

MR. SPEAKER: It is not necessary. We are at the fag end. We do not have to quarrel on technicalities. We can resolve this issue.

18.00 hrs.

Supposing if it is the sense of the House that it should not be passed now and it can be considered in detail, then it can come up for discussion later on also. It is not necessary to adjourn also because it is 6 O'clock now. We will continue this.

SHRI RANGARAJAN KUMARA-MANGALAM: Totally, we agree with you.

18.01 hrs.

RE: MOTION ON DUNKEL DRAFT TEXT
ON TRADE NEGOTIATIONS

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Then what about Dunkel?

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI NITISH KUMAR (Barh): Yesterday, the hon. Minister had given an assurance in the House that after completing all the other items quickly we would discuss the Dunkel issue in the rest of the time. Two days ago, I had raised this issue that the Government of India trying to avoid a discussion on the Dunkel Draft. Of course, a notice was given that we wanted to hold a discussion on this motion. But the Government did not take any interest to make an early discussion on it. That is why it has been put as a last item in the list of Business.

MR. SPEAKER: It has been removed from the list.

SHRI NITISH KUMAR: This is the last item as per today's list of Business. This is a very sensitive issue. The whole of country is concerned about it. People are staging agitations. But we are not able to discuss it properly in the Lok Sabha. A number of Members have continuously been waiting to raise this issue but

it is already 6 O'clock and it will not be possible for us to discuss it today properly. I, therefore, do not have any objection if it is taken up in the next session. I want to submit it personally that if it is taken for discussion in the next session then it should be placed like this that it can be focussed. I would also request you that the Debate on Dunkel should be fully televised. (Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI NIRMAL KANTI CHATTERJEE (Dumdum): Let the Dunkel proposal be discussed in the special session. (Interruptions)

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE (Bolpur): Always, the discussion on Dunkel is coming on the last day after 6 O'clock in every session. There is no possibility of any discussion. And then the Government gives an assurance, "we are very very serious about the discussion and in the next session we shall do it. Again, 6 O'clock has already passed of the last day, even an extended day. Therefore, there is no possibility of any effective discussion. I take it that the Government also agrees that this is a very serious matter and the country is agitated over it that there should be a full discussion. Hon. Prime Minister has said that there will be a special session. I say, two days of that session should be kept for discussion on Dunkel proposal and then this other Bill which you also want, bring it in the special session—those two Bills and also keep the Dunkel proposal for discussion during that session. It will be very very effective session then. Do not bring other things. We want a discussion. If not so, then it should be brought in the first week of the next session. (Interruptions)

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI VIDYACHARAN SHUKLA): We have been talking about this Dunkel proposal in the Business Advisory Committee. You know, Sir, that the Government has been proposing a discussion on it right from the beginning. If the House has not been able to find time to discuss it, it is not the Government's fault. We have given the highest priority. But for reasons best known to the House and you also know the reasons that in your presence, in your chairmanship this discussion has been held. We decided that we

would have it in the extended session after we dispose of the business quickly. We should not take so much time on matters. But if a lot of time is taken, then the Government cannot be blamed. If we decide to take two hours for a particular item, we take six hours for it; if we decide to take one hour for a particular item, we take four hours for it; if we decide to pass a particular item without discussion, then we discuss it for two hours and then this kind of situation arises. The Government has been very serious, is very serious. If it is possible, we would like to discuss the Dunkel proposal today. From our side, our Minister is ready, we are ready. We have already prepared the list of speakers. If the opposition leaders are ready, we can discuss it now. (*Interruptions*)

SHRIMATI MALINI BHATTACHARYA (Jadavpur): The Treasury Benches will be empty. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI VIDYACHARAN SHUKLA: It is not unusual in this hon. House to sit late to dispose of various important discussions which are pending. In my opinion, Dunkel proposal is one of those items which must be disposed of. And I am speaking on behalf of the party and the Government. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR (Ballia): What does he mean? An assurance should be given that the Government will not take a decision before it is discussed in this House.

SHRI VIDYACHARAN SHUKLA: I think we should start the discussion on the Dunkel proposals now. Our Minister is ready with his opening statement. He will make the opening statement. We can hold a discussion and if the discussion is not conclusive, we can carry it on at some other time. But, we should start the discussion rather than leaving it in the limbo as we do. We should start the discussion now. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI NIRMAL KANTI CHATTERJEE (Dumdum): Will you agree if we ask for a special session? What are you saying?

