

MESSAGE FROM RAJYA SABHA

Secretary: Sir, I have to report the following two messages received from the Secretary of Rajya Sabha:

(i) "In accordance with the provisions of rule 125 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Rajya Sabha, I am directed to inform the Lok Sabha that the Rajya Sabha, at its sitting held on the 28th August, 1956, agreed without any amendment to the Bihar and West Bengal (Transfer of Territories) Bill, 1956, which was passed by the Lok Sabha at its sitting held on the 17th August, 1956."

(ii) "I am directed to inform the Lok Sabha that the Rajya Sabha at its sitting held on Tuesday, the 28th August, 1956, concurred in the following motion passed by the Lok Sabha at its sitting held on the 22nd August, 1956, for modification of the Displaced Persons (Compensation and Rehabilitation) Rules, 1955, under sub-section (3) of Section 40 of the Displaced Persons (Compensation and Rehabilitation) Act, 1954:

That the following sub-rule be substituted for sub-rule (3) of rule 19 of the Displaced Persons (Compensation and Rehabilitation) Rules, 1955, as further amended by the Notification S. R. O. No. 1161, dated the 30th April, 1956, namely:

'(3) For the purposes of calculating the number of members of a joint family under sub-rule (2), a person who on the relevant date—

(a) was less than eighteen years of age; or

(b) was a lineal descendant in the male line of another living member of the joint family;

shall be excluded:

Provided that where a member of a joint family has died during the period commencing on the

fourteenth day of August, 1947, and ending on the relevant date leaving behind on the relevant date all or any of the following heirs, namely,—

(a) a widow or widows;

(b) a son or sons (whatever the age of such son or sons);

but no lineal ascendant in the male line, then, all such heirs shall notwithstanding anything contained in this rule, be reckoned as one member of the joint family."

Dr. Lanka Sundaram (Visakhapatnam): Without amendment!

NEWSPAPER (PRICE AND PAGE) BILL—concl'd.

Mr. Speaker: The House will now proceed with the clause-by-clause consideration of the Bill to provide for the regulation of the prices charged for newspapers in relation to their pages and of matters connected therewith for the purpose of preventing unfair competition among newspapers so that newspapers may have fuller opportunities of freedom of expression, as passed by Rajya Sabha.

The balance of time available is 33 minutes.

Clause 2 was added to the Bill.

Clause 3.—(Power to regulate prices and pages of newspapers, etc.)

Shri N. Sreekantan Nair (Quilon cum Mavelikkara): Sir, I beg to move:

Page 2—

after line 14, add:

"Provided that newspapers selling at one and a half annas and below per copy will be regulated only in relation to their minimum and not their maximum number of pages."

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao (Khammam):
Sir, I beg to move:

(i) Page 2, line 33, for "associations of publishers" substitute: "associations of journalists, working journalists, newspaper editors".

Page 2—

after line 35, add:

"(5) Every order made under this section shall be laid before both Houses of Parliament as soon as may be after they are made and shall be subject to such modifications as may be made by the Houses on a motion in this regard within a period of fourteen days from the date on which the order is so laid before the Houses:

Provided that if the House or the Houses are not in session during any such period, such period shall not be taken into consideration in computing the said period of fourteen days."

Shri Bhakt Darshan (Garhwal Distt. East cum Moradabad Distt.—North-East): Sir, I beg to move:

Page 2—

line 33, after "publishers" insert: "editors and journalists".

Mr. Speaker: These amendments are now before the House for discussion.

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao: I have not much to add to what has been said the other day by my colleague **Shri Moitra** and others, but I would like to urge on the hon. Minister his objection to consult the working journalists or editors—he said he would only do it informally. I would like to bring to his notice one important fact. When we assembled at the Labour Panel Meeting to consider the chapter about the labour policy in the Second Five Year Plan, some issues of this nature came up, whether the trade unions should be apprised of the financial position of the industry. It was contended on the part of the employers that they were not prepared to do so, when the workers' representatives present there represented that without knowing the fin-

ancial position of the industry, there cannot be any discussion or negotiation between the workers and the employers. In this important newspaper industry, I would urge that the working journalists, who are said to be the dominant partners in the industry, should be consulted.

If evidence had been published, I would have been able to point out that this question of price and page was first brought up by the working journalists. Therefore, I would strongly urge the hon. Minister to accept my amendment. Today there is no trade union which works without knowing the full financial position of the industry, the place of the industry in the economic life of the country. Those days were such when they would simply make any demands of the workers. Today, the trade union leaders and trade unions themselves have become very responsible and they first decide about the place the industry has in the economic life of our country and then put forth their demands. That is the important place that the trade unions have got today. I would, therefore, very strongly urge upon the hon. Minister to accept my amendment that the associations of journalists, working journalists and newspaper editors be consulted.

