

THE PRESS COUNCIL BILL, 1963—
continued

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Madam Deputy Chairman, I was speaking about this monopoly control of the Press. There is a prevalent notion that yellow journalism is indulged in mostly by small papers and the big newspapers are not responsible for any such bad thing but would invite the attention of hon. Members to the findings of the Press Commission on page 352, paragraph 945 :—

“Nevertheless, the large and well-established newspapers suffer from certain weaknesses: Some of them are partisan in the presentation of news in respect of the financial interests with which they are allied; there is a certain timidity to expose courageously the shortcomings of those who are in a position of power and authority; there is an element of arbitrariness in the publicity given or denied to individuals; there is a tendency to suppress facts which are unfavourable to their own interests or to the financial interests with which they are associated”.

Now, this is the finding of the Press Commission with regard to papers with a large circulation. This is a clear indictment of the big Press on grounds of suppression of truth, lack of objectivity, partiality and subservience to the interests of monopoly capital or financial interests if you like. Therefore, it is not something which I am saying. The Press Commission has said all these things and I am only recalling to mind what they have said. Here again Mr. Mani—who is not here again—yesterday wanted to make out that it is the Western Press only which indulges in sensationalism and that our Press does not do such things. And unfortunately he chose the example of Rosellini. I think she was a Bengali girl and by marriage she became Rosellini. Madam Deputy Chairman, I do not go to cinemas and therefore I do not know all these things.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Why talk about it when you do not know?

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: I may commit a mistake. I do not even know if I have pronounced the name correctly. It is true that this film star was given a lot of publicity in the foreign Press after the Indian lady had married the Italian film star Signor Rosellini. But I would ask Mr. Mani not to make much capital out of it. It is bad, we know; but what about our Big Press? When the name of Christine Keeler shot the headlines in the British Press, big portraits and big pictures of Christine Keeler were published in some of the leading newspapers in India and I do not know how Dr. Pande felt about it, but I should have thought that he is aware of these things. Now such things are done here because the monopoly capital always does such things. Sensationalism is the method by which the monopoly Press tries to degrade the people's tastes and culture and tries to secure readership. It is not particularly a British or an Italian or a French vice. It is a kind of vice that arises from the control of the Press by monopoly capital.

Now you see how in England they are dealing with the Press. The “Daily Herald” was a labour paper. It was controlled by monopoly capital and later on it was crushed. Today there is no such paper as “Daily Herald”. It was supposed to be the organ of the Labour Party which sometimes becomes the ruling party also.

[THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN) in the Chair.]

I say that it should not be our guide. We should not try to guide ourselves by what happens in Fleet Street. That is not at all a good thing or a correct thing for us. Now, Mr. Vice-Chairman, therefore, I think the Press Council should be seized of this question in a proper way. What we are concerned with is the need for diffusion of ownership and I expect-

[Shri Bhupesh Gupta.]
 ed Mr. Mani to dilate upon that problem at some great length. Now, diffusion of ownership is something which has been dealt with at length in the Press Commission's Report and I am not going to recite the paragraphs and so on lest I should commit a simple error here and there and be hauled up because my errors are never forgiven. Now, you can read paragraphs 688 to 700, 715 and 716 and other related paragraphs and come to your own conclusions. I would ask the hon. Minister, when she discusses this Bill in the Joint Select Committee, to consider all these suggestions and findings in the Press Commission's Report. In our view the Joint Select Committee should consider that no person having interest in an industry of the value of Rs. 10 lakhs and more should have anything to do with the Press. There must be some guiding principle. I should like to extricate the Indian Press from monopoly control and that gradually I can do it, but certainly I must have a clear perspective in this matter. The unit of shareholding should be reduced to five per cent and no more. That is to say, no one should be allowed, except perhaps that some trusts and other things—not the trusts owned by big people—should be allowed to hold more than five per cent of shares in any newspaper concern. That should be our approach. I am not saying that this is an infallible approach. All I would like to stress in this connection is that one should bear in mind and see what concrete steps should be taken here and now to bring about a diffusion of ownership of newspapers. It brooks no delay whatsoever. We should have taken this step some six or seven years ago. In fact, I think, the hon. the late Prime Minister in this House and the other House and also other leaders of the Congress Party and Government spoke about the diffusion of ownership and spoke against monopoly control in the Press. But unfortunately the practice has been to encourage and even allow it to continue. This is what is happening.

