

“For God’s
Sake, Go”



M. R. Masani

Many members here are perhaps heaving a sigh of relief that this is the last time this particular Lok Sabha will have to go through this exercise, and I would not blame them, because the result is foregone. It is not true, as a matter of fact, that we can hope that this house has lost confidence in the Council of Ministers. I wish it were so, it should be so; but we know that the result is a foregone conclusion. In any event, this is a lame-duck Parliament, whose mandate is nearly exhausted, and whatever value this discussion has is as an educative preamble to what is to follow. Because the real vote of no-confidence is not going to be passed this November nor this December but it will be passed by the people of India next February, and I for one have no doubt whatsoever that, when that time comes, the Congress Party will be soundly defeated at the polls. And it will be a well-deserved defeat; of that there can be no doubt.

Consider for a moment the state of our country today. Consider the state of the nation. On the constitutional front, the Constitution, which many of us were proud to have joined in framing, has been violated over and over again and amended on 18, 19 or 20 occasions. On many of those occasions the amendment was brought in for the simple purpose of trying to undo a judgement of the Supreme Court of India. In the process, the Fundamental Rights have been eroded and whittled away. For the last so many years, the state of Emergency has been made permanent, although there is no question of any clear and present danger to the security of this country. The Defence of India Act and the Rules have become a kind of crutch on which those in office have to rely, without which they cannot carry on the day-to-day administration of a country living in peace.

This state of affairs reminds us of what happened under British Raj, and I shall quote the words of Jawaharlal Nehru under the British to show how very close to that we have come today and how we, on this side, feel that the position is as intolerable as he had in the days of the Rowlatt Act under the British. This is what Jawaharlal Nehru said:

"A Government that has to rely on the Criminal Law Amendment Act and similar laws, that suppress the press and literature, that ban hundreds of organisations, that keep people in prison without trial, and that do so many other things that are happening in India today, is a government that has ceased to have even a shadow of a justification for its existence. I can never adjust myself to those conditions; I find them intolerable."

We in the opposition find ourselves in the same position.

On the front of national unity, far from progress being made, we are steadily going backwards. The country is being fragmented today by encouragement given mainly by members of the ruling party, and even those in government, to all kinds of linguistic controversies, territorial claims of one State against

another, the imposition of zonal barriers dividing this country into many sovereign independent States and class warfare of various kinds.

Public Morality

Public morality is the biggest casualty of these last 19 years of Congress rule. We have corruption, jobbery and inefficiency, which have become an established way of life. This kind of corruption has an inextricable link with the regime of statism and controls to which reference has been made. You cannot abolish corruption like this unless you decontrol and wipe out the permit-licence raj and restore economic freedom to our people.

The latest example was given by Shri Trivedi when he mentioned how, while this Government talks of economy and saving of public funds, it creates in the Punjab a Cabinet four times as big as the last one although the territory of Punjab has shrunk to one-third — in a House of 87, 24 members of Government — and in Haryana with a Party of 41 MLAs, 18 have been inducted into the Cabinet! It would seem, the smaller the State, the bigger the size of the Cabinet must be! No wonder that a report from Chandigarh says that those in charge of affairs are wondering how to find 42 rooms of sufficient status for these 42 gentlemen, 42 cars and 42 bungalows in a city which was not prepared for this kind of locust invasion.

I want to challenge even the formation of these two governments. I want to say that the very formation of these two governments is an impropriety. There was no reason whatsoever why these self-created governments, responsible neither to a Legislature nor to public opinion, should have been installed at this stage. Governor's rule should have continued till February and then a new government should have come after the elections. Here is an example of how the power of patronage and bribery is going to be employed to try and doctor the elections.

Finally, as Shri Trivedi has said, even the Das Commission's recommendations have been ignored and four guilty men, unfit to hold office, have now been given the Cabinet rank again.

