

UF should reciprocate

Sir, — The TDP leader and AP Chief Minister, Mr. Chandrababu Naidu, seems to be a bitter man after having lost some seats in the Lok Sabha elections. It is only natural that he should blame the Congress(I) for forcing elections on him and leading to the loss. It is necessary, however, that he should look at the Congress(I)'s record as a whole and judge it not just by its last act of withdrawing support to the Gujral Government.

The Congress(I) had, after all, supported two UF Governments for a period of nearly two years. Fairness and a sense of reciprocal obligation requires that Mr. Chandrababu Naidu and the UF support a Congress(I)-led Government for at least a similar period of two years. Otherwise, the UF parties would have shown themselves as no more honourable and fair than the BSP of Mr. Kanshi Ram which, after enjoying power in UP, withdrew support when it came to the BJP's turn to lead the Government.

R. Srinivasan, Chennai

Jayalalitha's stand

Sir, — Ms. Jayalalitha's statement that the AIADMK will extend support from outside to the BJP-led Government negates her very promise of a stable Government at the Centre. The mandate she has received, drubbing the DMK-TMC combine at the hustings, is not due to her charisma alone. Had the AIADMK contested separately, the results would have disappointed her.

She should not forget that the victory for her party was due to the forged alliance with those parties opposed to the DMK-TMC combine which prevented the split in the Opposition votes. It is time she gave up her stand.

As the other partners of the combine have reposed faith in her leadership and have left the decision to her, she too should, in turn, respect the BJP and

agree to join the Ministry without reservations, so as to provide a stable Government, under an able Prime Minister, as she had promised before the elections.

A. Seshagiri Rao, Chennai

Not a confused verdict

Sir, — The elections have once again thrown up a hung Parliament, may be of a lesser degree. Outwardly this may look like a confused verdict, but this appears to be one of the wisest pronouncements the common man has given — duly considering the options before him for the Centre and at the same time with due weightage to the local issues.

As the campaign began, the overall mood of the people was for a change and for the BJP. A significant percentage, including a large number of Muslims, for the first time, were in favour of giving Mr. Vajpayee a try. But the strong line adopted by the party on the Ayodhya issue made them review their decision. It is under this light that the people rightly thought that giving an absolute majority to a party, still with blatant signs of rashness, is not good and hence have endorsed it with a rider. The figure of 250+ reflects this concern of the people and to that extent it is a victory for the people of this country. It is indeed heartening to see the voters coming of age in this poll.

If the BJP is keen on ruling this country, it should leave its hard postures on all controversial issues and adopt the route of winning over the people by persuasion and dialogue.

N. Harihara Subramaniyan, Chennai

Sir, — It was a rude shock for the over-confident and highly optimistic DMK-TMC combine which was sure of repeating and bettering its earlier record of winning handsomely. On the contrary, the "tide" unfortunately was against the combine, making its leaders sit up and won-