

पूर्ति के लिए सरकार अविलम्ब कार्यवाही करे और कम से कम देश के इतनी बड़ी संख्या में मजदूर आए हैं उनसे रेलवे मंत्री महोदय या रेल राज्य मंत्री महोदय जा कर मिलें और उन से बात करें। इससे उनको जानकारी हासिल होगी। वे क्या कर सकते हैं यह भी उनको बताएं। इसलिए आपके माध्यम से पुनः सरकार से आग्रह करूंगा कि इन तमाम कर्मचारियों का जो बड़ा समूह आया हुआ है उनकी मांगों की तरफ अविलम्ब सरकार ध्यान दे।

#### REFERENCE TO DEMANDS OF THE YOUTH FEDERATION AND THE STUDENT'S FEDERATION

SHRI JAGJIT SINGH ANAND (Punjab): Sir, more than 60,000 members of the Youth Federation and the Student's Federation from all over India have come—more than 10,000 from Punjab alone—to the Boat Club. They have certain specific demands. I convey it through you to the Leader of the House and request that some Minister may go there to receive their demands and to try to satisfy them.

#### DISCUSSION UNDER RULE 176

##### Government Statement on 'Samachar'

SHRI VITHAL GADGIL (Maharashtra): Sir, I rise to raise a discussion on the statement made by Mr. Advani with regard to 'Samachar'.

Frankly, I was not surprised to read his statement. If I may say so, it is a typically Janata decision, a characteristic Janata decision—indeed no decision at all. The whole approach of the Janata Government towards all problems is like this: what you cannot build, destroy; what you cannot pursue, give up; what you cannot improve, abandon, turn back, retreat, don't move forward. Therefore, whether it is the CSIR, whether it is Planning Commission, or whether it is 'Samachar', the approach is self-

evident. The whole thrust of this Government is towards *status quo*. The entire dynamism is towards *status quo ante*. Therefore, I was not surprised. There is another reason why I was not surprised. It is consistent with a pattern. If the RSS will not merge in the Janata Party, if the Bhartiya Mazdoor Sangh will not merge in the Hind Mazdoor Panchayat or the Hind Mazdoor Sabha and if the Akhil Bhartiya Vidyarthi Parishad will not merge with the Yuva Janata, how can Hindustan Samachar merge in 'Samachar'? Therefore, it is consistent with the pattern. I was not surprised. In a sense, it is a negative decision or it is no decision at all. That is the approach of the Government. Therefore, as I said, I was not surprised to read his statement.

Now what is the statement? Sir, the text of the statement must be read in the context of the pledge, of the platform, of the manifesto on which the Janata Party got elected. And what was the commitment? The commitment was that the Government will not interfere in the media, in the newspapers, freedom of the press and all the rest of it. The previous Government was criticised on the ground that if I remember the words exactly, by arm-twisting, by strong arm methods, it forced the four news agencies to merge into a single agency—the 'Samachar'. Now the same thing is done. Of course, I concede it is done in a subtle way, in a sweet reasonable way. Now what does the statement say? "The Government have accordingly decided to inform that Government are in favour of restoring the *status quo ante*". Now may I ask, what has Government got to do with it? Why inform them? If the previous Government was wrong in interfering with the four news agencies, what provoked the Government even to inform since the Government has nothing to do with the media, since it does not want to interfere with the freedom of the press? Why inform at all? What is the necessity, what is the provoca-

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tion, what is the rationale? I shall tell you presently, Sir, what is the rationale. What does 'inform' mean here? In the Ministry of Information, 'inform' means 'direct'. Even under this Government, the word 'inform', means a writ, a decree, an order and a direction. That is what 'inform' means. And appropriately it is called the Ministry of Information. Where they 'inform', they order a particular thing to be done. And I am not making any baseless statement. This is what Mr. Advani's Ministry has now written to 'Samachar'—and I quote from a letter:

"With regard to the rates of subscription payable by Akashvani and Doordarshan, Government are aware of the problem and recognise the need for finalising of rates with the news agencies so as to bring them on a rational basis."

The next sentences are important:

"This again is a question which now will recognise cannot be settled before the news agencies come into existence and enter into contracts for their services with Akashvani and Doordarshan. Appropriately, therefore, this issue does not need to be linked up with the immediate steps that are necessary for the revival of the News Agencies".

The words are very significant. We are told with a sweet reasonableness, "well, let them decide what they like. But let them be informed, 'you Johnnies, you better act according to Government's wishes. You split into four agencies; otherwise, there is the question of rates payable by Akashvani and Doordarshan'". I am reminded of a story. Sir, the story of a henpecked husband. The story goes that the God one day called all the husbands in the world and made two entrances at the Heaven. He said that those who were henpecked should stand in one queue and enter through one door and those who were not henpecked, not dominated by the wives, should stand in the other queue and enter through the other door. And what did he find? He found a long queue near the en-

trance which was marked for henpecked husbands and only one poor soul was standing near the other door. Then the God asked: "How is it that you are standing here alone?" He said, "I am standing on the directive of my wife"! So Mr. Advani wants to reduce the Samachar to a henpecked husband and the Samachar will proclaim to the world that they take independent decisions, that they are the bosses in the house with the permission of their wives! This is what he wants the Samachar to, be reduced to.

Mr. Vice-Chairman, if Mr. Advani and the Janata Party were true to their claim I would have expected him, as Mr. Kuldip Nayyar has written in the Indian Express, to come forward with the proposal that the five Divisions of the Information and Broadcasting Ministry should be dismantled and should go to the respective autonomous Corporations or the Department and the Information and Broadcasting Ministry should not exist. I am not saying that Mr. Advani should be deprived of his job. He will get some other Ministry. Therefore, I would have expected that kind of approach if the Government did not want to interfere in the media and believed in the freedom of the press. Therefore, the entire Ministry-of Information and Broadcasting should be dismantled. But that is not done. That is why I say it is a negative, politically motivated decision. I shall presently substantiate how.

Now, what is the problem? I shall not be very long. I shall presently deal with the approach. What is the problem and what are the facts? I am not saying this as a Congress Party man. In my humble view what is the solution? The problem is this. The problem is how to provide an impartial, comprehensive, objective, efficient news service to the nation. I think the basic decision any government should take now is that this is a national responsibility, a national obligation.. We are not concerned with either the newspaper proprietor or the working

journalist. I am concerned more for the reader—whether the reader in India will get a comprehensive, impartial, balanced news service. That is the problem. And how did the Government deal with it?

It is claimed that the present Government is different from the earlier Government. All that they first did was to appoint a Committee. Sir, I have carefully gone through the Kuldip Nayyar Committee report. In my limited experience of public life I have never come across a stranger Committee. I will presently show some very shocking things.

There are 13 members, 3 dissenting notes, I separate observation and, again, a note by the Chairman. Now what is the Committee's idea of a news agency? It is that a news agency should mould public opinion. I would ask Mr. Advani: Does he concede that it is the role of a news agency to mould public opinion or is it to provide objective news?

Then the Committee says that there is the question about competition. And the entire question of competition, Sir, is dismissed in two sentences. The basic approach of the Government is that there should be no monopoly, that there should be competition. And the whole problem is dealt with in two sentences.

Then there are serious allegations. I have never come across such allegations and such charges. Now the dissenting note says, for example -----

SHRI HARSH DEO MALAVIYA (Uttar Pradesh): By whom?

SHRI VITHAL GADGIL: Mr. Irani. It makes serious allegations. It says: "In the first place I regret that the overwhelming evidence in favour of two competing news agencies in English language does not appear to feature in this para of the report-----"

So, evidence is ignored according to him. Then there are many many interesting things. In another context he says:

"In the first place, the evidence before us was overwhelming that even those who continued to subscribe to PTI alone after the birth of UNI found that the existence of UNI had spurred PTI to better service."

Therefore, according to the Dissenting Note, overwhelming evidence was discarded.

Then again there is a serious charge, a political charge in the context of Hindi:

"No evidence has been laid before us for the simple reason that no evidence exists that there is any case for a Hindi agency and the matter has been settled."

And the next sentence is very significant:

"I am afraid, based on statements made by politicians in authority today stressing the role of Hindi in national affairs."

Therefore, the accusation is that the Report is influenced by what political leaders of the Janata Party in authority have stated with regard to Hindi.

Then again there is a charge. And what is the charge? The charge is, the whole Report is based on "absence of proper reasoning and argument, the straining after-effect and the readiness to jump from inadequate premises to unwarranted conclusions." More serious, Sir, is this charge. "This recommendation is unfair"—This is what Mr. Irani says—"unwise, and I charge that it has been made without any discussion."

Here is a Committee which goes against overwhelming evidence, ignores evidence and, without discussion, takes decisions. That is the charge and it is most astounding. The aston-

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"In the discussions at the last meeting preceding the Draft Report, it was also argued by the majority that place must be found in the governing body of this agency for as many as 9 of the 16 Indian languages noted in the Constitution of our country. The Draft Report as presented to me has all these provisions carefully cut out."

Now, with the kind of allegations the Janata members indulge in, I thought I was reading allegations about the Emergency. Some portions are cut out from the Draft Report.

And the crowing thing is this. This is what the Chairman, Mr. Kuldip Nayyar, the great champion of individual liberty, the great champion of civil liberties, the great champion of the freedom of the press says:

"Without disclosing any further evidence given by Shri C. Raghavan and Shri V. P. Ramachandra. I would only state that the gist of it given in the Note of Dissent is totally incorrect."

Mr. Advani should call for his explanation. Who is he? It is a Government-appointed Committee. He refuses to disclose evidence. And the Report is presented to us, based on the Chairman's refusal to disclose evidence. And now we are told democracy is restored, secrecy is gone, civil liberties are restored. And here is the Chairman of a Government-nominated Committee who has the check to say "I shall not disclose the evidence." This is the approach.

Therefore, what was the reaction to the Committee's Report and the Government decision? I shall not give the details: they are well known. But what is the reaction? Out of the 13 members, Mr. Manekar, Mr. Barpute, Mr. Chakravarty and Mr. Munagekar—four members—have opposed the Government decision. Then distinguished

journalists like—their names are too many—Ramesh Thapar, Chanchal Sar-kar, CGK Reddy, C. Raghavan, Abu Abraham—who is an hon. Member of this House—and working journalists have all opposed this decision. And opposed in what terms? Very serious terms. The Indian Federation of Working Journalists says this:

"In the name of competition there will be duplication now as had been the case before frittering away the limited resources. As for foreign coverage, the restoration of status quo ante will further increase India's dependence on trans-national news agencies which the Government of India had pledged to fight from Lima to Colombo."

That is the criticism.

Then, again, a newspaper like the *Free Press Journal* says—I will not read the whole of it—that "the decision is uninformed, illogical and detrimental to the national interest". "In fact, the Government decision seems to be calculated to make the four news agencies, which will now take the place of Samachar, much more dependent on the Government than ever before." This is the politics: to make the news agencies much more dependent on the Government. And only last week—on Friday—Mr. Mir-chandani's article in the Sunday *Statesman* makes it clear that the Government should provide finances to restore the position of 1975. Therefore, it is not a few lakhs but crores that will be required. Again I will explain the politics of it when I come to the facts.

Now, what are the facts? I have stated the problem; I have stated the reaction. The first fact that one has to consider is the viability of a news agency. In India there are about 300 districts. FIT, which was the largest agency, could not cover more than 70 districts. And, would you be surprised, Sir, that in my State in Kolha-pur—which is a district place, which is a politically important place, which

is a university town—PTI had a unit and an office which was manned by a mechanic! So even PTI with its resources could not manage it well. Therefore, the question is whether four agencies will be viable or not. That is the question the Government has to take into consideration. In all democratic countries of the world, except perhaps America, there is only one news agency. I am not saying that there should be one or four agencies. I am not on that question. I am only enumerating the facts. Then, again, do we have the resources to finance four agencies? Can we afford it? If the Government can afford it, very well. As I said, it is a national obligation and a national responsibility. I do not mind if the Government is in a position to provide finances to all news agencies provided certain safeguards are there which I shall presently pointed out.

Then about politics. About viability and comprehensiveness I have mentioned. What is the politics? Now there are four news agencies, three of them politically neutral. But, as everyone knows, Hindustan Samachar was dominated by RSS people and persons of that persuasion. I have from personal experience found out that it is dominated by RSS. Therefore, if that is a fact and if objectivity is the test, one has to take into consideration along with viability and comprehensiveness the fact that Hindustan Samachar is dominated by one organisation. Indeed, as one journalist told me—I have not met that gentleman; I do not wish to be personal; but I am only quoting what he said—that Mr. Baleshwar Agarwal is the second Mohammad Yunus. Therefore, along with comprehensiveness and viability, one has to ensure objectivity. And the politics, as I see it, particularly in view of Mr. Mirchandani's statement is that the 1975 position should be restored. That means, a lot of money will go to the Hindustan Samachar.

This is evident from Mr. Advani's statement itself. "As some of the news agencies would have undergone dislocation following their merger, the Government should also consider a nonrecurring grant being made available to them so as to enable them to make a fresh start."

Therefore, I would like to have two assurances from Mr. Advani. First, the assistance to these news agencies—one or four—will not depend on the sweet will of the Government but there will be a scientific, rational formula applicable, say, for 10 years, during which period the Government will not interfere, so that the Government cannot use that as a lever for its political ends. Secondly—and again Mr. Advani should not misunderstand me; I do not want to be personal—I have heard it said that very quietly, in a subtle manner, each and every Director of the four news agencies is told by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting that it will be in his interest if he comes to the conclusion or decision which the Government expects him to.

I would be very happy if Mr. Advani contradicts this and says that no Director has seen him or the officials in the Ministry and that no such advice has been given. I will accept his word and will be happy. I am apprehensive and it is being said that they are being called and told to better take a decision on a particular line. Therefore, these two assurances I would like to have from him.

Then, lastly, as I said, I would make a few humble suggestions of mine. As I said some time back, I am not an expert in this field, although a few years ago I worked as Sub-Editor and Reporter in an English paper. That was way back in 1950s. Mr. Advani has been a journalist all along. I am conscious that I have not made a deep study of these problems. Nevertheless, as a citizen, I would like to make a few suggestions. Whether there should be one agency or four agencies is

[Shri Vithal Gadgil] debtable in the context of the financial resources of this country and the rest of the problems. But, I would suggest that, whether it is one, two, three or four agencies, certain inbuilt safeguards should be provided. In the first place, in the constitution of the Board of Directors, the Government or the big business or monopoly houses should have no place. In the second place, we might copy something from the French news agency and provide for a kind of ambudsman for the news agency, who will act as a sort of a trustee, a public trustee, of objectivity, and any complaint made to him or a number of them, it may be a board, they will ensure that independence and objectivity is maintained.

Then again, I would suggest that as far as the finances are concerned, financial aid should not depend upon the Government's will. It must be decided on a formula on certain basis. It should be a kind of an automatic formula, say for the next ten years, which will provide the basis for financial assistance from the Government.

Then again, to ensure competition, if it is one, two or three agencies, some machinery can be provided for inbuilt competition. Or, if there are four agencies, competition should be encouraged. Let me make it very clear, although I am a socialist by conviction, that I am all for a free enterprise in ideas. Let ideas be in a free enterprise area, the rest of it we can sort out. Therefore, competition is welcome, provided we can afford it, it is done in a proper form and it is not at the instance of the Government or some big business.

Then there is the problem of the non-aligned nations pool. Any machinery that we devise will have to see that our representation or our commitment to the third world is honoured. Sir, I see one danger. I shall mention that danger and I shall finish. The Government interference is objectionable. But equally objectionable is the interference by the big business.

Only last week, the American "Time" magazine gave one article whose title, "vanishing of Home-Town Editor", is significant. There is a serious apprehension in America that all the capitalist big business newspaper chains are eating up small newspaper, and today the position is that more than 70 per cent of the circulation of all the newspapers in America is controlled by a few chains. Now, whether you call it "Samachar" or you call it any other news agency, in future, the news agency or agencies must be such that they will be free from the danger on the one hand of the Government interference or control and on the other hand of the interference or control by the big business or the monopoly houses.

Then, lastly, Mr. Advani had talked about the *status quo ante*. Well, this is an approach. I question that approach. But, even assuming that that approach is correct, is it followed in all respects? Sir, everyone knows the case of Mr. C. Raghavan, how injustice was done to him and how he was removed from the PTI. All kinds of assurances were given, and yet, despite the present Government's commitment to remove injustice, Government has done precious little in that individual case. I am mentioning this because they had given certain assurances in this individual case.

Now, the case is, once he is told "Go to the Labour Court" and then he is told "Do this" or "Do that". All kinds of things are said but hardly any assistance comes from the Government side, whereas in the case of another person like Mr. Baleshwar Agarwal, the Government is very active and all kinds of things are restored. Now, is it fair? Is it consistent with your approach that you will be just and fair and you will restore all the civil liberties which, according to you, were completely lost during the last regime?

These are the four or five basic issues that I thought I would raise under this subject. As I said, I am not

an expert, but I have made my submissions and I am pretty confident that Mr. Advani will take them into consideration and give the specific assurance which I have demanded from him. Thank you.

श्री सुन्दर सिंह भंडारी (उत्तर प्रदेश) :  
उपसभापति जी, श्री गाडगील जी ने समाचार के बारे में विवाद प्रारम्भ करके इस सदन और इस देश का ध्यान एक बहुत बड़ी आवश्यकता की ओर खींचा है। आपात्कालीन स्थिति के दिनों में जो बहुत सी बातें हुई, समाचार का गठन भी उसी कड़ी का एक भाग था। मुझे उन सब घटनाओं पर विस्तार से जाने की आवश्यकता नहीं किन्तु इतना अवश्य कहना चाहूंगा कि मजदूरियों और बाध्यताओं में इस समाचार का गठन किया गया था। इसलिये अब यह एक अनुकूल समय है जब कि हम आपात्कालीन अत्याचारों को समाप्त करने जा रहे हैं, तो इस ओर भी हम आगे बढ़ें और जो स्वतंत्रता प्रेस की थी, समाचारों के प्रकाशन में थी, उसके लिये जो व्यवस्थायें थीं, उनको हम पुनः स्थापित करें। क्योंकि एक समाचार के गठन हो जाने के बाद समाचार पहुंचाने की उत्सुकता समाप्त हो गई थी। लोगों को एक ही समाचार पर आश्रित रहना पड़ता था और इसलिये एफिसियेन्सी और मुस्तैदी से जो खबरें लोगों के पास पहुंचनी चाहिए थी या सही खबरें अखबारों को पहुंचनी चाहिए थी, वह नहीं पहुंचती थीं। इमरजेंसी के दिनों में तो एक आम धारणा यह भी बन गई थी कि जो सरकार चाहेगी, वह समाचार के द्वारा दिया जायेगा और वही अखबारों में छपेगा। इस तरह हिन्दुस्तान के समाचारों की प्रतिष्ठा समाप्त हो गई थी और लोग किसी भी खबर पर विश्वास करने को तैयार नहीं होते थे। सरकार की खबरों पर ही यह समाचार एजेन्सी निर्भर हो गयी थी, पूरे तौर पर। इससे एक समस्या खड़ी हो गई। यह ठीक है कि कर्मचारियों का एकदम से वेतन बढ़ गया, कितने ही लोगों का

वेतन दुगुना हो गया परन्तु काम करने में जो दिलचस्पी रहनी चाहिए थी, वह उनमें समाप्त हो गयी।

मैं समझता हूँ कि सरकार ने यह उचित निर्णय लिया कि उस गलती को सुधार लिया जाय। श्री गाडगील साहब ने इस सम्बन्ध में कुछ उत्पन्न होने वाली समस्याओं की तरफ ध्यान आकर्षित किया है। वह वाजिव है। क्योंकि इन बातों का विचार किये बिना हम केवल पूर्व स्थिति प्रतिस्थापित करने के बाद भी अपने इरादे को पूरा नहीं कर सकते। जब इन समाचार समितियों का एकीकरण किया गया तो दफ्तर एक जगह आ गया, सारे कर्मचारी एक जगह आ गये और जहाँ जहाँ पर भी इस नव-गठित समाचार के दफ्तर रहे, काम चला, वहाँ व्यवस्था बनी रही और बाकी सब की व्यवस्थायें टूट गई, समाप्त हो गयीं क्योंकि उनको जारी रखने की कोई आवश्यकता भी नहीं थी। कौन जानता था कि इतना शीघ्र, फिर से हमें यह समय मिलेगा कि हम इन एजेन्सियों को अपने बारे में विचार करने का, अपनी व्यवस्थाओं के बारे में विचार करने का मौका देंगे। कौन जानता था कि इसकी आवश्यकता होगी। इसलिये जो उनकी व्यवस्थायें थीं, वह टूट गई।

आज अगर, जैसा कि सरकार का कहना है कि पूर्व स्थिति पर उन्हें लौटाने की अनुमति देना चाहती है, तो इसके लिये केवल मात्र घोषणा पर्याप्त नहीं होगी। इस पूर्व स्थिति पर लौटाने के लिये मुख्य रूप से जो एजेंसियाँ अब अलग होना चाहती हैं, उनके लिये अक्रोमोडेशन की बहुत बड़ी समस्या है। सरकार को कम से कम इतना इंतजाम करना चाहिए कि जो एजेंसियाँ अलग काम करना चाहें उनके लिए अक्रोमोडेशन का भी विचार करे और कम किराये

[श्री सुन्दर सिंह भंडारी]

पर वह अकोमोडेशन मिल सके इसका भी प्रबंध उन्हें करना चाहिए अन्यथा उनको अधिकार देने के बाद भी फंक्शन करने की कठिनाइयां उसमें निश्चित रूप से उत्पन्न होंगी, उसका विचार भी इस का एक भाग बनना चाहिए ।

साधारण रूप से सरकार की इस छूट को जो उन्होंने पूर्वस्थिति को स्थापित करने का इरादा किया है समाचार जगत ने मुख्य रूप से समाचार पत्रों ने कुछ अपवादों को छोड़ कर इसका स्वागत किया है । कर्मचारियों का प्रश्न जरूर विचारणीय है और इस संबंध में भी सरकार ने जो व्यवस्था की है कि जो बतन उनको इस समाचार के गठन के पूर्व मिलता था और बाद में मिलने लगा है उसका अन्तर वह कम से कम तीन वर्ष तक वहन करेगी और उसके बाद धीरे धीरे अगले तीन वर्षों में उस सहायता को कम करेगी । 6 वर्ष का समय उनको मिलेगा जिसमें परिस्थितियों के साथ वे अपने आप को एडजस्ट करेंगे । यह बात तो सच है कि इस में एक स्वाभाविक प्रक्रिया का निर्माण होता है, समाचार समिति को अपने पैरों पर खड़ा होने की भी उसमें से चिंता करनी होगी । अपने पग बिन्दु के आधार पर, उसकी कुशलता के आधार पर यह दोनों ही चीजें समाचार समिति की आवश्यकता और समाचार समिति की एग्जिस्टेंस इन दोनों के साथ संबंधित है । और यह एक अच्छा विचार है कि केवल समाचार को काम करने के लिए एक दफ्तर चलाना मात्र पर्याप्त न हो तो उसका लाभ क्या है,

इस का भी हमें विचार करना होगा । यहां पर मैं केवल इस बात का उल्लेख करना चाहता हूं कि समाचार की लायबिलिटीज आज जो समाचार बना हुआ है 31 दिसम्बर तक ही वहन करने का सरकार ने फैसला किया है । साधारणतया यह कहा जाता है कि 24 जनवरी, 1976 को इसका श्रीगणेश हो गया था लेकिन वास्तविकता यह है कि इस सब की व्यवस्था जमते जमते एक अप्रैल, 1976 हो गया । इस विषय में मेरा कहना है कि एक दम से 31 दिसम्बर के बाद एक जनवरी से उन्हें अपने हाल पर छोड़ देना उचित नहीं होगा । मैं चाहूंगा कि सरकार इस सुझाव पर विचार करे कि हम इस फायनेंशियल ईयर की समाप्ति तक उनके अलग होने की प्रक्रिया के बावजूद भी इस जिम्मेदारी को सम्भालने में बराबर का हाथ बटाएं और एक अप्रैल, 1978 से इस व्यवस्था को लागू करने का या उन्हें उनके हाल पर छोड़ने का इंतजाम करें । यह अधिक अनुकूल होगा । इससे उनको अपनी परिस्थितियों को सम्भालने, प्रारम्भिक व्यवस्था करने की मोहलत मिल जाएगी । इसलिए मैं चाहूंगा कि 31 दिसम्बर के बजाय 31 मार्च, 1978 तक का विचार सरकार को इस संबंध में करना चाहिए ।

समाचार को हम अगर उपादेय बनाना चाहते हैं तो हमें इस बात का ध्यान रखना पड़ेगा कि समाचार मुख्य रूप से अंग्रेजी भाषा में समाचार देने का ही काम करता रहा है । इसमें हिन्दी के रूपांतर, अनुवाद की व्यवस्था रही लेकिन मूल काम अंग्रेजी का रहा और



