

vate Colleges (Regulation) Rules, 1976. [Placed in Library. See No. LT-511/77]

(2) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Central Institute of English and Foreign Languages, Hyderabad, for the year 1975-76 along with the Audited Accounts.

(3) Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government on the working of the Central Institute of English and Foreign Languages, Hyderabad, for the year 1975-76.

(4) A statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at item (2) above. [Placed in Library. See No. LT-512/77].

PROCLAMATION REVOKING PRESIDENT'S RULE IN ORISSA

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI CHARAN SINGH): I beg to lay on the Table a copy of the Proclamation (Hindi and English versions) dated the 26th June, 1977 issued by the Vice-President acting as President under clause (2) of article 356 of the Constitution revoking the Proclamation issued by him on the 30th April, 1977 in relation to the State of Orissa, published in Notification No. G.S.R. 415(E) in Gazette of India dated the 26th June, 1977 under article 356(3) of the Constitution. [Placed in library. See No. LT-513/77]

12.8½ hrs.

ASSENT TO BILL

SECRETARY: Sir, I lay on the Table the Appropriation (Railways) No. 2 Bill, 1977 passed by the Houses of Parliament during the current session and assented to since the report was last made to the House on the 13th June, 1977.

12.09 hrs.

CALLING ATTENTION TO MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

LOCK OUT IN THE INDIAN EXPRESS AND FINANCIAL EXPRESS, NEW DELHI

SHRI DINEN BHATTACHARYA (Serampore): I call the attention of the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and Labour to the following matter of urgent public importance and request that he may make a statement thereon:

"Serious situation arising out of lock-out in Indian Express and Financial Express, New Delhi since the 20th June, 1977 affecting the livelihood of their employees and steps taken by the Government."

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND LABOUR (SHRI RAVINDRA VARMA): In my Statement on the 17th June, 1977, I had informed this Hon'ble House that I would call a meeting on the 22nd June, 1977 to discuss the matter of non-implementation of Government's notifications relating to interim wage rates of newspaper employees, with the representatives of the Indian and Eastern Newspaper Society, the Indian languages Newspaper Association, the All India Newspaper Employees Federation, the Indian Federation of Working Journalists and the National Union of Journalists. I had also referred to an appeal made by me to the Newspaper employees not to go on any indefinite strike. I am happy to say that my appeal received a very good response, and the discussions with the representatives of Newspaper employers and employees were held in a very cordial atmosphere on the 22nd June. It was agreed that three representatives each of Newspaper employees and employers would meet at Bombay on the 26th June, 1977 to see how the implementation of the notifications issued by the Government could be secured. In these talks they will be assisted by officers

[Shri Ravindra Varma]
of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and the Ministry of Labour.

In the meeting held on the 22nd June, 1977, the question of lock-out in the Delhi edition of *Indian Express* and the *Financial Express* was also brought up. After the meeting, I held discussions with the representatives of the employees' organisations on the situation in respect of these two Newspapers. An officer of the Labour Ministry was asked to contact the parties and report on the situation. The strike in the *Indian Express* and the *Financial Express* at Delhi continued after the 16th June also. The management, by a notice dated 17th June, called upon the workers to resume duty by the first shift on the 18th June, 1977 at 6 A.M. The workers, however, did not resume work. Meanwhile, the management had obtained a stay order in the matter of implementing the Government's notifications on the 14th June, 1977 from the Bombay High Court.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: Only for Bombay Edition.

SHRI RAVINDRA VARMA: The Management issued a notice on the 18th June stating that the workers had not called off the strike and that the strike was illegal and unjustified. The employees were further given a final opportunity to report for duty latest by the 1st shift commencing from Monday the 20th June, 1977. The strike, however, continued. The management by another notice on the 20th June, 1977 declared that there was complete cessation of work and that the management apprehended physical violence and damage to its property. The management notified that they have no alternative but to declare a lock-out from 20th June.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: Totally unfounded.

SHRI RAVINDRA VARMA: On the 22nd June, the Management issued

another notice that since all negotiations have failed, they have decided to close down the establishment at Delhi subject to legal formalities. The management is also reported to have issued letters to the employees individually terminating their services from the 23rd September, 1977.

Subsequently, workers of the *Indian Express* Group of papers at Madras, Vijayawada, Bangalore, Cochin and Madurai have gone on an indefinite strike with effect from the 26th June, 1977 in sympathy with the striking workers of the Delhi unit and in furtherance of their demands for full implementation of the notifications. Discussions on the terms that can be acceptable to the management and the employees are continuing. Since the discussions are at present at a delicate stage, it will not be beneficial or proper to go into the details of the formulae that are being considered for the resolution of the impasse. I am in constant touch with the parties concerned and shall continue to make every endeavour to find a solution, to bring about the return of normalcy in these units so that the publication of these newspapers is resumed at an early date. I shall keep the House informed of further developments.

