

LOK SABHA DEBATES

I

LOK SABHA

Wednesday, September 5, 1973/
Bhadra 14, 1895 (Saka)

*The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of the
Clock*

[MR. SPEAKER in the Chair]

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

(SHORT NOTICE QUESTION)

'दि स्टेट्समैन' के प्रबन्धकों द्वारा अपने पत्रकारों और अन्य कर्मचारियों के प्रति भ्रष्टाचारपूर्ण तरीके अपनाये जाना

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7 श्री सतपाल कपूर :

श्री सी० के० बन्नायन .

क्या सूचना और प्रसारण मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि

(क) क्या दैनिक समाचारपत्र 'दि स्टेट्समैन' के प्रबन्धकों द्वारा अपने पत्रकारों तथा अन्य कर्मचारियों के प्रति भ्रष्टाचारपूर्ण तरीके अपनाये जाने के परिणामस्वरूप एक गम्भीर स्थिति पैदा हो गई है, और

(ख) यदि हां, तो इस समाचारपत्र को बन्द होने से बचाने के लिये सरकार का क्या कार्यवाही करने का विचार है ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE
MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND
BROADCASTING (SHRI DHARAM
BIR, SINHA); (a) and (b). Govern-
ment have received a copy of the re-
solution passed on August 17, 1973 by

1827 L. S.—1

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the General Body of the Statesman Journalists Association, New Delhi, containing *inter alia* the following grievances —

- (1) negative and unhelpful attitude of the management towards the genuine functional difficulties of the journalists,
- (2) grant of adequate interim relief pending revision of wages including modification of the D A formula providing for full neutralisation of the rise in the cost of living index,
- (3) reduction of quantum of bonus to Working Journalists by imposing a ceiling of Rs 1,000

It is hoped that the management of the Statesman Limited will hold discussions with representatives of the Association and take steps to redress the grievances

श्री सतपाल कपूर : स्पीकर साहब, क्या मिनिस्टर साहब बंलायेगे कि यही एक ऐसा प्रखबार है जिस के न्यूज की एडीटीरियल पालिसी एडीटर के बजाय मैनेजिंग डायरेक्टर बनाते है ?

श्री अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी : यह सवाल इस में से कहां निकलता है ?

श्री सतपाल कपूर : इस प्रखबार के मैनेज-
मेंट और मैनेजिंग डायरेक्टर न जो विविट-
माइजेम किया है, उस की बजह से यह सवाल
उठता है ?

अध्यक्ष महोदय : धन्य क्य सवाल है—

As a result of high-handed methods of management towards journalists, . . .

श्री सतपाल कपूर : जहां हाइ-हैंडलिंग की बात आती है, कुछ जर्नलिस्ट्स इस में से रिबाइन कर गये हैं, कुछ लोगों को कोर्ट में जा कर पीटा गया है.

श्री जयल विहारी बाबुलवी : यह कन्स है।

श्री सतपाल कपूर : प्राय गलत वाली बात कहिये।

जयल विहारी बाबुलवी : उन को जवाब देने दीजिये, इस को सन्ना मत कीजिये।

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI I. K. GUJRAL): Hon. Members will recall that when there was a discussion in the House on diffusion and delimiting of the Press, I submitted to the House that one of the difficulties that had arisen unfortunately in some of the major news papers had been that decision-making was passed on from the Editorial Room to the Management Room

In this case, particularly, it is very unfortunate that in the Articles of Association the *Statesman* have provided and given the powers to the Managing Director to enforce the policy of the paper and not to the Editor.

श्री सतपाल कपूर : क्या यह दुस्त है कि इस प्रबन्धन के कुछ स्पेशल-कारस्पोंडेन्स रिबाइन कर गये हैं। एक कारस्पोंडेन्ट जब कोर्ट में पेसी चुगतने गया और कोर्ट से बाहर निकला तो उस पर हमला किया गया और उस ने कोर्ट से ऐसी शिकायत भी की है ?

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL: These are two separate cases. I have received a copy of the resignation submitted by Shri Sumanta Banerjee resigning from his job in which he has said:

"My conscience does not allow me to continue working any longer in the present conditions."

....."The subsequent events culminating in the total surrender of

men at the helm of the editorial staff to the managerial bosses bartering away editorial freedom and dignity only strengthened my resolve to resign so as to avoid being a tool of business interests."

He also mentions that one of the members on the editorial side was mishandled by one of the managers and local staff. This has been mentioned in the Resolution a copy of which has been sent to me.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU. Sir, I am catching your eye. Let me be permitted to put questions

MR SPEAKER: May I request you to allow one other Member to put his questions first since his name has also been clubbed?