मुफसिल करेस्पांडेंट्स इस व्यवस्था में नहीं पनप पाये क्योंकि उनकी अपनी भाषा में समाचार भेजने की व्यवस्थाएँ बहुत अधूरी रहीं। यही कारण है कि मुफसिल करेस्पांडेंट्स की व्यवस्था न होने के कारण कई महत्वपूर्ण समाचार देश को बहुत देर में मिले। अभी थोड़े दिन पहले आसाम में हमारे प्रधान मंत्री मोरारजी देसाई की विमान दुर्घटना का समाचार हुआ, घटना हुई लेकिन वहाँ पर मुफसिल करेस्पांडेंट्स की उचित व्यवस्था न होने की वजह से हिन्दुस्तान के कई प्रान्तों की मारनिंग एडीशन में भी यह खबर नहीं छप सकी। क्योंकि बड़ी-बड़ी जगहों पर केवल इनके करेस्पांडेंट हैं, अंग्रेजी में 'केटर' करते हैं। आंध्र प्रदेश में इतना बड़ा साइक्लोनिक तूफान आया, 4-4 दिन तक, वह कितना भयंकर है, भयानक है, कितनी मौतें हुई हैं, इनके समाचार पूर्ण रूप से देश को 4-4 दिन तक पता नहीं लग सके क्योंकि उन दूर दराज के क्षेत्रों में अंग्रेजी में समाचार भेजने वाले करेस्पांडेंट नहीं हैं। वे स्थानीय भाषाओं के हैं और स्थानीय भाषाओं के करेस्पांडेंट की गुंजाइश इस व्यवस्था में नहीं रही। अभी यहां रिवाड़ी के पास जो रेल की दुर्घटना हुई जिसमें हमारे माननीय सदस्य श्री प्रकाशवीर जी का देहांत हो गया, इतना नजदीक है दिल्ली से, सुबह 6 बजे घटना हुई लेकिन मुझे जो जानकारी मिली है कि साढ़े 12 बजे के पहले टेलीप्रिंटर पर वह खबर नहीं आयी। इसका कारण यह है कि रीजनल प्रेस, रीजनल लैंग्वेज में और मुफसिल करेस्पांडेंट्स का इस देश के समाचार जगत में अभाव रहा है। इस प्रश्न पर हमें गम्भीरता के साथ विचार करना पड़ेगा और आज अगर फिर से 'समाचार' के बारे में हम पुनर्गठन या इन एजेंसियों का विचार करें तो यहां पर यह आवश्यक है कि रीजनल लैंग्वेज के बारे में हमें निश्चित रूप से सोचना चाहिए और मैं चाहूंगा कि 'समाचार' की आगे की रूपरेखा, इस प्रकार की न बने कि रीजनल लैंग्वेज में या रीजनल

भाषाओं में समाचार देने की संवाददाताओं की व्यवस्था दुर्लभ हो जाय और फिर से वहीं जिसको आज एक बड़ा मोटा शब्द दिया जा रहा है, नेशनल प्रेस, वह हो जाय। यह नेशनल प्रेस क्या है। कुछ ठेकेदार, अंग्रेजी के बड़े-बड़े अखबार या कुछ दूसरे 2-4 भाषाओं के अखबार अपने आपको नेशनल प्रेस क्लेम करते हैं। वे शायद समाचारों की दृष्टि में भारत की विभिन्न राजधानियों या कुछ बड़े-बड़े ट्रेडिंग सेन्टर्स को ही कवर करते हैं जिससे उनकी आवश्यकताएँ पूरी हो जाती हैं और 70 प्रतिशत आबादी इस देश की इन समाचारों से अछूती रहती है। उनकी न्यूज इसमें कवर नहीं होती और इसी कारण से यह आवश्यकता है कि इस पुनर्गठन पर विचार करते समय, समाचारों की एजेंसियों का विचार करते समय इस एक बात को बहुत महत्व देना पड़ेगा कि हम रीजनल प्रेस को किस प्रकार से बलवान बना सकते हैं, उसको कितना महत्व दे सकते हैं और उसके लिए मैं यह भी चाहूंगा कि एक अलग एजेंसी, यह लोग बनाने का प्रयत्न करें। क्योंकि अंग्रेजी के साथ फिर जोड़ देने से, उनके साथ पिछले दिनों सौतेला व्यवहार होता रहा है, अब फिर से उन्हें उसी सौतेले व्यवहार का शिकार होना पड़ेगा और इस नाते से सरकार को, इस रीजनल न्यूज एजेंसी को बलवान बनाने के लिये अपनी तरफ से कितनी सहायता उन्हें प्रदान कर सकते हैं, उनके लिए किस किस प्रकार की सुविधायें दे सकते हैं, इस पर भी विचार करना चाहिए। मैं इस देश के रीजनल

3 P.M. { भाषा के अखबारों से भी यह अपील करना चाहूंगा कि उन्हें भी इसमें एक बहुत जबर्दस्त हिस्सा लेना है। अगर वे चाहते हैं कि रीजनल भाषाओं में दिये गये भाषणों की रिपोर्ट भी उन्हें अंग्रेजी में न मिले तो भी उन्हें ऐसी एजेंसी को खड़ा करने में, ऐसी एजेंसी को मदद देने में यह निश्चय करना पड़ेगा कि क्या उन रीजनल भाषाओं के पत्रों के लिए

[श्री सुन्दर सिंह भंडारी]

हर सामग्री अंग्रेजी के माध्यम से ही प्राप्त करनी होगी? इसकी आवश्यकता नहीं होनी चाहिये।

इतना जरूर हो गया है 'समाचार' के गठन के बाद कि कुछ रीजनल भाषाओं के भी टेलिप्रिंटर पूरे समय चलने वाली सर्विस देने लग गये हैं। हमें इस बात की कोशिश करनी चाहिए, इस पुनर्गठन के बाद भी, कि रीजनल भाषाओं के टेलिप्रिंटर 18 घंटे की सर्विस कैसे दे सकते हैं और किस प्रकार से वे अपनी आर्थिक आवश्यकताओं की उसके नाते से पूर्ति कर सकते हैं। इसका विचार हमें करना चाहिए। ऐसा न हो कि रीजनल भाषाओं के मोह में वे केवल एक कैप्सूल सर्विस देने वाली एजेंसियां बन जायें; वे टिक नहीं सकेंगी। इसलिए उसके वास्ते भी प्रबंध करना चाहिए।

पोस्ट एण्ड टेलिग्राफ डिपार्टमेंट भाषायी टेलिप्रिंटर की व्यवस्था करता है, 100 टेलिप्रिंटरों का एक मिनिमम निर्धारित कर रखा है। मैं समझता हूँ, सूचना मंत्रालय को पोस्ट एण्ड टेलिग्राफ डिपार्टमेंट से सम्पर्क रखना चाहिए। 100 टेलिप्रिंटरों की अनिवार्यता, रीजनल भाषाओं में टेलिप्रिंटर सर्विस प्रारम्भ करने में कठिनाई उत्पन्न कर रहा है। मेरा सुझाव है कि 100 की बजाये मिनिमम 50 पर हमें आ जाना चाहिए। देवनागरी में आजकल टेलिप्रिंटर सर्विसेज हैं। बंगला में भी बहुत जल्द टेलिप्रिंटर सर्विस प्रारम्भ की जा सकती है, इसमें केवल अपने इन्टर्नल कंजेशन के लिए ही नहीं, अपने पड़ोसी देश बंगलादेश में भी बंगला भाषा की टेलिप्रिंटर सर्विस काम में आयेगी। और इसी तरीके से अगर हमने यह मिनिमम कम करवा दिया तो रीजनल लैंग्वेज में टेलिप्रिंटर सर्विस बढ़ा कर इसके लिए व्यवस्था करना सरल हो जाएगा। मैं सरकार से चाहूंगा कि रेडियो की तरफ से, आकाशवाणी की तरफ से भी जो पैसा दिया जाता है उसको भी हमें पुनर्विचार करना होगा। सन् 1955 में प्रेस कमीशन ने जो

रिकमण्ड किया था 65 पैसा "पर रेडियो", अब 1955 में और 1975 में बहुत फर्क है इसलिए हमें रेड्स रिवाइज करने की आवश्यकता है। टेलिविजन के बारे में उस समय व्यवस्था नहीं थी, अब टेलिविजन नेटवर्क बढ़ रहा है। इसके संबंध में भी कुछ मिनिमम चार्ज, पर टेलिविजन सेट हम को तय करना चाहिए और इसका जो पूल बनेगा—मैं सुझाव देना चाहूंगा—रीजनल लैंग्वेज की समाचार एजेंसियों में और अंग्रेजी भाषा में समाचार एजेंसियों के बीच में इसको फिफ्टी-फिफ्टी डिवाइड करना चाहिए। आज भी कम से कम 26 आकाशवाणी के केन्द्र हैं जो रीजनल सर्विसेज देते हैं, रीजनल भाषा में अपने समाचार प्रसारित करते हैं। यदि वहां रीजनल भाषाओं में सर्विस देने वाली एजेंसियां काम कर रही हैं तो उन्हें स्पेशल ग्रांट उस नाते से देने की आवश्यकता है तभी हम आकाशवाणी को, समाचारपत्रों को भारत की वस्तुस्थिति का समाचार देने वाला एक सफल माध्यम बना सकेंगे अन्यथा यह समाचार ऊपर ऊपर की जानकारी देने तक सीमित रह जाते हैं और उस परिस्थिति को हम नहीं बना पाएंगे जिसमें समाचार पत्र यहां के आम आदमी की तकलीफों, आम आदमी की आवश्यकताओं संबंधी सारी बातों पर रुचि लें और देश की समस्याओं पर दिलचस्पी लें। श्री गाडगिल साहब ने हिन्दुस्तान समाचार और श्री बालेश्वर अग्रवाल का भी उल्लेख किया है, हालांकि उन्होंने स्वयं कहा है कि उन की जानकारी इस संबंध में व्यक्तिगत नहीं है। मैं इस लिये चाहता था कि अगर व्यक्तिगत जानकारी के आधार पर कुछ व्यक्तियों का नाम लिया जाता तो अधिक जिम्मेदारी का परिचय उस में से निकलता है। 'हियर से' बहुत सी बात कही जाती हैं, कही जा सकती हैं। जब वह स्वयं उस के बारे में विश्वसनीय नहीं है तो मैं कुछ और कह कर उस बारे में

किसी प्रकार का विवाद खड़ा करना नहीं चाहूंगा। इतना जरूर मैं जानता हूँ कि हिन्दुस्तान समाचार एक कोआपरेटिव न्यूज एजेंसी थी और शायद यह प्रयास एक सफल प्रयास इस देश में कोआपरेटिव न्यूज एजेंसी के रूप में हुआ है। समाचार के गठित होने के बाद भी इसी लिये एक्जिस्ट कर सका कि सरकार केवल उस के शेयर लेने मात्र से उस पर हावी नहीं हो सकी। कोआपरेटिव एजेंसी में शेयर कितना बड़ा है या छोटा है, इस से कोई मतलब नहीं होता, वह उस के मैनेजमेंट में दखल नहीं देते और वर्किंग जर्नलिस्ट ही उस के सारे काम को चलाते हैं। यह कोआपरेटिव एफर्ट का एक सफल उदाहरण है और श्री गाडगिल को भी उस की कामयाबी उस की वर्किंग के बारे में जानकारी है तो मंजूर इस वजह से कि कोआपरेटिव शेयर्स कुछ ऐसे लोगों ने खरीदे थे जो राष्ट्रीय स्वयं सेवक संघ से संबंधित थे। अगर शेयर खरीदने से भी विचार परकुलेंट होता है तो मुझे हैरानी है कि किस प्रकार से इस देश में कोई व्यक्ति वहां काम कर सकेगा। इम्पलाइज के लिये व्यवस्थायें बनी हुई हैं और अब तो हम ने देखा है कि समाचार के गठित हो जाने के बाद 3/4 शेयर पे आफ कर दिये गये। नये लोग आये और वे इस नये कोआपरेटिव एफर्ट में शामिल हैं। वैसे वास्तव में जो रीजनल प्रेस को डवलप करना चाहते हैं वे इस कोआपरेटिव एफर्ट में शामिल हो कर रीजनल प्रेस को कामयाब बनाने के उद्देश्य से इस का गठन करें। मैं समझता हूँ कि यह एक अच्छा उद्योग होगा।

मैं समाचार भारती के प्रबंधकों से निवदन करता चाहूंगा और यह कहने की इसलिये आवश्यकता है कि पिछले दिनों में एक समाचार छाया था कि उस के प्रमुख लोग इस का विचार कर रहे हैं कि हम किसी अंग्रेजी एजेंसी के साथ क्वांटिटी गठजोड़ कर लें। उनको अधिकार है करने का वह इस का निर्णय खुद करेंगे,

लेकिन स्वाभाविक रूप से जो कठिनाइयां एक वायबल न्यूज एजेंसी चलाने के बारे में आती है, जिन का श्री गाडगिल ने भी उल्लेख किया और मैं उन का समर्थन करता हूँ आज तो उन के लिये एक्जिस्ट करना ही सब से बड़ी समस्या बन गया है। खास कर रीजनल लैंग्वेज की एजेंसी अच्छे तौर पर चले, वायबल हो कर चले, और समाचार में भी जो हिन्दी डेस्क थी या रीजनल लैंग्वेज की डेस्क थी वह सब मिल कर एक अच्छी वायबल एजेंसी चला सके एक यह बहुत बड़ी चुनौती रीजनल प्रेस के सामने है, रीजनल समाचार के सामने है। मैं चाहूंगा कि ऐसे सब लोग जो इस देश में रीजनल प्रेस को बलवान बनाना चाहते हैं और रीजनल लैंग्वेज के माध्यम से उन को सारे समाचार फीड करना चाहते हैं, जो उन को इकट्ठा बैठ कर इस के लिए कुछ उपाय करना चाहिए। सरकार ने अगर उन्हें एक अवसर दिया है अपने पैरों पर खड़े होने का, इस देश में ग्राम आदमी के प्रति अपनी सेवायें अर्पित करने का और हिन्दुस्तान के सब रीजनल प्रेस को, सब रीजनल अखबारों को किसी दूसरे के बल पर आश्रित न होकर अपने खुद के साधन और समाचार की व्यवस्था के आधार पर लोगों की उचित सेवा करने और जानकारी देने का तो उन के सामने एक अवसर उपस्थित हुआ है और एक चुनौती उपस्थित हुई है कि वह एकत्रित आकर एक वायबल रीजनल लैंग्वेज एजेंसी कैसे डवलप कर सकते हैं इस पर विचार करें और किसी दूसरे प्रकार के विवादों में न उलझे।

इसी आधार पर मैं सरकार से आग्रह करना चाहूंगा कि जो वह ग्रांट देना चाहते हैं उस ग्रांट के बारे में भी इन एजेंसियों को अपने पैरों पर खड़े होने की दृष्टि से जो भी हम देने का विचार करते हैं उन का कुछ परसेंटेज जिन जिन एजेंसियों के बारे में उनको विश्वास हो सकता है कि वे अपने पैरों पर खड़ी होना

[श्री सुन्दर सिंह भंडारी]

चाहती हैं उनको प्रिलिमिनरी एक्सपोज़ की दृष्टि से आज ही देने का विचार करें। ताकि अवसर जो उनको दिया है उसके आधार पर वह कायम हो सके, वह फंक्शन करने लगे और सब रीजनल लैंग्वेज का पूल बनकर एक अच्छी सुदृढ़ समाचार एजेंसी अपने देश में कायम हो। इन्हीं बातों की तरफ मैं सरकार का ध्यान आकर्षित करना चाहता हूँ।

उन्होंने जो अवसर दिया है समाचार जगत की स्वतंत्रता का जिस के बिना वास्तव में इस देश में राजनीतिक स्वतंत्रता प्रस्थापित करने का अर्थ अधूरा रह जाता है, उस अधूरी बात को पूरा करने वाला जो उनका साहसिक कदम है, उसको अपने लाजिकल कंक्लूजन तक ले जाने में हर प्रकार की सहायता और सुस्ती दी उसमें वह दिखायें, यही मैं उनसे आशा करता हूँ। धन्यवाद।

SHRI JAGJIT SINGH ANAND (Punjab): Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, we are discussing a very important problem. The problem is the need in this country of a strong, viable and independent news agency which can protect the existing emoluments and guarantee appropriate chances of promotion to the people who are serving in the news agency. At the same time, Sir, we need to have a news agency which has a stature and a standing in the world commensurate with the stature and the standing of our country. In order to have such a news agency, what is required is that that news agency should be free from Government control on the one hand, should be free from the big business control on the other hand and should also be independent of the control of the multi-nationals who are controlling the western press agencies. These objectives were not fulfilled by the four agencies which existed before the emergency. These objectives were not fulfilled by the Samachar which was formed during the emergency. These objectives are not being fulfilled by the Samachar which

is going on today. I am very sorry to say that while there was naked control of the Samachar by the emergency Government, there is a subtle control of the same Samachar by the Janata Government today. I do not have to go far in order to illustrate my point. Only yesterday, in this House, a discussion was raised by my colleague Comrade Kalyan Roy about Farakka Barrage. Not even one newspaper or news agency has carried the name of Mr. Kalyan Roy who initiated the discussion. It is only 'a C.P.I. Member'. Obviously, a remote control is being exercised. That is not the only example. There was a previous example Of 29th of October.

[The Vice-Chairman (Shri Shyam Lal Yadav) in the Chair.]

An unprecedented procession, five-lakh strong, was taken out in Patna. It was totally blackedout by Samachar I am only saying it today. You will see that tomorrow's Samachar will not carry the news of the protest of the Railwaymen Federation which is going on. There is a strong march by them and by the All India Youth Federation. Or, it will be put in a very small corner. Sir, we are faced with this situation. The Government appointed a committee about what to do with Samachar. That committee, headed by Shri Kuldeep Nayyar, submitted a report. As the Government's ultimate decision has nothing to do with the recommendations of the report, I will not go into that report. Now, what the Government has proposed is that we go back to where we were. When some of the people came to Shri Advani asking him not to do that and to keep one agency or something like that, then Shri Advani, according to the Press, said that this problem could be referred to the Second Press Commission. In another context also, Shri Advani has talked of the Second Press Commission. I would only request Shri Advani to look up the recommendations of the First Press Commission. It was the First Press Commission which was there when PTI and the UPI were

there. UNI was not there. The First Press Commission recommended that PTI should be converted into a public corporation by statutory enactment with shares given to the employees. It was not implemented. The Constitution came into the way of price-page schedule. It was also not implemented. Delinking was not implemented. Defusion was not implemented. The Congress Government did not do anything about it for 30 years or so. The report of the First Press Commission is a very refreshing document pointing out all the evils and ills of our Press.

It went to the extent of saying that control is being exercised by the big houses in favour of private property. There is a bias in favour of private property. I would ask Shri Advani that before going to the Second Press Commission he should devote his enlightened energies to the implementation of the recommendations of the First Press Commission which remained on paper for so long. It was a recommendation that every five years, the Press Commission itself should go into the question of how much of the press is controlled by the big monopoly chain. Even then 30 per cent of the press was controlled and now, perhaps, the figure would have gone up. I do not want to take much time of the House on this but I want to point out that going back to the old situation will not serve our purpose at all because the old situation itself was a very unhappy situation. What was the state of affairs then? The state of affairs then was that the PTI had a capital of Rs. 4.5 lakhs, the UNI had a capital of Rs. 3.5 lakhs, and almost the same board of directors was there. Samachar Bharati had a capital of Rs. 26 lakhs. Hindustan Samachar about which it had already been mentioned as a front organisation of the so-called cultural organisation, the RRS, and they also invested some capital. But before this Samachar was formed, the day the Samachar was formed, I was one with Shri Bhandari and Shri Advani that it was very wrong. But the fact that there should be one news agency was one of the recommendations of the First Press

Commission. But what was the situation? The situation was that the PTI itself was in a deplorable state of affairs. Samachar Bharati which had the largest capital invested had not paid its employees for one full year and all the 26 lakhs of rupees have gone. And those agencies were on the verge of bankruptcy. What was the state of affairs? There were 700 newspapers in the country. Only 383 were subscribing to any of the four agencies and only 81 were subscribing to both of them, the PTI and the UNI. There was hardly any competition for the rest of the 302 newspapers because they were subscribing to only one agency. And then, Sir, there were the Hindi news agencies but there was not even one newspaper in the country which was only subscribing to the Hindustan Samachar or Samachar Bharati. It had to subscribe, in addition to a Hindi agency, to either the PTI or the UNI in order to carry on. Sir, there were many features of Samachar which came out during the emergency. Proper attention was paid to the language section with the result that today there are 100 newspapers which are taking only the Hindi service of Samachar and not taking the English service, and going on. That is a progress made in favour of the Indian languages which is a welcome feature. But what I am trying to say is that the PTI had only 17 bureaux in the whole of India. It covered only 17 places in India and it covered only 5 places in the whole world, namely, the United Nations, Moscow, London Colombo and Kathmandu. Colombo and Kathmandu are in the next door. In fact, it was covering only three and a half important centres of the entire world through its own correspondents. And from 12 correspondents, the situation had come to only three and a half while an agency of a small country like Yugoslavia's 'Tanjug' is having today 25 representatives. You will be surprised to know that throughout the Vietnam war, we did not have **any** correspondent either in Vietnam or even in Thailand or in a neighbouring country to cover the Vietnam war from our angle. So, we were all the

[Shri Jagjit Singh Anand]

time selling the imperialist propaganda on the greatest war of liberation fought in recent times. I am saying that the state of affairs was so bad previously that it is no use going back to the old state of affairs. It will not solve any problem internally in the domestic market. We were not cultivating the district newspapers which are very few in number and which need to be subsidised by the Government in order to come up. We were not reflecting the real news and problems of rural India. We were confined in a very narrow way and the news agencies were not at all viable. Why was this state of affairs there? Primarily because the newspapers barons who controlled and founded both the agencies did not want to pay anything to make them viable. I would only quote one instance because of shortage of time. That is from the 'Statesman'. The 'Statesman' is priced at 40 paise. Ten paise are given to the hawker and 0.39 paise are given to the news agencies. And, the Statesman was one of the founders of the U.N.I., but it was one of the first to stop subscribing to the U.N.I. It means that to the most precious commodity, the news, less than one paisa was given and the hawkers were given ten paise. Now, Sir, Shri Irani is on record to have said in this very Report that the newspaper proprietors are openly saying that they are not in a position to pay anything more towards the news agencies. They say that already a ceiling has been reached and what do they want? They give all sorts of suggestions, the T.V. should pay more, the All India Radio should pay more and that the Government subscriptions should come more this way. They want to create a situation in which the news agencies that are there, one or two or three, will be more and more dependent on the Government and when a news agency is not viable, when a news agency is not self-sufficient, when a news agency has to rely on the Government, the Government will continue to exercise its control, and some will exercise that control in

a very rugged, in a very foolish in a very obtuse manner and some will exercise that control in a very subtle manner. So, Sir, what I am saying is that so far as the finances of newspapers are concerned, it is not possible at all, with the present attitude of the monopolists who are owning the chains of newspapers, to make any news agency viable. My suggestion would be that Parliament should properly enact a law, bring forward a Bill, in which it should be laid down that any newspaper which is registered with the Registrar of Newspapers will have compulsorily to pay a certain percentage as a cess to the news agency to be founded in this country. Only a few, days ago the hon. Prime Minister suggested a cess on newsprint in order to meet the emoluments of employees. If a cess on newsprint is possible or is agreeable, as the mind of the hon. Prime Minister has indicated, to meet the interests of the employees, it is perfectly in order to have a cess on all the newspapers which are registered with the Registrar of Newspapers for a viable news agency and that cess should be a percentage of the gross revenue of the newspaper. In that way, the bigger newspapers will automatically have to pay more, not on the profit but on the gross revenue. Then, Sir, the question of competition is there. I think that we are being misguided in the House. Except for the U.S.A. which has two national news agencies, not even the advanced countries like Britain, France, Italy and Japan have more than one news agency, and possibly they cannot have. The notion of competition in the present day world is a strange notion. Now, when the U.N.I. and the P.T.I. had a certain competition, what was the result? One of these news agencies declared the Bangladesh war three days before it was actually declared and the other killed Sheikh Mujibur Rehman two days before he was actually killed. So, rumours were being soljj to 'be in competition and to be in advance of the other news agency. This

I am giving by way of an example. Such sort of blandishments were Committee! in the name of competition. We live in an electronic age. Within seconds all the news occurring anywhere in the world can be passed on to the rest of the world. There could be no competition in that sense and this news today is a social commodity and has a social value. Dog bites man, is no longer news. Therefore, I would say that the concept of competition is a false concept meant only to keep in existence four news agencies even when one decent agency would be enough. (Time Bell). Sir, I am looking at the watch; I have not taken even 15 minutes.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SHYAM LAL YADAV): You are nearing 15 minutes.

