

18.16 hrs.

**STATUTORY RESOLUTION RE-  
DISAPPROVAL OF THE PRESS  
COUNCIL (SECOND AMENDMENT)  
ORDINANCE, 1974 AND PRESS  
COUNCIL (AMENDMENT) BILL—  
Contd.**

श्री एस० एन० बनर्जी : (कानपुर) : मैं एक चीज की तरफ आपका ध्यान आकर्षित करना चाहूंगा। श्री श्री नायक ने कुछ एडवर्टाइजमेंट्स के बारे में कहा है, कुछ वर्ल्स के बारे में कहा है कि वह माडल का काम करती हैं। ये शब्द प्रोसीडिंग्स से हटा दिए जायें। मैं समझता हूँ कि वह बहुत दुरा नहीं है।

वह शरीफ धराने की लड़कियाँ हैं, माडल बन कर गजारा करती हैं। यह कोई बुरी बात नहीं है। यह इनको समझा दीजिए कि बाल बड़े रख कर अगर वह साड़ी पहन लें तो लड़की नहीं समझे जा सकते। लड़कियों का काम तो लड़कियाँ ही कर सकती हैं।

श्री राम सहाय पांडे : (राजनंदगाव) : सभापति जी, मेरा छोटा सा प्रश्न है। प्रेस काउंसिल का दायित्व और उसका क्षेत्र बड़ा है। प्रेस काउंसिल पर बड़ा दायित्व है। पत्रकारिता में स्वस्थ वातावरण हो।

सभापति महोदय : आप अभी कैसे बोल रहे हैं ? आपको मैं बात में मौका दूंगा।

SHRI P. G. MAVALANKAR (Ahmedabad): This is a very small Bill. In one sense it is rather unfortunate that the hon. Minister has to come more than once asking for extension of the present Press Council of India till the 31st December of this year. It is rather unfortunate that he had to resort to the ordinance-issuing power for seeing that the Press Council survives. I realise the difficulties; during

the last session particularly when the time was so short there were many such Bills. Therefore, he had to resort to the ordinance-issuing power.

The main point is the nominating committee's unwillingness to continue to serve as the nominating committee. For some time the Committee consisted of the Vice President and ex-officio Chairman of the Rajya Sabha, the hon. Chief Justice of India and the hon. Speaker of our House. I believe that those three high dignitaries felt that their names ought not to be dragged into any public controversy on the question of the selection of members of the Press Council because such public criticism would reflect on their offices. While the sensitivity of the nominating committee was understandable, may I say in all humility that I do not think it was really justified. In any open democratic system there can be and indeed bound to be legitimate criticism. Anyway, the Committee asked to be relieved of their responsibility and the hon. Minister says that an informal committee of members had been set up which is not seized of the matter.

Why has this informal committee of Members of Parliament been taking so long in formulating alternative proposals and methods of filling up the membership of the Press Council? It is because of this delay that the Minister has been faced with this difficulty of resorting to the issuing of an ordinance and then coming to this House for getting that converted into an Act.

I should have thought that if the Nominating Committee were not to function, it would be good if the same three big individuals were to act as an Appointing Committee for nominating three individuals, and those three individuals will be persons of undoubted integrity and of known eminence in the country, and then these three individuals so nominated by these three VIPs will go into the question of appointing the Members of the Press Council.

[Shri P. G. Mavalankar]

We have some such procedure with regard to the appointments of Vice-Chancellors in some of our Universities. To quote one example from Gujarat, the Governor has to nominate the Vice-Chancellor, but what happens is that Vice-Chancellors of various Universities select one individual, the Syndicate or Senate or sometimes both of the University where the Vice-Chancellor is to be appointed select one individual, and the Governor selects one individual, and these three individuals comprise the Committee, and that Committee gives three names in order of preference to the Governor, and then the Governor selects one of the three for Vice-Chancellorship.

So, I feel that if a Nominating Committee consisting of these three VIPs can be requested to act as an Appointing Committee for naming three persons of known eminence and general experience in public life, that Committee can then appoint the Members of the Press Council.

I feel that the role of the Press Council in any developing and even developed democracy is very crucial. My friend, Shri Daga was asking me privately a little while ago about the necessity of the Press Council. My simple answer is that although the Press Council has no authority to enforce its decisions, nonetheless it does act as a kind of healthy check on some of the abuses of the Press which are going on in the name of freedom like obscenity, or attacking an individual, writing without proper evidence, character assassination etc. If these offences are brought before the Press Council and it passes strictures, coming from the Council consisting of eminent and experienced people, it does act as a check. Therefore, I think it has a very significant place in maintaining the freedom of the press.

The Searchlight case and the case of George Verghese vs. the Hindustan Times have brought to light the serious situation in regard to the freedom of the press in this country.

I am not one of those who believe that the freedom of the press in India is far from satisfactory. There are many developing countries which have no such freedom at all, but the point is the freedom that we have got is endangered. Through governmental interference and government patronage used in a particular way, and through advertisement revenue as also through the interference of the proprietors of newspapers and through the journalists not standing up for their rights and freedom. The last fact is also partly responsible for the erosion of the freedom of the press. Further, I want to ask is the Government regulating newsprint in such a way that surreptitiously, indirectly, subtly, in an invisible way the freedom of the press is curtailed through this mechanism of controlling supply of newsprint? The English and national papers have no difficulty because they have large funds, good infrastructure, seasoned journalists and a good establishment. But the vast number of language papers and provincial and district papers can be cowed down under the threat of inadequacy of newsprint.

Mr. Anantrao Patil quoted a part of the speech of Mr. Ernest Meyer, President of the International Press Institute delivered in America last year, where he is alleged to have said that India, Malaysia and Indonesia are having no freedom of the press. This has been repudiated by Mr Meyer himself in a letter written to Shri Chanchal Sarkar, Director of the press Institute of India saying:

"I never did make the statement. I never amalgamated the situation of other Asian countries with that of India....As you know, every year in the annual report, I always underline the very special situation of the Indian press and I feel really hurt by the fact that, on vague agency reports, it could be believed that I could have mentioned India together with Indonesia and the Philippines as a country where a once free press has been suppressed."

I quote this because I wanted to keep the record straight. Now, Sir, one has to go to other African, Asian and Latin American countries and I dare say even some European countries and come back to find out how in India the Government is criticised in the press, through funny and intelligent cartoons of the Prime Minister and other Ministers etc. and what not! So, there is no doubt that we have the freedom of the press. But in the last year or so, this freedom is getting eroded partly by newsprint control, partly by proprietary interference and; partly by the journalists themselves not standing up against nonsense. So, the time is very opportune to give a friendly warning to my good friend, Shri Guiral, so that he does not use some advantages and obvious facilities he has at his command as Minister to curb the freedom of the press, which ultimately means three things: All newspapers, big or small, must have a certain infrastructure. They must have the freedom to gather information from all sources and must be able to print that information. Thirdly, they must have the freedom to express their opinion. The founder-editor of Manchester Guardian, Mr. Scott, once said: "Facts are sacred. Opinions are our own". If channels of information are allowed to flow freely and are encouraged to flow freely, all is well with the freedom of the press. That is where the Government have a special responsibility to see that they do not willingly or unwillingly fall a prey to the temptation of curbing the freedom of the press to achieve a short-term advantage.