SHRI VIDYACHARAN SHUKLA: I will say whatever I want to. That is all. I have no obligation to say what you want me to say.

Sir, therefore, I would humbly request you to start the discussion on the Dunkel proposals today.

[*Translation*]

SHRI LAL K. ADVANI (Gandhinagar): The demand to discuss Dunkel proposals is being raised in the House because it has become a matter of great concern throughout the country. Many sections of people, particularly the farmers are greatly worried due to it. Therefore, we have not to discuss it only for the sake of formality, just start today and repeat it next time again. As Shri Chandrashekhar has pointed out, there is no use in starting the discussion today because the matter cannot be discussed properly today. But at the same time the Government should assure that no final decision will be taken until the matter is discussed in the House and the House gives consent. It would be proper to discuss the matter on the first day of the first week of the next session whether it is a special session or normal session.

[*English*]

SHRIMATI MALINI BHATTACHARYA: Sir, I want to say just one thing. We are told that the Dunkel draft proposals will have to be signed in the month of December. In December, it will have to be signed.

MR. SPEAKER: Let us understand that everybody is very eager to discuss the Dunkel proposals. I think, this was discussed on one occasion in the House and the proposal given was to refer it to the Joint Select Committee. There was a proposal. But, then, this matter again came up for discussion in the House.

(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Let me complete. I am standing here.

The Joint Select Committee had already discussed it and I think, they have given a Report. I am not so sure.

(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Please let me complete it. Otherwise, it becomes very difficult to say what I have to say.

Now, there is a Standing Committee for Commerce and that Standing Committee had

discussed this matter and I think that they have given the Report. The Standing Committee's Chairman comes from Rajya Sabha; Shri Gujral is the Chairman of that Committee. I think, he had given the Report.

A suggestion was made on the floor of the House that the Government's initial stand on the Dunkel proposals should be made known to the Members so that the Members can respond to the initial stand taken by the Government and that initial stand could be modified in the light of the suggestions given by the Members or in the light of the discussions with other countries also. In response to that suggestion, I think, the Government had circulated certain papers and probably, they have indicated the kind of stand they want to take on the Dunkel proposals, if agreed to by all of you. And, they have indicated probably, some points on which more discussions and deliberations would be required with the Members of the House as well as outside.

Now, this is the position. And I am sure that everybody wants that there should be a discussion. There is no shirking of the responsibility on the part of the Government to discuss it.

Nor is there any obstruction created by the other side. But now that we are at the fag end of this session, probably it cannot be useful just to have a few sentences spoken on it. In the next session, with the agreement of all, it can be discussed, whenever that next session is going to be there.

This is exactly for these reasons that the Presiding Officers have been saying that the unlisted business should be discussed for a shorter time. This is exactly the point that the Presiding Officers have been saying that the points made by one member need not be repeated by other Members, so that the time is available to all the Members.

But when we are on the point, we do not have the totality of the business to be transacted by the House before our eyes and the difficulties arise. But this is not apportioning the blame. We are all responsible; even the Presiding Officers are responsible for that. That is not the point. I think we can discuss it in the next session, whenever it is held.

[Translation]

SHRI NITISH KUMAR: The Agreement should not be signed.

[English]

SHRI SRIKANT JENA (Cutback): They will not sign the draft unless this House discusses this draft fully. That commitment must come from the Government. Who is giving that commitment?.....(Interruptions)..... The Government is not prepared; they are not going to give that commitment to this House.

MR. SPEAKER: Do you realise that we always sit in December?

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: We have all these things in view. Unnecessarily, without applying your mind, if you are making some suggestions, complications arise.

SHRI SRIKANT JENA: Always an assurance was there that unless the House discusses this draft proposal, the Government will not sign the agreement. The Government should commit that.

MR. SPEAKER: I do not know whether the Government is ready to give that commitment.

SHRI SRIKANT JENA: Why is the Government keeping quiet?

MR. SPEAKER: This is exactly why we do not get the time to discuss important issues. Without understanding the procedure, without understanding the time, you are making the proposal.

SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR: Mr. Speaker Sir, we want to know only one thing; whether this House will be allowed to discuss the Dunkel proposal or the House will be asked to discuss Dunkel agreement. That indication should be given by the Government; whether we are going to discuss the proposal or the agreement. Because there is a lurking doubt in the minds of the people that the Government will come with an agreement. Then there will be no purpose in discussing Dunkel.

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRI P.V. NARASIMHA RAO): Dunkel proposals for

discussion have come here quite sometime back. What the hon. Members want me to do is that we will not go on with the negotiations; everything will be kept in cold storage until we discuss it. I beg of you, I beg of the Members to discuss it as quickly as possible. This is an international convention that is going on there, negotiations are going on there; may be they will also be delayed. But how can we lock this up depending on this?

MR. SPEAKER: If you all are ready to discuss it, I am ready to sit.

SHRI P.V. NARASIMHA RAO: We are prepared to discuss it. We have never shirked any discussion. It has been postponed sometimes, I understand for various reasons; may be for valid reasons. I am not going into the reasons. But the point is, no guarantee can be given. It is quite possible that we may also try to have a little more time there. Yes; but beyond that, it is not possible.

SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR: This is most unacceptable position for the Parliament of India that others will decide what we should discuss and when. This cannot be accepted by this country. I also know that others cannot force us that we should take the decision today. Are we a sovereign nation or are we going to be guided by the Dunkel and GATT negotiations? This is exactly the point where Members are agitated. Because the Government finds itself totally helpless. Tomorrow they may be pressurised to sign the agreement and then say that because you did not discuss it today, so we have signed it. This is the position. Then, extend the House and let us discuss it.

[Translation]

SHRI NITISH KUMAR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to remind one thing to the Government, you would also remember it that the Government had made a commitment to take Parliament into confidence before making an agreement you may please see the records of Parliament. They made this commitment on the floor of the House and today, whatever is being stated by the hon. Prime Minister by that, he is going back to this commitment.

[English]

SHRI SRIKANT JENA: We are prepared to sit tomorrow. We will cooperate; let us sit tomorrow itself. (Interruptions)

SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR: I think the Speaker's observation should be followed by the whole House.

MR. SPEAKER: Which ruling?

SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR: The Government is not immune to the Speaker's observation. (Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI LAL K. ADVANI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I think that the reply given by the Government—particularly when the Members of the House have extended their cooperation with such an emphasis is not proper. When the Government can call a special session to discuss the Bill, why not to discuss the Dunkel Proposals. The House should be summoned next week itself. My submission is that if it is not possible to discuss the matter in the House due to certain reasons, I had expected, the hon. Prime Minister should take into confidence the different political parties and their representatives before taking any decision in this regard. Final decision with regard to Dunkel Proposals will be taken by the country.... (Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI P.V. NARASIMHA RAO: Sir, I may also add, I do hope that it will be possible for us to discuss it in the House. But, if that is not possible, for any reason, about which I will inform the hon. Members, I will certainly talk to the leaders of all parties—opposition parties—before taking a decision. (Interruptions)

SHRI VIDYACHARAN SHUKLA: May I add, Sir? As you rightly said, we are not standing here to apportion blame. We have been anxious to discuss this Proposal and the hon. Members on the other side also have been anxious to discuss this Proposal. If we do summon a special Session, we will keep one day exclusively to discuss the Dunkel Proposal in that special Session. (Interruptions)

SHRI SRIKANTA JENA: Sir, the House cannot go hypothetically. He says, "If there is a Session, then the first item will be the discussion on Dunkel Draft." This kind of an

[Sh. Srikanta Jena]

announcement of the Parliamentary Affairs Minister will not serve the purpose. There should be a categorical assurance saying that, "Yes, there will be a special Session to discuss the Dunkel Proposal". Before we discuss it in this House, the Government should not go in for any kind of an agreement about this Proposal. There was a categorical assurance in this House and the Government should not go back from that assurance. *(Interruptions)*

SHRI VIDYACHARAN SHUKLA: Sir, may I put a question to the Opposition? *(Interruptions)* Sir, I would like to put a question to the leaders of the opposition. Let them give one good reason as to why this Dunkel Proposal was not discussed here. When you have been kind enough to propose and allot the time and we have been asking for the discussion, why was it not possible for the House to discuss it? Somebody must tell us this. *(Interruptions)*

