

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Bhupesh Gupta, I have said I am going to fix up a time.

CALLING ATTENTION TO A MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

Reported Agreement on the Exchange of News between the Press Trust of India and the Inter Press Service, Rome

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, Calling Attention, Shri Shrikant Verma.

SHRI SHRIKANT VERMA (Madhya Pradesh): Sir, I beg to call the attention of the Minister of Information and Broadcasting to the reported agreement on the exchange of news between the Press Trust of India and the Inter Press Service, Rome.

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI LAL K. ADVANI): Sir, hon. Members will recall my statement of 14th November, 1977 on the dismantling of Samachar and restoration of the *status quo ante* with the revival of the four news agencies in the country. On the matter of India's continued participation in the Press Agencies Pool of Non-aligned Countries, I had expressed the hope that it would be possible for each of the four agencies to participate individually or jointly through some co-operative arrangements in the Press Agencies Pool.

2. Following this, and in line with India's commitment to continue participation in the Press Agencies Pool of Non-aligned Countries, it was suggested to P.T.I. and U.N.I. that they might consider some kind of joint manning of the News Pool Desk, associating also in some suitable manner, the other two agencies viz.

Hindustan Samachar and Samachar Bharati, P.T.I., however, came out strongly against this consortium idea and informed Government that "the Board felt that P.T.I. alone should be in sole charge of the Pool". The Pool Desk thus continued to be manned by P.T.I. as indeed it was since 14th April 1978, when the P.T.I. resumed its functioning.

3. One of the major drawbacks in the effective functioning of the Press Agencies Pool noticed at the second meeting of the Coordination Committee at Jakarta was lack of efficient communication channels. The meeting had recommended urgent action on establishing satellite communication and other modern means to facilitate quick exchange of news. P.T.I.'s agreement with Inter Press Service is an important step in this direction, making available to P.T.I., I.P.S.'s advanced and computerised communication net-work.

4. A copy of P.T.I.'s agreement with I.P.S. has been laid today on the Table of this Sabha, in reply to Starred Question No. 252. [Vide cols. 51—54 *supra*]. The agreement speaks for itself. I might inform the Honourable Members here that P.T.I. and U.N.I. had very actively participated in the negotiations with I.P.S. which finally led to this agreement. At no stage during these discussions did P.T.I. give the slightest indication that they had any reservations in this regard.

5. In December last, however, some P.T.I. Board members met me and expressed reservations on the standing, utility and credibility of I.P.S. I had on that occasion made it clear that all that Government were anxious about was that the Pool communication facilities should be improved. In a formal communication, P.T.I. were informed that I.P.S. was only one of the instruments that could be utilised and that also as a carrier of

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news. If there were other possibilities, these could also be explored. Government were on their part satisfied about the standing of the I.P.S. after making due verifications.

6. In February 1979, P.T.I., while reiterating their reservations about the IPS and even the Press Agencies Pool itself, informed the Government that if Government desired, P.T.I. was willing to give I.P.S. a trial for six months.

7. I would like to assure the Honorable Members that Government are fully committed to the freedom of the Press and this includes the independent functioning of the News Agencies. There can be no question of any pressure being brought to bear on P.T.I. or any other news agency for that matter. At the same time, Government have a commitment towards the Pool and as such, an obligation and indeed a responsibility, to explore all possible avenues for its better and more efficient functioning. It was in this context that co-operation of P.T.I. had been sought by suggesting utilisation of I.P.S.

[Mr. Deputy Chairman in the Chair]

SHRI SHRIKANT VERMA. The hon. Minister of Information and Broadcasting is in the habit of misleading the House. This is the third time when he is misleading this House by saying that no pressure was exerted on the PTI. There are many things to his credit, such as blacklisting of journalists and Members of Parliament, and non-promotion of DDG since he belongs to the minority community. Now, this forced agreement between the Press Trust of India and the Inter Press Service is one more feather on his cap.

I am not opposed to the idea of Non-aligned News Pool. In fact the entire idea was mooted during the Congress regime and we have always supported and held that such an Agency would be to the best

interests of the non-aligned countries because this would give the authentic news about the developments, not only political, but also social and economic, etc. in the non-aligned countries. But the manner in which this agreement was brought is most disgraceful and shameful. I remember that Mr. Advani and his colleagues accused the previous Government of forming Samachar at gun point. I think, now, this agreement has been brought into existence at the gun point. There is no difference. The only difference is that this time the bureaucrats were different and the Minister is different. But there is also another difference, namely, the sterner looks of Mr. V. C. Shukla were less deceptive than the smiling face of Mr. Advani.

How was this agreement brought into existence? Mr. D. R. Mankekar happened to be the Government's nominee on the co-ordinating committee of the Non-aligned Agency Pool. I do not know since when Mr. Mankekar started believing in non-alignment and Non-aligned News Pool. I do not want to challenge his credentials, although I know what he believes in and what are his practices.

Sir, Mr. Mankekar is, what I would describe, 'your most obedient servant'. He went to the Press Trust of India and he told Mr. Neelkantan, Acting General Manager of PTI that the Government will be very unhappy if the agreement between IPS and PTI is not brought about, because the Government considers it essential to have a non-aligned news pool. Now, in principle, there is nothing wrong in it. I have nothing to say against IPS. I think it is Government's job. If the Government did any wrong, it will suffer. It will come to know tomorrow what wrong it has done. I do not want to comment on the antecedents of IPS. I will, however, certainly comment, Sir—and permit me to comment—that Mr. Mankekar as the nominee of the news pool

exerted pressure, and a note was circulated by Mr. Neelkantam. What is that note? The note says—I quote:

“There had been a veiled hint from Mr. Mankekar that if we do not run the pool and sign the agreement, the Government would be compelled to set up some agency to operate the pool, as it was deeply committed to the non-aligned agencies pool. In that event, either the subscription paid by the AIR to PTI may be reduced or the AIR may re-consider its decision whether to subscribe to the PTI service at all.”

Still, Sir, Mr. Advani maintains the position that the Government has not exerted any pressure. If this is not a pressure, then what is it?

