

[Prof. Samar Guha]

I would make an earnest appeal to the Minister of External Affairs for enlightening the House about the steps taken by the Government for bringing Badshah Khan from Kabul for his medical treatment. As the aging leader of the freedom struggle of our sub-continent who is suffering from serious illness in Jalalabad hospital, we hope that the Government will take every possible measures to remove the hurdles in the way of Badshah Khan's coming to India immediately.

Sir, I want to add that I had a talk with the Minister of External Affairs. As he is now in the Rajya Sabha, he would not be able to give any reply to my statement. I would, however, request you to kindly bring this to his notice.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That is always done.

15.20 hrs.

WORKING JOURNALISTS AND
OTHER NEWSPAPER EMPLOYEES
(CONDITIONS OF SERVICE) AND
MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS
(AMENDMENT) BILL.

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND LABOUR (SHRI RAVINDRA VARMA): Sir, I beg to move:*

"That the Bill further to amend the Working Journalists and Other Newspaper Employees (Conditions of Service) and Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1955, be taken into consideration."

The Bill seeks to replace the Working Journalists and Other Newspaper Employees (Conditions of Service) and Miscellaneous Provisions (Amendment) Ordinance, 1979 promulgated on the 31st January 1979.

As the House is aware, two statutory Wage Boards—one for non-journalist newspaper employees and the other for the working journalists—were set up by the Central Government on the 11th June 1975 and the 6th February 1976 respectively, for revising the rates of wages of newspaper employees. The two Wage Boards had a common Chairman, Shri D. G. Palekar, a retired Judge of the Supreme Court and two common independent members, viz. Shri B. C. Bhagwati and Shri R. C. Dutt. Each of the Wage Boards also included two representatives of employers and employees.

The Wage Boards started working in 1975 and 1976 and submitted interim reports on the 16th of June 1976 (Non-Journalist) and 12th of October 1976 (Journalist). Immediately after the present Government took over, we took action on the interim report, and notified interim rates of wages for non-journalists and working journalists on the 1st April 1977. Some of the newspaper managements challenged the interim wage rates in various High Courts on the ground that they were excessive, and would have adverse effect on the newspaper industry. They also contended that the independent members were not really independent, and the Wage Boards were not therefore properly constituted.

Later, in December 1977, the representatives of the newspaper employers on the Wage Boards wrote to the Government that they were withdrawing from the Wage Boards under instructions from the Indian and Eastern Newspaper Society and the Indian Languages Newspapers Association which had nominated them. These two organizations also wrote to Government saying that the two independent members were not really independent and that they should be replaced. In the face of the withdrawal of the representatives of the employers, the Chairman felt compelled to cancel further sittings of the Wage Boards.

*Moved with the recommendation of the President.

The work of the Wage Boards thus virtually came to a standstill, and a stalemate was created in the work of wage revision.

Sir, I have already referred to the issues that were involved in the writ petitions that some newspaper managements had filed in High Courts. In order to obtain a uniform decision, the Attorney General, at our instance, filed an application before the Supreme Court for the transfer of the writ petitions from the High Courts to the Supreme Court. After a preliminary hearing on the 28th of August 1978, the Supreme Court stayed the proceedings in the various Courts.

Sir, ever since our Government came to power, we have repeatedly reiterated our deep desire to see that the work of wage revision in the newspaper industry is completed expeditiously. The very fact that within a week of our taking over, we accepted the interim report of the wage Boards and proceeded to notify an interim revision in the wages, was an earnest of our desire to see that the work of wage revision was completed without delay. We, therefore, wanted the Wage Boards to continue and conclude their work, and submit a final report without delay. When we found that a stalemate had been created in the working of the Boards by the withdrawal, and subsequent resignation of the members representing the employers, we made every effort to look for a way out of the impasse that was acceptable to both the parties. We held discussions with the representatives of the organizations of the employers and with the representatives of the employees organizations, both separately and jointly. At these discussions, our attempt was to find a way out that would enable the Board to resume and complete its work, and also to ensure that the work of the Boards or the report of the Boards did not become vulnerable to legal challenges. My distinguished colleagues, Shri L. K. Advani, the Minister of Information and Broadcasting, and Shri Shanti Bhushan, the Minister of