Then comes the question of news agency. The Press Commission had certain recommendations to make in their relevant paragraphs. They made certain recommendations. They wanted the Press Trust of India, for example, to be converted into a public corporation with a board of trustees and not a board of directors and there certain suggestions were made. The Chief Justice should be appointed as the Chairman of the board of trustees. Now, we have shelved that suggestion also. I see no reason why we should not be in a position to convert such institutions into public corporations, as suggested unanimously by the Press Commission. By the way, all the recommendations of the Press Commission were unanimous except in respect of some Press laws. Otherwise, they were unanimous recommendations. On the Press Commission there was no communist at all. They were all very respectable people, some of them Judges and so on.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN): Do you mean to say that communists are not respectable?

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: You do not think that we are respectable. We are never respectable because we could be arrested and put in jail any time you like, treated harshly under the Defence of India Rules and all that. They can do anything they like. We do not claim that respectability from the ruling class. All I say is they were respectable persons. All human beings are respectable, if you like that way, but I am using your expression. According to them they are very respectable people. Even so, these are not implemented. Government owes an explanation to Parliament and to the country as to why even the unanimous recommendations of such a body of persons as the Press Commission should not have been implemented. May I ask in all humility

our new Minister of Information and Broadcasting to take courage in both hands and see how much of it could be implemented? I think everything could be implemented because the recommendations were made by people who were not extremists. They were all people who were known for their moderate views. They gave their views ten years ago. What I would like to know is why after ten years even these moderate views of persons, who were not extremists but people with moderation, should not be implemented. On the contrary, we find in this country they are allowing new news agencies. News agencies come up under Goenkas and others. Permissions have been given sometime by modifying certain laws and regulations. This is not a right thing. Therefore, this aspect of the matter should be gone into and the Press Council should be given that assignment, to go into the question of diffusion of ownership in general and the question of conversion of PTI and other news agencies into public corporations, so that monopoly control over them is eliminated. Here again the Press Commission has said many things.

Now, another task of the Press Council would be to protect the Press from the Government's attack and from the pressure of the Government. The Government sometimes attack them directly under these impressive laws, the Defence of India Rules, the Press Act and so on and the Government sometimes put pressure upon them by withholding advertisements or by denying advertisements to small newspapers. Therefore, when I say Government attacks, I have in mind both the repressive measures and other methods of pressurisation as I have indicated with regard to advertisements and other things.

Mr. Mani very rightly dealt with the question of the freedom of the Press. Here you will find in the Bill the words. The Commission put the

language in a particular way and interestingly enough in that clause, in clause 12, you will find that they say: "(2) (a) to help newspapers to maintain their independence;", whereas in the Report of the Press Commission at page 353, their first point is: "To safeguard the freedom of the Press"

SHRI A. D. MANI: 'Safeguard'.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Yes. Safeguard the freedom of the Press. You should remember it. Their second object is: "To help the Press to maintain its independence." These are two distinct, different concepts. Now, it is significant here that the expression "the freedom of the Press" is deleted. All they say is: "To help the Press to maintain its independence." I think it is a very crude tampering with a good recommendation, a well-contrived, well-conceived and well thought-out recommendation of the Press Commission. But we are vigilant, Mr. Vice-Chairman. We will not allow the hon. lady Minister or her Deputy to get away with this kind of alteration—not that she has done it. The Bill was there in 1963 when it was done: Now, of course, she has got the book. You can see it at page 353, at the bottom of the paragraph. Now, you should explain why you have done it. Here is a significant part of it. The Press Commission makes recommendations as to the functions of the All India Press Council. Fourteen items are given and you will see it is differently put in the Bill. One should have expected that at least bodily this thing would be lifted from the Press Commission's Report and those functions would be given, because this is prepared by the Secretary and that is prepared by the Press Commission, people competent to speak on the subject, on the functions of the Press Council I cannot understand why there should be hesitation in accepting it in that manner, although I may have something to say even with regard to the suggestions made by the Press Commission. Now, here again, let me give one or two very interesting examples, be-

[Shri Bhupesh Gupta.]
 cause I always try to substantiate it. The hon. Minister will get accustomed to me that in such matters, although I may not be always very pleasant. I try to substantiate things. Mr. Mani, what have you been talking? Here it is not a question of subtlety. A vulgar, crude, violent attack is launched against the Press and its freedom and I would like the Press Council to be given ample powers under clause 12 to protect the independence, dignity, honour and freedom of the Press. It is not given. That is my complaint. Now, I will presently give you an example and I hope the hon. Minister will note it. I will pass on the papers to her if she is interested in saving the freedom of the Press.