**SHRI Y. S. MAHAJAN (Buldana):**  
 Mr. Chairman, Sir, I rise to support the Press Council (Amendment) Bill for extending the period of the term of office of the existing Chairman and members of the Press Council till the 31st December 1975. There is an enabling provision which empowers the Government to specify an earlier date, if the necessary formalities for this purpose are completed.

It is advisable to avoid the issue of Ordinances for this kind of amendment, as it is being done for the second time in this case. But this had to be done because the Government could not complete its deliberations for the radical changes which it proposes to make in the Press Council of India.

The Press Council of India is an important institution. During the last nine years it has helped the press to regulate its own affairs. Self regulation is the basic principle underlying the composition and functions of the Press Council. It is an independent democratic body, consisting of representatives of editors of English and Indian language newspapers, working journalists, owners and managers of newspapers, managers of news agencies, representatives of the UGC or members appointed by the Parliament.

There is not the slightest doubt that it has rendered valuable service in preserving the freedom of the press and in censuring editors or journalists whenever they failed to maintain standards of decency and fairplay, in cases which were brought to its notice.

One of the functions of the Press Council is to study developments which may tend towards monopoly or concentration of ownership of newspapers and news agencies, including a study of the ownership or financial structure of newspapers and news agencies and, if necessary, to suggest remedies therefor. I say that the Council has not done much in this direction.

The report of the Fact-Finding Committee has revealed that there is a growing trend towards monopoly, wherever the newspapers are controlled by industrial concerns. Not only this, the profits are siphoned off for purposes unrelated to the newspaper industry. The Government should take steps to see that the MRTPC is empowered to deal with sus-

[Shri Y. S. Mahajan]

pected cases of monopoly and take appropriate remedial steps to prevent any restrictive trade practices.

Another consequence of the monopolistic trend is the price leadership exercised by a few newspapers. They first raise their prices and they are followed by other newspapers. This is a clear indication of monopolistic elements in this industry. The large newspapers are a very profitable business and they should not be allowed to exploit their subscribers who are poor and are not able to buy more than one paper. They should not be allowed to restrict competition in this field. Since newspapers are a public service, their prices should be controlled, along with the rates for the advertisement space.

Government have been thinking of delinking the newspapers from business houses but, so far they have not been able to bring forward any proposals in this regard. This reorganisation of the press industry is necessary and urgent. It will prevent the use of newspaper profits for other purposes. As the Report of the Fact Finding Commission says, newspaper profits have been used for acquiring shares in other enterprises. Such profits should be utilized only for improving the quality of the newspapers. The diffusion of ownership will also have the effect of reducing the power of small management groups, which sometimes exercise an unhealthy influence on policy making.

In this connection, we should also bear in mind the recommendations of the Press Commission that every newspaper should be constituted as a separate unit so that its profits and loss are definitely ascertainable. The best form of organisation to run a newspaper is a trust, so that its policy is regulated properly and financial abuses are prevented. This is most calculated to maintain and preserve the freedom of the press which, in

effect, means the freedom of the editor.

The value of the press depends on the accuracy of its news and the fairness and balance in its judgment. To ensure this we must see that budding journalists are made to undergo a period of rigorous training. The Act expects the Council to provide facilities for the purpose of education and training of persons in the profession of journalism. From the Annual Report it appears that the Council has not done anything in this direction. A number of universities have started journalism courses. But there are some universities which have not paid any importance to this subject. In Poona I had some experience of organising this course. It is doing excellent work. I suggest that the Council should pay more attention to the training of newspapermen.

We have any number of newspapers and journals in India which offend the standard of journalistic ethics and public taste or indulge in character assassination or in vulgarity and obscene pictures. There are some newspapers which even extract money by threatening to black-mail individuals and institutions in society. There are some newspapers which during the last one year have specialised in character assassination of leaders of the ruling party in this country. The Press Council must deal with all these cases with vigour. I feel that there should be fuller investigation into the irregularities committed by some newspapers.

Just as we have a number of big newspapers, English and Indian language newspapers, there are also a large number of small and medium newspapers. The total number of publications in this country is 12,000. It is necessary, in the interest of variety and healthy growth of the press to see that small and medium newspapers are given institutional assistance. I suggest, therefore, that the hon. Mi-



nister may consider the urgency of starting a Newspaper Finance Corporation.

Much has been said by the hon. Members on the other side that the freedom of the press has been curbed in this country during the last one year or so. One important reason which has been put forward is the control of newsprint. The newsprint quota is determined by the circulation during the previous year. That is determined by an objective test. Therefore, I fail to see how the newsprint quota can be a means of curbing the freedom of the Press.

As regards advertisements also, it is a matter which has been discussed in the House a number of times. The advertisements are placed by the Department in newspapers where they are likely to be most useful for the persons for whom they are meant. Therefore, many of the arguments that have been put forward by them are really because of the regrettable fact that the Opposition in this House regards that its only function is to oppose the Government, whatever be the nature of the government's policy. I am afraid, this means that the Opposition in this country is irresponsible.

With these words, I support the Bill.

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE: His statement itself is irresponsible.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA (Contd.): Mr. Chairman, Sir, in fact I had no intention to participate in the debate but for two reasons.

Firstly, I want to draw the attention of the hon. Minister to one thing that although on the recommendation of the Press Council, the Wage Board for the working journalists had to be constituted by the Labour Ministry, very unfortunately, the Labour Minister in constituting the Wage Board for the working journalists has betrayed an

attitude of partisan politics and has tried to inject some kind of politics in constituting that body. In this House, there was an agitated discussion on 25th April, 1974. I think, you will also remember that not one but dozens of Members from both the sides of the House, barring one or two, particularly stressed that there should be fair justice done to all the journalists without making any discrimination about one journalist against the other.

There are two organisations of the working journalists. One is the Indian Federation of Working Journalists and the other is the National Union of Journalists. I do not want to say either for or against any of the two organisations. It is upto them whether they should form one organisation or two organisations. As to what are the reasons for their differences, I do not want to go into them. I am not interested in that. My interests is about the factual position and that is that one of the organisations, either the Indian Federation of Working Journalists or the National Union of Journalists, in some States, has a majority and, in other States, the other organisation has a majority. I do not know whether it is fifty-fifty or forty-sixty. I do not know.