Law, took part in these rounds of discussions that were held at my initiative. Several proposals were discussed. As I said earlier, the attempt was to find a way out that would fit in within the four corners of the legal framework and responsibilities of the Boards. One of the proposals that emerged was that the employers and employees may try to identify the parameters of wage revision through bilateral negotiations, and that on points on which difference of opinion persisted, the view of the Chairman could prevail, and the whole agreement then could be processed through the Wage Boards themselves. It was felt that this would provide a solution within the four corners of the legal framework. The representatives of the employees agreed with the proposal. However, the representatives of the employers did not find the proposal acceptable. Nor could they come up with any alternative proposal except their earlier proposal for the substitution of the independent members on the Boards. The result was that the impasse in the work of the Board continued. Meanwhile, the delay in the finalization of the reports of the Wage Boards and the work of wage revision was causing considerable resentment among the employees in the newspaper industry. There were manifestations of unrest, and suggestions for an indefinite strike. I must say that I am grateful that in response to my appeals the employees refrained from resorting to industrial action and indefinite stoppage of work. Under such circumstances, when the Government was keen that the work of wage revision should be completed expeditiously, and when it became clear that the stalemate in the functioning of the Wage Boards could not be resolved without legislative action, the Government decided that the way out lay in the setting up of tribunals that would take up the work from the stage where the work of the Wage Boards had come to a standstill.

Sir, it is in this background that Government decided to amend the Working Journalists and Other News-

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papers Employees (Conditions of Service) and Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1955 to provide for the appointment of Tribunals to carry out the task of revising the wage structure. An Ordinance was accordingly promulgated on the 31st of January 1979. Sir, I would like to point out that while the Wage Boards ceased to exist immediately on the appointment of the two Tribunals, the interim wage rates notified by the Government in consultation with the Wage Boards continue to be operative. The appointment of the Tribunals will enable the work to proceed without any further delay, since the Tribunals can take up the work from the stage that had already been reached and rely upon the material already gathered by the Wage Boards.

As the House is aware, Shri D. G. Palekar who was the Chairman of the two Wage Boards has already been appointed to constitute two single-member Tribunals. I do hope the Tribunals will now be able to proceed with their work with the utmost expedition. I also hope that they will receive full co-operation from the employers as well as employees in the newspaper industry.

Sir, with these words, I commend the adoption of the Bill to replace the Ordinance promulgated on the 31st January, 1979.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Motion moved:

"That the Bill further to amend the Working Journalists and other Newspaper Employees (Conditions of Service) and Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1955 be taken into consideration."

Now there are three amendments. Shri Vinayak Prasad Yadav is not here. Another amendment is by Shri Ram Dhari Shastri.

श्री रामधारी शास्त्री (पदवीना) : मैं अपने संकोचन को मूक नहीं करता हूँ इसलिए कि इससे देर होगी।

समाप्ति महोदय : श्री उपस्थित ।

श्री उच्च लेव (वेवरिया) : मैं भी वेक नहीं करना चाहता हूँ इसलिए कि इससे देर होगी और मैं चाहता हूँ कि जल्दी से जल्दी यह कानून बन जाए और अमजोबी पत्रकारों को उनके हक मिल जाए जिन को कि गायनका इस्तिमया और उनके नाती पोते देना नहीं चाहते हैं।

समाप्ति महोदय : प्राप मूक करना चाहते हैं या नहीं ?

श्री उच्च लेव : मैं मूक नहीं करना चाहता हूँ।

AN HON. MEMBER: There is no provision to withdraw it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: He has not moved it. Shri R. Venkataraman.

SHRI R. VENKATARAMAN (Madras South): Mr. Chairman, we have heard with great interest the chequered history of the attempt made by the Government to find a solution to the problem of wage fixation among the working journalists and the non-working journalists. When originally the Working Journalists Act was passed it was conceived that the employers were enlightened people and the working journalists were enlightened people and it would be possible for them to hammer out my mutual discussion an agreed formula with regard to wages and other conditions of service. Otherwise, the general principle adopted in the Industrial Disputes Act, namely, referring of disputes to the industrial tribunals whose decision shall be final and binding on parties, would have been introduced even in the Act. After the 1955 Act was passed the first wage board was constituted and I happened to be a member of that board. We spent two years over it, met all the people, recorded evidence and had interminable discussions and finally gave a report. After the report was given the newspaper editors took the matter to the Supreme Court and had it set aside. Ever since it is my feeling that in this country there is very little scope whether it is enlightened employers

or otherwise, for negotiated settlement of this kind by way of wage board in which there could be discussions, mutual appreciation of each other's point of view and a measure of give and take. The trouble with most of these negotiations is that negotiation implies that their point of view must be accepted and the newspaper owners' record in this has not been very bright. It is therefore that we on this side welcome this measure.