Secondly, we are going to have for the first time this price and page schedule. I would only ask the Minister to lay on the Table of both Houses every order made under this section so that we can discuss and offer our comments on it, because this is a new experiment. Afterwards we need not have it, but in the beginning we should have such things.

Shri N. Sreekantan Nair: My amendment is for the addition of a proviso like this:

"Provided that newspapers selling at one and a half annas and below per copy will be regulated only in relation to their minimum and not their maximum number of pages."

This is a very important amendment which I wanted to bring to the notice of the House. The history of this attempt to control the prices and pages had a long and chequered career. In the past the newspaper barons, with their chains of newspapers, used to stifle the lesser newspapers—the small newspapers, with only one newspaper for a particular spot. They naturally had control of the major advertising firms and had got international affiliations, so much so the newspaper barons were in a position to stifle the lesser newspapers. At the same time, the lesser newspapers are a necessity for this country because we are a poor country, and the newspapers selling at one anna or 1½ annas per copy will be read by a greater number of people than those selling at two annas or 2½ annas. It has been pointed out by the Press Commission that newspapers should be made available at a fairly low cost in this country. The suggestion which had been placed by the Newspaper Proprietors' Conference, the Association of Newspaper Owners, was that the pages and prices should be directly proportional. This means that if an one-anna paper has four pages, a two-anna paper will have eight pages. The main items of news are the same in almost all the papers. Therefore, in an one-anna paper, which can have four pages, three pages out of the four pages will be utilised for actual news, and other items, and only one page or half a page will be available for advertisement, so much so, the one-anna paper will be at a loss, whereas a two-anna paper will be able to publish 3 or 4 pages of news and three or four pages of advertisement. So, the gain to the more costly newspapers will be first of all in the matter of price, because they get higher prices and secondly they get much more space for advertisement. In order that the circulation and news value for the reading public may be increased, we must be able to allow the lesser priced newspapers to get more advertisements, so that they may give us a sufficient number of

news items and sufficient advertisements. I have suggested that some control is necessary so that the interests of the common people and poor people may not be affected by the paper taking in more advertisements and stifling news or cutting or chopping off of the news, some minimum is required, that is, a minimum guarantee must be there for every paper to give sufficient news to the people, and beyond that a maximum need not be stressed in the case of lesser priced newspapers because if newspapers have the power and are capable of canvassing, they may be able to run in a more economical manner. Otherwise the newspaper barons, with their chains of newspapers and affiliations throughout the world, will be able to corner all the advertisements and they will be selling at a higher price and getting more income also from advertisements. I bring this to the notice of the hon. Minister and the House so that the people in this poor country may get cheaper newspapers with sufficient reading material, and at the same time the newspapers may be able to compete with the newspaper barons with their chains of newspapers.

श्री भक्त वरुण : अध्यक्ष महोदय, चूंकि परसों माननीय मंत्री महोदय ने इस विधेयक के प्रथम वाचन के बाद-विवाद का उत्तर देते हुये यह आश्वासन दिया है कि यद्यपि वे इस के लिये तैयार नहीं हैं कि वे कानूनी तौर से पत्रकारों और सम्पादकों से परामर्श लें, लेकिन वे गैर-रहस्यी तरीके से शायद जरूर राय ले सकेंगे, इस लिये इस आश्वासन के आधार पर मैं अपने संसोधन को आगे नहीं बढ़ाना चाहता, और उसको वापिस लेता हूँ।

Shri M. S. Gurupadaswamy (Mysore) rose—

The Minister of Information and Broadcasting (Dr. Keskar): What is the amendment?

Mr. Speaker: He is speaking on the amendments already moved and the clauses together.

Shri M. S. Gurupadaswamy: The day before yesterday, the Minister said that it was not possible to provide a schedule in the Bill. He said that there would be changes in regard to the price of newsprint from time to time and so, it will not be possible or even practical to provide a permanent schedule. I understand the difficulty. But, cannot that difficulty be overcome? When we are fixing a price page schedule, we normally take into consideration the average cost of newspaper or the average price of newsprint during a particular period. For instance, it may be for the period of five years. On the basis of the average price of newsprint for a particular period, if we calculate the price and relate it to the pages, I am sure it is possible to provide for a schedule here. I am very sorry that blank power is being given to the Government on the ground that it is not possible to provide for a price-page schedule in the Bill. The House will be in the dark if we do not know the possible rates that the Government has in view. I do not know if it has already got any schedule drawn up for issue in the form of an order.