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE: Why don't you verify? (Interruptions).

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: I know how the membership is verified. Do not tell me about that.

It has been admitted by the Government that the National Union of Journalists were the first to demand for the Wage Board for Working Journalists. It is also a fact that the Government has recognised this Union also as one of the unions of the working journalists. The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting has done that. (Interruptions) I am not for or against any of them. I want that justice should be done to the journalists as a whole; no partisan attitude should be taken.

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE: Then have a referendum. (Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: We are discussing the Press Council (Amendment) Bill. You have already spoken the other day about representation being given to this. Why do you want to bring in that aspect again here?

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: This is very important, Sir. It is on the basis of the recommendation of the Press Council....

MR. CHAIRMAN: What relevancy has it with the present Bill?

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE: The Press Council verified that membership of both the Unions and they recognised the National Union of Journalists ... (Interruptions).

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question there was representation of the working journalists on the Wage Board. We are not discussing the Wage Board now.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: As I have said, the Government should do justice to the journalists as a whole. Why should the Chairman and Secretary of only one Union find a place?

MR. CHAIRMAN: As far as Press Council is concerned, NUJ is recognised as a Union. The question is one of representative character on the Wage Board. That is altogether a different matter.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: My point is why should one section of the people be ignored. Why should the Chairman and the Secretary of only one Union find a place? Heavens would not have fallen if the Chairman of one organisation and the Secretary of the other organisation had been taken. This would have been better because the collective wisdom of both could help the Wage Board in coming to a conclusion. Therefore, I want to draw the attention of the hon. Minister/..

MR. CHAIRMAN: We will transfer this speech of yours to the discussion on the Working Journalists Wage Board.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA ..to kindly see whether the recommendation of the Press Council has been properly implemented. It has also been indicated to me that one Chairman and Secretary of the same organization have been nominated to the Board that one of them is not a working journalist, that he is an employer and that he has a journal of his own. I said that the collective interest and the collective wisdom of the journalists should be represented and no Minister should take partisan attitude. The Minister of Information and Broadcasting has something to do. Whether the recommendation of the Press Council has been properly implemented he has to see.... (Interruptions).

SHRI R. S. PANDEY: I agree with you. You do not worry.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: Not only you, but 30-35 members got up and supported me that day.

I want to draw the attention of the hon. Minister which I have drawn in another committee also....

MR. CHAIRMAN: You are not being relevant. I am very reluctant to give you any more time. The moment I give you time you take undue advantage. You have already wasted 15 minutes on utterly irrelevant things. You are talking on the Wage Board for Working Journalists instead of the Press Council (Amendment) Bill. You take undue advantage of the latitude of the Chair. Please come to the Bill.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: I have drawn the attention of the hon. Minister in various committees also that about 80 lakhs newspapers in the form of monthlies, weeklies and brochures are being published in our country from Delhi alone by foreign embassies. Most of them are big

powers. Not only this, these papers, monthlies, weeklies and brochures are being printed by printing presses owned by political parties, or most of whom are interested in some political parties. It is also reported that they give newsprint to these printing presses which is being utilised for other purposes. It is also reported that towards printing costs they give much higher than the market casts. I want to know from the Government whether the Government through the Press Council or through some other agency cannot control this wild propaganda, this political propaganda by the big powers. I do not know whether there is any country in the world where every month about 80 lakhs of foreign propaganda material are distributed freely all over the country by foreign embassies and that too through political agencies. It is an indirect way of giving foreign contribution to political parties. This is what is eroding the whole basis of, I should say, our nationalism and democracy. This is eroding our fundamental nationalism and democracy in our country by this kind of infiltration of foreign money and foreign ideas in a way which, I am told is fantastically voluminous.

And, regarding advertisements given by foreign embassies, we find big two-page advertisements are being given in these brochures and weeklies and what is being done is this, that the countries with which we are having diplomatic relations are being attacked. They are being criticised. Political comments are made which are against diplomatic norms. I don't want to name these cases. You also know them. This is against fundamental principles of diplomatic relationship. This is what I want to bring to the Minister's attention. This kind of vulgarity and this kind of misuse of diplomatic freedom vitiating our friendly relationship with those countries should not be allowed to continue, which they are doing, taking advantage of the liberal attitude of the Government. This is what I wanted especially to bring to

the notice of the Minister and I request him to reply to these point when he replies to the debate.

श्री मूल चन्द बागा (पाली) : सभापति जी, प्रेस काउन्सिल ऐक्ट 1965 का जो बना उस के ऊपर क्या ऐक्शन लिया है ? अगर प्रेस काउन्सिल ऐक्ट के नीचे कोई आक्रॉस करता है तो आप को क्या पावर्स हैं ? आप उन को उचित रूप से सजा दे सकते हैं कि नहीं ? केवल सेशर करने की पावर्स हैं। अगर आप ऐसा ऐक्ट बनाते हैं जिस में आप को सजा देने की पावर्स नहीं हैं तो ऐसे ऐक्ट से क्या लाभ होता है ? किसी को भी बुलाना चाहते हैं कमेटी में और उस का अनुपालन नहीं होता है तो क्या कोई पनिशमेंट है ? जब तक आप इस को इफेक्टिव नहीं बनाते हैं तब तक इस को कौन मानेगा। अगर कोई पेपर गलत खबर छापता है उस के खिलाफ ऐक्शन लेने का आप को अधिकार नहीं है, सिवाय सेशर करने के। और कौन सा उपाय है जिस से आप उस की पब्लिसिटी बन्द कर सकते हैं ? इसलिए इस पर चर्चा का क्या महत्व। मैं मानता हूँ कि प्रेस एक मिशन था। तो वही परपज रहना चाहिए था। और अगर उसके बाद आप ऐक्ट लाना चाहते हैं तो यही परपज था कि जो मिशन पूरा नहीं हो रहा है इसलिए ऐक्ट लाया गया। और जब ऐक्ट से भी काम नहीं हा रहा है जो आप ने लिखा कि :

"To improve the standards, freedom of the Press, maintaining and improving the standards of the News papers."