SHRI C K CHANDRAPPA. It is stated in the answer that the employees of the *Statesman* have submitted a memorandum. They have also placed their grievances I want to know whether the Government is aware of the fact that the Managing Director of the *Statesman*, Shri Iran, who is a former boss of the Insurance organisation or something like that under Tata is enjoying all kinds of facilities including a big bungalow in Delhi and in Calcutta? And whenever he goes to the other big cities, more facilities are provided to him like bungalow, car and everything. At the same time, the real journalists who are working on the staff and the correspondents from the Bureau have not been provided with such facilities.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr Chandrappan please put your question and do not make a statement.

SHRI C. K. CHANDRAPPA: The last part of the answer says:

"It is hoped that the management of the *Statesman* Limited will hold discussions with representatives of the Association."

We are hoping against hopes. That is why I am asking this. Is it also a fact

that one of the journalists, Shri Madhok, after filing a case against the management for redressal of some of his grievances and while coming out of the Court, was assaulted by no less a person than the manager of the *Statesman*? When such things are happening, what is the kind of action that you are taking? What is the use of bringing in a Bill on Diffusion of Ownership?

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL: A copy of the Resolution passed by the Association was sent to me in which this incident had been mentioned. Naturally, I am not in a position to vouchsafe for the facts. But, this was mentioned by the deputation of the employees who met me. I am also told by the deputation that when the incident took place, it was brought to the notice of the Labour Court itself. The labour court is looking into it.

SHRI DINEN BHATTACHARYYA: May I know whether it is a fact that the *Statesman* management is planning to remove the machine which they propose to set up in Calcutta in connection with their junior *Statesman*, a weekly magazine? If you have decided to shift it to Delhi, it will cause a serious unemployment problem in Calcutta. May I know whether Government have taken note of this matter and whether...

MR. SPEAKER: How is it relevant to the main question?

SHRI DINEN BHATTACHARYYA: Kindly see the question. The question refers to 'high-handed methods'. This is the most high-handed method that they are shifting the machines from Calcutta to Delhi, as a result of which a large number of employees will be in a very serious situation. So, I would like to know whether Government propose to set up a high-level inquiry into all the functions of the *Statesman*, especially that follow, Mr. Tgani.....

MR. SPEAKER: I fail to understand how this question is relevant....

SHRI DINEN BHATTACHARYYA: It is a high-handed method to remove the machines from Calcutta thereby causing hardship to the workers.

MR. SPEAKER: After all, the machine has to be removed with hands.

SHRI DINEN BHATTACHARYYA: Let the hon Minister answer whether he knows it or not.

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL: It has not been brought to my notice as yet.

SHRI DINEN BHATTACHARYYA: What about the inquiry? "Today is the last day of this session, and tomorrow nobody will come to you or to me as a Member of Parliament. I would like to know, therefore, whether he is going to set up any inquiry by the Company Law Board or any other agency regarding this aspect of the *Statesman*."

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL: If the edition of a particular paper is shifted from one place to another.

SHRI DINEN BHATTACHARYYA: It is not only that, but there are other things also which are happening. So, I would like to know whether he is going to set up any inquiry?

MR. SPEAKER: There is no question of high-handedness in this. It is their own problem. They may shift a machine wherever they like. So, let the hon. Member confine himself to the main question.

SHRI K. P. UNNIKRISHNAN: As this type of disgusting experiences of esteemed friends in the journalistic profession pile up not only in "the *Statesman*" but also in "the *Janmabhoomi*" and "A" or various other papers owned either by families or groups or trusts, may I know whether the hon. Minister is going to set up a watchdog machinery to inquire into such instances, because the problem has become very urgent in these media of mass communication?

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL: So far as retrenchment is concerned, it is receiving

attention immediately. The case of *Janmabhoomi* was also pointed out to me, and it is receiving our attention. The case of *Aj* has also come to our notice. In this particular case regarding the *Statesman*, I have received a copy of the resignation and I have not been asked to intervene on this occasion on his resignation. What has been brought to my notice by the resolution and by the representation and by a copy of the letter written by the association to the editor of the paper is that the authority of the editorial side is being eroded by the management side. That is the issue which concerns me more than the others, not that the others are less important, but this is of greater concern to me, because we have guaranteed in the Constitution freedom of expression and we are very keen to see that the editorial side is more important than the management side in a newspaper. This matter is receiving my attention, and I am looking into it.

