

ENSURE STABILITY

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Sir, - The no-confidence motion which the Narasimha Rao government survived raises crucial questions relating to the prospects of the political stability in our country.

The Rao government which has faced no less than three no-confidence motions within a short span of its 25-month rule has barely survived the motion by a thin majority of 14 votes. There is nothing to prevent the opposition parties, acting in concert, to move another no-confidence motion against the government after a lapse of six months.

While the opposition parties are ever willing to move a no-confidence motion against the government whenever it suits their respective party interests, they do not display the required wisdom of arriving at a common understanding regarding the formation of an alternative government, thereby giving rise to nationwide instability. Since political instability has a debilitating effect on all segments of the society, discerning thinkers must explore ways of removing the causes of instability resulting from such no-confidence motions.

In this connection, it is most pertinent to cite the measures adopted in the German Constitution, which, inspite of being basically parliamentarian in character, has an inbuilt method of ensuring political stability in the event of the opposition bringing a successful no-confidence motion against the government.

Thus, under the German Constitution, the Chancellor being the executive head, after being elected by the majority votes of the Bundestag (federal parliament) is not obliged to resign in the event of a successful vote of censure or no-confidence motion unless the Bundestag elects a new Chancellor with a clear majority. This provision precludes the negative vote so often witnessed under our system and prevents the opposition parties from dislodging the incumbent Chancellor without first reaching an agreement on the appointment of his successor.

All said and done, our experience of past 46 years has shown that given our multi-racial character, sectional interests and diversity of views, the development of a strong two-party system so vital for a successful parliamentary democracy is a difficult proposition in the country. The remedy lies in structural reform - in providing for direct election of the Chief Executive by the people and providing him with the requisite executive powers, coupled with the separation of the executive from the legislature.