर, आज जब इसका उद्घाटन हो रहा है तो आपसे प्रार्थना है कि जब आपको घड़ी-आघ घड़ी का अवकाश हो तो इस गंभीर मसले पर वहां और यहां के सब लोग मिलकर इस पर कुछ तय कर लें। आप लोगों ने हमें लाइब्रेरी समिति का मੈम्बर बनाया है, हमारे लिए भी वहां पर असुविधाएं पैदा हो जाएंगी। सर, अभी तो काफी टाइम है और इस वक्त अगर कुछ फैसला हो जाएगा या हम उस फैसले की दिशा में बढ़ेंगे तो ठीक रहेगा।

मैं सदन के नेता महोदय से यह प्रार्थना करूंगा कि आप कृपा करें क्योंकि यह बड़ा गंभीर मसला है और इसको हल्के स्तर पर नहीं लिखा जाना चाहिए। ऐसी मेरी प्रार्थना, माननीय सभापति महोदय, आपसे भी है और सदन के नेता महोदय से भी है।

श्री संजय निरुपम : हमें सदन के नेता से गंभीर शब्दों में गंभीर आश्वासन चाहिए।

सदन के नेता (श्री जसवंत सिंह) : ठीक है।

माननीय सभापति जी, कहने में मुझे लीडर आफ दि हाऊस कहा जाता है, लेकिन मैं हाऊस का सेवक हूँ। मैं माननीय सदस्य जानते हैं कि संसद की जो व्यवस्था होती है, संसद से जुड़ी संस्थाओं की, चाहे वह लाइब्रेरी हो, ज्ञानपीठ हो, साधारणतया लीडर आफ दि लोक सभा या लीडर आफ दि राज्य सभा उस व्यवस्था में सीधे तौर से नहीं आते हैं, यह चेयरमैन साहब और स्पीकर साहब के अधिकारों का एक क्षेत्र है। आपकी भावनाओं को निश्चित रूप से हम स्पीकर साहब को बताएंगे और मुझे विश्वास है कि चेयरमैन साहब भी इस बारे में बात करेंगे। बराबरी होनी चाहिए, इसमें किसी की दो रायें नहीं हैं।

श्री सभापति : ठीक है, इसे देखा जाएगा।

श्री सुरेश पचीरी : बहुत-बहुत धन्यवाद।

DISCUSSION ON THE WORKING OF THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH (Rajasthan): Mr. Chairman, Sir, when I joined the Indian Foreign Service 49 years ago, diplomats were told that a good diplomat thinks twice before saying nothing. In the past 50 years, the

content of diplomacy, the nature of diplomacy has altered the world over. In our country, for the past 50 years, there has been a broad national consensus on the foreign policy. The framework that Nehru constructed has survived the test of the time even when some superficial and supercilious predators have tried to tamper with that framework. You abandon Nehru and you are left naked in the foreign affairs field.

I will begin by mentioning the important link between the domestic policy and the foreign policy. This is most dramatically made available to the country and to the House by the recent events in Gujarat. I will quote from a book written by P.N. Haksar whom the Minister of External Affairs, like me, admires very much. Nehruji said, "Foreign policies depend ultimately on internal conditions and developments. Internal progress for us, therefore, becomes essential if we have to play an effective part in world affairs". Shri P.N. Haksar says, "Thus sovereignty and independence are indispensable to conduct of foreign policy of any nation and even if a country is sovereign and independent, it cannot effectively pursue a foreign policy unless it is cohesive within itself and consistent in its purpose."

I have been a representative of India for 31 years and it has been a great honour to me because India has one of the best Foreign Services in the world. We come to the Foreign Services through one of the most difficult competitive examinations that the world has to offer. But the instrument that the diplomats have to have is a clear-cut policy framework and a leadership which is familiar with the foundations of India's foreign policy laid down before Independence; what are its sources of inspirations and what are the springs from which it flows. If you are not familiar with those, then you fall into the kind of traps we have been falling for the last few years. One of the fundamental problems that the present dispensation is confronted with is they are not clear about what India's foreign policy is. I say this with very great respect because I have respect for the shrines of the minds of all the Members in this House. For example, take the statement made by the Prime Minister in Ahmedabad before going to Singapore. Sir, 120 foreign missions in Delhi reported to their Governments that the Prime Minister of India has spoken like a statesman. He comes back and speaks in Goa. The same 120 missions send reports to their Governments that the Prime Minister of India has spoken like a Swayam Sewak. Now the Prime Minister has been facing a great dilemma ever since he became Prime Minister. When is he a statesman and when is he a

Swayam Sewak? Now it is no use telling the diplomats from this country or that country that you have no business to interfere in our internal affairs. The fact of the matter is that a large number of people of Indian region are citizens of the USA, the United Kingdom, France, Germany and Netherlands.

When their Governments, High Commissioners, Ambassadors, say, "Our citizens, who vote for us, have relations with Gujarat", they are concerned about their welfare. Then, how can you fault those Missions? I would have done the same thing if I was an Ambassador of this country. Sir, I have been in this game for nearly 50 years; I am still learning. I am not sure if the dispensation in the External Affairs Ministry is aware of the shortcomings from which some of them suffer.

Let me now come to the fundamentals of India's foreign policy, that is, non-alignment. It has become fashionable to say that non-alignment is not relevant. And I have seldom heard Jaswant Singhji resorting to any reference to non-alignment. He has done so rarely, and I would like him to read the Prime Minister's speech in Durban, where the Prime Minister praised non-alignment. "The Cold War has ended, the Warsaw Pact is wound up, but NATO is expanding to the borders of Russia." Against whom? If non-alignment is irrelevant, then, I think, NATO is even more irrelevant? But I will tell you how and why non-alignment is relevant even today as it was 20 years or 40 years ago. The international agenda has changed, which, of course, is inevitable. When I represented India in the 50's and the 60's, the agenda was colonialism, imperialism, rationalism, apartheid and so on. Today, the agenda is environment, drugs, AIDS, population and ecology. So, in this arena-II, it would help us if the non-aligned movement had a proper leadership, and India is a country which can give that leadership, which this Government is not giving. But, on these issues which affect the human kind, we should take a lead in the non-aligned movement and speak with one voice. Let me quote from a very distinguished European Statesman, Dr. Richard von Weizsacker, who was the President of Germany for 10 years. In the lecture which he delivered at the Nehru Memorial in 2000, he said, "Nehru was among the first and foremost to look for a non-bloc internationalism. His idea of non-alignment became of global importance. He spoke about peace clubs against Cold War-clubs, nuclear clubs. He was pondering how to create a sort of no-war-zone between the military blocs. From the outset his thoughts became and remained fruitful. Non-alignment was aiming at more than equidistance from blocs. It was a denial of the gist of bloc thinking, an endeavour to

detect inside those blocs the growing trends of openness, of looking for common interests, of conditions to survive together, of detente-policies as recommended and practised by leaders like Willy Brandt, of arms control and arms reduction proposals. Nehru's non-alignment was not a means to prevent cooperation. It was, on the contrary, an invitation never to give up the search for new ways leading to peaceful co-existence, detente and reconciliation. What echoes can we find today? Where do we go from 1989, from the end of the two-bloc confrontation, under the influence of ever-growing globalizing tendencies? So, what is to be expected from this only prevailing super power? Are we heading for a new Pan Americana? Or, will the next few decades produce a balance of global powers such as China, India, Russia, again, after a while, Japan; possibly, the European Union? What kind of internationalism is to be expected from such powers?" Now, I want to ask: What substitute do you have for the policy of non-alignment? I would like to know if any thought is given because the distinguished Minister, if he was reported correctly in the newspapers, said some 10-12 years ago - I think, it appeared in the Times of India; he was speaking to some audience in Mumbai.

It was in Bombay, which is now Mumbai. He said, "The time had come for us to abandon the Nehru legacy, lock, stock and barrel". If he did not say so, I would be happy. But it was quoted in the *Frontline* magazine. Now I would like to know what substitute you or your colleagues can produce for India's foreign policy.

Let me ask you another thing. You had twelve meetings with the Minister of State of the United States. You are India's Cabinet Minister, sitting in the chair in which Jawaharlal Nehru sat. It never occurred to you, or to the Prime Minister, that India's dignity was involved, that the Cabinet Minister of India, the Foreign Minister, should be parleying with the Minister of State of the United States, Mr. Talbot. And when the same Talbot went to Islamabad, he was met by the Foreign Secretary of Pakistan. Now, what are the Indian diplomats to say when the Foreign Minister of India escorts three hard-core terrorists in an aeroplane and releases them in Kandahar? I am very glad that I am not a diplomat under you, Mr. Minister, because I would not know what to say.

There are in the world, today, 57 Islamic countries which have been watching what has been happening in Gujarat, under the dispensation of the BJP. Four million Indians live in great comfort in the Gulf countries and in Saudi Arabia. Their lives, their future and their earnings are being put in

jeopardy because of a Swayamsevak Chief Minister! And it is extraordinary; you call it RSS, the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh; why can't you say Rashtriya Samajsevak Sangh? What are these Indians to do if, God forbid, the situation in Gujarat were to spill over? It has not spilled over to Maharashtra and Rajasthan because those States do not happen to be under the BJP. But if it were to spill over, what would be the fate of our relations with these 57 Islamic countries, what would be the fate of these four million Indians in the Gulf? If this were to spread, these people would be asked to leave the Gulf within one week. They are not citizens; they can't appeal to any court. The foreign exchange that we get from the Gulf will stop. The economies of Kerala, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, etc. would be adversely affected. Why? That is because, the present dispensation at the Centre is unable to see the damage that has been done by what has happened in Gujarat. And that is the linkage between the foreign policy and the domestic policy.

Let me take another example; and that is about your policy towards Pakistan. Do you have a policy? First, there was no mention of the Shimla Agreement at all. Lahore Journey! And we know what happened after Lahore. The distinguished Foreign Minister, for whom I have very great respect, said that the Lahore Declaration - and the visit - was a defining moment in the Indo-Pak relations. Indeed! In three months, you had the Kargil. When the Prime Minister of India was embracing the Prime Minister of Pakistan, the Pakistani Army was occupying the heights of Kargil. Indira Gandhi signed the Shimla Agreement in 1972, and it ensured peace for 27 years. Why? That is because, Indira Gandhi did not lower her guard, which the present Prime Minister did.

You take another happening in the foreign policy field. Mr. Clinton arrived here, in India, and he is the only Head of State or Government, or any foreign dignitary - I think it was two or three years ago - in the last 52 years who said, not only on the soil of India, but in the Central Hall of Parliament, that Kashmir was a disputed territory. And the Prime Minister of India was sitting next to him! You did not object. There was a Press Conference at the Hyderabad House where he repeated the same thing. And he repeated that in Washington, on the lawns of the White House. The Congress Party spoke up, and we said that we had great respect for the President of the United States, but it was not up to him to say that Kashmir was a disputed territory, on the Indian soil or elsewhere. I would like to

know this from the distinguished Foreign Minister. When did you object to this in public or in Parliament or in your private conversations?

Can you share with us the discussions that you had on the CTBT? The country doesn't know till this day. Mr. Talbot called you to Rome; you went to Rome. He called you to London; you went to London. He called you to Berlin; you went to Berlin. He called you to Washington; you went to Washington. It was, to say the least, an unseemly sight to see the Cabinet Minister of India parleying with the Minister of State of the United States of America, and, to this day, the country does not know anything about the talks. And we asked you. I don't want to make public the conversations that we had with you and the Prime Minister. But the fact remains that an impression was being given, that if we signed the CTBT, a lot of financial advantages would accrue to India. Since when has the security of India being bargained for a few dollars and financial gains? The security of India is sacred. And, with regard to the CTBT, in an article written in the Foreign Affairs magazine of September, 1998 - when you were having these discussions - you wrote, "After the two tests, India has stated that it will henceforth observe a voluntary moratorium and refrain from conducting underground nuclear tests and explosions. It has also indicated a willingness to move towards a *de jure* formalisation of the declaration. The basic obligation of the CTBT is, thus, met" - 'met' by whom? - "to undertake no more nuclear tests as India has already subscribed to the substance of the test ban treaty. All that remains is actually the signature". Now, who authorised you to say this, that India was ready to sign the CTBT, without a discussion on the issue, or your disclosing to Parliament what you have been discussing with Mr. Talbot? It was we who raised this question, both in Parliament and outside, that it was an unequal treaty; it could not be signed. And Mr. Vajpayee repeated this when he spoke at Durban. I do not know who drafted his speech. But whoever did, he had some idea of what the foreign policy was all about. There is a difference between foreign policy and diplomacy. Foreign policy is what you do; diplomacy is how you do it. I am not sure if this is borne in mind. You have one of the finest Foreign Service in the world. And you were reported, Mr. Minister - and I say this with very great respect to you - to have said at a gathering of former Foreign Service officers and some other senior officers, that the Ministry of External Affairs was unable to give you something worthwhile with regard to China and Pakistan. I am not quoting your exact words; but this is what has been reported. And you said this to

people who have spent 35 years in the Foreign Service, who have vast experience. You have only three years' experience as the Minister of External Affairs. I have nearly fifty years' experience, and I am still learning. And let me tell you, there are very few countries in the world that have the expertise on China and Pakistan that India has. And I am very proud to say this as a former member of the Foreign Service. We have nearly 85 officers who are fluent in the Chinese, who have served in China a number of times. I have been the Ambassador to Pakistan. What the Indian Foreign Service Office does not know about China and Pakistan is not worth knowing. And for the Foreign Minister of India, who should be an inspiration to his instruments, the diplomats and the officers, to say that he has not got the kind of analysis or the background or the perception, is mind-boggling, really.

Now, Sir, take the relationship with China.

We are very glad that, finally, the Government is taking some interest in Sino-Indian relations. You look at the records; you look at the speeches, and you yourselves will find out how critical your Party had been of our relations with China in the past. How sceptically you looked at India's relations with the Soviet Union? But, today, because of the visit of late Shri Rajiv Gandhi in December, 1988, Sino- Indian relations are on an even keel, regardless of what the Defence Minister of India said in May, 1998, that China was enemy number one. Instead of dismissing him, the Prime Minister pampered him. The Sino-Indian border has been quiet, has been peaceful, for the last 14 years. Why? It is because Rajiv Gandhi put back the 1962 hang-up and started a new path when he and Deng Xiao-Peng shook hands, and a new beginning was made. I was present there. It has taken you some time to realise the importance of Sino-Indian relations. I am glad you have been there, and you must have heard there the high praises which the Chinese leadership would have sung on the role of Rajiv Gandhi in improving Sino-Indian relations.

Now, Sir, take Palestine. It is singularly fortunate for Mr. Vajpayee that the incidents - unfortunate, sad and tragic - in Palestine have been more on the American radar screen; otherwise, you would have had Gujarat in every bedroom in America. I don't know if any statement, worthwhile statement, has been made on Palestine. You went to Israel and said that India's policy with Israel has been hostage to the Congress policy of

minorities. Did you or did you not? It was an extraordinary statement to make. It shows that you are unfamiliar with the foundation of India's Foreign Policy because, before Independence, Gandhi and Nehru had said that Palestine was for the Palestinians. This does not mean that we don't want friendly relations with Israel. Of course, we do; and this does not mean that we should take a one-sided view. In Shanghai, recently, when Mr. Arafat was under arrest, you said that Mr. Arafat was still the leader of the Palestinians. This was quoted in the newspapers. I don't know whether you were quoted correctly or not. I don't know when you last met the Arab Ambassadors here. Because only last week, I had to draw the attention of the higher-ups in the Prime Minister's Office that these poor dears have been asking for an appointment with the Foreign Minister for weeks. You should have been seeing them every day. When did you last see them? Well, our relations with Palestine are of utmost importance. It is, therefore, vital that we have closer relations in this hour of need when Palestine is going through hell because of the policy of Mr. Sharon, who even the Americans are trying to abandon. No worthwhile statement condemning what is happening in Palestine has come out. If it has, I would like to see it; I would like to see the wording of that statement. The Congress Working Committee passed a Resolution condemning it in the strongest possible terms.

Now, Sir, what do you think of the consequences of the appointment of an individual called Agnihotri as Indian Ambassador in the United States? What do you think Mr. Lalit Mansingh would have felt? I would like you to confirm or deny that the Americans have told Mr. Agnihotri that either he should surrender his green card or be ambassador; Mr. Agnihotri has abandoned being the Ambassador of India and retained the green card. The appointment was made for the services rendered to the *Sangh Parivar* by Shri Agnihotri, whom nobody ever heard of, and nobody will hear again. Let me come to the relationship with the United States of America. Jawaharlal Nehru's first major visit outside England was to the United States of America. He spent six weeks there in 1949. So let that history be correct. Nothing miraculous you have done for the improvement of Indo-American relations. It is in the very nature of the present day world that the United States of America and India have come closer. The Indian community there is playing a vital role in acting as a bridge between India and the United States of America.

I don't think the United States of America respects any nation which doesn't stand up to it. There was an amount of pressure that was being put on us to sign the CTBT and you were conniving at it. They would not have put this pressure up earlier. What horrified me was that the Prime Minister, in a Joint Session on 26th February, said that he had the courage to have Pokhran-II whilst the Congress Prime Minister, a few years back, had buckled under the American pressure and abandoned the exercise.

I presume the Prime Minister has taken an oath of secrecy. For him to make public reference to what a previous Prime Minister did on the nuclear issue and programme of India to be spelt out in public is, if I may say so respectfully, the height of irresponsibility. No Prime Minister should ever, in public or even private, refer to these matters, because it is only he who knows and he presses the button.

You will recollect a meeting Shri Narasimha Rao had with the present Prime Minister. He had said, "Jaswant Singhji, you know nothing about these things. Myself and Vajpayeeji know about it." Mrs. Sonia Gandhi didn't refer to Pokhran-II. But this was said in bravado by the distinguished Prime Minister. He says he has 45 years of experience, and we are all aware of it. Nobody is denying it. Arjun Singh was here and he too has 45 years of experience. I may not be a very big man but I have also had 50 years of experience in public service, representing India, and I have not done a bad job of it. But when this kind of a thing is done, what impression is being created? You were very, very happy at Pokhran-II. Do you know what the consequence has been? The superiority India had for 52 years in conventional weapons and arms against Pakistan disappeared, because we now have nuclear parity. They will never sign any agreement with you on 'no-first-use.' Why should they? आपने अपनी मुट्ठी खोली तो पांच निकले, उन्होंने मुट्ठी खोली तो उनके छः निकले।

Musharraf says that he will use nuclear weapons against India and there is no response from the distinguished Government of the NDA, which is neither national nor democratic, nor a Government nor an alliance. Your own partner, your Minister of State - the only sensible thing, as far as the foreign policy is concerned the Prime Minister has done is to appoint Omar Abdullah as a Minister of State. At least, somebody talks sense in your set up. But what did he say on Gujarat? He said it to the House, he said it on television. He abstained. But you can't do without him, so his resignation was not accepted. But he has the pulse on the repercussions and the

consequences of Gujarat or India's good name abroad. A bad domestic policy can never have a good foreign policy. Now I will conclude, Sir, by just reminding the House and the hon. Foreign Minister about the two distinguished Indians. Shashi Tarur, the best-selling author, and who is a close advisor of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, has written an article in the Hindu, Sunday, 28th April. I would not take the time of the House by quoting it. Kapil Sibal's brother, who is sitting in the Gallery, should bring it to the notice of the distinguished Foreign Minister...(Interruptions)... Okay, Sir, I take back. He is not sitting there. He is invisible. I would also like the distinguished Minister of External Affairs to read two articles written by Muchkund Dubey in the Hindu on the consequences of Gujarat and the fallout for India's foreign policy, on our economic policy and on our good name. And finally go back to Nehru because if you do not, then you will be going into every single conference with nothing worthwhile in your hands. One more thing, Sir, which has just struck me. In 1998, Nelson Mandela at the Non-Aligned Summit in Durban named eight areas of the world where there was tension and a conflict possibility. And he mentioned Kashmir. And the entire Vajpayee setup, jumped on Mandela, 'apologise, how dare you mention Kashmir!' Clinton comes here and under your nose in the Parliament House he says that it is a disputed territory. You do not say anything. What was the result? Nelson Mandela, who is a great, great friend of India, went on a farewell visit after he retired as President. Where do you think he went? -- China, Russia and Pakistan. He did not come to India. While after his release, one of the first countries he visited was India and the Sabarmati Ashram, which has been desecrated by the *Parivar* to which you belong. Thank you.

DR. L.M. SINGHVI (Rajasthan): Sir, I congratulate the Prime Minister and the Foreign Minister for the conduct of the foreign policy during the last one year which has been an extremely difficult year. But before I proceed with anything else, I would like to welcome the release of Madam Aung San Suu Kyi in Myanmar. I had got to know her husband for many years and I also know the deep sufferings which she has gone through for the cause of freedom. We acclaim her as a distinguished freedom fighter, as a true Gandhian and as a great daughter of Asia. I think, our sentiments are nationwide in the acclaim we give to Madam Aung San Suu Kyi. Mr. Chairman, Sir, the distinguished former diplomat and an hon. Member of this House, Shri Natwar Singh was certainly at his devastating best, at his left-handed best. And I wish he had used his right hand a little more.

SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH: I will, if I did not. ...*(Interruptions)*...

DR. L.M. SINGHVI: I hope so. But I think it is important for us to understand that finding faults is easy. Making a constructive contribution to the mending of various matters, I think, is a little more difficult. Mr. Natwar Singh has great experience and has great talent. He has depth of knowledge of diplomacy and I would expect him to make that constructive contribution for the enlightenment of us all. Indeed, there are many points on which I agree with him. But there are many others with which I am unable to agree with him, not because I sit on this side, but because I would have disagreed with him on some of those issues even wherever I would have speak on that. But, I must say this. Over the years, our greatest asset in foreign policy has been the asset of the national consensus behind it. The legacy of Jawaharlal Nehru, the legacy of successive Prime Ministers who have contributed to the making and modifying of the foreign policy, because nothing standstill and what was valid years ago is no longer valid now. I think, it is important for us to see that the national consensus, the solidarity of the nation is maintained to the utmost degree. And, wherever it is necessary, we should try and see that the Government has gone slightly different from that consensus, we tell the Government. That is what we do in the Standing Committee. And, I think, it is important, therefore, for me to emphasise that this great asset of India's foreign policy, with the backing of the consensus of the people, should never be allowed to be frittered away or to be diminished.

Our distinguished Member is right when he says that the foreign policy depends on the internal cohesiveness of the nation. That, in fact, is axiomatic. And that is why we must make every effort to create that internal cohesiveness, that sense of solidarity and that sense of oneness, both in matters where we discuss, differ, agree to differ and yet get on with the business which is entrusted to the Parliament. At the same time, that cohesiveness cannot be complete in matter of domestic policy. That cohesiveness can be maintained in foreign policy much more than in internal policy.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I recall the time from 1960 to 1963, when I was a Member of Parliament in the Lok Sabha, and when both the Houses of Parliament rose as one man when the Chinese attacked us. A remarkable demonstration of that sense of unity is something which etched on the

memory of India even today. And, I think, that is something for which we must strive hard because it is the internal cohesion and strength of our nation as a political system, as a civilisational State that will strengthen our position in foreign affairs. It is also well to remember that the dynamics of foreign policy does not permit us to make a fetish of any particular alignment or non-alignment. Non-alignment is not irrelevant even today. I agree with the distinguished Member who just spoke. But it has receded into a deep recession. What is required, I hope that the hon. Member will agree with me, is that a lot of rethinking, a lot of recasting and remoulding, a lot of revitalisation of a movement in building of which we played such an important part at the very historic and momentous phase of our foreign policy. We cannot, possibly, put it as an icon and worship it everyday because, non-alignment, as we have expounded at one time has changed, the situation has changed. But, I think, the association of nations - that is the essence of it all - which felt a certain sense of kinship must be revitalised, must be resurrected, if I may say so, and it can be done. While doing it, I think, we can provide a certain sense of leadership, a certain sense of belonging to that huge association which was once created, which has lost a great deal of its relevance mainly because it has not kept pace with time. Sir, I think, it is not correct to say that we have done full justice to our Foreign Service. The Foreign Service, no doubt, is a very distinguished segment of our Civil Service. Its officers are dedicated. They have shown great sense of India, wherever they have represented India. But I will be failing in my duty if I did not say that in recent years, there has been a certain decline in the quality of recruitment. I find it extraordinarily difficult to accept that, today, the first preference of those who are chosen in the competitive examinations, is no longer the Foreign Service, as it used to be fifty years ago. Fifty years ago, the Foreign Service ranked as number one service, for which the best talent of India used to opt. But it is distressing to find that, today, it ranks at the second or third or even at the fourth place. It speaks volumes for the change or the shift in priorities of our youth who are competing for these jobs. I think it is also important that the Foreign Services careers should be planned, and every effort should be made to make sure that our Foreign Service remains in the forefront of our diplomatic efforts because it is one instrument that we have to use carefully and effectively. Mr. Natwar Singh has put forward the idea that in respect of China, a great new beginning was made by late Shri Rajiv Gandhi. It is absolutely correct. There is no doubt that that beginning was a very significant turning point in our diplomacy. But I must tell the House that

many more and many significant beginnings have been made since then, because Foreign Policy is like a river. You do not bath in the same river twice because the current of water has already gone by. In respect of China, as in respect of many other issues, I think, many new beginnings have been made. I think, it is also very important for us to realise that this was a year of many tragedies and of untold sorrow. This was a year of violence, rampant throughout the world, and distressingly enough, in our own country. This was a situation in which we had to adjust our Foreign Policy in a way that it would serve our national interest. I think, in this particular area, we have not done badly. In this year, we have been able to adjust our Foreign Policy to the radical changes that have come about. Those radical changes required us to readjust our approaches and our policy. After what happened to the twin towers in New York, after what happened to our Legislative Assembly in Jammu & Kashmir, after what happened to the Parliament House on 13th December, there has been a remarkable change in the perceptions not only of India, because we have been long-suffering victims of the onslaughts of terrorism; it has also changed the perception of the world with regard to terrorism. Terrorism did not occupy a very important place in the priorities of the diplomacy of Western nations. They would listen to us; they would speak to us sympathetically. Once in a while, they would share our concerns. But I am afraid, the Western nations totally disregarded the urgency of the issue that we were facing. Mr. Chairman, the situation that we were facing was a situation of the gravest provocation, both in the form of cross-border terrorism or proxy war and a certain mobilisation in many countries of the world, in order to fight us and to fight the Indian States. One wondered, what the Rwandans and the Sudanese were doing in Kashmir. One wondered what the Afghans and some of the other nationals of Middle East nations were doing in Jammu and Kashmir. One wondered how the ISI had spread its network over the last almost 50 years in our country. One wondered how they had succeeded in indoctrinating people and, in fact, in taking heavy toll of Kashmiriath, which I think, at one time, represented that sense of secularism in India.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I think it is important for us to remember that the nefarious designs of terrorism of ISI, of Pakistan regime, successfully, are now being met on their own ground, more effectively than ever before. Although the threats, the onslaughts, the dangers are around the corner even now, I think, it is this that requires our Foreign Policy to address as

the first priority of the nation. We must try and do all that we can do to make sure that we are able to enlist the support of the countries of the West, the developing countries, the countries of Asia, and build up a world opinion based on facts and figures in respect of the threat of terrorism which we have faced all these years, the threat of terrorism which continues to threaten us. If peace is indivisible, then, the threat of terrorism, wherever it takes place, is also a matter of the concern of the world community, as a whole. We have been saying this for many years, but I think, there is a sense of sharing our concerns in this respect, much more than ever before. Mr. Chairman, Sir, I think, the United States is, today, in the driving seat, whether we like it or not, but this war of terrorism in respect of which the United States is in the driving seat, is a war of which we are very much a part. We must try and see that the priorities of India are not pushed into the backyard. We must try and see that the problems which we face are brought to the awareness of the world in a compelling manner so that a fair and just approach is applied to our concerns with regard to terrorism in Kashmir, and, indeed not in Kashmir, but in the whole network in our country. We are still awaiting reports of what their role was in Gujarat. We are still awaiting reports of many other terrorist incursions into our polity. But I think it is important for us to stand as one nation in the fight against terrorism, and, there, I think our secularism is the best bastion that you have to fight terrorism as one united nation. Mr. Chairman, Sir, all illusions die hard. The indifference of the Western countries to our oft-repeated concerns has also receded, but I wonder if we will be able to make sure that our anxieties with regard to the tactics of cross-border terrorism, the changing tactics of cross-border terrorism would also be addressed in the Western nations. I am afraid, our diplomacy will still have to negotiate its way through the pickets of General Musharraf's tactics. General Musharraf seeks to give the impression as if he is a peacemaker. He has destroyed his credibility.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Member, it is now one o'clock. You can continue after lunch. ...*(Interruptions)*... We adjourn for lunch for an hour.

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

The House reassembled at two minutes past two of the clock,

[THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SURESH PACHOURI) in the Chair.]

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SURESH PACHOURI) : Dr. L.M. Singhvi to continue.

DR. L.M. SINGHVI: Sir, I wanted to make the point, as the House rose for lunch, that when we deal with Pakistan, we must reckon with the fact that we are dealing with a pastmaster in the performing art of misrepresentations. It is from that point of view that we need to put India's case fully before the world so that all these misrepresentations and the many masks that the President of Pakistan wears from time to time are exposed.

Mr. Natwar Singh made a point that our policy had failed because within a few months of the Lahore Bus Yatra of the Prime Minister, we had an attack in Kargil. I think that is, intellectually, an argument which is flawed. Historically, we remember that immediately after the short period or the long period of Hindi-Chini Bhai Bhai, we had an attack by China on our borders. But that would not be a correct basis for faulting either Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru or, now, Shri Atal Behari Vajpayee. India is a country which seeks peace. India goes an extra mile on every occasion in its quest for peace. That is why we are to take this whole episode in that perspective -- what we have done and what we were bound to do as a peace-seeking and peace-loving nation.

Another point that Mr. Natwar Singh made was with regard to the fact that because of Pokhran-II, the two countries came on a parity with regard to our conventional forces. It is a point which has been made on many occasions by many hon. Members. But remember the fact that Pokhran-II came rather late. Pokhran-II should have been done much before.

It was a courageous act and if it had not come, it is not as if it would have stopped Pakistan in its tracks in regard to its nuclear explosion. After all, Pakistan did not develop its nuclear technology within two weeks after we had exploded or imploded the bomb. If I may say so, Mr. Vice-Chairman, we have to understand that there is a constant re-appraisal that is necessary for a long-term perspective and we require a national think-tank. I hope that the distinguished Minister will see to it that the Indian Council of World Affairs functions as a non-Government sector, NGO sector, think-tank and that there is a greater research and a better understanding of issues in this difficult area.

Mr. Vice-Chairman, we have an introduction and synopsis in the report which gives us an outline of the broad framework of priorities within which India's Foreign Policy is drafted. The objectives and priorities are valid without any question and they have also been validated by the long experience, historical perspective of India's Foreign Policy in the process of constant evolution. But, I would like to submit to the Minister, through you, Mr. Vice-Chairman, that it would be appropriate if at least three areas, which do not find a mention in the list of eight areas, are also included. Those are, in my opinion, the area of cultural diplomacy, diaspora relations and the reform of the United Nations. I know that our Prime Minister and our Foreign Affairs Minister attach the highest importance to these areas. They have shown the greatest interest in advancing these three concerns within the orbit of Indian Foreign Policy. But I find a statement in the year 2002 in which eight priorities are mentioned and cultural diplomacy is not mentioned. Economic diplomacy is mentioned and rightly so; it was not one of our priorities for many years; but I think it ought to be. However, I think cultural diplomacy, diaspora relations and reform of the United Nations should find a place in the statement of our priorities. Having said that, if I may say so, it is not enough to say that the report does mention these areas elsewhere because these are priority areas which are encapsulated in the Report and I think that these three areas should find a place in the statement of priorities.

I think that one of the areas of our priority attention is the reform of the United Nations. The United Nations Organisation needs to be reformed. It needs to be re-invented and re-inforced, if I may say so. It needs to be invested with greater moral and legal authority. Also, its functional style must change. Mr. Vice-Chairman, I have found that the democratic principle is not applied so far as the choice of permanent members in the Security Council is concerned. There is no reason, there is no earthly reason, in the year 2002 why populations of countries as large as India, a country so richly endowed with human resources should be marginalised in the consideration for permanent membership of the Security Council. There are still too many cobwebs, it seems, in the minds of the so-called great powers who have got the seats as permanent members of the Security Council. It is, therefore, important for us to make this thing move more quickly, perhaps, in concert with the nations who are also eligible for permanent membership of the Security Council. Japan has recently made the statement that it would think that Japan and India should enter the United Nations Security

Council as permanent members hand-in-hand and together. We should welcome that. There are other things, and I think, it is important for us to use the network influence in a large number of countries--big and small--to see that this point is taken note of. I am aware of the efforts, which have already been made by our Government, and the fact that they have met with a reasonable amount of success so far. But, I think, the time has come when the United Nations ought to see itself in the mirror of reality. That mirror of reality will show how distorted the composition of the Security Council is; how deficient the composition of the Security Council is. It is important, therefore, that we take it up as a priority area. But, it is not only in the composition of the permanent membership of the Security Council that reforms are needed, but, I think, there are many other areas in which the reforms are needed. There are other reforms, which are waiting to be adopted and implemented. Those reforms concern the functioning of the Security Council itself. I think, that is where we have a contribution to make, and the Security Council should be made to function more effectively as the forum for the interest of collective security in the world.

Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, I would like also to emphasize the importance of cultural diplomacy. Sir, I think, I have enough time.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SURESH PACHOURI): There is one more speaker from your party.

DR. L.M. SINGHVI: That is settled between us. I think, it is important for us to attach the highest importance to the cultural diplomacy. A very distinguished writer recently wrote that India was not only a nation State, but it was a civilisation State, and I think, it is important for us to remember that we draw strength in our foreign policy from the civilisational sense. There are many admirers of India. There are many people who greatly rever India for the contribution that it has made. I think, it is important for us to advance the whole cause of cultural diplomacy, where under the leadership of our distinguished Minister, some very important steps have been taken. I think, more needs to be done. More money needs to be provided for the Indian Council of World Affairs. I have been saying this year in and year out that the Indian Council of World Affairs and the Indian Council of Cultural Relations are two institutions now, which can, perhaps, further the cause of Indian diplomacy, in a way, in which the Government would find its efforts greatly supplemented and reinforced. I

think, it is also important that we consider the whole question of the diaspora relations. I was privileged to work in the cause of understanding the whole issue of the Indian diaspora, which is large, and we have made a report, which we have submitted to the distinguished Minister. We would very much like him to say as to what kind of a time-frame he has in mind to implement some of the recommendations we have made. I must pay my tribute to the Prime Minister and to our distinguished Minister for External Affairs, for having taken a historic and momentous initiative in the matter of relations with the diaspora, in the matter of framing a policy for the Indian diaspora. Now, that the Government has had the report for almost six months, the people and the Parliament and the diaspora itself expects that quick decisions would be taken. There are 20 million people in the Indian diaspora. There is a great multiplicity and variety. There is a rich, social, ethnic, religious and cultural capacity of India, represented in the Indian diaspora. There is also a new strength, economic, cultural and political, that we find in the Indian diaspora. It is time that we harnessed it in the cause of India's foreign policy and India's economic development as well as transfer of technology from abroad.

Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, there are many issues which relate to the Indian diaspora, and many recommendations which we have made in this 900 page report. The world has witnessed different diasporas, and the world can now see that countries like Israel, Poland, Lebanon, Italy, Philippines, Japan, Korea, China and Ireland, attach a great deal of importance to the role that the relationship with the diasporas can be made fruitful. It is important, Sir, that we are able to harness this remarkable resource. At one time, the NRIs were called the "not required Indians", or by such other names, abroad. I think, the NRIs are really a national resource of India and that national resource of India should be utilised in a full measure, both in the implementation of the three interim Reports which the high-level Committee which I was privileged to chair, had made, and the substantive recommendations which reach out into almost every area of human endeavour. Both the distinguished Prime Minister and the Minister of External Affairs have taken a very keen interest, a consistent interest, in the diaspora. This is an area in which there is a great deal of agreement. We had in our Committee a former Minister in the Congress Government. The whole point is that we approached this matter across party lines, and we have tried to suggest a framework of policy which will stand the country in good stead. They are the people who went in the 19th Century, and a great

deal of industrial intelligence which they put has transformed the economies of the countries to which they went. There was a poet, a diaspora poet, who said, "They did not find gold under every stone they turned, but every stone they turned became gold because they were able to contribute to the economies of those countries in a remarkable way." I think that is the strength of India. This is the strength of the civilisation of India, and this strength should be harnessed in the course of future. With a very warm accolade to the Minister for both making the foreign policy and conducting the foreign policy in a remarkable way, I conclude my observations with my thanks to you, Mr. Vice-Chairman.

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE (West Bengal): Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, I thank you for giving me this opportunity to participate in the discussion on the functioning of the Ministry of External Affairs, raised by my colleague, Shri Natwar Singh.

Sir, as it has been correctly pointed out by Mr. Natwar Singh, and also by Dr. L.M. Singhvi, there is a broad consensus on our foreign policy and it is rooted in our oldest civilisation. It has drawn inspiration from our freedom struggle, as we did never think that our struggle against colonialism was an exercise in isolation, but it was part of the overall struggle against colonial exploitation. In this context, certain issues emerge when we are discussing the functioning of the Ministry of External Affairs during the year 2001-2002. No doubt, this year was a very momentous and also a very critical year, and, in that context, we would like to assess to what extent we have achieved our objectives. After all, the foreign policy of a country is to protect its national interests with the cooperation and support of others, along with our cherished objective of maintaining peace all over the world.

Sir, today, the most critical issue in our Foreign Policy, which has been discussed on the floor of the House on earlier occasions, is that we are confronted with cross-border terrorism. This cross-border terrorism has assumed a new dimension after the attack on the World Trade Centre in the United States on 11th September, 2001, the attack on the Assembly building in Jammu and Kashmir in India in October, 2001, and the attack on this very building on 13th December, 2001. When we had a discussion on this issue on the floor of the House, I asked the hon. Minister in charge of External Affairs, "Mr. Minister, how do you perceive the US response to international terrorism and its action, along with its allies, against the Taliban regime in

Afghanistan? How does India's concerns get reflected in that action?". We were told on the floor of the House by the hon. Foreign Minister that the Taliban regime in Afghanistan has done nothing but manufactured terrorism". If I remember correctly, this is the phrase that he used. Its only job was to manufacture terrorism; and if that factory, which manufactures terrorism, is being destroyed, surely, our concern is reflected. Almost after six months after the destruction of the Taliban regime, I would like to know from the hon. Minister what is his assessment, whether the destruction of the terrorism-manufacturing Taliban regime in Afghanistan has eased our battle against cross-border terrorism. In the Report itself, in the Chapter on USA and in other areas also, a number of times it has been pointed out that India's problem is now viewed in a different context, with a better understanding, with a better realisation. For example, it has been stated in the Report itself, "The United States condemn the attack on the Assembly building in Srinagar on 1st October, 2001 as a terrorist act with the White House publicly stating that President Bush believes that "terrorism must end everywhere and that includes Kashmir". Thereafter, this is the observation of the Ministry of Home Affairs in the Annual Report, "There was, however, no public linkage drawn in Pakistan with regard to these attacks". Mr. Vice-Chairman, this is the catch and this is our concern that this public linkage was never there. Therefore, I would like to know to what extent it has improved the position in our fight against cross-border terrorism. So far as the alliance is concerned, so far as the new perception of USA and others is concerned, in their fight against global terrorism, where do we fit in? No doubt, our relationship with the Western powers has improved. I would not like to repeat it. My colleague, Mr. Natwar Singh, has very elaborately dealt with the aspect of non-alignment which reflects our attitude towards the Non-Alignment Movement.