SHRI DINEN BHATTACHARYA: From the statement, it appears that the Minister made an attempt to bring a settlement in the matter. If we go through the statement made by the hon. Minister, we find that the Government has been soft to the *Indian Express* Management—Shri Goenka.

Please see the allegation—on 16th June, 1977 the workers were on strike. On 20th June the management declared a lock out and on 22nd June the same management came forward and declared that they have no other alternative except to close down their paper in Delhi. They knew about the law that at least 3 months' notice is

necessary for closing down any undertaking. This also comes under the same law. Therefore, I don't find any reason for Goenka group's *Indian Express and Financial Express* issuing this kind of notice. Simultaneously, how can they issue this kind of notice to their employees? How can one justify this action on the part of the management? Along with this notice the management is coming and issuing individual termination notices on the employees. Is this justified under the law?

What is the plea which the *Indian Express* magnate Mr. Goenka is taking? The plea is that they cannot pay. Why? When the award was given, there was the representation of both the employers and the employees as well as the Government. They pleaded their case. After hearing all the three parties the judge gave his award. They might have taken the plea that they are incurring losses. Losses may have been there during the time of emergency. But this payment is to be made after 1st of April, 1977. Therefore, the question of loss or profit will not arise in respect of the payment of interim relief.

Now, what is the plea that they are taking? They are ready to pay 50 per cent. For another 50 per cent they are to spend Rs. 23,000 per month. They are going to open a new edition in Chandigarh and other places.

So, in spite of the best wishes of the hon. Minister to bring about a settlement within the party, may I know from him whether it is a fact that this company, that is, Goenka's company, had taken a decision in the meantime of starting a new edition from Chandigarh and other places? If so, may I know whether Government will take steps to see that they do not get the permission to bring out a new edition so long as this dispute is not solved?

MR. SPEAKER: Now, will you kindly sit down. He must also answer your questions. If you go on speaking, then I have no alternative except to get up and ask the Minister to reply. You have already put many questions. Let the hon. Minister answer them.

SHRI DINEN BHATTACHARYA: Sir, the matter is so urgent that we have to put in many questions. After waiting for a week, you have admitted this. You must realise that.

MR. SPEAKER: But, leave some more questions for others also.

SHRI DINEN BHATTACHARYA: What is the use of this?

MR. SPEAKER: Go along. I am helpless here.

SHRI DINEN BHATTACHARYA: Sir, after one week's waiting you have admitted this. In the meantime, it has been discussed already in the other House. I have mentioned all this to you.

MR. SPEAKER: It is no use arguing with you.

SHRI DINEN BHATTACHARYA: My question is this. The meeting is going on for conciliation. That is the method that is being adopted. In the meantime, the closure notice has been given—the termination notice has been given. At the same time they are going to start a new edition from Chandigarh. He must stop all this. This is probably inconvenient to Shri Biju Patnaik because I am putting the question regarding Shri Goenka for whom they have got a very soft corner. That is why he has come over to this side. (*Interruptions*).

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Bhattacharya, I am not objecting to your putting in long questions. But, you go on repeating the same question. Anyway, let the hon. Minister reply.

SHRI RAVINDRA VARMA: Sir, there are so many questions which the hon. Member has raised. I do not know which one I have to answer and whether I should answer all of them.

First of all, I would like to begin by saying that I, on behalf of Government, totally repudiate the allegation that there is any question of softness or harshness in the attitude of the Government—either softness to one, or harshness to another. This is a case about which the hon. Member must have his say even though there was an attempt made by some other hon. Members to prevent him. The hon. Member asked what steps have government taken? I wish to say first of all that in this case, right from the time when the workers went on strike, Government has been following the matter and has been trying to use its good offices to see that there was a way found out of the impasse. The origin of the trouble was from the notification that was issued by the Government on the question of interim wages. On this question, the Government has not changed its attitude.

In answer to another question, I made it clear in this House that the Government stands by its notification. It has made no modification whatsoever in this notification. And the Government expects all newspaper managements to implement the notification.

In the case of the *Indian Express*—as the hon. Member pointed out it has been stated by the management that their paying capacity has been inadequately examined by the wages Board. I am not here to answer this on behalf of the *Indian Express*. I can only answer what the attitude of the Government is. Why the *Indian Express* has chosen to put forward the plea that its paying capacity was inadequately examined by the Wage Board is a question that the *Indian Express* can answer.

Then, he said about the award. Actually, there was some misunderstanding. Perhaps, he did not mean to say what he said that the judge gave the award. It is not a question of a judge's giving the award. The wage board has come to a certain conclusion. There was a judge who was the Chairman of the Wage Board. But, it was the recommendation of the wage Board which the Government accepted and, on the basis of the acceptance of the wage board's recommendation, the Government issued this notification.