On the one hand there is corruption, jobbery and patronage, on the other there is abdication of authority, of the responsibility to maintain law and order. Criticism made in this House and elsewhere, which is reasoned and constructive, whether by politicians or by the press, is ignored. How very little of what we say has ever evoked a response from these gentlemen, but when somebody pulls chains, loots godowns and attacks property and person, that very demand is conceded. Now the people have come to realise that with the Congress governments at the Centre and in the States the only way to get something done is to resort to violence and force. This is a tremendous blow to public morality in any society.

I was in Bombay during the Bundh which created a Cabinet crisis in Maharashtra. I have seen and heard people who wanted to exercise their lawful right to go to their jobs or colleges, who asked for police protection but who were refused it. The police stood by while goondas were not permitting men and women to go about their normal avocations. Citizens of Bombay were denied the protection of the law because the Congress Government in Maharashtra, the Home Minister, had said that the police should keep out of it and watch. This created a Cabinet crisis in the Maharashtra Government. It is true that most of those concerned climbed down, but I would like to pay my tribute to one honest Congress Minister who had the guts finally to resign. Shri Shantilal Shah, a veteran Congressman and trade-unionist, stuck to his guns because he was ashamed of belonging to this corrupt, degenerate Congress Government.

Dr. M. S. Aney: Did he say so?

Mr. Masani: He has resigned; he is out. He did not use these very words but that was the meaning of his resignation; the words are mine.

This morning one of our most experienced, mature and responsible commentators has written an article entitled "The Grimmiest Situation in 19 Years", a few sentences of which, I think, I must put into the record of this House. Shri Moolgaonkar, the Editor-in-Chief of the *Hindustan Times* writing under the initials "S.M." — I hope I have not identified him incorrectly—

"We see today the results which were always obvious to the meanest intelligence of the criminal abdication by Congress Governments at the Centre and in the States of their responsibility for maintaining law and order.

"The situation we are facing in the country today is the grimmiest in the 19 years since independence.

"The future of the country is dark for many reasons, all of them directly attributable to 19 years of Congress rule."

He goes on:

"And all because a government which has lost all moral authority to rule is not capable of taking precautions in time because of incompetence abetted by the fear of losing a few votes."

Now we have come to this stage of our wonderful system of planning and statism that the location of a steel plant has to be decided not by the laws of the market, not by the needs of the consumer, not by economic considerations but by hunger strikes, burning of trains and uprooting of tracks.

International Sphere

Turning to the international sphere, the mover of the motion has done a great job in delineating in clear language the contemptible nature of our foreign policy. He has referred to the failure on our part to discriminate between friends and enemies, the Himalayan blunders we have committed which have invited aggression and lost us large amounts of territories to the Chinese Communists. We have in Vietnam the failure of this Government to realise that the boundaries of this country lie on the River Mekong and if Communist China cannot be contained there, we shall be encircled by China and its friends all the way from Karachi down to Singapore.

There is a failure to build any kind of a regional collective security system in Asia. Smaller countries are getting together to protect themselves from the Communist bandits. In Seoul there was a Conference where Japan, Malaysia and even so-called non-aligned

countries went along with the others and we were conspicuous by our absence. Instead of that we had this pathetic summit the other day about which Shri Trivedi was so critical.

Mr. Indrajit Gupta: Not like the Manila Conference.

Mr. Joachim Alva: Why do you not tell your American friends not to arm Pakistan? They gave massive arms aid to Pakistan which has brought the Chinese at our doorstep.

Mr. Masani: I see, Sir, that my Communist friends on both sides of the House cannot take it.

I was saying that we had this pathetic summit here. Shri Nath Pai, quite rightly, asked the Prime Minister this morning. "Why did you not go beyond pious platitudes?" The answer is obvious, namely, because the three governments that had met are all weak, downgraded governments — governments dependent on somebody or other for economic and military support. There is no strength in their legs. If three weak people come together, they do not become any stronger; they still remain as weak as they were. This was a miserable flop of three discredited governments trying to bolster one another by helping each other's morale. The result has been a complete failure.