The Information and Broadcasting Ministry has got an efficient organisation for this purpose. The Press Registrar who has been appointed under the Press Registration Act of 1867, is doing his work very well. I am sure his previous experience would be helpful in this calculation. So, it would not be difficult for the Minister to draw up a schedule if he takes into consideration the average price existing in a particular period. He may then fix the maximum and minimum pages required for a newspaper. The other day, the hon. Minister was not able to appreciate my view on this point. I cited a particular instance where the newspaper is charged with three pies or six pies. It is only one sheet paper. I do not

know if the Minister contemplates the fixing of the maximum and the minimum number of pages of a newspaper. It is essential to prevent such newspapers which do not conform to certain standards.

I would again urge that he must make use of the machinery already available in the Ministry and try to work out a price schedule, if not now, at least in the immediate future. I expect that such a schedule would be included in this legislation. I do not however, want to hold up the Bill on this ground. So, I throw a suggestion that the Minister may utilise his machinery which is efficient. The Press Registrar will be helpful in this because of his past experience and knowledge. I hope that it will be possible to introduce a fair price page schedule in the Bill itself.

Shri Achuthan (Cranganur): I appeal to the hon. Minister to look into the amendment of Shri Sreekanth Nair seriously. While introducing this Bill, the hon. Minister stated that this was mainly meant to check unfair competition so that the district-level and language papers might have some existence. So, some provision is to be made with regard to language papers. Some latitude may be given to them so that they can, for instance, have one more page in order that they may have some more advertisements for their existence. Otherwise, the position will be very difficult and what is sought to be done will not be achieved. In almost all the States there are a number of dailies. In our State, the number goes up to a high figure. After this system comes into operation and if some dailies come to an agreement and see that the other dailies, which are healthy and useful and which have a purpose to serve in the particular region, are not allowed to canvass sufficient advertisements, then, they will go out of existence. That is an important matter. The aim in the Bill is good. But, some latitude must be given, in the initial stages, to the

language papers which may not have so much capital to stand on their own legs for a long time. So, they should also get some advertisements. They should give some local news and some other news also. So, I feel that so far as the smaller newspapers are concerned, which sell at an anna or an anna and a half there must be some laxity. They should be allowed some more pages without raising the price so that they can give some news as well as a fair percentage of advertisements. I hope that the Minister will consider this question sympathetically and some amendment like the one moved by Shri Sreekantan Nair will be brought in.

Shri M. K. Moitra (Calcutta—North-west): Sir, I rise to support the amendment moved by Shri Vittal Rao. In his amendment, he has asked that, in fixing the price-page schedule, the Federation of Working Journalists or such other bodies of journalists should be consulted. Day before yesterday, the hon. Minister, in the course of his reply, said that such consultations must not be made obligatory. In fixing the price-page schedule, he has stated that the associations of publishers will be consulted. So far as I know, there are two organised associations of publishers—the Indian and Eastern Newspapers Society and the Indian Language Newspapers Association. The rates of subscription for membership of these associations are so high that it is not possible for smaller papers to be members of such associations. The hon. Minister was kind enough to say that he would make efforts to consult even the smaller papers. But, the smaller papers are disorganised in the country. I do not know what method he will follow in consulting these small papers. The Federation of Working Journalists have always been the custodians of the rights and privileges of the smaller papers. In view of the fact, that the smaller papers are not organised, I will insist that the Federation of Working Journalists should be consulted in fixing the price-page schedule.

The Minister has said that the journalists never run the business. But they are intimately connected with the trade and their fate is determined by the rise and fall of the trade. When such members are intimately connected with the trade and they have gained some experience about running the paper and managing its business, I would insist that they should be consulted. This matter should not be dispensed with by merely saying that the journalists are not connected with the running of the business and therefore, they should not be consulted. The advice of the journalists is sought in many matters, but in a matter which affects the newspapers their advice will not be sought according to this. It is rather strange. I, therefore, support the amendment moved by Shri Vittal Rao.

Shri D. C. Sharma (Hoshiarpur): This is one of the most difficult problems that the Minister will be called upon to solve. In order that this problem may have a smooth sailing in the country, I would urge that he should associate along with the publishers, the editors and working journalists also. I think there will be no difficulty in doing so. The working journalists have a federation of their own, and I think they can give the hon. Minister their considered opinion on the matter. At the same time, the newspaper editors also have an organisation of their own. I think they also can be expected to give him their considered views. We are not to look upon the newspapers only from the financial angle. If only the publishers are consulted, it will mean that it is going to be an absolutely financial deal. I do not want that the price-page schedule should be fixed only in accordance with the finances of a paper. In the running of a paper other things have also to be taken into accounts. I believe, even though they may not be directly interested in the financial position of the paper, the editors and working journalists know how the paper is running, whether it is able to pay its own

[Shri D. C. Sharma].

way or not and all that. They have their own views on these points. From that point of view also they would be helpful.

