

## BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

**Mr. Speaker:** The House will now proceed with the Hindu Marriage Bill.

**Dr. Rama Rao (Kakinada):** Before this business is taken up, may I just raise one point. Any information about the extension of the Session may be given now, because, yesterday there was a talk about the extension of the Session. I would like to know if there is going to be any extension, and if so, up to what date. We have made some arrangements, and this sort of postponing and extending causes difficulty.

**Mr. Speaker:** I quite appreciate the difficulties to which Members are put, including the Chair as a Member of Parliament. I am myself very keen that we should have a definite specific programme of dates on which the Session begins and also the date on which it ends. Unfortunately, we have not been able to adjust to the new conditions. And a lot of legislation is coming before the House. Members themselves want more time. Members are also urging that this piece of legislation should be taken and that piece of legislation should be taken, and so on. So, it becomes a little loose.

But I trust that the hon. Minister of Parliamentary Affairs, when he is present in the House, will make a statement as promised by him yesterday. Of course, today he perhaps anticipated that the Question Hour would go up to 12 noon, but we have finished the business more quickly. So, the question may be raised when he comes here.

## HINDU MARRIAGE BILL—Contd.

**Shri N. C. Chatterjee (Hooghly):** The other day when we met to discuss this matter, I was making my submission to the hon. Minister and the Members of this Parliament that in a social legislation of this revolutionary character, if we are to be consistent with the tenets of democracy, we should have a definite mandate from the people before we

enact such a legislation of far-reaching consequences, making very radical alterations in the Hindu social organisation. I maintain that the way that you are proceeding is not in conformity with the principles of democratic Government. Such a radical legislation should easily wait for a year or so, because the elections are again coming, and it is quite clear that never did the Party in Power or in office have the mandate of the nation on this subject. I would therefore ask them seriously to consider that these votaries of democracy should act according to genuine principles of democracy, and they should make this an issue in the next elections. If the Party in power gets the mandate, then it will be justified in proceeding with a measure of this character.

**An Hon. Member:** It has been a part of the election manifesto.

**Shri N. C. Chatterjee:** You, Sir, and all sections of the House, know that there is considerable feeling over this measure. A considerable section of our people is opposed to this measure, especially because its provisions are repugnant to the fundamental principles of the Hindu social system. Before you introduce this kind of a thing simply because you have a big majority or a sledge-hammer majority, it is only fair and right to place this measure before the nation, educate our real masters, that is, the electors, get their definite verdict, and then proceed with this measure.

I am making four points today for the consideration of my hon colleagues in this House. My first point is this. Is this kind of a communal legislation not repugnant to the spirit of our Constitution? Is it consistent with the Directive Principles which we have definitely and consciously embodied in our organic law, i.e. the Constitution of the Indian Republic? Article 44 in Part IV of the Constitution clearly says:

“The State shall endeavour to secure for the citizens a uniform