

**SHRI VASANT SATHE:** He is the Shipping Minister. Should the Planning Commission know the size of the ship also?

**MR. SPEAKER:** What is the normal size of the ship and what is the annual loss that is suffered?

**SHRI CHAND RAM:** They have bigger size ships of 2.5 lakh to 3 lakh. Even at Nhava Sheva dredging will have to be done. There are only two or three ports, in the country namely, Vizag, Haldia, where we have good draught and where deep draught vessels are accepted.

**SHRI R. K. MHALGI:** The Minister has said that a high level committee has been appointed in the month of June, 1978. It has also been said that the report is likely to be submitted soon. Has the Government fixed any time-limit or given any particular time to the Committee to submit the report to the Government or the Planning Commission?

**SHRI CHAND RAM:** I have requested the Planning Commission to expedite the report at an early date. I have myself been to Nhava Sheva to see whether we can do anything. Our Secretary, Transport, is a member of that committee. I have asked the Secretary to have this report expedited.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Has any date been fixed?

**SHRI CHAND RAM:** This is a Committee appointed by the Planning Commission. I can only request the Planning Commission to expedite the report. It is so far the Planning Commission to submit the report.

#### **Reconstitution of Second Press Commission**

\*245. **SHRI A. ASOKARAJ:** Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Indian Federation of Working Journalists has urged

for the reconstitution of the Second Press Commission; and

(b) if so, Government's reaction thereon?

**THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI L. K. ADVANI):** (a) Press reports to this effect have come to the notice of Government.

(b) Government do not propose to reconstitute the Press Commission.

**SHRI A. ASOKARAJ:** The answer is not so satisfactory. I would like to know whether any press note was given of the announcement made by the hon. Minister in the Rajya Sabha on May 18, 1978 regarding this press Commission?

**SHRI L. K. ADVANI:** A formal statement was made by me in the Rajya Sabha on 18th May. Subsequent to that, the Press Commission has been constituted and it has been going round and it will be issuing questionnaire to various bodies...and all the necessary steps that it needs to take to complete this work would be taken.

**SHRI A. ASOKARAJ:** Sir, during 1952-53 the circulation was estimated to be 25 lakhs by this time. But now the circulation of newspapers has come to some 90 lakhs. Considering the larger increase in the circulation, I would like to know whether the Government is considering any move to set up any body for the welfare of these journalists.

**SHRI L. K. ADVANI:** In fact, in the statement itself that I made in the Rajya Sabha on 18th May, this factor that the hon. Member referred to was taken note of when we said that since 1954 when the first Press commission gave its report, the Indian press has taken new strides and has acquired an added significance with the continuously expanding readership. So this factor has been taken cogni-

zance of and I am sure that the Press Commission while making recommendations will take note of it.

**SHRI K. A. RAJAN:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether Mr. Nikhil Chakravarty, the editor of the *Mainstream*, has resigned from the membership of the Press Commission. If so, what is the reason advanced by him?

**SHRI L. K. ADVANI:** Sir Mr. Chakravarty has tendered his resignation to the Chairman of the Press Commission and this resignation followed appearance of a press report about our Party meeting. I feel that the resignation was based upon a misunderstanding and subsequent to that, the Chairman of the Press Commission has spoken to the Prime Minister and I myself have spoken to Mr. Chakravarty and I hope that the misunderstanding would be removed and Mr. Chakravarty would be serving the Press Commission again.

**DR. SUBRAMANIAM SWAMY:** Sir, the Emergency is an antithesis of press freedom and the Press Commission is supposed to safeguard the press freedom. At the time of appointment when it was suggested to the Commission that Mr. Nikhil Chakravarty should be appointed, was the hon. Minister aware that the Shah Commission has quoted from Home Ministry's reports what Mr. Nikhil Chakravarty's view was over the Allahabad High Court decision where he advocated basic changes in the Constitution and that the President should waive all disqualifications of the then Prime Minister in consultation with the Chief Election Commissioner, and also whether he is aware that in the July, 12, 1975, issue of *Mainstream*, of which Mr. Chakravarty is the editor, he said:

"...those who have for long been warning about the danger from the

right and tirelessly calling for patriotic unity in defence of democratic values have been vindicated even if it is felt that these measures were long overdue and that there was a convincing case for Emergency measures in the very first week of this year (1975) when a Cabinet Minister had been assassinated in broad daylight, a heinous act which the Prime Minister herself referred to while announcing to the nation the promulgation of the Emergency in the morning of June 26."

and also what he said in the subsequent articles throughout till the magazine closed, and whether the Minister is aware that Mr. Nikhil Chakravarty was out and out a supporter of the Emergency all through, as reflected by his articles up till August 1976, and whether he has brought this to the notice of the Chairman of the Press Commission, when his appointment was made, to say that a man of his stature should not be appointed to the Commission?

**SHRI L. K. ADVANI:** I can say this much that even during the Emergency, was personally trying to follow how various journalists responded to the traumatic situation that had then arisen and then on the basis of my own assessment, I can say that I regard Mr. Chakravarty as one who .... (*Interruptions*). A question has been posed referring to certain statements made by Mr. Chakravarty or said to have been made by Mr. Chakravarty in his journal as a part of his response to Emergency. I am not aware of that particular statement. But I am aware that in all, taken in totality, Mr. Chakravarty proved himself as one of the few journalists who showed professional integrity and stood up to the challenges of that time so much so that he opted and preferred to close down and wind up his journal rather than succumb to the authoritarian pressure of that time.