At page 2 in the Introductory Chapter of the Annual Report itself, eight areas have been identified as the priority areas within which India's foreign policy is crafted, but in those eight priority areas, there is no mention of the Non-aligned Movement. There was no wonder when the former junior Minister in the Ministry of External Affairs publicly said that the Non-aligned Movement had lost its relevance. This is the real problem. What we believe, we do not say and what we say, we do not believe. Some of us might have been inspired by the Durban speech of the Prime Minister. But when we find that there is no reflection of that speech in our action and even identifying the eight priority areas in the official document published by

the Ministry of External Affairs, naturally, we do feel that this is nothing but rhetoric. Even going by this statement what we find is this. It has been stated, "To work with P-5 countries and other major powers in strengthening its security and multi-polarity in the world based on the new architecture of dialogue and cooperation." I would like to know about our position on Jammu and Kashmir. What advantage have we got in the post-11 September scenario when we extended all support - I do not want to go into the details - all sorts of logistic support to the USA and its allies? After that the British Foreign Office said - nobody pointed it out earlier; if the newspaper report is incorrect, I would be glad to be corrected by the Minister of External Affairs -- that independent elections in Jammu and Kashmir could not take place under the supervision and conduct of the Election Commissioner. This is one organisation or institution of which we are all proud. Even after the first General Elections, the then Chief Election Commissioner, Shri Sukumar Sen, was invited by Sudan when the general elections took place there. In a developing country, we have been able to establish an institution which can conduct free and fair elections. But the representative of the British Foreign Office pointed out that free and fair elections couldn't take place in Jammu and Kashmir. It was basically a bilateral issue which has been converted into an international issue. Is it our gain? Is it an outcome of our deeper cooperation and better understanding with the USA? I am not going into the debate whether we did the correct thing or incorrect thing by going in for the Pokhran-II explosions. We had a debate on it and we agreed to disagree. Shri Natwar Singh has made some suggestions. I am really at a loss to understand in regard to one area. Is it not a fact that prior to the Pokhran-II explosions, in May 1998, there was no Pressler Amendment against India; although everybody was aware of the fact that India was almost at a screwdriver distance to manufacture nuclear bombs. Still, there was no Pressler Amendment. Against the U.S.A., the Pressler Amendment was there. The U.S. President refused to certify to the Senate -- he said that he was not in a position to certify to the Senate -- that Pakistan did not possess nuclear weapons clandestinely. But that was not the case with India. India was not brought under this. There was no need for amending the Pressler Amendment through another amendment, by the Brown Amendment, to facilitate supply of sophisticated weapons to Pakistan. These questions still remain. What did we gain? Surely, it is not a weapon to win war. Surely, by having five or six explosions, we cannot compete with the United States of America which has conducted more than thousand tests or with the erstwhile U.S.S.R.,

now, Russia, which has conducted 750 tests, or with France with 250 tests or with China and the U.K., with 70 tests each. But, apart from that, the fact remains, as you are talking of parity in nuclear weapons, we have been brought on-par with Pakistan in regard to our approach to the whole issue of nuclear disarmament. And, Kashmir, today, is really internationalised. That is why, repeatedly, whoever comes, even after September 11, even after our going all out to provide logistic support to the U.S.A. and its allies, they advise us, "This issue has to be resolved. You talk to Pakistan and try to resolve the issue." Nobody shares our perception that the root-cause lies in Pakistan continuously aiding and abetting the terrorists. Certain organisations have been declared terrorist outfits and, perhaps, it would be better for our foreign policy formulators and articulators that whatever we may try to do, Pakistan would continue to be a front-ranking State in the overall strategy of the U.S.A. so far as South-Asia is concerned, so far as this part is concerned. Despite the fact that Pakistan had failed to meet the demands of the U.S., in regard to Osama bin Laden or in regard to supporting and harbouring the terrorist organisations, Pakistan will continue to be the most important contracting State in their overall strategy in regard to this region. Therefore, from our point of view, we have to see whether it is better for us or not; I leave it to the Minister because, here, umpteen number of times, I have suggested that we should not be forced to sit at the negotiating table. But, at the same time, we should not be afraid of sitting at the negotiating table and I do always believe that this issue has to be resolved at our initiative. I was reading the Kathmandu Declaration of the SAARC Summit. You had fixed the deadline of 2002 for South Asia becoming a free trade area. In 1995, at the New Delhi Summit, at the initiative of President Kumaratunga of Sri Lanka, this Declaration was made. There was no need for its reiteration at the Kathmandu Summit. SAARC, without Pakistan's cooperation, is almost like saying Hamlet, without the Prince of Denmark', because these are the two important countries which will have to contribute for the success of SAARC. But, unfortunately, it is not having... (*Time Bell*) I am sorry, Mr. Vice-Chairman. In case there are other speakers, I will conclude. I will not take more time. I will just conclude by pointing out only one aspect which is in regard to our demand for the extradition of Mr. Prabhakaran. I know that the Ministry of External Affairs has demanded it. But this issue has assumed a new dimension after the recent Press statement of Mr. Prabhakaran. I read in the newspapers that the Government of India has refused to respond to his suggestion of India playing a mediator's role. But, in this area, I do feel that

the Government of India should press hard with the Sri Lankan Government, and we should demand his extradition. It is simply not acceptable to us that the demand for the extradition of the prime accused of a dear and revered leader of this country should be sacrificed for diplomatic niceties.

The last point on which I would like to make a small observation is this. I would like to know from the hon. External Affairs Minister whether there has been any substantial improvement in the talks which are continuing in the open-ended working group in regard to the expansion of the permanent membership of the Security Council. Dr. Singhvi has argued very eloquently. I agree with him. But it is not merely a question of argument on the floor of the Indian Parliament. The argument has to be extended outside India, and we shall have to carry conviction with the other members. There was the relevance of the leadership of the Non-aligned Movement because a big chunk of countries' support could have helped us. It is some sort of a mirage after which we are running. Anyway, there is no need of having any argument over the spilt milk. But I would like to know from the hon. Minister of External Affairs as to what has been the progress or whether there is any chance of having any conclusion within a definite time-frame. Thank you, Mr. Vice-Chairman, for giving me this opportunity.

श्रीमती सरला माहेस्वरी (पश्चिमी बंगाल) : धन्यवाद उपसभाध्यक्ष महोदय, विदेश मंत्रालय के कार्यकरण पर चर्चा है, जाहिर है कि विदेश नीति पर ही केंद्रित हो सकती है और किसी भी देश की विदेश नीति उसके आंतरिक मामलों से अलग नहीं बल्कि उसका अभिन्न हिस्सा होती है। आज की दुनिया में हम अपने देश को किस रूप में देखना चाहते हैं, हमारे देश के राष्ट्रीय लक्ष्य क्या हैं, उन लक्ष्यों को हम किस तरह हासिल करना चाहते हैं, किस रास्ते पर चलकर हम अपने देश की जनता की समस्याओं का निदान करना चाहते हैं, इन प्रश्नों का जितना गहरा संबंध हमारे देश की आंतरिक नीति से है, उतना ही गहरा संबंध देश की विदेश नीति से भी है।

उपसभाध्यक्ष महोदय, आज के समय में कूटनीति के अनेक आयाम विकसित हो चुके हैं। एक आयाम राजनीतिक आयाम है जिसका बहुत गहरा संबंध किसी भी देश की स्वतंत्रता और संप्रभुता से होता है और इसका दूसरा आयाम आर्थिक आयाम है जो कि आज के वैश्वीकरण के दौर में मैं समझती हूँ कि बहुत ज्यादा महत्वपूर्ण हो गया है। उपसभाध्यक्ष महोदय, यह भी साफ है कि आज हमारे राष्ट्र के समक्ष जो चुनौतियाँ हैं, ये ही चुनौतियाँ कमोबेश हमारे देश की विदेश नीति के संबंध में भी हैं। उपसभाध्यक्ष महोदय, यह याद दिलाने की जरूरत नहीं है कि जिस समय केंद्र में भारतीय जनता पार्टी के नेतृत्व में "राजग" सरकार का गठन हुआ था, उस समय दुनिया के बहुत सारे देशों में विशेषकर पश्चिमी देशों के अखबारों में यह प्रतिक्रिया होने लगी थी कि हिंदुस्तान में एक उग्र हिंदू राष्ट्रवादी पार्टी, एक दक्षिणपंथी पार्टी का शासन हो गया है।

उपसभाध्यक्ष महोदय, हमारी सरकार के साथ जो ये विशेषण जोड़े जा रहे थे, मैं समझती हूँ कि उनको यहां बहुत खोल कर रखने की जरूरत नहीं है। दक्षिणपंथ से क्या तात्पर्य है, उग्र राष्ट्रवाद से क्या तात्पर्य है, इसको भी मैं समझती हूँ, खोल कर रखने की जरूरत नहीं है। हमें बहुत दूर तक जाने की जरूरत नहीं है। आज ही के अखबार में आपने देखा होगा कि किस तरह फ्रांस में, हाल ही के राष्ट्रपति के चुनाव में जब एक उग्र राष्ट्रवादी, घोर दक्षिणपंथी ली पेन ने सिर उठाना शुरू किया तो पूरे फ्रांस की जनता के कान खड़े हो गए। उसने कहा कि नहीं, हमें हर कीमत पर इनकी जीत को रोकना है, हमें फ्रांस को बचाना है और फ्रांस की जनता ने अपनी चेतना का सबूत दिया। चुनाव में शिराक को 83 फीसदी मत मिले। इसीलिए उपसभाध्यक्ष महोदय, हमारे यहां राजग सरकार के आने पर जो आशंकाएं व्यक्त की जा रही थीं कि इसके क्या प्रतिफलन हो सकते हैं, हमारे देश की आंतरिक नीति में, हमारे देश की विदेश नीति में, कमोबेश राजग सरकार के इन चार वर्षों के शासन में, दुर्भाग्य से वे तमाम आशंकाएं सही साबित हुईं। परमाणु विस्फोट से शुरू की गई हमारे इस क्षेत्र में नाभकीय अस्त्रों की दौड़, फिर कारगिल युद्ध और अब गुजरात, इन तमाम चीजों का एक ही सार है और वह सार है धर्म के आधार पर हमारे समाज का, हमारे राष्ट्र का धुवीकरण करना। उपसभाध्यक्ष महोदय, यह सच है कि यही चर्चा अगर दो-तीन महीने पहले हुई होती तो चर्चा का संदर्भ कुछ दूसरा हुआ होता। उस समय की पृष्ठभूमि कुछ दूसरी थी और तब हमारी चर्चा के केन्द्र में 11 सितम्बर हुआ होता, अमरीका का अफगान युद्ध हुआ होता, डरबन में हुए तीसरे नक्सलवाद विरोधी सम्मेलन में भारत सरकार की शर्मनाक भूमिका हुई होती, दोहा सम्मेलन हुआ होता और भारत की संप्रभुता को ताक पर रख कर अमरीका के साथ किया गया सैनिक सुरक्षा सहयोग समझौता होता और इसके अलावा भी कई सवाल होते। लेकिन उपसभाध्यक्ष महोदय, आज जब हम यह चर्चा कर रहे हैं, तब संदर्भ बदल गया है। आज विश्व का संदर्भ हम खुद बन गए हैं और इसीलिए विदेश नीति पर चर्चा करते हुए मेरी चर्चा का प्रारंभ बिंदु अगर गुजरात बन जाता है तो इसमें किसी को कोई आश्चर्य नहीं होना चाहिए, क्योंकि गुजरात अब सिर्फ हमारा आंतरिक मामला नहीं रह गया है। यह सरकार भले ही प्रतिवाद और क्रोध का कितना ही नाटक क्यों न करे, लेकिन आज पूरी दुनिया की आंखें गुजरात पर गड़ी हुई हैं। निश्चित तौर पर यह एक बदली हुई विश्व परिस्थिति है और जब हम विश्व ग्राम की चर्चा करते हैं तो आप कैसे अपेक्षा कर सकते हैं कि विश्व के किसी भी कोने में सभ्यता के स्वीकृत नियम, कायदे कानूनों को ताक पर रख कर इसानियत के हकों का अगर कहीं पर उल्लंघन किया जाता है तो विश्व की नज़रें उस पर नहीं जायेंगी। मैं समझती हूँ कि ऐसा सोचना घनघोर बदकानापन है। इसके अलावा उपसभाध्यक्ष जी, अब तो यह चलन हो गया है कि जहां कहीं मानवीय अधिकारों का उल्लंघन होते हुए देखते हैं, जनतंत्र का उल्लंघन होते हुए देखते हैं, वहां हम देखते हैं कि विदेशी ताकतें प्रत्यक्ष तौर पर हस्तक्षेप करती हुई दिखाई पड़ती हैं। इस हालत में गुजरात में पिछले दो महीनों से सरकार द्वारा प्रायोजित जनसंहार का जो तांडव चल रहा है, उसके प्रति विश्व समुदाय अपनी आंखें मूंद लेगा, ऐसी अपेक्षा हमें नहीं करनी चाहिए। लेकिन भारत सरकार का इसके प्रति क्या रवैया है, जब अमरीका की दक्षिण एशिया की प्वायंट पर्सन क्रिस्टीना रोका गुजरात की घटना पर टिप्पणी करते हुए कहती हैं कि यह बड़ा ही भयानक है, तब हमारी सरकार चुप रहती है। जब ब्रिटिश हाई कमिशन ने इंग्लैंड स्थित अपने कार्यालय को यह रपट भेजी तो कहा कि गुजरात में जो चल रहा है, यह एक पूर्व कल्पित किसी समुदाय विशेष की सफाई के उद्देश्य से प्रेरित, राज्य द्वारा समर्थित हिंसा है। उस समय भी हमारी सरकार चुप रही और यह रिपोर्ट भारत के तमाम अखबारों में छपी।

सरकार ने कुछ नहीं कहा, लेकिन जब हमारे परंपरागत मित्र फिनलैंड के विदेश मंत्री, जो कि व्यक्तिगत रूप में भी भारत के मित्र रहे हैं, उन्होंने जरा सी बात कही कि गुजरात की स्थिति पर वह चिंतित हैं तो हमारी सरकार उबल पड़ी, क्रोध से फट पड़ी और बयान जारी किया कि यह हमारा आंतरिक मामला है, आप इस विषय में हस्तक्षेप मत करिए। उपसभाध्यक्ष जी, आप उस बयान की बानगी देखिए, they are projecting themselves in the highly politically charged internal and political debate in the country and are creating an impression of playing a partisan role. उपसभाध्यक्ष जी, इस पार्टीजन रोल पर आप गौर करेंगे। मुझे लगता है कि हमारा विदेश मंत्रालय चूक गया, नहीं तो उन को भी "स्यूडो सेक्युलरिस्ट" की उपाधि से विभूषित कर दिया होता। उपसभाध्यक्ष महोदय, विदेश मंत्रालय के इस भोंडेपन से हमें क्या मिला? क्या इस से गुजरात के मामले से हम ने विश्व समुदाय का ध्यान हटा दिया? दूसरे दिन स्विटजरलैंड के विदेश मंत्री हमारे प्रधान मंत्री से मिले और उन्होंने कहा कि गुजरात में जो कुछ हो रहा है, उस से वे बहुत आहत हैं और इस के बाद कनाडा, जर्मनी, हॉलैंड - सभी ने गुजरात के मामले पर गहरी चिंता प्रकट की। युरोपियन यूनियन की ओर से तो बेहद कड़ी भाषा में प्रतिवाद किया गया और उन्होंने इस की तुलना नक्सलवाद और नाजीवाद से की, लेकिन तब भी हमारी सरकार ने कुछ नहीं कहा और मैं समझती हूँ कि इस में इस सरकार का कोई दोष नहीं है। असल में राज.ग. सरकार को संघ परिवार घला रहा है और उस संघ परिवार का गुजरात में चल रही हिंसा के प्रति क्या रवैया है, यह सब जानते हैं। उन का कहना है कि शायद वह सांप्रदायिकता का अंतिम समाधान निकाल रहे हैं, फाइनल सॉल्यूशन निकाल रहे हैं।

उपसभाध्यक्ष जी, भारत सरकार की विदेश नीति, इस सरकार की अन्य तमाम नीतियों की तरह ही घनघोर दक्षिणपंथी, राष्ट्र हित विरोधी और साम्राज्यवादपरस्त नीति है। गोसांई जी ने कहा था, "समरथ को नहीं दोष गोसांई।" अमेरिका, इंग्लैंड, कनाडा, जर्मनी और युरोपियन यूनियन की टिप्पणियों से इस सरकार को कुछ नहीं हुआ, लेकिन फिनलैंड ने जब जरा सी बात कही तो हमारी सरकार को अपने स्वाभिमान का ध्यान आया।

उपसभाध्यक्ष जी, जब से यह सरकार बनी है, इस की विदेश नीति ने दुनिया में दोस्त कम, दुश्मन ही ज्यादा बनाए हैं। मुझे शेक्सपियर याद आते हैं जिन्होंने कहा था कि, Sir, you have wrestled well and overthrown more than your enemies. उपसभाध्यक्ष जी, एक समय गुटनिरपेक्ष राष्ट्रों का नेता होने के नाते भारत को दोस्तों की कोई कमी नहीं थी। उस समय भारत उत्पीड़ित मानवता को शब्द दे रहा था, राष्ट्र मुक्ति आंदोलनों का नेतृत्व कर रहा था, विश्व विरादरी में समानता और न्याय के पक्ष में खड़ा था और अमेरिकी दादागिरी के विरोध में खड़ा था। इसीलिए दुनिया की 80 फीसदी जनता भारत की ओर आशाभरी नजरों से देखती थी और उसे अपना मित्र समझती थी। उपसभाध्यक्ष जी, मुझे फिर गोसांई जी याद आ रहे हैं जिन्होंने कहा था,

"जे न मित्र दुख होई दुखारी, तिन्हें विलोकत पातक भारी,

निज दुख गिरि सम रज करि जाना, मित्रक दुख रज मेरु समाना।"

उपसभाध्यक्ष जी, इसी रास्ते पर चलकर हमारे देश ने दोस्तों के दुख में शामिल होकर दोस्तों की एक लंबी कतार खड़ी की थी, लेकिन इस सरकार के आने के साथ ही पूरा दृश्य पटल पलट गया है। इस सरकार ने सीधे-सीधे अमेरिका, ब्रिटेन और साम्राज्यवादियों की मंडली की जी हुजुरी का रास्ता अपना लिया है। यहां तक कि परमाणु बम का विस्फोट कर के भी सीधे-सीधे हमारे प्रधान मंत्री ने तत्कालीन अमेरिकी राष्ट्रपति को पत्र लिखा और कहा कि यह विस्फोट हम ने चीन को मद्दे नजर रखकर किया और उस काले पत्र की छाया उस समय जब हम चीन के साथ हमारे संबंध सुधर रहे थे, उस काले पत्र की छाया ने हमारे उन सुधरते हुए संबंधों पर एक जबर्दस्त आघात लगाया और उस पत्र की काली छाया आज भी चीन के साथ हमारे संबंधों पर है। इसलिए मैं कहना चाहूंगी कि अब यह उचित समय आ गया है कि हम इस सब का ठीक से मूल्यांकन करें कि हमारी इस अमेरिकापरस्त नीति से हमें क्या मिला है ? अमेरिकापरस्ती का जो रास्ता हम ने अख्तियार किया, उस के चलते हम ने क्या खोया, क्या पाया और खास तौर पर 11 सितम्बर की घटना के बाद जब अमेरिका ने आतंकवाद के खिलाफ युद्ध की घोषणा की।

भारत सरकार का क्या रवैया था ? उस समय अमरीका अपने अफगानिस्तान युद्ध में भारत के समर्थन की कोई आवश्यकता नहीं समझता था, अपनी विश्व रणनीति में वह इसे सही नहीं समझता था और वह इस्लामिक राष्ट्रों को अलग नहीं करना चाहता था, लेकिन भारत सरकार बार बार अमरीका से कह रही थी कि आप किसी तरह से पाकिस्तान को आतंकवादी राष्ट्र घोषित कर दीजिए। कहा जा रहा था कि अगर आप हमारी सेनाओं को सीधे नहीं उतार सकते तो कम से कम हमारी धरती से अपने विमानों को ईंधन भरने का अवसर दे दीजिए।

उपसभाध्यक्ष महोदय, सरकार का रवैया यह था कि जैसे कोई दास अपने घर में अपने स्वामी के आने की प्रतीक्षा करता है और जब स्वामी आता है तो उसके पांव पड़ कर अपने को धन्य धन्य समझता है, यही भारत सरकार की इच्छा थी। भारत सरकार इतनी आकुल-व्याकुल थी कि किसी तरह हम अमरीका के साथ हो जाएं। यह आपकी नीति थी। इसके बाद हमारे प्रधान मंत्री जी वाशिंगटन गए और उसके दूसरे ही दिन परवेज मुशर्रफ़ साहब वाशिंगटन पहुंचे। मुशर्रफ़ साहब की यात्रा के बाद पाकिस्तान पर लगी तमाम पाबंदियां हटा ली गईं, ऊपर से एक अरब डॉलर की सहायता की घोषणा हो गई, ऋण में राहत की घोषणा हो गई। लेकिन, भारत को क्या मिला ? अमरीका के राष्ट्रपति बुश ने कश्मीर का मामला उठा दिया। प्रणब जी कह रहे थे कश्मीर के मामले को आपने अंतर्राष्ट्रीय बना दिया, यह सही बात है। आप ही के राज में यह हुआ। उस समय अमरीकी राष्ट्रपति ने कश्मीर का मामला उठाते हुए कहा था कि भारत और पाकिस्तान, दोनों को साथ साथ बैठाया जाएगा और जनता की राय को ध्यान में रखते हुए कश्मीर की समस्या का समाधान किया जाएगा। यह जनता की राय का जुमला ऊपर से देखने पर तो बहुत आकर्षक लगता है, लेकिन इस जनता की राय के जुमले के पीछे भारत की पीठ में भोंकने के लिए खंजर तैयार किया जा रहा था, जिसकी ओर हमारी सरकार पूरी तरह से बेखबर रही।

उपसभाध्यक्ष महोदय, इससे पहले भी इसी संदर्भ में, कश्मीर के संदर्भ में राष्ट्रपति क्लिंटन ने एक जुमला छोड़ा था और वह यह कि कश्मीर और पाक-अधिकृत कश्मीर, दोनों की जनता के बीच में मेलजोल बढ़ाया जाय, यह मेलजोल पांच साल तक बढ़े और उसके बाद

रेफरेंडम किया जाए, जनमत संग्रह किया जाए। इसका क्या परिणाम होता ? उनका इरादा साफ था कि इन पांच वर्षों में कश्मीर में स्वतंत्र कश्मीर के विचार की आंधी उठाई जाए और एक ऐसे कश्मीर का गठन किया जाए, जो कमजोर हो, अमरीका पर निर्भर हो ताकि वह कश्मीर अमरीका की विश्व रणनीति में उनका मोहरा बन सके। अमरीका का यह इरादा आज भी बदला नहीं है। अमरीका कभी नहीं चाहता कि भारत एक मजबूत और एक शक्तिशाली राष्ट्र के रूप में उमरे। अमरीका कभी नहीं चाहता कि भारत समानता और न्याय के पक्ष में खड़ा हो। इसलिए वह आज भी हमेशा की तरह पाकिस्तान को अपना विश्वस्त साथी मानता है। अफगानिस्तान युद्ध के दौर की सारी घटनाएं इस बात को प्रमाणित करने के लिए काफी हैं कि भारत ने लाख कोशिश की, लेकिन अमरीका पाकिस्तान से अपना पल्ला झाड़ने को तैयार नहीं हुआ। हमें इस बात को कतई नहीं भूलना चाहिए कि पाकिस्तान किसी समय सिएटो का सदस्य था और यह सिएटो हमारे इस क्षेत्र में अमरीका के नेतृत्व का सैनिक संगठन है।

उपसभाध्यक्ष (श्री सुरेश पक्षीरी) : प्लीज, अब आप समाप्त करें।

श्रीमती सरला माहेश्वरी : महोदय, पांच मिनट और लूंगी। इनकी अमरीकी परस्त नीति अचानक पैदा नहीं हुई। इसके मूल में जनसंघ की नीति, आरएसएस की नीति, संघ परिवार की नीति काम करती रही है, जो हमेशा से भारत को अमरीका परस्त बनाने पर जोर देती रही है।

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL) : Sir, I would like to inform the hon. Members that we have to finish the debate before six o'clock because Rashtrapati's programme is at 6.30 p.m. ...*(Interruptions)*... If you go according to the time available for each Party, then, I think, ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRIMATI SARLA MAHESHWARI : Already the number of speakers is very less. ...*(Interruptions)*...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SURESH PACHOURI) : That is why I have requested her to wind up.

