

# INTERVIEW: ALL INDIA RADIO FOR TV

**Mrs. Malik:** Mr. Prime Minister, you first visited India 22 years ago. As a young student you hitch-hiked from Europe with a knapsack on your shoulder. You have travelled third class in India; you roughed it out in dharam salas and I gather on railway platforms, and you saw India in the raw through the eyes of a young student. And now you have come back as the Prime Minister of your country, as an honoured state guest, and are seeing it through the perspective of a world politician. Now what are the differences which have struck you on arriving here again?

**Prime Minister:** Well Mrs. Malik. I think the main difference is my inability now to have the exact kind of feeling and contacts I had in those days. I felt that I learned a great deal about the realities of India by living in that way in those days. Now, as you point out, I am meeting at the other level, at the level of the Establishment,

and I am thankful that I can interpret one by my knowledge of the other. I have not seen enough of India this time to be able to make many comparisons. The things I did see indicate to me that India is coming to grips with the problem of change in a very dramatic way. I have seen entire cities transformed, buildings have sprung up, technologies which have developed, in a way which makes me very grateful for having had this experience in previous times. I am able to see the progress; I am able to see the desire and the intensity with which your people are coming to grips with the problem of change.

**A.M:** Now, you represent an entire new generation of world politicians, younger politicians, who one feels are getting away from splitting ideological hairs. For instance, you once said that "the real challenge of the age is to accept values in other people," and you have also said that "we are not so much threatened by communism or fascism or other ideologies nor even nuclear bombs so much as the fact that two-thirds of the world goes hungry to bed every night." Now, are you younger, forward-looking world leaders now in a better position to achieve these ideals or are you still bogged down by the difficulties of world political life?

**P.M:** I think we are bogged down, if at all, not so much by our administrative inabilities. I think there is still a great need to convince populations, the society in general of our respective countries, that these values which are foreign to them are indeed worthy of respect. The quotation you had of me is indeed a feeling I have. But I would be, I think, mistaken if I said that the



**With Shrimati Amita Malik  
during AIR interview for TV.**