More than this, I think the whole thing should be looked at from a composite angle. Therefore, it will be very necessary to have these persons associated with the determination of the price-page schedule. An hon. Member was talking about some officer who, according to him, has great experience and wisdom. Although I agree that there may be some officers who may have great experience and wisdom, I think in determining this you do not need only the wisdom and experience of one person but you need the pooled experience and wisdom of the whole Ministry, and in addition to that the accumulated experience and knowledge of those persons who are there to produce the paper.

I would, therefore, ask the hon. Minister to accept this amendment. He said that he would consult them informally. There is a lot of difference between informal consultations and regular consultations. From what I know I can say that these informal consultations very often do not give you very authentic results.

Dr. Lanka Sundaram: You want to place an obligation on the Ministry?

Shri D. C. Sharma: It should be made obligatory on the part of the hon. Minister to consult them. It will be good in the interest of the Ministry, in the interest of the newspapers, in the interest of the reading public and in the interest of those who produce the newspapers. Then you will have a schedule which will command the maximum consent in this country. If it is going to be only a one-way traffic between the Ministry and the publishers, I think it will not be assented to by so many persons. I want that they should be associated so that there will be the maximum of acceptance for the decision which the Ministry takes.

Dr. Keskar: Sir, I would first deal with the amendment which has been moved by Shri T. B. Vittal Rao, and supported in similar amendments by one or two other hon. friends. I am afraid I cannot accept the amendment. I do not want to repeat all that I said yesterday, but I say it again with further emphasis that consultation with all and sundry is not necessary. It is not that we are trying to minimise the importance of working journalists or the editors. Bill when we are trying to fix up the price of a paper, and we have to decide whether that particular price will bring loss or profit to the paper, naturally those who manage the paper have to be consulted. It is something very simple and reasonable. As for the collective soul of a newspaper and such other things mentioned by my friend Shri D. C. Sharma, I have listened with interest. No doubt, I am interested in his exposition of this collective responsibility, but I have to look to the specific responsibility. As I said, I am interested in certainly having a very workable price structure for the newspapers. What I said yesterday was that if necessary I will consult very experienced people of the journalistic side also.

Dr. Lanka Sundaram: But we read between the lines, you don't. That is the trouble.

Dr. Keskar: But I will certainly consult them to find out whether they have any other suggestions to make.

The second point is one that my friend Shri Sreekantan Nair wants that we should make a statutory elimination of papers having a price of 1½ annas and below. I have not understood his reasoning. Some other Member might say that papers above a particular price also should be eliminated. So there would be very little left for a price-page schedule. If we eliminate a particular class of papers and only leave a particular class of papers to be dealt with, then any consideration of fixation of a

price structure which is good and satisfying will not be possible. I have heard his arguments carefully. What he says is that papers below a particular price should be excepted. I shall certainly bear in mind what he has said, when any such schedule is prepared. At the same time, let it be remembered that the price of a paper is not an indication of the paper being big or small. A paper might be a half-anna paper, but it might have one million circulation. We cannot consider that as a small paper. A paper with a price of 4 annas might be a small paper because it might have only a very small circulation, circulation among selected people whereas the half-anna paper might be having a circulation among one million people.

Dr. Lanka Sundaram: You should draw a distinction between daily papers and non-daily papers.

Dr. Keskar: The schedule is at present meant for daily and weekly newspapers, and not weekly 'views-papers'. As such other periodicals do not come in here.

Dr. Lanka Sundaram: That is the trouble. What is the distinction between a weekly 'newspaper' and a weekly 'views-paper'?

Dr. Keskar: My friend knows it too well. It has been very definitely laid down. Even now in the Post and Telegraphs Act and also in the Books Registration Act it is very clear.

Shri M. S. Gurupadaswamy: If a paper contains both news and views?

Dr. Keskar: Then in the mixture you have to see which dominates. But I feel, if we eliminate certain classes of papers and make it, what shall I say, for a very limited class of newspapers, the whole scheme would be defeated. We cannot have a flexible price structure or schedule—whatever name you may like to call it—if we pass any such statutory restrictions. But the points that my friend has made regarding smaller

papers will certainly be borne in mind when we take up this question for practical decision.

My friend Shri Bhakt Darshan has already sought permission to withdraw his amendment. So I have nothing further to say regarding his amendments.

Mr. Speaker: I shall now put the amendments to the vote of the House.

The question is:

Page 2—

after line 14, add:

"Provided that newspapers selling at one and a half annas and below per copy will be regulated only in relation to their minimum and not their maximum number of pages."

The motion was negatived.

Mr. Speaker: The question is:

Page 2, line 33—

for "associations of publishers" substitute:

"associations of journalists, working journalists, newspaper editors".

The motion was negatived.

Mr. Speaker: The question is.