श्रीमती सरला माहेश्वरी : उपसभाध्यक्ष महोदय, मैं बात कर रही थी कि आरएसएस हमेशा से अमरीकी परस्त नीति पर चलता रहा है और यह अमरीका के साथ संघ परिवार के पुराने रिश्तों का ही परिणाम है कि पचास के दशक में अमरीका ने कई शोधकर्ताओं के जरिए भारत में सामाजिक तनाव के बारे में एक रिसर्च करवाई। इसमें एक रिसर्च इंस्टीट्यूट आफ पेसिफिक रिलेशन के तत्वाधान में जे०एन० करान जूनियर ने की थी, जिनकी रिपोर्ट के आधार पर यह निष्कर्ष निकाला गया था कि यदि भारत को वामपंथियों से बचाना है, भारत को कम्युनिस्टों से बचाना है तो अमरीका को आरएसएस का दामन धामना पड़ेगा और तभी से आरएसएस के साथ अमरीका के संबंधों का सूत्रपात हो गया था।

3.00 p.m.

राजग की विदेश नीति पर जनसंघ के वक्त से चली आ रही संघ परिवार की यही नीति काम कर रही है। जब राजग सरकार बनी तो अपने सहयोगियों को बरगलाने के लिए भाजपा ने एकध्रुवीय विश्व की दुहाई देनी शुरू की। There is no alternative - TINA. इस टीना का मंत्रीच्चार करते हुए उन्होंने कह दिया कि आज का विश्व बदल गया है, इसलिए अमरीका के साथ जाने के अलावा और कोई चारा नहीं है। उसके बाद अमरीका के साथ सैनिक और सुरक्षा सहयोग शुरू हुआ। इस सरकार ने दियागो-गार्शिया पर अमरीका के सैनिक अड्डों को हटाने की मांग भी छोड़ दी। 3-4 दिसम्बर, 2001 को नई दिल्ली में अमरीका और भारत की रक्षा नीति गुप की बैठक हुई। इस बैठक के बाद एक संयुक्त वक्तव्य जारी किया गया। इसको अगर आप देखें तो आपको पता चल जाएगा कि किस तरह भारत अमरीका की विश्व रणनीति का एक हिस्सा बनता जा रहा है। इस वक्तव्य में कहा गया कि 'भारत और अमरीका इस बात पर सहमत हैं कि एशिया में और उसके आगे भी उनके साझा रणनीतिक हित हैं, common strategic interest' इस वक्तव्य में संयुक्त प्रसार विरोधी कदमों, anti-proliferation measures, का भी उल्लेख किया गया है। अभी मेरे से पूर्व वक्ताओं ने बता दिया है कि anti-proliferation measures से इनका तात्पर्य क्या है और आतंकवाद से लड़ने के नाम पर आज अमरीका की विदेश नीति क्या है ? हम अच्छी तरह से समझ रहे हैं कि आज ईरान, इराक, उत्तर कोरिया और चीन को अमरीका समझता है कि ये सबसे ज्यादा मिसाइलों के प्रसार का काम कर रहे हैं। इसलिए अमरीका चाहे एबीएम जल्दी से हटा दे, चाहे सीटीबीटी पर कुछ न करे, हम खामोश रहेगे। इसलिए अमरीका की विश्व सामरिक नीति का अगर हम अनुसरण करेंगे तो मैं समझती हूँ कि हमारा रास्ता गलत होगा।

अंत में मैं गुट निरपेक्ष आन्दोलन के बारे में कहना चाहूंगी। गुट निरपेक्ष आंदोलन के बारे में नटवर सिंह जी ने भी चर्चा की। मैं हमारे विदेश मंत्री जी और सिधवी जी से भी कहना चाहूंगी, जो यह कह रहे थे कि एक ही नदी में दोबारा स्नान नहीं किया जा सकता, कि आज विश्व परिदृश्य बदल गया है लेकिन आप अगर यह मानकर चलें कि यदि आज विश्व एक-ध्रुवीय है तो वह हमेशा के लिए एक-ध्रुवीय रहेगा, यह कोई ईश्वरीय विधान नहीं है। यह कोई ईश्वर के विधान से नहीं बना है। आज अगर विश्व एकध्रुवीय है तो कल उसे कई ध्रुवों का होना है, एकध्रुवीय हमेशा के लिए नहीं रहेगा और तब इसका नेतृत्व कौन करेगा ? क्या गुट निरपेक्ष आन्दोलन का नेतृत्व करने वाला भारत इसका नेतृत्व नहीं कर सकता ? क्या भारत, रूस और चीन मिलकर, जो दुनिया की आबादी का आधे से अधिक हैं, एक नया ध्रुव नहीं बना सकते ? उपसभाध्यक्ष महोदय, आज हमारी रीजनल कोऑपरेशन की अनेक अपूर्व संभावनाएँ खुली हुई हैं, लेकिन हम क्या कर रहे हैं। दक्षेस जैसे संगठन को हमने एक मृत संगठन बना दिया है। यूरोपियन यूनियन आसियान अफ्रीका एकता आदि तमाम संगठन बड़ी तेजी से काम कर रहे हैं, लेकिन हम अपने द्विपक्षीय संबंधों की कटुता को लेकर ही जी रहे हैं और आज के विश्व परिप्रेक्ष्य को भूलते जा रहे हैं। भारत ने दोहा में थोड़ी सी भूमिका निभाई लेकिन साम्राज्यवादियों के दबाव के आगे वह टिक नहीं सका।

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SURESH PACHOURI): Please conclude now.

श्रीमती सरला महेश्वरी : उपसभाध्यक्ष जी, आपका दबाव मैं देख रही हूँ, इसलिए मैं अंत में विदेश मंत्री से यह कहना चाहूंगी कि अगर भारत के आत्मसम्मान को बचाना है, अगर भारत की मर्यादा को अक्षुण्ण रखना है तो इन आत्मसमर्पणकारी, आत्मघाती नीतियों को आपको छोड़ना होगा तभी भारत का कल्याण होगा, विश्व का कल्याण होगा, तभी हम अपने देश में और दुनिया में विश्वस्त्रीकरण के पक्ष में, शांति के पक्ष में खड़े हो सकते हैं, समानता और न्याय के पक्ष में खड़े हो सकते हैं। धन्यवाद।

SHRI T.N. CHATURVEDI (Uttar Pradesh): Thank you, Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir. I would like to say, at the very outset, that the Indian foreign policy is a positive one. It is a forward-looking one. It takes into account the changing circumstances and it believes that there is a need for consensus within the country. The foreign policy of India emerged, as has been mentioned by Mr. Mukherjee, through the freedom struggle and the number of postulates that arose therefrom. There is no question of any deviation. So far as this Government is concerned, it has only tried to build on it. It has only tried to shift the focus as called for by the circumstances. And that is why there is a needless apprehension and fear that there is an attempt to disown the legacy of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru or somebody else. I do not know why my friend, Shri Natwar Singh, harbours such illusions? I cannot compete with him either in his experience in diplomacy or in his scholarship or the years that he has spent in a very useful service, by representing the country.

Probably, many of the things that he has asked, would be replied to by the hon. Foreign Minister, as may be called for. But I was a little bit surprised by the barrage of vituperation that he unleashed, always, of course, referring to the hon. Foreign Minister. He said that diplomacy is how to do a thing, and foreign policy is what ought to be done. I think Shri Natwar Singh is not satisfied with being the Chairman of the Foreign Policy Group or Cell of his party. He is fumbling. He does not know what is to be done, and how to do it. He thinks that one way is, just try to start some kind of a posture of aggression that, probably, will demolish the Foreign Minister, the foreign policy of the Government, and the Government itself. This is only in continuation of two simple things. I don't want to go into them. I just want to point out some positive features. The worry is Gujarat. Gujarat is again being brought in. I agree with my distinguished friend, Shri Natwar Singh, that so far as the foreign policy is concerned, it hinges on the economic strength of country, on the social cohesion of the country, and how far we can speak and articulate our interests in one voice,

because it is the national interest which is supreme. But certain moral principles that we have inherited, naturally, take note of that. Also, as Mr. Mukherjee has said, it is only the cooperative atmosphere that will enable the foreign policy to fructify. But, again, when he started with Gujarat, Goa, Ahmedabad, the Prime Minister, I think, the stage was the same. Or, probably, he had prepared for the discussion on Gujarat yesterday or the day-before-yesterday. But his equally distinguished senior colleague, Shri Arjun Singh, stole the march that day, and, in any case, he had to make up now. The idea was that yesterday's debate and the unanimous voice would put an end to this kind of seemingly fractured viewpoint. That is the unanimity of view; so far as this country is concerned. As far as this unfortunate matter is concerned, we do not want a repetition of this. We want that all those who were guilty of any of the wrongdoing should suitably be punished. But, again, that is being repeated, and, that too, combined with the RSS. Shrimati Sarla Maheshrawai and Shri Natwar Singh brought in the RSS everytime. This is, again, an expression of the frustration of the very distinguished lady Member, and our friend. The trouble is, she talked of a small pamphlet, which was given to me also by Mr. D.R. Goel, who has written a big book. That gave me an idea of what the organization was at that point of time. But the point is, the Communist Party, in the USSR and in this country, and the RSS, were almost founded at the same time. One has disappeared. The remnants remain, probably, they will also vanish in a matter of time. Mr. Mukherjee and many others are trying to ensure that. But the RSS goes on flourishing, goes on increasing, in its strength, diversifying itself, acquiring more and more strength in different areas of life! I have never been a member of the RSS. But when I think of it, the kind of criticism in season and out of season, that is brought in, only. It means that you want to give the dog a bad name and hang it. There have been the same kinds of arguments. Sir, I have limited time, otherwise, I would also have mentioned many other things in this regard. Probably, I can do it at some other time. Sir, my friend, Shri Natwar Singh, mentioned one thing. He said, 'I am criticising the Foreign Minister.' I was a member of the Standing Committee during his time. And when Mr. Dinesh Singh was the Foreign Minister, then also, I was in the Consultative Committee. At that time, I made a statement that the integrity of the Foreign Service, the cohesiveness of the Foreign Service, and the status and prestige of the Foreign Service, should be maintained. Because, at that point of time, an attempt was made to interfere in its working. A large number of articles had appeared and a number of misgivings had been expressed. And, it was I,

who pointed out at that stage, that the cohesiveness and status of this Service should be preserved. Sir, I had worked at the National Academy. And I would not even go by my friend, Dr. Singhvi's assessment on today's young people. There may be this change in the prioritisation of the ranking of the Services by the young people, probably, very new or, maybe, some viciousness of the atmosphere, might have affected that. But, I believe today's young man who joins the Service, and I am saying this as one who had worked at the National Academy for a period of, at least, four and a half or five years, I have seen, at least, four or five batches and when I meet those people even today, I find that they are as bright as they were once upon a time. On the other hand, probably, they are much more sensitive to the issues today. I would like to assure Shri Natwar Singh on this. On the other hand, whenever I had a grouse or whenever some matter was pointed out to Mr. Natwar Singh, I found him always very protective; and he was very possessive about the Foreign Office. It is not that he tries to denigrate the Foreign Office as such because he knows that it is the strength of that Institution which enabled him to perform his tasks better and better. He has confidence in the Foreign Service and, that is why, he has been able to achieve whatever he has achieved.

Sir, the next point is about non-alignment. My friend Shri Natwar Singh and myself were there in a forum on 'The Relevance of Non-alignment today.' And, I do agree with his point. But, Sir, this is not a *mantra* to be repeated every morning and evening. It is not a rosary to be repeated every time. The point is that he himself suggested certain ingredients; certain new elements. So far as the economic areas are concerned, and Shri Pranab Mukherjee has pointed that there are many elements. Those points have to be taken into account.

Another point is that he himself quoted some reported statement in Mumbai and he says, 'he is not sure of that'. And, also about what the Prime Minister, Mr. Vajpayee, said in Durban. He himself realises very well that the foreign policies of the Government, the foreign policies of the country, I don't think there is any kind of 'schism' or any kind of rift about the perception of a statement on an important matter which is made by him or by the Prime Minister; and we have to see that there is a complete unanimity on views. The only thing is that the style, the way one expresses, may slightly differ, as Mr. Natwar Singh's style differs from that of Shri Pranab Mukherjee. That, of course, is a different matter.

Sir, a number of points have been mentioned. I cannot go into all those things because of lack of time. So far as this Government is concerned, the emphasis on the point made by whether Smt. Sarla Maheshwari or Mr. Natwar Singh that this Government succumbs to the pressure, and abides by the wishes of the United States.

Inside this House and outside this House, the Prime Minister, the Minister of External Affairs, and many other important Members of this Government have made it clear that there is no power on earth which can really coerce a Government of the country. Today, it is our Government, tomorrow, it may be your Government. Ours is the Government of proud people, and of the people who have strength and who have resources. That is the reason why everybody looks to India and China as two great powers. But it does not mean that we should go on harping on this particular point. India has never believed in unipolarity. Somebody may be strong today, somebody else may be strong at another point of time. After all, this world consists of sovereign States and India's strength and resources will always support the right cause. So, there is no question of such needless apprehensions. A web of illusion is being woven that America is pressurising us, and some reference was made even to what the Prime Minister, Shri Vajpayee said. It was not in bravado. It was also said that that was a statement of fact. You should realise the context in which he made that particular statement. Vajpayeeji is a man of few words and mild words. Our Foreign Minister, of course, he talked to me, it was also advised by Natwar Singh that he is a man of few words, very few words. Sometimes, I feel that he will even dilate a little more on what he said. Sir, it was not in the spirit of bravado. Mr. Natwar Singh, that was the articulation, that was the expression of the indignation of the people of this country. So, that was not any bravado that the Prime Minister made that kind of a statement.

Again, it was said about Palestine. I would like to mention a few things about Palestine which I have read. He also quoted something. Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, I happened to be out of this country, but even there, through the courtesy of Embassies, I was able to get some extracts of Indian newspapers. Full details were given about the way he talked to the Prime Minister of Israel. It was also said he got in touch with Mr. Arafat, whom we have always respected, whom we hold in great esteem. But, as you know, Sir, the path of a conciliator and the path of a bridge builder is

always difficult. At the end of his memoirs, Edward Benson, writes that a bridge builder is crushed from both the sides. That is why an effort to bring in conciliation, try to smoothen the ruffled feathers, try to bring the warring sides together is needed, the hard words are not needed. It is this kind of approach which this country and this country's Minister of External Affairs has rightly adopted.

Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, Mr. Mukherjee has put a number of questions which are very relevant. I have no doubt that the Minister of External Affairs will respond to all of them. But saying that there is no policy on Pakistan, there is no policy on any aspect of foreign affairs, is not correct. *(Time bell)* Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, before I wind up, I would like to mention, in a telegraphic manner, or refer to some of the things which my hon. friend, Mr. Natwar Singh, said, because there has been a good relationship between both of us, as far as the discussion on external affairs goes. Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, today, one of the positive things about India's Foreign Policy is that defence and foreign policies are in tandem. That is why we have moved forward. We are moving forward in both areas, in building links with different countries, with regard to foreign policy matters, but also the positive fall out as regards the defence cooperation and so on, whether it is the USSR - unfortunately, there is no Soviet Union -- or it is the United States or France. So, Sir, that is why, I said that it is for the first time that these things are being done in tandem.

Sir, there is another gain about which I would like to mention. It is not a sudden gain, but it is a calculated one, and that is, the economic development of the country. You can see the way this cooperation is developing; it is not a surrender of economic sovereignty. The people of this country will never surrender their economic sovereignty, and no Government of this country can dare think of this. But, for publicity purpose, they might say so. So, along with the military gains, the defence gains, the foreign policy gains, I think, we are also entering in a new era of economic development.

Sir, without going into more details, I would like to say something about the 'Look East Policy'. Sir, the Prime Minister's visit to Japan was referred to. His recent visits to South-East Asia -- Singapore, Cambodia and Malaysia -- have also been referred to. Sir, all these visits have been made to achieve some gains, which we cannot foresee now. A lot was said

about Afghanistan, but I think we are re-forging our links with that country. We are giving all medical and humanitarian aid to Afghanistan, and we are just trying to win our old friends once more, and, Sir, very soon, they will be with us.

Sir, recently, Shri Jaswant Singh visited Myanmar. And, very rightly, my distinguished colleague, Dr. L.M. Singhvi, started his speech by expressing happiness, on behalf of the whole House, on the release of Aung San Suu Kyi, whom all of us hold in great respect. She is an uncompromising freedom fighter, a person with a personality and the spirit, which will continue to spur the generations to come. Sir, he also tried to forge economic links with these countries. Now, the so called Shanghai Group wants us to be a member of that Group. The Mekong-Ganga project, etc. are also there. Many of these things have been said. Sir, we know that only recently, an Indian has been chosen to head the UN Commission on Environment. These are the steady, silent and sure symptoms of the recognition, of the increasing significance and importance of this country, and that is true. It can all be said in an open-ended session. Sir, the discussion is always open-ended. Mr. Pranab Mukherjee, who himself is a former Foreign Minister, knows very well that the strength of those who support India is also increasing. Sir, another gain has been the world-wide recognition of the danger of terrorism. This recognition is not only because of the 11th September incident. This recognition has been the result of the way this matter has been pursued. India pursued this matter consistently, persistently, and with cogency and logic.

Sir, at the end, I will say that I am glad that Mr. Natwar Singh paid a tribute to our young Minister of State, at least. In a very friendly manner, he might have been harsh with his friend from Rajasthan, the present Foreign Minister. You know, Sir, that I served in that State. I know that both of them were born in that particular State. So, naturally, there are friendly exchanges. But I was happy that he paid a tribute to the young Minister of State. And I have no doubt that this was meant in the proper manner, and not just try to fish in the troubled waters or create any sort of misunderstanding or something like that because I think, that as a diplomat, he has always tried not to create misunderstanding, but understanding, so far as this country's people and the country's strength are concerned. Thank you very much, Sir.

SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH (Andhra Pradesh): Sir, I was rather constrained to make a speech at a juncture when our diplomats are trying to defend the indefensible. That is what happened in Gujarat. I do not want to go into the detail, because Gujarat has been discussed exhaustively by Members belonging to all political parties. But, you cannot do damage-containing exercise overseas, unless you undertake a sincere damage-limitation exercise here in India itself. This is a very important aspect that you have to keep in mind. As Mr. A.G. Noorani has correctly said there is nothing wrong with the global concern over Gujarat, we had been doing so earlier also. We expressed our concerns when things were happening adversely to our interests or to our ethnic interests in Sri Lanka, or Palestine, or Pakistan or recently in Fiji. Therefore, I do not find anything wrong when foreign countries are making comments or expressing their views or apprehensions about the developments in our country. I should say that we have over-reacted on it. We should not have done so. As a civilised nation, we too have reacted in the same manner as the European Union or Britain has reacted. We will have to devise ways -- what exactly is the substance of criticism, whether it is genuine -- to counter it.

[THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI T.N. CHATURVEDI) in the Chair.]

The countering has to be done at the national level, not at the international level. Only the good governance and a good record in human-rights will help us in our case. I would like to say that the diplomatic backfoot and angry outbursts by our Foreign Ministry's spokespersons would not help us in any way. That will not be the solution. I would come to that subject afterwards. First let me come to Afghanistan.

Afghanistan was liberated five months back. Now, King Zaheer Shah has also returned to Afghanistan and the assembly of tribal leaders -- Loya Jirga - is about to take place. Reports are coming that ISI is taking a very active role in its constitution. Pakistan is back in Afghanistan, in spite of its negative contribution to the liberation of that country. Now, where do we find ourselves? When the interim administration of Mr. Karzai was being sworn in, you had been invited, whereas Pakistani Foreign Minister virtually had to beseech to get an invitation. What is the position today? They have taken-over the lead. We could not establish our trade contacts and we could not take the lead. I apprehend, we have lost a very good opportunity. Now, President Musharraf has made a very important trip to

Kabul, in spite of his negative contribution in the liberation of that country, I have got my own apprehension that the experience in Bangladesh is being repeated here. In 1971, we had liberated Bangladesh with a very huge cost to the nation. We had paid for years together contributing to the war expenditure and for feeding the millions of refugees who had come to India. What is the advantage have we got? We could not establish good relations with Bangladesh. I apprehend that that is going to be repeated in Kabul, unless we realise our positive role.

Till today we could not open a mission in Mazar-e-Sharieff. Pakistan has opened two missions outside Kabul. I do not know what are the reasons or constraining factors which the Government of India is facing in strengthening our bonds with Kabul. It is not only sad, but a sickening experience.

In this connection, I would like to say that the Government does not realise that relations are not built on the nostalgia. It is a globalised world. We should not have dogmatism in our approach. We should keep our national interests in view, whatever the policies we adopt.

The hon. Member has been talking of non-aligned policy. I do not know to what extent non-alignment is relevant today. We have been claiming it as our policy. Non-alignment might have been a relevant factor once upon a time, but is it relevant today?

Can we isolate ourselves from the comity of nations and develop ourselves? Can we remain nonaligned? Let us have introspection. I am not against the Nonaligned Movement. But, can we do that, with all the limited resources, with all the limited opportunities we have got?

Take the case of Nepal. Nepal is facing the Maoists problem and we have got a similar problem in Bihar. Nepal is in our backyard. We have got some ethnic links with it. America is paratrooping its forces to train the armed forces of Nepal, to combat the Maoists. And we are totally unconcerned with it! How do we establish our relations with our neighbours so that we may have a good Foreign Policy? As one of our hon. Members has been telling us, it is true that the domestic policy has a tremendous impact on the formulation of our Foreign Policy. Now, we have made our Foreign Policy in such a way that our diplomats are facing a stupendous

task. I had been to two countries recently, after the Godhra incident. Our failure on the diplomatic front is more pronounced in respect of Pakistan. The Government may not agree with this impression. Have you moved after the Agra Summit? We have not moved, not even an inch, whereas Musharraf has used every inch of space that is available for him. He had been charged as the Villain of Kargil. Now, he is considered as the Kargil Hero in Pakistan. He has gained legitimacy with the recent referendum also.

One more aspect was pointed out. It was with regard to the appointment of a super envoy to Washington. What made you do this appointment? I have seen creating extra-constitutional authorities in persons, right from 1947. And we are equally responsible for it. But I have not seen extra-constitutional organisations that we are creating in this country. How will the VHP or any other similar organisation interfere with the administration, with the formulation of policies of the Government? How will the Prime Minister have interactions in his official residence with those organisations? What is the validity or legitimacy of those organisations? What is the message you are sending? I am asking...*(Interruptions)*...but not to please you. I am asking that because we are more concerned with the nation. Out of anguish, we are talking about it. What is the treatment we have got? The US has refused to grant the diplomatic status to that gentleman. It has refused to recognise him unless he discards the Green Card, which he has chosen to retain. What is this?

With regard to the policy of our relations with America, we have been claiming that we have become very close to America. As Mr. Natwar Singh was saying, the situation warrants that. The circumstances are destined in such a way that they have to maintain good relations with us. It is not an achievement on the part of the Government of India. Whatever good relationship that is there is because of that reason, not because of our efforts. Even then, what happens? I read yesterday in the newspapers. Pakistan's total debt is 43 per cent of its GDP. In spite of that, the IMF is coming forward, the World Bank is coming forward, to finance that country! At whose instance? At the instance of America. And what is our relationship, except to purchase some outdated arms from that country? Do we feel that that itself is an achievement of our Foreign Policy? Sir, I think we should have some introspection. We can say that they are trying to help Pakistan to identify Osama-bin-Laden. We can advance that

argument. That may be true. I cannot deny that. But, we have to explain to the nation why the US is leaning towards Musharraf, despite all his deficiencies. Even the European Union is yearning to deal with Pakistan. They have treated us as a pariah.

Sir, we are not only discussing the foreign policy, but also the functioning of the entire Ministry of External Affairs. I am sorry to say that in the recent months, our diplomats have been indulging in washing their dirty linen in public. I read an incident, where two top officers of a Mission in Turkey indulged in a public spat, and the Mission in the Gulf country is raising an accusing finger at the South Block for patronising a school, run on profit basis, which they should not have permitted. In spite of the suggestion that has been made against it, the South Block has permitted a school to be run on profit basis. I do not want to disclose the names of such officers. I have got the names. They are being rewarded with the plum posts. The postings are not to be given on merit basis. So, I request the Minister for External Affairs to attend to the human resource first. Mr. Natwar Singh was telling that we are proud of our diplomats. We continue to be proud of them. It is our endeavour to maintain that quality.

Now, I refer to certain observations that have been made by the Department-related Standing Committee on External Affairs. It has specifically been pointed out that huge wasteful expenditure is being incurred. This is the recent report which I have studied. It was submitted on 23rd April. The funniest thing is that every department will try to spend more than what it has been allocated. But this is a particular Ministry where there is a huge unspent balance. Either I should infer that incorrect Budget estimates have been prepared or the money has not been spent on the projects for which the money has been allocated; or the money has not been spent on the Mission for which the amount has been allocated, and the target has not been achieved. I will give an example. I will read out from the report of the Committee. "During 1999-2000, the Budget estimate was Rs. 2,209.47 crores; the revised estimate was Rs. 2,249.43 crores and the actual expenditure was Rs. 2,133.16 crores. The same feat was repeated during the fiscal year 2000-01 also. Under-utilisation of fund is a recurring feature in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs since 1996-97. Sir, this is the perpetual feature. Since we are facing the resource crunch, we can congratulate the Ministry of External Affairs for saving a certain amount of money so that the same can be spend on some other projects. With regard

to the question of rent also, the Parliamentary Committee has specifically mentioned that 6.5 per cent of the Budget of the entire Ministry is being spent on rent, and we can go in for permanent buildings. Our Missions have taken 1,944 buildings on rent, and more buildings are under acquisition. We could not construct buildings in foreign countries. I came to know that Brazil gifted us a piece of land in 1967. Though a period of 37 years has elapsed, we are yet to put a brick on it. I do not know the reason.

I would like to refer to another shocking aspect. Way back in 1970, the Government mooted a proposal for a new diplomatic enclave in Delhi. More than three dozen foreign missions want a piece of land to construct their own offices, which we are unable to provide, and their requests have remained as PUCs. I can only advise the Minister to act with speed, because this is the age of internet. With regard to dual citizenship, we have been hearing about the restructuring of PIO (Persons of Indian Origin), the card-scheme, for a while, but nothing tangible has happened. Most of our embassies do not have a database. Recently, I had been to a particular country--I do not want to name the country. They are not able to provide even the basic information! I wanted to know what is the power position there, not political power, but the energy position. What is the requirement? What is the power generation made in the country? What are the potentialities to develop power? That also they are unable to provide!

Sir, I will conclude by making two more suggestions. With regard to passport fee, there has been an abnormal increase. The people are willing to pay, provided the service is good. You refer it to the police. They have to bribe the police to get their recommendation. Even the educational certificates and the other certificates that are issued by the Principal of the institution to the students who are going abroad for higher study are subjected to scrutiny, before a passport is obtained. The newly-married girls who are going abroad to join their husbands are facing a lot of difficulties in obtaining their passports.

Sir, with one more suggestion I want to conclude. We should avoid becoming oversensitive to foreign criticisms of our failures. Our over-reaction does not behave well for a country like ours. Let us not forget that all the critics of India's failure to uphold secularism are not our enemies. They have been our good friends since time immemorial, and they are good at heart. We should not allow the repetition of RABAT, where

Mr. Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed, the late President of India, led a delegation, and the doors were shut on him. So, let us be very pragmatic. I am not saying this in the interest of a particular community. I am saying this in the interest of our nation.

I have heard our Foreign Ministry spokesperson talking about Finland. Finland was a very good friend of ours. It was a closest ally. They have supported our entry into the Security Council. They have been supporting us in the WTO and other international organisations. In fact, they have genuinely reacted. That does not mean that we have to over-react and make our friends, whoever we have got, our enemies. Already, we do not have good relations with our own neighbours; even in Europe and other parts of Africa. Let us not strain our relations with them just because of the aberrations and the mistakes that we have committed here. Let us try to rectify them, rather than accusing others for pointing out our deficiencies.

DR. M. N. DAS (Orissa): Sir, let me begin by saying Governments will come and go, but the country will continue for ever. Every country must have two broad policies. One is defined as "internal policy" and the other as "external policy". I agree with my hon. senior colleague, Natwar Singhji, when he talked of our external policy. The foundations of our external policy were laid long before Independence. The founding fathers of the Congress had laid the foundation of what should be India's foreign policy tomorrow, the day after, in the years to come; what should be the foundations? India's policy is based on, what is called, international bilateralism, universalism, human brotherhood, peace, international harmony and friendship amongst nations. All those foundations are there. But my respected senior colleague, Natwar Singhji, also said that there should be changes in the policy, according to the demands of the time; I agree. Now, the fundamentals remaining the same, we may move with the time, as the time demands, with certain changes. That is all right. But how do we change? In 1947, when India became independent, the whole world knew that India was a poor country. But, at that time, the poverty was ascribed to the long British domination for 190 years, the British exploitation of the Indian wealth, and the total neglect of India's industrial and agricultural potential. But the whole world stood up to respect India as the largest democratic nation. The leadership of India held its head so high that India's Prime Minister declared, off and on, in the East and in all international fora, that India would oppose colonialism, imperialism and racism in any form in

any country, etc. That policy worked. Automatically, India became the leader of the emerging Afro-Asian nations. When the superpowers of that time tried to drag India to this side or that side, India stood obstinately, solid, and said, "No, we decide our policy according to the merit of each issue. We are not going to support you or them". That philosophy became the Non-Alignment Movement. All these things are old stories.

Now, I am coming to one thing. Today, when the leadership does not hold its head high, the dignity, the honour, of our nation is at stake. I will give one instance. Just after the occupation of Hyderabad, when India's Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, went to attend the first Commonwealth Conference in London, at an official dinner hosted by the then British Prime Minister, Winston Churchill, was the guest of honour. Mr. Churchill aggressively and audaciously advanced towards Nehru and said, "Mr. Nehru, I have come to congratulate you, because you have relieved the Nizam of Hyderabad of his burden of administration". But Nehru retorted immediately, smilingly, not aggressively, "Mr. Churchill, I congratulate you that you have been relieved of the burden of administering the British Indian Empire". A paled Churchill stood back in his seat and tended to realise that the British Empire was dead and gone and India's Prime Minister was the Prime Minister of the largest democracy on earth. Compare that kind of dignity, holding head high, with the Prime Minister of the present dispensation, when he is talking to small man called Musharraf. Think of Gandhi shaking hand with Mussolini in Mussolini's Audience Hall. In front of the fascist grand Council and all the generals, Mr. Mussolini said, "Mr. Gandhi, what do you think of my system of fascism?". Looking straight at the eyes of Mussolini, who was at a yard's distance, Mr. Gandhi said, "Mr. Mussolini, your system of fascism that is born out of violence will die in violence". That is the strength of the nation. The leader's image speaks of the image of the nation. I will give you a few instances. Let us forget Kandahar. It was a human tragedy. Let us think about this incident. When the so-called friendly Prime Minister, Begum Sheikh Hasina, allowed her soldiers to drag a few Indian soldiers from a border outpost, torture them, brutally murder them, butcher them and send their bodies like dead animals, hanging on bamboo poles, whether the External Affairs Minister, the Government, raised a strong voice of protest, threatening retaliatory action. But they did not do it. Why? Grim silence was maintained on the plea that Sheikh Hasina was friendly towards India and she had to face an election. What was the result? Sheikh Hasina was defeated because she was supposed to be pro-

India. Coming to Nepal; the entire royal family was eliminated. The entire Nepali nation pointed a finger at a particular direction. Why should the Indian Prime Minister come out and give a clean chit that it was a personal matter? What would the Nepali people think of us? Why are the Nepali people anti-India today? Now I come to Afghanistan. Did America seek our help immediately after the September 11 incident? They did not. But India volunteered immediately, promptly and at once. We said, "We are behind you against the Taliban." Now I would like to caution the hon. Minister. While thinking of Afghanistan policy do not enter into an imbroglio. That will ultimately lead to disgrace. I know a little bit of the history of Afghanistan. In 1850, when the British Empire touched the Hindukush, thereafter, the British policy was how to control and dominate Afghanistan and how to keep the puppet Government of Afghanistan in their hands. The Britishers apprehend Russian invasion towards India. Did they succeed? Of late, could Russia succeed in holding Afghanistan? Today, the Americans have come. They did not need our support. They required the support of Pakistan and Pakistan alone because Pakistan would be a ground of operation against Afghanistan. Let us not commit that blunder again. The Britishers could not control them. The Russians could not control them. It goes to the credit of the terrain of Afghanistan and the character of the people of Afghanistan. They would not tolerate any outsider. Even Pakistan's Taliban also collapsed. We have to learn lessons in many ways. Lastly, what is going to be our policy towards the latest US Missile Defence Project? Are you going to support it? When all the major nations of the world have expressed apprehensions, what is our policy towards the so-called Bush theory of 'exorcism of evil'? Are we going to support the USA against Iraq, Iran and North Korea? When we think of foreign policy, let us think cautiously, carefully and judiciously keeping our own national interest first and foremost in our mind and also the dignity of the nation through the leadership's action. We may have acquired nuclear capability, but India has lost today the moral ability to command respect. Whatever *izzat* we had, Gujarat has destroyed that *izzat*. How can you show your face to the outside world? Let us think several times before we take any decision on any major issue of foreign policy.

SHRI P.G. NARAYANAN (Tamil Nadu): Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, of the Budget Estimates for 2001-02 the total allocation for the Ministry of External Affairs, which is budgeted under the Revenue and Capital Head, was Rs. 2883.39 crores. The allocation was lowered by Rs. 53.39 crores in the Revised Estimates. Of the Budget Estimates 2002-03 for the proposed

allocation is Rs. 3238.34 crores which is an enhancement over the Revised Estimates for 2001-02. Sir, the Budget Estimate for Technical and Economic Cooperation with other countries has been increased by Rs.125 crores as compared to the last financial year. The Revised Estimate for the year 2001-02 is Rs.240 crores as compared to the current fiscal year's allocation of Rs.365.60 crores. Of course, the allocations reflect India's abiding interest in providing assistance to developmental projects in friendly countries. I wish to submit here that the scheme of providing assistance to developmental projects should confine not only to our immediate neighbouring countries, but it should also be extended to Africa, Central Asia and other developing nations. There is a whopping increase of 60 per cent in the Budget estimates for aid to Bangladesh, as compared to the last financial year. It is a welcome thing that we are providing aid to Bhutan in respect of three mega projects, namely, Tala Hydro Electric Project, Kurichu Hydro Electric Project and Dungsum Cement Plant, in addition to the ongoing projects, at the same time, we should explore the possibility of cooperation in other fields as well. As regards the demand for allocation of Rs.107.25 crores for aid to Nepal to complete the ongoing projects such as the optical fibre link along the East-West Highway, Mahendrapur-Tanakpur link road, the work should be completed on a war footing basis so that we can facilitate larger communication between the countries.

The strategic importance of Indo-Sri Lankan bilateral ties should be kept in our mind while deciding the allocation as well as while entering into an agreement on new projects so that both the countries can be benefited. In this connection, I want to draw the attention of the Government with regard to the issue of Kachatheevu. All the political parties from Tamil Nadu, and, particularly, the leader of my party, the AIADMK, Dr. Puratchi Thalaivi, has been pressing the Centre to take immediate and strong steps to get back Kachatheevu from Sri Lanka. The strategic island, Kachatheevu, was handed over to Sri Lanka in 1974 through a dubious treaty without consulting the people of Tamil Nadu. That is what I can say. Everybody knows, who the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu was, at that time who agreed to this transfer, ignoring the interests of the Tamil Nadu fishermen. I don't want to go into the details of that. The problems of the coastal fishermen from Tamil Nadu started from the day Kachatheevu was handed over to Sri Lanka. The Sri Lankan navy, in blatant violation of the Treaty, continues to harass the Indian fishermen by confiscating their fishing nets and they arrest the fishermen. This has been going on for the last 30 years. Several Indian fishermen are even now languishing in the Sri Lankan

jails. I want the Minister, when he replies, to give the list of the Indian fishermen who are now being kept in the Sri Lankan jails and also mention the steps taken by the Indian Embassy in Colombo to release them. I am sorry to say that the Indian Embassy in Colombo is not taking adequate steps in this matter. So, as a first step, the Indian Embassy should take up this matter with the Sri Lankan Naval authorities and ask them to stop the harassment of the Indian fishermen forthwith. Sir, we have enough evidence; we have historical records in our possession to show that Katchatheevu was a part of the Ramanathapuram Samsthanam. In spite of all this evidence, the Government of India thought it fit to hand over this strategically placed island to Sri Lanka. After having committed such a Himalayan blunder, the Government of India is duty-bound to, at least, safeguard the interests of the Indian fishermen.

Sir, I want to say something about the LTTE. We are not against the Sri Lankan Tamils. We are happy that the peace process has finally started, after thirty years of bloodletting in Sri Lanka. Sri Lanka could have become a prosperous State like Singapore, but it got bogged down by its ethnic problem. The peace process has started now. We do feel that the Sri Lankan Tamils should get all the legitimate rights that they deserve. So, we are for the welfare of the Tamils in Sri Lanka. At the same time, we are opposing the LTTE leader, Mr. Prabhakaran, because of his nefarious designs and activities. Our leader, Dr. Puratchi Thalaivi, took a lot of steps to convince the Central Government to ban the LTTE in India. The LTTE is now a banned organisation in India. New Delhi has rightly chosen to avoid getting involved in the proposed dialogue between the Sri Lankan Government and the LTTE. But, at the same time, India should move in the right direction to secure the extradition of Mr. Prabhakaran for his role in masterminding the assassination of our late Prime Minister, Shri Rajiv Gandhi. Sir, we should not forget that an organisation like the LTTE is more dangerous and deadlier than the Al-Qaeda, and its leader, Mr. Prabhakaran, more dangerous than Mr. Osama Bin Laden. The assassination of Shri Rajiv Gandhi was done while he was in the middle of the campaigning during the national elections, with *malafide* intentions to undermine the very basis of India's democratic process. We should not forgive the LTTE at any cost for this act that was aimed at undermining the electoral process in India. This act of the LTTE was more outrageous than the December 13 attack on Parliament.

4.00 p.m.

The LTTE receives huge amounts from Tamil communities in various countries like Canada, Australia and so on. They use these funds to kill thousands of innocent people, including numerous political leaders. My leader, Dr. Puratchi Thalaivi, became the Chief Minister in 1991 and took a number of steps to destroy the network of the LTTE and to throw the LTTE out of Tamil Nadu. So, we should not allow the LTTE to set its foot again on the Indian soil, in the interest of the unity and integrity of our country. The request of Mr. Anton Balasingham to get medical treatment in India should not be considered at any cost. The Tamil Nadu Assembly has now passed a Resolution urging the Government of India to send the Indian Army to Sri Lanka, with the consent of the Sri Lankan Government, for capturing Mr. Prabhakaran. If the Sri Lankan Government is unable to extradite him to India, India should send a clear signal to Mr. Prabhakaran and the world community at large that India would not hesitate to use all possible means, including the use of its special forces; to capture him and bring him to justice in India. Sir, I want to...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI T.N. CHATURVEDI): I thought you were thanking the Chair and winding up.

SHRI P.G. NARAYANAN: Sir, in order to bring our three sister States of the North-eastern region into the mainstream, the Government of India should seriously consider opening of passport offices in all the State capitals. To start with, the Government should accept the offer and start building the passport office at Guwahati, on the land given by the State Government.