तो आजकल के अखबारों का कौन से मेटनेस होता है यह एक बड़ा प्रश्न है। इसलिए आप को पूरे ऐक्ट के अन्दर ऐसा प्राविधान करना होगा जिस से आप का परपज हल हो।

श्री राम सहाय पांडे : (राजनंदगांव) : सभापति जी, प्रेस की आजादी के मुतालिक किसा को कोई शिकायत नहीं होनी चाहिए

[श्री राम सहाय पांडे]

क्योंकि जब तक माननीय गुजराल जी बैठे हुए हैं प्रेस की आजादी है, और दुनिया के किसी देश के मुकाबले ज्यादा है। लेकिन कैंसेटर प्रेस-सिनेशन नहीं होना चाहिए, विरोधियों के बारे में भी नहीं और सत्कार दल के लिए भी नहीं होना चाहिए क्योंकि इस से देश में दूषित वातावरण होता है और चुनाव के समय ज्यादा होता है। आप के दायित्व का क्षेत्र बड़ा है, आप एक्शन ले।

डीलिकिंग के बारे में बहुत दिन से सुन रहे हैं ताकि औद्योगिक क्षेत्र में जो बड़े बड़े लोग बैठे हुए हैं उन पर कुछ प्रभुत्व लग सके। न्यूज और व्यूज प्रलग प्रलग हैं। व्यूज बिके हुए हैं और न्यूज दफ्तर में टेबिल पर बैठ कर लिखी जाती हैं जो यहाँ से जाती हैं। तो इन दोनों को डीलिक कर दीजिए। मैं जानना चाहता हूँ कि डीलिकिंग की जो बारबार मांग की जाती है वह आप कब करने जा रहे हैं ?

अब मैं प्रश्लीलता के बारे में पूछना चाहता हूँ। हमारा देश गरम है। यहाँ नग्न अर्ध-नग्न और निरवसन नारियों के शरीर का जो होता है इस में लड़के खराब होते हैं। यह बात यूरोप में लागू नहीं होती क्योंकि वहाँ के लोग ठंडे हैं। लेकिन यहाँ के वातावरण में उत्तेजना, वासनात्मक उत्तेजना होती है। चुम्बन चाटन की बबतमीची की बातों को खत्म होना चाहिए, और कला के नाम पर यह नहीं होना चाहिए। आप परम्परा के आधार पर, सामाजिक धरोहर के आधार पर कुछ सोचने की कोशिश करें जिस से इस पर रोक लगायी जा सके।

तो मैं चार बातें पूछता हूँ : (1) डीलिकिंग, (2) कैंसेटर प्रेसिनेशन, (3) प्रश्लीलता, और (4) छोटे छोटे प्रचार, मासिक पत्रिकाएँ, साप्ताहिक पत्र, पत्रिकाएँ हैं, उन की भी बोड़ी मजबूत कीजिए। यह नहीं कि अंग्रेजी के प्रचारकों को ही प्रोत्साहन

दिया जाय। आप उबार हैं, हम जानते हैं, लेकिन उन प्रचारकों को विज्ञापन न दीजिए जो ब्लैक मेल करते हैं, प्रश्लीलता की छलछाया में वैसे बनाते हैं और एक प्रशुद्ध वातावरण पैदा करने की कोशिश करते हैं।

श्री मधु सिन्घे : (बी०) सभापति महोदय, मेरी समझ में नहीं आता कि मंत्री महोदय बार बार इस कमेटी की मियाद बढ़ाने के लिए ह बिन क्यों लाते हैं। शायद हम लोगों को प्रेस स्वतंत्रता के ऊपर यह प्रवसर देना चाहते हैं। अगर यही उद्देश्य है तो बड़ा पब्लिक उद्देश्य है। वरना मैं तो यह सुझाव देने जा रहा हूँ कि आप ने कहा है कि 31 दिसम्बर, 1975। तो उस में आप 2000 ए० डी० कर दीजिए फिर शायद इस कमेटी का काम सम्पन्न हो पायेगा।

लेकिन जैसा मैं ने कहा कि पब्लिक उद्देश्य यह है कि समय समय पर प्रेस की स्थिति के बारे में हम को अपने विचार रखने का मौका मिले। तो यह बहुत अच्छी बात है। आज प्रेस की स्वतंत्रता चक्की में पीसी जा रही है। एक ओर धन-शक्ति और दूसरी ओर दंड-शक्ति।

19.00 hrs.

सभापति महोदय : मुझे लगा कि आप कह रहे हैं "जन-शक्ति"।

श्री मधु सिन्घे : जन-शक्ति से प्रेस की स्वतंत्रता को कोई खतरा नहीं है। दंड-शक्ति तो गुजराल साहब के हाथ में है और धन-शक्ति बिड़ला, साहू जैन आदि के हाथ में है।

एक माननीय सदस्य : और गोयन्का।

श्री मधु सिन्घे : गोयन्का उद्योग में कितनी दूर तक गया है, उसके बारे में आप सोचिए, लेकिन बिड़ला साहू जैन के बारे में मैं जानता हूँ क्योंकि मोनोपली कमीशन की रिपोर्ट में...

श्री राम सहाय पांडे : गोयन्का के बारे में आप ने नहीं कहा ।

श्री मधु लिमये : आप धार० पी० गोयन्का की बात कर रहे हैं ।

श्री राम सहाय पांडे : नहीं, नहीं । राम नाथ गोयन्का ।

श्री मधु लिमये : वे मोनोपली कमीशन में नहीं हैं, आप जरा रपट पढ़िये । मैं प्रती-कात्मक रूप से ले रहा हूँ । धन-शक्ति बिड़ला, साहू जैन प्रादि लोगों के हाथ में है और दंड-शक्ति श्रीमती इन्दिरा गांधी, श्री इन्द्रकुमार गुजराल के हाथ में है और इस चक्की में प्रेस की स्वतन्त्रता पीटा जा रही है ।

अभी प्रेस कौंसिल के सामने हिन्दुस्तान टाइम्स के सम्पादक श्री बगिस का मामला पड़ा हुआ है । श्री इन्द्र कुमार गुजराल का एक भाषण मैं ने पढ़ा है जिस में उन्होंने बगिस के प्रति बड़ी हमदर्दी दिखाई है । ठीक है न ? ... (बध्बध्बध्ब) ... मैं ने तो पढ़ा है, आप न नहीं पढ़ा । श्री के० के० बिड़ला और जार्ज बगिस के बीच में जो पत्र व्यवहार हुआ है, वह धाज भी प्रेस कौंसिल के सामने है । उसे पढ़ने का मुझे अवसर मिला है । तो मेरी नजर एक पत्र पर पड़ी जो जार्ज बगिस ने श्री के० के० बिड़ला को लिखा था और इस पत्र से मैं अभी जो मुद्दा आप के सामने रख रहा हूँ वह यह है कि धन-शक्ति और दंड-शक्ति के चक्कर में प्रेस वाले कैसे मर रहे हैं, इस का एक उदाहरण मुझे मिला है । बगिस साहब श्री के० के० बिड़ला को लिखते हैं कि आप ने प्रोटेस्ट किया मारुति लि० के बारे में कि "हिन्दुस्तान टाइम्स" में बहुत खबरे छपी हैं और बगिस साहब ने कहा है कि मैं ने विगत कुछ दिनों के हिन्दुस्तान टाइम्स के भ्रंक देखे हैं और मुझे उन में एक ही आइटम मिला और यह था श्री संजय गांधी, वैनेबिल डाइरेक्टर का स्पष्टीकरण । इस के अलावा कोई मजबूत मुझे नहीं मिला । उस के अलावा उन्होंने कहा है कि बिग कमांडर

