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Rajya Sabha Debate on the Non-Proliferation Treaty

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Summary:

Transcript of debate between members of Rajya Sabha on the Non-Proliferation Treaty draft presented by the United States and the U.S.S.R. to the Disarmament Conference in Geneva. Contents, government reaction, and India's nuclear aspirations are discussed.

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SHRI SURENDRA PAL SINGH: As I have said in the statement, the question of giving them political asylum is still under the consideration of the Costa Rica authorities. Our delegation has gone there for the purpose of putting our case before them and to convince them that the Tejas are not victims of any political persecution but are criminal fugitives and criminal cases are pending against them. We are very hopeful that they will see the reason at the back of our case and would ultimately deport them.

SHRI NIREN GHOSH: It seems strange that Dr. Teja comes to India and goes out and in extradition proceedings he also jumps bail. Dr. Teja succeeds and the Government of India always fails. That is the position. Did you take proper vigilance steps, taking into account the possibility that he may jump bail and perhaps the U.S. Government may also give him some assistance in jumping bail, to apprehend him physically or in any other way so that this criminal is brought to the soil of India?

SHRI SURENDRA PAL SINGH: May I at the very outset say that at the time when they jumped bail extradition proceedings were in progress. Even when they applied for the bail we opposed their bail application tooth and nail. We did not succeed. Under the local law the bail could be given. As to what steps we took for preventing their escape, we did everything possible. We informed all countries about the position of the case, about the cancellation of their passport. We made appeal to all countries not to give them facilities for travelling for any place outside America. Even then they managed to go out. Whatever legally is possible is being done from our side.

SHRI G. MURAHARI: I would like to know whether Government's attention has been drawn to a statement made by Dr. Teja wherein he has accused both the Prime Minister and certain Ministers of the Indian Government of having had certain financial dealings with him, and he has alleged that because of this the Government of India is trying to hound him or what-

ever it is. So, I would like to know whether the Government has answered ... (Interruptions). It is in the Press. Government knows about it.

SHRI SURENDRA PAL SINGH: Before I answer that question, Madam, may I make an appeal to the hon. Member through you? It is this that the negotiations that are being carried on with the Costa Rican Government are of a very delicate nature and I would appeal to the hon. Member not to ask any searching or probing questions at this stage because that might

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: He wants to know whether there is a Press report.

SHRI SURENDRA PAL SINGH: Well, there have been a number of Press reports

(Interruptions)

SHRI TRILOKI SINGH: May I know if there is an extradition treaty between India and Costa Rica? If not, under what law do the Government of India propose to have Dr. Dharma Teja extradited back to India?

SHRI SURENDRA PAL SINGH: Madam, it is a fact that there is no extradition treaty between India and Costa Rica. But what we are trying is to have them deported back to America because they jumped bail from America and we are hoping that we will be getting them deported back here under the treaty which we have with America.

NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION TREATY

- *34. SHRI HARISH CHANDRA MATHUR: †
 SHRI JAIRAMDAS DAULATRAM:
 SHRI NIREN GHOSH:
 SHRI SITARAM JAIPURIA:
 SHRI RAM CHANDER:
 SHRI R. P. KHAITAN:
 SHRI V. M. CHORDIA:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have examined the joint draft of a Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty presented by U.S.A.

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Harish Chandra Mathur.

and U.S.S.R. to the Disarmament Conference held at Geneva;

(b) if so, what is the reaction of Government in the matter; and

(c) whether Government propose to manufacture atom bomb as a deterrent, and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI B. R. BHAGAT): (a) Yes, Madam. A copy of the Draft Treaty is laid on the Table. [See Appendix LXII, Annexure No. 8.] Article III has been left blank by the sponsors, as they have not yet reached agreement on the formulation of a provision for safeguards against the diversion of fissionable material for nuclear weapons production.

(b) The preliminary reactions of the Government of India are that the draft Treaty does not fully conform to the principles set out in U.N. General Assembly Resolutions 2028 of the XX Session and 2153-A of the XXI Session. Some members of the Eighteen-Nation Disarmament Committee have proposed amendments to the draft Treaty and the sponsors are reported to be considering them. The sponsors are also reported to be discussing the formulation of an Article III as well as the question of security assurances for non-nuclear States.

(c) No, Sir; the policy of the Government, as declared before, is to utilise nuclear energy exclusively for peaceful purposes.

