

[Dr Henry Austin]

exported—it was zero in 1953—marine products worth over 150 crores in the last year. Today, we have a leading position in the world in the sea-food export. In the same way, our plantation products also have a good place in world market. We are to-day having an international market. These could not have been achieved had it not been for the fact that we have a Government committed to the welfare of the people.

Again one more word, Sir. The weaker sections of our society who are the main victims of exploitation by the gullible propaganda by the Marxists Party are deserting them. It is the weaker sections of our society, the vulnerable sections of our society who have benefited from very many nation-building activities. I have catalogued earlier carried on by our Govt. From the social and economic angles as well as from the political angle our State has achieved much in recent years. In the wake of these significant achievements, this Bill for extension is welcome and the people will only be happy.

However, the ruling United Front, much less the Congress Party is ready to fight the elections any time. You know, Sir, that ours is the single party in the State. In any election to come the Congress and its allies who have succeeded in giving our people leadership stability and economic progress will be returned with overwhelming majorities.

Therefore, Sir, I welcome this Bill.

SHRI C. K. CHANDRAPPA
(Telliicherry) Sir, this is the third time that Government is coming forward with the Bill to seek extension of the life of the Kerala Legislature.

I stand to support this Bill. But, I am not so jubilant in supporting this extension as Mr Henry Austin has

And also I am not so diffident as Mr Samar Mukherjee is about the situation in Kerala. Why is it so? Because during the last six months after the last extension was sought in this House it would have been possible for the Central Government to arrange for the Kerala elections and there was a congenial condition existing in that State. The President of the Congress Party and the leaders of the Congress Party in Kerala said on more than one occasion that they are ready to face the electorate. The Chief Minister of Kerala spoke on behalf of the coalition that the coalition is also ready to face the electorate in Kerala.

Then Sir, the Government says the situation in the country remains as it was before and as such they are seeking extension of the life of Government in Kerala. If I remember in this House itself ministers after ministers were coming and telling that they are trying to relax the emergency and they are releasing prisoners. They are trying to bring about condition under which the harshness of emergency will be felt little. While speaking to foreign press in Colombo the Prime Minister himself said that the Government's aim is to relax the emergency. If that is the situation and the Government is going in for relaxation or emergency then I think it would have been very appropriate for the Government to go in for elections in Kerala.

When I say this I would like to make it very clear that Shri Samar Mukherjee and his party need not indulge in day-dreaming that in the elections they will again come back victorious in Kerala. I think that is a closed chapter. They cannot. They will be badly defeated. It is not that they have no freedom to work among the people or do their propaganda—I have not any quarrel with the Marxist party when they say they are harassed—but they are rather exposed before the

people. Mr. Henry Austin narrated the various socio-economic measures that the Kerala Government had taken up during the last several years. I need not repeat the same. Now, to all these schemes what was the attitude of the Marxist party? Absolutely negative and cynical attitude was taken by the Marxist party. So, they are exposed. They are thoroughly isolated from the people. Their rank and file is running away from the leadership.

Sir, the main point is, today in Kerala the United Front is ready to go in for election as has been made clear by Mr. Achuta Menon and all the parties to the coalition. That being the case—while supporting the Bill—I would request the Government that they should not come to this House again, the fourth time, for an extension. I will support this Bill but they should not come again and say that the situation is the same. Situation in Kerala is good for holding elections.

In this context, I have certain questions to ask. While speaking about this, Dr. Austin said that the Government had done well and political stability had been given to the State. But is it an argument? If a Government is doing good and it is providing political stability, can you say that that Government can continue with one extension after another without election?

DR. HENRY AUSTIN: I said that the current political stability is admired by the people and so this extension will not be resented by them.

SHRI SAMAR MUKHERJEE: Make it a permanent thing!

SHRI C. K. CHANDRAPPA: I did not say that Dr. Austin said it. But is that an argument for not having election or for postponing election?

In this context, I would like the hon. Minister to enlighten us as to what the attitude of this Government is towards holding elections in the country, for

Parliament as well as the State Assemblies. The same argument can be extended. After emergency has been imposed, after the 20-point economic programme has been implemented, there are good things happening; political stability is ensured, reaction is pushed back. But can you say that we will seek more extension for Parliament and we will go ahead without election?

The Minister who was answering a question in the other House said that it is the prerogative of the Prime Minister to decide about the election. I agree with him. It is the prerogative of the Prime Minister, but this House has the right to know from this Minister when he is seeking an extension of the life of the Kerala legislature at least an indication as to when we are going to face the electorate. I think the Congress Party today can face the electorate. They will ask, Who are you to say that? Well, that is my view. This country can go in for an election now; it cannot seek refuge under any pretext that we will go on extending and extending without election.

There are certain strange arguments being advanced like these. Under socialism there is no election necessary. This is a very strange theory, a reactionary theory. Then another theory is advanced that when a Government is doing good for the people, no election is necessary. I say this will eat away the vitals of parliamentary democracy. So when you speak of parliamentary democracy, when we are living under a Constitution which provides for parliamentary democracy, there is no escape from facing the electorate.

We supported the emergency; we are still supporting it. We supported extension of the life of Lok Sabha. We supported the extension of the Kerala legislature, we are going to support it

[Shri C. K. Chandrappan]

again. But we are entitled to know from the Government what is their attitude in relation to the problems I am raising. Will you face the electorate in the near future and go in for elections, parliamentary as well as Assembly?

SHRI SAMAR MUKHERJEE: Keeping the emergency intact!

SHRI C. K. CHANDRAPPAN: Shri Samar Mukherjee may have his view.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Forget the provocation.

SHRI C. K. CHANDRAPPAN: Statements made by official spokesmen many times suggested that emergency and election need not be counterposed. I am also saying: do not counterpose election and emergency. But give an assurance...

SHRI SAMAR MUKHERJEE: With the Opposition in jail.

SHRI C. K. CHANDRAPPAN: When we are going in for elections. This will lay to rest the prophets of doom here and in the western press that democracy in India is doomed. Democracy in India need not be doomed. For that I think the Government should adopt a positive attitude towards the problem. They should say that they are ready to face the electorate and that they will not come before the House for seeking another extension for the Kerala Legislature. Then, there is reason to support that; otherwise unwittingly you will be contributing to the enemies of the country, enemies of the policies of the government who would say that in

India democracy has been doomed, think they will not do that.

When you are extending the life of the Kerala Legislature, certain demands of the Kerala government should be conceded also. There is the Kerala Labour Welfare Fund Bill awaiting President's assent for one year or so; it is a good Bill providing so many good things for the poor people. The Marxist Party never did it; the Coalition did it. That assent should be given. A draft Ordinance for nationalisation of foreign plantations has been pending assent for the last five long years. What will happen to that? There is the Medical Practitioners' Bill which was sent back without assent; it provided facilities for those who got their degrees in integrated medical courses, those who were ayurvedic as well as allopathic. The Kerala government wanted some facilities to be provided but the Central Government sent it back. Lastly, tomorrow the Central Sales Tax Bill is coming up and I should request the hon. Law Minister to consider the point raised by the Kerala Government. Because out of Kerala's total revenue of Rs. 127 crores, Rs. 23 crores will be knocked off if that Bill is enacted as it is proposed without agreeing to the amendment that is proposed by the Kerala government. I think those good things should be favourably considered by the government when the extension of the life of the Kerala Legislature is sought. With these words I support the Bill but I again request them not to come here again for a similar extension.

18.05 hrs.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Tuesday, August 31, 1976/Bhadra 9, 1898 (Saka)