In February last a few communist members in the Kerala Assembly raised the question of corruption charges levelled against Shri V. P. Nair, Inspector-General of Police, Kerala Estate. The Chief Minister replied that these members should produce material evidence to prove the charges. Members replied that the files of the Home Department might be there because they knew that they were with the Kerala Government. That was what was said. But the challenge was met. The Communist members have got some papers, we do not deny.

Then on July 29th last "Navajeevan" and "Janayugam", both Communist dailies from Trichur and Quilon respectively published photostat copies of a letter sent by the now retired Inspector-General of Police, Shri Krishna Menon, to the Secretary of the Home Department about the behaviour of the then Deputy Inspector-General of Police, Shri V. P. Nayar. He was at that time, in 1961 or so, Deputy Inspector-General. Now he is Inspector-General. He is now in Delhi, he is much in the news. The letter is self-explanatory. Mr. Sankar had got this evidence with him. He did not tell the House that he had it with him. Internal evidence shows that Mr. Sankar had it. Earlier it went to Mr. Chacko, and when he

resigned Mr. Sankar took over the Home Ministry, and naturally that file came to him. Do you know what happened? Here is the photostat we published in public interest. I can tell you what happened. You will sympathise.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN): Is it all relevant?

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: This is absolutely relevant. Then my life is irrelevant. It is very relevant because the Press Council is given the power to protect.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN): You can pass it on.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Not at all. I should expose it on the floor of the House. Why should I pass it? I will tell you why I am doing it. Here is a confidential letter. Yes, we plead guilty, we published it in our paper. It is a letter from Mr. Krishna Menon, Inspector-General of Police, Kerala, marked "Confidential", dated at Trivandrum, 9th February 1961, which he wrote to Mr. P. J. Jacob, Secretary, Home Department, Trivandrum.

SHRI A. D. MANI: What does he write?

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Among other things he complained:

"1. Shri V. P. Nair was drunk at the time of the Boat Club incident. Shri Sivakumarlal, Additional Inspector-General of Police, Hyderabad, and Shri Kalyana Rao, Commissioner of Police, Hyderabad, were two senior officers, besides others who were present at the time.

2. I question both of them and they confirmed that his talk was objectionable and irresponsible, that he was drunk and that he did not heed their admonitions to desist from such talk.

3. Shri Balraj Mudaliar, Assistant Inspector-General of Police, confirmed that Shri V. P. Nair had told him on February 9 at the Stadium

that he had seen the Chief Secretary Andhra Pradesh, who told him that there was an enquiry into the conduct of Shri A. K. K. Nambiar Inspector-General of Police, Hyderabad, and that he had entrusted it to a Deputy Secretary of the Government.

4. On February 5, 1961, at 4 P.M. in the upstairs hall of Goshamahal Stadium Shri V. P. Nair was sent for at the instance of Shri A. K. K. Nambiar and questioned in the presence of Shri Malhotra, Deputy Inspector-General of Police, Hyderabad State, and Shri C. R. Reddi Commandant, Special Armed Police Hyderabad State, about his loose talk. I was also present. Shri Kalyana Rao, Commissioner of Police who happened to pass by, was also called in. Shri V. P. Nair could only say that he merely mentioned what he had heard and when Shri Kalyana Rao, Commissioner of Police, pointedly taxed him with what all he had said, he could not justify or excuse his conduct but merely sat silent. At Hyderabad besides exhibiting this drink weakness he has shown himself to be irresponsible."

Interesting phase.

SHRI A. D. MANI: Drink weakness?

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: This "drink weakness" is police language:

"He has shown himself to be irresponsible. He has brought disgrace by his conduct."

Other things are there. Now the whole thing we had to publish. The Chief Minister challenged and said "Come out with material proof." We gave proof by publishing a photostat of the letter written by the Inspector-General of Police at that time. Then what happened? I will give you that. What do you think happened to us? On the same day of publication of this photostat letter in the two dailies the Crime Branch of the Trivandrum

Police moved in and our people were arrested and taken to Trivandrum. Those arrested were:

Mr. R. N. Pisharodi, Trivandrum Correspondent, "Janayugom".

Mr. Kambisseri, Editor, "Janayugom".

Mr. Thengamom, Printer and Publisher, "Janayugom".

Mr. Elayath, Trivandrum Correspondent. "Navajeevan".

Mr. T. K. G. Nair, Editor, "Navajeevan".