I will cite one more example. It is essential. The Minister has said in his statement that at no stage the PTI said that it does not want an agreement. It often conveyed its protest to the Government, but the Government never cared. On December 19 last year, Chairman, PTI, with his colleagues—well, who were the colleagues? Mr. C. R. Irani, Mr. P. K. Roy, Mr. Ramesh Chander—met the Minister and explained why the PTI did not wish to sign the agreement. After this, the Joint Secretary in the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting wrote two letters to Chairman, PTI, telling him and conveying him that the Government is fully committed to the obligations of the non-aligned news pool. Now, Sir, what is it if not pressure? Now, if the Government is committed, that does not mean that the PTI is also committed. PTI is free to believe in the non-aligned news pool or not to believe in it. Again, Sir, the Chairman resisted pressure. On January 31st last, he wrote to the Minister that it was not possible for the PTI to enter into an agreement with the Press and yet the Government forced the PTI to enter into an agreement. How? On February 9, the Chairman's let-

ter was ratified by the Board of Directors of the Press Trust of India. However, as Mr. Irani has said in his statement, long statement—and I have no reason to doubt it because the Government has not contradicted or the members of the Board have not contradicted the statement, so I think what he has stated is based on facts, although I am not an admirer of Mr. Irani—he has said that according to the minutes of the same meeting, it was decided to try Inter press service as an experiment for six months, terminable on a month's notice.

Now, Sir, how did it happen that in the same meeting, two contradictory things happened? One was the Chairman's letter under protest was ratified and in the same meeting permission was given to PTI to run this on experimental basis. These were two contradictory things. But it did happen. It is amazing; it is surprising. Who exerted pressure and how? That also Mr. Irani has explained that a Director of the Board of PTI, Mr. Ashok Sarkar, was not present in the meeting, and Mr. Irani had left by that time; probably it was because he had another engagement. In the absence of these two Directors, the Government pressed the other Directors present at the meeting to agree to the agreement. Now, Sir, it is most disgraceful. It is possible that the other Directors did not have that much courage. We know what metal they are made of. We know who these proprietors are and how the Government deals with them. Only the other day, Mr. Girilal Jain, a distinguished Editor, commented upon the freedom of the press. *Time bell rings*). He said that the previous Government used to deal with the Editors and the present Government deals with the proprietors. He cited an example that when the Patna Correspondent of the *Times of India* was not transferred, the two firms of the Jains were raided by the Government. Since we know that the style of functioning of the

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present Government has not changed much from the style of the previous Government, we can understand and I can believe Mr. Irani's statement. I have no reason not to believe it. I think that nothing has been done by the Government to contradict it or to substantiate that the Government did not have any hand in this shady deal. Sir, Mr. Advani is a very pious man. He threatened to resign over the Kanti Desai issue and emerged as a hero and the constituent to which he belonged also emerged as a stronger constituent after that. This is also an issue on which he should resign. The entire press world is commenting on this. The entire press world feels concerned about it. *(Time-bell rings)*. I think that in all fairness Mr. Advani should tender his resignation because something which is more shady than the formation of Samachar has taken place.

Sir, I would like to know from the Minister whether he is prepared to appoint a committee to inquire whether this agreement has been signed under force or not, whether any pressure was exerted by the Ministry or not and whether he would appoint a committee to look into the whole thing or just pass it on to history and throw the whole thing into the dustbin. I would like to have a categorical reply from him. If he is really honest, then he should appoint a committee.

SHRI LAL K. ADVANI: Sir, in the statement which I have made to the House, I have traced the course of events. Even after that the hon. Member has chosen to make observations saying that pressure had been exerted on the PTI to enter into this agreement. He has cited from a note of the Acting General Manager of the PTI to substantiate it. I think that I may start with this note itself at the outset because that is the only basis for his allegation. I have gone through this note again and I notice

that while it is convenient to quote one part of it, it is inconvenient to refer to the other part. The note says and this portion has been quoted by the hon. Member:

"There had been a veiled hint from Mr. Mankekar that if we did not run the pool and sign the agreement, the Government would be compelled to set up some agency to operate the pool as it was deeply committed to the Non-Aligned News Agencies Pool. In that event, either the subscription paid by the AIR to PTI may be reduced or the AIR may reconsider its decision whether to subscribe to the PTI services at all."

This portion has been quoted. But the immediate sentence thereafter has not been quoted. I would quote that because it is more relevant:

"But there have been no such hints either from the Minister or the Secretary or any other responsible official of the I&B Ministry, although one of the Under Secretaries who deals with the matter said that the Government would have to set up some agency to operate the Pool."

This sentence is quietly skipped over, glossed over and no one refers to it. In this context, I would like to make it very clear that I am not shifting the responsibility of this matter to anyone in the Ministry. I hold myself fully responsible so far as this particular part of decision-making, in respect of the Non-Aligned News Pool, is concerned. I may mention that the Chairman of the PTI Board along with a few of his colleagues met me and expressed their own reservations not only about the IPS proposed agreement but even about the Non-Aligned News Pool, that there should be no Non-Aligned News Pool, that this is not proper. At that stage I indicated what has been attributed in this note to the Under Secretary. I said that so far as this Government is concerned when it decided to dismantle the

Samachar, at that very stage it decided to continue the Non-Aligned News Pool, though the Non-Aligned News Pool was created during the emergency. This Government honestly believes that the Non-Aligned News Pool is a very proper forum to supplement information that is being transmitted by the western media about global activities and particularly about the activities in the developing countries. The Non-Aligned News Pool can, in course of time, serve a very useful purpose to supplement the major world news agencies without trying to supplant them.

Now, Sir, there are two aspects which must be distinguished. Number one, the Non-Aligned News Pool about which the Government is committed and when the Government is committed as the Joint Secretary told the PTI, I do not think that this is any kind of pressurising. When we said that we want to continue the Non-Aligned News Pool, the PTI insisted that they must run it. We wanted all the agencies to run it as a consortium. The PTI said, we must run it alone. Later on, the Hindi news agencies, the Samachar Bharati and the Hindustan Samachar, kept approaching us and saying that if the PTI or some members of the Board, have reservations in regard to the Non-Aligned News Pool, why are you not allowing us to run it? Allow us to run it, we will run it. It is at that stage that the Chairman himself had come to express certain reservations. I told him that it is for you to decide whether you want to run it or whether you do not want to run it and if you cannot run it or if you have any reservations in regard to the utility of the News Pool, then the Government would make alternative arrangements. This has been said over and over again. And they themselves in one of their letters or two of their letters have said, if this does not succeed then the Government should make alternative arrangements. I do not see how this amounts to pressurising.