श्री चंद्रलाल चन्द्राकर : मेरा ऐसा ख्याल है कि मंत्री महोदय के पास बहुत से ऐसे अखबारों के संबंध में शिकायतें आई हैं कि बहुत से लोगों को नौकरी से निकाल दिया गया हो। तो क्या मैं यह जान सकता हूँ कि ऐसे कितने लोगों की शिकायतें आई हैं और कितने लोगों के साथ दुर्व्यवहार हुआ है या निकाले गए हैं? आज के जो लीगल करेस्पोंडेंट थे उन को जो चिट्ठी दी गई है निकालने की उस में साफ कहा गया है कि आज कल पेपर की कमी है, इसलिए उन को नौकरी से निकाल दिया गया है। जगदीश प्रसाद चतुर्वेदी को भी इसी तरह से उन्होंने निकाल दिया है। तो इस तरह के कितने कैसेज हैं जिन के सम्बंध में मंत्री महोदय को विशेष शिकायतें मिली हैं जिन को हाल में अखबारों से पेपर की कमी या और किसी कारण से निकाल दिया गया है या जैसे स्टेट्समैन में दुर्व्यवहार हुआ है वैसे उन के साथ हुआ है?

श्री आई० के० गुजराल : मेरे नोटिस में जो बात आई है वह सिर्फ यही आई है कि

‘आज’ से दो आदमियों को निकाला गया है चतुर्वेदी जी को और उन के लीगल करेस्पॉण्डेंट को। दोनों को मैं देख रहा हूँ। जन्मभूमि के संबंध में भी यह शिकायत आई है।

श्री अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी : मंत्री महोदय ने यह स्वीकार किया है कि स्टेट्समैन के पत्रकारों ने एक प्रस्ताव पास किया है जिस में अपनी शिकायतों का विवरण दिया है। मंत्री महोदय ने उस प्रस्ताव का हवाला भी दिया। क्या यह सच नहीं है कि उस प्रस्ताव में पत्रकारों ने सरकार से कुछ कार्यवाही की भी मांग की है? वह क्या कार्यवाही है जो पत्रकार चाहते हैं और सरकार इस मामले में केवल जवाब दे कर अपने कर्तव्य की इतिश्री समझ लेगी या कुछ कदम भी उठाना चाहती है जिस से उन की शिकायतें दूर हो सकें?

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL: When the deputation met me and gave me a copy of the Resolution, they were naturally keen that their problems should be looked into. Otherwise, they would not have met me. It can be divided into two parts. One is about the working conditions in regard to bonus, salaries etc. Naturally, this should be looked into by other Ministries, to which the papers are being referred. I understand copies of this Resolution were sent to those Ministries also, namely The Department of Company Law and the Labour Ministry. My primary concern in the Ministry of Information is about the authority of the editorial side, about the hegemony of the editorial side. If the hegemony of the editorial side is eroded, as unfortunately seems to have eroded, it is a matter of concern not only for Government but more for the House even because we are the custodians of freedom of expression. So we must see to it that it does not get eroded.

SHRI VAYALAR RAVI: It is disgraceful to hear from the hon. Minister what the management has done considering the articles of association and freedom of the press. I would like to know

from the hon. Minister what is the definition of 'freedom of the press' according to Government and what steps have been taken to protect it? Also are Government aware that the *Statesman* management has threatened a lock-out of the newspaper? If so, what steps are being taken to prevent such a drastic step?

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL: I would only content myself with quoting from a book which has recently been published. It is the autobiography....

MR. SPEAKER: How is it relevant to this?

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL: If you will kindly hear, you will know (*Interruptions*) I hope you are equally concerned about freedom of the press; if you are not, that is a different matter. This is from the autobiography of no less a person than Shri M. C. Setalvad who was one of the trustees of the board of this paper. I will only quote a few lines to tell you how the authority of the editorial side and freedom of expression has been eroded in the newspaper. Shri Setalvad as Chairman of the Board of Trustees. He says:

"My Chairmanship of the Board of Trustees of the *Statesman* Ltd. received a somewhat rude though not unexpected shock in the latter part of 1968. The story is interesting showing how difficult it is for the industrial proprietors of a newspaper to give editorial freedom to its editor and how the experiment so honestly and laudably launched by the industrialists who had reorganised the *Statesman* in 1963 failed. Probably it is a novel experiment....."

The main point is that even Shri Setalvad felt that editorial authority in the *Statesman* was being eroded.....

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: What have you been doing?

SHRI VAYALAR RAVI: What about the threatened closure?

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL: I think the question stands replied when I quoted already from the articles of association to show that authority has been passed from the editor to the managing director. I have also quoted Shri Setalvad who was Chairman of the Board of Trustees to show that authority was passed on from the editorial side to the managerial side. That is where freedom of expression was eroded in the *Statesman*.

SHRI VAYALAR RAVI: I asked about the threatened lockout.

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL: It has not been brought to my notice. I hope they would not resort to it.