Sir, I want to know the criteria for engaging a lobbying firm, under the Advertising and Publicity Head. The Government has engaged a lobbying firm to project Pakistan as a sponsor of cross-border terrorism. In this respect, I want to know the *modus operandi* adopted to evaluate the performance of this company. The real scene is totally different. Instead of punitive and stern action against Pakistan for cross-border terrorist activities, USA is now giving huge financial aid to Pakistan.

The Government of India allocates funds to institutions like the ICCR, ICSSR, ISIL, ICWA, etc. I want to know whether there is any

mechanism to evaluate and assess the impact of the programmes/projects carried out by the respective institutions. If there is no standard mechanism to evaluate, then, I strongly feel that there should be one such mechanism so that, in future, the respective institutions will learn from the feedback and work out the strategy accordingly to make a full impact on the foreign nationals and achieve the objectives of the programmes. Thank you, Sir.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI T.N. CHATURVEDI): Now, Mr. S. Viduthalai Virumbi. You have eight minutes. Finish your speech within that time because we have to go for that programme.

SHRI S. VIDUTHALAI VIRUMBI (Tamil Nadu): Sir, I will try my best. Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, thank you very much for having given me the opportunity to take part in the discussion on the working of the Ministry of External Affairs. Sir, some two decades before, the issue before the comity of nations was totally different from what we are confronted with today. Sir, about three decades before, we were discussing about decolonisation; two decades before, we were discussing about disarmament and then about non-alignment. Sir, after 1989, after the fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of the Soviet Union, the world scenario has changed from a bipolar system to a unipolar system. This particular change in Europe has affected the entire globe, in the political as well as in the economic arena. What is the present situation? Due to the time constraint, I would not go into the details. Sir, even though there are some good signals, a precarious situation is prevailing in the world. Sir, now, in Europe, the rightists have the upper hand in their nation-states. In Belgium, Austria, Italy, Denmark, Hungary, Holland, Germany, France and Britain, during the last elections, the people with rightist leanings were able to catch the eye of the public and they were able to enter the legislatures of those nation-states. Whether it is good for Asia and Africa or not, it is an issue before us, because Asians and Africans struggled for human rights development in 50's and 60's. Now they are able to get some knowledge in information technology. They are also able to get some employment opportunities in Europe and in the U.S. But, I feel, the recent general elections in France as well as the local body elections that took place in Britain are a warning bell for the people of developing countries. I feel, that effect for the people of developing countries may not be immediately known, but within a short period of time, it may have its own effect on them. People, who have taken shelter in the U.S. and Europe for the poor dried husk may have to come back to countries of their origin who have gone there to settle down.

Also, some internal policies pursued by some sections of the people in India would be affecting the employment opportunities in the Gulf countries. Therefore, the situation is not so bright as far as the developing countries are concerned. But, at the same time, the other side of the coin gives a little hope. Sir, the Indo-U.S. relations are taking a positive turn. I quote from *The Hindu* of April 20, "The high-level meeting envisaged in Washington under the aegis of defence group represented by the top civilian officials from the Defence Ministries of both countries is scheduled from May 20 to 23. The same type of military exercise is going to take place between China and the U.S. also. The European Union, under the leadership of the Prime Minister of Spain, has visited America to bridge the gap between the EU and the U.S."

I would now come to the subject directly. With regard to the visa, the regulations imposed by the U.S., have some conditions. The U.S. Immigration and Naturalisation Service, INS, have put some conditions, by which the facilities we had previously have been curtailed. Previously, youngsters who went on a sports visa could have converted their visas into students' visa automatically, has now been curtailed. Previously, there used to be a 60 days' visa and that has been curtailed. Even though the Embassy says nothing wrong and everything is as it was, we feel that there would be further stipulations for the students who want to study in the United States. I hope the hon. Minister would explain the new stipulations put under the guise of the INS.

Sir, apart from that, there is a move by Shri Arjun Mahendra, Chairman and Director-General, Sri Lanka Board of Investment, to enter into an agreement with India, to build a land bridge between Sri Lanka and India. I think, the Government of India also has given green signal for this project.

Here I tell you frankly. There is already a move to build Sethusamudram Project. If this Sethusamudram Project is completed, the distance of ships' sailing, more or less, would be reduced by 400 kms. There are eleven major ports in India, but no port meets the international standards. If Sethusamudram Project is completed, automatically, we will have a port of international standard. If the land bridge is going to be constructed between India and Sri Lanka, I am afraid, the Sethusamudram Project would be affected.

If it is going to be affected, it means that the employment opportunities in Tamil Nadu may be affected; the employment opportunities for the Indians may be affected. Ships have to sail. But now what we are doing is that only through feed vessels, the cargo is being taken from the Indian ports either to Singapore or to Colombo. Colombo is earning more money for that. To keep their income on continuous basis, I think, it may be another intriguing thing for Sri Lanka, if a land bridge is constructed between India and Sri Lanka. If it is going to be constructed without affecting the Sethu samundram Project, then it should be pursued further. If it is coming in the way of the Sethu samundram Project, then I request the hon. Minister to have a second look on the construction of this particular land bridge between Sri Lanka and India. Now, I would like to say something about Iraq. I do not want to explain in detail. I do not want to go into the internal affairs of other countries, what is going on between Palestine and Israel and as far as West Asia is concerned, *...(Time-bell)..* I will take only two more minutes and finish. I do not want to go into the details of what is happening between Palestine and Israel. But my concern is that because of the developments that are going to take place in Iraq or the developments that are going to take place in the West Asia, they should not affect the petroleum business that we have with those countries. In 1973, there was a shock. If peace is disturbed in Iraq or if peace is disturbed in West Asia or between Palestine and Israel, it will affect petroleum prices and as a result of which our economy will be affected. That is why I do not want to go into the political side of this issue. I just want to concentrate only on economic issues. That is why the hon. Minister has to see that the petroleum prices are kept intact in spite of the new developments that we expect in Iraq or in the West Asian countries. Apart from that, I am told that recently America has again placed India under Super 301. They have put us in the Watch List under Super 301. I do not know whether it is fact. If it is a fact, then I would like to know the reaction of the Government on this issue. Sir, we welcome China becoming the member of the WTO because it will strengthen the hands of the developing countries. Now, I have only a few words about Kachchatheevu Islands. When it was annexed by Ceylon in 1974, we had strongly protested against it throughout Tamil Nadu cutting across party lines. All parties had arranged condemnation meetings. But according to the Indian Constitution, the powers are vested with the Government of India. There were two pacts, one was at the Government level and the other was at the Secretary level. Now, the Secretary level pact has created a lot of problems for fishermen. I

raised this matter with the hon. Prime Minister when he had gone to Ceylon. I wanted to know from him whether any sideline talks were held in this regard. He agreed that that sideline talks could be held with regard to the prevailing plight of fishermen. It is more than two decades that the Tamil fishermen -- I would say the Indian fishermen -- are being treated by the Sri Lankan authorities as vessels and not as human beings. Therefore, what I say is that there should be a permanent solution to this problem because every fortnight they catch our fishermen. You talk with them and after that they release these fishermen after one month. Their families are not able to know anything about them. They do not know whether they have been shot down. Sometimes these fishermen are unnecessarily shot at. Actually, they shoot them dead from point blank range. I would also like to tell you that their navy takes away their catch. That is how they are treating our Indian fishermen. They have stooped so low in this regard. I, therefore, request the hon. Minister to see to it that this type of menace is stopped once for all. With these words, I conclude, Sir. Thank you.

SHRI V. V. RAGHAVAN (Kerala): Sir, since the time at my disposal is very short, I shall confine my speech to a single point, which, I think, is the most vital aspect of our foreign policy. The tradition of our foreign policy, through all these years, has been anti-imperialist in content. In the thick of the Cold War era, we stood with about 150 countries, newly independent countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America, to resist the offensive of imperialist powers on economics and military advances. My learned friend, Dr. Singhvi, has been saying that USA is sitting in the driver's seat, whether we like it or not. No, Sir. The phraseology of the USA is not so simple. The USA is, now, unleashing an offensive, both economically and militarily. They want to dominate the world. President Bush, in his State of Union Address, publicly, stated, "We have the right to strike any country in the name of fighting terrorism." He has named some countries as 'rogue countries.' He named the Democratic Republic of Korea, Iran and Iraq. He has stated that Iran, Iraq and other countries have an evil axis. What has he not said? These offences are going on. Please excuse me when I say frankly that we are drifting from that anti-imperialistic edge of our foreign policy, at the cost of our national interest. Look at the Gulf countries. Even Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Bahrain are all very much concerned of these offences. American military presence is there all along the globe including the sea. Their nuclear warheads are present on our own boundaries. And they are citing some flimsy reasons to land their

armed forces. I know the economic policies of the country. This neo liberal economism is nothing but neo-colonialism. Dr. Singhvi knows it very well. This neo-liberal economic policy is to capture the market and is to exploit the erstwhile colonial countries, both economically and militarily, and their offensive is going on without any check. We have to check it. We have to mobilise the countries as we did earlier and fight this onslaught. That is our main task. We are a billion plus people with great tradition. If we stand up and once again enter into the helm of Asian, African and Latin American countries, we can check this. We alone can check it. If we are not doing it, they can go unquestioned and unchallenged. That is the reality. With regard to our policy towards Palestine, I would like to know, have we not drifted from the earlier stand, and at what cost?

Now, the Arab and the Gulf countries are very much pained at our stand. Some 3.5 millions Indians are living there. And they remit some \$ 2 billion per year as foreign exchange. The Gulf and the Arab countries were friendly with us in spite of our actions and statements. But we are not reacting strongly through our actions and statements. The Israelis brutally butchered unarmed women, children and civilian people and with tanks demolished the buildings.

Why don't you say a strong word against this heinous crime against humanity? We have been standing behind the Palestine people for their rightful demand for their motherland. After the Second World War, America and Britain brought in Israelis, and they were driven out. Now they are fighting for a piece of land of their own motherland. They are being brutally suppressed. What a double role America is playing! Israel is doing this with the help of America, with the help of American arms. America is behind it. They say one thing and do another thing. They encourage Sharon. How long will we keep mum, seeing all these atrocities?

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI T. N. CHATURVEDI): Mr. Raghavan, you have to wind up now. You have made your point very well. You are repeating the same one point.

SHRI V.V. RAGHAVAN: I want to stress that point.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI T. N. CHATURVEDI) : We have to finish by 5 o' clock because we have to attend that programme.

SHRI V.V. RAGHAVAN: Okay, Sir. After making just one more point, I will finish. The same thing is happening with regard to Kashmir. Is America helping us in solving the Kashmir issue? America is playing with a puppet, Pakistan, to grab Kashmir. It is a naked truth. They want an independent Kashmir. They want a base in that vulnerable area. That is why they are playing a double role. Please raise your voice. If you are drifting towards the imperial powers, especially, towards the United States of America, you are doing so at the cost of our own interests, both in the Gulf Countries and in Kashmir. We remember what happened in 1971 when the U.S. Seventh Fleet advanced against us. There is no USSR to help us now. But we can stand together and fight this attempt on the part of the United States of America. Thank you, Sir.

DR. L. M. SINGHVI: I had said that the Government of India had sought to promote multi-polarity, in spite of the situation that has arisen.

SHRI V.V. RAGHAVAN: I agree, Sir. ...*(Interruptions)*...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI T.N. CHATURVEDI): With reference to you, Mr. Raghavan only said that the neo-liberalism is neo-colonialism.

SHRI MANOJ BHATTACHARYA (West Bengal): Sir, at the very outset, I would like to say that I am not the person who believes that our Government which is pursuing a retrograde domestic policy, and, that too, so vigorously can have a well-meaning and a progressive foreign policy. It is not possible. It is not true. I agree with Shri K. Natwar Singh when he said the same thing. The time at my disposal is quite short. So, I cannot dwell on all the countries. There are 194 countries that are members of the United Nations. It is not possible to dwell on the relations of India *vis-a-vis* those countries within this short period. So, I will try to confine myself only to certain important comments. I have also made this point earlier that on 7th October when the United States, in the name of the so-called hunt for Osama Bin Laden, attacked Afghanistan, killed hundreds of thousands of innocent, poor, Afghan people. The Government of India, without being even asked for, extended all-out support to the Government of the United States on combating terrorism because they thought - we also felt it - terrorism was to be fought globally, notwithstanding the economic policies involved, the economic designs involved, the interests of the multinational corporations involved.

The Government of India, without being asked for, unnecessarily supported the war efforts of the US imperialism. And, I was amused. I must thank the hon. External Affairs Minister, Shri Jaswant Singh. When the statues of Buddha at Bamiyan were being demolished by the barbaric acts of Taliban, while commenting on those, he rightly said, 'Yes, it is a fact that international terrorism is being abated by US imperialism. U.S. imperialism is responsible for abating international terrorism.' But when Afghanistan was attacked on the plea of finding the hideout of Osama Bin Laden, the Government of India, or, the foreign policy led by none other than Shri Jaswant Singh, for whom I have got very high esteem, did not hesitate for a moment to render his all out logistic support to the war efforts and war designs of the United States of America.

Sir, the Agra Summit took place on 14th July. Kindly correct me, if I am wrong. To my humble understanding, and to my very modest understanding, a summit is the ultimate discussion point. After series of discussions, a summit takes place. All the nitty-gritty's are decided before the summit starts. And, usually, in the Summit, a final decision is taken. But, what happened in the Agra Summit? With much fanfare Shri Pervez Musharraf came here with a huge team. He was accommodated. The country had to spent a few crores of rupees. I don't know how many crores of rupees. And nothing came out of it. Nothing cognizable came out of it. Even in the Annual Report of the External Affairs Ministry, it has been reported that the Indian side worked very hard to bridge the vast differences in our respective approaches to bilateral relations and to arrive at a draft joint document that will move our bilateral relations forward.' Sir, the vast differences could not be taken care of earlier, unless a certain summit was agreed to! I would like to know from the hon. External Affairs Minister, Shri Jaswant Singhji, what compelled us to go for the Agra Summit unnecessarily. At whose instance we went there? Is it at the instance of the American imperialism? Was it at the instance of the American Administration that you were forced to go? Sometimes, I feel that we were not being forced to go. We have chosen to move like this. It is not under pressure that the Indian Government is functioning. The Indian Government is functioning out of its own choice. They have gone in for abject surrender to American policies. They have gone for abject surrender to the US administration; they have gone for the abject surrender to imperialist designs of the G-8 countries as required for the victory of this neo-liberal capitalist economy.

Sir, the Annual Report continues on the Agra Summit. "And, eventually, the quest had to be abandoned because of Pakistan's insistence on the settlement of the Jammu and Kashmir issue as a pre-condition to normalising relations. Pakistan was also unwilling to address our concern of cross-border terrorism. Who did not know about that? Even in this House, a number of discussions had taken place, and the Government had taken a stubborn position that we shall not discuss it, we shall not invite Shri Pervez Musharraf, we shall not discuss with Pakistan. Unless they abandon this issue of cross-border terrorism; unless they abandon this plea of Jammu and Kashmir issue; unless they effect some changes in their approach to the Jammu and Kashmir issue, we shall not go for any bilateral discussion."

A number of times, even the hon. Prime Minister also made some points in this regard. But what compelled you-- once again, I say, I would like to hear from none else than the Minister of External Affairs - to go for the Agra summit, and spend the hard-earned money of ours, and, at the same time, spoiling our image, internationally. Sir, this question must be addressed by the hon. Minister present over here. Sir, I would also like to say that in the Annual Report, it has been said that, "the exchanges with Bangladesh continue to across a broad front." I am not going to comment about those skirmishes, those killings of BSF soldiers. I am not going to comment about those very sad things. The Indian Government could not respond, even to a country like Bangladesh which is economically worst placed than that of ours. I am not going to comment about those, but I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister that, even for a very simple matter of foreign policy, foreign relations failed. I pointed out, I drew the attention of this House on perhaps, if I remember correctly, on 23rd April, 2000, to the issue of river pollution. The water of the rivers which are flowing from Bangladesh to India, to West Bengal like Churni, Jalangi, and all these rivers, is polluted. I had made an appeal that the Department of Environment and Forests should take up this matter, that they should get in touch with the Department of Foreign Affairs, and these things should be settled with Bangladesh. I received a letter from Shri T.R. Baalu. He also pleaded that the Ministry of External Affairs has to look into this, but, uptil now, after more than two years, nothing cognizable could take place. I would once again request the Minister of External Affairs to kindly look into this. The poor people who reside besides the banks of these rivers are suffering. They are suffering very badly because of the river pollution, because of some factory slags, or affluents which are coming from Bangladesh.

Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, India and Myanmar imparted enhanced substance to bilateral cooperation and those have been exemplified by joint ventures in many areas, in mutual development, etc. I don't mind, but, Sir, what is the standard? Myanmar is a country which is being ruled by military junta that detained Aung San Suu Kyi, who has been released only on 2nd May, and no voice of democracy was being allowed, or, is being allowed, even today. And Myanmar is also a hideout for the militants or terrorists who are operating in North-East. My friends from North-East, Shri Apok Jamir, and others are sitting there, they will agree with me that these militants or the terrorists keep on moving around, but we are pleading that India and Myanmar imparted enhanced substance to bilateral cooperation exemplified ...etc. I cannot go into details, otherwise I would have gone into details. Sir, I would like to draw the attention of this House to a very incriminating document, i.e. Gujarat. Everybody has spoken about it. I would not like to repeat the same things. I don't like to comment about the very sad incidents that are taking place, that are continuing in Gujarat. But, Sir, where I am concerned, where I am dismayed, I am worried is that the Indian Embassies, in different countries, have issued some such notices which only carried disinformation. I am referring to a Report that I am having in my hand, that is, dated 2nd April, "The following document of the Indian Embassy website gives Modi's and VHP's version in facts v/s myths format, allegedly signed by Sonia Gandhi, I.K. Gujaral, Dr. Manmohan Singh, Harkishan Singh Surjeet, Yerrain Naidu, Mulayam Singh Yadav, Mayawati, A.B. Bardhan. Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, if you go through these papers, you will find that this is a clear acquittal for the Gujarat State Government. Nothing wrong has transpired in Gujarat. Everything is under control. Everything is being controlled, and the police is acting very effectively, impartially. Rather, some thousands of words, thousands of sentences have been used to describe the Godhra episode. It is very sad episode. So, I must also accept. We have also condemned Godhra episode, but, in so far as killings, the perpetual killings, the genocide, the very sad carnage in different parts of Gujarat, in Ahmedabad, Mehsana, Vadodara and where not is concerned, nothing has been reported there. The Ministry of External Affairs must look into this that this sort of disinformation should not go internationally...(Interruptions)... Please, Mr. Gautam.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI T. N. CHATURVEDI): Mr. Gautam, please, don't interrupt. He is going to wind up.

SHRI MANOJ BHATTACHARYA : Sir, I must say that this will not enhance the image of our country because, now-a-days, nothing can be kept hidden; everything is open. By satellites, each country knows everything, and this sort of disinformation will only tarnish the image of our foreign policy. Sir, please be careful about this.

Sir, I am coming back to the main aspect now. Because I do not have much time, I am just making some passing references. Sir, my very humble question to the hon. Minister is this. All of a sudden, the passport fee has been enhanced from Rs. 300 to Rs. 1000. Did you think for a while about the common students, the students who are coming from very poor families, whose per capita income is very low? The per capita income which is being reported to us is also not here. Did you ever think about the labourers, the skilled labourers, who want to go abroad to earn their livelihood? In order to live, they want to go abroad. How would they give Rs. 1000, and, that too, when you are not effecting any infrastructural changes in the passport offices? Without effecting any infrastructural changes in the passport offices, all of a sudden, you have enhanced the passport fee from Rs. 300 to Rs. 1000. I do not know how you would justify this. Sir, it is very unfortunate. I know it for certain that this Department is spending very liberally in the different missions abroad, on which the CAG has also adversely commented. In the different missions abroad, this Department is spending very liberally, and quite illogically. This Department is spending on the rent for the passport offices at different places; I would name some. In Chandigarh, in Lukhnow, in Calcutta, they are paying lakhs of rupees as rent for these passport offices. Though the Government has its own plot -- they have acquired the plot -- they could not construct the buildings; they did not construct the buildings. There is misbehaviour in the passport offices. This thing must be looked into. I seriously raise my voice of protest and demand that the fee for passport must be reduced. The fee of Rs. 1000 is too much for the poor people of this country who want to go abroad. In a globalised situation, people ought to go abroad. They cannot afford to pay Rs. 1000 for getting a passport. The poor people cannot afford it. So, I raise my voice of protest against it.