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SHRI SHRIKANT VERMA: Under whose authority Mr. Mankekar has said that the Government will withdraw.

SHRI LAL K. ADVANI: I do not know if he has said it. Since this charge has been made, he is not here. He is abroad. He is about to return in a couple of days. I am sure he will deal with it at his own level. But so far as the Government is concerned...

SHRI SHRIKANT VERMA: If he is proved a liar, will you withdraw him? Will you ask him to resign? (Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Order please.

SHRI LAL K. ADVANI: I am at the moment dealing with the Government's. . . .

DR. BHAI MAHAVIR (Madhya Pradesh): And if he is proved correct will the hon. Member resign?

SHRI LAL K. ADVANI: . . . relations with the PTI and the Government's relations with the PTI as conceded even by the note which has been cited against me and secondly, as it appears in the conversation and the dialogue that I have had with the members of the Board, including the Chairman, and thereafter in the letters that we have written to them. I am sure the members would have seen the statement of the Acting General Manager. This matter started at a seminar concluded by the AINEC. On the first day when this allegation was made I was not present there, though the Secretary of my Ministry was present at a subsequent stage of the seminar. On the second day I had been invited to attend the seminar. I learnt of it there and dealt with all the points one by one and pointed out how the Government has been correct in letter and in spirit. I told them that all our cards are

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on the table; nothing is behind hind the back. This is a Government which does not believe in any shady deals or doing things behind the back of anyone. Whatever we do, we do it here . . . (*Interruptions*) At that stage, the acting General Manager Mr. Nilakanthan was present. He was present when I replied to all the points. And I quote from no other paper except the *Statesman* because Mr. Irani has serious reservations to the non-aligned news pool and has, in a way, accused the PTI Board of taking a decision behind his back. That is the kind of accusation which implicitly he has made. This is what the *Statesman* of 30th April reports:

"Mr. Nilakanthan explained that there were two or three inter-press agencies and there was some confusion. The initial information of the PTI was that IPS was not noted for its credibility. In the light of this information, PTI informed the Government that it would be difficult for the PTI to associate itself with the IPS . . .".

This is the letter that was being referred to. It is true.

"But Government later on informed PTI that it had made its own enquiry both through Home Ministry as well as through Indian Embassy in Rome about the antecedents and the credibility of the organisation. The Government also informed the PTI that these enquiries revealed that there was nothing wrong with the IPS. In the light of this, the Government asked PTI to try the IPS circuits for six months for carrying Indian and non-aligned news to various parts of the world, he added. Mr. Nilakanthan said that the matter was reconsidered by the PTI Board at its meeting in February. The Board decided to try the IPS circuits for carrying Indian and non-aligned news for six months as an experimental measure and then review the situation. After this decision, the agreement was signed."

So, these are the hard facts; They expressed certain reservations. They asked us to make enquiries. We conveyed to them that we have made enquiries and this is the result of our enquiries. Now it is for you to decide. And they took a decision—by a majority, perhaps, or it was a unanimous decision—to which Mr. Irani has subsequently referred and said that it is true that majority decision has a value but minority also has a value, meaning that although he was in the minority in the Board, his view should not be ignored.

Now this is something which the Board should consider and not the Government. So far as the Government is concerned, I would like to reiterate once again that our approach in this regard is very clear. We are committed to press freedom which means freedom and independence of the news agencies to function freely. We are also committed to the non-aligned news pool to which all journalists may not be committed. Several agencies are there. If suppose, one agency has reservations in that regard, it can certainly say that it cannot work it and it is unable to work it because it does not believe in it. But here the situation is that from the very beginning, the insistence is by the PTI that we must work it and no one else should work it that we are not willing to work even in a consortium.

SHRI SHRIKANT VERMA: You are telling lies; not lies—I would not use that word—but I would say untruths . . . (*Interruptions*)

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: No interruptions.

SHRI LAL K. ADVANI: And furthermore. I may even add that ever since reservations started being expressed by a section of the Board about the non-aligned news pool the employees of the PTI have come to me and told me that this should not happen. The PTI employees are

keen that the non-aligned news pool should function and they said that they would like the PTI to run it.

SHRI BIPINPAL DAS (Assam): Sir, the background of this question is related to the question of non-aligned pool, as the hon. Minister has explained. It is known to the hon. Members why the proposal of non-aligned pool came up at the Algiers Summit in 1973 which was further approved at the Summit Conference of non-aligned nations at Colombo in 1976 and there was also subsequently a conference of the Information Ministers of the non-aligned countries in Delhi to give shape to the whole idea. Sir, the reason why this idea came up was that the giant international press agencies dominated the news service in the whole world. But they were catering to the needs of the developed world only and they did not care for the needs of the developing countries. They did not care to disseminate news about the activities of the developing world. That is why, the non-aligned countries felt very strongly that they must have a pool of their own. That is how this has come into existence, this pool business.

Now, I am glad that the Janata Government is committed to the non-aligned pool. I thought they had some reservations. But perhaps, the compulsions of foreign policy, which we have been following, make it unavoidable and they have to follow this particular line.

Then the question arose, who is to operate this pool from India. This question arose. You know, Sir the newspaper barons in this country over the years have been very much psychologically and intellectually tied up with international news agency giants like the Reuter, the Associated Press and so on. They cannot think of any other pool growing as a rival to these news agencies. This has been the psychological aspect of the newspaper barons in this country. There-

fore, I am not surprised that they have reservations. Sir, reservation is a mild word. They have hostility towards this idea of a non-aligned pool. There is no doubt about it. Sir, if I am not wrong—I do not think the hon. Minister is quite correct; if I am wrong, he will correct me—the UNI passed a resolution saying that they would have nothing to do with the non-aligned pool. PTI ultimately agreed, willy nilly, but when PTI undertook this job, the cost was found to be very high, because for 600—700 words per day, the cost was about a lakh of rupees per month and, therefore, it was not possible for the PTI alone to carry on the business. Hence arose the desirability or the need for having some link up with some other news agency, which will be in tune with the ideals and principles of the non-aligned pool and which will serve the cause of the non-aligned pool, the non-aligned countries and the developing countries. Therefore, this agency came up, this I.P.S.