श्री मधु लिमये : मन्त्रालय महोदय, कुछ साल पहले स्टेट्समैन की सम्पादकीय नीति के बारे में मतभेद की गूंजाइश रहती थी लेकिन इसके बारे में दो रायें नहीं थीं कि उसका दर्जा बहुत ऊंचा था, हर क्षेत्र में और खास करके पार्लियामेंटरी रिपोर्टिंग के बारे में आप जानते हैं कि इतनी बढ़िया रिपोर्टिंग स्टेट्समैन में आती थी कि वे हमारे ऊपर नुकताचीनी भी कर ते थे तो भी पढ़ने में मज़ा आता था। हम चाहते हैं कि स्टेट्समैन और दूसरे अखबार एक और बड़ी पूंजी के नियन्त्रण से और दूसरी ओर सरकारी प्रभाव से मुक्त हों इसलिए मैं मंत्री महोदय से जानना चाहता हूँ कि क्या यह बात सही है कि एक जर्नलिस्ट मि० नाथ को मैनेजमेंट ने अदालत में धमकाया, मेरे सामने वह वाक्य है :

"You journalists, you should know that I am the management. I shall grind him into the dust."

टैक्सीज़, स्कूटर्स, टेलीफोन आदि की सुविधाओं के बिना इनकी संचार की जो स्वतन्त्रता है, लोगों से मिलने की जो स्वतन्त्रता है, खबरें इकट्ठा करने की जो स्वतन्त्रता है वह कभी भी कारगर नहीं हो पायेगी इसलिए मैं मंत्री महोदय से जानना चाहूंगा जिस तरह से पहले मैनेजिंग डायरेक्टर की पोस्ट नहीं थी—यह नयी पोस्ट क्रिएट की गई है जिसके

चलते समादकीय वर्ग और पत्रकारों की स्वतन्त्रता मिट्टी में मिल गई, तो क्या मंत्री महोदय इसके बारे में सरकारी विभागों के कोई कार्यवाही करेंगे ताकि जो पुरानी परम्परा है वह स्टेट्समैन में कायम हो और जिन्होंने धमकी दी है उनके खिलाफ कोई कार्यवाही की जायेगी? टैक्सी, स्कूटर, टेलीफोन आदि की सुविधा जिनसे संचार की सुविधा बनी रहे, सारी खवरो को इकट्ठा कर पायें उसके लिए भी क्या आप लेबर विभाग से या जो भी विभाग हो, मैं नहीं जानता लेकिन सरकार एक ही है, तो क्या इस तरह की विभिन्न कार्यवाहियां करेंगे और सदन को आश्वस्त करेंगे कि जैसे पहले स्टेट्समैन सरकारी प्रभाव से और बड़ी पूंजी के प्रभाव से मुक्त था उसी तरह से भविष्य में भी रहेगा ?

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL: Sir, in their memorandum and articles of association, one of the things which the *Statesman* have, in principle kept for themselves; says: "Code of principles of democratic Government and democracy." I hope they will understand after all these questions, what is the democratic wish of the country, and they will understand how this House is reacting from all sides to their present method of functioning. I hope no further action will be needed if they heed to what the country is feeling, because if they feel that democracy is to be preserved then the democratic wish is being expressed here.

So far as the particular incident is concerned, which Shri Madhu Limaye has pointed out, as I have said just now, when the deputation came to meet me that the incident occurred in the Labour Court, I was told that the presiding judge of the Labour Court has taken cognizance of that, and I hope something will happen.

श्री मधु लिमये : प्रिजाइडिंग आफिसर ने कहा लेकिन वे इतने उर्दंड थे कि जज के कहने के बाद भी माफी मांगने से इनकार किया—क्या यह बात सही है ?

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL: It is difficult for me to say yes or no, but that is what I was told.

श्री मधु लिमये : तो आप जानकारी हासिल करके बतलायें लेकिन मेरी जानकारी है कि प्रिजाइडिंग आफिसर ने कहा आप माफी मांगिये लेकिन उन्होंने माफी मांगने से इनकार किया ।

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL: I will check it up.

SHRI HARI KISHORE SINGH: I understand that the whole trouble has started after the talk of diffusion of ownership of the press. May I know from the Government whether it is aware of the fact that after this talk of delinking the press from monopoly houses, the *Statesman* management has started harassing the correspondents by cutting down their facilities such as transport convenience, telephone facilities and other allowances, and if that is so, what steps do the Government propose to take? I was very surprised to hear from the Minister that while the articles of association of the *Statesman* were changed, the Government sat tight and did not do anything. How is it that the articles of association were permitted to be changed, which has eroded the freedom of the press and of expression in the *Statesman*?