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: Sir, who will decide the Government business? It is very easy to blame the Opposition. If that is the attitude, then, let us go on. For an indefinite time, let us go on. *(Interruptions)* Let the Minister start the discussion; we shall go on till tomorrow, day after tomorrow. We can go on. *...(Interruptions)*

SHRI SRIKANTA JENA: Sir, the Parliamentary Affairs Minister said that after the Jammu & Kashmir Resolution, we would start discussion on the Dunkel Draft immediately. *(Interruptions)*

SHRI SAIFUDDIN CHOUDHURY: Sir, let us sit tomorrow to discuss this. *(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI NITISH KUMAR: Mr. Speaker, Sir we are not speaking futile. Yesterday, Shri Kumaramangalam had assured that tomorrow we will discuss Dunkel Proposals throughout the day. We want to discuss the matter, we are ready to sit throughout the day to discuss Dunkel Proposals but additional items are being included in the list of Business and the Government want to avoid discussion on Dunkel Proposals. We did not think for such an attitude from hon. Prime Minister. It was assured that the agreement would be signed only when the House is taken into confidence. Either a special session should be called or the sitting of the

House should be extended till tomorrow or Monday for this purpose.

[English]

SHRI SAIFUDDIN CHOUDHURY (Katta): We can sit on Monday to discuss this. *(Interruptions)*

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: We will start the discussion just now, today itself. Let the Minister start it. *(Interruptions)* It is not the time to score a debating point. Let the Government start the discussion. *(Interruptions)* Let somebody speak from the Government side. *(Interruptions)*

SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, you have said. But, may I know whether all those papers have been circulated? Where are those papers? *(Interruptions)* No. They have not been circulated, to my knowledge. *(Interruptions)* Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Minister should speak, after verifying. *(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Let me know.

(Interruptions)

SHRI VIDYACHARAN SHUKLA: We will start the discussion just now. Let us start the discussion; and we will see how long it goes. We will like to sit. Sir, I request you to kindly allow the discussion on the Dunkel Proposal right now. *(Interruptions)*

SHRI SRIKANTA JENA (Cutback): We accept it and we are prepared to sit overnight also.

MR. SPEAKER: No, no. Your sitting is not important. Your making contribution is important.

(Interruptions)

SHRI JASWANT SINGH (CHIT-TORGARH): Mr. Speaker, Sir, if I have your permission to make a submission, I do not think that combativeness is necessarily the best attribute of the Minister for Parliamentary Affairs. The Minister for Parliamentary Affairs in a very combative manner has said: firstly, let us establish the responsibility for the reason why Dunkel has now been.....

MR. SPEAKER: Nobody is combating. Now, everybody is fatigued.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Nobody is blaming. You are not blaming the Opposition. You are not blaming the Government. Probably you are trying to say that it could have been discussed.

SHRI JASWANT SINGH: No, I am not. I am making a general observation that combativeness is not necessarily the best attribute of the Minister for Parliamentary Affairs.

Secondly, this is not the question.

[Translation]

It is not a wrestling ground, let the discussion be started just now and we will see how long it continues. It is an important subject itself and we are not here to play Kabad-di.....(Interruptions).....Hon. Minister, please let me complete my submission, then only you may speak. I have seen such Ministers of Parliamentary Affairs who speak just to interrupt the Members....(Interruptions)....

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: I will decide now. My information is that more than 500 copies were received by this office. They were put at the counter. I think, the bulletin was issued about it.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Let me know when you finish it.

(Interruptions)

SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR (Ballia): I am sorry that I did not know that it has been circulated. But the whole thing is how seriously we take up this subject. If the Government wants to have the formality of discussion just now, I do not know why the Members in the Opposition should try to discuss it. If they have decided to sign that proposal without discussion or without knowing the view of the country, sign it. (Interruptions) Even then, you can criticise it because from the statement of the Prime Minister and..... (Interruptions)*.

MR. SPEAKER: I will go through the record.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DEPARTMENT OF ELECTRONICS AND DEPARTMENT OF OCEAN DEVELOPMENT) AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI RANGARAJAN KUMARAMANGALAM): It is unparliamentary.

SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR: Mr. Speaker, I am not going to learn parliamentary manners. But if anything is unparliamentary, I shall immediately withdraw it. (Interruptions) Do not try to teach me what parliamentary language is. (Interruptions) I say, it is.....and I say, it is 'parliamentary'. (Interruptions) Mr. Speaker, Sir, I say, it is..... (Interruptions).