Now, I am saying a few things about this. I am only stating facts. I am not pleading either for or against them. I am only stating facts. This IPS, as far as my information goes, is a co-operative run by journalists, working journalists alone, mainly from Latin America and the office-bearers are elected by the journalists themselves. Now, this agency was chosen by the Group of 77 as its Official Reporter at the Lima meeting in 1971. Now, there are some other facts which I would like to point out. The I.P.S. acts as a channel for distributing news from a number of national news agencies of the developing world concentrating, of course, on Latin America, but they are also trying to concentrate on Africa and West Asia. About 400 newspapers and institutions in Europe and Latin America subscribe to its service. The IPS has one advantage and that is it has a satellite of its own, providing for speedy transmission at a very low cost. It has its headquarters in Rome.

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Now, the IPS. has entered into agreements—this is very significant—with TANJUG of Yugoslavia, VEN-PRESS of Venezuela, INA of Iraq, AIN of Mozambique, JANA of Libya, Wafa (PLO) of Beirut, ANP of The Hague, APS of Algeria, AGER-PRESS of Rumania, NOTIMEX of Mexico, SHIHATA of Tanzania, TAP of Tunisia and ANGOP of Angola and some others. These facts give a true picture of what the IPS really is. Perhaps, this was the reason—I do not know—we chose to co-operate with the IPS. in order to advance the cause of the non-aligned pool.

What are the terms of the agreement? The hon Minister did not read out the terms of the agreement. If I am not wrong again, I would point out a few. The IPS. will transmit to India about 24,000 words a day and the PTI will transmit to the IPS. about 4,000 words from the pool through the satellite. Services are free of cost either side. PTI's obligation is to meet the cost of Rome-Delhi satellite link for 12 hours a day. Thirdly, PTI correspondents at U.N. and 20 other countries are allowed to send news on the IPS network free of cost to New Delhi. To compensate it, PTI will pay IPS Rs. 6,000 per month for its office expenses at New Delhi.

Fourthly, PTI is free-again, if I am not wrong—to kill any news or article from IPS and is entitled to edit or even re-write them.

These are the facts about the situation. If these facts are true, if I am correct in my grounds, to have an agreement with IPS there cannot be any objection. As an agency it will supplement—he has used the word "supplement", I will say to counter-act or fill up the gaps which have been created by the international news agencies' giants. I do not know what is the motivation of Mr. Irani's attack. I will put only a few questions to the hon. Minister.

Firstly, he says there was no pressure on PTI. If there was no pressure on PTI, why have the Government not contradicted so far the statement made by Mr. Irani? Why did they wait till today when the Calling Attention Motion has been moved? They should have clarified the matter earlier that there was no pressure at all.

Secondly, if there was pressure, if as Mr. Irani says there was pressure, that means there was reluctance on the part of PTI. That means PTI was not willing and the Government put pressure. If Mr. Irani's statement is to be believed, then it indicates, it follows logically that PTI was not a willing partner. I want to know the reason why. If PTI was not a willing partner to this, they did not want to enter into an agreement with IPS, why and on what ground? So my charge remains. The press barons of this country dominate UNI and PTI. The most unfortunate fact of the country is that both these news agencies are dominated by the press barons of this country, not by the working journalists. This is my grievance. And, therefore, they must have some reason. Either they are linked up with the old agencies like the Reuter, AP and all that and that is the hindrance, or they have some other reservations, I do not know. I want to know if PTI was unwilling—because the question of pressure would not come if they were willing; if the Government put pressure, they must have been unwilling—if they were unwilling I want to know from the Government why they were unwilling, why they were reluctant. He has used the word "reservation". What are the reservations of PTI regarding this agreement with IPS? I want to know this very clearly.

Sir, there are two or three other minor questions. I want to know whether this agreement has come into operation or not. If so, is it working satisfactorily? If not, is the

Government looking for any other news agency in the world with whom we can be linked up profitably, more usefully, more gainfully in order to further the cause of the Non-Aligned News Pool?

SHRI LAL K. ADVANI: Sir, the hon. Member has given very many details about the agreement which the PTI has had with the IPS. I did not refer to them in detail because the text of the agreement itself I have laid on the Table of the House. The more salient features of it, the hon. Member has already referred to. Any one can see that this is an agreement which not only gives the News Pool an advantage but also gives the PTI itself—the contracting party—a very great advantage inasmuch as PTI correspondents in 20 countries of the world, including the UN, Britain, France, Germany, Switzerland etc., would be able to transmit their messages through the satellite communication and for half an hour they will be able to use it without any additional expense. This is a very great advantage.

The hon. Member has referred to the control of agencies by press barons.

SHRI BIPINPAL DAS: My first question you have not answered. Why did you not contradict Mr. Irani's statement?

SHRI LAL K. ADVANI: Mr. Irani made the statement at the A.I.N.E.C. Seminar on the first day of the Seminar. As I said already, I was invited on the second day, and on that second day I contradicted the whole story which also appeared very prominently in all the papers. And thereafter he chose to address another press conference at which he cited this particular portion of Mr. Nilakanthan's note saying that Mr. Mankekar said this and he said that. To this also I have already replied. I have given full facts.

The hon'ble Member asked: Why did the PTI have reservations? In the beginning they might have had reservations as I myself had. When I heard the name of the IPS. I thought that it had something to do with that International Press Service which is supposed to have some kind of CIA. linkage. This is that IPS. about which certain documents had been circulated some months back involving certain senior journalists of this country with the CIA. I myself had certain doubts. They also might have had similar doubts. We sought to clarify that. After making necessary verifications we were given to understand that that is something entirely different from this. This is based in Rome whereas that is based in Geneva.

The second reservation they might have had was about the credibility of the whole thing. At least that is what they told us. They came and told us that they had certain reservations about the credibility and the nature of the link-up of this organisation. So if the Government is satisfied then it is all right. They asked me to satisfy myself. We proceeded to satisfy ourselves through the Ministry of External Affairs and the Ministry of Home Affairs. The decision that they have finally taken is also on that basis that now that the Government has satisfied itself about the antecedents and the link-up of this organisation they are willing to go into it if the Government desired on an experimental basis for a period of six months—formerly it was intended to be one year. When the PTI wanted it for six months, we agreed to six months.

By and large, this is the situation as it obtains today. This agreement has come into operation from April 21 last. And during the few days that it has functioned I can say that it has functioned satisfactorily. The output of words that we are able to transmit through the I.P.S. has increased from 800 to about 2,000 and we expect it to

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go to about 4,000. That was the original expectation.

SHRI BIPINPAL DAS: You are not looking for any other similar agency?