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL: It is difficult for me to say in terms of time when this difficulty started. In any case the *Statesman*'s difficulty started definitely when Mr. Pran Chopra, former editor of the *Statesman* asserted himself and it is understood that the board of trustees stood by him and that is why not only the Editor but the board of trustees also were got rid of. This has happened in 1968; it has happened as a coincidence that in the last five or six years we have been seriously thinking of delinking of the Press, etc.

श्री शंकर दयाल सिंह : माननीय अध्यक्ष महोदय, अखबारों की स्वतन्त्रता का जब जब प्रश्न उठा है तो जनता और सरकार दोनों ने जागरूकता का परिचय दिया है, इस सन्दर्भ

में मैं यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि सभी स्टेट्समैन को लेकर जो एक बहुत बड़ी संयोजना पत्रकार जगत के सामने उपस्थित हो गई है उसको ध्यान में रखते हुए क्या कोई संविलम्ब उच्चस्तरीय कमेटी बनायेंगे जो एक हफ्ते के अन्दर इसकी जांच करके धायको रिपोर्ट दे और तत्काल धाय उस पर कब्ज उठायें ?

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL: This consists of two parts. So far as articles, etc. are concerned, I am given to understand that the Company Law is looking into it. So far as freedom of expression is concerned, we shall try to assert and see that freedom of expression, not as a Government but as part of this House, as preserved in every institution which is given that right under the Constitution.

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA: In view of the fact that the proprietorship of *Statesman* rests in the hands of a consortium of some of the big monopoly houses in this country, such as the Tatas, Marwari, Andrew Yule and so on and in view of the real difficulty of any independent-minded editor in getting along with the proprietors of this type—the Minister has already referred to Mr. Pran Chopra's case; there are other cases also—I should like to know specifically from the Minister whether the Government has the capacity, how does it expect to uphold the freedom of the press for which he expressed so much concern? What concrete steps can the Government take other than bringing in the legislation for diffusion of the ownership of the press which seems to have been indefinitely shelved? What other steps have the Government in their mind, which will at least give us confidence that the freedom of the Press is not going to be limited to words only where such big monopoly houses are concerned?

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL: The question of shelving that measure does not arise. We are committed to delinking and we shall bring forth measures in this respect... (Interruptions) I hope it will not be long time. We have begun trying to evolve methods and measures whereby delinking

can take place... (Interruptions) So far as my friend's contention that this paper and some other papers are being controlled by big industrialists, that is a fact to which we agree and that is why we are keen. We are committed that the delinking must take place.

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA: My question was whether there are any other measures by which they can uphold the freedom of the Press in cases like this.

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL: I think freedom of the press can be restored only when those interests which are known monopoly interests are eliminated and that is the main idea; nothing short of that will serve the purpose.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: This paper, *Statesman* used to be owned by Andrew Yule Company and people like Lord Cathew and Sir David Yule ran it to protect the British monopoly interests in the country. The ownership has changed to some extent. They have planted as managing director Mr. Irani on a monthly salary of Rs. 13,500, this is Mr. Gujral's *garibi hatao*. Whilst the Government is talking in terms of removing IAS officers from professional spheres and replacing them by professionals like engineers, doctors, etc., in the *Statesman* the reverse is the process. Today the Editor has not even the functional power and if a reporter or correspondent wants some taxi hire or a typewriter or something else, the Editor has not the power to give him the clearance. It has to go to the managing director or one of their henchmen. A manager of *Statesman*, Mr. Santoshnath, went to the UN ILO conference as the employers' representative and he is the Labour Correspondent. The news are thoroughly controlled and news about the opposition is completely blacked out by the *Statesman* management and the Government jointly. Is it a fact that one of the Delhi manager's wife, Mrs.—I do not want to mention the name—is the interior decorator for decorating Mr. Irani's house at No. 28 Tughlak Road...

MR. SPEAKER: I am not allowing it. You are bringing in individuals who are not present in the House.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: I shall re-frame the question.

MR. SPEAKER: You will make it worse.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: No, Sir. I assure you. Will the Minister kindly tell us whether it is a fact that a manager of *Statesman* who had gone to ILO as the employers' representative is the labour correspondent getting two columns for writing on labour issues?

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL: I do not know; I will make enquiries.