Sir, another thing to which I must draw the attention of the hon. Minister is this. Of late, internationally, there is a discrimination against the Indian citizens. Even it is being reported in the Indian Embassy that the foreigners are discriminating against us, by looking at the title of the Indian

citizens. If they belong to the minorities, they are being discriminated against and they are being humiliated in certain cases, even at the airports. Many instances have come out that minorities are being discriminated against, minorities are being harassed, minorities are being embarrassed and humiliated. So, I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister to this and request him to kindly look into all these matters, and try to effect some changes, because I am not a person who can do so. I cannot effect changes in the foreign policy approach of yours. You will be following the same retrograde foreign policy, as you are following retrograde domestic policies. I cannot effect changes. I can effect the changes somewhere else. That we are working for.

Sir, I cannot refrain myself from commenting on what hon. Shri T.N. Chaturvedi has said. I have very high regard for him. He said, "Please try to consider that you are going to be extinct, and the philosophy of the RSS is proliferating." Sir, I would very humbly remind those friends of mine who say this kind of things. From 1933 to 1945, Nazism proliferated, and all the Germans were for Nazism; the Communism took a back seat, Communists were annihilated, Leftists were annihilated, Socialists were annihilated; and in a freak of moment, Nazism withered away. Still it is only inviting the wrath, despise and the hatred of right-thinking people, civilised people. So, Sir, please do not try to derive any satisfaction out of this sort of comparisons. With these few words, I conclude. Thank you very much, Sir.

SHRI SHANKAR ROY CHOWDHURY (West Bengal): Thank you very much, Sir. I have experienced Indian diplomacy at the sharp end. In 1962, the India-China policy sent me as a Captain, with 5 years service, to Ladakh. In 1965, the Kashmir question sent me to Chamb Jorian. In 1971, the Bangladesh question sent me to Bangladesh. So, Sir, I will raise the prime issue of my concern, which is Pakistan.

Pakistan is India's test case for diplomacy. We have spoken to Pakistan. We have tried our diplomacy, but I call into question India's capability, today in the 21st century, for conducting, not soft diplomacy, but hard-coercive diplomacy. I call into question the national capability of conducting coercive diplomacy, which is the rule of the game in many situations. Take our own history. In 1971, when we were flooded with refugees from Pakistan, diplomacy continued. Madam Indira Gandhi prepared the ground diplomatically, but the continuation of diplomacy by other means,

if I may say, sent people like me into Bangladesh. I was there as a Major with about eleven years service. In 1984, Indo-Sri Lanka policy sent people like me and my friends into Sri Lanka with the Indian Peace-Keeping Force. We exerted our diplomacy or continuation of a diplomacy, because the situation in the neighbourhood was adverse to our country. We intervened in the Maldives.

Now, I would like to ask the External Affairs establishment or component of our country as to what is our capability of continuing diplomacy by other means? And Pakistan is a test case. Apart from that, in our neighbourhood *i.e.*, in Nepal, there is a tremendous internal disturbance generated by Maoist rebels. Bangladesh, under the short dispensation of Begum Sheikh Hasina Wajed, had tried to follow a more positive policy towards India. But, now, in Bangladesh, we have a Government of the Bangladesh National Party, which is almost openly anti-India. We have tried all diplomatic means with a country like Bangladesh. Is there some step beyond this, which we are prepared to go? My main concern pertains to these two countries. There are other concerns also, but keeping our concern with Pakistan, we have, somehow, come out definitely the second best. We had the Lahore initiative by the Prime Minister. I think it was a good initiative. It did not work with a double-dealing nation. We had the Agra initiative, which, I think, was a shame, because we invited President Musharraf with full diplomatic honours, with almost full national honours, and, he deliberately humiliated us in our dialogue. We had no other option, but to accept what he said.

Now, I come to the deployment of forces against Pakistan. My objection to this deployment is to the level of rhetoric with which it started off. It started off with a very high flow of rhetoric unlike in Bangladesh, when Madam Indira Gandhi started off with a low level of rhetoric and built up until we took it up to the logical conclusion. Here, we face a reverse situation, in which we started off with a high level of rhetoric and we have not yet been able to take it to the logical conclusion. What is it that we want from Pakistan? We want Pakistan to stop cross-border terrorism. Since dialogue has failed, is there any other means which the Indian nation is capable of?

We all accuse the USA of behaving like the policeman of the world. Well, until the 11th September last year, terrorism, for the USA, did not exist. When it did happen, it decided, rightly or wrongly, that the Al-Qaeda and Osama Bin Laden were to blame; it decided, rightly or wrongly, that he was

given safety and sanctuary in Afghanistan by the Taliban; it gave an ultimatum to the Taliban who were then the Government of Afghanistan, to hand over Osama Bin Laden and the Al-Qaeda to US justice. When the Taliban did not accede to their offer, they took diplomacy to its logical conclusion. My main question, today, pertains to the capability of my country to take our Foreign Policy, when diplomacy had failed, to its logical conclusion which, in this case, is in the matter of Pakistan and cross-border terrorism.

Secondly, Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, we are, today, trying to find our feet in a uni-polar world. I am afraid, as an Indian, I feel definitely diminished by the spectacle of our External Affairs establishment struggling with other nations to obtain the crumbs from the American table. I feel diminished as an Indian. I feel that we should be friends with America. Certainly, there is a lot to gain because, economically, we have to tie our policies now to America in the globalised world--I do not think there is any other alternative to it. But, must we make our eagerness and striving so obvious? Can't we be more restrained about it? This is a question I would pose, through you, Mr. Vice-Chairman, to the External Affairs Minister of our country.

Then, have we taken due note of the statements of the United States? Have we taken note of the statements of the NATO? The NATO, today, which is really a forward deployment of American military power in Europe, has stated quite clearly that after the disappearance of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War--the NATO has said--they will intervene in out-of-area contingencies. As the first step, German troops have been deployed to Afghanistan. This is the first time in the history. There was a huge debate on this, whether they should be sent out-of-area on such missions. Japan, which is another Western ally, though it is in Asia, has also taken the first step by stepping forward and sending its warships, in support role to the United States' fleet in the Upper Arabian Sea. These are straws in the wind. Can a time come--because the world is an uncertain place, the future is unseen--at any time, at some time in the future, when the interests of the West and our own national interests can come into collision? We hope that they do not; we, certainly, hope that they do not. But, are we at least preparing ourselves for it?

Lastly, Sir, I would like to make a small point, which is partly in the realm of External Affairs, partly, perhaps, not. It is the international

comments on Gujarat. Now, foreign nations, foreign countries, foreign media, will say what they want about Gujarat. And there is nothing we can do about it. There is nothing we can do about it. We may express annoyance, but that is really an exercise in frustration. What I am disturbed about, again, as a concerned Indian, is the conduct of foreign missions existing in India, accredited to this country.

Is it within their Charter to give their comments to the Indian Media, conveying their opinion on the events inside India? And this has happened on more than one occasion. I am not referring to a country like Finland. We are having friendly relations with all these countries. I am referring specifically to the High Commission of a Commonwealth country, which went to Gujarat on a legitimate visit, because four of its nationals were reportedly killed or missing, and every High Commission is authorised to do so. But, are they authorised to leak the contents of their investigation to the Indian Media? If they have done so, is it not a *malafide* act? If so, what steps the Ministry of External Affairs is taking in this regard? With that, Sir, I would just like to say that non-alignment may be irrelevant, but that is not really so, because the non-alignment must now be construed as self-reliance, as an independent policy. But, the national interests of India come above everything. Thank you.

SHRI M.P. ABDUSSAMAD SAMADANI (Kerala): Thank you, Sir, for giving me this opportunity to speak on this subject. Sir, keeping the shortage of time in view, I do not want to repeat what has already been said by the previous speakers, who spoke before me, on this subject. I think, a time has come or that a ground has been prepared to make human interest as the basic and the nucleus point of the foreign relations among various countries of the world. Sir, everywhere in the world, there is confusion; there is violence. That is the present scenario--politically and socially. In such a situation, the only glorious trend that we are witnessing, is that there is an awareness, throughout the world, that man's rights and human interest are to be given primary importance for every kind of social behaviour, especially, in the case of foreign relations. In such a situation, we are again reminded of that old era of colonialism, the Western hegemony. That form of imperialism is once again coming back to the forefront. We are seeing such a situation that every nation, every big power, is defining certain terms of international importance, according to their interest. For example, for the word "terrorism", everybody has got his own interpretation. The

United State of America has got its own definition. America has once openly said: "Those who are siding with us, are against terrorism. Those who are against us, we will consider that they are with the terrorists." This kind of irrational, anti-human definitions and interpretations are given for this kind of term. I request the hon. Minister for External Affairs that a time has come when we must find out some scientific definition for a word like "terrorism", and India has to work hard in the international fora for such a consensus. There may not be a consensus. But, at atleast, an effort can be made in that respect. America had attacked Afghanistan. For what? To fight terrorism. Did they achieve their goal? Did they succeed in punishing the real terrorists who were responsible for creating the problem? They did not achieve it. Till this day, every child knows that America did not achieve anything. Even the so-called prey, who was declared by them as a very big terrorist, could not be apprehended by them. Some say that he is alive. Some say that he is dead. I am not entering into that debate. But, one thing is clear. So many innocent men, women and children were killed under the pretext of fighting terrorism.

We see another tendency. Many versions are coming from the West to justify this kind of an attack by the big powers on the Third-World countries and comparably smaller countries. For example, the Edington's Theory of clash of civilizations. The clash of civilizations was a theory founded by them, and it was given much importance by them. They spread that theory like anything. The idea again was to bring that Western hegemony.

If there is a clash of civilizations, as Edington and other western thinkers and intellectuals claim, then who will emerge as victorious? Edington said, "In the final outcome, the Western culture will survive. The Western culture will be succeeding and we will become victorious." Sir, I would like to add one thing. First of all, the clash does not exist. If at all there is a clash of civilizations, it should not be there. If there is a clash, it will be harmful for the entire humanity. If there is a clash, Asia will be having more richness, compared to the West. If there is a civilizational conflict, and if we compare Asia with America and other Western countries, Asia is the cradle of civilizations. Most of the religions, the major religions of the world, were produced by Asia. Even Christianity which is followed by a majority of people in the West is an Asian product. Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, Sikhism, Jainism, they are all born in Asia. They are not the

Western products. Even then, these people said, "There is a clash of civilisations!" They write some books and claim, "In the final outcome, we will be victorious!" It is only for the sake of neo-colonialism and imperialism. At one time, they speak of a clash of civilisations, and at another time, they speak of globalisation! Both cannot go together. Globalisation means, the entire world is to be considered as one bloc, at least economically, for its own interests. But, at the same time, they speak of this kind of a clash of civilisations.

Sir, the Palestine issue has already been referred to by many other colleagues. It is a sentiment related to our freedom struggle. Hon. Member, Shri Natwar Singh, spoke about it. Shri V.V. Raghavan and many other hon. Members who spoke before me also referred to it. Sir, a messenger came to India. He was sent by Mr. Yassar Arafat as an emissary. He met the hon. Prime Minister of our country. Mr. Yassar Arafat had requested for the help and cooperation of India for the Palestine cause. What happened? What was the outcome of such a meeting? Did anything take place? Had we done anything after that? We are happy that on many occasions, the hon. External Affairs Minister, in his statements, made it clear that we are with the Palestine, and we stand for the Palestine cause. But after having such a meeting, at an important juncture, when Palestine was actually in need of our help, what happened? Sir, I would like to pose a very simple question: What are we going to gain from our relationship with Israel? Our good friends are there in the Middle East. The Arabs are there; the Gulf countries are there. They are all our good friends, and we are making some kind of relationship with Israel. Okay. Fine. That can be justified in a way. Is there any gain economically, politically, socially or diplomatically? In what way our relationship with Israel is going to help us--this is the point to be considered by our leaders in such a situation.

Sir, I would like to add one more thing. In such a situation we have to once again think of the Non-Aligned Movement. A reference was made to the Non-Aligned Movement and its ideology. A day will come when there will be more than one power. Whenever there is one power and that power starts behaving like a policeman in the world, I don't think the posterity is going to bear this kind of a terrible atmosphere in the world-politics. Rays of hopes are already there. A situation may come when there will be other powers. It is not a problem related with power. It is a

5.00 p.m.

problem concerning different ideas. It is a problem concerning the freedom and liberty that every country wants to enjoy. In such a situation, we must work hard for the rebirth of the non-aligned ideology. The Non-Aligned Movement may not be becoming a reality today or tomorrow, but the ideology will have to be there for the welfare of humanity. I think, it is still there. Physically, the body of nations may not be found in the arena of international politics, but, Sir, I really believe that the ideology is already there.

I want to mention another thing. The internal scenario is very much related to the external scenario. Our Government and our Foreign Minister had sent many emissaries and delegations abroad to meet the officials of various countries, especially, to the Middle-East countries. It was a very good move, and it attained a good success.

All the political parties in the country stood united against our enemies. If we are weakened, if our body politics is weakened, if our secular fabric is weakened, it would, naturally, send a different picture to the world outside. Nobody can hide this kind of things. In the present age, in the so-called information technology age, nobody can conceal this kind of things, what is happening in the country, what is happening here and there. Everything is quite known to the people all over the world. Everything is shown through the electronic media. In such a situation, I would like to request the Government and the hon. Minister of External Affairs not to adopt a partisan role. For example, a reference was made here to the website. The information given in the website regarding the incidents in Gujarat, those unfortunate incidents, was such. During the discussion on Gujarat also, a reference was made to that. The other day a friend of mine told me that when he was going through the website of the MEA, he came across many things. I am not going into the details. A lot of information was given. But one thing is clear. It is not doing justice to what happened in the country. It is not doing justice to the pain and anguish of the Indian society. Our External Affairs Ministry is the mouthpiece of the entire country, as far as the external world is concerned. It is the tongue of all of us. Sir, I would like to request the hon. Minister of External Affairs to look into this matter and if there is any such thing, it has to be undone. I seek his intervention in this regard because the unity and integrity of the country are very important. It is very much linked with our foreign policy. The two cannot be separated.

Before I conclude, I would like to refer to one thing. Whenever it comes to a single-power world and the exploitation of all the nations, every nation is against this idea. They are all against this single-power hegemony. Some nations have already started speaking out. Some nations are not speaking out. India, which has a glorious tradition, a glorious heritage, in its fight for freedom, for liberty and against colonialism, has a major role to play at this historical juncture. Once again, I request the hon. Minister that we should not deviate from our basic policies. As Prof. Das has already mentioned, Governments will come and go; but certain policies, which are unique, have to be continued as a historical flow. In that context, I, once again, request the hon. Minister of External Affairs and the hon. Prime Minister, who is not present here, that we should continue our policy with regard to the Palestinian struggle. The words of Gandhi that Palestine is for Palestinians should not be forgotten by any Indian. When the Parliamentary Delegation went to the Middle-East countries, the main question that they had to face was about India's policy regarding Palestine. But our delegation was successful in convincing the Press and the leaders of those countries that we were with the Palestinians and that we supported their cause. Regarding Pakistan's propaganda about terrorism, that was going on actively in the Middle-East countries, we were able to fight such a kind of propaganda. When our problems are increasing, we have to get united, in the interest of the country's unity and integrity, which will contribute to a foreign policy based on human interest. Thank you.

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am very grateful to the hon. Members who have participated in this discussion. I am informed by the hon. Minister of Parliamentary Affairs that I have about 40 minutes to respond to the points that were made by the hon. Members. Thereafter, there is a Parliamentary function which the Members are obliged to attend. I am grateful to the hon. Members for the views they have expressed. But I must give voice to a certain sense of disappointment at the highly personalised manner in which the initiator of the discussion, hon. Natwar Singh, chose to make his intervention.

That, of course, is his choice. He is perfectly free to do so. But, it will be difficult for me to respond to it. The substance of his observation was that because I did not join the Foreign Service when he joined the Foreign Service, therefore, I am not in a position to manage the country's

external affairs ably. I do admit that deficiency. I did not have the good fortune to be born in the same year when Shri Natwar Singh was born. I was born much later. When he chose to go into the Foreign Service, some of us like Shri Shankar Roy Chowdhury and myself went to different arenas of soldiering. I do not want to become autobiographical here because most of his interventions were quite autobiographical. If I continue in the same vein, I would have to say that because you were also a very distinguished civil servant and that because you joined the civil service when he joined and I did not have the good fortune to do so, therefore, I am unable to comment on any issue relating to civic functions, then this assembly would be rendered into really a non-assembly. We come from diverse fields bringing to this assembly a collectivity of experience. Some of us have the good fortune to have very ordered and regulated lives. Shri Natwar Singh said, "I spent 49 years in this field." That is very good. I am very glad. He has spent all those years writing very erudite notes on files while some of us did other things. I chose not to be a pensioner. I chose deliberately to resign my commission. I can very easily say...

SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH: I also resigned from the Foreign Service. I am not a pensioner. Kindly get your facts right.

SHRI JASWANT SINGH: My facts are quite right. Sir, the hon. Member, Shri Natwar Singh gets so easily irritated and I sat very patiently and listened to all his personal jibes. Well, it is a matter of further disappointment for him.

SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH: It is not a matter of disappointment for me. I am very sorry. I do not want to interrupt him. I am just correcting him on a matter of fact. Mr. Minister, your facts are wrong.

SHRI JASWANT SINGH: If you do not wish to interrupt, don't interrupt. It is a very simple solution. If you do not wish to interrupt, kindly do not interrupt. That is a very simple and instant solution. Be that as it may. It is a matter of disappointment. I was looking forward to this discussion. I think there are some very fundamental issues that we needed to address ourselves to. I shall endeavour to do so. I think one issue that has run as a thread through a great deal of the debate is the point that foreign policy necessarily has to reflect the internal policy, certainly not a mirror image, but an expression of the internal will of the nation. I agree. I

don't think there is any dispute on this point. This is a fundamental issue and there is no disagreement on that. I do not wish to cite yesterday's Motion which this House had adopted not without debate, not without contentions, not as if everyone was speaking with one voice. We did have contentions. Nevertheless, after all that, the House did find the need and the right to express a collective will. It is in that context that very briefly, without revisiting the extremely regrettable development in Gujarat, I wish to state a few fundamental positions so far as the Ministry of External Affairs is concerned.

We are concerned with it; I am ready, as Minister of External Affairs, and my officers are ready, to discuss with any country at any time any issue that they wish to raise. If they raise it in public, then, the response also will be in public. If, however, they conduct a diplomatic discourse with us, and the dialogue is diplomatic, then, the expectation is that it shall remain diplomatic. And, what is supposed to be a diplomatic dialogue shall not be conducted through the media, whether electronic or print media. This is elementary. This is not something which I, as the country's External Affairs Minister, am now inventing as a new method of conducting diplomacy. This is how international diplomacy has conducted itself.

Sir, some countries were cited by the hon. Members. I discussed these issues with them. It was my expectation that they would not refer to the discussions that they had with me in the media. When they chose to do so, naturally, the Ministry had also to respond. I will not go into the whole issue of the European Union. That is all over now. Other than that, there has been no difficulty in this regard. We are very clear; if the dialogue is diplomatic, it must be conducted diplomatically. There is one other aspect which must be understood. I will not accept,-- it did not accept in 1998, I will not accept now if, God willing, I continue to have the honour and responsibility of doing this job -- India will not accept, to be told in prescriptive terms, "Do this, that or the other." And, further, I must also make it clear -- we did it in 1998, and we continue to do so -- that India will not be spoken to from any position of assumed superiority or greater morality. After that, any country is free to speak to us on any issue. If they wish to speak to us freely and openly, we will speak to them freely and openly. If it is a diplomatic dialogue, then, we will conduct it diplomatically. This is what we have done, and this is ~~what~~ we wish to do. I have,

otherwise, no difficulty. My objections, my Ministry's objections, are based on these fundamentals, not on trivial aspects.

I must continue further. A number of issues came up. Hon. Natwar Singhji found that a lot of things were wrong. We will endeavour to correct them. I might not agree with what he finds wrong. He was kind enough to suggest that some of the things that appear to be happening right are not because of anything that the Ministry has done or because of what the Government has done, but it is inherent in the circumstances. Well, that is his choice.

Now, when I come to specific issues, firstly, about non-alignment, I am disappointed that he has not taken note of the fact that how actively, if somewhat behind the scene, -- without wanting to hurt the sensibilities of South Africa, because the current Chairmanship is held by South Africa -- we had, constantly, been encouraging South Africa that what was most urgently needed was, actually, the revitalisation of the non-aligned movement. It was because of this persuasion that, very recently, a Conference of the Non-aligned Ministers was held in South Africa, precisely for this purpose. I am not saying that it is a panacea or that it will find us all the answers, whether it is in the form of the United Nations or, recently, by South Africa. Earlier, for example, when Bangladesh was unable to host the Non-aligned Summit, there was a strong move that India should agree to host the next Summit in India.