SHRI LAL K. ADVANI: If this works it would be very satisfactory even though, as I said, the Government's approach in this regard is that we want a communication channel. We want a carrier. In our letter to the P.T.I. also the Government said that we are willing to explore other possibilities also. This is the only one offer that has been made to us and we feel that it is a fair offer and we should accept it.

श्री योगेन्द्र शर्मा (बिहार): मान्यवर, मैंने जब अखबार में ईरानी साहब और आडवाणी साहब की नोक झोंक पढ़ी तो मैंने समझा कि यह आम तौर पर जिस तरह से नोक झोंक चलतो है उसी तरह चल रही है। परन्तु उसके बाद मैंने ईरानी साहब का प्रेस वयान पढ़ा जिसमें कि उन्होंने आम दिवस्टिंग की बात कही। उसको पढ़ने के बाद मुझको 'बेरहम सैथा मरोड़ मत बैया' कुछ उसी तरह की बात लगी... (Interruptions)

डा० भाई महावीर: आज कुछ रसिक हो रहे हैं शर्मा जी।

श्री योगेन्द्र शर्मा : लेकिन मेरी उत्सुकता बढ़ी कि आखिर बात क्या है और बात जो है वह यह है कि हमारे देश में जो सेठिया और बड़े बड़े इजारेदार हैं जिनका संबंध पश्चिम के विकसित इजारेदारों के साथ में है, न्यूज एजेंसियों के साथ है जिसके वे मालिक हैं उससे वे हटना नहीं चाहते हैं, उससे वे लगे रहना चाहते हैं। हमारे देश और दूसरे नान-एलाइन्ड देशों ने जो न्यूज पूल को सही नीति अख्तियार की है गुट निरपेक्ष देशों के हितों के लिए, वे उसके खिलाफ हैं। असली मुद्दे की जो बात है वह यह है और कुछ आडवाणी साहब भी जैसा हमने कहा कि नोंक-

झोंक के असर में है, इसलिए साफ-साफ बात नहीं बोलते हैं और साफ-साफ बोलते तो हम पूछेंगे इनसे कि क्या यह बात सही है कि यहां की एक न्यूज एजेंसी यू एन आई ने साफ इन्कार कर दिया कि हम इसके साथ यानि आई पी एस के साथ शिरकत नहीं करेंगे।

दूसरे, क्या यह बात सही है कि टाइम्स आफ इंडिया ग्रुप के अखबारों ने सम्पादकीय लिखा कि गुट-निरपेक्ष देश या विकासशील देशों के बीच क्या समानता है? कोई समानता नहीं है। सिर्फ एक बात की समानता है और वह यह है कि गरीबी की समानता है। गरीबी के अलावा नान-एलाइन्ड देशों में और किसी बात की समानता नहीं है। तो, यह उनका दृष्टिकोण जाहिर करता है, उनकी मनोवृत्ति जाहिर करता है। उनकी मनोवृत्ति यह है कि नान-एलाइन्ड मूवमेंट खत्म हो जाए, उनकी मनोवृत्ति है कि नान-एलाइन्ड ग्रुप ने जो न्यूज-पूल बनाने का फैसला किया है वह फैसला खटाई में रह जाए और आडवाणी साहब की भी मजबूरी है, हमारे पूरे देश के लिये भी मजबूरी है कि विकासशील देशों के साथ हमको रहना है, इस आन्दोलन में हमको रहना है, गुट-निरपेक्ष देशों के साथ रहना है, और गुट-निरपेक्ष देशों में रहकर हमें अपनी भूमिका अदा करनी है उसके बिना हम अपने देश के हितों की रक्षा नहीं कर सकते हैं।

मैं दूसरी बातों में नहीं जाना चाहता हूं कि क्या किया? मगर, हमको सन्तोष है कि कम से कम एक सवाल पर आप इन सेठिया अखबारों के दबाव में नहीं पड़े। मगर हम आपसे दूसरी बात जानना चाहेंगे जिसके बारे में सन्देह था। कुछ बातों में तो उन्होंने बतलाया। हम आपसे जानना चाहेंगे कि क्या यह बात सही नहीं है कि जो आई पी एस न्यूज एजेंसी है, उन्होंने कहा कि एक कोआपरेटिव चलाता है और यह कोआपरेटिव

[श्री योगेन्द्र शर्मा]

देती है उस पैसे को बंद करना चाहिए क्योंकि यह प्रेस स्वतंत्रता के नाम पर हमारी वैदेशिक नीति को निर्धारित नहीं कर सकते हैं और प्रभावित नहीं कर सकते हैं कि हम गुट-निरपेक्ष देशों से अलग हो जाएं या गुट-निरपेक्ष देशों से संबंध तोड़ दें या गुट-निरपेक्ष देशों के फैसले को हम फाड़ कर फेंक दें।

श्री लाल कृष्ण आडवाणी : उपसभापति जी, माननीय सदस्य का मैं बहुत आभारी हूं कि उन्होंने न केवल सरकार के और पी टी आई के निर्णय का पुरजोर समर्थन किया है बल्कि विस्तार से अनेक बातें कही कि हम को कितना लाभ है उस से। मैं इतना ही बल देना चाहूंगा कि इस में सरकार की कोई मजबूरी नहीं है। सरकार ने यह निर्णय सोचविचार कर लिया है। जिस समय हमने तय किया कि "समाचार" को चार भागों में विभक्त करना चाहिए उसी समय हमने यह भी निर्णय लिया कि नान-एलाइंड न्यूज पूल को ठीक प्रकार से चलाए रखना चाहिए। क्यों कि सरकार जनता के हित में है, देश के हित में है। मैं यह मानता हूं कि हमारी सरकार की जो नीति है देश के अन्दर पूरी स्वतंत्रता प्रेस को देना और अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय स्तर पर विकासशील देशों का जो रवैया है उस चार प्रसारण के बारे में उस के साथ तालमेल बनाये रखना और उनकी आवश्यकताओं को मद्देनजर रख कर यूनेस्को में और बाकी स्तरों पर एक दृष्टिकोण अपनाना उस के कारण हम एक प्रकार से कड़ी बन पाये हैं और दोनों हिस्सों से रेपर्ट बना पाये—एक तरफ पश्चिमी मीडिया जो यह समझ कर चलता है कि विकासशील देशों में प्रेस की आजादी जैसा कुछ नहीं है, वह स्पष्ट रूप से देख सकते हैं कि जहां तक भारत का सवाल है भारत में प्रेस की आजादी पूरे तौर पर कायम है। दूसरी तरफ विकासशील देश हैं जिन की अपनी समस्याएं हैं और जो अब भी कम्युनिकेशन्स की, प्रेस