श्री कल्पनाय राय (उत्तर प्रदेश) :  
आदरणीय उपसभाध्यक्ष महोदय, मेरा  
व्यवस्था का प्रश्न है। समाचार के सम्पादक  
श्री कस्वेंकर साहब यहां आफिशियल गैलरी  
में बैठे हुए हैं। मैं सरकार से पूछना चाहता  
हूं कि क्या 'समाचार' सरकारी एजेंसी  
हो गई है, जो यहां पर 'समाचार' के  
सम्पादक उपस्थित हैं, इन्फर्मेशन सेक्रेटरी  
के पीछे बैठे हुए हैं ?

उपसभाध्यक्ष (श्री श्याम लाल यादव) :  
इसमें कोई प्वाइंट आफ आर्डर नहीं है।

SHRI JAGJIT SINGH ANAND: Sir, what I was submitting was that the concept of competition should not come in the way of creation of a news agency which is financially viable on the basis of a cess to be laid down; which is independent, by forming a board of directors or a trust which guarantees its independence and in that connection I would suggest that, firstly, it should not be the newspaper proprietors who should figure under the nomenclature of editors but it should really be the

journalists, newspaper editors, working editors, who should be represented.

Then, newspaper employees, both journalists and non-journalists should be represented; then Members of Parliament should be represented; then people with special interest, like people from universities and from University Grants Commission and the elite who take interest in the development of news media, should be represented. All these four elements should create a strong Board, a Board which should be able to stand up to both the Government and the internal monopolists as well as the external monopolists, on the basis of a cess on all newspapers on their gross revenue.

Then there are certain apprehensions amongst the employees. These apprehensions are regarding their promotions, regarding their fitments and existing emoluments. I would only say that if we are in a position to create a strong, viable, self-reliant and an independent agency in this country, then there will not be five correspondents abroad. At least, 25 will have to be sent to the important centres of the world. And then, India is a country which has more than 400 districts. There will not be only 17 places where the people are covering the news. There should be, within the foreseeable future, 200 or 250 and if that fast expansion takes place, which can only take place if there is one agency, the problems of promotions, emoluments, fitments etc. will be solved. And in fitments, the newspaper employees can be given the same benefits, or the same rules can be made applicable which were brought in when the L.I.C. was formed out of various Life Insurance companies. Their continuity of service may be taken into account even if they change from one paper to another or from one news agency to another if the gap in service is not more than six months.

So, in the end, what I want to urge upon is that it is a very serious pro-

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blem. Going back to four agencies will be going back to a situation which was a bankrupt situation. Continuing as it is also will not be good because the present Samachar is again being subtly controlled by the Government. Therefore, a viable news agency, cess on the gross revenue of the newspapers, representation by the four elements that I have said and a strong Board which should stand with its full rights and which will be able to fulfil our commitments to the international world, are a necessity. We are one of the important countries of the third world. It is a question of liberation of news media also from the imperialist control. It is a part of the great fight that was going on in our times for national liberation all over the world. All the newly-independent countries, all the non-aligned countries, all the countries that are standing for peace and friendship, all those countries have got to have between themselves a strong news arrangement news pool which should be able to stand up to imperialist propaganda.

With these submissions, I would urge that the present suggestion of going back to the old system should be scrapped and this new strong and independent agency should be created which will protect the interests of the workers, which will keep the Government away, which will keep the multinationals away, which will keep the monopolists away, which will raise our stature and status and at the same time which will protect the rights of the workers.

Thank you.

SHRI HARSH DEO MALAVIYA: Sir, I would entirely endorse what the honourable Shri Gadgil said about the general attitude of the Government and the break-up of the Samachar. Restoration of status *quo ante* is in line and consistent with the general approach of the Government of the day. Today, there is a kind of a chorus from the Janata Party, attributing everything to Emergency, every

bad thing to Emergency and the Samachar is sought to be dismantled on the plea that it is a product of Emergency.

Well, Emergency had certain good effects also; there is no denying about it, and the creation of the Samachar was one of the good things done by Emergency. Now, first of all, Sir, there is a serious doubt whether this dismantling of the Samachar is really and legally correct, because the Samachar is a society registered under the Societies Registration Act. It has the additional protection of Article 19(1) (e) also. Therefore, even the appointment of Kuldip Nayar Committee was unwarranted as neither the management of the erstwhile agencies nor their workers had asked for revival of their organisations or their properties. None of the share-holders filed any suit before any courts for the annulment of the sale of their shares on the ground that they had sold their shares under duress during the Emergency. None of the erstwhile news agencies, even after the revocation of the Emergency came forward with the proposal to revive themselves. They did not ask the Samachar to return their tools, equipment and staff. Therefore, Sir, this is a legal point. The dissolution of Samachar at this stage will amount to contempt of court also. The Shah Commission of Inquiry is already looking into the alleged excesses perpetrated against the four news agencies. But it is surprising that even before the Commission could record its findings, the Government announced its judgement on Samachar in Parliament on the 14th November, 1977.

श्री कल्पनाथ राय : आदरणीय उप-समाध्यक्ष महोदय, मैं ने एक व्यवस्था का प्रश्न उठाया है। यहां पर 'समाचार' के सम्पादक साहब उपस्थित रहे . . .



**उपसभाध्यक्ष (श्री श्याम लाल यादव) :**  
आप कृपया स्थान ग्रहण करें ।

**श्री कल्पनाथ राय :** आदरणीय उपसभाध्यक्ष महोदय, यहां 'समाचार' के सम्पादक कस्बेकर साहब इन्फार्मेशन सेक्रेटरी के पीछे बैठे रहे मिनिस्टर बैठे रहे । एक तरफ यह कहते हैं कि 'समाचार' जो है सरकारी एजेंसी नहीं है और दूसरी तरफ सरकार के नियंत्रण में आडवाणी साहब एजेंसी का पूरा प्रचार अपनी पार्टी के लिए करते हैं । यहां कस्बेकर साहब कैसे उन्स्थित रहे हैं मंत्री महोदय बताने की कृपा करें ।

**उपसभाध्यक्ष (श्री श्यामलाल यादव) :**  
गैलरी में जो कोई सज्जन बैठते हैं उनके पास राज्य सभा कार्यालय से इश्यू होते हैं उस पास पर कोई सज्जन बैठे होंगे, इसलिए यह कोई प्वाइंट आफ आर्डर नहीं है ।

**श्री कल्पनाथ राय :** जब 'समाचार' पर बहस चल रही है ...

(Interruptions)

**उपसभाध्यक्ष (श्री श्यामलाल यादव) :**  
आप जब अपने विषय पर बोलिएगा ...  
(Interruptions)  
अनी मालवीय जी बोलें ।

**श्री कल्पनाथ राय :** आदरणीय उपसभाध्यक्ष महोदय, 'समाचार' एक तरफ सरकार कहती है कि सरकारी एजेंसी नहीं है और दूसरी तरफ 'समाचार' के सम्पादक यहां बैठे हुए है यह कैसे ... (Interruptions)

**उपसभाध्यक्ष (श्री श्यामलाल यादव) :**  
आप कृपया स्थान ग्रहण करें ।

SHRI HARSH DEO MALAVIYA: Sir, the Kuldip Nayyar Committee gave its report, and strangely enough, the Government has adopted the minority report, the minority report signed by two members and both the

members are representing the big newspapers. Mr. Irani and Mr. A. K. Sarkar are representatives of, what we call, the monopoly Press. Sir, if I may be permitted to point out, this has to be viewed in the back-ground of the increasing assertions of the Samachar staff for their legitimate rights. In view of the fact that the Samachar employees were demanding their right, asserting their demands, they accepted the plea of the owners. Now, the big owners see sinister designs in the references in the majority report to the need for social change and social responsibility on the part of agency reports and so on. The dissenters say that all this is hot air. Mr. Irani has also not missed this opportunity to display his co-tempt for Indian languages. He describes as the "modern version of the Tower of Babel" any arrangement in which our sixteen languages can come together to manage a news agency. This is Mr. Irani whose report has been accepted by Mr. Advani. There are other quotations. This shows the utter contempt with which Mr. Irani treats the working journalists. Sir, I will read out a small passage. It is there in the note signed by him. It is in the singular person. But it is signed by Mr. A. K. Sarkar also. It says:

"The role of effective competition in our circumstances must remain predominant. I cannot accept the argument that internal checks and balance can be any substitute for the simple reason that the ultimate sanction open to international agency networks of dismissal from one's job for proven in-efficiency or lack of professionalism or other weighty considerations—is not open to us."

He wants to create a competitive agency so that he can victimise the working journalists and he can turn them out any moment. This is the approach of Mr. Irani and this is the approach in the minority report which the Government has accepted. I hope Mr. Advani will give some explanation for this.

SHRI KALP NATH RAI: He cannot explain.

SHRI HARSH DEO MALAVIYA: The fact of the matter is that an overwhelming majority of the working journalists in India have opposed the dismantling of Samachar. Dismantling is now in vogue. There has been the dismantling of the CSIR. Now, there is the dismantling of Samachar. It appears that a dismantling disease has caught the Janata Government. The Government says that after dismantling they will help the revived news agencies. They will finance them for six years. Now what will happen after six years? The creation of Samachar was one of the very positive steps taken. The journalists of India warmly welcomed it. Their salaries were raised. The staff was placed on par with class I newspapers and the pay-scales were upgraded. For the first time, the journalists of small news agencies had a sense of satisfaction. Now they want to restore the status quo ante. Sir, I may give you an account of the economy of the present newspapers. There are over 700 newspapers in this country of which only 383 are subscribing to the Samachar. The Committee on Newspaper Economics had estimated, in its report submitted in early 1975 that newspapers paid only 1.5 per cent of its cost of production to the news agencies. Some of the big ones paid even less; as low as 1.1 per cent as in the case of the Times of India group and the Statesman, and the medium and small ones more. The point to note is that newspapers pay much less to the news agencies which contribute the bulk of the news to any daily paper than they pay to newspaper vendors. For instance, a hawkers is paid around ten paise per copy of a newspaper priced at 40 paise while the news agencies get only 0.39 paise per copy.

Sir, before the creation of Samachar let us see the economy of the various constituents which were merged into Samachar. The PTI and UNI together had a miserable capital of around

Rs. 8 lakh. Samachar Bharati was on top with a capital of Rs. 26 lakhs but for a whole year before its merger into Samachar, it had no money to pay its staff. The Nayar Committee report has gone on record that all these news agencies, having wiped out their capital, meagre as it was, had been operating on "borrowed funds" at the risk of third parties and more particularly their under-paid employee. Now somebody said that this Samachar Bharati could not pay its staff for one whole year. But then Samachar was doing no better. When Mr. Advani is thinking of dismantling Samachar, let him keep in mind that even after all that has been done, Samachar is doing no better even today financially. Its annual revenue is a little over Rs. 20 crores, including the rent from its New Delhi building. Its last year's deficit was Rs. 78 lakhs. It could limp along because of a Rs. 50 lakh subvention from the Government of India. The expected deficit for the year ending March 1978 is Rs. 90 lakhs. Its total liabilities are estimated at Rs. 200 lakhs, including the unfunded gratuity of the employees amounting to Rs. 75 lakhs. Samachar's domestic coverage is admittedly meagre for a country of India's size. Its daily output is only 100,000 words in both English and Hindi, and is largely urban-oriented. Its foreign beat is deplorable. It has a miserable bunch of five correspondents abroad, and we are supposed to be one of the leading nations of the world and a pioneer of non-alignment. So, Sir, this should be clearly understood that if they will break Samachar, the old situation will come back. The UNI will practically fall down. One does not know what will happen to Samachar Bharati. There is a sinister game behind this like the Sarsa. (*Time Bell Rings*).

अभी तो शुरू किया है, साहब ।

उपसभाध्यक्ष (श्री इयाम लाल यादव) :

नहीं 12 मिनट आप बोल चुके हैं ।

SHRI HARSH DEO MALAVIYA: Sir, as has been pointed out like *Sursa Hindustan Samachar* will swallow *Samachar Bharati* because the former is an RSS agency, backed by the RSS, supported by the RSS and supported and patronised by persons in the Government who are in the RSS despite their professing to the contrary. Therefore, Sir, it is hazardous to break *Samachar* and the Government is aware of it. If you see the statement which was read out by Mr. Advani the other day, you will find he himself is afraid. But it is amazing how even with all his fears about the possible financial implications of breaking up *Samachar*, dismantling *Samachar*, he persists in this proposal. The *Samachar* would accumulate debts amounting to Rs. 95 lakhs as on March 31, 1978 and the Government has readily agreed to liquidate these debts. The Cabinet has decided to go a step further ostensibly to enable the owners of these agencies, mostly newspaper proprietors, to restart them by offering a form of solatium to reacquire their buildings and teleprinter lines surrendered in the process of amalgamation. So I would like to point out that this is a highly retrograde step. If the interest of creating a viable news agency in India is required to be served, the present proposal of dismantling *Samachar* today will be the biggest disservice that the Government can do to the news agencies in India. Of course, we can understand that a certain stage may come when it may become necessary, when it may become viable, but certainly not today.

In this connection, Sir, I would like to give certain suggestions. These I have taken from my journalist friends. They say that if *Samachar* is dismantled—later on, not today—then the following pre-conditions must be satisfied.

I shall read that out:

1. Parliament should pass a legislation which could be named as the News Agencies Establishment, Deve-

lopment and Regulation Act. The legislation should lay down the minimum capital required to float an all-India news agency.

2. The AIR, TV and the Government, both at the Centre and in the States as well as their Departments should be treated purely as commercial subscribers.

3. The subscription from news-pepers should be related to their gross revenue.

4. No single group of subscribers should be allowed to dominate or control the agency or agencies.

5. Any news agency formed should conform to the provisions of the proposed legislation.

6. Every news agency should have a board of elected directors.

7. Voting rights of shareholders should be limited irrespective of the numbers of shares held.

8. Every news agency should have an independent editorial board whose decisions should be accepted by the board of directors.

9. In case of difference of opinion between the editorial board and the board of directors, it would be referred to the board of trustees whose decision shall be binding on both the editorial board and the board of directors.

10. Every news agency should have a staff council comprising elected journalists and non-journalists with a minimum of 10 years service for each.

11. A high level committee on the ombudsman model should be set up at the top to go into complaints from staff, public and other quarters about the functioning of the agency.

If the Government is really serious, then they should, seriously consider these proposals. Immediately, they should drop their proposal for dismantling *Samachar*. And lastly, Sir,, with

[Shri Harsh Deo Malaviya] your permission, I would like to completely ditto what my hon. friend, Shri Gadgil, had to say about our friend, Mr. C. Raghavan. Mr. C. Raghavan is a well-known journalist. He has been treated badly. He was the Editor-in-Chief of the Press Trust of India. When the Samachar Society was registered, Mr. K. S. Ramachandran was retired and Mr. Raghavan was superseded. This is now admitted even by Samachar whose Chairman testified before the Shah Commission. Mr. Raghavan was then offered a job at Brussels and posted to Bhubaneswar. Ultimately, a self-respecting man as he is, he left the job. I would appeal to Mr. Advani to kindly go into his case. It is a very fair case. An eminent journalist has been very badly treated.

Lastly, Sir, I refer to Hindustan Samachar as the possible Sursa. In the National Herald it published an audit report on 10-9-77 which shows serious financial irregularities in Hindustan Samachar news agency. This report says that proper records have not been maintained for fixed assets nor were the auditors given details of the creation of the assets and certificates of their possession from the persons. Therefore, they could not ensure the physical existence of the fixed assets in the balance sheet.

Then there is mentioned payment of a sum of money to a person named —B—name not given by the Patna branch of Hindustan Samachar in December, 1975. The auditors have commented that it has not been explained as who this fictitious person B is—I hope it is not Mr. B. Agrawal— and for what purpose the payment has been made. Certainly, dismantling of the Hindustan Samachar should not mean revival of such an agency, which has been so adversely commented upon by the auditors' report and which, apart from its politics, is also economically a very questionable agency.

Sir, in the last analysis I would appeal to Mr. Advani kindly not to stand on any prestige. Please realise that the first thing is to create a viable,

financially sound news agency in India. Samachar has been a positive step in that direction. Their argument of competition we accept. But your subvention is for six years. Make it ten years. But please do not grudge the money and the country will be grateful to you. Please act properly and do not dismantle Samachar. Do not cut down the living standards of our journalists. Wait for some time and I hope after a decade or so you will be able to create more than one news agency as you like.

SHRI M. KADERSHAH (Tamil Nadu): Mr. Vice-Chairman, the news media of a country is its lifeline if it has to survive politically and economically. The recent debate on this vital question is the reflection of the instinct of our people and denotes a sense of purpose and seriousness of the matter. The decision of the Government to restore *status quo ante* has accelerated the process. I would, therefore, confine my views before this august House to the limited question of the need for a news media, dependable and trustworthy. The argument that Samachar is the product of emergency and has acquired a bad name and a stigma of the darker days no doubt is correct and does not denote the purpose for which it was established at that time. Journalism in general and dissemination of the news in particular, are the professional sides of the entire get up of Samachar. I would request the hon'ble Minister to enlighten this august House about the positive views which weighed with the Government for reverting to the pre-emergency era. Let one be very clear that my approach to the subject is non-committal. But my thoughts are engaged on the problem, that is, to find out a way by which we can perform this important assignment with objectivity, precision, autonomously and without any interference from any quarter. No doubt the circumstances of Samachar were lacking in all these and the havoc it played in bringing up the personalities, is a bad mark on its name, whether this was acquired intentionally or by force. The role

of Samachar was biased, controlled and looking forward for benefits from the Government and all these are against the ethics of good journalism and do not give us a good sense of pride in calling ourselves a democratic country with a controlled press. The suppression of unwanted news, the wrong news bulletins, misguiding of public, discouraging people's faith in liberty, checking the zeal for independent functioning of the judiciary, the cover of the ruthlessness of the censor on the facts, embargo on mental get up and inspirations and their expressions, all these are those on which Samachar had its very important role to play and we were thinking it could be relied upon as dependable news media.

Much has been said in the recent weeks for and against the subject, people in the profession have come out with their explanations whether it should or should not be disturbed. I ask them now, what was their analysis of the concept of one news agency? This rhythm of events and discussions is all right for urban elite and English newspapers, the percentage of which is not proportionately very high. But What about the regional news agencies, what about the role of Samachar in the regional languages? It has no answer. I am not speaking of regionalism on this occasion, but I would -certainly ask the protagonists of 'Samachar what they have done for regional newspapers whose readership is far wide. The answer would come that nothing could be done during the Emergency. My reply to these persons is, then what is the use of an Emergency-Samachar in non-Emergency time? Has anybody answered it? Has Samachar fulfilled "the pivotal role of unifying the news media and so on? The answer is a definite "No." Democracies have their different set-ups for dissemination of information and news. Countries ruled by other methods of Government have their news media as per their requirements. Our news media should not be a controlled camouflage under the garb of independent news media.

This, to my mind, was the role of Samachar so far. It failed in all its legitimate operations.

Now I would come to the question whether the dismantling of Samachar is likely to bring some benefit to the country as a whole, and the news media in particular. The four news agencies in the pre-Emergency days were rather not doing a very commendable work in a democratic set-up and much could have been improved upon. The whole share capital of the four news agencies was swallowed and they even struggled to survive. The debates in Parliament revealed bypassing the objectivity of the coverage by the then news agencies and depicts an unsatisfactory state of affairs. The industrialists were manipulating surreptitiously the news coverage without even caring for the general good of the public and the debate in those days about the take-over of newspapers was an indication that everything was not normal. Giving Samachar the freedom to split itself into reasonable news agencies was one of the suggestions put forward by many journalists. Nothing is known as to what prompted the Government to drop this idea which was more democratic in approach rather than forcing Samachar with a final decision of breaking it into four. If Samachar was the child of Emergency, the splitting of Samachar would be recorded as *i* vengeance of the Janata rule. Government should not give an impression that it is forcing its decision on the split. Let there be any number of new agencies in the country, why restricted to four only?

Let there be extensive competition among the news agencies for the cover age. Let there be some autonomous body or board of their own to co-ordinate their activities. Let them torn their own guidelines for their working Let politicians be away from their organisations. Let them dedicate themselves in serving and educating the masses. Let them give their share for rebuilding rural India. Let them infuse : new life into the political horizon of the

[Shri M. Kadershah]

country from where nobody could dare to bring back those darker days. Let these news agencies function on the model of autonomous institutions, unconcerned of the Government patronage but getting their legitimate share of finances without asking for them and without affecting their independent approach for the news coverage. All these news agencies should have one greater object, that is, the objective of national reconstruction and development and, above all, integration and dedication.

Sir, I have analysed what Samachar is, why Government is interested in bifurcating it. Can't we have our news agencies without Government interference? This is the Fourth Estate of the democratic pillar. Governments come and go but the nation stays, Parliament stays, the executive stays, the judiciary stays and, similarly, I want the country's independent news agencies to stay whatever their number may be. They should never be subject to changes on the change of every Government. They should survive and function in all circumstances. Let us fulfil our pledges that we have not touched the boundary of the Fourth Estate from where we could peep into the world and reassure ourselves of the existence of international co-operation. I would therefore appeal to Mr. Advani to think over the matter again and, if need be, reconsider the matter in helping establish and maintain as many news agencies as possible with objectivity and clarity of purpose. Thank you, Sir.

SHRI ABU ABRAHAM (Nominated): Sir, Mr. Gadgil and others have made a very comprehensive and detailed analysis of the problem of what to do with Samachar. So I do not wish to go into details; there is no time anyway for that. But I would like to make a few general remarks.

One major problem, while discussing Samachar, is that Samachar was formed during the emergency and people are inclined to think it as one of the excesses. Sir, if it was an excess of

the emergency, it was chiefly in the manner in which it was forced *into* existence, because of the crude methods that were used to bring the old agencies together. Nevertheless, when we consider this question in terms of the future, it seems to me that clearly there are many advantages in having a unified news agency. Therefore, I—like majority of the members of the profession of journalism—hold the view that Samachar should not be dismantled but should be improved and made into a strong, efficient and modern news agency of the country, an agency which should be able to compete with other Press agencies of the world.

Sir, if I may say so, the decision of the Cabinet Sub-Committee was made in haste and perhaps without taking into consideration the views of the professional people, more importantly the views of the people who work in Samachar, because after all it is they who run the agency or agencies and the views of the employees of Samachar are extremely important. Therefore, I would make a suggestion to Mr. Advani and to the Government let them not take a decision right now, let them delay the decision until the new Press Commission has gone into all aspects of the matter. After all, Mr. Kuldip Nayar's report, as is generally agreed, is unsatisfactory. He has gone off the beam, off the main point of what we should have as a substitute **for** the agency and what sort of agency we should have. So it is generally agreed that the Kuldip Nayar's report has been a failure. Let the new Press Commission, whenever it is appointed—and I hope it will be appointed soon because there are many problems to be discussed and gone into—make its recommendations after going into details, because there is no great hurry. The heavens are not going to fall because we have only one news agency and we do not have the so-called competition: it is not so serious as to take a decision right now. So let them have another thought about it and let us delay taking a decision.

Sir, the old Press Commission made *the* recommendation that PTI should be turned into a public corporation. Perhaps we should think in those terms and consider if it will be a good idea that Samachar should be made into a public corporation. Then it can be more efficient and more independent. People who say that there should be two agencies argue that Samachar, because it is one single agency, will be controlled by the Government. But, where is the guarantee that the Government cannot control two agencies or four agencies? It all depends on the Government. If the Government makes up its mind to influence a news agency, it can very easily do so. 'There is a story going the rounds—and it has been mentioned in one or two journals — about a senior journalist of the UNI, who is in favour of two agencies, going to Shri Sanjay Gandhi and saying: "It is in your interest that we should have more than one agencies.

4 P.M.

Then there will be a competition to toe the Government line. This is also a problem. There can be competition in sycophancy if you have two agencies instead of one. I think the argument that the moment you have two agencies there would be a competition and it would create better efficiency, is a fallacious argument. What was this competition anyway? In the old days, as any Sub-Editor in news paper knows, 50 per cent or 60 per cent of the material that came from the teleprinters of the UNI or the PTI was very similar. It was the same official news relating to the same subject. There was nothing original in what these two agencies were doing independently, and much of the news was repetitive. It simply meant that in a newspaper office you have to employ so many more Sub-Editors to sort out paragraphs from the material coming from the two teleprinters ticking all through the night. There are also other practical problems like those connected with the teleprinters that we had, according to the people who have worked in these news agencies. In a -recent seminar held by the Indian

Federation of Working Journalists, one engineer, who was the Chief Engineer of Samachar, had this to say:

"....that Samachar still had to make do with quite a number of vintage models of teleprinters imported from Creed and Croydon of Britain and that Samachar had a long way to go in replacing junk by the latest models of teleprinters produced in India. He explained that the modernisation of equipment of the erstwhile PTI and UNI was seriously inhibited by lack of financial resources."

