

without exploitation, and strength that is not based upon violence?

The world seems to admire results regardless of the means and the consequences, pushing aside questions of value. We are acutely conscious of the rising impatience of our people. We realize that if our system fails to meet their reasonable aspirations they may opt for other methods. Yet we do believe that our chosen path will deliver the economic goods and also bring maturity to our people. Democracy, which to us means an enlargement of the area of choice and the socialization of opportunity, invigorates as it evolves.

We do not doubt the answer. Our confidence in our capacity to lessen poverty and bring into being a society of equals through democratic means is unshaken. We are blamed for our inability to generate a higher rate of growth, the entire Indian experiment is criticized and we are advised to be tougher. The postponement of some demands might indeed have enabled us to move faster, but this could only be at the cost of social justice and would therefore lead to social tension. Also, we cannot agree that a higher rate of growth is reason enough to dispense with free elections and independent parliamentary and judicial institutions.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Madam Gandhi: Through our plans of development, in 20 years we have been able to double our grain production to more than 100 million tons. We have also laid firm foundations of modern industry, with emphasis on steel, machine tools, chemicals and electronics. We, who imported everything from sewing needles to locomotives, can make our own power generators and aeroplanes and even export machinery and consultancy service. The decline of the death rate has led to an increase in population but as levels of living improve and education spreads, the people are becoming conscious, though far less so than we would wish, of the need to limit their families. Education has expanded at all levels. The number of school-going children has risen from 23 million to 26 million. In higher education, the increase is not only of numbers; we have given attention to technological training and research which is the foundation of self-reliance.

Right now we are passing through a most trying period. To the expected strains of growth was added the burden of a war and the care of ten million refugees. The failure of the rains for a third successive year in many parts of western India has aggravated our problems. There have been many droughts in India's long history. Now, for the first time, people are not left to fend for themselves and the government has taken upon itself the full responsibility for giving succour. Reports from India should be seen in this perspective. We have given work, wages, food and even drinking water to millions of people. At the beginning of this month, extra employment was provided to nine million people through 137,000 relief projects. That we have been able to tide over the crisis with only marginal imports is a testimony to the internal vitality of our economy.

A nation can achieve economic or political liberation only through its own endeavour and sacrifice. Our develop-

ment is based primarily on our own savings and labour. But the problem of poverty is a world-wide one, demanding international action. We have welcomed and received co-operation from other nations for our developmental plans. I should like to express the gratitude of our people for Canada's help. It was concrete and imaginative, and without expectation of political advantage.

Not all countries have been so understanding. Their attempts to derive some political leverage have, not unnaturally, led to impatience with aid on the part of many developing nations. Donors also are becoming aid-weary. The Indian people are resolved to achieve self-reliance. This does not mean diminution of economic give-and-take, but that economic relations between one nation and another should be on the basis of equality. We shall continue to look for technological assistance to bridge the gaps in the structure of our basic industries and our know-how of new technologies. Our efforts could be more effective if the advanced countries adopted more enlightened trade policies. When it comes to trade, many of the strongest nations behave as though they need protection from the weak. A new outlook which will not condemn developing nations to permanent disadvantage is essential.

Canada and India provide examples of how countries with differing backgrounds can work together for common goals. In many parts of the world we have co-operated on international issues such as colonialism and racial discrimination, and on major economic problems such as international trade and commerce. In Korea, our two countries played a major role in defusing an extremely dangerous situation. We have participated together in peacekeeping missions in many risky situations and areas, for example, Gaza and Indo-China.

A country's foreign policy is dictated by its historical conditioning and its assessment of national interests. In keeping with our tradition of non-violence and our belief that mankind is one family, we have subscribed to the concept of peaceful co-existence. The world is large enough to hold countries with different civilizations and political ideologies. Anyhow, we cannot choose our neighbours nor move to another planet! So we are glad that the powerful have ceased to mock us for our naivete and have moved away from the doctrinal rigidities of post-war bipolarity. We welcome the detente in Europe and are glad that China has at last been given its legitimate place in the United Nations.

But can we be certain that the new and more realistic relations between the great powers do in fact indicate a more stable world order? Or are they yet another attempt to reinforce the old concept of balance of power? High-level exchanges and discussions between great powers are good, but we hope that they will not lead to decisions which affect other nations, big or small, without full consideration of their legitimate interests. We must be vigilant against big-power arrangements for the creation of new spheres of influence. In our own area and with our neighbours we favour a bilateral approach for resolving issues.

We should and do welcome the relaxation of tensions. But we think that the only non-proliferation of nuclear arms which is compatible with real peace is total disarmament.