की, टेलीव्हिजन और रेडियो की बात आती है तो अपनी समस्याओं के नजरिये से देखते हैं। उनको भी यह बात समझ में आती है कि भारत उन की समस्याओं के बारे में अध्ययन करके और उन की समस्याओं को समझ कर रवैया अपनाता है। नान-एलाइंड न्यूज पूल और उस के सम्बन्ध में लिये गये सभी निर्णय, जैसे आई पी एस का निर्णय, इसी बात की पुष्टि करते हैं।

मैं इस बात पर भी बल देना चाहता हूं कि वित्तीय दृष्टि से भी, धन की दृष्टि से भी आई पी एस के एरेंजमेंट के साथ हम अधिक शब्द बाहर भेज सकेंगे और कम पैसे में। मेरे पास कुछ आंकड़े हैं। 14 अप्रैल 1978 से लेकर आज तक हम ने जो रिडिमबर्समेंट किया है टैलेक्स बिल्स का और पूल आइटम्स के लिए वह ठीक 7.35 लाख था। अन्दाजा यह है कि आई पी एस-पीटीआई प्रोजेक्ट के कारण अगले साल में लगभग 2 लाख 76 हजार रुपए खर्च होंगे जिस का मतलब है कि खर्च हमारा कम होगा और हम शब्द अधिक बाहर भेज सकेंगे नान-एलाइंड पूल के माध्यम से और बाहर से जानकारी भी प्राप्त कर सकेंगे और पी टी आई के जो कारेस्पोंडेंट्स प्रमुख शहरों में बसे हुए हैं वे भी अपने समाचार यहां भेज सकेंगे। ये बहुत सारी सुविधाएं हम को प्राप्त हैं जिस के कारण हम समझते हैं कि यह समझौता उचित है। आई पी एस के बारे में माननीय सदस्य ने जो कहा है वह मोटे तौर पर सही है। यह जर्नलिस्ट्स का आर्गनाइजेशन है।

जहां तक हम ने सन्देह उस के बारे में व्यक्त किये, जानकारी करने की कोशिश की, सदन इस बात को स्वीकार करेगा कि जब देश की सब से बड़ी एजेंसी पी टी आई, उस के चेयरमैन, उस के बोर्ड के मेम्बर मेरे पास आकर अपनी आशंकाएं व्यक्त करे कि यह संस्था कैसी है, क्या है, आप हम को सलाह तो दे रहे हैं कि इस के साथ समझौता

ऐसा कोआपरेटिव है जिसके प्राधिकारियों का चुनाव इस न्यूज एजेंसी में काम करने वाले जो पत्रकार हैं वही चुनते हैं, दूसरे नहीं, कोई सेठिया मालिक इनके प्राधिकारियों का चुनाव नहीं करते। तीसरे, इसके शेयर पर कोई डिविडेंड नहीं दिया जाता है।

चौथे, यह तीन भाषाओं में अपने समाचारों और लेखों का प्रकाशन करता है और हमारे जैसे बहुभाषी देश के लिये यदि हम कोशिश करें तो भारत की दूसरी भाषाओं में भी प्रकाशन होने की सम्भावना हो सकती है। मगर हमारे यहाँ की न्यूज एजेंसी जो सेठों के हाथ में है इसके प्रति बहिष्कार का दृष्टिकोण रखता है। यह सच है। लेकिन एक सम्भावना खुलती है कि हम अपने बहुभाषी देश में दूसरी भाषाओं के माध्यम से भी हम समाचार और विचार के प्रसारण का काम कर सकते हैं।

आखिर में हम आपसे यह भी जानना चाहेंगे कि आखिर यह जानने का सवाल क्यों उठा, जब कि यद्वात हम समझते हैं कि सरकार के अधिकार में तो होगा ही कि 1971 के लोमा सम्मेलन में जो ग्रुप आफ 77 का गुट निरपेक्ष देशों का सम्मेलन हुआ था, उसमें इस एजेंसी ने यानी आई पी एस जिसके बारे में आपको शक हुआ कि इसमें सीआईए का हाथ तो नहीं है इस एजेंसी को अपना आफिशियल रिपोर्टर लोमा सम्मेलन ने नियुक्त किया था। आखिर में इन से जानना चाहूंगा कि यह जो टर्म्स आफ एग्रीमेन्ट के बारे में बातें हुई हैं, और ईरानी साहब ने भी अपने प्रेस बयान में उठाया, क्या आप नहीं समझते हैं कि उन्होंने अपने प्रेस बयान में, जो टर्म्स आफ एग्रीमेन्ट आई पी एस और पी टी आई के साथ हुए हैं, उन को तोड़ मरोड़ कर रखा है यह दिखाने के लिए कि ये जो टर्म्स हैं, वे हमारे हित में नहीं हैं।

इसी सिलसिले में मैं सिर्फ दो बातें आप सामने पेश करना चाहूंगा कि ईरानी साहब

ने कहा है कि आई पी एस जो भी न्यूज देगा उस को एडिट करने का हम को हक है। लेकिन क्या हकीकत नहीं है कि जो टर्म्स आफ एग्रीमेन्ट है, उसमें न केवल संपादन का बल्कि संवर्धन, परिष्करण, परिवर्तन, इन तमाम चीजों का अधिकार है, और इन चीजों को छिपा दिया है। इसलिए यह प्रश्न उठता ही नहीं है कि किस विचार को किस एजेंसी पर लादा जाए।