So, the question of resources is very important.

The so-called competition that we had between the UNI and the PTI was a competition in speed. The PTI would sometimes give out news five minutes before the UNI. How can it help in a country where most newspapers go to Press at the same time, somewhere at midnight? In the case of an international news agency. I can understand that five minutes would make a lot of difference. Around the world there are very many newspapers which might just be going to Press while a piece of news is on the teleprinter. But in India it is not of that much importance whether the UNI or the PTI sends out its news a few minutes before the other. This kind of competitiveness for speed results in inaccuracy and slipshod reporting very often, and this has also been mentioned in the seminar which I have referred to earlier. It has been mentioned by a number of journalists and editors who have worked in a number of newspapers that it had promoted inefficiency because of competitiveness of speed between the two news agencies.

I think for achieving objectivity, efficiency and independence, the best guarantee is the awareness of the public. In any case, it should not be forgotten that there are other media

[Shri Abu Abraham] competing with the news agency. There is the television and the radio. I do not know why Mr. Advani, for instance, cannot improve the news services of the television and the radio to such a degree and employ their own correspondents instead of utilising the correspondents of the news agency and using the news agency reports for their news bulletins. I think that they too should employ their own correspondents through out the country so that that also provides competition. Then there are the national newspapers which employ a large number of reporters working in different centres in the country, and so the competition can come from these sources. You do not need to have two agencies.

So considering the fact that we have only limited resources—whatever be the resources, it is always limited—it, is essential to concentrate these resources on one agency so that we can improve the coverage within the country and also abroad. Other Members have mentioned this fact as to how few correspondents we have abroad. It is disgraceful that we do not have any proper reporting by our news agencies from the Middle East or Africa for instance. There are so many countries with which we have close relations now not only in trade and politics, but just the fact that so many large Indian communities live in these countries makes it essential for a national news agency in this country to have correspondents in the Middle East, Africa and the Far East. And talking of resources I would like to pay tribute to Samachar for its coverage of the cyclone disaster in Andhra Pradesh. It has been an excellent coverage. And why? Only because they had been able to send a large number of reporters to the different areas which were affected by the cyclone. And if we had had two agencies, you would have had the experience of UNI and PTI reporters going to the same village and trying to compete with each other. There are 200 villages affected in one taluk, Divi taluk alone. I have just

been there during the week-end. One realises how difficult it is even to get to these places. It is because we had this one agency which has a large staff that Samachar has been able to do such good work in the coverage of the cyclone, unlike the national newspapers which have I think, on the whole not been able to give proper coverage.

I have one other suggestion to make which is that if we can afford another agency or at any time when we have the resources to do it, perhaps we should have another agency for features, a features agency which would deal in specialised news and features relating to science or agriculture or rural subjects and such other things. We keep on saying that rural areas are neglected. But why? Because the rural areas need a different kind of approach to present the rural problems, and it is a kind of specialised reporting that is required in agriculture and rural matters. So, when we have the resources let us start a features agency which will supplement the main news agency. Sir, I would not take long—Just two minutes more, if you could give me.

Therefore all that I am saying is that if we have one agency, we will have that much more efficiency and we will be able to serve the smaller newspapers and the language newspapers much better. There is a fear in the Hindi language press that Hindi will be neglected. But there again, it has been said in the seminar of the IFWJ—the consensus was this— that "the interests of newspapers published in the various Indian languages can best be served by a language wing forming an integral part of a viable news agency and not by creating a separate agency immediately in the absence of financial technical and manpower resources."

To dismantle the present set-up will involve some practical difficulties. It would be like trying to put the



omelette back into the original eggshells. Once we have scrambled an egg, it is very difficult to unscramble it. So what I say is, keep Samachar. If you do not like the name, we can change the name of Samachar. If the name has become odious because of the association with the Emergency let us find a new name for Samachar, but let us try and keep it as one agency and improve it and make it a model agency. Thank you.

PROF. RAMLAL PARIKH (Gujarat): Mr. Vice-Chairman, I am really astonished to hear some of the comments from honourable Members on the other side who had themselves several times agreed that there were certain distortions and excesses in the Emergency which were required to be rectified. Now it is really surprising to hear from some of the honourable Members on that side arguments which go in defending the Emergency. Now what we are debating here is a very limited issue. The issue is that Government have come to this House with a statement that the manner in which Samachar was created was a manner which has been proved beyond doubt to be one to which this Government or anybody who loves freedom and democracy cannot be a party. This is not based on anybody's fanciful imagination. One may agree or may not agree with the recommendations of the Kuldip Nayar Committee. One may differ from the points made by the Kuldip Nayar Committee. I also do not agree with all its recommendations. But at least here the point is that they have gone through this question as to how Samachar was created, and they came to the specific conclusion that Samachar was not an independent body, that Samachar was used to suppress not only the liberty of the press but civil liberties and everything that constituted a democratic order. On page 36 para 75, the Kuldip Nayar committee, have therefore, said "The fact that Samachar management at some level was in liaison with Government and pro-Government political elements is

shown by certain decisions of the Censors which described the Samachar version as the only one which would be permitted. The Censor authorities had issued verbal orders for killing the news of Shri Jayaprakash Narayan's letter to Shrimati Indira Gandhi concerning her offer of contribution for purchase of dialysis machine. Subsequently, the Censors declared the Samachar story, released on 17th June 1976, as correct and permissible." Now, there are several examples. We never know what Samachar did in the past. And simply because there is a change of Government we cannot say that Samachar would, therefore be basically different from how it was constituted. Many of us—Members of this House, on this side or on that side—are anxious to ensure that whatever may be the Government—it may be the previous Government or this Government—the things which happened in the past during the Emergency should not repeat. Now how exactly could you do it? This is not a question of dismantling. This is a question of removing the distortions and aberrations which the Minister in his statement has very pointedly brought out, that "the Government had not only actively assisted the formation of Samachar but had also guided the Managing Committee of Samachar in their policy decisions. Samachar was, thus in this sense a product and the symbol of the Emergency, and indeed, an aberration arising out of the Emergency." Now, this Government is committed to removing these aberrations and it could not do so without giving its clear opinion that it does not approve of it. Now it is for the agencies, for the press, to decide themselves whether they want to retain the original four agencies, whether they want to have two agencies or one agency. Whatever you do Government's attitude is very positive. It is not dismantling anything, as it is very distortedly alleged. If it were so, Government would not have said this, "The Government

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would be willing to consider financial help for participation in the Nonaligned News Agencies Pool and for the development of services in Indian languages." So I think Government has been very positive in considering this question and in considering this it is consistent with its total attitude if the restoration of a democratic society and a democratic order in our country... Then it is said.,.

SHRI ABU ABRAHAM: If Samachar was an aberration of the emergency, so also was the All India Radio. That too has to be changed...

PROF. RAMLAL PARIKH: That is why this Government has made it known several times before that it is going to ensure that, the All India Radio is going to be an autonomous corporation. This Government and its leaders have stated time and again that there are three things to be done in order to restore democratic order. One is the repeal of the Act which prohibited the freedom to publish Parliamentary proceedings. That was first done and Shri Advani should be congratulated because he lost no time in doing it. The second was to ensure that the news agencies enjoyed not only the same freedom, but had more freedom and they were assisted in removing their difficulties at their instance. My hon. friend Shri Abu Abraham just now stated that the method in which Samachar was formed was certainly a matter which nobody could tolerate. That is exactly why the Government is not coming forward to say that the news agency should be of this type or that type. It is only giving an opportunity to the professionals to review themselves and decide what they want to do. It is not possible unless you do the first thing first. The Government have only come to the conclusion that they do not favour a forced marriage of the agencies. It is for them to decide whether they want to continue the forced marriage or again want to go **back** to the original units. Govern-

ment has not said anything on how they should do it or what they should do. This is very clear.

There are many points and I know the time is short. The main question is that this Government is committed to a plural society. Let us understand it dearly. Some may say that it is characteristic of Janata. Yes, I think it is characteristic of Janata Government and Janata Party. We have to have a plural society and we do not want unilateralism or monopolism! either of the private enterprise or of the State. This is exactly where we differ from our other friends. Our Indian society, Indian culture, Indian languages, Indian religion and Indian press are all based on the principle of plurality. Unless and until we recognise that and we ensure the plurality or the plural character of our society and of our philosophy we would never be able to ensure democratic order in our society. That is why multiplicity of news agencies is a vital element and an important element in the restoration of democracy.

Now it is established beyond doubt that the Samachar functioned at the sweet will of the Government of the day. This Government does not want that. We do not want to continue that old system. This is a self-denying act that we are doing. This is not being done to patronise somebody or to create better conditions for ourselves. We are in the process of doing an act of self-denial. We are giving up some of the powers which the Government had acquired in the past. Our leaders are well-meaning people and they may have all the good intentions. Still we are after all human beings and sometimes we may abuse the powers which are given to the Government. That is why we want the whole idea of centralism and unilateralism to go. Only then we would be able to ensure future of democracy in this country.

It has been amply established that even the news about the birthday of

Shri Morarji Desai was not allowed to be published by Samachar in those days. Only one line was published in a language newspaper to the effect that today was the birthday of Shri Morarji Desai. That was sought to be removed and got to be removed, because they were told that if the news was published it was against the security of India. Now this is the kind of experience that we have had with Samachar. There may be some merits. But, in totality, if you take into account the whole thing, the manner or the way in which it has been constituted and the philosophy of unilateralism which brought it into being are matters which are not consistent with the restoration and preservation of a democratic society.

Now, Sir, there is one more example given in this Report also. Mr. Jagjivan Ham was mentioned as a defector when he resigned so boldly and so courageously from the Congress Party. Now,, with these examples, how can you say that the record of Samachar has been good? It is a dismal record and it is a disgraceful record. Now, Sir, there are many other problems. In this Report, we have a number of other things also. A point was made by some friends who tried to quote Mr. Irani's note of dissent. Now, this note itself has been used by friends of opposition party to suit their convenience. This note itself says that the restoration of the original news agencies was the most imperative measure which was required to restore the freedom of the press. And, Sir,

I am really amazed when some friends (Time *bell rings*).. . say that the news agencies were being directed with the intention of moulding the public opinion. Now, this has never been said. It has been said in the Report on page 15 as follows:—

"A news-agency system therefore cannot by itself be an instrument of social change. At the same time, when a community is in the throes of social change, a news agency system adhering to the principle of objectivity, has to cover or reflect the unfolding of such social change,, and to that extent, as a medium of mass communication, it induces and supports the process of social change."

I think that this is a very objective and practical assessment of the role of a news agency.

Now, Sir, coming to the role of news agencies to be developed in the Indian languages, I would like to say that I am at one with these who are for it and I feel dissatisfied with the present situation of the English press where the English press is having a commanding and dominating position and this must be reduced if you want this country to develop and if you want to project the role of the common man, the rural people, the poor labourers and the working class people and all that. In that case, I do not think that the English press can play that role effectively. Therefore, I would like to urge upon the honourable Minister that he must give an assurance that he would be willing to help in the development of services in the Indian languages. But I would like to say that that assurance alone is not enough. He must come out with more positive statements indicating concrete

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measures as to how the Indian language newspapers will be supported and developed and encouraged. Here I must congratulate him, for it was for the first time that the Indian language newspapers' representatives and correspondents were taken to the Soviet Russia in a foreign delegation and this has never happened before. If this is the policy of the Government, let it be accelerated. The Indian languages have suffered, the language newspapers have suffered in terms of patronage in advertisement, in terms of news coverage, in terms of support, financial and otherwise, and the Indian language newspapers have not been given their due share and they must be given their due share and this is the opportunity again to think about that.

Sir, I will take one or two minutes more and I want to comment on one or two points. We have now taken a new pledge to wipe out illiteracy in the country. How are we going to do that unless we support and develop the Indian language newspapers? This is possible only by ensuring positive encouragement to the newspapers and news agencies in the Indian languages and also developing them and encouraging them positively saying that there can be no news agency just for English or for just one language. There can be or may be an English news agency. But there cannot be an agency only existing in the English language. Now, what happens in such a situation? For example, suppose in Ahmedabad somebody speaks in Gujarati. His speech is translated into English and then it goes to Delhi and then it comes back to Ahmedabad which is again translated into Gujarati. This is very objectionable and unsatisfactory and this is an unhappy state of affairs in our press and I think we must try to rectify it and we must take this opportunity to rectify it. Now, two or three measures are required to be taken to do this. One is that in the advertisement policy, which the Minister has recently tried to rationalise and which needs to be further rationalised, the

language newspapers must be given a higher weightage than the English newspapers. Simply because one has a larger circulation among the wealthy class, it does not become national. The number of readers only does not make a newspaper national. It becomes national because of the value of the news affecting common man that it publishes.

Secondly, Sir, I would also like to make a small suggestion that there ought to be some way to reduce the price of Indian newspapers, because they have to spread more literacy among the people. In that case, to cater to the needs of millions of people, what we need is that we must try to reduce the price of newspapers also, if possible, by reducing the price of newsprint, by giving 50 per cent subsidy on the newsprint price, and so on. That would ensure the regional language newspapers to come up.

Thirdly, Sir, the whole idea of charging a cess for newsprint also is very good, and that indicates that the Government today is very clear in its mind that it is interested in providing all of us the liberty to come to our original ways and reconstruct it in the manner as we want it, in the free and unfettered manner as we want... *{Time bell rings}*. And, therefore, it has taken enough care to protect the salaries and emoluments of the existing workers. I do not see any reason why there should be any fear on the part of working journalists, because there is already a commitment that nothing will be done to harm their security nor their services or the existing emoluments. When you look to the statement, it is very clear that it is a very welcome statement and has a clear indication of the Government's policy, and I hope it will be followed up by more concrete measures.

Mr. Advani needs to be congratulated for the prompt manner in which he is bringing such measures one by one for restoring democracy, particularly with regard to the freedom of Press, freedom of speech and other things.

I. certainly hope that he would very soon come to us also with proposals for conferring autonomous status on the Radio and Television. And I feel that this House should support his approach to ensure a system which can never be tampered with by any Government of the day.

Thank you.

**श्री श्रीकान्त वर्मा (मध्य प्रदेश) :**  
उपसभाध्यक्ष महोदय, समाचार का मामला इतना गम्भीर है कि उसको मैं राजनीति में घसीटना उचित नहीं समझता। मैंने आरम्भ में ही समाचार के विघटन के बारे में सरकार के फैसले का स्वागत किया था और अब भी उसका स्वागत करता हूँ क्योंकि मेरे ख्याल में यह सरकारी फैसला नहीं है बल्कि इतिहास का फैसला है। सरकार केवल एक मायम है। मैं इस संबंध में सरकार को बधाई नहीं दूँगा क्योंकि सरकार के पास, जो कि लोकतंत्र और स्वाधीनता की दुहाई देते हुए चुनाव में चुनकर आई है, समाचार को भंग करने के अलावा कोई रास्ता नहीं था। यह उचित कदम था और अगर कोई उचित कदम उठाता है तो उसके लिए बधाई देने की आवश्यकता नहीं होती है। केवल हमारे समाज में ही यह होता है कि अगर कोई आदमी ईमानदारी करता है तो हम उसको बधाई देते हैं। पश्चिमी समाज में ईमानदारी एक आम चीज है। उसी तरह हमारे समाज में भी स्वतंत्रता और स्वाधीनता आम चीजें होनी चाहिए। मैं प्रो० रामलाल पारीख और उनकी पार्टी के अन्य लोगों की तरह इस मामले को पोलिटिकेलाइज नहीं करना चाहता।

उपसभाध्यक्ष महोदय, न्यूज एजेंसीज के बारे में कुछ भी कहने से पहले इनके इतिहास पर गौर करना चाहिए। ये संस्थाएँ कैसे अस्तित्व में आईं? क्या जरूरतें थीं? 19वीं शताब्दी के अन्त में अंग्रेजों को एक न्यूज एजेंसी की जरूरत हिन्दुस्तान में महसूस हुई, जिसके जरिये वह अपने व्यापार और अन्य गतिविधियों की सूचना ब्रिटेन की जनता

को दे सकें और यहां जो छोटी मोटी थोड़ी-बहुत खबर निकलती थी, उसमें अपने हितों की बातों को छपवा सकें और इस तरह रायटर से सम्बन्धित एसोसियेटेड प्रेस आफ इंडिया अस्तित्व में आया। एसोसियेटेड प्रेस आफ इंडिया ने न केवल हिन्दुस्तान की जनता को यहां के स्वाधीनता आन्दोलन के बारे में गुमराह करने का प्रयत्न किया, बल्कि उसने ब्रिटेन की जनता को भी भारत के बारे में पूर्ण सूचना नहीं दी। ब्रिटेन के लोगों को यह भी नहीं मालूम हो सका कि हिन्दुस्तान में कितनी जबरदस्त आजादी की लड़ाई छड़ी है। अगर हिन्दुस्तान में आजादी 1947 में आई तो यह 10 साल बाद आई। इस दस साल की देरी का श्रेय एसोसियेटेड प्रेस आफ इंडिया को है। अगर एसोसियेटेड प्रेस आफ इंडिया न होता और केवल भारतीय समाचार एजेंसियां होतीं तो शायद यह आजादी 1947 के बजाय 1942 में ही आ जाती। इतना महत्वपूर्ण रोल न्यूज एजेंसियां अदा करती हैं। इसलिये मैं इसे अपने मित्र श्री अबू इब्राहीम की तरह केवल एक फाइनेन्शियल मामला या केवल कर्मचारियों के हितों का मामला मानकर रद्द नहीं करूँगा। आखिरकार कर्मचारियों के हित केवल बेतन से ही पूरे नहीं होते। कुछ मूल्यों से भी पूरे होते हैं, जिनके लिये वे लड़ते हैं। इसके लिये उन्होंने लड़ाई लड़ी है। मैं जानता हूँ कि इमरजेंसी के बाद ही यह बन्द हुआ, परन्तु पहले तक पी० टी० आई० और यू० एन० आई० के बीच एक कम्पीटीशन रहता था। जैसा कि अभी श्री इब्राहीम ने कहा कि बड़े बड़े पत्रकार हैं जो कहते हैं कि प्रतियोगिता है, केवल स्पीड का कम्पीटीशन है, यह कहना गलत है। यह केवल स्पीड का कम्पीटीशन नहीं। प्रेस ट्रस्ट आफ इंडिया, मैं यह तो नहीं कहूँगा कि वह उन दिनों सरकार का समर्थन कर रहा था, लेकिन वह अपना समर्थन सत्ता के नजदीक पड़ने वाली खबरों को दे रहा था जब कि यू० एन० आई०, जिनके कि बहुत से कर्मचारियों को मैं व्यक्तिगत रूप

[श्री श्रीकांत दर्मा]

से जानता हूँ और न भी जानता होता तो कोई फर्क नहीं पड़ता, उसकी यह अप्रोच जरूर थी, उसकी कार्य पद्धति ऐसी थी, उसका दृष्टिकोण ऐसा था कि वह सत्ता-विरोधी खबरों को समर्थन दे रहा था। उसमें काम करने वाले लोगों को बाद में मुसीबतें उटानी पड़ीं। जिस रोज इमरजेंसी लागू हुई, उस दिन यू० एन० आई० के कार्यालय में मैं गया था, वहां इस बारे में रिपोर्ट के लिये भाग-दौड़ हो रही थी ताकि जल्दी से जल्दी उनके अखबारों को मालूम हो सके और वह देश को सूचित कर सकें। यह उनमें डेडीकेशन की स्प्रिट थी और यह इसलिये थी कि एक दूसरी न्यूज एजेंसी पी० टी० आई० से उन्हें कम्पीटीशन करना था।

इसके अलावा हम उन दिनों समाचार पत्रों में काम करने वाले लोगों के मुंह से कुछ शब्द सुना करते थे 'स्कूप' और 'ए गुड स्टोरी' अब यह शब्द नहीं सुनाई पड़ता। क्योंकि केवल एक न्यूज एजेंसी है। कोई संवाददाता स्कूप लाये या न लाये कोई फर्क नहीं पड़ेगा। उसे जितना वेतन मिलता है, उतना मिलेगा ही। कोई स्टोरी बहुत अच्छी है या नहीं है, इससे कोई फर्क नहीं पड़ेगा। लेकिन उन दिनों फर्क पड़ता था। क्योंकि एक अच्छी स्टोरी होने का मतलब था, देश के अखबारों में उसे प्राथमिकता मिलना और दूसरी न्यूज एजेंसी का पिछड़ा जाना। 'स्कूप' अच्छा होने का मतलब था, उस न्यूज एजेंसी का भविष्य उज्ज्वल होना। ये चीजें होती थीं। लेकिन 'समाचार' बन जाने के बाद, सच्चे अर्थों में कहा जाय तो समाचार आकलन की पद्धति जो थी, वह समाप्त हो गई और केवल वही समाचार जो प्रेस इन्फर्मेशन ब्यूरो से मिलने लगे, प्रकाशित होने लगे। यह केवल आपात स्थिति के दौरान ही नहीं हुआ, उसके बाद भी और आज भी वही कार्य पद्धति प्रचलन में है। जाहिर है कि यह 'समाचार' का नतीजा है। इसके लिये मैं श्री आडवाणी को दोष नहीं दूंगा। बल्कि

मैं तो यह कहूंगा कि 'समाचार' में एक ऐसी मानसिक दासता पैदा कर दी गयी है कि आज 'समाचार' के सम्पादक श्री कस्बेकर साहब का एक पैर आफिशियल गैलरी में है और दूसरा पैर प्रेस गैलरी में है। अगर उनके दोनों पैर आफिशियल गैलरी में हों तो किसी को कोई आपत्ति नहीं होगी। अगर उनके दोनों पैर प्रेस गैलरी में भी हों, तो भी ठीक है। लेकिन एक पैर इधर और एक पैर उधर है, इसलिये इस हिप्पोक्रेसी को, इस पाखंड को बनाने के लिये जो भी चीज जिम्मेदार हो, उसे समाप्त करना चाहिए 'देर आयद दुस्त आयद'। इसलिये सरकार ने जो फैसला लिया इस 'समाचार' को समाप्त करने का, मैं इसका स्वागत करता हूँ।

उपसमाध्यक्ष महोदय, यू० एन० आई० और पी० टी० आई० इन दोनों ने कुछ उत्तराधिकार लिया, ए० पी० आई० और यू० पी० आई० का। और इस तरह ये दोनों और इस उत्तराधिकार को, उन्होंने कायम रखा। इसके बाद हिन्दी न्यूज एजेंसियों का सवाल आता है कि क्यों हिन्दी न्यूज एजेंसियों या भारतीय भाषाओं की न्यूज एजेंसियों की आवश्यकता पड़ी? उनकी आवश्यकता इसलिए पड़ी कि भारतीय भाषाओं का अगर विकास करना है, उनके समाचार-पत्रों का विकास करना है तो अनुवाद के जरिये नहीं हो सकता। हमने देख लिया शिक्षा मंत्रालय और सूचना मंत्रालय और तमाम जगहों में अनुवाद के बावजूद भारतीय भाषाएं आज भी वहीं हैं जहां वे आज से 45 वर्ष पहले थीं। इसलिए इस अनुवाद को समाप्त कर के मूल चिंतन की शक्तियां, मूल समाचार आकलन की प्रक्रिया का आरम्भ किया जाए। हिन्दुस्तान समाचार ने कुछ काम करना शुरू किया लेकिन दुर्भाग्यवश हिन्दुस्तान समाचार में काम करने वालों की विचारधारा थी—

उन्होंने समाचार संकलन को गौण कर दिया और अपनी विचारधारा को ज्यादा महत्व देना शुरू कर दिया। नतीजा यह हुआ कि उसका कोई क्रेडीबिलिटी विश्वसनीयता नहीं रह गई जैसा कि समाज में होता है आजादी की पुकार करते हुए कुछ लोग आते हैं और इसी तरह जब समाचार भारती अस्तित्व में आई तो यह हिन्दुस्तान समाचार के लिये भी अच्छा हुआ। समाचार भारती ने एक महत्वपूर्ण काम किया और उसका नतीजा यह हुआ कि हिन्दुस्तान समाचार ने भी अपनी कार्य-पद्धति में कुछ सुधार किया। उन्होंने भी कुछ अपना राजनीतिक टोन कम किया क्योंकि हिन्दुस्तान समाचार को समाचार भारती से कम्पीट करना था, अपनी खबरों को बेचना था। मेरे कहने का तात्पर्य यह है कि यदि प्रतियोगिता है किसी भी प्रतिबद्ध व्यक्ति को, चाहे वह कांग्रेस से प्रतिबद्ध हो, चाहे वह आर०एस०एस० के प्रतिबद्ध हो, अपनी विचारधारा को ताक में रख कर बेचने की श्रमता बढ़ानी होगी। दूसरे अर्थों में उसे भी दूसरों की तरह स्वतंत्र समाचार देने के लिए मजबूर होना पड़ेगा, चाहे उसका स्वतंत्रता में विश्वास हो या न हो। हमें किसी व्यक्ति का स्वतंत्रता में विश्वास है या नहीं है इससे कोई मतलब नहीं है। मुझे इस बात से मतलब है कि वह समाचार क्या देता है। इसलिए कुलदीप नायर समिति की रिपोर्ट बिल्कुल भ्रामक है क्योंकि उसमें यह कहा गया है कि समाचार एजेंसियों का काम जनमत को बदलना है। यह बिल्कुल गलत है। मैं श्री ईरानी के विचार से पूरी