चौधरी ने एक और पत्र हिन्दुस्तान टाइम्स के सम्पादक के नाम से लिखा और उस के सम्बन्ध में श्री के० के० बिड़ला को बगिस साहब कहते हैं कि मैंने वह इसलिए नहीं छपा क्योंकि संजय गांधी के ध्यान में जो बातें थी उस में कोई नई बात नहीं थी लेकिन भागे चल कर बगिस साहब के० के० बिड़ला साहब को लिखते हैं कि बिग कमांडर, जो कि मारुति लि० का जनरल मैनेजर है, का एक पत्र ले कर प्राइम मिनिस्टर सेक्रेटेरियेट का एक सीनियर इन्फार्मेशन आफिसर हिन्दुस्तान टाइम्स के सामने आया था और उस के बारे में बगिस साहब ने कहा है बिड़ला साहब से कि यह ऐसी बात है जिस से फैक्टिज्म के बारे में आम जनता द्वारा जो आरोप लगाए जाते हैं प्रधान मंत्री के ऊपर और मारुति लि० के ऊपर उस की पुष्टि होती है । तो बगिस साहब के इस पत्र से दंड-शक्ति के दुरुपयोग का ज्वलन्त उदाहरण मिलता है, लेकिन साथ ही साथ मजे की बात है कि नीचे एक और उदाहरण दिया था उन्होंने और उन्होंने कहा था कि यह जो मोदी ग्रुप है, उस की एक फ्लोर मिल है और, सम्भाषित महोदय, आप जानते हैं कि उस का मामला पकड़ा गया था, धनाज या नेहूँ पकड़ा गया था । तो बगिस साहब उस में लिखते हैं कि मोदी ग्रुट का आदमी मेरे पास आया था और उन्होंने यह कहा था कि यह जो केस चल रहा है, उस की आप प्रसिद्धि न कीजिए और प्रसिद्धि नहीं करेंगे, तो मोदी ग्रुप की ओर से हिन्दुस्तान टाइम्स को पर्याप्त मात्रा में इशतहार, विज्ञापन मिल जाएंगे । मैं अभी जो बात कह रहा हूँ उस से पता चलता है कि दंड-शक्ति और धन-शक्ति का अनुचित उपयोग कर के प्रेस की स्वतन्त्रता को कैसे कुचला जाता है और उस का यह दूसरा ज्वलन्त उदाहरण है जो कि उसी पत्र में दिया गया है । मैं श्री इन्द्र कुमार गुजराल से कहना चाहता हूँ कि सरकार के पास जरूर इस पत्र व्यवहार का कापी होगी । प्रेस कौंसिल के पास वह है और अगर आप के पास न हो, तो आप उस को मंगवा सकते हैं ।

श्री राज सहाय पांडे : आप के पास होगी।

श्री सच्चु लिये : मैं समय पर रख दूंगा। आज किसी ने मेरे दस्तावेज चुरा लिए लेकिन मेरे पास उस की कापी है... (व्यवधान)... मैं आरोप नहीं लगाऊंगा जब तक कि मर पास जानकारी न हो कि प्राइम मिनिस्टर सेक्रेटरियेट के किमी आदमी ने उसकी चोरी करवाई हो। मैं समय पर उस दस्तावेज को रखने को तैयार हूँ लेकिन किल्हाल मैं श्री इन्द्रकुमार गुजराल से प्रार्थना करता चाहता हूँ कि प्रेस कोसिल में या वर्गिस साहब से श्रीर आर० के० के० बिडला साहब से उन की कोई दांस्ती है, वैसे उसका मुझे पता नहीं है, लेकिन सहानुभूति उन्होंने वर्गिस साहब के प्रति दिखाई है, इसलिए वर्गिस साहब से सारा पत्र-व्यवहार प्राप्त करके आप सदन के सामने रखिए।

SHRI DINEN BHATTACHARYYA (Serampore): Sir, before the Minister speaks, I would like to mention one thing which I forgot to mention. Here, in Delhi, the Statesman office has been turned into a police camp and several employees who are office bearers of the Statesman Employees Union have been victimised and their cases are pending with the Government for a long time. Something must be said about them and some action must be taken to reinstate them.

श्री शशि भूषण (दक्षिण दिल्ली) : क्या आप की जानकारी में यह है कि वर्गिस साहब ने जब चीफ एडिटर थे, तो श्री भजीत घट्टाचर्य से ले कर पांच, सात और जर्नेलिस्ट जो हिन्दुस्तान टाइम्स में थे, बिडला जी के कहने से निकाला और उस सितसिले में आप के पास कोई शिकायत आई और कभी आपने उस जर्नेलिस्टों के मदद के लिए कोई कदम उठाया।

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI I. K. GUJRAL): Sir, I am grateful to my hon. friends from both sides of the House who have taken such an interest in this subject and although the hour is very late, obviously, the interest has not gone down. I think it is rightly as it should be because this is one of the sacred institutions in our democratic set up and we should show interest as the chosen representatives of the people to see that this institution is well-run and safeguarded. This is an anxiety which we should all share and I, more so, share this anxiety.

Sir, some friends have naturally raised the question about the Ordinance. Why is it that I was forced to come here three times to seek extension to the Press Council? You know, Sir, the reasons why this present situation arose. In the existing Act, there is a nominating committee comprising of three very high dignitaries of this country. Unfortunately, this process of nomination broke down after the last Press Council was formed. We were left with no option but to ask the Members of Parliament drawn from all sides of the House to sit together, have a look at the whole thing and help us in evolving a new Bill. I am grateful to all those hon. friends both in this House and in the other House, who have participated in this and who have given their very valuable time as well as their valuable views on the basis of which we have almost finalised the Bill and I am hoping, subject to the permission of this House and subject to the availability of time, to bring the main Bill also in this Session itself. Therefore, this anxiety will not be there that we will have to come again or perhaps another extension will have to be given. Sir, in the matter of Press Council my anxiety has always been—I was fortunately associated with the last Committee also when the current Bill was formulated—that we should try to evolve a Bill which represents the consensus of all the political parties

in the Parliament. That is what I have been working for. I can say with a degree of satisfaction—I hope you will also be satisfied—that the new amended Bill that is likely to come soon also represents the consensus of all the parties. This is a have our views determined on the democratic society where institutions like the fourth estate are so sacred, we should be able to evolve and have our views determined on the institutions connected with the press on the basis of a broad consensus. I think this is one of the major achievements that in spite of the fact that in the present context our views differ on many things, as has been said in this debate also—we represent different parties with different political attitudes—we should be in a position to evolve a consensus. For this, I must thank my colleagues sitting on all sides of the House, but I will do this more formally when I come forward with the Bill itself.