Page 2—

after line 35, add:

"(5) Every order made under this section shall be laid before both Houses of Parliament as soon as may be after they are made and shall be subject to such modifications as may be made by the Houses on a motion in this regard within a period of fourteen days from the date on which the order is so laid before the Houses:

Provided that if the House or the Houses are not in session during any such period, such period shall not be taken into consideration in computing the said period of fourteen days."

The motion was negatived.

Mr. Speaker: Shri Bhakt Darshan has sought leave of the House to withdraw his amendment No. 4. Has he leave of the House to withdraw his amendment?

The amendment was, by leave, withdrawn.

Mr. Speaker: The question is:

"That clause 3 stand part of the Bill".

The motion was adopted.

Clause 3 was added to the Bill.

Clauses 4 and 5 were added to the Bill.

Clause 6.—(Penalties)

Shri Ramachandra Reddi (Nellore):

I beg to move:

Page 3—

(i) line 11, for "one thousand rupees" substitute "one hundred rupees"; and

(ii) line 13, for, "two thousand rupees" substitute "two hundred rupees".

I am quite sure that the Government is anxious to give as much assistance as possible to the smaller papers. If the fine of Rs. 1,000 and Rs. 2,000 is retained, the smaller papers would be very much hard hit. As a matter of fact, there are certain proprietors of weeklies who do not own a press and who do not even own a decent office. They go on issuing the papers and printing them in other printing presses and paying the press charges. In such cases, they will be very much hard hit if this large amount of fine is imposed. On the other hand, if you take the bigger papers, it would be a matter of prestige to them, though not a matter of money, if they are fined even one rupee. If a small fine of rupee is imposed on them, it will be equated by them as a matter of prestige, to a fine of even Rs. 10,000. If the Government want to help the smaller papers, the amount of fine should be reduced.

In this connection, I may also point out that in the Press and Registration of Books Act, 1867, the penalties are only Rs. 50 under section 16A and Rs. 50 under section 16B, for every default. So, I wish that the hon. Minister considers my amendment in this light.

I would also like to point out a lacuna. To whom the complaint should be made and by whom it should be made is not clear in clause 6. It is not known whether it should be a judicial officer or a magistrate having jurisdiction over a particular area or whether it should be a secondclass magistrate or even an honorary magistrate. These matters are not clear from clause 6. So, I would suggest that there should be an amendment by the Government itself to this effect. On a complaint made to the magistrate, the magistrate must be in a position to give a decision with regard to the fine, etc.

I would also like to refer to clause 7 in this connection. Of course, there is no amendment tabled for that clause. It is said in the second line of clause 7 that the complaint should be made in writing by the Press Registrar appointed under the Press and Registration of Books Act. I do not know the implication of the words "in writing".

Dr. Keskar: That means, "not orally".

Shri Ramachandra Reddi: In the Press and Registration of Books Act, the words "in writing" do not find a place. Here, it is said that it should be "in writing". Usually, when a complaint is sent, we expect that it will be sent in writing.

Dr. Lanka Sundaram: They have no confidence in the spoken word.

Shri Ramachandra Reddi: So, I do not know the special implication of the words "in writing" and I do not know whether it will involve, later on, any legal and procedural difficulties.

Dr. Keskar: I would only like to say that the amendment of Shri Ramachandra Reddi is unnecessary. The wordings in the Bill are:

"... fine which may extend to one thousand rupees" and again:

"... fine which may extend to two thousand rupees."

While the hon. Member has been pleading the cause of the small papers, he has also to remember that there are big papers which will infringe such a price-structure and for them a fine of Rs. 1,000 is nothing. Some of them might be prepared to pay much more than this amount and yet they may make profits. So, the maximum fine has been put here and it has been done after careful consideration. The authority which imposes the fine is quite at liberty to impose the fine within this limit which is prescribed. Of course, a smaller fine will naturally be imposed on a small newspaper. I do not expect that the authority will impose on a poor paper a big fine and on a rich paper a small fine.

Dr. Lanka Sundaram: Why don't you make a provision for warning the paper before a fine is imposed?

Dr. Keskar: I think the managements of papers are sufficiently versed in law and the regulations, and we do not expect them unconsciously to commit any infringement.

Dr. Lanka Sundaram: Not language papers.

Dr. Keskar: If anybody commits any infringement and it becomes clear that it did it unconsciously, then it is not necessary that you should impose a particular fine. That is always understood. I think Shri Ramachandra Reddi has been pleading a cause unnecessarily. The provision that he has been pleading for is included in this Bill. It is not outside the purview of the powers that are being to be given and I, therefore, hope that he would not press his amendment.