तरह सहमत हूँ कि समाचार एजेंसियों का काम या समाचार पत्रों का काम जनमत बदलना नहीं बल्कि जनमत को सचेत करना है। यू०एन०आई० और पी०टी०आई० यही काम इमरजेंसी के पहले कर रही थी। लेकिन इमरजेंसी में उनको एक दूसरी भूमिका मिल गई और उन्हें यह भ्रम हुआ कि वह जनमत को बदल सकते हैं। केवल सरकार को यह भ्रम नहीं हुआ बल्कि बहुत से पत्रकारों को यह भ्रम हुआ। यह बड़ी बुनियादी समस्या है कहावत है कि पिंजरे में रहने वाला पिंजरे में रहते रहते खुद यह सोचने लगता है कि पिंजरा उसका घर है। जो इस संस्था में काम करने वाले लोग हैं उन्हें भी यह लगने लगा कि वे जनमत को बदल रहे हैं। वे भूल गए कि यह काम किसी न्यूज एजेंसी के जरिए नहीं होता। अगर कोई यह कहता है कि समाचार पत्रों के द्वारा क्रांति ला सकता है तो यह बिल्कुल गलत है। एक तानाशाही समाज में ऐसा सम्भव हो सकता है। इसलिए जो लोग यह कहते हैं कि समाचार से यह हो सकता है या दूसरे शब्दों में यह कहना चाहते हैं कि वह समाचार पत्रों के जरिये या समाचार एजेंसी के जरिये समाज को बदल सकते हैं तो यह बिल्कुल नामुमकिन है। इसके लिए कुछ और करना होगा। समाचार-पत्र केवल बुद्धिजीवियों तक जाता है। उसका जनता से कोई वास्ता नहीं है। जनता अपनी धारणा अलग बनाती है और अलग कारणों से वोट देती है और समाज को बदलती है।

उपसभाध्यक्ष महोदय, इस का दूसरा पक्ष वित्तीय है। इसके बारे में मैं यह कहना चाहता

[ ती-तीकान्त बर्मा ]

हूँ कि सब से महत्वपूर्ण बात प्रधान मंत्री महोदय ने कह दी है कि न्यूज़ प्रिंट में से सेस निकाल कर दिया जाए जिससे इन समाचार एजेंसियों की आजादी बरकरार रहे। यह बहुत अच्छा सुझाव है और चूंकि खुद प्रधान मंत्री की तरफ से आया है, इसको स्वीकार कर लेना चाहिए। इसके अलावा भी कुछ करना होगा क्योंकि इतना काफी नहीं है। चारों एजेंसियों में काम करने वाले संवाददाताओं को उतना ही पैसा मिलना चाहिए, उतना ही वेतन मिलना चाहिए जितना कि टाइम्स आफ इंडिया या हिन्दुस्तान टाइम्स या किसी भी प्रथम श्रेणी के अखबार के संवाददाता को प्राप्त होता है। यह नहीं हो सकता कि उनको आप डिजिटल रिपोर्ट्स का दें और काम विशेष संवाददाता का लें। अगर आप उनसे विशेष संवाददाता का काम लेते हैं तो उनको वेतन भी प्रथम श्रेणी के अखबार का देना होगा। इसके लिए यह आवश्यक है कि जो अखबारों को विज्ञापन दिए जाते हैं उसमें से एक अनिवार्य शुल्क निर्धारित कर दिया जाय।

(समय की घंटी)

उस विज्ञापन से जो पैसा प्राप्त होता है उसमें से निर्धारित कर दिया जाए कि इतना अंश अनिवार्य रूप से समाचार पत्रों को देना होगा न्यूज़ एजेंसी को, क्योंकि न्यूज़ एजेंसी के जरिए ही यह समाचार पत्र चलते हैं और उनकी वजह से ही विज्ञापन मिलते हैं।

तीसरी बात यह है कि चारों न्यूज़ एजेंसियों को चलाने के लिए 4-5 करोड़ रुपए से ज्यादा की जरूरत नहीं है, यह बहुत

बड़ी रकम नहीं है। इस देश में धन की इतनी बरबादी है फाइव स्टार होटलों में इतना पैसा रोज शराब और गुलछरों में बरबाद होता है, क्या वजह है कि सरकार इस पर कोई ऐसा कारगर कदम नहीं उठा सकती कि इतना पैसा न्यूज़ एजेंसियों के लिए हो सके। यह कोई बड़ा मुश्किल काम नहीं है थोड़ा कठोर कदम उठाने की जरूरत है बरना समाचार पत्रों के मानिक की यह हिम्मत नहीं है कि वह हाकरों को 10 पैसे दे और समाचार एजेंसियों को एक पैसा भी न दे। उपसमाध्यक्ष महोदय, मैं मंत्री महोदय से यह अनुरोध करना चाहता हूँ कि उन्होंने समाचार पत्रों की आजादी शब्दों में तो दे दी आकार में तो दे दी लेकिन उन्हें अर्थ में देने के लिए सब्सिडी देने के लिए जरूरत है कि सरकारी नियंत्रण उस पर पूरी तरह हटे और दूसरे उसकी स्वायत्तता बरकरार की जाय। यानी कि समाचार एजेंसियों के प्रबन्ध में और उनके बोर्ड आफ डाइरेक्टर्स में केवल संपादकों को और पेशेवर पत्रकारों को रखा जाय। आज ही मुझे मालूम हुआ कि इमरजेंसी के दौरान प्रख्यात हुए 'जागरण' के पी० सी० गुप्ता प्रेस ट्रस्ट आफ इण्डिया के चेयरमैन चुने गए हैं अब आप सोच सकते हैं कि उस जमाने में भी, शुक्ल जी के युग में भी वह सुख में थे और आडवाणी जी के युग में भी वह सुख में हैं। मैं उम्मीद करता हूँ, क्योंकि आडवाणी जी से मुझे उम्मीद है कि ऐसे लोगों को वहां से हटायेगें, कुछ ऐसा तरीका निकालें कि ये नाम बार बार न सुनाई पड़े और ऐसे लोगों को भी वहां से हटायेगें जो कि जरूरी है। याद रखिए आप बुनियाद कायम कर रहे हैं। उदाहरण के लिए राम तरनेजा उन्होंने पिछली बैठक में यह कहा



कि सरकार ने इतना पैसा दे दिया है समाचार एजेंसियों के कर्मचारियों को कि अब समाचार एजेंसियों के कर्मचारियों का वेतन बढ़ाने की कोई जरूरत नहीं है और हम वेतन फ्रीज कर देंगे। दूसरे शब्दों में उनका दृष्टिकोण कर्मचारियों के विरोध में है। क्या बजह है कि यही लोग जो कि उस जमाने में भी सरकार के चारों ओर चक्कर काटते थे और अपनी सारी शर्तें मनवा लेते थे और आज भी अपनी सारी शर्तें मनवा लेने में समर्थ हैं। मैं उम्मीद करता हूँ और उम्मीद से ज्यादा अनुरोध करता हूँ कि इस व्यवस्था को आप समाप्त करें और प्रेस ट्रस्ट आफ इण्डिया, यू०एन०आई०, समाचार भारती और हिन्दुस्तान समाचार को कायम करें। पिछला सरकार ने क्या किया, क्या नहीं किया इसमें जाने की जरूरत नहीं है क्योंकि पिछली सरकार ने बहुत से अच्छे काम भी किए लाखों लेकिन आप उनकी गिनती नहीं करेंगे। आप उनकी एक या चार गलतियों को लेकर ही रह जायेंगे। इसलिए यह सवाल छोड़ दिया जाए। सवाल यह है कि आप एकाधिकार में यकीन रखते हैं या लोकतंत्र में? अगर एकाधिकार में यकीन रखते हैं तो 'समाचार' रहेगा और अगर आप लोकतंत्र में, प्रतियोगिता में, स्वाधीनता में, जो एक ही चीज के तीन नाम हैं, विश्वास करते हैं, तो उससे 'समाचार' का विघटन होगा और होकर ही रहेगा। धन्यवाद।

SHRI VISWANATHA MENON (Kerala): Sir, I welcome the decision to restore the four original news agencies because our experience during 19 months after the creation of the Samachar is bitter. When my friend, Mr. Abu Abraham was speaking, he

was saying that the excess was only on the question of creation. But in the functioning of Samachar also, excesses were there....

SHRI ABU ABRAHAM: I must clarify this. Even if there were two agencies or four agencies, so long as there was censorship, so long as the emergency existed, Government could have interfered. So do not misunderstand.

SHRI VISWANATHA MENON: All right. Thank you for the clarification. Sir, coming to the statement given by the hon. Minister, the main difficulty that I find is when he said that he will have the status quo *ante* about these things. That has created a misapprehension among the employees of Samachar. My humble submission is....

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE):

Status quo ante is about protection of emoluments.

SHRI VISWANATHA MENON: Yes. I request that whatever benefits they are getting now because of the creation of the Samachar under whatever circumstances, those must be assured promptly in this House by the hon. Minister. I feel it must be done in a better way and an assurance is essential.

Sir, I took at the question of Samachar or the other news agencies from another point of view. I look at it from the point of view of journalism. If there is only one particular structure of organisation, then journalism stoops to the extent of a clerical job. If there is a competition, naturally

[Shri Vishwanatha Menon] some kind of originality, some kind of an enterprise would be there. According to me, journalism is an art by itself. So, for the sake of journalism at least, there should be more agencies. My friends" who are actually the victims of Samachar or the victims of the emergency, who are from among the working journalists, are afraid that something may happen. Nothing is going to happen. Let journalism flourish in this country. There is nothing wrong. If I make a speech here and if there are four news agencies, as least one news agency may feel to write one sentence. Others may be all anti-communist and they may not give anything. I do not mind. At least that kind of competition should come into this field. I welcome it. My

friend, Comrade Anand when he was speaking here, said about gome demonstration in Patna and nothing came in the papers even now, because there is only one Samachar Correspondent. If there was a competition and four news agencies were there, someone could carry this news. So, do not stand in the way of these things.

The main difficulty is, how to make it viable. It should not depend upon the Government. It should not go to Mr. Advani for help. Now, how to do it? My humble submission is that there should be a statutory decision on this question. Big newspapers have finances and presses. I agree with Comrade Anand that a cess, should be there. But In that respect, small papers, district papers may not be taxed and only these big people should pay. Actually speaking, if you look into these things, you can see

even now that these big press barons have got their own news service and are spending a lot of money for that. At the same time they want to kill the U.N.I. or P.T.I. and all these news agencies. So, my humble submission is whether it is one paisa or two paise the tax must be levied on these big presses, for the purpose of Cess there could be the ABC system or something like that. Small papers can be left out. The viability of the news agencies is a vital and important factor. I agree. It should stand on its own' legs. At the same time, the Government should give advertisements and so on. Now, it is actually patronisa-tion. I am not saying about the present Janata Government. During the thirty years of Congress rule, it was all patronisation. Certain papers got advertisements. For example, our paper would not get any advertisement. There must be some rule. You can say that so much advertisements will be given if there is so much circulation. There should be some such system. Some statutory provision should be there. Without that, if you give that power to the Government, the Government can influence. Another-matter to which I would like to draw the attention of this hon. House is. about the regional Press and their condition. There was the UNI, the PTI and other old news agencies. There is now the Samachar. Their catering of news to this Press has not at all. been happy. Why not they give their news in the regional language itself? If a news is taken from Kerala, that news can be given to the Malayalam Press in Malayalam. If the issue is. of an all-India importance, it could-

be given either in English or in Hindi to other parts of the country. The regional Press and the Varta should be patronised in such a way that all the regional languages are patronised and made equal. In this respect, I would like to draw the attention of this hon. House to one fact. Many were criticising and saying that after the Janata came to power, the Samachar has become the Janata Samachar. I do not agree with that. I come from a part of the country where even now Samachar and the All India Radio ate All Indira's Radio and Indira's Samachar. Therefore, I do not agree with that. I am saying this from my experience. In Karala, the All India Radio is All Indira Radio even now. In Kerala, the Samachar is even now the Samachar of the Congress. Therefore, I am not saying that because Mr. Advani has become the Minister it has become Janata Samachar. I am not going to say that. But the independence and the freedom of the Press has to be guaranteed. How? Not by the Press barons. The structure of the Board is given here. Nine subscribers will be in the committee and so on. I do not agree with that. Who are these subscribers? People like [he Tatas, the Birlas and some such people who are running the show. I do not agree with that. They can have one representative. I do not mind. 'I he working journalists must have some representation. The non-working journalists must have some representation. Moreover, according to me, if it has to function more democratically, representatives of the central trade unions, not only of the working journalists, but of the central trade unions and kisan sabhas must also be there. Such a Board alone can act as a block against the influence of the Press barons, the multinational corporations and other vested interests. Such a Board must be constituted. Anyhow, as a beginning, the Government has taken a decision to bifurcate it and to have an open discussion, to have an open discussion on both these things. I welcome that suggestion. At the same time, I would like to impress upon the House that on this question

of the freedom of the Press, the voice of the people who have not been heard till now, namely, the voice of the downtrodden of this country, mainly the voice of the unorganised working class must be heard. The organised working class have got some forum. But the unorganised working class have none. They can speak only through the regional Press. The regional Press should be patronised by giving pecuniary support through advertisements and so on. Sir, in this respect I want to make one position clear because everybody is saying that it should be looked upon above party politics and all that. I agree with that but whatever we speak, party politics does come in. Because from my experience I can say that even journalists can be influenced. Is it not? Even before pre-emergency days the role of the working journalists of this country was not at all much commendable. During emergency they cowed down before the Government, but even before emergency they could have been influenced. Is it not, Sir? The suit-length stories and the scotch whisky stories are now coming out. I do not want to say all these things. So, I have a humble submission to make or rather I make a request on the floor of this House that the working journalists of this country must also feel their dignity of labour and they should rise to the occasion. They should be the biggest fighters for freedom of the press and then only this can be achieved.

SHRI K. K. MADHAVAN (Kerala): May I know whether you are supporting the Government's position or not?

SHRI VISWANATHA MENON: In the very first sentence of my speech I have said that I support the bifurcation. I have made my position clear.

SHRI S. W. DHABE (Maharashtra): Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, I oppose the proposal and the statement made by Mr. Advani. It is neither a historical statement nor there is any historical

[Shri S. W. Dhabe] necessity which he has done. It is a political blunder which he is making today in thinking that whatever was done in emergency has to be set at naught. One Member just now said that the press was muzzled not because Samachar was there but because of censorship. Now if there are four agencies there is no guarantee or circumstances may warrant that the censorship may not come in and the news can be sterilised. It was also stated that the plurality of society requires more than one agency, as if more than one agency itself will solve the question. Sir, I agree with my learned speaker who has spoken previously that the trade unions and the downtrodden must have a say in all these matters, but if the situation is different then we think of different propositions. Somebody just now said that Mr. Advani is thinking of a proposal that the All India Radio should be made an autonomous corporation. Why can't it be given to private agencies, like the Tatas and Birlas, as is done in America? There the radio is in the hands of private persons. But that is not the proposal. The proposal is that an autonomous corporation should be established. If it is good for all-India important news media, why will an autonomous corporation not be useful for Samachar as a news agency? Therefore, Mr. Gadgil, the opening speaker, said: It is not a decision in the interest of society, nor a decision as per manifesto of the Janata Party, but a decision politically motivated for some other purposes.

Sir, my friend just now was saying. I also wanted to quote that about the railway accident debate which we had a very long debate, when Mr. Dandavate the hon. Railway Minister replied to it—no news was given by Samachar, nor a flash was given in the newspapers or in the All India Radio, but the statement of Mr. Kacchwai, M.P. and erstwhile member of the Jana Sangh and president of the unrecognised and unregistered union—I am told it is an all-India union of some con-

trollers or some categories of railway employees—that the Railway Minister must resign, not only appeared in newspapers, but it was also flashed on the All India Radio.

5 P.M.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: The news is more attractive.

SHRI S. W. DHABE: It is more attractive because it is made by a member of the Janata Party. But what I am saying is that if Samachar news is given like this, then if Hindustan Samachar comes into existence, all the news of Hindustan Samachar will get a prominent place because political persons are interested. Therefore, Sir, we are not here considering whether there should be one agency or competition among agencies. Competition is not made applicable to below field. My friend who is sitting here speaks about one-union one-industry in the trade union field. Though we talk of industrial democracy, we do not accept the principle of plurality of unions as competing unions in many fields. Sir, we want one union svery where. My friend has made speeches in which he has said one-union one-industry.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: I am sitting here. You have forgotten Mr. Advani.

SHRI S. W. DHABE: I am giving an example. Therefore, from situation to situation, different proposals, different solutions will have to be found. From that point of view, I would like to make some suggestions. The reason why I say that it is not a good decision, it is a politically motivated decision and it will not help the country or the employees in that, firstly, it is stated in the White Paper on Misuse of Mass Media at page 44 in paragraph 10 regarding Samachar that "The Employees Federation, however, welcomed the proposed merger. *The Indian Federation of Working Journalists*, New Delhi; *National Union of Journalists (India)*, New Delhi; *PTI Employees Association* and *UNI Em-*

ployees Federation, besides the Associations of Employees of Hindustan Samachar and Samachar Bharati supported the proposal subject, however, to the rights and interests of the employees being safeguarded in case of merger and thereafter; and protection of other service conditions and other benefits." There is not a single word in the whole White Paper on Samachar that this was done under pressure by the unions.

[THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI H. M. TRIVEDI in the Chair)].

If it was so, today the same unions would not have supported the continuance of Samachar. Sir, this became a new idea in the month of November, to go back to these four news agencies. It was never contemplated by the hon. Minister when he constituted the Kuldip Nayyar Committee. If only the four news agencies were to be revived, it was a waste of public funds that the Minister had appointed the Kuldip Nayyar Committee and made a farce of constituting the said Committee. The main purpose of this reference was that working of Samachar should be reviewed. That Committee have made certain recommendations and there are also differing views by some persons whether PTI and UNI should be two news agencies. But the Kuldip Nayyar Committee Report has been given a decent burial and a new proposition has been brought up that the four news agencies must be revived. I must say, Sir that the Minister has not consulted any working journalists trade unions apart from other national trade unions, before taking a decision. It was necessary because the most important federation of working journalists considered this matter in its session at Hyderabad in August just after the Kuldip Nayyar Committee Report was published. And they condemned it. I shall seek your indulgence, Sir, and quote from the journal, *The Working Journalist*, of the Indian Federation of Working Journalists of September-October, 1977. The Resolution is given on page

7 of that issue and it is stated that "most of the recommendations of the Nayyar Committee are retrograde in nature" and they have asked—"The meeting, therefore demands that the recommendations should be drastically modified in order to give to the nation a really viable, independent and strong agency.

"This meeting urges the Government that it should not take any decision on the report without having full consultation with the employees' federations."

The Resolution further says;

"The IFWJ which is fully committed to the freedom of the Press and independence of the News Agencies, is firmly of the opinion that a statutory national news agency as suggested by it will alone be able to maintain independence and objectivity and serve also as the pace-setter for other news agencies which newspapers might start if they consider it necessary in the interest of the newspaper industry."

There is then the statement issued by Mr. Suhas Agashe, Secretary General, UNI Employees' Federation and Mr. Mrinal Ghosh, General Secretary, Federation of PTI Employees' Unions on the 17th May 1977 asking that the Agency must continue. Their complaint also is that they have not even been consulted in taking the decision. (*Time Bell rings.*)

Before I conclude my speech I would like to give the state of affairs. The state of affairs has been well explained in the financial statement given on page 71 of the Report. The P.T.I. had a paid-up capital of only Rs. 4.2 lakhs which had been wiped out by losses even before 1969. The U.N.I. had a meagre capital of Rs. 3.5 lakhs. The report says: —

"The entire operations of PTI were thus carried on borrowed funds at the risk of third parties and more particularly of that of the employees, liabilities to whom were unsecured".

[Shri S. W. Dhabe]

Not only that the staff gratuity fund was also utilised. Samachar Bharati had Rs. 26.4 lakh capital which was completely lost by 1975. Hindustan Samachar had a share capital of Rs. 1.5 lakhs. Its accumulated losses upto 31st March, 1976 exceeded Rs. 16 lakhs.

*(Time Bell rings.)*

I would like to conclude with only one more point. And what was the meagre operation which they were having? Hindustan Samachar had only 66 subscribers and Samachar Bharati 27 as given on page 73. UNI and PTI had 182 and 201 respectively. I would not like to take more time of the House.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI H. M. TRIVEDI): Please conclude.

SHRI S. W. DHABE: From Appendix V, "News Agencies of the world"—it is a very important thing—I will take only one or two points. Here they have given information about the various agencies in the world. I do not want to quote the countries where there is one agency but I would take only democratic countries. On page 147 they have given information about Japan, Kyodo. ...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI H. M. TRIVEDI): Mr. Dhabe, there are at least seven or eight more speakers still waiting to speak and the Minister has to be called at 5.30.

SHRI S. W. DHABE: I am finishing. In 1975, the Kyodo had 51 bureaux in Japan and 24 bureaux abroad with stringers in many countries. They are spending \$ 72 million for one viable agency. Our country cannot afford the luxury of four agencies.

Lastly, the statement of the Minister is incomplete because it shows only what they will pay off. As regards wage Board recommendations they will be paying less to them. New agencies are having different gross revenue and they will be categorised like that.

One more thing. The Sarkar Patrika Editor \_\_\_\_

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI H. M. TRIVEDI): I am sorry. You must conclude.

SHRI S. W. DHABE: Just one last sentence. Mr. Munagekar editor of Sakal Poona who was a member of the Kuldip Nayyar Committee has taken very serious objection to the proposal in the issue of 'Sakal' dated 12th November. You may pay them for their salary but for expansion and development there is no proposal. Therefore, the proposal of the Government will not be successful and will not be in the interest of the country or the interest of the working class. Thank you, Sir.

SHRI V. B. RAJU (Andhra Pradesh) : Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, I have carefully gone through the statement of the Minister. I was making a strenuous effort to understand what could be the motivation for the Government in taking to this enterprise. Firstly, how does the Government come into the picture at all? Who asked this Nayyar Committee to be constituted and, then, what happened to the recommendations? The Minister does not say which recommendation, is acceptable and which is not. Then comes the Minister's statement of November 14th. And what does he say? That Samachar is a product and symbol of Emergency and is an aberration. Now, is it the only motivation for the Minister or the Government to dismantle this, to destroy this? If it is so, Sir, then there are many such other products also. Does the Government intend to destroy all of them or break them up. One significant product is the Janata Party itself. Therefore, is it the intention of the Minister and the Government next to follow up and break up the Janata Party?

Let us actually forget about the theory of "product of Emergency". Already eight months have passed and let them not use this instrument of Emergency to beat not only the Congress Party but the nation also below the belt. This is not the right approach.

Then comes the question of competition. If there is competition, there will be efficiency. So is the Government gradually taking to the laissez-faire theory, to market economy? But the Minister does not maintain any consistency. The Government has no consistency. If there is consistency, the Government is consistent in its inconsistencies. Two of the most important media are AIR and Television but he does not say a word about competition in them. Has he a plan to break them up? Many are complaining about inefficiency in the Indian Airlines. The greatest public undertaking, the Railways is there— Mr. Dandavate is presiding over it— with many accidents and killing people; it has become a killer transport. Then are you thinking in terms of providing a spirit of competition by encouraging others to take it up? What is the motive? Don't give a dog a bad name and hang it. It is not 'Samachar' which is creating any distortion. It is the functioning of the bureaucracy during the time of Emergency in the implementation of censorship and 'Samachar' played to the tune of those powerful forces and the rulers in the Government.

Then, what has happened in these eight months? What is the experience of the Minister with 'Samachar' in these eight months? Forget Emergency for a moment. Did 'Samachar' create any difficulty for the Minister? Misuse of an agency is a relative term. Who can misuse more—the Congress Government or the Janata Government? My friend over there of the CPI(M) was talking about competition, democracy and all that as if he is going to give us on a platter absolute freedom of the [individual. Can he declare here and now that he believes in pluralism? I declare, we believe in pluralism. Sir, it is not the question of break-up that is going to provide any efficiency or, what you call, coverage. The point is not one news agency or more than one news agency.