Normally as a trade unionist interested in promoting bipartite settlement we would regard the imposition of a decision by a third party not connected with the industry as something which should be avoided and relegated to the very last resort. But in this case, since the employers have shown scant regard for the process of mutual negotiation and have taken up such a stand as to challenge even the independent character of persons nominated as independent members of the wage board. I think the government have had no alternative but to come forward with this amendment, taking the power to refer the disputes relating to working journalists to a tribunal where it becomes necessary.

I am glad that the other provisions with regard to wage board are not substituted and that reference to the tribunal is in addition to, and not in substitution of the wage board provisions. It should be the endeavour of the government as well as the parties to the dispute to arrive at mutually agreed settlements through wage board as far as possible. But if it is not possible, the working journalists or non working-journalists or labour of any category should not be denied the opportunity of getting their grievances settled through the process of compulsory adjudication. Therefore, on this side we welcome this measure and we say that it has been necessitated by the attitude taken by the newspaper proprietors in this country.

I have one or two small doubts with regard to the provisions. The Bill provides that the evidence already recorded may be treated as evidence

in this case. I hope this is only a permissive legislation. It is not intended to in any way influence the tribunal into thinking that they must accept the evidence which has already been recorded because the way in which evidence is recorded in Wage Board is different from how it is recorded in tribunal. In tribunal many things will be brought in examination, cross examination, re-examination and so on. Therefore, if the Tribunal has to take a quasi-judicial or a judicial decision in this matter, the evidence on which it bases its conclusion must be free from attack. I am worried that the newspaper proprietors, if it effects them, may take this as one of the points for their appeal by way of writ to the Supreme Court and say that the evidence on which the conclusion is based is not a proper evidence according to the Evidence Act and it has not been properly recorded and properly proved and established before the tribunal. It would, perhaps, be worth while for the tribunal to take it in writing i.e., the consent of both the parties, before proceeding to give due regard to the evidence already recorded in this case so that at least, they may not go behind. Otherwise the decision of the tribunal is liable to be challenged and once again there may be a lot of un-necessary and avoidable litigation.

The second thing I would like to mention on this occasion is the tribunals have a tendency to take things in a leisurely way. One of the objections which labour has raised to tribunals is the long drawn out procedures and the inordinate delay that takes place in the proceedings. I know it is not possible to fix a time limit to a judicial decision. But I am proposing and pressing it so that it may be mentioned by the parties and discussed before the tribunal that the decision must come in this case at least within six months from the date of their being referred to the tribunal. Otherwise as the

[Shri R. Venkataraman.]

Minister himself stated it has taken more than two years already and still they are nowhere near the decision. So, some way of expediting the decision should be brought to the notice and attention of the tribunal.

The third thing which I may mention here is that the procedure will be such as will be decided upon by the tribunal itself. Since the tribunal is the Judge of the Supreme Court or the High Court. I hope the Tribunal will not took upon it as a case on the original side of the High Court and lead to unnecessarily prolonged proceedings. The reason why we are in favour of tribunal deciding cases is that the tribunal is not bound by the rigid rules of procedure and that it could adopt the procedure is such a way as to suit the needs of each particular case and thereby bring about the greater expedition in the disposal of the cases. It is, therefore, necessary that the procedure which the tribunal adopts in this case will be such as is necessary to observe the rules for natural justice and not observe the strict rules of Civil Procedure.

There are a number of things which I would like to say regarding the problems of working journalists, but perhaps this may not be the occasion for it since the Bill before us confines itself only to providing a remedy for an impasse that has been created by the newspaper proprietors in this country. Therefore, I would conclude by saying. We support the Bill.