He has been asking for a clarification as to which authority it will be that should receive the complaint. It will be the suitable judicial authority. Except in very specific cases there is no need to mention the authority. It is not, I think, essential that we should mention the particular type of magistrate before whom a complaint is to be made. I have nothing more to say.

Mr. Speaker: So, should I put the amendment to the vote of the House?

Shri Ramachandra Reddi: I beg leave to withdraw the amendment.

The amendment was, by leave withdrawn.

Mr. Speaker: The question is:

"That clause 6 stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 6 was added to the Bill.

Clause 7 was added to the Bill.

Clause 1.—(Short title etc.)

श्री भक्त वरुण : मैं अपने संशोधन संख्या १ और २ प्रस्तुत करता हूँ जो कि इस प्रकार हैं :

(i) Page 1—

lines 5 and 6—omit "except the State of Jammu and Kashmir".

(ii) Page 1—

omit lines 7 to 11.

पार १ में कहा गया है कि इस कानून को जम्मू और काश्मीर में लागू किया जाय। लेकिन मैं चाहता हूँ कि इसको जम्मू और काश्मीर में भी लागू किया जाय। मैं देख रहा हूँ कि सदन में जो कानून पास होते हैं उनमें से बहुत से जम्मू और काश्मीर पर लागू किये जाते हैं। अभी परसों ही हमने जो नेशनल वालंटियर फोर्स का कानून पास किया है उसको जम्मू और काश्मीर पर लागू किया गया है। इसी तरह से नेशनल हाईवेज बिल भी जो हमन स्वीकार किया था वह जम्मू और काश्मीर पर लागू किया गया है; लेकिन इस कानून को जो कि इतना महत्वपूर्ण है हम जम्

[श्री भक्त दर्शन]

श्रीर काश्मीर पर लागू क्यों नहीं कर रहे हैं, इसका स्पष्टीकरण नहीं किया गया है।

इस सम्बन्ध में मैं यह भी निवेदन करना चाहता हूँ कि जम्मू श्रीर काश्मीर के बारे में हम जो ढीला रुख अख्तियार किये हुये हैं वह ठीक नहीं है। हमारी भारत-सरकार को अपना प्रचार तेजी से करने की जरूरत है। क्या हम लोग इस बात को नहीं जानते कि कांस्टीट्यूशन हाउस में बैठ कर एक स्वानामधन्य महिला हमारी सरकार के खिलाफ आये दिन प्रचार करती रहती हैं? पता नहीं हमारा इनफार्मेशन मंत्रालय इस विषय में क्या कर रहा है और जम्मू और काश्मीर सरकार इसका क्या जवाब देती है? इसलिये मैं चाहता हूँ कि यह कानून और दूसरे भी जितने कानून यहां स्वीकृत किये जायें उनको जम्मू और काश्मीर पर भी लागू किया जाना चाहिये और उनमें कोई भेद नहीं किया जाना चाहिये।

अपने दूसरे संशोधन के सम्बन्ध में मुझे यह कहना है कि परसों मंत्री जी ने अपने उत्तर में यह स्पष्ट नहीं किया कि आखिर यह कानून पांच साल के लिये ही क्यों लागू किया जा रहा है। जैसा कि मैंने उस दिन भी बताया था, प्रेस आयोग ने अपनी रिपोर्ट में कहीं भी यह नहीं कहा है कि इसको परीक्षण के तौर पर लागू किया जाये। उन्होंने पांच, दस या १५ साल का कोई समय नियत नहीं किया है। स्वयं मंत्री जी ने बतलाया था कि इस प्रकार का कानून यूनाईटेड किंगडम में दस-गन्धह साल से लागू है और जब उसके हटाने के लिये आवाज उठायी गयी तो वहां के अखबारों में बड़ा हल्ला मचा और कहा गया कि उसको न हटाया जाये। जब इंग्लैंड में यह हालत है तो हमारे देश में जहां हम प्लान्ड इकोनोमी की ओर बढ़ रहे हैं, हमको अखबारों को भी क्यों प्लान्ड नहीं करना चाहिये? इसको केवल पांच साल के लिए ही क्यों लागू किया

जा रहा है, यह मेरी समझ में नहीं आता। अतः मैं आशा करता हूँ कि मंत्री जो अपने उत्तर में इसका स्पष्टीकरण करने की कृपा करेंगे।

Dr. Keskar: As far as the first amendment of Shri Bhakt Darshan is concerned, I do not think that it is advisable to extend this legislation to the State of Jammu and Kashmir.
1 P.M.

As far as the principle that all legislation should automatically apply to the State of Jammu and Kashmir is concerned, I will not say anything here. This is not the place to take it up and discuss it. As far as this particular Act is concerned, first of all the Press as such is in a very fluid stage in that area. I do not know how many newspapers there are; I think they can be counted on the fingers. Unless and until we are sure that it will be to the advantage of the Press in that area, I do not think it will be advisable for us to apply it to the State of Jammu and Kashmir.