Nobody is disagreeing with the principle of having more agencies if the country requires them.

SHRI ABU ABRAHAM: United States is the only country which has more than one agency.

SHRI V. B. RAJU: There are other countries also. Actually, I should correct the impression. In Germany, there are two. In the United Kingdom, there are two. Let us not go into that question. The point is that if a big country like ours needs 10 news agencies, let us have them. Mr. Abu Abraham has made a good suggestion for the feature service. What is the news reported, except the political news? Sir, the House forgets that there is a very important news agency, which may not be competitor. It is the Information Department in the Ministry itself. It gives handouts about the Minister's speeches, about the policies. What has happened to it? Why is he not making a correction if 'Samachar' is giving any wrong news about the Government?

To serve whom, is he going to breakup Samachar? Sir, status quo ante is a term used now. Let us put the clock back. Let us go back to what was obtaining before the Emergency. Four agencies were there, which were supposed to have been merged, but they are not merged. I think the House is aware of the fact that they are still existing; only 80 per cent of the shares have been taken over by 'Samachar'. To give them life, to show them favours, why do we destroy 'Samachar'? The point of dispute here between the Opposition and the Government is this. The Government says that they want to break-up 'Samachar', not improve the efficiency, not increase the coverage but break-up 'Samachar'. That is the motivation. We are stoutly opposed to breaking up of 'Samachar' because it is politically motivated. It is not for a professional purpose. It is not for the economics of it. It is not for any other thing. It is only

[Shri V. B. Raju]

politically motivated. Where this Government takes any action politically motivated against the interests of the nation, we are going to oppose it. We may not succeed now. We believe in the principle that If you are doing a thing in national interests, we are with you. But we know you are not doing It for that purpose. If you want to encourage PTI again and give them work, if you want to give something to the UNI, do it. We are not asking that they should be liquidated. They are there. You can make use of them. Sir, with Samachar' we have not been able to cover, with the presently available resources, more than 70 districts. Out of 364 districts, we have been able to cover nearly 70 districts. By making them ineffective and feeble, increasing the overheads, are you going to succeed? You are going to doom the news agencies in the country. Sir, what was the fate of the news agencies before they were supposed to have been merged? They are going to go to *status quo ante*. PTI had 201 subscribers, UNI 182, Hindustan Samachar 66, Samachar Bharti 27. With these 27 subscribers, that agency existed. Then you want to spoon-feed them. Sir, the motive as we have been able to understand is: Weaken the news agencies through the instrument of financial control, in a subtle manner. Sir, a news agency will be effective, independent only when it can stand on its own feet, when it is economically viable. Five news agencies cover the whole world. And these five agencies were able to control and stand on their own feet because of their economic viability. They do not look to Mr. Advani for funds. Sir, where is the Parliament's sanction for Mr. Advani to promise them Rs. 2 crores every year? Are we here to subsidise Inefficient private enterprise? Is it the policy of the Government? My friend supports it. We have got more than 12,000 newspapers which are actually starving. Do you give a pie to them? Do you extend the same policy to them,

that you are going to subsidise them? And only these four inefficient news agencies you subsidise. Every news agency had eaten away its capital much before the Emergency. In fact, one news agency had written to the Government for take-over. Why bring in the Emergency to distort the picture? For Heaven's sake, do not talk of the Emergency. Eight months are over.

Now, therefore, Sir, I stoutly oppose this. This should not be the way. If you destroy "Samachar", how are you going to place yourself on the world map. It is a vital news agency in the country, which can compete with the other world news agencies? You know they are thinking of taking back to the times when the world news agencies were exploiting us and His Master's Voice was actually being projected. This is being done to weaken our news agency's position in the country. I would earnestly appeal to Mr. Advani. He is a wise man; I have great respect for him. Let him not be a victim, to the political ambitions. We have to do great things in the country. If we have committed a mistake it does not mean that, by taking an argument that we have committed a mistake by asking them to merge, you too should commit the same mistake by asking them to split. One mistake does not rectify the other mistake. That is not the point here. By feeding the news agencies through the financial institutions to control them, they will never be independent. They will never be effective.

Lastly, I plead: Let there be a national debate on this. Let there be a consensus taken from the subscribers who are the consumers. Let all the newspapers say and let the employees Of the newspapers actually say this. It is not actually for Mr. Mirchandani or for that matter Mr. Nayar or Mr. Advani to decide. If you want to change this we are prepared to have a democratic approach. You are committed to democracy, and let us



actually have a national consensus on this matter. Do not rush with this. In fact the Government did not give an opportunity. We asked for this opportunity. Parliament must have an opportunity completely to go into the financial implications, the political implications and the professional implications, and, therefore, let there be more time.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI H. M. TRIVEDI): We can now allot only five minutes to Mr. Varma and Mrs. Habibullah.

SHRIMATI HAMIDA HABIBULLAH (Uttar Pradesh): Five minutes for both of us?

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI H. M. TRIVEDI): For both there are only five minutes left. We will have to call the Minister by 5-30.

**श्री महादेव प्रसाद वर्मा (उत्तर प्रदेश) :**  
मान्यवर, इस बहस में माननीय राव ने जो बातें कहीं . . .

SHRI K. K. MADHAVAN: What about me, Sir?

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI H. M. TRIVEDI): I am sorry, I cannot accommodate you.

SHRI K. K. MADHAVAN: This is going to be unfair, Sir.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI H. M. TRIVEDI): I am going by the list of speakers before me. I am bound by the time.

SHRI K. K. MADHAVAN: My name was mentioned. My name was presented by my party.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI H. M. TRIVEDI): I know it. But the debate cannot extend beyond 5-00 o'clock.

SHRI K. K. MADHAVAN: Why not? For whose convenience do you want to silence us. May I know if you want to silence us for the convenience of Mr. Advani? This is 'democratic' Emergency?

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI H. M. TRIVEDI): Are you available after 6-00 P.M.?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI LAL K. ADVANI): I have no objection. If the House is willing to stay late, I have no objection.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI H. M. TRIVEDI): Mr. Varma, you have got ten minutes.

SHRI MAHADEO PRASAD VARMA: Sir, in the beginning they were given 15 minutes.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI H. M. TRIVEDI): Now I still have left, with me something like seven speakers.

**श्री महादेव प्रसाद वर्मा :** मैं घड़ी को देख रहा हूँ। घंटी बजाने की जरूरत नहीं पड़ेगी। मैं 10 मिनट में खत्म करूंगा।

वाइस-चेयरमैन साहब, माननीय राव ने जिन बातों की तरफ ध्यान दिलाया है, वह गौर के लायक हैं लेकिन एक चीज छूट गई उसमें। उसकी बुनियाद जिघ्र से चलनी चाहिए थी उसको छोड़ कर उन्होंने बात कही। बुनियाद क्या है? बुनियाद यह है कि जनतंत्र में और व्यक्तिगत स्वातंत्र्य में खूबियां तो हैं, लेकिन खराबियां भी उतनी ही हद तक हैं; हम उन से बच नहीं सकते और जब कभी हम जनतंत्र की बात करेंगे तो हमेशा इस बात को ध्यान में रखना पड़ेगा कि उसके अंदर जो खराबियां आती हैं, कमजोरियां आती हैं उनको भी हमें बर्दाश्त करना पड़ेगा—उसको छोड़ कर नहीं जा सकते। उसके अंदर इन्ट्रिन्सिक कमजोरियां हैं। मैं उनसे एग्री नहीं करता कि कोई कारपोरेशन होना चाहिए, कोई एक एजेंसी होनी चाहिए, इस बात को देखते हुए कि जितना कम्पीटीशन खास कर के समाचारपत्रों के मामले में है, कम से कम यह एक फील्ड है जिसमें “लैसेज़ फेयर” की बहुत जरूरत है और अगर इसको आप कम कर देते हैं तो फिर जनतंत्र की टांग तोड़ देंगे। वह रुक नहीं सकता। कोई भी एक एजेंसी हो उसमें डिफेक्ट आयेंगे, कमजोरियां आयेंगी, इन्फोर्शियेंट काम होगा। लेकिन उस इन्फोर्शियेंसी को मेकअप करने के लिये गवर्नमेंट पर क्यों जोर डाला

[श्री महादेव प्रसाद वर्मा]

जा रहा है। क्यों नहीं वे ही सब मिल कर कोऑपरेटिव ढंग से एक अच्छी एजेंसी बनाने के लिये काम करते, क्यों न इसके लिये उन को एन्क्रेज किया जाये। वह खुद ही इन चार एजेंसियों को तोड़ कर एक को बना लें। ऊपर से लादना ठीक नहीं है। यह गवर्नमेंट की तरफ से हो, यह अच्छा नहीं है। इसमें खतरे दो हैं। एक खतरा है सरकारी मशीन का, और दूसरा खतरा है विंग हाउसेज का आपके इस प्रेस को, जिस की फ्रीडम इस जनतंत्र के लिये इतनी जरूरी है; इसको इन दो खतरों के बीच से कैसे निकाला जाये यह खूबी सरकार की होनी चाहिए और यह हो सकता है। अगर सरकार जैसा कि वह कह रही है और जैसा कि स्टेटमेंट हमारे प्राइम मिनिस्टर का हुआ है मैं एक मिनट में उसको पढ़ कर सुना देता हूँ। उन्होंने कहा है:

"I am going to make a provision by which the press in India is not interfered with in future by any Government."

अगर इस प्रकार की भावना है कि प्रेस को यूँ बनाना चाहिए तो उसके लिये रास्ते हैं। आज टाइम नहीं है और इसलिये मैं ज्यादा कुछ कहना नहीं चाहता, लेकिन इतना जरूर कहना चाहता हूँ कि अगर उस रास्ते पर इस सरकार को चलना है और प्रेस को फ्रीडम देनी है तो इन दोनों खतरों के बीच से निकाल कर उसके लिये कोई प्रोविजन हो सकता है। मैं राव साहब की इस बात से एग्री करता हूँ कि देश के अंदर इस प्रकार के बहुत से विचारक हैं, अच्छे अच्छे पत्रकार हैं और भी दूसरे लोग हैं जो इसको जानते हैं, जिन्होंने अपनी जिन्दगी उठने लगायी है, उनको, सरकार के अधिकारियों को और मंत्रियों को भी बिठा कर और विरोधी पक्ष को भी साथ में बिठा कर सोचा जाय, तो कोई रास्ता निकल सकता है, जिसमें हम इन दो खतरों से बच सकते हैं। लेकिन उस रास्ते का मूल यह होगा कि अगर प्रेस की दो एजेंसियाँ बह चलाना चाहते हैं, तो चलायें

और अगर वह एक एजेंसी रखना उचित समझते हैं तो वह एक रखें। यह इनीशियेटिव उनको लेना चाहिए। यह उनके अधिकार में रहने दीजिए। इसमें सरकार कोई दखल न दे। यह खतरे की बात है। हम इन्क्रेज कर सकते हैं, बनवा सकते हैं, दोनों खतरों से बचा सकते हैं, अगर हम उसको कराना चाहते हैं। मुश्किल यह पड़ रही है कि हम यहाँ जो विचार प्रकट करते हैं, उसमें वह विचार भी आ जाते हैं। एक तरह का बुनियादी विचार है जिसमें दो चीजें हैं। जनतंत्र में व्यक्ति-स्वातंत्र्य बुनियाद है। उसको खतरे से जितना बचा सके उतना अच्छा है। जितना उस पर कम से कम कंट्रोल हो, वह अच्छा है। यह बुनियाद है जनतंत्र की, जिसको सोशलिज्म कहते हैं। इस तरह की जो हुकूमतें बनी हैं रूस और चीन में उनकी बुनियाद है कि व्यक्ति कोई चीज नहीं है और सोसाइटी सर्व-सर्वा है। व्यक्ति को उतनी स्वतंत्रता दो जितनी उसके लिये बहुत जरूरी है, उसकी जिन्दगी के लिये, उसके बाद सारा कुछ सोसाइटी का है। यह दो विचारधारायें मूल रूप से चल रही हैं और जब हम प्रेस के ऊपर बहस कर रहे हैं तो उस समय भी यह विचारधारायें हमारे सामने आ जाती हैं। एक तरफ हम को इम्पार्टेंस देनी है कि अगर जनतंत्र को कायम रखना है तो उसे इन खतरों से बचाना है कि जो व्यक्ति-स्वातंत्र्य की वजह से पैदा होते हैं, विरला, टाटा, डालमिया के चंगुल से प्रेस को बचाना है। यह बात साफ है, लेकिन उस पद्धति से हमें हगिज नहीं सोचना है, चाहे जिस रूप में भी हो। अगिक तौर पर वह फायदेमंद भी है, पिछली इमरजेंसी के दौरान हमने देखा और अब भी हो सकता है कि अगर प्रेस को किसी सरकारी एजेंसी ने किसी रूप में किसी तरह से अपने पीछे लगा दिया तो जनतंत्र की हत्या से आप उसको बचा नहीं सकते। जो श्रमजीवी पत्रकार हैं, उन्होंने कुछ आर्गुमेंट्स दिये हैं इस समाचार एजेंसी के खिलाफ, सब तो नहीं है, लेकिन कुछ

लोगों ने दिया है और उन्होंने अच्छी दलीलें दी हैं। मैं समझता हूँ कि उनको संक्षेप में आपके सामने रख दूँ कि उनके अन्दर कमजोरियाँ क्या हैं।

यह सेमिनार हुआ था उसमें अच्छे अच्छे पत्रकार आये थे। उन्होंने कहा है :—

"The retention of SAMACHAR with a suitably reconstructed set-up and having a clearly independent language •wing would be in the best interests of the nation having regard to the need to have a strong economically viable news agency which could cater to the ever increasing and varied demands of the newspapers."

इस चीज के इकानामिक्स पर एम्फेसिस दिया है, शायद उन लोगों को यह खतरा हो गया है कि ये न्यूज एजेंसी बनने पर हमारा जो ग्रेड बना है वह शायद खतरे में पड़ जाए। इसलिए नैरो दृष्टिकोण से इसमें उन्होंने दिया है, मैं मानता हूँ। लेकिन कोई एजेंसी जब तक इकानामिकली साऊंड न हो एफिशियेंटली रन नहीं की जा सकती लेकिन उसकी एफिशियेंसी को बनाये रखने के लिए गवर्नमेंट का मुँह देखना खतरनाक है।

दूसरी चीज जो कही है —

"Freedom of the press is not dependent on existence of two or more competent news agencies but can be guaranteed by suitable provision in the Indian Constitution,—"

अब इनकी कमजोरी को देखिए। लेकिन थोड़ी देर में इनको अकल आ गई।

".....as was done in the United States."

तस्लीम करते हैं। इसलिए इस दलील में कोई दम नहीं है।

तीसरी चीज कहते हैं—

"It was emphasised in this context that even a Constitutional safeguard be its could not guarantee press freedom unless those in power showed due respect to the Constitution and the rule of law. It was pointed out that the existence of the world's bulkiest written Constitution did not prevent Mrs. Indira Gandhi from imposing the kind of Emergency she did and making an *ex-post facto* reference to the Cabinet."

अगर लैसेज फेयर की थ्योरी कहीं दुनिया में एप्लाइ की जा सकती है तो फस्ट सेफगार्ड न्यूज एजेंसी को चाहिए।

"That competition is a laissez faire concept and cannot be applied to news agencies."

लैसेज फेयर एक खतरा जरूर है और बिड़ला, टाटा, डालमिया, बिग हाउसेज उसको कैप्चर कर लेंगे। अगर उस खतरे से हम बचा सकें तो वह न्यूज एजेंसी के ऊपर कोई कंट्रोल किसी की तरफ से न होने पायेगा।

श्रमजीवी पत्रकार संघ के प्रेसिडेंट श्री रामास्वामी की एक बात कह कर मैं खतम करता हूँ। उनका कहना है :—

"Media is a public utility and no Government which professes to run a welfare State can totally abdicate its responsibility in the matter."

अब बात सही है, लेकिन इस बात को वे भूल गये कि जो भी मनी सप्लाय करेगा, चाहे बिड़ला हो, टाटा हो, डालमिया हो या गवर्नमेंट के एक्जीक्यूटिव हों, मिनिस्टर हों या सरकार को, निश्चित है कि जो पैसा देगा

[श्री महादेव प्रसाद वर्मा]

उसकी लगाम को खींचेगा। यह जरूरत है, लेकिन उसके साथ साथ इस बात का भी ध्यान रखना है कि अगर गवर्नमेंट पर किसी भी रूप में, पैसे के ऊपर गवर्नमेंट पर वह निर्भर होगी तो उसका कंट्रोल उसके हाथ में आ जाएगा।

"It is extremely regrettable that Government by arriving at this decision has Ignored not only the opinion of the bulk of the Agency's employees and also of competent professionals including some....." (Time bell rings)

यह कहना उनका सत्य से परे है, क्योंकि जैसे स्टेटमेंट मिनिस्टर का हुआ है उसमें एम्प्लॉय के इंटरेस्ट को ओवर-लुक नहीं किया गया है। इसलिए यह निराधार है।

अन्त में, मेरा कहना है, घण्टी बज गई है कि माननीय मन्त्री जी का यह कदम स्वागत योग्य है और माननीय राव साहब को और अन्य आनरेबुल मेम्बरों को भी इसे एक्सेप्ट कर लेना चाहिए, ज़िद की बात नहीं है, मुल्क का भला इस बात में है कि न्यूज़ एजेंसियां इंडिपेंडेंट हों। इसमें कोई दो रायें नहीं हैं। दूसरी चीज़ यह जरूर है कि वे वायेबल हों, सक्षम हों। सक्षम होने के लिए उनका इकोनामिक बेस अच्छा होना चाहिए। मैं समझता हूँ कि वह इकोनामिक बेस ऐसा होना चाहिए जो बिरला, टाटा तथा डालमिया और सरकारी मशीनरी, इन सब से परे होना चाहिए। ऐसा रास्ता पैदा करने के लिए और उसको बनाने के लिए सब की तरफ से कोशिश की जानी चाहिए। मैं यह भी समझता हूँ कि हमारी सरकार की यही नीति है कि हमारी न्यूज़ एजेंसियां सक्षम हों और उनको इसी आधार पर सक्षम बनाया भी जा सकता है। इसमें कोई मजबूरी की बात नहीं है। इसलिए मेरा विनम्र सुझाव है कि इस वक्त जिस प्रकार से समाचार को बनाया गया है उसको हटाना बहुत जरूरी है। यह ठीक है कि न्यूज़ एजेंसीज़ स्वतन्त्र होनी चाहिए। लेकिन उसके साथ साथ एक

समिति ऐसी बनाई जानी चाहिए जो यह देखे कि इन एजेंसियों को सक्षम और निष्पक्ष कैसे बनाया जा सकता है और कैसे इनको गलत काम करने से रोका जा सकता है, इस सम्बन्ध में अपने सुझाव दे। इसके लिए जितने भी एक्सपर्ट्स की सलाह या राय लेने की आवश्यकता हो वह ली जानी चाहिए और किसी को इस बारे में मुगलते में नहीं रहना चाहिए। हमारा लक्ष्य एक होना चाहिए कि इस देश में जनतन्त्र की रक्षा के लिए हमें एक निष्पक्ष और सक्षम न्यूज़ एजेंसी कायम करनी है। मैं समझता हूँ कि इस लक्ष्य की पूर्ति के लिए कोई रास्ता निकालने में कोई दिक्कत नहीं होगी।

SHRIMATI HAMIDA HABIBULLAH:  
Mr Vice-Chairman, I will try to take as little time as possible. But at the same time I want also to convey my ideas to the hon. Minister.

I am sorry to say that in my opinion, if a definition was required for 'reactionary', it could be found in the thoughtless step taken over the disintegration and dismantling of 'Samachar'. For, it shows the tremendous powers of the private press owners of this country against the interests of the whole people of India.

I am not going to deal with forced marriage or even divorce. Until 'Samachar' was created there were four privately financed and privately owned news agencies. They did not cover the whole of India. In fact only one quarter of the country was covered. As an example of this in my own State of Uttar Pradesh, out of 56 districts only 20 were covered by these four. In these twenty, there was overlap over the others by each, in most districts. Even worse, Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, Jammu and Kashmir and Punjab, covering a vast area of this country, had a total of five representatives. So, actually, we were dependent on outside agencies, who fed India on the nonsense and selected gleanings of dirt via three Atlantic countries. A most glaring example

of this utter ineffectiveness on our part and total reliance on foreign media was seen by me in 1965, during the Indo-Pakistan conflict. I happened to be in London at that time. The whole of Europe relied heavily on news through Anglo-American owned media. Even on T.V. a Professor Tinker of London University was acting as an expert on our sub-continent.

He used such phraseology as Hindu India is suppressing Muslim Pakistan. My husband and I did overtime attending meetings in London and at Universities to show that we were Indian Muslims and we had a clear case against Pakistan for invading and attacking our country on little or no grounds. Even letters intended for publication were returned back to us. This was the sorry state of private ownership, by vested interests, of a country's press and news media. This state was heightened by the fact that our country had no proper press organisation beyond what the High Commission could put out. This, therefore, is just one instance to show up the gravity of the step the Government has now taken to reverse our growing strength in the world of information.

The international atmosphere being what it is, all sorts of corruption into the third world countries was being affected. But India, had, for its own news collection abroad, a total of 5 representatives. There thus existed a mission for this great nation to find a way out. Just as we were the first colony to shake off colonial rule, so we led the way for our sister countries and formed a collective news service. In this, 'Samachar' was not only to play a vital role, but it became the sixth largest news agency in the world. This way, our input and output media would have played an important role, in the advance of the erstwhile slave countries, into the future. But now it has been decreed otherwise and India will leave a void

by its absence, or its part will scarcely be a creditable one. Except for England, France and America, all the countries have national agencies of their own. What is the result? Lord Thomson alone has over one hundred agencies with which he controls the whole of England. He was largely responsible for Britain's disastrous entry into the European Economic Community, out of which they can scarcely now hope to extricate themselves. In America, about twenty individuals own all the news media. They have even created corrupted lobbies in both the Houses of the legislature there. Sir, what is known as the freedom of the press in the USA and on the other side of the Atlantic is freedom of the owners to say or do what they like. They may call black as white or white as black. That is part of their freedom. But say that someone tried to expose the malpractices of a favoured person that would not see the light of day. In this way, great areas of a nation's life are constantly blacked out. For instance, do we need the exposure of those who have made crores and crores while the people who are living below the starvation line are increasing in numbers day by day? 'Samachar' was, therefore, set-up in order to rationalise the set-up. Its political objective, if any, was to help India and the third world countries come closer, and to give news of the doings, not of Queen Elizabeth or Jimmy Carter, but of what was going on in South America and the Afro-Asian region. It was to start cementing our feeling of oneness and our sense of interest in things concrete or projected in the areas that matter to India and Indians. Its coverage was to include all classes, regions and people of India, their welfare and needs, and interesting items of information about each other. Even assuming that 'Samachar' was misused which, I will not say is all that true, then, Sir, was the set-up wrong or was it the misuse of the set-up? No one has really gone into that. The answer boils down to the question whether information and news media be in the

[Shrimati Hamida Habibullah]

hands of the people and their representatives or in the hands of a few money owners who have neither contact with nor sympathy for anyone except their own narrow interests. Should we give the people what is profitable for a money-lender-turned-industrialist, by the purchase of foreign know-how? He will obviously be in the clutches of the owner of the know-how. This, in turn, will lead to the twisting of the Indians' tale from a long distance and by an unseen hand. On the other hand, a Government-run news agency has the advantage of being committed from the start to the idea of the good of the people. It will strive to do all it can to educate the people and it will explain the why and wherefore of Government action. At the same time, it will give the Government and the responsible persons the correct quantum and urgency of things that need to be done to satisfy the people. In short, it will be a two-way daily or periodical vehicle between the people themselves and the people and those who serve them.

From this position of communion and vantage, a national press agency can be closely linked to an international two-way system feeding and receiving back the feelings and the facts of life of those people of the globe nearest to or even farthest from us. The present action of the Government has betrayed the interest of the people through personal feelings of vengefulness. They have destroyed the tool in order to appear to have destroyed its uses. They have obviously little or no thought for the public. Rather they would like to kow-tow to and prostrate themselves before the press barons, who are from the topmost houses of the twenty families that are already sucking the blood of India. The words "sincerity", "objectivity" and "service" have already vanished from their vocabulary. However, I

appeal to them to realise that the people are the State and not the denizens of the sprawling Government of New Delhi nor the press owners.

Sir, I would like to finish by asking the honourable Minister: Do you or do you not want to build a new society? Or, are you selling your heritage for a mess of pottage? To break up Samachar into its old constituents is to sell out India and sow reaction in the extreme. In its wake, this action will make the rich much richer and the poor even more poorer. That is the tragic truth. Thank you, Sir.