The results of our foreign policy, briefly, are that today we are utterly isolated in the world. We have not got one friend to whom we can turn in time of need. The second result is that we have lost international stature. Our Government's name is mud in the rest of the world because of two things — our self-righteous posture on the one side and our economic mendicancy, going with a begging bowl all over, on the other.

Our Economic Plight

Finally, look at our economic condition today. I saw in the *London Economist* of a few weeks ago a paragraph summarising our economic plight. The *London Economist* is a very sympathetic paper where this Government is concerned.

"India today", it wrote, "is a land of disillusion. The country has had its self-confidence badly shattered,

first by the ignominy of defeat at Chinese hands, and subsequently by the persisting economic crisis. ... The disillusion is aggravated by the fact that things at home have turned out very differently from what the people had been led to hope. Planning is in bad odour because of constant shortfalls. The public sector, far from being a lever of growth, has soaked up resources on which it yields hardly any return. Inflation, which has grown in step with higher plan investments, has increased the gap between income groups and thrown the burden of development on the shoulders least able to bear it."

Can we deny that this is a fair summary or picture of what is going on in this country? This picture is the result of the perverse policies in which this Government still wants to persist. The primary obligations of this Government are neglected. Our telephone service is a scandal. Letters now take three to four days to move from one city to another although there is air transportation. This morning we read a message from Ghaziabad which shows the rock bottom to which this Government has descended, saying that a notice has been put up in the Ghaziabad post offices that no postcards and stamped envelopes are available. The newspaper report goes on to say that they have been out of stock for already three days! Did this ever happen under British rule? This is the first time that this country is sinking to the level of Congo or some backward African State.

While all these basic jobs of carrying out the functions of Government are being neglected, this Government is busy putting up steel plants and trying to make everything that it should not. Now they want to put their hands on foodgrains and the distribution of food, and finally, like a desperate gambler who has lost everything, they are looking with ugly, avaricious eyes at the money of the small depositors — lakhs of them — in the banks of India and wanting to spread their tentacles on them by talking of the nationalisation of banking.

Now what happened about devaluation? We were told that devaluation was for the sake of boosting our exports. Will one of the economic Ministers in his

reply tell us in what way our export position has improved since we devalued the rupee? Will they tell us what has happened and to what extent our devaluation has been justified because, when we asked them what it was about, they said that it was primarily for the sake of exports. Our neighbours in Pakistan, whatever we may think of them otherwise, are more practical. The *Pakistan Observer* recently gave the export figures for the last two months in Pakistan. Exports during September, 1966, rose by 29.44% as compared to the previous month of August and, compared to the corresponding month last year, the exports for September, 1966, are 50.44% higher. While they are doing this, we are wallowing in the aftermath of devaluation because our Government did not have the courage or gumption or intelligence to take the correct follow-up measures.

Then comes this horrible Fourth Plan. This Fourth Plan, if ever it is implemented, will spell the doom of this country. It has all the evils of the Second and the Third Plans in an exaggerated degree. We are told that there is to be no deficit financing. That is a lie. Deficit financing is implicit in this Plan; it is inherent in this Plan. It has already taken place; already in the last six months, which are the first six months of the Fourth Plan period, it is admitted that there was deficit financing to the extent of Rs. 200 crores. Yet, they go on saying in their Resolutions and Manifestos that there will be no deficit financing. If this is not a fraud on this country, I do not know what is.

Then let me say this. Prices are to rise; so long as the Congress Government is there, prices will rise. So long as the Congress Government is there, food shortage will continue. I do not like to be a prophet of doom, but let me put this to the House. If this Government is returned next February, God help us, there will be famine in the country in the middle of 1967 and thousands of people will die.

Shri Ranga: Mr. Subramaniam has said so.

Mr. Masani: Thousands of people will die, if the people return this Government to office next time.