श्री राम सहाय पांडे : श्रीमन्, प्रेस स्वातन्त्र्य के संदर्भ में यह जितने बड़े बड़े समाचार-पत्र हैं वे बड़े बड़े मोटे उद्योगपतियों के हैं और उनके मोटापे का सब से बड़ा कारण सरकार है। आप इन समाचार-पत्रों को 25 वर्ष पहले की जिन्दगी को देखिये। आज इंडियन एक्सप्रेस की नारमन प्वाइंट पर बड़ी बिल्डिंग बनी है। सारे समाचार-पत्रों में चार, पांच मंजरी के जो पत्र हैं उन्होंने बड़ी सम्पत्ति अर्जित की है, बड़े भवन बनाये हैं। आज जब डीलिकिंग की बात हो रही है तब उनका व्यवहार जो वहाँ काम करने वाले कर्मचारी हैं, चाहे बड़े हों या छोटे हों, उन के प्रति विनम्रता का नहीं रहा। जैसा हमारे मित्र माननीय चन्द्रलाल चन्द्रकार ने प्रश्न उठाया था कि "आज" समाचार-पत्र के पार्लियामेंटरी कर्स्पोंडेंट श्री जयदीन चतुर्वेदी को जब प्रधान मंत्री कैनाडा जा रही थी तो उनके साथ जाने का निमन्त्रण दिया गया। वह बेचारे इन निमन्त्रण को पाकर कैनाडा नहीं गये क्योंकि मैनेजमेंट अपने प्रतीजे को भेजना चाहता था

MR. SPEAKER: You are not asking a question. Ask a question.

श्री राम सहाय पांडे : मालिक अपने प्रतीजे को भेजना चाहते थे। वही गये श्री

नहीं और इस प्रकार उनको खरिद से निकाल दिया गया। इस संदर्भ में क्या मैं किसी महोदय जी से जान सकता हूँ कि उनकी खरिद की सुझा के सम्बन्ध में आपके यहाँ कोई प्रासधान है, जब कि वह समाचार-पत्र आप की ही मजद से मोटे हुए हैं।

MR. SPEAKER: No question is being asked. If the Minister could make out anything, he may reply.

SHRI MURASOLI MARAN: As I understand it, the crux of the problem which causes a lot of concern to us is the supremacy and the freedom of the editorial side has been eroded in this instance of *Statesman*. May I know whether the Minister is prepared to refer this problem to the Press Council and whether the Minister is satisfied that the Press Council can solve the problem? Secondly, in this particular case *Statesman* happens to be a commercial newspaper. Now every party has its own organ. Let us suppose tomorrow the *National Herald*, which is the spokesman or mouth-piece of the ruling party. (Interruptions)

SHRI JAGANATHARAO JOSHI: He said "suppose".

SHRI MURASOLI MARAN: Every party has its own organ. Suppose the editor of *National Herald*, or the editor of a newspaper which is committed to a particular party as its official organ becomes a turncoat and starts writing against a particular philosophy of the ruling party. What is the position? Which shall prevail—the editorial freedom or the particular commitment of that party? I want a clarification from the Minister.

MR. SPEAKER: The question is about the High-handed methods of the management of the *Statesman* towards journalists. Now its scope is extended to the freedom of the press, instances are given and a question is asked that if they start writing like this, what will happen. After all, this is not a debate. A question can be asked only for factual information. Why do you go out of the scope of the question?

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL: Since a question has been asked and you have permitted me to reply to it, I may say that there is a basic difference between commercial newspapers and those papers which claim to be party organs. Everybody knows that in a party paper the policies of the party are being projected. If you exclude them, by and large the press in this country is free.

SHRI MURASOLI MARAN: Suppose the editor of a party paper becomes a turncoat and writes against the philosophy of the party?

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL: I cannot reply to a theoretical question. I can only give a general projection. In order to ensure the freedom of the press the supremacy of the editor must be there. Only then the constitutional guarantees about the freedom of the press become really effective. About reference of the problem to the Press Council, it is a suggestion which we will consider.

SHRI ANANTRAO PATIL: There has been more and more encroachment by the newspaper management on the editorial freedom and the Minister has also admitted this fact. May I know whether this important and basic issue has been referred to the Press Council, which has been established for maintaining the freedom of the press and improving the standard of journalism and, if not, why not?

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL: Recently, the Association wrote a letter to the editor, a copy of which was sent to me. I am quoting a paragraph from that letter. It pertains to the defutation meeting. I quote:

"After reading the resolution, the witness asked whether we had taken up our problems with you—that is, the editor—and what you had to say about it. He was told that, as we understand the situation, you—that is, the editor—did not hold the authority and the Board of Directors of the Statesman Ltd. had told you that you should confine yourself to editorial matters and

that the Managing Director was the sole authority in other matters."

This is the issue which I will examine from the point of view if I can refer it to the Press Council.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA A: has been pointed out by Limaye, the editorial comments show a balanced view of the news and also help in getting a correct publicity to certain reports. The correspondents of the *Statesman* were becoming bold and critical of the Government side or of the Opposition side. In view of this, there has been a peculiar discrimination of the news that appear in the Delhi edition of *Statesman* and in the Calcutta edition of *Statesman*. Some kind of news are published in Delhi and some kind of news are blacked out in Calcutta. May I know whether it is a fact that the Chief Minister of West Bengal has been putting a pressure on the management.....
(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Please be relevant.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: I know it. I am in possession of the facts.