दूसरी चीज जो हम जानना चाहेंगे, टर्म्स आफ एग्रीमेन्ट के बारे में, वह यह कि जैसा आपने खुद कहा, शुरू में, कि पहले 600 या 700 शब्द प्रति दिन समाचार भेजा जाता था, वह दमियानी तौर पर अरेन्जमेंट किया गया था लेकिन इस के लिए एक लाख रु० प्रति मास देना पड़ता था और सरकार इसको देती थी क्योंकि टेलेक्स की मार्फत उस को भेजने में काफी खर्चा होता था—उसके मुकाबले में यह जो एग्रीमेन्ट है उस एग्रीमेन्ट में 2,000 शब्द प्रति दिन प्रेषण किया जा सकता है और उस के लिए केवल 2 लाख रु० प्रति वर्ष सेटलाइट सर्विस के लिए देना पड़ेगा, 2,000 शब्द प्रति दिन प्रेषण के लिए साल भर में सिर्फ दो लाख, तब जब कि 500 या 600 शब्द प्रति दिन के लिए एक लाख रुपए सरकार को फी महीना देना पड़ता था। इसलिए पैसे के भी खयाल से जो टर्म्स आफ एग्रीमेन्ट है वह भारत के हित में कई गुना ज्यादा था। इन तमाम बातों को ईरानी साहब ने अपने प्रेस वक्तव्य में छिपा दिया है और छिपा कर यह हवा बांधने की कोशिश की है कि यह पी टी आई के खिलाफ या भारत के खिलाफ कुछ इंतजाम किया गया है। वास्तविकता इसके विपरीत है और हम समझते हैं कि सरकार बिल्कुल जस्टीफाएबल होगी अगर ये सेठिया अखबार मालिक जिन के हाथ में ये न्यूज एजेंसियां हैं इस बात के लिए तैयार नहीं होते हैं सरकार को अपना प्रबंध करना चाहिए और जो पैसा उन को सरकार

करो, लेकिन आप ने इसकी छानबीन कर ली है, तो मैं समझता हूँ कि सरकार का कर्तव्य था कि पूरी छानबीन कर ले। छानबीन कर के हमने अपनी राय दी और उसके आधार पर उन्होंने समझौता किया।

श्री जगदीश प्रसाद मन्थुर (उत्तर प्रदेश): श्रीमन्, अभी माननीय विपिनपाल दास जी ने और आप ने एक इतिहास आई पी एस का रखा है। मैं उसमें जाना नहीं चाहता, लेकिन यह बात सच है कि पिछली सरकार ने और जो कुछ भी बुरा किया, नान-एलाइन्ड न्यूज पूल बना कर एक अच्छा काम किया था, जो इस सरकार ने आगे जारी रखा है।

इस सब में से दो-तीन बातें निकलती हैं। प्रथम तो यह कि पी० टी० आई० के लोगों को इससे इतना बड़ा फायदा उनको है। अभी मन्त्री महोदय ने आंकड़े रक्ते हैं। मेरी भी जानकारी है कि यूनाइटेड नेशंस से पी टी आई का संवाददाता एक डिस्पैच भेजता था तो बहुत छोटे से डिस्पैच का तीन हजार रुपया आता था। इस से बीसियों देशों से समाचारों के आदान-प्रदान की सुविधा होगी। जैसा मन्त्री महोदय ने कहा, पहले विचार कंसोर्टियम के रूप में काम करने का था। इस पर पी टी आई ने आब्जेक्शन किया कि करेंगे तो हम अकेले करेंगे। उस के बाद पी० टी० आई० के दो-तीन सज्जनों जैसे मिस्टर ईरानी ने आब्जेक्शन किया और उसी के आधार पर ईरानी साहब ने भाषण दे डाला कि हमी को प्रिसाइड करना है। विपिनपाल दास जी ने यह बात पूछी थी, मैं भी मन्त्री जी से पूछना चाहता हूँ कि यह सब होते हुए उन्होंने थोड़ा संकोच क्यों दिखाया? क्या यह आक्षेप सही है कि ईरानी साहब अथवा दो-चार लोग, जो दूसरे देशों के बड़े-बड़े व्यापारियों के हाथ में बंधे हुए हैं, उनकी कोई दिलचस्पी थी। और पी० टी० आई० ने स्वयं भी कई लोगों से समझौता किया हुआ है। अभी श्री विपिन पाल दास जी ने एक लम्बी लिस्ट

दी थी कि उनका किन-किन के साथ समझौता है। तानजुंग नाम की एक एजेंसी है उसके साथ है पी टी आई का समझौता यू. एन. आई. का समझौता तास के साथ है। तो आखिरकार, यह उन्होंने क्यों किया। क्या यह कहना सच है कि उनके कुछ पर्सनल कहिए या आर्गनाइजेशनल कहिए, उनके जो व्यापारिक संगठन हैं, उनके साथ समझौता था और क्या यह ठीक है कि—

they want to have the cake and eat it too.

हम को मिले नहीं तो खर्च हो जाये। मुझे यह सब सुन कर संदेह होता है कि पी० टी० आई० के ईरानी साहब और सरकार के दो, तीन लोगों का लक्ष्य यह था कि, नम्बर एक, जो नान-एलाइन्ड पूल है यह टूट जाय और आई पी एस भी टूट जाय और हम जैसे काम करते थे वह करते रहें। क्या यह मेरा संदेह सच है? अगर यह संदेह सच है तो मैं माननीय मन्त्री जी से जानना चाहूंगा कि जब उन्होंने अगले 6 महीने के लिए एक चार्ज व्रेसिस पर निश्चय किया है तो सरकार और कौन सी एहतियात बरतेगी कि यह लोग जो बैठे हैं यह उस को नाकामयाब न कर सकें। इसका मुझे संदेह होता है। और दूसरे यह कि बोर्ड का निश्चय है भी और नहीं भी है। यदि यह उस का निश्चय नहीं था तो फिर उन्होंने कांट्रैक्ट क्यों साइन किया? और यदि बोर्ड का निश्चय था तो यह आक्षेप लगाना कि बोर्ड पर दबाव डाला गया कहां तक सत्य है?

तीसरी बात मैं यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि यदि वह फेल हो जाता है और ईरानी साहब या दो-चार जो बड़े बड़े सेठिये हैं, जैसा आप ने कहा वह इस प्रयोग को असफल करने में सफल हो जाते हैं तो क्या दूसरी जो एजेंसियां हैं जैसे हिन्दुस्तान समाचार है, समाचार भारती है, यू एन आई का नाम इसलिए नहीं ले रहा है कि मेरी जानकारी के अनुसार उस से मना कर दिया है, क्योंकि उनका कांट्रैक्ट आप के पास है, तो क्या यह विफल होने के बाद तत्काल जो अन्य दूसरी एजेंसियां

[श्री जगदीश प्रसाद माथुर]

हैं उनका कांटेक्ट देने का निश्चय सरकार करेगी ? यह तीन चार सवाल हैं जिन की जानकारी मैं चाहता हूं। साथ ही जो एहतियात की बात कही गयी है उस के बारे में आप बता दें।

एक बात मैं और पूछ लूं। आई पी एस की चार एजेंसियां हैं दुनिया भर में। उन सब का नाम आई पी एस है। उन में से एक को कहा जाता है कि वह के जी बी के साथ है। दूसरी के लिये कहा जाता है कि वह यमरोका के सो आई ए क साथ है। आप को कहा गया है कि आप इस की जानकारी करा लें कि वह किसी के साथ संबद्ध तो नहीं है। यदि वह किसी के साथ संबद्ध नहीं है तो क्या सरकार यह एहतियात बरतेगी कि यू एन आई या पी टी आई या अन्य जो दो सनाचार समितियां हैं जो के जी बी के साथ या सी आई ए के साथ संबद्ध हैं उन के साथ कोई ठेकान करें ? क्या सरकार इस के लिए भी कोई रोकथाम करेगी ?