Now, Sir, he also said that as far as this interim relief is concerned, it is payable from 1st of April which is a date that falls after the emergency was withdrawn and, therefore, the profit and loss account during the earlier days is irrelevant. I do not think the hon'ble Member is so naive as to believe—as is implied in his question—that the profit and loss of days prior to April have no relation to the question.

(Interruptions)

Sir, I do not want any impression to be created that the government is in any way soft to anyone. The government holds the balance equal and this is not a government which believes in two standards. Therefore, I do not want this impression to be created by the hon. Member that we are soft to anybody.

Secondly, Sir, the hon. Member asked about the intention of the *Indian Express* to close down. Sir, the hon. Member must be quite familiar with the Industrial Disputes Act. Under Section 25(O) of the Industrial Disputes Act an employer who intends to close down an industrial establishment employing three hundred or more workers has to apply for prior approval at least 90 days before the date of intended closure to the appropriate government clearly stating the reasons for his intention to close down the undertaking. On re-

ceipt of this notice the appropriate government has to apply its mind in assessing whether the reasons given are adequate, sufficient and justifiable or whether the closure would be prejudicial to public interest. In this case the employer has sent an application under Section 25(O) to the Delhi Administration which is the appropriate government in this case. To our knowledge the Delhi Administration will have to give an order either way within 90 days from the date of receipt of the notice, that is, by 23rd September, 1977. The matter is being considered by the Delhi Administration, which as far as our information goes, has not taken any decision.

SHRI P. RAJAGOPAL NAIDU (Chittoor): When the other daily newspapers like Statesman, Hindustan Times, Patriot, Nav Bharat Times, etc. have accepted and paid the interim relief, I do not know why Goenka has not paid.

Secondly, Sir, Mr. Goenka apprehended violence. How can he apprehend violence when the strike was peaceful. Mr. Speaker, Sir, you are well aware that at Madras when Mr. Goenka closed down the Indian Express he brought it to Chittoor and then went to Bangalore. That is the trick he plays. I want to know from the Minister whether he knows very well that under 5 of 25K if the government is not going to give any reply that means it is deemed to be given permission to him. Therefore, I want a categorical statement from the Minister whether the government is going to refuse the permission or not. Please tell us the policy of the government with regard to the Indian Express Management.

SHRI RAVINDRA VARMA: Sir, as far as the first part of the question is concerned, the hon. Member was giving some information to the House, much of it is not new to many hon. Members of this House. For the second part of the question, as I stated earlier this matter is before the Delhi Administration, and the Delhi Administration has not taken any decision in this re-

gard. As far as the Union Government itself is concerned our attitude to the question is clear from the fact that I am making efforts to see that a way is found out of the impasse. If we wanted the closure to continue, obviously I would not have been making any effort in that direction. As I said in my statement, I shall continue to make every effort to see that a way is found out of the impasse, and to see that the closure notice withdrawn, the strike is withdrawn, normalcy returns and the papers come out. I do not want to say very much about the details of the formulae because it is quite clear when negotiations and discussions are taking place no purpose will be served by splitting hairs about the formulae. In fact, the success of the venture of the efforts that I am making may be jeopardised if I want to apportion blame or analyse the various formulae that have been discussed.

SHRI P. RAJAGOPAL NAIDU: Suppose the talks fail, whether the Government is going to refuse permission....?

SHRI RAVINDRA VARMA: It is a conditional question. Therefore, no unconditional answer can be given.

SHRIMATI PARVATHI KRISHNAN (Coimbatore): I have listened very carefully to the Minister's reply and gone through his statement very carefully. Now, I want to bring one point to the hon. Minister's notice. Here is a concern that claims to have been the victim of the Emergency and suffered losses during the Emergency. Yet, precisely, during the Emergency, a new edition was started in Hyderabad and, I am told in Cochin also. Sir, the calculation of the interim relief has been worked out on the basis of the year 1971—1974, and the figures of the Indian Express Group for this year show that this Group of papers can pay this amount. It is my contention and the question of loss and so on does not arise. If a paper like Patriot which during the emergency suffered tremendous loss on account of harassment, stoppage of Government advertisement and also pres-

[Shri Parvathi Krishan]

asures were brought on other people for the stoppage of advertisements, could pay the interim relief to its employees, why should the Express Group take up this stand? Because there is a history behind this Express Group. The same thing happened after a previous Wage Board when the Madras edition was closed down Madurai edition was started. There is a continuous trend behind the whole thing.

Therefore, however reasonable, soft spoken and polite the Minister may be, I would request him to bring the Express Group to book. Other papers have paid this interim relief to their employees. I do not understand how this paper is in a position to start a new edition in Chandigarh on the 2nd of July. Permission has been sought to start new editions in Patna and Lucknow. I would request the hon. Minister to take strong action against this Paper. Again what disturbs me is the following in his statement that he is "in constant touch with the parties concerned and shall continue to make endeavour to find a solution in order to bring about normalcy in these units so that publication of these newspapers is resumed at an early date". But the Minister fails to say anything concrete on this point and assure protection to the employment of all the staff and the journalists in this concern. It is not only the question of resumption of publication of papers. It can be done in so many ways. Termination notices have been given to the employees. I want an assurance from the hon. Minister that the continued employment of these Express Group employees will be guaranteed. This is a guarantee I want.