I am also glad that Shri Madhu Limaye pointed out that these opportunities are there for us to discuss the major institutions of our democratic life. What our newspapers are doing, what are they writing, what is the trend growing, how is the fourth estate influencing other estates—these are naturally issues on which we should have our views, and if debates like this provide an opportunity, I think it should be welcomed, because after all, if the elected representatives of the people do not express themselves on these major issues, who else will? That is why it is very welcome that even though we differ in details, broadly on many things we have agreed.

There is one trend which is noticed in the Indian press, particularly of late, that increasingly we find that our newspapers are becoming newspapers. This is what the Fact Finding Committee has also observed that so far as the question of investment on news collection is concerned, very little investment is made. I quote:

"The amount of subscription paid by individual newspapers to the news agencies represent a very insignificant proportion of the cost of production, namely 1.5 per cent. Including payments on piece-rate basis to correspondents and other contributors of special features, the total rate on news gathering amounts to 4.2 per cent".

If figures mean anything, these by themselves should make us feel that what we are calling newspapers are unfortunately not developing as newspapers.

My hon. friend, Shri Naik, was feeling concerned about the non-coming on the Indian scene of people like Jack Anderson and others who made their mark in world journalism. It would have happened if our newspapers grew and encouraged what is called investigative journalism. You would see that investigative journalism in our journalistic scene is almost absent. Also you see that the spirit of inquiry unfortunately has not captured the imagination of our profession. Therefore, since the inquiring spirit is absent, the result basically is that it is much easier, much safer and more influence-wielding if you only express views and go on drifting away from news, both news about the political inquiry and news about what is happening in this country.

In this House and in the other, we often talk about changing society. From all sides of the people, people with varied angles of course say that in India society must change. An in-depth inquiry is needed to know what is the trend, what is the social change that is coming to society, the changing inter-relationships, the changing attitudes, the trend in which everything in life is changing. But I am afraid unfortunately our newspapers do not represent that and do not bring to us that in-depth study which is needed to enlighten those who read newspapers. The result is that more and more newspapers become views-



[Shri I. K. Gujral]

papers and those who give views tend to be very much self-egoistic because once I start feeling that I can sit down with my pen and only express judgment on all the events that are taking place, then I feel a strange type of power in my pen.

I feel that I am above everybody, above personalities and above institutions. Howsoever wise a person may be, if he is given unhindered right, he can write whatever he chooses and sooner or later you will find that there is a trend towards irresponsibility. I think that is here institutional checks are needed. Institutional checks are needed in this House, whenever anybody in authority sitting in this House says something, then the question hour is there. My friend Mr. Madhu Limaye is a vigilant Member and he is sitting there. All the time you see that the Third Estate, the Second Estate and the First Estate and the judiciary, the elected representatives, the elected executive, all of them are all the time explaining their conduct and it is before the public eye. But when the editor of a newspaper which ceases to be a newspaper and increasingly becomes a viewpoint when unfortunately he is sitting behind a desk and feels that he is responsible to none and he can say whatever he likes and can give whatever opinion he likes, sometimes unfortunately in this kind of thing, we find a new trend in journalism here even the code of conduct is not observed and of late particularly this trend has grown.

I do not see my friend Mr. Vajpayee here. If he were here I would have drawn attention to the type of writing in the last two or three months which Motherland and Organiser had been indulging in. I do not want today to spend more time on what they had been writing.

**SHRI MADHU LIMAYE:** You read New wave, Link....

**SHRI I. K. GUJRAL:** I read everything. When I criticise one paper it should not be understood that I am trying to condone the other papers. I am expressing my views about the trend which is growing. If somebody in the Press writes and distorts the image of the Father of the Nation? Howsoever I might differ with Mr. Limaye or Mr. Samar Guha, we all know what the Father of the Nation stood for. If somebody comes and tells that the Father of the Nation was pumped out by Pandit Nehru, I do not know how to react. This is the real danger we have to look at and safeguard against. This is something which is happening because opinionated journalism is coming. People have talked about it. My friends have said that it is character assassination I am not so much bothered about character assassination. I think it is assassination of journalism as such and I am more bothered about it because I think journalism will not survive if this type of attitude continues and if this type of conduct continued. A code of conduct is needed. We all know how to differ. I differ with my friend Mr. Madhu Limaye and my friend Mr. Samar Guha; they differ with me. But one thing which democracy teaches is: when we differ, let us differ with dignity. Dignity is very important. Even in journalism, let us differ with dignity and with style.

It is no use every morning coming and telling us that every attempt at murder is foisted on such and such. It is much below the level of dignity, debasing our journalism. Particularly it becomes more important if some newspapers and journals represent a political party. I say this not with anger but with anguish. I hope our friends sitting on that side of the House will realise that a democratic life means a life of dignity and democratic life means differing with a great deal of dignity and gentleness. Let us differ with mutual respect; of course, dignity implies mutual respect. Therefore, I hope that this trend at least will be stopped.

In its report the Press Commission recommended to the Press Council that a code of conduct for journalism should be evolved. Unfortunately the Press Council has not codified the code of conduct. They have said that they are trying to make case law history and they want a code of conduct to be evolved. I think now at least more attention is needed and I hope the Press Council will pay some attention to this.

I shudder to imagine what our democratic life will be if there is no freedom of expression. I think there can be no two opinions on this account. We all value and love this freedom of expression. It has not just come down to us, it was a product of our freedom struggle. It came to us with freedom and is an integral part of the democratic life which the people of India gave to themselves. But, the fourth estate also has to appreciate and realise that all the four estates can only co-exist. None will survive if the other three are undermined. If some section of the fourth estate thinks that it has the right to diminish people's faith in the ballot box, to people that elected Members should not sit in the Assemblies and Parliament, that it has acquired the right to ask people to elect, then de-elect, and again elect, etc., I do not think it is serving its own interests.

Just now, my attention was drawn to acts of violence against some newspapers like the Searchlight. If I may say so, I condemn every act of violence against individuals and more so against the Press because I feel that once we allow violence to grow, it will not be possible for us to run this country through persuasion, debate and arguments. We have rightly decided that this country shall be run through arguments, and if we are going to do that, our unanimous voice has to be raised against violence.

The fourth estate has to realise that if it feels that it can encourage slogans of people losing faith in Assemblies, people gheraoing elected

Members, then sooner or later, they are exposing themselves to danger. The fourth estate cannot be safe if the safety of the other three is not ensured.