Mr. Bhakt Darshan also referred to the anti-Kashmir and anti-Indian agitation carried on here. I hope he will bring it to the notice, not of me, but of the Home Minister. I hope he would take adequate steps about the matter.

श्री भक्त दर्शन : क्या मंत्री जी गृह मंत्रालय का ध्यान इस ओर दिलाने की कृपा करेंगे ?

Shri Feroze Gandhi (Pratapgarh Distt.—West cum Rae Bareilly Distt.—East): May I point out that this has been brought to the attention of the Government and the Government have not done anything? For the last two or three months, all sorts of unreasonable treacherous literature are being published in Delhi and nothing has been done.

Dr. Keskar: It is not I but the Home Minister to whom it should be addressed. (Interruptions).

Shri Feroze Gandhi: According to the Minister, I understand this Bill is

going to help the smaller newspapers. This is the kind of smaller newspapers that you will help.

Shri Bhagwat Jha Azad (Purnea cum Santal Parganas): You are also a Minister of that Government.

Dr. Keskar: I am in charge of a particular department.

The other amendment is regarding the period of this Act. Mr. Bhakt Darshan wants that this should be a permanent piece of legislation. I do not agree with him for two reasons. One is that though the price-page structure exists in Great Britain, it has been there with a particular purpose only, namely, distribution of newsprint. It does not take into account the question of framing the schedule in such a way as to help the smaller papers or papers financially not so well-placed.

Dr. Lanka Sundaram: Did the Minister keep track of the newsprint allotted to big papers going to the black market? Is it still going to the black market?

Dr. Keskar: That is a different question. For the first time, according to the recommendations of the Press Commission, we are trying to take the question of having a price-page structure which will eliminate unfair competition as much as possible. Until we have tried this out, for us to say that this should be a permanent legislation is wrong. If it works out well, then the question of extending its life is very easy. There is no difficulty whatsoever. I do not think it makes any material difference whether it is for 5 years or permanently. In fact nobody can guarantee what will happen after 3 or 4 years and from the practical point of view it is not very important.

श्री भक्त दर्शन : बुकि माननीय मंत्री जी ने कहा है कि पांच साल के बाद भी इस कानून को लागू किया जायेगा, इस आश्वासन पर मैं अपने संशोधन वापस लेना चाहता हूँ।

The amendments were, by leave, withdrawn.

Mr. Speaker: 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.

Dr. Keskar: I beg to move:

"That the Bill be passed".

In moving that the Bill be passed, I would like to say only one thing. The Bill has been brought forward after very careful consideration and after taking into consideration the opinions expressed in Parliament and by the Press as a whole and the experience gained in other countries.

The object of the Bill is not ambitious, nor does it categorically say that it is going to achieve this or that. As I said earlier, we hope that it will help in eliminating unfair competition and in that way help papers which are less favourably placed and the smaller papers in general. We have also made it clear that this is not the only factor which will help the smaller papers, but one of the important factors, as the Press Commission has very rightly pointed out. I do not want to say anything further. When the Bill becomes an Act and when the schedule is prepared, it will be tried out and the results will be before the House. I hope they will be favourable.

Mr. Speaker: Motion moved:

"That the Bill be passed".

Dr. Lanka Sundaram: I would congratulate the hon. Minister for the manner in which he has piloted this Bill. I would say, as a journalist who owned and edited papers for over 20 years, that this Bill is of a halting character. I do hope that within the period of time made available in the ambit of this Bill, the Minister would review the situation constantly and would not endanger the existence of small papers. I say it because I

[Dr. Lanka Sundaram]

have experience—the House will agree on that point. The vast majority of the newspapers in India are not the Daily Press. I would like the Minister to remember that point.

I find the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs is anxious to take up the next Bill, and I would finish by saying that unless the Minister of Information and Broadcasting gives us an assurance that he will not forget the interests of the smaller Press, which has got to be properly nurtured, I am afraid in this country the freedom of the Press will not be possible and public opinion will not be heard. The smaller Press in this land is imbued with a mission; it is not a mechanised Press; it is not a Press of monopoly; it is not a Press having chain circulation; it is not an industry. I hope the Minister will remember it. The periodical Press cannot be forgotten. There are very bad specimens of it; I had occasion to say so in this House on a previous occasion. He should attempt to weed out the undesirable weekly Press. I hope, while reviewing the constant working of this Bill, the Minister would remember the periodical Press.

With these words, I support this Bill.

Shri Bhagwat Jha Azad: Mr. Speaker, I was one of those who had very strongly advocated the price-page schedule while the Press Commission's report was discussed in this House. I welcome this opportunity to congratulate the hon. Minister for bringing this Bill here. At this hour, when the Bill is going to be passed and made into an Act, I only want to bring one or two points to the attention of the Minister.