डा० रामजी सिंह (भागलपुर) : सभापति महोदय मैं तो कोई धाड़िनैस जारी करना प्रजातांत्रिक पत्रिका के बिल्कुल खिलाफ है, खाम तौर से जब कि एक दो महीने में ससद् का सत्र शुरू होने वाला हो, लेकिन जब मसहूर बर्ष की, और ख़ास तौर से पत्रकारों को न्याय देने का प्रश्न हो, तो जनता के प्रजातांत्रिक स्वस्थ प्रतिनिधियों के काम में लगे हुए हैं, तो इसके लिए इस धाड़िनैस को निबन्धानुसार लागू करने का समर्थन करना हम लोग अपना कर्तव्य समझते हैं।

श्रीस कमीशन ने एक महत्वपूर्ण सिफारिश की थी कि श्रमजीवी पत्रकारों के लिए वेज बोर्ड बनाया जाय,

और उसी के आधार पर शुरू में यह कानून बना। मैं ने उस समय की सदन की कार्यवाही को पढ़ा है। एक बड़े पत्रकार, श्री धाल्वा, वे उस समय श्रमजीवी पत्रकारों की दुर्दशा का चित्रण किया था और कहा था कि वे लोग मुबह जाते थे और रात भर कार्यालय में रहते थे, और अगर उनके बच्चे की मृत्यु भी हो जाये, तो भी अपने मालिकों से उनको छुट्टी नहीं मिलती थी। सम्पूर्ण पत्रकारिता पूंजीपतियों के हाथ का खिलाता रही है। इसलिए सरकार ने श्रमजीवी पत्रकारों की सेवा जहाँ और बेतन के बारे में जो नियम बनाये हैं, वे पत्रकारिता को पूंजीवाद के चंगल से मुक्त कराने के लिए एक शुभ प्रयत्न है।

11 जून, 1975 और 6 फ़रवरी, 1976 को दो वेज बोर्ड बने थे, लेकिन मालिकों की तरफ़ से बाधाये खड़ी की गईं। श्रम मंत्री और सूचना तथा प्रसारण मंत्री ने बहुत कोशिश की कि किसी प्रकार से यह मामला निपट जाये। लेकिन जब मालिक नहीं माने, तो धाड़िनैस यह धाड़िनैस लागू करना पड़ा। इसलिए इस धाड़िनैस को लागू करने में किसी प्रकार का अप्रजातांत्रिक काम नहीं हुआ है। जब जनता के पक्ष में ख़ास तौर से श्रमजीवी पत्रकारों के हित में, कोई धाड़िनैस लाया जाता है, तो हम समझते हैं कि वह स्वागत-योग्य है।

जहाँ तक श्रमजीवी पत्रकारों का प्रश्न है, जिस तरह हमारे देश में बर्गभेद हैं, उसी तरह उनके भी कई भंग हैं। उन में से कुछ पत्रकार हैं और कुछ पत्रकार नहीं हैं, लेकिन फिर भी उन सभी के श्रम और जीविका का बही आधार है। इस लिए जब उन दोनों के सम्बन्ध में पग उठाया गया, तो मालिकों ने रिट पेटिशन फ़ाइल किया कि वे जो वेज फ़िक्स किये गये हैं, वे ज्यादा ऊंचे हैं।

मैं मानता हूँ कि जब यह जनता सरकार आई और उन्होंने श्रमजीवी पत्रकारों का बेतनमान निम्बन किया तो उस से हर जगह ख़ुशी की लहर बनी थी। लेकिन जो बड़े बड़े पत्रों के मालिक थे उन लोगों को यह अच्छा नहीं लगा और उन लोगों ने न्यायलय में जाकर इस के लिए रिट किया। कई बातें उन्होंने उठाईं, मैं उन्हें छेड़ना नहीं चाहता लेकिन इंजेंजन मिला और स्टे डाईर हुआ।

इतना ही नहीं, दिसम्बर 1977 में एम्प्लायर्स ने अपने प्रतिनिधियों को भी उस से वापस कर लिया। इस का साफ़ मतलब है कि वे वेज बोर्ड को नहीं चलने देना चाहते थे। इसलिए धाड़िनैस अपनी सरकार को ऐसा करना पड़ा।

इस में एक बात तो यह है कि श्रमजीवी पत्रकारों का बेतन नियत हो, उन की सेवा प्रतिष्ठित हो, बरेजु नौकरों की तरह जब चाहा नियुक्त किया और जब चाहा बरखास्त किया, इस प्रकार की बात न हो क्यों कि जब वह नौकरी में स्वस्थ रहने तथा निष्पक्ष और स्वतंत्र समाचार हमें दे सकेंगे। इसलिए सरकार ने इस कानून के लिए जो टिप्पणन बनाया है वह बहुत ही स्वागत के योग्य है। मुझे तो याद था रहा है, 1965 में जब यह कानून पहले बन रहा था तो विद्यवत किरोज गांधी ने केवल बार सादन कही थी और मैं बोलता हूँ कि मुझे भी बही मुनुर-