(Interruptions)

Shri Ranga: You will see the people's graves.

Shri Raghunath Singh: Famine will depend on Indra.

Shri Ranga: That will be an epitaph written on your Government.

Mr. Masani: A few days ago, my respected friend, Mr. Jayaprakash Narayan, sent a letter to the Press where he endorsed the views of Professor Shenoy in regard to the destructive and deplorable character of the Fourth Plan and asked our Government and our Prime Minister to call him in and listen to his counsel. My friend, Mr. Jayaprakash, is a very noble man, a great optimist.

An Hon. Member: He was the hon. member's colleague.

Mr. Masani: He is still my colleague; I am very proud to be his colleague. He is an optimist. He believes in the goodness of human nature. But I would like to tell him that there is no chance of this set of people ever calling in an honest economist like Professor Shenoy. It may interest this House to know that Prof. Shenoy is today in Ceylon, where a more intelligent government has chosen to call him to listen to his views and benefit by his advice. But this Government of ours will go on listening to those economic mountebanks and charlatans who are sitting in the Planning Commission and who have brought this country to this pass.

Paper Tiger

This is the picture of our country. The verdict should be clear. Such a Government is unfit to exist even a day longer. But there are two fallacies prevalent which may prevent it from being thrown out and I would like to refer to them before I conclude.

The first fallacy is the one which is widely held mostly by the urban intelligentsia: "the Congress is invincible and you cannot defeat it." I have heard this from hundreds of highly educated people, graduates, people with constructive genius, people who have done things: "What can we do? They are hopeless people; they are a menace; they are destroying this country; but you cannot do anything against them." This is a big fallacy. This Congress is a paper tiger; it is a big balloon

with gas in it. It only needs to be pricked. I say that because the facts are that this is not only a paper tiger, but it is also a shrinking tiger. This Congress Party never got a majority of the Indian people to vote for it. Ever since India became independent, not even in one election, even under the leadership of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, did they get 50% of the votes polled for the Lok Sabha. The highest they got was 48%.

An Hon Member: What was your percentage?

Mr. Masani: We did not exist at that time! The highest they got was 48%. The lowest was in the last elections, 44.72% for the Lok Sabha elections and yet, with that, they got 72% of the seats, and they have got this fraud of a bogus majority. It only exists because of a fluke in the electoral system. This 44% is not going to exist next year. At the very highest, I would give them 39%, and nothing more. Now the Gallup polls... (Interruptions)

Let them listen to a few words. They may work a little harder; they may buck up and get more votes.

The Gallup polls that have been carried out this year show a very clear trend. . . .

An Hon. Member: By whom?

Shri Joachim Alva: By one who is the henchman of big business.

Mr. Masani: They have been carried out by the Indian Institute of Public Opinion which is an affiliate of the Gallup institution of America which enjoys international prestige and which our own Government uses when it suits them. The Indian Institute of Public Opinion has polled a cross-section of opinion in the four metropolitan cities, Delhi, Bombay, Madras and Calcutta. In January-February, the Congress support was 60% of those polled. In May-June, it had dropped to 41%. Perhaps we may have thought that this was a temporary decline or trough which would be got out of, but the latest figures for September-October are very conclusive. They show that it still remains 41%.

Shri Shinkre: He is diagnosing a dead disease.

Mr. Masani: I am trying to be helpful. The September-October figures show that it is still 41%. In other

words, in the last three months, not even one per cent of the lost ground has been regained and it looks as if that is where they are going to remain. I was asked as to what was the support to our Party. I will give that answer. According to the same poll, the non-socialist parties, which include my Party and the Jan Sangh, and may be other groups, got about 20%; the non-leftist or non-socialist support was 20% in January-February but by May-June it had risen to 42%, i.e. double.

Shri Tyagi: It may be a clerical error.

Mr. Masani: There was no clerical error. According to this poll, the support of the Swatantra Party and the Jan Sangh combined in the four big cities is equal to that of the Congress Party.