Secondly, I would like to know also about the closure. Whether the Government is thinking in terms of taking over this concern because it is a concern that does have profit? Otherwise, it cannot start new editions in other places. Lastly, is Government prepared to set up a Committee to go into the finances of the Express Group of papers? Because that is exactly what will help to uncover this

hoax that is being perpetrated on the country as a whole. I would also add my voice to the appeal made by Chattrasagarsh Samithi of Rajasthan to Shri Jayaprakash Narayan to quite Express Towers. I would appeal through you, Mr. Speaker, to convey that appeal to him.

AN HON. MEMBER: Why do you bring that ailing man into the picture?

SHRI RAVINDRA VARMA: The hon. Member has prefaced her many questions with declamations that were made with unusual vigour. She does not generally work herself up into a mood of the kind that she chose to demonstrate in the House today.

SHRIMATI PARVATHI KRISHNAN: I was provoked by your replies.

SHRI RAVINDRA VARMA: I did not intend to provoke her at all, nor did I intend to get provoked. She made a general statement about the paying capacity of *Indian Express* and asserted that she knew for certain that they have the paying capacity. This is the hon. Member's opinion.

SHRIMATI PARVATHI KRISHNAN: Knowledge.

SHRI RAVINDRA VARMA: Opinion based on knowledge; whatever it is, it belongs to the hon. Member.

SHRIMATI PARVATHI KRISHNAN: It is not my opinion. It is the opinion of the Wage Board and the Wage Committee. They went into the paying capacity of the newspapers. It is not my personal opinion.

SHRI RAVINDRA VARMA: The hon. Member is wrong if she thinks that the Wage Board went into the capacity of the *Indian Express* in particular. They went into the capacity of all newspapers and came to certain conclusions, of course, including the *Indian Express*. But it is not that that there was a specific enquiry in this case. She has expressed her view about the paying capacity. She is welcome to express her view. But as far as the

Government is concerned, if the Government did not uphold the recommendations of the Wage Board, it would not have issued the notification that it issued. The fact that the Government did issue the notification and stands by the notification, and is making every effort to see that the notification is implemented means that the Government accepts the Wage Board's recommendations in this regard. Now, Sir, as far as the question of payment itself is concerned, the Government has taken a very strong position in this regard. It has not diluted its position, whether it is the *Indian Express* or *Patriot* or *National Herald*—I do not want to be invidious in mentioning names or not mentioning names. In every case, the Government wants that its notification must be implemented. Precisely for that reason, as the hon. Member knows and as I stated in my statement earlier, we convened a meeting of the newspaper managements as well as the employees' organisations to discuss the question of phasing the implementation in case where particular difficulties arose. I am very glad to inform the House that the discussion on the 22nd were cordial and constructive, and the discussions were followed up yesterday in Bombay by further discussions. The indefinite strike that the hon. Members referred to when the matter came up before the House last time, did not materialise. And the discussions on the 26th i.e., yesterday in Bombay were held in a very constructive atmosphere and we have every reason to hope that a formula would be found which would be acceptable to both the parties. And therefore, the Government has made an effort to see that the kind of complaint, the hon. Member has referred to, does not come from the newspapers or the employees concerned.

Now, Sir, she referred to the Emergency. I do not know whether the nightmare still persists with her. There is no doubt at all that during Emergency there were certain papers which folded up, kow-towed, certain

papers which went under and there were certain papers that stood up for the freedom of the press, for independence and for human rights. It is true that there is this distinction and people cannot forget it, nor can the House nor the hon. Member. (*Interruptions*). It is not only a question of one individual but of the journalists who fought for the freedom of the press and human rights. But that does not mean that anyone earns any immunity from the law for this reason. The law is the same for everybody as far as this government is concerned. I have made it very clear that no newspaper will receive or get any special treatment from the government as far as the notification and the implementation of the notification are concerned for any reason whatsoever.

Now comes the question about the protection of the employees. The government is very keen to see that the closure notice is withdrawn and the lockout is lifted so that the employees may continue in their employment. It is because the government is very concerned to see that nobody loses his employment, that nobody is victimised, and I shall continue to make those efforts.

Then she asked whether the government is thinking of taking over the newspapers. I do not know what prompted her to put this question. I do not want to go into the question whether she thinks that taking over of the papers will benefit any particular group.

SHRIMATI PARVATHI KRISHNAN: The Smayl Newspapers' Association have asked for it.