After the Bill becomes an Act, there will be many difficulties confronting the Minister. As he said in Rajya Sabha, during the last one year, the Government have not been able to decide what would be the nature of the regulations or the rules that would be made in this behalf. It only shows the difficulties in the matter. It

is said in this Bill that it will equalise the opportunities regarding securing advertisements between small and big newspapers. It will be quite difficult to give equal opportunities to the small as well as big papers for securing advertisements, one of the chief resources of these papers. Therefore, I want to emphasise one point, namely, that the regulation made under this Act should be flexible to the extent that can be adjusted according to the time, to ensure fair competition and to educate the public opinion in the country freely. Therefore, though the Minister has assured that he would consult the interests in this matter, informally, would it not be advisable that before these regulations framed under this Act are given effect to, they should be placed before the legislature? The Memorandum regarding Delegated Legislation says that the delegation of power is of a normal character. I think that the Minister has himself stated in Rajya Sabha that it is very difficult to give us any idea as to what will be the nature of the regulation. It clearly shows that these are difficult matters and, therefore, I think the Minister should consider if it is not possible and feasible for him to bring those regulations before this House before they are given effect to. Then the House will have an opportunity to go into it and the Minister will have the advantage and benefit of the opinion of the House. I think these are the lacunae. I wish god-speed and success to the hon. Minister in implementing this Act because it will go a very long way to help the smaller papers. With these words, I whole-heartedly support this Bill.

Dr. Keskar: I have not much to say: I certainly will keep in mind the wise words of my hon. friend, Dr. Lanka Sundaram who, with his experience of the papers and the press in general, has certainly raised points which are worth consideration. I might only say that bringing in a wider sphere of the press within the ambit of this Bill

Bill

is not an easy job. It is going to be a difficult job and I do not want in the initial stage to make it still more complicated. But the point that he has made will certainly be kept in mind.

The point raised by my hon. friend, Mr. Azad, is no doubt worth consideration but it has been disposed of day before yesterday. I do not know whether he was here.

Shri Bhagwat Jha Azad: I was present.

Dr. Keskar: I do not want to repeat the answers that I gave that day. I will only say here that there is no question of rules. It is here a question of announcing a price page rate and it is not included in the same category as other rules or schedules.

Dr. Lanka Sundaram: That is, your approach is not going to be punitive.

Dr. Keskar: I think it will give rise to great difficulties for the press as well and, therefore, I hope he will not press his viewpoint and I am sure the House will pass the Bill.

Mr. Speaker: The question is:

"That the Bill be passed".

The motion was adopted.

STATE FINANCIAL CORPORATIONS (AMENDMENT) BILL

Mr. Speaker: The House will now take up the further consideration of the following motion moved by Shri A. C. Guha on the 24th August, 1956, namely:

"That the Bill further to amend the State Financial Corporations Act, 1951, be taken into consideration."

The time allotted for this Bill was four hours, out of which we have already taken 47 minutes. The balance is 3 hours and 13 minutes. We will allot 2½ hours for the general discussion and half an hour for clause-by-clause consideration.

Shri Bansal (Jhajjar-Rewari): Mr. Speaker, before I come to the provisions of the Bill, I should like to

revert with your permission to the question of information relating to the work of the various State Financial Corporations which has been placed before this House. The hon. Minister was pleased to say that day that whatever information I wanted was supplied to me two days before the discussion was scheduled to take place here. I beg to submit that in this particular respect he was not properly informed by his department.

The Minister of Revenue and Defence Expenditure (Shri A. C. Guha): I should make the position clear. I was under the impression that the report which contained about 120 pages was placed on the Table of the House. But the difficulty is that they could not prepare all these pages and they could not verify the figures. So they placed only a summary. That was a mistake.

Dr. Lanka Sundaram (Visakhapatnam): Only a summary was placed in the Library.

Shri Bansal: I was given only some 7 to 8 pages. After that, when you were pleased to postpone the discussion, a bigger summary consisting of about 100 pages was placed in the Library. From that summary itself, from page 5, I find there is reference to the various obligations of the State Financial Corporations.

The first three obligations, in my opinion, clearly make it incumbent on the Government of India to place all the relevant information in the Library of Parliament. The first obligation here says that the State Governments and the Reserve Bank are to be supplied detailed reports on the working of the State Financial Corporations within three months of the closing of the year. The second obligation says that the Financial Corporations are to submit monthly and quarterly statements showing their assets and liabilities and investment position etc. to the Reserve Bank. The third obligation says that annual accounts are to be audited by the auditors to be appointed by the State Governments in consultation