This morning the *Indian Express* starts an analysis of the Madras situation with the remark: "People are with the Opposition, but the Congress may yet win." This sums up the prospects in Madras. This is true of the whole country. That is why I am sounding this note of warning to the people who think that just because the people are against the Congress, the position for the Opposition is favourable, and they will be thrown out of office. This may happen or may not happen because of the reasons given for Madras. This is because of the British electoral system which we have adopted, the system which very few 20th Century Constitutions have touched. Almost all the new countries and the new Constitutions have adopted some system of Proportional Representation, but we in our wisdom chose the British one. The result is that Britain, which has a two-party system, is able to work the British electoral system, but we are not Anglo-Saxons with a spirit of compromise like Englishmen or Americans. We are Latins in our temperament. We are argumentative; we are quarrelsome; we split; we splinter; we form more parties rather than unite. The result is that in our country we have six or seven parties rather than two. When we have six or seven parties, with the group system of the Latins and the British electoral system, we get the distortion which is represented in the composition of the Lok Sabha, that is, 44% of the people electing 72% of the members, and *vice versa*. This is the

evil and this has to be eliminated next February. This Government can hardly be expected to bring in a Bill for proportional representation to put an end to their Government and their monopoly of power. But the remedy lies on this side. The remedy lies on this side and the remedy is that we should have what they call in France a "second ballot." In France, when a member does not get a clear majority in his constituency, 50 per cent or more, the two senior candidates are sent back to the polls the following Sunday and the man who gets 50 per cent or more is duly elected. We saw this in the case of Gen. DeGaulle's election as President only a few months ago. Because he could not get 50 per cent, he had to stand again against Mr. Mitterand, and he got 55 per cent and he was declared elected as President. What we have to do on this side, if we have the gumption, the intelligence and the patriotism, is to hold a second ballot in advance, to consider who is the strongest democratic Opposition candidate, and for the other democratic Opposition parties to withdraw and leave him alone in the field for a straight fight between the ruling party and the democratic Opposition.

An Hon. Member: It will not happen.

Mr. Masani: It is happening. I am very glad to say it is happening. I am very glad to say that this process has partially succeeded already. In Gujarat, in Rajasthan and in Orissa—these are the States which we hope to carry—there is a complete agreement between the Jan Sangh and the Swatantra Party about the allocation of seats. And we ought to do this all over the country. We hope that the socialist parties and the other democratic parties will come into this kind of arrangement. This is not an alliance, because there are many things on which we do not agree. It is a second ballot that I have advocated and its only purpose is to remove the inequity of our electoral system and to create a Lok Sabha which really represents the will of the majority of the people and not a minority as this Lok Sabha which is functioning. It is our first target, therefore, to bring into existence, a new Lok Sabha where the balance of power is changed and where the monopoly

of power is ended, because that is the will of the Indian people. Then, people ask: "What will happen?" That is not my business. It is the business of the President of the Republic, with the help of the newly elected Lok Sabha, to create a Government that enjoys the confidence of the majority of the Lok Sabha and of the people, and I think we can leave that to the President and to the new Lok Sabha itself.

Fallacy of Stability

This was the first fallacy to which I was referring. Then, there is another fallacy. That fallacy is that the interests of stability require the continuation of the Congress Government. Many of my rather cowardly business friends have been misled into believing this. It is complete nonsense. There is one situation alone in which the stability of this country and the continuation of our democracy can be secured and that is by a change of government in Delhi next February-March. If that does not take place, I warn the House that this country will drift in the direction of Ghana and Indonesia. For, if 60 per cent of the electorate rejects this Government and yet it comes back with 55 or 60 per cent of the seats, then I say with all responsibility that, though I may accept the verdict of the Constitution such as it is, and I may bow to the quirks of the electoral system, the common man is not such a sophisticated democrat and he would not understand this, and he will not understand a discredited and demoralised government, after nineteen years of misrule, being rejected by 60 per cent and yet coming and sitting here, saying: 'I shall rule for five more years'.