SHRI RAVINDRA VARMA: As far as the government is concerned, no situation has arisen for the government to think in terms of taking over any of the newspapers in the country. We do not indulge in such acrobatics to please ourselves or to show that we have the power to do so.

[Shri Ravindra Varma]

Lastly she made a reference to someone who is not present in the House—Shri Jayaprakash Narain. I am very sorry that she chose to bring in his name. She has made an appeal and I do not have to answer that appeal.

SHRIMATI PARVATHI KRISHNAN: My last question was whether a committee will be set up to go into the finances of the Express Group. The appeal was made to you, Sir. Why does he interfere with that?

SHRI RAVINDRA VARMA: If a situation arises where the government is convinced that there is a need to enquire, the government will certainly do so. But at the moment, the government does not feel that such a situation has arisen.

SHRI K. P. UNNIKRISHNAN (Badagara): Sir, for the last several years I have been drawing the attention of this House to the criminal activities of a man called Seth Golmal Ramnath Goenka, his various nefarious deals and his treatment of employees and working journalists; the way he sought to blackmail the officialdom and his various other criminal activities including 420! This was also the subject matter of a privilege motion I brought before the House demanding that he be turned out of the House. Now he has turned out to be a great defender of Janata faith. The statement which the minister has brought forward today and the various replies he has given today only confirm that he is not only a defender of the Janata faith but unfortunately there is absolute collusion between this government and Seth Ramnath Goenka! Now he is projected before this House as if he were a great champion of the freedom of the press. Now, Sir, I would like to bring to your notice that the great champion of the freedom of the press—what did he do immediately after the assumption of office of this great Government? That was to remove a great and competent journalist Mr. V. K. Narasimhan—it will go down

in infamy—the man who withstood the rigours of censorship, who withstood the maniacal dynastic messiah who rode rough-shod over this country, and the first criminal act of this Government was to allow this great editor to be removed.

Now, as far as this issue is concerned, there are only 3—4 important questions. Here is a habitual offender, Seth Ramnath Goenka who has violated the law with impunity by non-payment; and non-implementation of the Wage Board's recommendations, declared an illegal lock-out, an illegal closure and, as he himself admitted, an illegal issue of notices. Now, Sir, this habitual offender is sought to be defended by this government because the Prime Minister, for whom I have great respect, used to play host to him and he is also playing host to the patron saint of Janata faith.

Now, the Minister in his reply said that he is not sure about the capacity of the Express Group of newspapers to pay. This is an issue which has been gone into all over again on several occasions.

SHRI RAVINDRA VARMA: He is misquoting me.

SHRI K. P. UNNIKRISHNAN: He can correct me later. The Chief Cost Accounts Officer of the Government of India went into the capital structure of the Express Group. Subsequently Babatosh Dutta Committee on newspaper finances went into this question. Besides giving out various details about the Express finances which for want of time I cannot go into in detail now, it was clearly brought out that he was running it for private profit because of the structure of the entire Express Group itself which has been changing. This kind of metamorphosis has been going on right from the days of his chain editions, right from 1958-59. Once it was private Limited Company, then it became a Public Limited Company and again it was transferred into

other different companies. At one time there were 410 companies, in carrying on this *tamasha* called the Express empire, and there is no law which he has not violated, no provision of Indian Penal Code which was not attracted by this gentleman of the Express Group.

I had expressed my grievance against my Government also when it was in power. And, Sir, our whole complaint is based on the Dutta Committee Report. The question is of capacity to pay. That is the crucial question. Now the Wage Board performs an important function in industrial relations and the Government once it accepts the norm it cannot run away from the responsibility of implementing this Wage Board recommendation whoever might be involved, whether it be Seth Ramanath Goenka or whether it be some other criminals or marauders or highway robbers. The Government's objective should be to get it implemented.

Now, Sir, this Government, as is clear from the statement, is not only refusing to get it implemented but they are throwing up their hands in the air by saying 'Well, this is how it is!' And if you read the statement it is clear that it is written in such a way that the workers, employees and journalists are responsible. Now, I want to say that these are the people who, whatever the Janata leaders might say, "poisoned the wells of public opinion in this country" to quote from a Supreme Court judgement.

Now, Sir, I have something to say. I will produce the collusion in another way. In a communication to a veteran Sarvodaya leader Ravishanker Maharaj and to Mr. Krishna-vadan Joshi of Ahmedabad, Mr. Goenka is reported to have said on 14th June 1977—I shall bring a privilege motion against the Finance Minister—and I now quote:

"If, as is expected, the Government discontinues the duty on import of newsprint and excise duty on sale of newspapers which amounts to tax on knowledge and which do not exist anywhere in the world, this action of the government will help to meet half of my burden in which case I was prepared to bear the other half, in spite of my present losses."

Again he says later, and I quote:

"If, however they act as expected, I shall implement the interim award."