The issue regarding George Verghese has come up again and again. I would like to say categorically that the issue is not whether I agree with George Verghese or not. The issue is not whether I agree with any other editor or not. The issue basically is that the editor has a right to express himself in freedom. That is the main issue that is involved, and I am on record that ever since I came to occupy a place in the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting this time or in my previous tenure, I have always said that the freedom of the editor is in danger from the hands of big moneyed proprietors. While we are thinking and talking it terms of a free press, let us understand fully and finally whose freedom we are talking about. Obviously, of those who write, who edit and not or those who own and whose only qualification is that they can sign a cheque book. That is why we must think in terms of liberating our press from this very oppressive situation which is endangering the freedom of the press itself.

I agree that both *dhan shakti* and *danda shakti* must be avoided, but if Mr. Limaye brings to my notice even one case where the Central Government in the last five or six years ever since I was associated or even earlier, where through newsprint or through advertisement policy any action was taken against any paper, I assure him that I will go out of public life.

We have never used it and we have no intention of using it. The basic point is that the Information Ministry and the Government of India have consistently followed one point, viz., advertisement is not an instrument of policy. The total budget of the Government of India under DAVP is Rs. 1 crores. If you include the public sector companies and the State Governments, the totality of this fund does

[Shri I K Gujral]

not go beyond Rs 5 crores. As against this, the private sector budget is estimated at Rs 60 crores. Can a Rs 1 crore budget stand up against Rs 60 crores and influence the papers? We might use it as a political argument, but the reality is totally different.

About newsprint, it is an open book. The Supreme Court gave a judgment that we have no right to make it an instrument of policy and we have not made it. We import newsprint in consultation with the proprietors of newspapers. Every newspaper is entitled to receive its quota according to the public declared policy. This is not a policy of equity, but of equality. If any hon. member brings to my notice even one case where the newsprint allocation was either reduced or increased as an instrument of policy and as a result of the policy of the newspaper, I offer to get out of public life. This is not the issue. I am doing it not because I want to oblige Mr. Madhu Limaye but because this is a sacred trust which India holds. India is building an independent press. We feel it is an integral part of our national life. We want to continue that policy, whatever my friend might keep on saying.

If you are really keen that cases like Mr. Verghese should not recur, let us think in terms of institutional reforms. But institutional reforms should not be the result of governmental thinking. It will be a very healthy day when on the basis of a broad consensus in the country as a whole we are able to make institutional changes whereby the freedom of the press can be further guaranteed. That is why institutional changes are needed.

I have been thinking about delinking because I strongly believe in it. I hope my opposition friends will also realise that unless delinking is done, the danger of money trying to influence everything will always be there.

Mr. Limaye talked a great deal about what he seems to have read in the Birla Verghese correspondence. Unfortunately, I do not have access to these papers—what are called secret documents by the Press Council. If Mr. Madhu Limaye has managed to get it

SHRI MADHU LIMAYE: Somebody stole it and presented it.

SHRI I K GUJRAL: If he gives it to me, I will be glad to read it. Therefore it is really not possible for me to comment on it. I am here to defend neither Mr. Birla nor anybody else.

SHRI MADHU LIMAYE: What about the Senior Information Officer of the Prime Minister's Secretariat?

SHRI I K GUJRAL: I would like to see the correspondence.

SHRI MADHU LIMAYE: You will get it.

SHRI I K GUJRAL: I would like to know whether it is genuine or not.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All that is presumptuous at this stage.

SHRI I K GUJRAL: My hon. friend Shri Mavalankar tried to read to us some comments by the International Press Institute about the freedom of the press. May I say with all humility that in this Parliament I do not need nor does any hon. Member need, certificates from outsiders to tell us that there is freedom of the press in this country. The Indian press is free because the Indian people want it to be free, and the Indian press will remain free as long as the Indian people want it to remain free. This is the basic issue. Therefore, for anyone sitting abroad, sitting anywhere else, to be so presumptuous and to assume that he has a right to comment and tell us whether our press is free or not is not proper. Tomorrow, he will tell us whether our Parliament is free or not. The institutions of a country are given by the people of that country them-

selves and the people preserve them; and we are proud that our people preserve our institutions and make them free. I do not need any certificate. I hope my hon. friend, Shri Mavalankar, will think twice before quoting them, because it is demeaning to quote those people who, in their own pettiness, often think they have a right to comment on us.

My friend Shri Janeshwar Mishra is a young man and I sometimes envy him, but sometimes his criticisms get away from him. He has made a very interesting proposition today. He said the press is free today but he is very apprehensive of tomorrow. That tomorrow is in the hands of the generations of the youth, and if he misleads the youth, the danger to the press is there. If the youth is trained well, the press will always remain free and we shall continue to be proud of it.

There are two or three subjects which have been raised by some hon. Members. Shri Samar Guha asked a question about the composition of the Wage Board. I think he has asked the question of a wrong person because he asked how it is composed, who are the members and why they should be the members. I think he can get more authentic information if he addresses the question to the Minister of Labour, who is dealing with it. But one thing I can say; whatever he has done is a Government decision and I stand by it.

Coming to the publication of foreign journals in this country, as you would have seen, in the last few years, on my initiative, we have now started giving a separate chapter in the Press Registrar's annual report about the newspapers and periodicals which are published by missions in India. It is very important for us to have a deeper look into it. So, one of the provisions that we have proposed in the Inflow of Foreign Money Bill is that we will call upon the newspapers and printing press and journalists to declare publicly what benefits they have derived

from foreign countries or sources. Once this information is available, it will be possible to give answers to the questions to which Shri Samar Guha has drawn our attention. But I can assure him that we are conscious and vigilant of the things he has pointed out.

SHRI R. S. PANDEY: What about character assassination?

MR. CHAIRMAN: He began his speech with that.

SHRI R. S. PANDEY: Say something about character assassination.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You were not attentive. He has specifically mentioned that.

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL: He is a very vigilant member. But, you know, he has reached a stage when he dozes off, off and on.

SHRI R. S. PANDEY: Who? I?

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL: So far as Statesman is concerned, we have received complaints. At this stage I can only say that they are receiving our attention.

So far as the conversion of the news agencies is concerned, I can tell my hon. friend, Shri Banerjee, that the Fact Finding Committee has drawn our attention to the functioning of the newspapers, as well as news agencies, and when we are making our policy resolution on the basis of the Fact Finding Committee Report, this will also receive our attention.

श्री शशि भूषण : संजी महोदय ने मेरे सवाल का जवाब नहीं दिया है। बिड़ला जी के इशारे पर जार्ज बर्गीज ने प्रजित मद्राचार्य से ले कर कई जर्नलिस्ट्स को हिन्दुस्तान टाइम्स से निकाल दिया। क्या इस बारे में कोई शिकायत आई है? क्या आप इस बारे में कुछ कर सकते हैं, या एडवाइजरी बोर्ड की ही करना पड़ेगा?

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL: The issue is not who turns out whom and, on whose behest, who turns out whom. The issue basically and fundamentally is that institutionally we must safeguard the interests of journalists. That is what I would like to say at this stage.