The Chief Minister of West Bengal has been putting a pressure on the management of *Statesman* not to give publicity to Opposition view-point in the Calcutta edition of *Statesman*. I want to know whether the Government will inquire into the matter. There is a discrimination between the news appearing in Delhi *Statesman* and Calcutta *Statesman*. They have utilised the management of *Statesman* for their own benefit. The *Statesman* was critical about the Government attitude. The management was pressurised to help the Government to suppress the freedom of editor, news editor and correspondents. May I know whether the Government will look into the whole matter?

MR. SPEAKER: The Question is about high-handedness of the management towards journalists and other employees. This is too much beyond the scope of the Question. It is not a general discussion about the policy of the *Statesman* or other matters.

दुनिया के किसी बिस्ते पर ऐसा नहीं होता है कि दो तीस से ज्यादा हों। मैं इधर दो खत्म करता हूँ तो उधर चार खड़े हो जाते हैं और इधर चार खत्म करता हूँ तो उधर दस खड़े हो जाते हैं।

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: I swear I am in possession of the facts that there has been a pressure by the Chief Minister of West Bengal on the management of *Statesman* to black out news that appear in Delhi edition of *Statesman* and to curtail the editorial rights of news editors and correspondents.

श्री सच्चिदानंद : पूंजी वाले और आप दोनों गड़बड़ी कर रहे हैं।

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL: May I say that Shri Samar Guha who is a very senior Member of this House and a very leading Member in public life should not make a statement like this... (*Interruptions*) I can only say this.....

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: I know it; I am in possession of the facts.

सच्यक्त सहोदय : इतना जोश में आने है ? बीमार हो जाऊंगे कभी।

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL: I want to say categorically that there has been no pressure on any newspaper including the *Statesman*.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: Pressure has been brought on the management not to publish certain things. You have to set up a Parliamentary Committee to find out whether there has really been any pressure or not. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI KRISHNA CHANDRA HALDER: I want to know from the hon. Minister whether Mr. C. R. Irani, as Managing Director, has usurped the rights and powers of the Editorial Board and whether the *Statesman* has invested Rs. 1 lakh in Nachiketa Publications started by Mr. A. B. Shah and which is financed by CIA....

MR. SPEAKER: I am not allowing it. It is not relevant to the main Question. It is beyond the scope of the question.

SHRI KRISHNA CHANDRA HALDER: I want to know whether every newspaper in India has submitted the needed details to the fact-finding committee set up by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting but the *Statesman* has decided to go to the court. I want to know whether this is a fact or not and what steps are going to be taken against the *Statesman*.

MR. SPEAKER: I am sorry, it is not relevant to the subject of the main Question.

Mr. Banerjee.

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE: This is the memorandum submitted to the hon. Minister by the employees of the *Statesman*. The *Statesman* has no money to pay to its employees as interim relief as demanded by them till the appointment of the Wage Board. But I want to know whether it is a fact that Mr. Irani, the Managing Director, had paid a sum of Rs. 1 lakh to the publication called Nachiketa which is connected with the Congress culture and freedom organisation, said to be financed by the CIA.

MR. SPEAKER: It is not relevant to the main question.

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE: My question is whether it is a fact that this particular publication has been taken over by the *Statesman* by paying another one lakh of rupees. (*Interruption*) It is contained in the Memorandum. Let him say yes or no...

MR. SPEAKER: Why should I ask him? It is not at all relevant.

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE: Let him say whether he has any information or not. I am talking about the *Statesman*, I am not talking about any other paper. They are unable to pay its employees on the ground that they are not having money, but they had paid Rs. 1 lakh to Nachi-

Keta Publication and have ultimately taken it over by paying another Rs 1 lakh. I want to know whether it is a fact or not.

MR. SPEAKER It has nothing to do with this. It is not a relevant question at all.

SHRI S M BANERJEE Sir, this is concerning the *Statesman*. Let him say yes or no.

MR. SPEAKER: It has no relevance to the main Question.

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE. My question is specific. They have no money to pay to their employees. But, here, Mr. Israni has paid Rs. 1 lakh to the Nachiketa publication which is an organ of CLA. I want to know whether it is a fact or not

MR. SPEAKER You are bringing in allegations and names of those persons who are not present in this House or in a position to defend themselves. I am very sorry, I cannot allow this.

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA At least that part of the question can surely be answered.

MR. SPEAKER Which part?

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA Irrespective of any comments, about the other publication he can answer whether the *Statesman* which claims to have no money to pay its employees, has actually invested Rs 1 lakh in some other publication.