This is what he has written. He knew what the budget was like. There is a question of budget leakage which is a different issue; and it is an issue of breach of privilege. Here he comes and says that he was prepared. But as far as the Delhi edition of Indian Express is concerned, he stubbornly refuses to implement the award. And there is an illegal closure; and as I have pointed out, there are illegal notices given.

Mr. SPEAKER: Please come to the question.

(Interruptions)

Mr. SPEAKER: Let him finish now. That is why I am asking him to put the question.

SHRI K. P. UNNIKRISHNAN: I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether he was totally unaware of the state of Express finances, or was the government totally unaware of it. There are so many files and files on it.

MR. SPEAKER: Com along now. You are going away from the subject again. Don't elaborate it.

SHRI K. P. UNNIKRISHNAN: The question is whether he would ask the Chief Cost Accounts Officer of the Government of India to go into the question of the Express Group's capacity to pay to facilitate the implementation of the wage board award.

SHRI RAVINDRA VARMA: It looked as though the hon. Member had thought that the subject-matter of the Calling Attention was Mr. Goenka, his life and work etc. and not the strike and the conditions of the employees, to which the Calling Attention refers. It appears that the hon. Member has done considerable research on Mr. Goenka. I am quite aware of the fact that even in one of the earlier Lok Sabhas, he had shown his knowledge, or his information as he chose to describe it, of what Mr. Goenka was like and what he was not like. I do not want to cross swords with him. That is not part of the question. However, I would say that it is rather unfortunate that he chose to make a long statement about a person who is not present here, and to attack him, and to say that there is no law which he has not violated and no offence which he has not committed. If he had made these allegations outside (*Interruptions*)—I heard him quietly; and, Sir, you must allow me to have my say; he must have the patience and courage to listen to me—I said that if the hon. Member had chosen to make these grave allegations outside the House, there would have been a legal machinery to decide whether he was right, or whether he was indulging in libel. (*Interruptions*) I do not yield. He said that the government is in collusion with the Indian Express group, because Mr. Goenka was the defender of the Janata faith. I do not know how familiar he is with the Janata faith, but we in the Janata Party are quite familiar with the faith that he professed, of which he is ashamed to-day. Is it being suggested that he was talking of the subject while I am talking of something else? I know it hurts him to hear the truth... (*Interruptions*) Since I have heard him, the hon. Member should also hear me. If it is hurting him, I am not responsible for it.... (*Interruptions*)

He referred to the internal affairs of the *Indian Express*, who was dismissed and who was employed. This

is not a subject of which I have any notice, and I do not think I can speak on this subject.

SHRI K. LAKKAPPA TUMKUR: Obviously, he does not know.

MR. SPEAKER: Even if he knows, on what authority can he speak?

SHRI RAVINDRA VARMA: This is nothing but playing to the gallery.

Then, he used the phrase "maniacal dynastic Messiah". This phrase has a certain echo in our ears. I wonder to whom he is referring when he uses the phrase "maniacal dynastic Messiah" because for many months the whole country has reverberated with this phrase. Therefore, I am not surprised.... (*Interruptions*)

Then, he referred to illegal lock-outs and illegal closures. On this question, I did not use the words "illegal lock-out" or "illegal closure". Unlike the hon. Member, I have been discreet enough not to pronounce on law, which is not my function. The position is that the Industrial Disputes Act makes a distinction between public utility services and industrial establishments which are not public utility services. As far as public utility services are concerned, the Industrial Disputes Act makes it obligatory to give 14 days' notice either for a declaration of lock-out or for the announcement of a strike. This particular industrial establishment does not come under the category of "public utility service". Therefore, the stipulation does not apply to this particular establishment. Whether it is legal or not is a matter on which I cannot pronounce. Again, the management has referred to the strike as being illegal. I make no pronouncement about it. On the other hand, the workers say that the lock-out is illegal. This is not a matter on which I can make any pronouncement. This is a question which has to be looked into.

On the question of paying capacity, which he referred to, I categorically deny that I have said that the *Indian Express* has no paying capacity.

I have never made any such statement. I said that the Wage Board looked into the whole question, and came to certain conclusions, which we have accepted, and we have issued the notification.

Perhaps hon. Members came with prepared questions and, therefore, they do not want to take cognisance of the fact that the hon. Minister has answered the question concerned. I have said it again and again in this House, at least five times that there is no question of our discriminating and, as far as the paying capacity is concerned, we go by what the Wage Board has recommended, and we do not want to dilute our notification in any way in regard to anybody. We want to see that the notification is implemented. As to how to see that the notification is implemented, there are many things, including persuasion and penalty, and the Government is seized of the matter. It is making every effort and that is why, as I said earlier, a meeting of this kind was convened.