SHRI HARISH CHANDRA MA-THUR: Madam, to me this Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty makes absolutely no sense; it appears to me to be so unilateral. Therefore, I would request the hon. Prime Minister to explain to us the rationale and the logic behind the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A. Governments' stand, who are stock-piling nuclear weapons all the time. They are going further with the nuclear explosions and not satisfied even with that, they have now again this ICBM defence system to which even the United Kingdom Government has taken objection.

In this context, what sense and logic does it make for this Government to consider this matter at all? As a matter of fact, even if all those blanks are filled, are we not surrendering the sovereign rights of an independent State, this country? Let us understand it. Have we not been able to appreciate that in today's context it is not only a military deterrent but it has a great political significance, it has got a great psychological significance, and this country, because of its importance and its size alone, has a right to be a nuclear power. May I know whether it is realised by the Government that India as a nuclear power will restore the balance in this country and in Asia and the world . . .

SHRI P. N. SAPRU: No.

SHRI HARISH CHANDRA MA-THUR: . . . and that it will be a great and potent factor? If it is not so, I would like the hon. Prime Minister to explain how it is not so that it will restore the balance here, that it will be the real answer to the threat posed to us by China, that it will be a potent factor to bring about peace in the world and for peace to be stabilised.

SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI: I have noted the views of the hon. Member. I agree with the first part of what he said which is that it is difficult for us to understand what is to be gained by the treaty as it now stands. Our delegate has expressed the view that true non-proliferation can be achieved only by all the States undertaking not to manufacture or acquire nuclear weapons. He has also pointed out that any safeguard system designed to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons should be of a non-discriminatory character and should be made equally applicable both to nuclear and non-nuclear States. Further, he has suggested that nuclear explosive devices for peaceful purposes should be excluded from the scope of this treaty and that explosions for peaceful purposes should be regulated under a safeguard system which would ensure that they are not used for military purposes.

Now, the other question which the hon. Member has raised is really a very far-reaching one of policy. We have had debates in this House on such matters on previous occasions; I do not know whether this is an occasion to go into all those.

SHRI HARISH CHANDRA MATHUR: I will ask two or three questions more if you will permit me, Madam. I recall to the attention of the hon. Prime Minister what the late Prime Minister, Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri said on the floor of the other House, "We have always been frightened, as a matter of fact, by the cost of the bomb". Now, we have a report before us which has been submitted to the United Nations by experts of 12 nations. They have for the first time provided a rough estimate of the cost of a modest nuclear force. Some 100 plutonium bombs, 50 medium-range missiles and 30—50 jet bombers all these will not cost more than Rs. 100 to Rs. 130 crores, a year. (*Interruptions.*) Well, we are at present spending more than Rs. 900 crores per annum. I would also recall to the attention of the Prime Minister what the late Mr. Bhabha said, that the nuclear TNT is much cheaper than your conventional weapons. I am not asking the Prime Minister or requesting her to order the immediate manufacture of nuclear weapons. Possibly, it might create a crisis in the Cabinet and Morarjibhai may possibly have to resign on this issue. I am not asking that but . . . (*Interruptions*) because he made this statement in the United States of America . . .

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Mathur, please be brief.

SHRI HARISH CHANDRA MATHUR: I am only wanting to know the actual position. As a matter of fact, in view of the assessment given by the late Prime Minister, of the assessment now given by these 12 experts at the United Nations and the assessment given by our own expert who unfortunately is no more and who has done so much to contribute to this science, may I know what the present position is? Maybe, we took a policy decision that we

do not manufacture nuclear weapons. But are we in a position to say that our nuclear development, the development of our science, is such that if we care to manufacture that, we are in a position to manufacture it and that it is not beyond our means and resources also?

SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI: Madam Deputy Chairman, many issues have been raised. While the cost is an important aspect, it is naturally not the only aspect. This matter has been considered from all points of view and it is after that that a decision on policy has been taken. And I can assure the hon. Member—and this is what Shastriji also said to the House; I do not recall his exact words—that our policy is constantly under review and that at all times our first consideration is to safeguard national defence and security. This is of paramount importance in the formulation of our policy.

SHRI HARISH CHANDRA MATHUR: I am not asking them for a policy decision. I entirely appreciate what the hon. Prime Minister said. My question was only this. That is why I made it absolutely clear; I am not asking you to revise your policy. I know the ingredients which have gone into the making of that policy. The factual position I want to know: What is the cost according to the present estimates, whether they agree to this or not. We may not make the bomb even if the cost is less. But what is the assessment of Government?

SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI: I cannot give these figures.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: How can she have these figures now?

SHRI JAIRAMDAS DAULATRAM: I would refrain from putting any supplementaries on this question because there is a mix-up in this question. I did not give notice of clause (c) which is put against my name . . .

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Confine yourself to parts (a) and (b).

SHRI JAIRAMDAS DAULATRAM: . . . I do not want to discuss here the practice of amalgamating questions received from several Members on one subject. Clause (c) is an entirely separate issue which needs being debated separately. I did not put clause (c) in this question. I have no supplementaries to ask on the other two clauses.

SHRI NIREN GHOSH: May I know from the Government what is the actual purpose of the non-proliferation treaty? Is it to preserve the monopoly of the nuclear nations, or whatever it is, on the one hand, and to prevent the non-nuclear nations from acquiring nuclear weapons? Or is it their purpose to blackmail? May I know whether the Government would agree that unless all stockpile of nuclear weapons is destroyed there is no guarantee of the security and the defence of India? If the nuclear powers preserve their stockpiles of nuclear weapons and we do not possess them, there is no guarantee. And lastly, may I know whether the Government would raise the question of first destroying the nuclear stockpile of weapons and then should come the conclusion of the non-proliferation treaty in the interest of the defence and security of India?

SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI: As I have remarked in the beginning, the Government of India does believe that all nuclear weapons should be banned. As to the purpose of the treaty, I think the hon. Member is aware of it. The Government of India have expressed their views. Presumably the countries who are putting forward this draft have another view on this subject.

श्री विमलकुमार मन्नालालजी चौरड़िया :
इसका जो ड्राफ्ट है इसका उद्देश्य तो बहुत अच्छा है लेकिन संसार इन उद्देश्यों के अनुसार नहीं चलता। अणुशक्ति के विस्तार से हम अपने आपको रोक रहे ह, इसलिए हम इस तरह की व्यवस्था चाहते हैं कि हमारे यहाँ अणुशक्ति का निर्माण न हो। एक ओर तो हमारे शत्रु के पास आणविक शस्त्रों का निर्माण होता जा रहा है, दूसरी

ओर इस तरह की द्वांद्वी में बंधकर हम उनके प्रसारण को रोकना चाहते हैं, तीसरी ओर अभी आपने लाल बहादुर जी शास्त्री का विचार बताया कि हम अपनी नीति पर पुनर्विचार करते रहते हैं और उसमें परिवर्तन कर सकते हैं। ऐसी स्थिति में, हम किस बात की राह देख रहे हैं जब कि हमारे नजदीक के दुश्मन चाइना के यहाँ इन शस्त्रों का निर्माण हो चुका है, इनमें काफी प्रगती हो चुकी है जबकि हमें 'ए' शुरू करना है? ऐसी स्थिति में, किसी का नाश करने की दृष्टि से नहीं, अपनी सुरक्षा की दृष्टि से, कोई आक्रमण करे तो उसका विरोध करने के लिए क्या हम आवश्यक नहीं समझते कि हमारे यहाँ पर अणु शस्त्रों का निर्माण हो?

श्रीमती इन्दिरा गांधी : यही बात मैंने कहने की कोशिश की। जो भी नीति बनती है वह इन सब प्रश्नों को ध्यान में रखते हुए बनती है। जो माननीय शास्त्री जी ने कहा वह भी कोई नई बात नहीं थी। डिफेंस की नीति में देश की रक्षा की दृष्टि से इन विषयों पर चर्चा, उस पर विचार, हर वक्त होता रहता है।

SHRI G. RAMACHANDRAN: Madam, the Prime Minister referred to the fact that India is now suggesting that the explosions for peaceful purposes may be kept outside this picture. The Moscow Treaty was against the explosions above ground, underground and all that kind of thing. Now, may I know whether there is going to be a less poisonous effect in the air if the explosion is made for peaceful purposes and not for military purposes? Are not all explosions alike poisonous for the atmosphere against which the Moscow Treaty was signed?

SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI: The problem, Madam, is this that under this argument some countries want to keep on doing what they are doing but they want to stop other countries from using nuclear energy even for legitimate, peaceful purposes.