MR. SPEAKER That is right. No names should be involved.

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL I am unable to say anything about it. This has been referred to and I am asking them to look into it.

SHRI P. G. MAVALANKAR. As you rightly pointed out, Mr. Speaker, Sir, this question originally was about the high-handed methods of the *Statesman*

But the Minister while giving several replies has chosen to expand the scope of the question and has gone into the whole question of the freedom of Press. Therefore, since the Minister has chosen to expand the scope of the Short Notice Question by quoting even from Mr. Setalvad's book, how it is going to advance.

MR. SPEAKER Please come with your question.

घाने जा कुछ पूछना है, वह प्रश्न की शकल में पूछिये। घाप तो बहुत में पट सके हैं।

SHRI P. G. MAVALANKAR: * *

SHRI I K GUJRAL: * *

MR. SPEAKER If you will see the proceedings, you will find that he was making these allegations. I expressly told him that he was not putting questions but that he was making allegations after allegations against him. Why should you disturb the atmosphere of the House? Rather than asking a question which is relevant why are you making allegations after allegations against the Minister?

I told the Minister that these are mere allegations; he need not answer.

PROF MADHU DANDAVATE: What is the wrong with the allegation?

अवकाश महोदय: घाप तो जो मर्जी हो कहते जाये और दूसरा एनाय हो कर रीएक्ट करे तो वह बुरा हो गया। घाप जब ऐडवा-स्फेयर को खराब करते हैं और फिर खोर करते हैं।

श्री अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी: मेरा व्यवस्था का प्रश्न है।

अवकाश महोदय: व्यवस्था का प्रश्न दोनों बरक से करिए।

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: Sir, I rise on a point of order.

MR. SPEAKER: Despite my warning to him not to side-track but to ask questions, allegations after allegations and all that are made against the Minister.

श्री अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी : अध्यक्ष महोदय, अगर ऐसा था तो आप वह इन्वेन्शन डिसएलाऊ कर सकते थे, आप उसे कार्यवाही में से निकाल सकते थे। लेकिन आप मंत्री को किसी मेम्बर की नीयत पर झक करने की इजाजत नहीं दे सकते। मंत्री महोदय उनके मवाल पर एतराज कर सकते थे **

MR. SPEAKER: The point of order should not be one-sided. It was relevant for him to ask questions. But, he should not side-track and make all sorts of allegations.

श्री अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी : आप उस को डिसएलाऊ कर सकते थे।

Mr. SPEAKER: I told him that he was not asking questions. But, he was making allegations after allegations. I shall see if it is objectionable.

श्री अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी : आप इन का मवाल देखिये और इन का जवाब देखिये। ब्यवधान. . .

MR. SPEAKER: All I can do is to disallow the questions and answers on both sides.

No more questions. I have said that everything said is expunged.

Now, Shri Nitiraj Singh Chaudhary.

श्री हुकम चन्द कछवाय : अध्यक्ष महोदय मैं प्रारंभ से खड़ा हो रहा हूँ, आप मुझे एक प्रश्न पूछने की इजाजत दीजिये।

अध्यक्ष महोदय : एक बंटे से खड़ा हो गया, अब छोड़िये इस की।

अच्छा पूछिये।

श्री हुकम चन्द कछवाय : श्री मंत्री महोदय ने मधु लिमये जी के प्रश्न के उत्तर में इस बात को स्वीकार किया है कि यह प्रबन्धक अब इस प्रकार की मड़बड़ी को समाप्त कर देवे। इस से साफ जाहिर है कि मंत्री महोदय स्वयं चाहते थे कि मालिकों को इस प्रकार से दबाया जाय, यही अच्छा मौका है सवाल पूछने के लिए, तो मैं यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि जो प्रबन्धक सरकार का फेवर करे उसके खिलाफ कोई सवाल यहाँ नहीं उठ सकता और जो सरकार की नीति की झालोचना करे उसके ऊपर मंत्री महोदय यह सवाल यहाँ से धाते हैं ?

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL: It is a strange type of question. May I submit that an allegation was made....

MR. SPEAKER: Kindly, let him not go into that matter again.

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL: I am not going into that. I am replying to his question. I was saying that my hon. friend Shri Samar Guha had felt that the management was under our pressure, and here my hon. friend Shri Kachwai feels that they are under our pressure. The two are self-contradictory. That is not the question at issue now; the main issue is that a working journalist had represented to me and given all the documents. This issue, definitely, as I put it to the House is, freedom of expression for editors and journalists, and I thought that all sides of the House would be equally concerned about it. So, if my hon. friend feels that the management has a case, I do not think that it is fair to this basic concept that freedom of expression must be preserved at all cost.