डा० लक्ष्मीनारायण पांडेय (मंसूर) :  
सभापति महोदय, मैं उन सभी सदस्यों का कृतज्ञ हूँ, जिन्होंने मेरे प्रस्ताव का समर्थन किया है।

मंत्री महोदय ने अपने उत्तर से बताया है कि कुछ कठिनाईयों के कारण अध्यादेश जारी करना पड़ा, लेकिन वह विस्तार से यह बताने में समर्थ नहीं हुए कि इस प्रकार की स्थिति क्यों उत्पन्न हुई और कमेटी के क्रमिशन से क्यों विलम्ब हुआ है।

मंत्री महोदय ने यह स्वीकार किया है कि न्यूजपेपर्स आज व्यूजपेपर्स बन कर रह गये हैं। उन्होंने यह भी स्वीकार किया है कि प्रेस परिषद् के पास जितनी शक्ति और अधिकार हाने चाहिए, वे आज उस के पास नहीं हैं। यह आवश्यक है कि प्रेस परिषद् को इतना सक्षम और अधिकार-सम्पन्न बनाया जाये कि वह प्रेस की स्वतंत्रता, कोड आफ कानडक्ट और पत्रकारिता के क्षेत्र में विभिन्न सुधारों के सम्बन्ध में ठीक तरह से कार्य कर सके। उन्होंने बताया कि वह इस बारे में एक सशोधन विधेयक शीघ्र ही प्रस्तुत करने वाले हैं। मैं समझता हूँ कि उस विधेयक में इन बातों का समावेश होगा।

मंत्री महोदय ने कई बातों का उत्तर नहीं दिया गया है। यह सवाल उठाया गया है कि छोटे छोटे समाचार-पत्रों और क्षेत्रीय समाचार-पत्रों को प्रायः न्यूजपेपर्स नहीं मिला पाता है। मंत्री महोदय ने इस बारे में कोई आश्वासन नहीं दिया है। उन्होंने केवल पालिनी की बात बनाई है कि हम न्यूजपेपर्स का आयाग करते हैं और फिर किस प्रकार उस का एलाटमेंट करते हैं। इसके लिए उन्होंने एक समिति की भी बात कही है। मैंने इसी

संदर्भ में इन्वीर के दैनिक "स्वदेश" से बात कही थी कि किस प्रकार उसे बंद किया।

मैंने मंत्री महोदय से यह भी जानना चाहा था कि हरियाणा सरकार ने प्रेस परिषद् की जो बात नहीं मानी है, उस के बारे में सरकार क्या करने जा रही है। सरकार ने इस बारे में कौन से कदम उठाये हैं? क्या प्रस्तावित विधेयक में प्रेस परिषद् को अधिक सक्षम बनाने की व्यवस्था की जायेगी? अगर ऐसा नहीं किया जायेगा, तो सभी राज्य सरकारें प्रेस परिषद् की अवहेलना करती चली जायेंगी।

मुझे आशा है कि मंत्री महोदय समाचार-पत्रों पर कुछ समाचारपत्रों के ग्रुप के एकाधिकार को समाप्त करने की दिशा में पग उठावेंगे। ऐसी स्थिति पैदा करनी चाहिए, जिस में समाचारपत्र जनतंत्र की रक्षा के लिए भागे भाग, व जन-भावना का प्रतीक बने, और केवल सरकारी घण्टापत्र बन कर न रह जायें, उन पर से सरकारी दबाव समाप्त हो और वे जनता की भावनाओं और आकांक्षाओं का सही रूप में प्रतिनिधित्व और प्रदर्शन करने का सफल माध्यम बने रहें।

मंत्री महोदय ने यह स्वीकार किया है कि प्रेस को जितन तरह से काम करना चाहिए आज वह उस के लिए समर्थ नहीं है। उन्होंने यह भी माना है कि पत्रकारिता के क्षेत्र में जिस प्रकार का आचरण होना चाहिए, आज उसका अभाव है। मैं समझता हूँ कि मंत्री महोदय इस दिशा में प्रयास करेंगे।

मैं चाहूँगा कि मंत्री महोदय ने जा बतें स्पष्ट नहीं की हैं, वह उन को स्पष्ट करने का प्रयत्न करें। साथ ही सरकार पत्रों पर अपने प्रभुत्व को समाप्त करे। लोकतांत्रिक परिधि में पत्रों को जनभावना प्रकट करने का पूरा अवसर दे और उस हेतु पत्रों को पत्रकारिता क्षेत्र में काम करने वालों का पूरी सहायता दे।

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, I first put the Statutory Resolution to the vote of the House.

The question is:

"This House disapproves of the Press Council (Second Amendment) Ordinance, 1974 (Ordinance No. 14 of 1974) promulgated by the President on the 27th December, 1974."

*The motion was negatived.*

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That the Bill further to amend the Press Council Act, 1965, as passed by Rajya Sabha, be taken into consideration."

*The motion was negatived.*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now we take up clause-by-clause consideration. Clause 2. There is an amendment given notice of by Shri B. V. Naik. Is he moving?

SHRI B. V. NAIK: I am not moving, Sir, since the hon. Minister has given a promise. Hon. Member Shri S. M. Banerjee has taken exception to my hair. I take the point well, but I would also give him a piece of advice that he may declass himself from his petty, bourgeois attitude and may become a good Communist.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That Clause 2 stand part of the Bill."

*The motion was adopted.*

*Clause 2 was added to the Bill.*

MR. CHAIRMAN: There is no amendment given notice of to Clause 3. The question is:

"That Clause 3 stand part of the Bill."

*The motion was adopted.*

*Clause 3 was added to the Bill.*

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That Clause 1, the Enacting Formula and the Title stand part of the Bill."

*The motion was adopted.*

*Clause 1, the Enacting Formula and the Title were added to the Bill.*

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL: Sir, I move:

"That the Bill be passed."

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That the Bill be passed."

*The motion was adopted.*

19. 44 hrs.

Re: HALF-AN-HOUR DISCUSSION

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now I would like to know the wish of the House regarding the half-an-hour discussion....

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE (Kanpur): Sir, I beg to move:

"That this House requests Sardar Swaran Singh Sokhi to agree to postpone his half-an-hour discussion."

MR. CHAIRMAN: If that is the wish of the House....

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH SOKHI (Jamshedpur): Provided it is taken up tomorrow.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That will be decided later. You need not press for the dowry today. The next date will be fixed in consultation with you.

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE: I suggest that it may be taken up tomorrow at 10-30 A.M., from 10-30 to 11-00 A.M.

MR. CHAIRMAN: So, it is agreed that we postpone the half-an-hour discussion.

The House stands adjourned to meet tomorrow at 11-30 A.M.

14.45 hrs.

*The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Tuesday, March 25, 1975/Chaitra 4, 1997 (Saka).*