Then he made a reference to a letter that Shri Goenka wrote to Ravi Shankar Maharaj, or to what he referred to as a copy of the letter with him. I do not know anything about the letter. I can only go by the contents that he revealed in the House when he read out those sentences. He said that he was going to bring a privilege motion on the question, because he suspects that there has been a budget leakage. If the hon. Member thinks so, he can move a privilege motion. Of course, that is a separate question and I cannot answer it.

I think I have answered all the questions.

13.00 hrs.

SHRIMATI PARVATHI KRISHNAN: Sir, the Minister has made a statement that Members come with prepared questions and do not listen to the Minister's replies. I am pained that he should have made a remark like that.

SHRI RAVINDRA VARMA: I did not mean to cast any aspersion on

any Member. I only said that sometimes when the same question is asked in spite of the fact that the question has been answered, one wonders in that fashion. But if that remark of mine has caused any offence to anybody, I apologise to the hon. Member and to the House.

SHRIMATI PARVATHI KRISHNAN: Thank You.

श्री उपसदन (देवरिया) : अध्यक्ष महोदय मुझसे पहले जितने प्रश्नकर्ता थे, उन्होंने प्रश्न के बजाय लम्बे चौड़े भाषण कर दिये, मैं तो ऐसा नहीं करूंगा। मैं इस सदन के लिये नया मੈम्बर हूँ फिर भी आप की बात मानते हुए प्रश्न पूछूंगा। मैं दो तीन सवाल पूछना चाहता हूँ क्योंकि मैंने भी पिछले 30,35 साल ट्रेड यूनियन में बिताये हैं कोई खाक नहीं छानी है।

अब सवाल यह है कि वेज बोर्ड का एवार्ड हुआ, सब अखबारों ने मान लिया लेकिन उसे गीयनका के अखबार ने नहीं माना। उन्होंने कहा कि हमारे पास पैसा नहीं है, कैसे दे सकते हैं। मेरे पास उन के मासिक खर्च और आमदनी का एक स्टेटमेंट है, जिसमें बताया गया है 23 लाख 50 हजार रुपये माहवार उन की आमदनी है 1975-76 की और 22 लाख 50 हजार का खर्च है। इस तरह से उन के दिल्ली ग्रुप की 1 लाख रुपये माहवार की आमदनी हुई। जैसा श्रीमती पार्वती कृष्णन ने बताया मुझे भी बताया गया है कि 23 हजार रुपये उन को देना है। एक लाख रुपये में से 23 हजार रुपये काट दीजिये फिर भी इतना पैसा उन के पास है। इतने पर भी वह मंत्री जी के पास टेबल पर बैठ कर बातें करते हैं तो मंत्री महोदय ने उन से क्या बातचीत की, वह मैं स्पष्ट जानना चाहता हूँ।

उन्होंने यह भी कहा कि बम्बई हाई कोर्ट में हम एक मुकदमा लड़ रहे हैं जब

[श्री उपसैन]

वह मुकदमा हार जायेंगे, तब वेज बोर्ड का अर्वाइंड लागू करेंगे, तब पैसा दे देंगे। मैं जानना चाहता हूँ कि वह लन्दन कोर्ट में इंटरनैशनल हैग कोर्ट में मुकदमा कर दें तो क्या दिल्ली ग्रुप के कर्मचारियों पर वह लागू होगा? मैं जनता पार्टी सरकार के मंत्री जी से जानना चाहता हूँ कि वह मंत्री जी से फालतू बातें क्यों कर रहे हैं? मैं यदि मंत्री महोदय की जगह पर होता तो उन को कह देता कि गैट आउट, चले जाओ।

मैंने, अध्यक्ष महोदय, सन 1945 में चम्बई में कमलनयन बजाज के कारखाने में हड़ताल करवाई, मुकन्द स्टील वर्क्स के कारखाने में हड़ताल कराई। गांधी जी को तार दिया, गांधी जी ने हमको बुलाया, समझौते की बात हुई। हमने गांधी जी से कहा कि 28 दिन हड़ताल हो गई है, ऐसा कीजिये कि पूरा दिलवा दीजिये। उन्होंने कहा कि नहीं ऐसा नहीं होगा। श्री प्यारेलाल शर्मा मौजूद हैं, उनसे पूछा जा सकता है। सवाल यह है कि इतने दिन हड़ताल क्यों रही? गोयनका साहब को कोई हक नहीं था कि जब 16 तारीख से हड़ताल होती है तो वह 17 या 18 को क्लोजर डिक्लेयर कर दें। मैं भी सब कानून जानता हूँ, मैंने भी सब कानून पढ़े हैं। उनको कोई हक नहीं था कि लाक-आउट डिक्लेयर करके उसके बाद क्लोजर डिक्लेयर करें। मालूम होता है कि वह क्रिकेट में सिकसर मार रहे हैं। बनाते हैं 2, 3 रन और मारते हैं सिकसर।