Mr. K. K. Warior, Member of the Lok Sabha, Printer and Publisher, "Navajeevan".

All were arrested for this and you talk about freedom of the Press.

SHRI C. R. PATTABHI RAMAN: My hon. friend is referring to the absence of liberty of the Press. I would ask him to read clause 12 where it is stated:

(1) The object of the Council shall be to preserve the liberty of the Press and to maintain and improve the standards of newspapers in India.

(2) The Council may, in furtherance of its object, perform the following functions, namely:—

(a) to help newspapers to maintain their independence; and so on.

As he refers to freedom of the Press, I thought he omitted to read it.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Mr. Pathak was there. He was complaining about the word "liberty".

SHRI G. S. PATHAK: No I did not.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: I think it was Dr. Sapru. Well, I think he is a more experienced jurist.

SHRI G. S. PATHAK: It is a lapse of memory.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: I have admiration for Mr. Pathak, but the trouble is that too many times he appears for the employers.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN): There are other Members to speak.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: We can continue for the whole week. It is a very relevant thing. I want the Press Council to protect. I gave notice of an amendment that protection must be made against Government interference in a direct way and the Press Council should be authorised . . .

SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR: Sir, on a point of information. May I know whether these gentlemen referred to by Mr. Bhupesh Gupta were arrested for publishing this letter or for stealing a confidential file of the Government? If they were arrested for stealing a confidential file of the Government, that means their being accomplices in a case of theft. Then it does not affect the freedom of the Press.

SHRI A. D. MANI: It is not a case of theft at all. (*Interruption*).

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: I know Mr. Chandra Shekhar. I do not want to annoy him because he will lose his temper. The editor, publisher, all went to Trivandrum Secretariat to steal a file—you may think that way. I regret that Mr. Chandra Shekhar says such a thing. It is not fair. I very much regret it. Then you will always accuse a newspaper man of stealing. Whenever I do something in public interest, especially when I am challenged by Government, I shall be accused of stealing. This is not fair. We do not have thieves. We have fighters. Here again . . .

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN): Again you are reading from a newspaper?

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: We are dealing with newspapers, Mr. Vice-Chairman. Here again I will give you

another example of how freedom of the Press is affected. Here I would invite your attention—you do not know Bengali, therefore it is very difficult to read out, but I will just mention it. There is a paper called "Tripura Katha", a weekly paper, and it belongs to what you call the Communist monopoly. It is only four pages, not good as a big handbill. This is a weekly paper and published from a co-operative Press set up by the Workers, which is called Jana Siksha Co-operative Printing Press. And its crime was that on the 13th of January, 1963 it published a letter to the editor in which the correspondent had criticised a certain speech of Mr. Sachindra Lal Sinha, then the Chairman of the Territorial Council, now by the grace of this Government, the Chief Minister of Tripura. At that time he was the Chairman of the Territorial Council, a Congress leader. This item could have been easily contradicted because the editor has no responsibility, as you know, with regard to the letters published. It was alleged in that letter to the editor that what Mr. Sachindra Lal Sinha said amounted to provoking the tribals against the State and in that letter the correspondent invited the attention of the Prime Minister and pointed out that such speeches on the part of the Congress leader would not be in keeping with the stand taken by the Prime Minister or his policies. That was his crime. He was supposed to have been in the audience. That is what he has said. Mr. Sachindra Lal Sinha could have got such a thing contradicted when such a letter to the editor appeared. What happened? Within two months or so, the Chief Commissioner of Tripura passed an order under the Defence of India Rules demanding Rs. 3,000 as security deposit from the printing press. Up to now we have not been in a position to pay this deposit and the paper does not come out. Now, I would ask . . .

SHRI B. K. P. SINHA: May I know if the Chief Commissioner indicated the grounds on which the security was being demanded?

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA No, he did not. He is not, under the Defence of India Rules, called upon to even indicate the grounds very much. A simple order is thrust. It was passed and the letter is the ground—that you have published this letter.

SHRI B K P SINHA Then on what basis, the Hon'ble Member connects the two things?

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA Any way, you can read that, you know Bengali

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN) It is always

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA I can even produce that letter. I passed it on to the Government, I gave it to the Home Minister. I got it from there. As you know, under the Defence of India Rules it is not necessary to give the grounds, except to produce the clause and say that you published a thing prejudicial to the State. But this is what

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN) But it may be for other reasons, not for publishing this letter.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA Mr. Sinha will never understand it.