I had the honour to represent India. I said, "Yes, I will do so, provided any other nation does not feel that we are, in any case, usurping, as of priority right, the function of hosting Non-aligned summits", whereupon the friendly country of Jordan said, "We would like to host it", and we encouraged South Africa to accept it and said, "All right, let Jordan host it". It is a matter of regret that Jordan, which was actually supposed to host the Non-aligned summit in July, because of circumstances and developments in the region, had to opt out of it. India was again in the scene. We again said, "We will be doing it. But we do not want to do it if some other country wishes to do it". Now, Malaysia has said that they wish to host it. We will stand by these countries. We will fully support them; and we will fully support them, as we support Non-alignment. We are endeavouring to impart to Non-alignment a contemporary dynamism and a contemporary relevance. That is the need of the hour. I cannot live in yesterday. It is

nobody's suggestion that I live in yesterday. And if I attempted to live in yesterday, then I would, in fact, be doing an injustice to a movement that has up till now -- and still continues to have -- a major presence in the United Nations.

Sir, it was pointed out to me by some other hon. Members, that because it was not in the Ministry of External Affairs list of priorities of eight items, Non-alignment was no longer a priority for us. It would be an oversimplification, and it will not be a just way of dealing with what we are doing. For example, the hon. Member, Shri Natwar Singhji, did not mention, in his priorities, the new issues that confront foreign policy today -- whether they be of ecology or other issues. Now, terrorism, for example, was not mentioned by him; it was not as if he considered that terrorism was a non-issue. It was simply that when he was listing certain items, he did not immediately arrive upon terrorism to be listed. Pranabbabu, in fact, said that the core issue of today was terrorism. Now, if I were to infer from this that between what Pranabbabu says and what hon. Natwar Singhji says, there were such fundamental distances on foreign policy, that one called terrorism the core issue of international affairs today, and another one said it was a non-issue, I would be doing injustice to both of them. I am sure this was not how you intended. It is an issue. Non-alignment is an issue. We are addressing it as best as we can, without appearing to hurt the sensibilities of the current Chairman of the Non-aligned Movement, to keep the Non-aligned Movement in the right direction.

There was also a reference to NATO. I think one of the anachronisms of today is, indeed, NATO. When the NATO Strategic Review Meet took place in Washington -- I think it was at the beginning of 1999 -- the opening sentence of the NATO was that the nuclear doctrine continued or had its relevance -- there were words to that effect -- and we had questioned that if the nuclear doctrine continued to have relevance for NATO, how did possession of nuclear weapons by India not have relevance. Against whom was NATO contemplating to use the nuclear weapons? My gallant friend, Shri Shankar Roy Chowdhury, spoke about NATO. NATO had propounded the theory of 'Partnership in Peace'. And I recollect going to Uzbekistan and mentioning it to my friend in Uzbekistan, "For NATO, you are 'Partners in Peace'; but 'peace' about what?"

These are the new anachronisms, the new challenges, of today. We have the challenges of today. The reality, Mr. Vice-Chairman, is that NATO is 19 plus one. Other than being a voting member Russia is virtually

a member of NATO. How do you address that reality? These are the new realities. We are mindful of them. And yet, we cannot address these new realities in either the idiom of yesterday or in the mindset of yesterday.

We have to address them as challenges of today. Sir, I am grateful that some commendation has been made of the Government's approach to the People's Republic of China. I do not wish to quarrel on the point. Everyone contributes. It would be difficult for me to subscribe to the theory that in the realm of international affairs, one individual contributes or one individual incident contributes either to the good or to the bad. Therefore, it is difficult for me to agree with what hon. Shri Natwar Singh said, that because of the late Prime Minister Shri Rajiv Gandhi's visit, etc., the entire scene got transformed. A number of other things have happened since then. You can discount that we have done nothing. Certainly, you are perfectly free to discount; that is what the People's Republic of China does now. In addition to what was done by the late Rajiv Gandhi, we also did very much. I would like to emphasise what was done, for example, in 1993 and 1996. In 1993, in 1996 also there was a Congress Government. I don't want to underline this point any further. Sir, that also contributed. That was the contribution made by the present Prime Minister's early visit which was well before -- it was the 1979 visit. It also contributed. You could concede, possibly, that on the question of the Line of Actual Control, having discussed it with my distinguished counterpart and friend, the Foreign Minister of the People's Republic of China, formally, in writing, in 2000, I wrote to him and said, "Let us work on a time-bound programme for an exchange of maps on the Line of Actual Control." It took some time. Why did it take time? It took time because I urged upon him, as I had urged during the recent visit, that both China and India, as two great civilisations, as great neighbours, as a collectivity, we represent, Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, almost 40 per cent of the humanity. As China and India represent 40 per cent of the humanity, it is incumbent upon India and China and the leadership of India and China to rise to the occasion and to address themselves to the challenges of tomorrow. It can only be done, if we escape the shadows of history and begin to look into the sunlight of tomorrow. I am very glad to say that we have moved forward; we have exchanged maps on the Line of Actual Control of the agreed scale. We will do so in the western sector now. We did it earlier in the middle sector, and we will do the same procedure in the western sector. We have, in the middle sector, identified, delineated, and defined the areas of differences. We will do so in the western sector; we will do so in the eastern sector. I

do believe that it is a positive step. Perhaps, to this positive step, the Ministry of External Affairs could have contributed something. Certainly, we inherited a great deal, but we too have contributed to it.

On the nuclear question, Sir, I really wish I had the time, because the question that hon. Natwar Singh raised was about conferring nuclear parity. We have discussed this question in Parliament since 1998 on a number of occasions. It would be difficult for me to revisit the entire debate, but should you or the House ever wish to discuss the whole issue again, I will be perfectly willing to do so. Indeed, I would be benefited, if such a thing is done. But if I now undertook to discuss the whole issue and the complexity, it will take time. What 1998 did was, actually, to make explicit what was all along implicit. I don't want to go into this discussion here, at this moment, because I don't have the time. I do wish to take up Palestine, and I wish to take up the United States of America.

On Palestine, the position is very clear. I have found out, because hon. Natwar Singhji asked how many statements have been made and said, "I have not seen any". It is my disappointment, Sir, that an hon. Member, who otherwise keeps himself so abreast of the current developments, lost his attention. We failed to find his attention on statements that the Ministry has made. In fact, in the last four-six weeks, we have made at least four-five very important statements. I will be instructing my officers to let hon. Shri Natwar Singhji have copies of those statements, and if he can improve upon on them, if there is anything that he feels we should emphasise, I will be very happy to do so.

I am grateful for some hon. Members who referred to the initiative of the Government, where we have sent teams of Members of Parliament and other prominent citizens to prominent countries belonging to the Organisation of Islamic Countries, as also the Gulf, because we needed to be constantly in touch with them. We are constantly in touch with them. I can assure you, Sir--not only because I have personally visited or my distinguished colleague, Omar Abdullah, has visited or our officers have visited--the frequency of exchange currently is much more than I have witnessed in the recent past.

We are also very mindful of the economic dimensions of it. We are also mindful of the factor of employment, etc., and we will constantly keep that in mind.

I am grateful to some suggestions of Dr. L.M. Singhvi, who spoke of cultural diplomacy and diaspora relations. On the U.N. Reforms, mentions were made by some hon. Members about the deficiencies of external publicity. Yes, Sir, if there are any deficiencies in the external publicity division, we would certainly address them, whether it is in the website or any other aspect of it.

I might share with the hon. Members that in the management of the website of the Ministry of External Affairs, we have hired an outside agency, who are considered to be the country's best in the field. It is not as if I don't have faith in the ability of the officers of Ministry of External Affairs, but I wanted the website of the Ministry of External Affairs to be the best amongst the websites of the Government. I am sorry that I say it myself; it is rather boastful. But I do think that the MEA has a better website than all other websites. Daily, we have a total quantity of hits, which is much larger than any other websites; but if we must improve, yes, we will improve.

Hon. Natwar Singhji said that I am not ready to learn. That is not a fair charge. I might be guilty of a lot of other shortcomings, but that I am not ready to learn is not a fair observation. I don't suffer from the arrogance of certainties. If I don't suffer from the arrogance of certainty, I also don't suffer from--because अहंकार देवताओं को लील लेता है।"

SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH: I didn't say that you are not ready to learn. I said, after 49 years, I was still learning. There is a wide difference. Please don't misinterpret it.

श्री जसवंत सिंह : मेरी समझ में गलती हुई।

श्री नटवर सिंह : जी हां।

श्री जसवंत सिंह : उसमें गीता के श्लोक का एक अंश है। इसका दूसरा अंश आता है, आप जानते हैं निश्चित रूप से, "अहंकार विमूढात्मा कर्ता ह्यमिति मन्यते।" जो अहंकार से विमूढ़ हों वे सोचते हैं मैं कर्ता हूँ, मैंने किया। I am but an instrument in the hands of the Government. Hon. Natwar Singhji also charged me that I was not sufficiently appreciative of the Ministry that I have the honour to deal with. I think, it is not correct. I have now to benefit from your company in this House. Recently in this House, in the other House and outside, I have so often said that if anything has happened correctly in the Ministry of External

Affairs, it is the team work of officers and their dedication and their integrity that is to be commended. For anything that goes wrong in the Ministry of External Affairs, it is only I, and I alone, who is responsible. But this, perhaps, has not come to your notice. I did, certainly, in a private assembly where the Ministry's officers were present, shared with them what I thought the areas that we needed to improve upon. It is a matter of great regret to me that what was to be a completely private exercise of searching deficiencies was then shared with some people. I am not free to go into all the details of it. You have attributed a statement to me, referring to some newspapers, that I said this, that or the other. I find it difficult to recollect that statement. However, let us proceed, Sir, because time waits for no one. On diaspora relations, this Government has done a great deal. A report is there. I wish I were in a position just now to announce how many of those recommendations of the committee have been implemented. But I can assure hon. Dr. Laxmi Malji that the great work that he and his team has put in, is the work that will contribute a great deal to a number of steps that have already been announced and will be implemented. On the question of United Nations reforms, I do beg to assert, Sir, that, today, for the permanent membership of the United Nations, the support that India has, of which the latest example of Japan's support was cited, is more than we have received anywhere. I wish to make it quite clear that, in fact, for the first time, we have a categorical statement from Her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom that UK shall not only support India's membership but will, in fact, now actively canvass for India's membership and will work for it. I do not say that the entire reform of the United Nations is imminent or that we are likely to achieve it. It is rather a closed club. This closed club confers upon the members certain distinctive powers. It is not easy for them to share those powers very readily. But the hon. Members are, no doubt, aware that the Millennium Summit, for example, unanimously adopted a Resolution for the reform of the United Nations. That Resolution carries a certain weight. It will have its effect. Can I give you a time frame in which it will have its effect? No, Sir, I cannot give you a time frame. Sir, I do wish to make one more point before I come to Afghanistan. Hon. Pranabbabu said that about the elections in Jammu and Kashmir, the United Kingdom is believed to have said that they cannot take place without outside observers. No, Sir, that is not what they say. There is a statement by my good friend, Rt. Hon. Jack Straw. He made it in a meeting of the EU Conference. I do not have the exact phraseology with me. But it is not the inference, as if there cannot be a

free and fair election, unless there are outside observers. We reject that notion totally. Her Majesty's Government knows it. My friend, Mr. Jack Straw, knows it. There is no question of accepting any outside observers. The function is entirely in the domain of the Election Commission of India. Similarly, whether it was President Clinton or anybody else, the fact remains, that Jammu and Kashmir is an issue that has to be resolved bilaterally, between India and Pakistan. It has been made abundantly clear, and statement after statement has gone in this regard. And I do wish to assure the hon. Members that neither there is any change nor can there be any dilution of that position.

Sir, on Afghanistan, an hon. Member said, "it appears that we are simply slipping." I do not think so, Sir. I did have the honour of going there for installation of the interim Government led by Mr. Hamid Karzai. We are not slipping. We are very much aware of the developments that are taking place in Afghanistan. I do not wish to read out the entire list, of how many visitors we have had from Afghanistan between November and now. Even today, Sir, I have, in India, two Ministers -- the Defence Minister and the Civil Aviation Minister -- from Afghanistan. We have a very active programme of co-operation with Afghanistan on a number of issues. This will continue. We do want Afghanistan to find an answer; where there is no place either for outside forces or for outside troops or for any external elements. Sir, Afghanistan has to find an answer to Afghanistan's problems. Foreign countries cannot find it. They have sought India's assistance in training their diplomats. Now, they are undergoing training in India. I do not want to go into all the details of the various assistance that India has already provided and what they have sought. We will continue because, in Afghanistan, India has no other interest but the welfare of the people of Afghanistan and an independent, self-assertive, a non-aligned and a free Afghanistan that would stand proud in the comity of Nations. That is what we are working for.

Sir, on the question of the LTTE, Pranabbabu has asked, and I wish to assure him that there is no change in the Government's stand with regard to the LTTE. It is a proscribed organisation, and the Government is fully mindful of not simply the sensibilities involved in this case, but the fact that we have to work in such a fashion that the territorial and Constitutional integrity of Sri Lanka is kept inviolate and, simultaneously, the aspirations of the people of Sri Lanka must be fulfilled. We cannot accept any division of

Sri Lanka. And we cannot accept any exportation of the problems of Sri Lanka on to the Peninsula or to any part of India. So far as the extradition of Mr. Prabhakaran is concerned, India has made a formal request for his extradition and we have reminded Government of Sri Lanka. This request is still pending. That is where the matter is, and there is change in this regard, so far as India is concerned.

On the question of Pakistan, I could very easily spend half-an-hour discussing this issue -- whether it is Lahore, whether it is Kargil. I shall now not refer to it by name. But when hon. Members point out that I am the guilty person who went to Kandahar, let me just correct one aspect of it. I did not escort anyone. I have explained this clearly a number of times. Please take your mind back. This was the Christmas and the New Year of 1999. There were already two aeroplanes of Indian Airlines at the Kandahar Airfield. The Kandahar Airfield was not, in any case, an international airfield. It was under the control of Taliban. There were 166 persons on board, who had been there for the last seven days, on that ill-fated 814. We had definite information that if steps were not taken, that aircraft will be taken off in the air on 31st December, and blown in the air. It was necessary for me to go because we anticipated that there will be last minute hitches in the rescue of those 166 passengers. There was no way Kandahar could take the fourth aeroplane. I chose to go. I volunteered to go. I volunteered to go because I considered it my duty to try and rescue those 166 persons. It was a bitter, bitter poison to swallow. But, in that aeroplane, I had to take others with me. Yes, if you charge me with that, I am guilty. You do reflect on the fact that before that, on the streets of Delhi, in front of the Prime Minister's house, in Press conferences, we were witnessing, on a daily basis, citizens rolling on streets. I do not agree with that. And, in retrospect, could I have done anything differently? I was able to get the 166 people back. Some day I will be able to say that the complications that arose on the tarmac when I had landed made me do like that. In retrospect, if I had not gone, I am not sure that those 166 persons could have come back to Delhi before 1999 became 2000. However, Sir, that is now behind us.

On Pakistan, let us be very clear. My gallant friend spoke of coercive diplomacy. It is not a subject that I can discuss in Parliament. On Pakistan, the issue is very clear. It is not India that has to decide what has to be done, it is Pakistan that has to decide what kind of long-term

relationship it wants with India. This is the fundamental question. And, in this fundamental question, what we require from Pakistan is, what I had said on 11th June, 1999, in the midst of the Kargil operation, My then counterpart, Shri Sartaj Azeez, had flown into Delhi, and I had said, "Reaffirm the inviolability of the Line of Control, withdraw your aggression, and abandon cross-border terrorism." We had said, "You must abandon cross-border terrorism." What we are saying in effect is, "We cannot accept the promotion of terrorism as an instrument of State policy." You cannot have a situation in which any country can say such a thing-- and Pakistan, in this case, comes to India, and tells India that they will continue to employ terrorism as a pre-dialogue negotiating tactics. The day or the minute I accept terrorism as a pre-dialogue negotiating tactic, there is no way that I will be able to rid my fair land of Jammu & Kashmir free of terrorism.

I had to stand on that. They have to abandon this. If they do so, we are ready to discuss any issue with them. We want a peaceful, a prosperous and an ease relationship with Pakistan. We wish the people of Pakistan well. I have no enmity with the people of Pakistan. I don't wish to comment, Sir, on the recent developments. The United States of America has chosen to employ Pakistan as an ally. I told them, 'Well, good luck to you; that is your choice.' I am not persuaded to follow suit. I am not persuaded because this -- let me not say it -- is their choice. Have they brought, through this choice, order in Afghanistan? I have told them "you have not." East Afghanistan and South Afghanistan suffer because of the deficiencies in the Coalition and the United States' approach to the whole question of Afghanistan. We have told them, clearly, that this attempt by the international community can simply not afford to fail in Afghanistan. It cannot afford to fail because, if it fails, then, the consequences will visit upon everybody else. I used to tell them earlier, "you live 8,500 miles away, but India lives not even eight-and-a-half minutes away. You can go away from here; India cannot go away". We have to find an answer. Now, they don't live 8,500 miles away. They are barely eight-and-a-half minutes away. And, therefore, we have to approach this whole issue and this is where I totally agree with Shri Pranab Mukherjee of terrorism, collectively. The international community has to address it. If this is done, we can engage Pakistan on any terms. Sir, I have to answer just one or two administrative questions. One relates to the passports. Let me answer about passports and visas...(Interruptions)...

SHRI P.G. NARAYANAN: Sir, I raised one point. For the past 30 years, the Sri Lankan Army has been harassing the Indian fishermen by killing and arresting them. Is the Government willing to take up this issue?

SHRI JASWANT SINGH: Yes, we have taken it up. I followed the point. Sir, the issue relates to the movement of fishermen. As hon. Members know, we faced this in the context of the Gujarat Coast also. We can do industrial fishing. Ours is, essentially, country-fishing, i.e., small fishermen moving in country boats. Then, there is the coastal fishing. In the Palk Straits, between Sri Lanka and India, it is, essentially, coastal fishing. The problem arose because of LTTE's presence. We had made it very clear to Sri Lanka that this is not acceptable. We are devising methods on how to sort this out. Some steps have been taken, and more need to be taken. I accept it.

On the passports issue, Sir, before this fee hike, India's passport fee was amongst the lowest in South Asia. It was lower than even the fee charged by Bangladesh and other countries. Am I entirely satisfied with the passports management? No, Sir, I am not. Therefore, we suggested to the States of the Union, that the Ministry of External Affairs is ready to have District Magistrates issue passports. We are ready to get the District Magistrates trained for this. In any case, it is the district police which does the verification. We don't mind it. And we will, actually, pay the State Governments a certain sum of money, if they were ready to do this. Some States responded to this. We then said, 'we will run a training programme for those officers.' Some states responded and sent officers for training. I wish to make issue of passports as easy as getting a ration card. The Supreme Court has said, 'it is a citizen's right'. I want to make the acquisition of this right, subject to the usual scrutinies and checks, an easy right. Sir, the fee we have raised, is the minimum that we could have done. I am afraid, as we go forward, the hon. Members would recognise it. There was something about visas and Sethu Samudram. We will address these issues also. Sir, I am very grateful to hon. Members. I have no conclusion to offer except to say that, really, Sir, I endeavour, indeed, I am bound to address myself, Sir, to the challenges of our times and not the issues of yesterday, no, but to the great issue that confront us today, or will confront us tomorrow. The debate has enlightened me, it has benefited me. The Government will benefit from some very valuable suggestions, and it is to these questions that we, in the Ministry of External Affairs, will address

ourselves as we go down the year. Thank you very much.

SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH: Since the distinguished Minister of External Affairs has spent a very large amount of time responding to me, I am glad to hear that he has rediscovered non-alignment. I began my statement by saying that I have respect for the shrines of the minds of our colleagues of the Treasury Benches, and that applies to my friend, also. And, repeatedly, I said; I have great respect for you. The Foreign Policy and the diplomacy of India is not a personal matter. So, please don't take it personally. These are matters of great importance. I did not mean one word through which I wanted to personally, in any way, offend you. That is not my nature, and, as a diplomat, the only emotion that I am allowed is 'controlled indignation'.

SHRI PRASANTA CHATTERJEE (West Bengal): Sir, only one point....

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI T.N. CHATURVEDI): Do you want to put some question? ...*(Interruptions)*... Please, be quick.

SHRI PRASANTA CHATTERJEE: Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, I want to know from the hon. Minister: Can you guarantee that, in future, the soil of our country will not be utilised by another foreign country to attack another independent country. I want an assurance on this point.

SHRI JASWANT SINGH: In future, it would not be utilised, implies that in the past or present, it has been so utilised. That is not so, Sir. That is not India's policy. It will not be India's policy. Let us conclude this. I am grateful to hon. Natwar Singhji for what he has said. The issue is over. The debate is also over. Let, therefore, the issue and the debate, both be concluded on that note. Thank you very much.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI T.N. CHATURVEDI): The discussion on the working of the Ministry of External Affairs is now over. There is a Statement to be made by hon. Shri Jagmohan on National Tourism Policy - 2002. I think, in view of the late hours, and since there is another programme, may I request you to lay it on the Table of the House?