वाप्त करनी चाहिए। उन्होंने कहा था कि यह इतना शुभ कार्य है कि ज्यादा देर कर के इस को पारित करने में समय नष्ट नहीं करना चाहिए और उन्होंने यह कहा था कि साढ़े पांच बजे तक यह पास हो जाये। इसीलिए जब मैं अपने भ्रम मंत्री को देखता हूँ और उन के इस शुभ विधेयक को देखता हूँ तो मैं उन से केवल यही कहना चाहता हूँ कि यह स्वागत के योग्य है और इस को जल्दी से जल्दी पास करना चाहिए।

एक चीज इस संबन्ध में मैं और कहना चाहूंगा। इस में एक चीज देखने की है। उस समय भी जब कसकर साहब इस बिल को लाए थे तो लोगों ने ध्यान दिलाया था कि वस्तुतः यह पत्रकारिता के क्षेत्र में रंगभेद की नीति है। यहाँ जो अंग्रेजी पत्रकार हैं उन के पत्रकारों को और उन में काम करने वालों का वेतन-मान ऊंचा है और जो भाषायी पत्रकार हैं चाहे हिन्दी के हों या तमिल, तेलुगु या मलयालम के हों, उन का वेतन-मान कम है। इस प्रकार का जो वर्ण-भेद या विभेद है इस को खत्म करना चाहिए। तब जा कर के भारतवर्ष की भाषायी पत्रकारिता का स्वाभिमान प्रकृष्ट ढंग से उज्ज्वल होगा।

इन्हीं शब्दों के साथ मैं इस शुभ विधेयक का पूरे हृदय से स्वागत और समर्थन करता हूँ।

श्रीमती ब्रह्मिणी श्री रामनेकर : (बम्बई उत्तर-मध्य) : उपाध्यक्ष महोदय, हमारे भ्रम मंत्री जी ने जो यह विधेयक रखा है वह किंग जनलिस्ट्स ने तो इस को एक्सेप्ट किया है। यह विधेयक रखना पड़ा इसलिए कि जो एम्प्लायर्स हैं उन्होंने हड़ताल की। हड़ताल के माने बायकाट किया। अगर वकिंग जनलिस्ट्स हड़ताल करते तो हमारी गवर्नमेंट और दूसरे लोग भी उन के ऊपर कार्य-वाही करते। मेरी समझ में नहीं आता कि जब इन लोगों ने वेज बोर्ड का बायकाट किया तब भी इन वर्तमान पत्रों का हमारी गवर्नमेंट के एडवर्टाइजमेंट्स क्यों मिले। हजारों रुपया हमारी गवर्नमेंट के एडवर्टाइजमेंट का इन लोगों को मिलता है। जिस टाइम उन्होंने वेज बोर्ड का बायकाट किया उसी टाइम गवर्नमेंट का फ़र्ज था कि उन को मिलने वाले एडवर्टाइजमेंट्स बन्द कर देती। उन को तो लगता है कि हमें एडवर्टाइजमेंट मिलता है, हम कुछ भी कर सकते हैं। ये जो एम्प्लायर्स हैं, बुनेट कोलमैन हैं या एक्सप्रेस न्यूज एजेंसी को लीजिए, इन के ये तरीके चलते हैं। न्यूजपेपरस में जो उन्होंने इन्वेस्टमेंट किया है उस को दूसरी जगह खोरी से ले जाते हैं। उस से दूसरे एसेन्ट्स बना रहे हैं। इंडियन एक्सप्रेस का हम ने देखा, एक जगह का न्यूजपेपर बन्द कर के दूसरी जगह चालू करते हैं। यहाँ के वकिंग जनलिस्ट्स को बेकार करते हैं और दूसरी जगह चालू करते हैं। इस का असर हमारे डिस्ट्रिक्ट न्यूजपेपरस पर बहुत हो रहा है। महाराष्ट्र में हम ने देखा है—हमारे डिस्ट्रिक्ट न्यूजपेपर और दूसरी जगहों का हमारा यही अनुभव है, उन के ऊपर इस का असर हो रहा है, क्योंकि असल में वे इस को चालू नहीं करना चाहते हैं। हमारे जो एम्प्लायर्स हैं, उन को बिकाने के लिये ऐसा करते हैं—हमारे हाथ में इतनी ताकत है अब चाहें इसको बन्द कर सकते हैं, इस लिये अपनी लड़ाई बन्द कर दो।

