

AMENDMENTS IN RESERVE AND AUXILIARY AIR FORCES ACT RULES

**The Deputy Minister of Defence (Sardar Majithia):** I beg to lay on the Table, under sub-section (4) of section 34 of the Reserve and Auxiliary Air Forces Act, 1952, a copy of the Ministry of Defence Notification No. S.R.O. 6-E, dated the 18th December, 1954, making certain amendments in the Reserve and Auxiliary Air Force Act Rules, 1953. [Placed in Library. See No. S-526/54.]

CALLING ATTENTION TO MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

SUPPLY OF NEWS TO PRIVATE ENTERPRISE BY P.T.I. AND U.P.I.

**Sardar A. S. Saigal (Bilaspur):** Under Rule 215, I beg to call the attention of the Minister of Communications to the following matter of urgent public importance and I request that he may make a statement thereon:

"The supply of news to private enterprise by the Press Trust of India and the United Press of India and the steps taken by the Government in that direction."

**The Minister of Communications (Shri Jagjivan Ram):** Sir, at present the Posts and Telegraphs Department rent out teleprinter lines to the PTI and UPI for the collection, transmission and distribution of news in the various centres in India. Other news agencies, newspapers, commercial subscribers, Government Departments, etc., are also allowed teleprinter lines and these parties as well as news agencies, including PTI and UPI are permitted to use the circuits for the purposes specified in the hiring contract.

With regard to the inter-urban circuits and other long-distance circuits leased out to the PTI and UPI, the hiring contract clearly lays down the type of information that can be passed on these lines and the conditions for divulging the information to any party. According to these terms

contained in the hiring contract read with Rule 135(2) of the Indian Telegraph Rules, 1951, the circuits can be used only for transmission of Press telegrams admitted for transmission at Press rates and these messages shall not, before publication in a newspaper, be communicated to an unregistered newspaper or to any private individual or to any establishment, such as a club, cafe, hotel or a stock exchange. We are advised that the minute to minute transmission of telegrams containing stock, bullion and commodity prices to any one except registered newspaper, contravenes the provisions of the hiring contract since any minute to minute communication of such telegrams to third parties is bound to be before their publication in a newspaper.

The Posts and Telegraphs Department became aware as a result of their own monitoring as well as through complaints received from public that these two news agencies and certain other news agencies had not been following the rules and were sending minute to minute quotations concerning bullion, grain, stock exchange, etc., and communicating these to private subscriber. In addition to these, cases have been found in which they were found transmitting buying and selling orders sometimes openly and at times in code on behalf of private parties and acting in other ways in contravention of the hiring contract.

Even though the Posts and Telegraphs Department and the Government have been aware that these lines were being used for purposes other than those for which they were leased, strict application of the penal clause was deferred due to the fact that the parties are all-India news agencies who are otherwise fulfilling a primary and essential service in the collection, transmission and distribution of news to all the newspapers in