I could have used harsher language if Mr. Vidya would not have been my personal friend. I used this language deliberately knowing that this is parliamentary and this is the minimum that could have been said about him. But I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that let us not try to give a message to the world that on such a serious matter, we are taking such a frivolous view. I do not know why Opposition members want to discuss this matter, in such a way, where..... (Interruptions).

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: All the persons need not speak.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Mr. Nitish, please do not give a running commentary, it is not good.

(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Nitish, you are disturbing all the time. I am sorry to say this on the last day. Please have a little patience.

SHRI VIDYACHARAN SHUKLA: Sir, may I clarify that we are very serious about discussing this matter? We are serious about discussion in the House and I was only saying that this has been put on the agenda in the hope that we will be able to find enough time to discuss

*expunged, as ordered by the Chair.

[Sh. Vidya Charan Shukla]

it. The BAC has been pleased to decide about allotment of time for such a discussion. If the hon. members do not want to discuss it, I am not insisting on the discussion. I am only suggesting that in case if the discussion can be held, the Government is ready; the Minister is ready with his proposal; papers have been circulated. If the House so decides and if you so permit, we will discuss it. The decision otherwise is we are ready for it. *(Interruptions)* To say that we are not serious about the matter is not correct. We are very serious about this discussion and we attach the highest regard and value to the views expressed in the House. That is why, we would like to have the views of the hon. members of this House and the other House before we finalise it.

MR. SPEAKER: I think this is not being discussed because of Mr. Nitish Kumar's running commentary on this.

[Translation]

SHRI NITISH KUMAR: We thought that this stand is being taken to postpone the party meeting.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI RAJESH PILOT): These tactics were used during your time and in the parties of Shri Devi Lal and Shri Vishwanath Pratap Singh. We do not adopt such tactics.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: If I get a slip from the Parliamentary Affairs Minister that nobody is going to speak, then I will speak.

Well, today is the last day and the parting should be very sweet and not with abrasive feelings. I am sure that everybody in the House wants to discuss this matter, more so the Government because when it was raised by Mr. Vajpayee that it should be discussed, he not only said that it should be discussed but the initial stand of the Government should be made known to the Members. I did say from the Chair that the initial stand of the Government should be made known and I am sure that not only this but there are three booklets which were circulated. It may be that they might not have reached some members. But they have been circulated it. That means the Government is particular about discussing it and the Government stands to gain from the discussion because when the discussion takes place, the stand of the Government will be made known

to the people of the country and there will be less possibility of any misapprehension on the stand of the Government about the Dunkel proposals. It is not only that but when the Government goes to discuss the Dunkel proposals in GATT and other forums, Government is backed by the feelings of the members and Government's hands are also strengthened. I am sure this view is known to all of us and nobody is shirking from the discussion on this point. I would like to say that I am sure that the agreement may not be signed before the next session because next session is likely, if nothing comes in between, to be in November and December. So, we will have the opportunity to do that. I am sure the Government's hands should not be tied down and Government should not be told not to negotiate. Negotiation is different from agreement. So, let them negotiate and let them find out the stand of other countries.

If it becomes necessary for us to sign the agreement before the next Session is held, if we get the information from the Government that this is likely to be so, then we may facilitate the discussion on the floor of the House also. Let us not have any two opinions on that point. But I am sure, international negotiations are such that they are not likely to take place so soon and a final proposal is not likely to be ready so soon. That is why, please do not have any apprehensions on that point. But difficulty arises when you take a political stand. Difficulties arise when you try to apportion blame. But difficulties will not arise when unitedly, we want to decide the matter. I am sure that the Government wants your strong support. I am sure you will give that unstinted support to the Government's stand because there cannot be two opinions when it comes to national interest and the stand that has to be taken by us. So, let us not have any apprehensions on that. Let us not think that the Government is not ready to do it. We will do it.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: I think we will have an agreement on Nitish Kumar's commentary too!

Now, with this, we may conclude. If you want to say something, please do so.

SHRI P.V. NARASIMHA RAO: Are we finally not discussing the Dunkel proposal?

MR. SPEAKER: I feel we need not discuss it now.