SHRI L. R. NAIK (Karnataka): Sir, at the outset, I would like to say that this august House is considering an issue of far-reaching importance for all times to come. It would, therefore, be necessary that each one of the Members of this august House should bestow his thoughts on the action taken by the Janata Government. And if they find that it is not in accordance with the major interests, it should be bold enough to stand up and tell the Government: Stop here, no further step is necessary. It is a well known fact that news agency plays a very important role in the life of a country. You have heard of certain international types of news agencies having international reputation, like Reuters in England, United News Agency of America, AFI of France, and similarly of Italian agencies. Of course, we do not want to speak about TASS which is a fully governmental agency. But there are certain important agencies which are working on very sound norms of journalism. Now, one of these sound norms, of course, is objectivity. What is objectivity? Objectivity means that a news agency should collect news reports and distribute these among its subscribing newspapers. And this part it should play with honesty and with due integrity. If this is not done, such a news agency is bound to lose its credibility. And once credibility is lost, the news agency

has fallen; it becomes worthless. Similarly, any news agency should be based on the principle of adequacy. Now, what is adequacy? As you know, Sir, ours is a caste-ridden society. Ours is a rural society. We have in this country millions and millions of people who are labouring under the poverty line. Is there any agency in the country today which can reflect the aspirations and desires of these vast number of people of this country? I would like Advaniji to answer this, question of mine.

I am confident that news agencies in our country have failed. Some of them have British legacies, like the PTI, the Hindustan Samachar, etc., dominated as they are by vested interests and communal elements. And some of them which can be said to be based on certain principles do not have proper resources to work on sound basis. It is for these reasons that an examination of these agencies was made and the previous Congress Government came to the conclusion that it was high time that there was an agency conforming to all the norms known to any reputable news agency in the world. That is why Samachar was created. I do not say that there are no shortcomings in the Samachar, nor do I say that there is no lacuna. They are there. But they could be remedied. The proper step that the Janata Government should have taken was to remedy those shortcomings if there are any. Restructuring of the Samachar would have gone a long way to give this country a good and sound news agency.

As you know, ours is a very young nation, though an ancient country. For the last thirty years, we have been labouring to establish an egalitarian society in our country. We should not be under the impression that merely by speaking about egalitarianism we can bring about such a society. It requires a concerted effort on the part of all the parties, whether it is the Janata Party or it is the Congress Party or it is the C.P.I. or C.P.I.

(Marxist). They should have that national interest for the purpose of establishing an egalitarian society. Therefore, it would be necessary that we should have a news agency of some reputation conforming to all the known norms of a news agency. If this is not done, I am afraid we will be failing in our duty. In this connection, I would like to make two important suggestions. It is high time that the Government thinks of establishing or appointing a Press Commission to go into these problems in detail so that when the report is received, the Government can be in a position to examine the problem in depth and take suitable action. My second suggestion is that any news agency that we may be contemplating of establishing must be under the Act of Parliament. (*Time Bell rings*). If this is not done, we won't have a proper news agency. We do not want to trust Hindustan Samachar which has got its own black marks. We should have an agency which will be authorised by the Parliament of this country. Thank you, Sir.

SHRI K. K. MADHAVAN: Thank you, Sir, for saving some time from the clutches of the unwilling Government so that it was made available to me. I say "unwilling Government" because we are at the fag end of the discussion and even now we do not get time to speak out.

(Interruptions)

SHRI SUJAN SINGH (Haryana): We are thankful to the Minister for having extended the time.

SHRI K. K. MADHAVAN: We are in the midst of a discussion on the statement on Samachar made in the Rajya Sabha on the 14th of November, 1977, by no less a person than the hon. Minister for Information and Broadcasting. In the midst of the discussion; in fact, we have wrested some time, a few hours, from the unwilling Government because the Government was not prepared to place the report of the Kuldip Nayyar Committee before the House for a discussion. It should

[Shri K. K. Madhavan]

have been open for discussion according to parliamentary norms. Now the Members have insisted on having a discussion only on this two-page paper which was read out by my friend, Mr. Advani. Let us go through the two-page paper. What does it mean? Going through this paper and the subsequent notes, we can find that the Government had already decided, as early as on April 7, 1977 to destroy the set-up of Samachar. They had taken the decision in advance. Then they thought of clothing that unlawful decision with some sort of formality and for that formality they appointed a committee headed by an eminent journalist. Though I do not agree with the findings of the committee. I congratulate the committee for the quickness with which they have given this report. Unfortunately for the Government, this report did not fit into the required pattern of the intention of the Government. That is the reason for placing the report beyond the pale of this hon. House. That is why they wanted to deprive us of the opportunity of discussing this very important subject. Going through para 1, I find that the intention of the Government was "to set up a committee of experts to examine and report on the future of Samachar". And what has happened? They submitted a report but it was to the disadvantage of the Government. The report went against the interests and the wishes of the Government. They offered certain recommendations which were quite unpalatable to the present Government. The present Government say that Samachar was a creation of emergency. All that was done during the emergency, they are out for undoing. At the very outset I thought that this attempt of the Government to destroy the set-up of Samachar was some sort of exercise of a conservative mother-in-law who always opposes whatever is said and whatever is done by her daughter-in-law. But going deeper into the relevant papers I find that it is not so. There is a sinister design behind it. Sir, the

Committee made a very significant suggestion. I am not discussing this Committee's report but there is a very significant suggestion at page 62 of the report. And I quote from para 133, entitled 'Sandesh':

"We recommend that the news agency work in English language should be organised under one independent body. The infra-structure should be so designed as to make for expansion of the coverage in term of areas and subjects and to achieve high standards of defficiency."—I underline the words "high standards of efficiency"—"The Agency may be named "Sandesh"."

If the name 'Samachar' is quite unpalatable, they have substituted it with a very pleasant term, 'Sandesh'. Sandesh means message. If they wanted, the Committee might have said against Samachar. But they did not want to split it into four parts. What prompted the Government to split Samachar into four parts is very important. There are two Indian language agencies—Hindustan Samachar and Samachar Bharati. I congratulate my friend, Mr. Advani, for the Party interest which he openly betrays at the expense of the public exchequer. If he wants to keep his own partymen on the pay rolls of Hindustan Samachar and Samachar Bharati, if he wants to pay through Government grants and aid, he could have said that openly. That is the honest way of doing things. Instead of that, he misuses the funds of the Government and the country by appointing a Committee. But that Committee did not fit into his requirements. They did not submit a report made to his order. It was not the readymade garment which the Government wanted. The Kuldip Nayar Committee, with which I have so many differences submitted, a report not to the order or to the taste of the Government. That is the crux of the matter.



There is another thing Sir. What about the Non-aligned news agency pool? Nothing is mentioned by this Government about that. So many people have said here that the present Government's foreign policy has not undergone any change in spite of the change of government. I have my suspicions, Sir. The very fact that nothing is mentioned about the Nonaligned News Agencies Pool and the very fact that it is left to the discretion of different bodies whether to associate with 'X' or 'Y' of the foreign news agencies is very significant. I will not be surprised if before long some of Mr. Advani's news agencies will have collaborations with foreign agencies working against the interests of this country. And, I can say that that will only be the fore-runner of the economic policy of this Government which will be attached to the apron-strings of big business throughout the world as well as inside India. Who owns these big newspapers? The big business in India knows very well their importance, they are very intelligent people. They understand things very well, and long before India became free they bought foreign owned newspapers. Many of the foreign newspapers were bought by Indian big business overnight. Now, the new agency also is going to be controlled by them at the expense of the public exchequer. Then Samachar is going to be split into four parts; into different institutions to be misutilised by big business, who will be financing the party of the present Government in some form or other. This is the sting (*Time Bell rings*). Here is a reactionary step; not only in the world of news, not only in the world of Economics, not only in the world of politics but also in the world of international affairs also. It is a very reactionary step.

Our Prime Minister has recently visited the U.S.S.R., and come back. Sir, I am no admirer of the U.S.S.R. I have foregone trips to the Soviet Union. Opportunities of Soviet trips were foregone by me because I wanted to be dissociated with one of their bodies.

Now our Prime Minister has gone there and come back. (*The Bell rings*) That is well and good.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI H. M. TRIVEDI): Please conclude.

SHRI K. K. MADHAVAN: Yes, I am concluding. Only one more minute. I can assure you, Sir, with confidence and one need not be a prophet to say that this Government is going to surrender the economic and political sovereignty of this country to the reactionary interests all the world over. The breaking up of the Samachar is only a prelude. We have got a very dark future. My esteemed friend, Mr. Abu Abraham, has presented to this hon. House a very good caricature of the Government. Let them correct themselves. Thank you.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI H. M. TRIVEDI): Mr. Sujan Singh. He will be the last speaker.

SHRI SUJAN SINGH: Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, first of all, may I convey my thanks to the hon. Minister for voluntarily offering to sit for longer hours in order to give me an opportunity to speak? Sir, let me congratulate the Janata Party and the Janata leaders and the hon. Minister for deciding to take a decision to make the press free. This is a historic decision taken on a historic day. Those people who have been talking and advocating that this decision should have been delayed are not democrats. A democrat would like to be freed from the jail or the prison any moment, he is offered an opportunity. He would avail himself of this opportunity and would not delay even for a second. It was open, to Janata Party, the ruling party and the Cabinet to keep Samachar under its control but the Government decided keeping in view the national interests the interests of democracy and keeping also in view our traditions and aims, to revive the earlier four agencies even though no Government would like to lose its powers. Yet, the Government decided to lose its power in this case.

[Shri Sujan Singh]

Sir, I realise there is one big shortcoming in this decision which I would request the hon. Minister to think over if he finds some force in it. The shortcoming is, what would be the position when all these independent agencies would be working and if there is a clash between the working class and the industrialists in the towns, between the rural people who constitute mostly the kisans community, and the traders and industrialists who trade in their products and who process their products? These interests definitely clash. At that time there will be no one to advocate the cause of the poor farmers, rural people and the poor people in the towns against the industrialists and traders. This is my personal experience also that whenever there is a clash between the workers and the factory-owners, there is none to support the workers and the factory-owners by the strength of their money, get the news defused or get the news fabricated in their favour. Therefore, Sir, it is very important that the Government should take this position into consideration while deciding on this issue. For that, I have got a suggestion to make and that is that the Gov-vernment should also have its own agency along with private agencies. The agency of the Government will be autonomous where Members of Parliament will be represented. In this way, the objections of most of my friends sitting opposite will also be covered. Secondly, while giving aid to the private agencies, the Government should impose certain conditions and one of the condition would be that the rural areas should be represented as much as possible on those private agencies. The representatives of the rural areas should be such who have the necessary rural background and who should belong to these rural areas, so that they will have full sympathy for the rural areas while giving their news.

With these words, Sir, I thank you again.

**श्री लाल कृष्ण आडवाणी :** उपसभाध्यक्ष जी, जिन सदस्यों ने इस चर्चा में भाग लिया है उनका मैं आभार प्रकट करता हूँ। अधिकांशतः जो आलोचना भी हुई है, उस आलोचना को मैं राजनीतिक नहीं मानता हूँ। कहीं कहीं पर जरूर राजनीति का तीखापन आ गया और कभी कभी तो आश्चर्य होता था कि कुछ शब्दों के बारे में कोई विशेष लगाव तो नहीं है कि कहीं पर भी आलोचना करनी हो तो 'सेल आउट' से कम कुछ कहो मत। सेल आउट ही सेल-आउट है। लेकिन इस बात का मुझे विशेष समाधान हुआ कि राजनीति से परे मानने की इस मुद्दे की प्रवृत्ति विपक्ष में भी कुछ लोगों में दिखाई दी। इस बात का मैं स्वागत करता हूँ कि विपक्ष के जो एकमात्र पत्रकार सदस्य बोले उन्होंने इस निर्णय का स्वागत किया। इस सम्बन्ध में उन्होंने मुझे बधाई देने की आवश्यकता नहीं समझी, लेकिन उन्होंने कहा कि यह उपयुक्त निर्णय किया गया है और इसलिए बधाई देने की आवश्यकता नहीं है जैसी कि मेरी पार्टी के लोगों ने मुझे बधाई दी है। मैं समझता हूँ कि इस मामले को ठीक परिपेक्ष में देखने के लिए इस बात को पहले समझा जाना चाहिए कि सरकार जब इस बारे में विचार करने के लिए बैठी तो इस सम्बन्ध में मैंने जो बयान दिया उस बयान को भी पढ़ने की आवश्यकता है। अगर आप उस बयान को ध्यानपूर्वक पढ़ें तो आपको कहीं पर भी यह नहीं लगेगा कि कहीं पर मैंने यह कहा है कि अगर ऐसा किया जाएगा तो देश के अन्दर न्यूज एजेंसीज के सम्बन्ध में एक आदर्श स्थिति पैदा हो जाएगी, एक अच्छी स्थिति पैदा हो जाएगी। इस प्रकार का बलेम हमने कहीं नहीं किया है। श्री बिट्टल गाडगिल ने अपना भाषण आरम्भ करते हुए कहा था कि जनता सरकार का यह एक करेक्टिस्टिक और टिपिकल निर्णय है। इस सम्बन्ध में मैं यह कहना चाहूंगा कि यह जो मंत्रालय है यह एक प्रकार से टिपिकल है।

टिफिकल इस बारे में है कि इसमें वह कमिट-मेंट साफ दिखाई देता है कि सरकार प्रेस के मामले में कम से कम दखल दे या थिल्कुल दखल न दें। मैं समझता हूँ कि यह जो कमिट-मेंट है, यह कोई टैक्निकल बात नहीं है। इसलिए खास तौर से जब राजू साहब बोल रहे थे तो मुझे बड़ा आश्चर्य हुआ। श्री राजू जैसे व्यक्ति भी इस निर्णय को पोलिटिकली मोटीवेटड बता रहे हैं। मैं समझता हूँ कि अगर वह निर्णय पोलिटिकली मोटीवेटड होता तो वर्तमान में समाचार का जो ढांचा बना हुआ है उसी ढांचे को बनाए रखती और उसके मैनेजमेंट को अपने हित के लिए अपने अधिकार में रखने की कोशिश करती। इसमें कोई सन्देह नहीं कि आज समाचार का जो ढांचा बना हुआ है और जिसका उल्लेख कई माननीय सदस्यों ने किया है वह जो समाचार छापता है वह हमारे खिलाफ भी न्यूज छाप सकता है और आपके खिलाफ भी न्यूज छाप सकता है। ऐसी स्थिति में मैं समझता हूँ कि अगर समाचार के सम्बन्ध में किया गया निर्णय पोलिटिकली मोटीवेटड होता तो यह ज्यादा अच्छा होता कि समाचार को ही बनाए रखा जाय और न्यूज एजेंसीज के सम्बन्ध में पूर्व की स्थिति को लाने की आवश्यकता नहीं होती। 'समाचार' को ही मजबूत किया जाता। जनता सरकार का शुरू से लेकर आखिर तक यही कमिटमेंट रहा है कि इस सम्बन्ध में सरकार कम से कम दखल दे। जहाँ उचित हो वहीं बीच में पड़े, अन्यथा बीच में न पड़े।

अब कुछ लोग कहते हैं कि अगर आपको पूर्व स्थिति को ही लाना था तो यह सारी एक्सरसाइज करने की क्या आवश्यकता थी? आपने कुलदीप नायर कमेटी बैठाई। यह ठीक है कि कुलदीप नायर कमेटी ने बहुत जल्दी अपनी रिपोर्ट दी। साधारणतः कमेटियाँ बहुत समय लगाया करती हैं। लेकिन इस कमेटी ने बहुत शीघ्रता से काफी मेहनत और परिश्रम करने के बाद अपनी रिपोर्ट दी है। इस रिपोर्ट के मिलने के

बाद भी सरकार को लगा कि इस पर डिबेट होनी चाहिए। यहां पर भी कुछ लोगों ने कहा कि इस विषय पर नेशनल डिबेट होनी चाहिए, इस विषय पर हमें जल्दी नहीं करनी चाहिए। श्री अबु अब्रहाम जी ने भी सुझाव दिया कि इस विषय पर जल्दी में कुछ करने की आवश्यकता नहीं है। उन्होंने कहा कि आपने यह भी निर्णय कर लिया है कि एक प्रेस कमीशन बनाया जाय। इसलिए प्रेस कमीशन द्वारा कोई निर्णय दिये जाने के बाद ही इस बारे में कुछ किया जाना चाहिए। इसका अभिप्राय यह है कि इन छोटे-छोटे मुद्दों पर भी कितना डिविजन आफ ओपीनियन हो सकता है, यह इस चर्चा से साफ हो जाता है और बिल्कुल रिजनेबल है। मैं समझता हूँ कि इस प्रकार की ओपीनियन देना प्रत्येक व्यक्ति की दृष्टि से रिजनेबल हो सकता है, इसको हमें स्वीकार करना चाहिए। इसमें पोलिटिक्स कहीं नहीं आता है। इसमें राजनीति कहीं नहीं आती है, उसकी कोई गुंजायश नहीं है। सरकार की तरफ से बार-बार यह कहा गया है कि प्रेस के मामले में कहीं भी राजनीति नहीं आती है। इन सात महीनों में इस दृष्टि से अगर देखा जाय तो कहीं पर भी राजनीति नहीं आई है, इसका मुझे गर्व है, अभिमान है। मैं समझता हूँ कि प्रेस के मामले में इन सात महीनों के अन्दर सरकार ने जिस आत्म संयम से काम लिया है यह स्पष्ट दिखाई देता है।

Self-abnegation in the matter of the Fourth Estate, in the matter of the

Press

दिया है कि उसने अपने बायदे को पूरा किया है और जो लोग वहां पर बैठे हुए हैं वे इसको चाहे मानें या न मानें, लेकिन अधिकांश लोग इस बात को मानते हैं कि हमने प्रेस के मामले में दखल नहीं दिया है। हमारी सरकार इस बात को मानती है कि सरकार को प्रेस के मामले में किसी प्रकार का दखल

[श्री लाल कृष्ण आडवाणी]

नहीं देना चाहिए या जहां पर आवश्यकता हो वहीं पर दखल देना चाहिए।

Commitment to the freedom of the Press; commitment to the non-intervention by the State in Press matters,

यही एक प्रकार से सरकार के निर्णय में पार्श्व-भूमिका रही है। इस प्रकार की पार्श्व-भूमिका रहने के बाद मैं अपने उस बयान की ओर सदन का एक बार फिर ध्यान आकर्षित करना चाहता हूँ। क्योंकि मैंने शब्दों का चयन सोच करके किया था। मैंने कहा था कि :

"Government has considered the question of the future set-up of news agencies in the country in all its aspects. In doing so, they have taken into account recommendations made by the Experts Committee on news agencies as also the public reaction to its recommendations."

उस डिबेट की हमने सूचना दी, उसको प्रकाशित किया। उस रिपोर्ट को प्रकाशित करने के बाद सारे देश से तमाम प्रकार के मत आये, बहुत टीका-टिप्पणी हुई, अच्छा-बुरा सब कुछ कहा गया और फिर हमने कहा कि हम इस मत के हैं :

"Samachar was, thus, In this sense ,a product and the symbol of the Emergency and, indeed, an aberration arising out of the Emergency."

Now I would like to draw your attention to this very specifically:

"The Government have, therefore, come to the conclusion that at the moment Government's role in the matter should be limited simply to the setting right of this aberration."

Nothing more, nothing less.

अर्थात् कि इस समय मैं यह नहीं कहता हूँ कि पूर्व स्थिति जो थी, वह बहुत अच्छी थी और इसलिये पूर्व स्थिति पर जाना चाहिए। मैं उसकी आलोचना करता रहा हूँ एक पत्रकार के नाते। जो स्थिति 75 में या 76 में, जब समाचार बना, उसके पहले न्यूज एजेंसियों की थी, उसको मैं कोई अच्छा नहीं समझता। मैं तो कहता हूँ कि प्रेस की स्थिति हिन्दुस्तान में जो है वह अच्छी है, ऐसा मैं नहीं मानता। बहुत कमजोरियाँ हैं और बहुत बाधाएँ हैं। जो प्रेस एजेंसी के बारे में कहा जाता है कि उसका कम्प्रहेन्सिव कवरेज नहीं है, वह केवल नगरों तक सीमित है, गांव की ओर ध्यान नहीं दिया है, एका-नामिक डेवलपमेंट की ओर ध्यान नहीं दिया, पोलिटिक्स ओवर एम्फेसिस है, यह जो सारी चीजें हैं, ये लगभग सारी प्रेसों में समान हैं। चूंकि प्रेस में सारी चीजें समान हैं, इसलिये बैठकर कह दिया कि दिल्ली में 5-6 एजेंसियाँ हैं, 5-6 अखबार निकलते हैं, 6 काहे के लिये होने चाहिए, शायद उसके लिये यह तर्क दिया जा सकता है, आर्ग्यूमेंट दिया जा सकता है। लेकिन सरकार का शुरू से यह दृष्टिकोण रहा है कि प्रेस के मामले में निर्णय जो हैं, वह निर्णय प्रेस वाले स्वयं करें। उसमें जो सहायता हो सकती है हम करेंगे। हमसे अपेक्षा की जाती है कि हम करें और जो अपेक्षा हमारी ब्राड आवेजैक्टिव और ब्राड अप्रोच से मेल खाती है, तो हम उसे जरूर करेंगे। इस मामले में आनन्द जी ने मैं समझता हूँ कि प्रेस कमीशन का हवाला दिया और कहा कि प्रेस कमीशन ने कहा कि न्यूज एजेंसी एक होनी चाहिए। मैं हैरान हुआ। मैंने प्रेस कमीशन की रिपोर्ट पढ़ी थी। परन्तु इसका ध्यान नहीं रहा। मैंने फिर प्रेस कमीशन की रिपोर्ट पढ़ी मैं देखता हूँ कि उसमें लिखा है कि. . .

श्री बी० बी० राजू : श्री आनन्द जी ने कहा कि :

PTI to be converted into corporation. Mr. Advani, let us do justice to him. This is what he said.

**श्री लाल कृष्ण अडवाणी : श्री आनन्द जी ने यह कहा कि : PTI to be converted into corporation.**

लेकिन एक एजेंसी की चर्चा थी । लेकिन आज के सन्दर्भ में वह भी महत्वपूर्ण है । उस समय भी प्रेस कमीशन ने इस बात पर बल दिया था कि प्रेस न्यूज एजेंसीज के मामले में news agencies' competition is necessary to provide a corrective. This is what the Press Commission has said.

SHRI K. K. MADHAVAN: Who prevents competition?

**श्री लाल कृष्ण अडवाणी :** मैं इसका उल्लेख इस लिये कर रहा हूँ कि प्रेस कमीशन का जो न्यूज एजेंसीज के बारे में मत है, जैसा उन्होंने कहा, वह बहुत ही साउंड मत है, बहुत अच्छा मत है । उन्होंने जो व्याख्या दी है न्यूज एजेंसी की, वह इतनी उत्तम है कि चाहे मैं समझता हूँ कि वह सदैव के लिये लागू रहे, जो व्याख्या प्रेस कमीशन ने न्यूज एजेंसी के बारे में दी है, वह हमको एक प्रकार से गाइड कर रही है और भविष्य में भी करेगी ।

अब मैं यह कहना चाहता हूँ कि प्रेस कमीशन ने अपनी रिपोर्ट में कहा है कि :

"The basic function of a news agency is to provide news reports of current events to the newspapers and others who subscribe for its service. As would be apparent

from its description, it acts only as an agent for collection. It is, therefore, expected to have integrity and disinterestedness."

Now what follows is very important.

"As in the case of justice, a news agency should not only possess integrity but should seem to possess it."