Shri K. D. Malaviya: Would my hon. friend allow me to put a question? In a public limited company where there are thousands of shareholders, will my hon. friend accept a change in the system of election of the directors and will he adopt the system which he has now advocated?

Mr. Masani: Most certainly. I believe in the rights of the shareholders to change the board of directors at any time when the majority of the shareholders want it.

Shri Raghunath Singh: What about proportional representation?

Shri Shinkre: Should my hon. friend compare our country to a public or private limited company?

Shri Raghunath Singh: Will he accept proportional representation in joint-stock companies?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The hon. Member should try to conclude now.

Mr. Masani: I hope I would have another five minutes without these constant interruptions.

I was saying that this is not the party on which the country can rely for stability. This is not the party that will protect the country from chaos or communism.

Shri Ranga: See what it happening all over.

Congress Invitation to Reds

Mr. Masani: The Congress President publicly invited the communists to get back to the Congress. Was that a way of protecting the country from communism? During and after his visit to the Soviet Union, he made some amazing statements which I would like my hon. friends opposite sitting there, who are not communists, to consider. First of all, he was impressed even by Soviet housing and agriculture. What a joke! Anyone who follows the Soviet press knows that one of the biggest criticisms is that there are two fields of work where the Soviet system has completely failed to deliver the goods; one is homes for the people and the other is food for the people. That is why the Soviet Union is selling millions of dollars and pounds of gold to buy food for their people. This is what our wonderful Congress President has learnt. Then, he made a remark after announcing this wonderful success:

"On seeing your progress we are enthused that we can make similar progress in the same way as you have done. Your planning can be a guide to our own material advancement."

This is from a party that is going to protect the country

from communism! Then, he misread history and would have liked to rewrite it, for, Mr. Kamaraj Nadar said:

"The Soviet Revolution undoubtedly inspired India in its struggle for freedom."

Poor Mahatma Gandhi, poor Mahatma Gandhi who abhorred communism and who had no use for the October Revolution, evidently got inspiration from Lenin and Stalin! And then we find Mr. Kamaraj was eager in Budapest to learn how the democratic process of electing Members of Parliament was managed in a one-party State, namely, Hungary. Was that a preparation for democracy or for a one-party dictatorship 1972?

Fascist Tendencies

Our Prime Minister too has been showing very unfortunate tendencies of a Fascist kind. In Srinagar, according to the *Hindustan Times* of October 2, she said that there was no need for a second party in Kashmir, talking about Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed's Opposition. If there is no need for a second party in Kashmir, she may now go on to say that there is no need for a second party in any part of India, and in fact, she has said so. At another meeting in India, she said that the slogan should be 'One nation, one team'.

Shri Ranga: What a shame!

Mr. Masani: What does 'One nation, one team' mean?

Shri Tyagi: Unity.

Mr. Masani: 'One nation, one team' is a totalitarian slogan. In any democracy, the slogan should be 'One nation, two team', one in office and one in the Opposition. That is the very basis of parliamentary government enshrined in our Constitution. I hope this remark does not indicate a consistent Fascist tendency on her part also.

If this Government does not go, then it is not only going to destroy the Congress Party and the Govern-

ment but it will destroy the country. It will bring down the pillars of the stability of our country, of its economy and social life.

I remember in this very House, in this very Chamber, as a Congress Member of the Opposition, during the days of the RIN Mutiny, I made a speech here, and I said to the British Government once sitting there: 'For God's sake, go. Get out of this country while there is still order, administration and some stability, because if you hang on to power in India any longer, there will be no authority left; there will be chaos and you will destroy this country before you go.' And I say this today to these men also: 'For God's sake go while there is some administration and some order. Do not destroy the country before you go.'

(Based on speech delivered in the Lok Sabha on November 2, 1966 during the debate on the No-Confidence Motion).



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