मैं जानना चाहता हूँ, अध्यक्ष महोदय, आपके जरिये श्री उम्मीकृष्णन को भी बताना चाहता हूँ, कि जिस दिन क्लोजर किया, उसी दिन डिसमिसल की नोटिस दी गई। इसके मायने यह है कि श्री गोयनका साहब अपनी किताब में सब लिखाकर लाये और छोड़ते गये, किसी की सुनवाई नहीं हुई। मंत्री महोदय

जानते हैं कि हमने एमजेंसी के दौरान फ्रीडम आफ दी प्रेस के लिए संघर्ष किया। मैं वर्गीज साहब को नहीं भुला सकता, मैं पैरोल पर यहां आया था, मैंने देखा कि किस तरह मर-मर कर काम उन्होंने किया है। उन दिनों पत्रकारों पर तरह तरह की सख्तियां की गई, प्रेस की बिजली काट दी गई, पत्रकारों और अन्य कर्मचारियों के राशन-कार्ड बंद हो गये, मगर फिर भी उन्होंने काम किया। इस लिए उन की कुर्बानियों को हम लोग भुला नहीं सकते हैं। मुझे स्पष्ट रूप से यह बताया जाय कि जिस व्यक्ति ने इतना गैर-कानूनी काम किया, उसको बातचीत के लिए टेबल पर क्यों बिठाया गया। 1975 का आमदनी और खर्च का स्टेटमेंट हमारे सामने है। उनकी एक लाख रुपये माहवार की आमदनी है। वे उसमें से 23,000 रुपये कर्मचारियों को दे दें और बाकी अपने पास रख लें। मैं जनता पार्टी का विधायक हूँ। मंत्री महोदय जब इस बारे में उनसे बात करें, तो वह मुझे भी बुला लें। मैं उनकी मदद करूंगा।

SHRI RAVINDRA VARMA: I am grateful to the hon. Member for volunteering to accompany me when I talk to the people. I certainly will bear in mind the offer that he has made.

MR. SPEAKER: In that way, so many people will offer.

SHRI RAVINDRA VARMA: Sir, I only said that I will bear his offer in mind. He has also said that if he were in my chair, he would ask people to get out. I have never done so and I will never do so. So I must think twice about this offer. (Interruptions) He has also said that all the papers have paid and only the Indian Express has said that it does not have the paying capacity. As he is a very well informed member, he must know that many newspapers have not yet complied with the notification. Some have implemented it and some of them have gone to the court. So it is not correct to say that the Indian Express alone has not complied with the noti-

fication. So far as our attitude is concerned, it is common to all newspapers, and we are trying to see that all newspapers comply with the notification.

I hold no brief for Mr. Goenka; I hold a brief for the Government. We have issued a notification on the basis of the Wage Board award, and we shall do everything on our part to see that the notification is implemented.

13.08 hrs.

ELECTION TO COMMITTEES

(i) ADVISORY COUNCIL OF DELHI DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

THE MINISTER OF WORKS AND HOUSING AND SUPPLY AND REHABILITATION (SHRI SIKANDAR BAKHT): I beg to move:

"That in pursuance of sub-section (2)(h) of Section 5 of the Delhi Development Act, 1957, the members of this House do proceed to elect, in such manner as the Speaker may direct, two members from among themselves to serve as members of the Advisory Council of the Delhi Development Authority, for a term of four years, subject to the other provisions of the said Act."

MR. SPEAKER: The question is:

"That in pursuance of sub-section (2)(h) of Section 5 of the Delhi Development Act, 1957, the members of this House do proceed to elect, in such manner as the Speaker may direct, two members from among themselves to serve as members of the Advisory Council of the Delhi Development Authority, for a term of four years, subject to the other provisions of the said Act."

The motion was adopted.

(ii) INDIAN COUNCIL OF AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH.

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION (SHRI SURJIT SINGH BARNALA): I beg to move:

"That in pursuance of Rule 4(vii) of the Rules of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research, the members of this House do proceed to elect, in such manner as the Speaker may direct, for members from among themselves to serve as members of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research for a term of three years, subject to the other provisions of the said Rules."

MR. SPEAKER: The question is:

"That in pursuance of Rule 4(vii) of the Rules of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research, the members of this House do proceed to elect, in such manner as the Speaker may direct, four members from among themselves to serve as members of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research for a term of three years, subject to the other provisions of the said Rules."

The motion was adopted.

(iii) ALL INDIA COUNCIL FOR TECHNICAL EDUCATION

THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION, SOCIAL WELFARE AND CULTURE (DR. PRATAP CHANDRA CHUNDER): I beg to move:

"That in pursuance of clause i(g) of paragraph 3 of the Ministry of Education Resolution No F.16-10/44-E.III, dated the 30th November, 1945, the members of this House do proceed to elect, in such manner as the Speaker may direct, two members from among themselves to serve as members of the All India Council for Technical Education for the term ending on the 31st July, 1979, subject to the other provisions of the said Resolution.