उन का कहना था कि श्री प्रो. सी. दत्त और श्री भगवती इण्डिपेन्डेंट मेम्बर्स वहीं हैं। बहाना निकालने की उन्होंने कोशिश की और कोर्ट में भी गये। यह एक बहुत भ्रष्टी चीज हुई है कि सुप्रीम कोर्ट ने ऐलान किया है कि इन के ऊपर जो कार्यवाही चल रही है उस को स्टे देना चाहिये। इस टिब्यूनल में आप ने जस्टिस पालेकर को रखा है, लेकिन जस्टिस पालेकर पहले वेज बोर्ड में भी थे, उन के साथ इन लोगों को असहकार कर दिया था। हमें मालूम नहीं है—अभी भी सहकार करेंगे या नहीं। लेकिन यदि वे सहकार न करें, तो पहला स्टेप सरकार को यह लेना चाहिये कि उन के एडवर्टाइजमेंट्स बन्द कर देने चाहिये, उन को दी जाने वाली तमाम फीसिलिटीज बन्द कर देनी चाहिये। वे लोग आज कहते हैं कि हमारे पास पैसा नहीं है—यह बिलकुल गलत बात है। आप बड़े से बड़े पेपर को उठा कर देखिये—8 पेज का पत्रकार है तो 5 पेज एडवर्टाइजमेंट में और 3 पेज न्यूज में होता है—यह प्रपोजन है। इस का मतलब है कि जो पेपर वे निकालते हैं वह न्यूज के लिये नहीं, बल्कि ज्यादातर एडवर्टाइजमेंट के लिये निकालते हैं, इसलिये उन को वेज बोर्ड की वेजेज देने में कोई विषकत नहीं होनी चाहिये। जब तक आप इन का एडवर्टाइजमेंट बन्द नहीं करेंगे तब तक ये मालिक लोग रास्ते पर नहीं आयेंगे।

दूसरी बात मुझे यह कहनी है कि टिब्यूनल के लिये भी कोई टाइम लिमिट होनी चाहिये। इन्होंने 6 महीना कह दिया है, मुझे नहीं लगता है कि छः महीना लगेगा, क्योंकि जब उन का एविडेंस लेते हैं और उस से कम टाइम में काम हो जाता है तो वह होना चाहिये। लेकिन मुझे यह डर है कि टिब्यूनल के साथ भी कुछ न कुछ बात निकाल कर वे लोग असहकार करेंगे, तो इस के बारे में भी आप को कुछ कदम उठाने के लिये तैयार रहना चाहिये।

आप ने यहाँ कहा है कि उन को जो इन्टरिम दिया है, वह चालू रहेगा। आप ने बहुत भ्रष्टी तरह से कहा है कि टिब्यूनल के रहते हुए भी यह चालू रहेगा, लेकिन हम की गारन्टी क्या है? यह ठीक है—आप तो कहेंगे कि यह चालू रहना चाहिये, लेकिन गारन्टी क्या है? इस के बारे में गारन्टी मिलनी चाहिये और गारंटी देने के लिये आप क्या करने वाले हैं—यह बतलाना चाहिये क्योंकि वे मालिक लोग बहुत हांगामार ह। उन में से कई तो कहते हैं कि हम मिनिस्टर के बहुत नजदीक हैं, इसलिये हम कुछ भी कर सकेंगे। इस लिये मैं चाहती हूँ कि इन की गारन्टी मिलनी चाहिये। जब तक टिब्यूनल का फाइनल एवाड नहीं आता है, तब तक इन्टरिम जो एवाड दिया गया है, वह उन को मिलता रहेगा—ऐसी गारन्टी उन को मिलनी चाहिये।

मुझे वहीं निवेदन करना था। इन शब्दों के साथ मैं इस बिल का स्वागत करती हूँ।

SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOO-WALIA (Faridkot): Mr. Chairman, with the indication from the Minister that I should not take more time,

[Shri Balwant Singh Ramoowalia]

with your permission, I will finish my speech within two minutes.