श्री लाल कृष्ण आडवाणी : माननीय सदस्य ने तो पीटीआई० बोर्ड के उन दो सदस्यों का जिक्र किया कि जिन्होंने विरोध किया इस समझौते का। जहां तक सरकार का सवाल है, सरकार के लिए पी टी आई के पूरे बोर्ड का निर्णय जो है वही निर्णायक है। उन के बोर्ड के कुछ सदस्य क्या कहते हैं, क्या नहीं कहते हैं, उन को शिकायत हो सकती है तो बोर्ड से हो सकती है। सार्वजनिक रूप से चूंकि उन्होंने आरोप लगाया कि सरकार ने बोर्ड पर दबाव डाला इसीलिए मुझे इस बात को स्पष्ट करना पड़ा और वह मैंने कह दिया है। मैं नहीं समझता कि कोई इस बात को स्वीकार करेगा कि किसी भी प्रकार का दबाव उस पर पड़ा है। मैं तो इस बात का भी जिक्र करना चाहूंगा उस की पुष्टि के लिए, वह भी 'स्टेट्समैन' की रिपोर्ट को कोट करते हुए कि जिस प्रेस कांफरेंस में श्री सी० एल० ईरानी ने सरकार पर यह

आरोप लगाया है विस्तारपूर्वक, उसी में एक स्थान पर उन्होंने कहा :

"Replying to questions, Mr. Irani said that he would neither resign from the PTI Board nor stop PTI service to the *Statesman* to protest against the agreement. On the contrary, he would continue on the Board and fight for the termination of the agreement."

Asked if it was not proper for him to abide by the majority decision of the PTI Board, Mr. Irani replied: 'A majority decision has one virtue: it is the least objectionable way of arriving at a decision. This does not mean that the minority has no point of view'. He however, did not believe that there was any collusion between the Government and the PTI Board for entering into the agreement."

जहां तक पी टी आई बोर्ड का सवाल है, पी टी आई आई पी एस के एग्रीमेंट के पक्ष में हैं। सरकार ने अपनी तरफ से पी टी आई बोर्ड को पहले भी कहा है अभी भी कहा है कि हम नान-अलाइंड पूल को सफलतापूर्वक चलाना चाहते हैं। आप अगर चलायेंगे तो हम को खुशी होगी। आपको अगर किसी कारण से इस में दिक्कत है तो हम उसके पर्याय की व्यवस्था करेंगे। आपने जिन एजेंसीज का नाम लिया है, हिन्दी एजेंसीज का, उनके बारे में भी एक आल्टरनेटिव अरेंजमेंट सोचा जा सकता है। यू एन आई के बारे में यह बात सही है कि यू एन आई ने अप्रैल में कहा कि हमको सम्बद्ध करना चाहिए। पी टी आई ने उस समय इंकार भी किया था। लेकिन बाद में चलकर उन्होंने स्पष्टीकरण हम से पूछा जिसमें से एक बात थी कि क्या डैस्क प्राफेशनल आधार पर काम कर सकेगा या उस पर सरकार का दबाव होगा जिस पर हमने उनको जवाब दिया था कि—

The news pool desk will function free at the professional level without any interference from the Government in the day-to-day functioning.

यह सितम्बर की बात है। लेकिन अक्टूबर के महीने में उन्होंने हमको कहा—

The Board—the UNI Board—has decided that UNI would not be able to participate in the joint news pool desk.

लेकिन आश्चर्य की बात है कि इसी चिट्ठी में उन्होंने आगे यह लिखा है—

UNI would, however, be glad to participate in the news exchange arrangement with the IPE.

जिस चिट्ठी में उन्होंने कहा है कि हम न्यूज पूल में शामिल होना चाहते हैं, डैक्स नहीं चलायेंगे, उसी चिट्ठी में उन्होंने कहा है कि आई पी एस के साथ जो एग्रीमेंट है उसमें हम भागीदार होंगे। लेकिन आई पी एस के साथ एग्रीमेंट उन्हीं का होगा जो न्यूज पूल चला रहे हैं।

LEAVE OF ABSENCE TO SHRI B. N. BANERJEE

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I have to inform Members that the following letter dated the 28th April, 1979 has been received from Shri B. N. Banerjee:

“As you are aware, I came to New York with my wife during the last intersession period. My wife unfortunately is not keeping well and so I am held up here in this country. I would pray that the House would grant me leave of absence for the Current Session.”

Is it the pleasure of the House that permission be granted to Shri B. N. Banerjee for remaining absent from all the meetings of the House during the current Session?

(No honourable Member dissented)

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Permission to remain absent is granted.

We will take up the Special Mentions after the lunch. Now if the House will agree, the Railway Minister will introduce the Indian Railways (Amendment) Bill.

THE INDIAN RAILWAYS (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1979

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE): Sir, I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill further to amend the Indian Railways Act, 1890.

The question was put and the motion was adopted.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: Sir, I introduce the Bill.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Now the House stands adjourned to meet at 2.15 P.M.

The House adjourned for lunch at twenty-three minutes past one of the clock.

The House reassembled after lunch at eighteen minutes past two of the clock, Mr. Deputy Chairman in the Chair.

REFERENCE TO RECENT INCIDENTS IN ALIGARH—Contd.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: May we have some idea as to when we are taking up the Aligarh discussion, especially when certain statements have been made by the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, Mr. Banarsi Das? Much of what he has stated is provocative.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The House will be informed of it in due course. Now, Special Mention. Shri Shyam Lal Yadav.