क्योंकि न्यूज एजेंसी एक निष्पक्ष संस्थान है जो सब प्रकार की खबरों को जो स्टैपल न्यूज हैं वह प्रोवाइड करता है इसलिए न्यूज एजेंसी के बारे में, सारी अखबारों में, सारी जनता में, सारी प्रेस में, विश्वास होना चाहिए कि यह जो समाचार देंगे वह सही होंगे । आज अगर कोई खबर हिन्दुस्तान टाइम्स में छपती है, नेशनल हेराल्ड में छपी है, टाइम्स आफ इंडिया में छपी है, पैटरीयाट में छपी है या इंडियन एक्सप्रेस में छपी है, हो सकता है सही हो, हो सकता है गलत हो । उनका अपना साधन है, उनके अपने कोरेसपोण्डेंट हैं, उनके अपने व्यूज हैं, उनका अपना बायस है, सारी बातें हैं । यह जो एडिटोरियल बायस होगा वह उनके समाचार पत्रों को भी प्रभावित कर सकता है । अगर कोई खबर पी० टी० आई० से चली गई है, कोई खबर यू० एन० आई० से चली गई है, समाचार भारती से चली गई है, हिन्दुस्तान समाचार से चली गई है, वह खबर फैक्ट्स के मामले में परफेक्ट होनी चाहिए उसमें कोई संदेह नहीं होना चाहिए । और अगर यह धारणा प्रेस में रहे, पाठक में रहे—तो न्यूज एजेंसीज अपना काम कर रही हैं । मैं कहता हूँ पुरानी बातें छोड़ दीजिए, इमरजेंसी की बातें छोड़ दीजिए लेकिन अब आप पिछले आठ महीनों को ही लीजिए । पिछले आठ महीनों के बारे में भी शायद ही कोई पक्ष हो जो समाचार की शिकायत न कर रहा हो । इधर से भी शिकायत आ रही है, उधर से भी शिकायत आ रही है, यह कहते हैं आप लोग मैनेज करवा रहे हैं, आप लोग

[श्री लाल कृष्ण आडवाणी]

बुला रहे हैं, आप लोग करवा रहे हैं, यह सप्रेम करवा रहे हैं। उधर से शिकायत जाती है कि वही पुराने लोग बैठे हुए हैं। आपने उनके खिलाफ कार्यवाही नहीं की तो, पूरी तरह समाचार की विश्वसनीयता स्थापित नहीं हो पाई है। मैं मानता हूँ यह प्रमुख कारण है कि जिसके कारण आज हम इस स्थिति पर पहुँचे हैं। कोई बल्लेक स्लेट पर नहीं लिख रहे हैं, कोरी पट्टी पर नहीं लिखा। एक स्थिति पैदा हुई है जो स्थिति है वह राजनीतिक कारणों से बनी है। श्री अबु अब्रहाम ने डिस्टिकशन करने की कोशिश की...

SHRI K. K. MADHAVAN: The hon. Minister should not....

SHRI LAL K. ADVANI: There is hardly one word that you have uttered and you want it to be replied.

SHRI K. K. MADHAVAN: In the T.V. in July last atrocities in Andhra Pradesh were presented instead of atrocities in Bihar. What does this mean?

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI H. M. TRIVEDI): No interruptions please.

श्री लाल कृष्ण आडवाणी : तो श्री अबु अब्रहाम इस बात में फर्क कर रहे थे कि जिस प्रकार से समाचार को बनाया गया वह उचित नहीं था। लेकिन समाचार का बनना उस पर आपत्ति नहीं होनी चाहिए। यह उन्होंने

product as well as process—both. The process in which Samachar came about and the product itself by virtue of the manner in which it had been run all through and during this period also. ...

क्रेडीबिलिटी नहीं कर पाये, विश्वसनीयता पैदा नहीं कर पाए। न्याय करने के लिए ठीक कार्य

करना, यह जरूरी नहीं है लेकिन जिसके लिए काम किया जाता है उनको विश्वास होना चाहिए कि ठीक काम हो रहा है। इसकी बैकग्राउंड में सरकार के पास एक ही तरीका था, हमारा रोल जो है वह लिमिटेड है, हमने सारा देख लिया, सब कुछ देख लिया, असैस कर लिया, पक्ष विपक्ष की डिबेट भी सुनी और उस पक्ष विपक्ष में जाने के बिना इस बात पर सहमत हूँ, इस बात पर कुलदीप नायर कमेटी की भी सहमति है, इस बात पर वाइट पेपर जो हमने प्रकाशित किया उस में भी सहमति है, विपक्ष में भी सहमति है कि समाचार का जो जबरन गठन हुआ वह कोई अच्छा नहीं हुआ शायद मालवीय जी ने कहा

It was a very right step in the forward direction. I do not know how he regards it as a step in the forward direction. I do not regard it so.

मैं यह मानता हूँ कि चार एजेंसीज को बरबस इकट्ठा कर के जिस उद्देश्य से किया गया, जिस नीयत से किया गया और उसका जिस प्रकार से संचालन किया गया जिसके बाद अच्छे अच्छे लोगों को हटा कर दूसरे लोगों को लाया गया। राघवन जी का उल्लेख किया गया तो सब यह How can it be regarded as a step in the right direction? It was a vicious step. It was, as a paper rightly put it, an illegitimate child of the emergency.

में सरकार के लिए यही एकमात्र अच्छा तरीका था, ठीक तरीका था कि न्यूज एजेंसीज को पूर्वस्थिति पर लाया जाए और पूर्वस्थिति पर लाने के बाद अपनी स्टेटमेंट में जैसे कि कहा, जानबूझ कर कहा कि —

"News agencies forced to merge under pressure and against their will during the emergency should be allowed to function independently as they were doing earlier."

And then what follows is important from my point of view, from the Government's point of view:

"It would then be open to them if they so desire to cooperate or to come together in order to ensure that they are able to play more effectively the pivotal role expected of them in the press set-up".

अब यह मैंने कहा है और उसी में से इस बात की झलक सबको मिलती है कि सरकार पूर्व स्थिति को कोई आदर्श स्थिति नहीं मानती है। पहले की स्थिति बहुत अच्छी स्थिति बहुत बढ़िया स्थिति थी और पहली स्थिति पर पहुंच जाओ मैं नहीं मानता हूं सरकार नहीं मानती है और इसलिए सरकार ने कहा एक बार वह स्वतंत्रता पूर्व वाली मिल जाय एक बार उनकी अपनी अपनी विश्वसनीयता पैदा हो जाय उसके बाद फिर वह आपस में बात करें मिलें जुलें एक फ्री इंडिविजुअल के नाते आपस में बात करके कोई फैसला करके कोई सहयोग करते हैं किसी भी प्रकार का जिनके द्वारा न्यूज एजेंसियों का जो एक पिबोटल रोल है एक बड़ा प्रमुख रोल है नये सेटअप में उसको अदा कर सकें वह भूमिका निभायें बहुत अच्छा है उनको आज्ञा दी होगी इस बात की। इतना ही नहीं कुछ लोगों ने कहा कि आपने तो ईरानी के साथ की रिकमेंडेशन मान ली और फिर ईरानी साहब को रिकमेंडेशन का उल्लेख करते हुए ईरानी साहब ने जो भाषाई पत्रों के बारे में कहा है, ईरानी साहब ने जो जर्नलिस्टों के बारे में कहा है उसका उल्लेख करते गये। हमारा वक्तव्य देखिए उसमें पूर्वस्थिति की बात तो है लेकिन उसके साथ-साथ इस बात की ओर विशेष ध्यान दिया गया है कि हम यह मानते हैं कि इमरजेंसी में जबरन सही इन सब एजेंसियों को साथ लाया गया तो यह क्लास बन एजेंसी बन गयी और क्लास बन एजेंसी के बनते ही तुरन्त जितने पत्रकार वहां पर काम करते थे उन पत्रकारों के वेतनमान बढ़ गये, क्लास बन एजेंसी के हो गये। जिन पत्रकारों को पहले शायद कम मिलता था उनको ज्यादा मिलने लगा और वास्तव में

पत्रकारों के मन की जो चिन्ता थी वह स्वाभाविक थी और वह स्वाभाविक रूप से आकर कहते थे। मैंने शुरू में कहा था कि सरकार इस बारे में जो भी फैसला करेगी तो उनमें पत्रकारों के जो वेतनमान हैं, उनके बारे में जरूर चिन्ता करेगी। यह कोई साधारण बात नहीं हम शुरू से इससे परिचित थे। आखिर इतनी बड़ी लायेबिलिटी बढ़ गयी, वायेबिलिटी नहीं बढ़ गयी, लायेबिलिटी बढ़ गयी। कभी कभी लोग कहते हैं कि वायेबुल हो गया। आप देख लीजिए कि कितना खर्चा हो गया। कुछ लोग कहते हैं कि इसको तोड़कर उनको कमजोर करना चाहते हैं। अब जैसे इकट्ठे हुए तो कितना खर्चा होता अगर इकट्ठे बने रहते केवल सरकारी खर्च पर चलते रहते तो हर महीने साढ़े छः लाख रुपये का घाटा सरकार को वहन करना पड़ता। Apart from the subscription that is paid to it. इस पीरियड में पिछले इस डेढ़ दो साल के पीरियड में शायद हमने 78 लाख एक साल में और उससे भी ज्यादा एमाउंट दूसरे साल में 1, डेढ़ दो करोड़ रुपये के करीब दिया। यह जो परपेचुअल पैरासाइटिक स्थिति है यह स्थिति अच्छी नहीं है। सरकार ने निर्णय किया कि इसकी जो अपनी इन्टर-प्राइजिंग स्ट्रिट थी, अपनी जो स्वयं की डाइनामिज्म थी जो इस पीरियड में खत्म हो गयी और इन 8 महीनों में उन्हें दिखाई दिया कि उस डाइनामिज्म को फिर से रिस्टोर करना चाहिए और रिस्टोर करने का तरीका तो यह था कि पूर्व स्थिति पर ले आये। यह हमने स्वीकार किया कि इमरजेंसी के कारण जबर्दस्ती इनको बैठाया गया और वेतनमान अच्छे हो गये तो वेतनमानों में क्लास बन की एजेंसी से फिर श्री और फोर बन जाय, जिनको आज 900



[श्री लाल कृष्ण आडवाणी]

मिलता है उनको 500 मिलने लगे तो यह किसी भी दृष्टि से न्यायोचित नहीं होगा। इसमें अपराध तो सरकार का है जिसके कारण पब्लिक एक्सचेजर में बोझा बढ़ गया और सरकार के अपराध के कारण जो बोझा बढ़ गया एक्सचेजर पर और जिसके कारण लाभ हो गया पत्रकारों को वह पत्रकार स्वाभाविक रूप से यह अपेक्षा करेंगे कि कम से कम अगर सरकार कोई और भी निर्णय करे तो भी आज जो हमको मिलता है वह तो कम न हो और इसी लिये यह प्रिंसीपल स्वीकार किया गया, प्रोटेक्शन का। हमने कहा कि एक एजेंसी में कोई कर्मचारी था पत्रकार था कि जिसको उस समय अमुक मिलता था आज अगर नार्मल तौर पर डेढ़ दो साल बाद उसको कितना मिलता यानी एक साल बाद और एक्चुअली जो कुछ आज मिल रहा है उसमें जितना अन्तर है उस अन्तर को हम गारण्टी करते हैं, छः साल के लिए उसकी व्यवस्था की है—3 साल के लिए पूरी तरह से और 3 साल के लिए टेपनिंग स्केल पर हम देंगे। एक प्रिंसीपल स्वीकार किया है। यह कहना कि यह व्यवस्था के द्वारा नियंत्रण किया जा रहा है, इस पर मैं कहता हूँ कि इससे ज्यादा अन्यायोचित, इससे ज्यादा अनरीजनेबल कोई आरोप नहीं हो सकता खास कर उन लोगों के द्वारा जो कहते हैं वर्किंग जर्नेलिस्ट्स की आप अपेक्षा करते हैं। यह सारा का सारा दृष्टिकोण जो है जिसके द्वारा बेसिकली हमने प्रोटेक्शन का प्रिंसीपल स्वीकार किया है, जिसके द्वारा हमने यह भी स्वीकार किया है कि अरे भई, न्यूज एजेंसी फिर से शुरू हो रही है। कल जिनके पास मकान था छोड़ दिया और सरकार ने कहा मिल जाओ और मिल भी गए और आज कहते हैं आजादी है वापस मिलने की, तो केवल यह कहना आजादी है वापस शुरू करने की वह कहेगा आप कौन सी आजादी दे रहे हैं ?

Is it the usual freedom that you grant them?

किया कि एक नान् रिकॉरिंग ग्राण्ट पहली बार दे दिया। लेकिन यह मत समझिए हमेशा के लिए सरकार सहायता करती रहेगी। नहीं करेगी। क्योंकि वह जो पहले की व्यवस्था थी, समाचार की, उसमें यह व्यवस्था थी—कोई बात नहीं है साढ़े 6 लाख रुपये हर साल घाटा होगा, कोई बात नहीं इतने समय देते रहे हो और भी देते रहोगे, क्या फिक्र की बात है

This is not the way a news

agency is to be run.

हमारी सरकार की कल्पना में यह नहीं है एक सिविलिटी के तौर पर न्यूज एजेंसी चलाने की। अलबता इस बात को हम समझते हैं कि न्यूज एजेंसी के सेट-अप में व्यवस्था रहे और उस व्यवस्था को लाने के लिये जितने उसके सब्सक्राइबर हैं वे उसको ठीक, उचित रूप में दें। ये जो सेस की कल्पना चली है, प्रधान मंत्री जी ने जिसका उल्लेख किया, उसकी तह में भी यह कल्पना है आखिर कि कौन न्यूज एजेंसी की वाएबिलिटी का असर क्या हो सकता है जब कि सब्सक्राइबर सब्सक्रिप्शन देते हैं और उन सब्सक्राइबर्स को, जहां तक ये बड़े बड़े अखबार हैं जिनकी सामर्थ्य अधिक है, देने कम हैं। मैं मानता हूँ और देना चाहिए। और दूसरा है आल इंडिया रेडियो (आकाशवाणी) सरकार उसको भी देख रही है उसको फिर किस रेशनल बेसिस पर लाया जाए। आकाशवाणी जो उनको सब्सक्रिप्शन देगी उसको देने का कोई रेशनल बेसिस हो, ऐसा न हो कि आर्बिट्ररी हो। आर्बिट्ररी नहीं होना चाहिए.....

श्री इशाम लाल यादव (उत्तर प्रदेश) :

मान्यवर, अगर इजाजत दें तो मंत्री जी से



एक बात कहना चाहता हूँ। जब ये कहते हैं कि साढ़े छः लाख रुपए महीने सविस्डी दी जाती थी वर्तमान व्यवस्था में और आगे छः साल तक ये पूरा खर्चा देंगे, तो खर्चा कम कैसे होगा, अभी एक इनिशियल ग्राण्ट देंगे, फिर जो डिफरेंस आफ सैलरी होगी वह देंगे। छः साल में अपने पूरे कार्यकाल में, जो रुपया देंगे और जो साढ़े छः लाख ६० प्रति वर्ष दिया जा रहा है, दोनों में क्या अन्तर है? क्यों शब्दों का हेरफेर कर रहे हैं?

श्री लाल कृष्ण आडवाणी : नहीं, सब देने के बाद भी मैं कहता हूँ बहुत कम बैठता है। मैं विश्वास दिलाता हूँ। सबसे बड़ी बात यह है कि पत्रकारों को, न्यूज एजेंसी को पता है कि 3 साल पूरा दिया जाएगा प्रोटेक्शन और तीन साल बाद टेपरिंग बेसिस पर—पहले 50 परसेन्ट फिर 25 परसेन्ट फिर जीरो परसेन्ट। उस पीरियड में हर एक न्यूज एजेंसी प्रयत्न करेगी, दौड़-धूप करेगी ताकि अपने सम्मन्विजन के द्वारा अपने को वाएनल बनाए। आखिर कोई भी न्यूज एजेंसी, कोई भी फ्री मीडिया को, अपनी व्यवस्था आप करनी चाहिए। सरकार की अपनी नीतियां होती हैं, जैसे हमारी नीति है कि बैकवर्ड एरियाज में लैंग्वेज पेपर्स या छोटे और मीडियम पेपर्स को प्रोत्साहन दें। उसके अन्दर हम कुछ बेटेज देते हैं, व्यवस्था करते हैं, लेकिन बेटेज देने के बाद हम सविस्डाइज नहीं करते। हम यह नहीं कहते कि कोई अखबार नहीं चल सकता क्योंकि छोटा अखबार है, क्योंकि गांवों में निकलने वाला अखबार है। तो ये सब रैशनल बेसिस पर सारा लाने का हमारा उद्देश्य है और मैं मानता हूँ कि समाचार के बारे में जो निर्णय सरकार ने किया है वह भी इसी दिशा में एक कदम है। लोग

कहते हैं कि आपका क्या काम है, आपने क्यों किया? गाडगोल साहब तो कहते हैं कि इन्फरमेशन मिनिस्ट्री जब इन्फार्म करती है तो डाइरेक्ट करती है। आश्चर्य है...

श्री बिट्टल गाडगोल : लेटर है।

श्री लाल कृष्ण आडवाणी : लेटर है; हां विलकुल ठीक है। लेटर क्या कहता है आपको ज्ञानकारी है। समाचार के मैनेजिंग बोर्ड ने दो तीन महीने पहले प्रस्ताव पास किया—immediately after the Kuldeep Nayyar Committee gave its Report and that resolution was passed on to us.

और

इस प्रस्ताव में हमसे कहा गया कि आप हमको बताइये कि क्या करना है। जो भी सरकार सलाह देगी उसके अनुसार हम कार्यवाही करेंगे। अब उसके आधार पर उनको लिख कर भेजा कि हमारा मतलब यह है।

That is what we expect. आखिर सरकार जो है अनन्त काल तक साढ़े 6 लाख रुपये का घाटा सहने को तैयार नहीं। चाहते तो अग्रैल में उनको कह देते कि साढ़े 6 लाख का घाटा पिछली सरकार ने दिया है, हम नहीं देंगे। जो करना है, करो। What would happen to thousands of journalists who are working there? How does it become a direction? How does it become arm-twisting, though in a subtle, sophisticated manner?

सरकार ने ऐसी कोई बेजवाबदारी की बात नहीं की। लेकिन इसका मतलब यह नहीं है कि सरकार जो है वह घाटा अनन्त काल तक सहन करती रहेगी। हम यह उचित समझते हैं यह कहना क्या हम उनको डाइरेक्ट कर रहे हैं और क्या यह समाचार का अधिकार है

### [ श्री लाल कृष्ण आडवाणी ]

कि हमको कहे कि आप हम को अनन्त काल तक इंडेफिनिटली साई 6 लाख रुपये देते रहिये ।

When you say that you want debate on an issue, you should be open to conviction. I have been open to conviction.

SHRI VITHAL GADGIL: So have we been.

श्री लाल कृष्ण आडवाणी : मैं चाहता हूँ कि कम से कम इन मुद्दों को इस पालिटिक्स की हल्की बातों से अलग रखें । हमारी दृष्टि में कोई पालिटिक्स नहीं है और इसलिये हम आपन माइन्डेड रहते हैं । कोई कहेगा कि हम बेवैरिंग रहते हैं । हम इसमें कोई बेवैरिंग नहीं देखते ।

Joint Secretary had written a letter to Samachar saying that such and such things should be done and they should not be linked up with the rates of subscription. I do not think there is anything wrong.

SHRI VITHAL GADGIL: Does it not imply that you take a decision to split them into four.

SHRI LAL K. ADVANI: This had already been conveyed.

हमारा पत्र जब उनके पास गया तो उन्होंने कहा कि हम यही करेंगे और उसके साथ साथ अपने पत्र में उन्होंने पूछा कि हमको यह बताइये कि ए० आई० आर० के सब्सक्रिप्शन में क्या दिया जायगा । तो उनको जवाब गया कि इसके लिये आप उनसे मिलिये । हम और वह दोनों जुड़े हुए नहीं हैं और जब आप कहते हैं कि चार एजेंसियां अलग अलग करेंगे तो ए० आई० आर० को सब्सक्रिप्शन क्या दिया जायगा उस के लिये

स्वाभाविक रूप से वह उन्हीं से बात करेंगे । लेकिन हर चीज में इसको देखना, मैं चाहता हूँ कि कम से कम कुछ समय के लिये आप जरूर छोड़ दें और यह प्रेस फ्रीडम का मुद्दा एक ऐसा महा है जिसके बारे में मैं कॉन्विंस्ड हूँ । I see nothing wrong about it. It is a natural and logical thing.

मैं प्रेस फ्रीडम के बारे में नेशनल कमि-टमेंट है । उस पार्टी में भी है और इस पार्टी में भी है । यह हमारा ही कोई प्रिविलेज नहीं है । हमारी ही मोनोपली नहीं है । इसलिए मैं मानता हूँ कि संभव हुआ तो प्रिवेंशन आफ पब्लिकेशन आफ आब्जक्शनेबिल बैटर्स ऐक्ट जिसको आपने अग्रेल से चार पांच महीने पहले पास किया था, सर्वसम्मति से पास किया था, उस को सर्व-सम्मति से रिपील किया था क्योंकि आपके ऊपर से कोअर्रसन हट गया । आपके ऊपर जो आतंक छाया हुआ था इमरजेंसी में, वह हट गया था और उस आतंक के हटते ही आपने कहा कि इसे बदल दो । यह नहीं चलता, प्रेस फ्रीडम के साथ यह बिल्कुल मेल नहीं खाता और मुझे विश्वास है कि 42वां संशोधन जो हुआ है उसके लिए जब बिल आयेगा तो उस समय भी आपका यही अप्रोच होगा । मैं उम्मीद करता हूँ और मैं आशा करता हूँ कि आपका यही अप्रोच होगा क्योंकि मैं मानता हूँ कि प्रेस फ्रीडम के बारे में सरकार ने जितने कदम उठाये हैं एडमिनिस्ट्रेटिव और लेजिस्लेटिव उनकी इतिश्री तब होगी कि जब हम 42वें संशोधन को खत्म कर देंगे क्योंकि उसमें इस बात की व्यवस्था है कि जितने सारे डाइरेक्टिव प्रिंसिपल्स हैं उन डाइरेक्टिव के प्रिंसिपल्स के लिये अगर कोई कानून बनाया गया तो वह कानून फंडामेंटल राइट्स को ओवर राइड करेगा और हमारी जो प्रेस फ्रीडम है उसका जो सोर्स है वह आधारित है आर्टिकल 19 पर और हमारा 19वां अनुच्छेद मीनिंगलेस है, इलज्युअरी है अगर उसको डाइरेक्टिव प्रिंसिपल के नाम पर कोई सरकार या

संसद् खत्म कर सकती है। अगर ऐसा रहा तो मैं मानता हूँ कि प्रेस फ्रीडम के लिये कांस्टीट्यूशनल खतरा बना हुआ है। मैं चाहता हूँ कि वह खतरा रिमूव हो जाय।

कई और छोटे छोटे मुद्दे हैं, लेकिन वह ऐसे हैं कि जो वास्तव में हिन्दुस्तान के अन्दर आदर्श न्यूज एजेंसी कैंपी होनी चाहिए इसके साथ जुड़े हुए हैं और मैं अपेक्षा करता हूँ कि जो प्रेस कमीशन हम बनाने की सोच रहे हैं उस में वह मुद्दे भी आयेंगे कि जैसे आगे चल कर कोई और रचना हो तो प्रेस एजेंसी वाले, पत्रकार स्वयं और हम सब मिल कर तय कर सकते हैं। जब कोई कंलेशन नहीं, कोई मजबूरी नहीं कि आपको मानना ही है, नहीं मारेंगे तो गड़बड़ होगी, ऐसी कोई मजबूरी नहीं, इन सब मजबूरियों से मुक्त, तो ऐसी अवस्था में हम किसी समय भी उन पर विचार कर सकते हैं। लेकिन आज की स्थिति में मैं समझता हूँ कि सरकार का जो दायित्व था, जो सरकार की जवाबदारी थी वह सीमित थी और वह सीमित यह थी कि यह जो विकृति पैदा हुई इमरजेंसी के समय में उस विकृति को दूर करके पूर्व स्थिति लाना। पूर्व स्थिति अच्छी थी, यह मैं नहीं कहता। लेकिन जितनी विकृति, जितना आतंकित विकृति इस काल में आई उतनी पहले कभी नहीं आई।

SHRI V. B. RAJU: Will you allow me one clarification? The Hon. Minister is mixing up the press freedom with the break up of the "Samachar". I would assure him that on the question of the press freedom and on the methods and approaches that the Minister and the Government would adopt, the Congress Party stands actually by him. There is no question about it and there is no problem about it

**श्री लाल कृष्ण आडवाणी :** अगर कोई तथ्यों के बारे में स्पष्टीकरण है तो मैं अवश्य दूंगा, लेकिन चर्चा नहीं होनी चाहिए ...

{*Interruption*}

SHRI V. B. RAJU: He is actually trying to do a thing which will give just the opposite result. He is trying to break it up.

SHRI LAL K. ADVANI: This is also an argument.

SHRI V. B. RAJU: He has assured us that he is thinking that this matter should be considered by the Press Commission. Now he is breaking up the "Samachar" and handing it over to the inefficient agencies which have eaten away the capital and destroyed everything. He is undoing something and asking the press to do anything. What can the press do?

SHRI LAL K. ADVANI: If I have to say specifically, I would refer to the fact that as early as 1954 the Press Commission had recommended that a corporation should be set up under a statute. From 1954 to 1975, 21 years had passed, but the Government in its wisdom, decided not to do it. May be, tomorrow we may decide to do it. But, at the moment, I felt that rushing into that course of action would not be proper, and, therefore, at the moment, the Government has very specifically said that its role, its purpose and its function is limited and that is to set right the aberrations.

## MESSAGES FROM THE LOK SABHA

### I. The Gresham and Craven of India (Private) Limited (Acquisition and Transfer of Undertakings) Bill, 1977

### II. The Enemy Property (Amendment) Bill, 1977.

SECRETARY-GENERAL: Sir, I have to report to the House the