I appreciate the effort of the hon. Minister and his colleagues in introducing this Bill. In fact, after coming into power, the Janata Party has tried to establish freedom of the press. In fact, freedom of the press is incomplete without this Bill. So, I am very grateful to the hon. Minister, Shri Ravindra Varma, for introducing this Bill.

Because of the uncertainty that is prevailing, this Bill is overdue. During the emergency the capitalists and the industrialists joined together and became a class of exploiters. This class compromised with those rulers in order to loot the people and prevent them from expressing their wishes. I will very humbly request you, Sir, that the Government should try to make a provision to ensure that the working journalists and the newspaper media people are made part and parcel of the governing bodies of the newspapers. I will also humbly request that decisions of the tribunals should be made time-bound because justice delayed is almost justice denied. These capitalists and the owners of the big newspapers can use third degree methods, they can sidetrack the issues and they can endanger the freedom of the people working in the newspaper industry.

15.56 hrs.

[MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

Since the Minister wants the discussion to be ended shortly, in the end I very strongly support this Bill and I will further say that the working journalists should be given the facilities of travelling free as the Punjab Government has done. There all the working journalists and even proof-readers can travel free throughout the State. Such facilities should also be given to the working journalists.

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND LABOUR (SHRI RAVINDRA VARMA): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I am very grateful to the hon. Members who have taken part in the debate on this Bill. There is unanimous opinion in this House in favour of the Bill. Therefore, it is not necessary for me to answer the many points that have been raised elaborately.

I am thankful to my distinguished friend, Mr. Venkataraman for the very important points that he raised. He will see, as other hon. Members will see, that the Bill does not in any way dilute the principle of bipartite negotiations or the importance of bipartite negotiations in the settlement of industrial disputes, but when, at the end of bipartite negotiations a stage is reached, where it is found that because of the attitude taken by one party or the other a solution cannot be found, then there is necessity to provide for such situations, and the Bill, before the House, only provide for such a contingency. A stalemate arose, a way out had to be found, and therefore, the proposal to set up a tribunal. As the hon. Members pointed out, this is an enabling provision. This, does not take away the other provisions in the Bill or in similar Bills which underline the importance of bipartite negotiations.

Then it was pointed out that the provision here in relation to evidence should not lead to a situation where the management find it possible to challenge the proceedings of the tribunal.

Again, I would like to point out that the provision in the Bill only says that the tribunal may act on the evidence that has already been recorded. The right of the tribunal to call for further evidence or even to call those witnesses who have tendered evidence once for further deposition before the Tribunal is safeguarded by the Bill.

Then, Sir, it was said that the tribunals generally have the tendency to take a long time and there are inordinate delays. It is precisely to prevent this possibility that the same Judge has been requested to head the tribunal. Therefore, I hope that the apprehensions that were voiced would be found to be unfounded. I take the suggestions made by my hon. friend, Mr. Venkataraman as well as other hon. Members in the light in which they have been made, and I am sure that their suggestions will be borne in mind for the quick disposal of the matter that has been referred to the tribunal.

I do not want to take more time of the House. I will, therefore, appeal to the House to approve the Bill.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The question is:

"That the Bill further to amend the Working Journalists and other Newspaper Employees (Conditions of Service) and Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1955, be taken into consideration."

The motion was adopted.

16 hrs.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The question is:

"That Clauses 2 to 7 stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clauses 2 to 7 were added to the Bill.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The question is:

"That Clause 1 stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 1 was added to the Bill.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The question is:

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

The motion was adopted.

The Enacting Formula, other Preamble and the Title were added to the Bill.

SHRI RAVINDRA VARMA: I beg to move:

"That the Bill be passed."

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The question is:

"That the Bill be passed."

The motion was adopted.

16.02 hrs.

DISCUSSION RE. CHINESE INVASION OF VIETNAM AND THE CONSEQUENT THREAT TO FREEDOM OF NATIONS IN ASIA

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: We now take up the discussion on Chinese invasion of Vietnam and the consequent threat to the freedom of nations in Asia.

SHRI BEDABRATA BARUA (Kaliabor): We are meeting under the shadow of a great threat to national liberty and freedom on an occasion which affects India vitally, and Asia and the world as whole. This is a matter of an aggression by a big Power against a freedom-loving and brave people on the worst pretext. It is a typical Chinese act, which is an act of invasion without parallel, of a few hundred thousand men of the so-called Chinese Liberation Army against the liberty of the people of Vietnam. This act again exposes the arrogance of the powers that be in