It is there. That is why I took it up with the Government. It is not disputed that the order was passed on account of the publication of the letter. That is not disputed by anybody. In fact, in the order itself it is mentioned. It is quite right. But he just wants to harass me a little. He knows it.

This is the position. Three thousand rupees were demanded. We have not succeeded up to now in persuading the Chief Minister of Tripura to cancel that order. Nearly two years have passed. And precisely at that time, 'The Ananda Bazaar Patrika' was writing most scurrilous things about the late Prime Minister Nehru. I invited his attention—personally I met him—to those writings and other things. I have to say these things with great regret, and these papers are still there.

No action was taken. Many things were said, against us. We were at that time subjected to attack by all unfortunately. But our late lamented Prime Minister was not spared either, and most vitriolic and violent editorials were written and they are still there. They were printed and circulated in some of the leading newspapers but no action was taken against any of them under the Defence of India Rules. They are all free because they are a big people, influential people. But a small printing press publishing a paper with a very small circulation in a place like Agartala was pounced upon simply because half a column was given to a letter to the editor in which the Congress leader, Mr. Sachindra Lal Sinha, was criticised for having made a speech in which somebody thought, he should not have said things like that. Then I appealed to the Prime Minister to look into the matter.

Now, I say this thing because these are the problems. Apart from these, there are other problems also. I gave you two concrete examples. I should be accused of leaving things very vague. Similarly I can produce other examples because we have suffered—I believe that others too have suffered—from this kind of thing.

Now, here again, with regard to the external pressures that are brought the Press Commission invited the attention of the Government to many kinds of external pressures. Advertisement is one of the means of such a pressure. They tell you, we can give the advertisement to you if you publish this thing or they say if you publish such a thing or do not publish such a thing, the advertisement would be withdrawn. Now, that again is a kind of pressure. Here again is an interesting thing. Do not bother about the numbering of the paragraph because I may again commit a mistake. My eye sight is also getting very bad. In paragraph 855 it was said

"Moreover, Government do not look for nor are they guided by the plain issue of returns per rupee spent as other advertisers are."

[Shri Bhupesh Gupta]

Then a statement was made on page 320

"The manner in which Government advertisements are placed or withheld may influence newspapers and periodicals. There is an element of patronage that enters into the selection of the media and should be eliminated if the pressure is to be removed from the Press."

Here an example was given

Then—

"Patronage is also discernible in the matter of rates. In West Bengal, we come across the anomaly of a paper recently started and claiming 13,000 circulation being entrusted with advertisements, even though it charged Government at a rate proportionately very much higher than that charged by papers of much longer standing and circulation."

According to my information, it seems to be page 321, paragraph 857. I cannot immediately vouch for it, but this is the thing

Now to my information, that paper is 'The Jana Sevak'. And who do you think is the editor of that paper? Mr Atulya Ghosh is the editor of 'The Jana Sevak'. Well, it has very little circulation and got this newsprint. I would ask the Minister to personally enquire into this matter, send the Central Intelligence Bureau or some such investigating authorities to find out from Calcutta and West Bengal what is likely to be the circulation of a paper which is practically seen nowhere. A newspaper with a large or sizeable circulation is seen at some place, but 'The Jana Sevak' is conspicuous by its absence. I do not think it commands enough readership to ensure a circulation of the order of 13,000. I think that you will agree that even if all the AICC members read this paper—I do not think they read it—even then it will not have a circulation of 13,000. How

it can have a circulation of 13,000—such a paper—is one of the mysteries that at least Bengali ingenuity has never been able to solve, we would require certain other intelligent and wise people to solve that particular middle. And this is how this paper could possibly claim a circulation of 13,000 or so or even more.

Therefore, these are the matters. As far as advertisements are concerned, the small and medium newspapers do not get very many advertisements from the Government. Railways are another thing. And Mr Mani is quite right in this matter because it is a major issue of seeing that the freedom of the press is maintained. They are stifled, they are strangled, they are suffocated to death, starved to death. Yet, the Press Commission has made very salutary recommendations about helping the small and medium papers. I asked the late Prime Minister as to his attitude in regard to this matter. I cannot give the exact date and so on. It was several years ago. He said it was a right thing that the small and medium newspapers should be helped in such a matter. It was not only a right sentiment but when it came from the late Prime Minister, I should have thought that it was a declaration of policy and the policy should have been implemented by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. But, Mr Vice-Chairman, there is nothing of the kind. From my experience I can tell you I have also been a working journalist. Unlike Mr Atulya Ghosh I can write editorials. For some time I was the editor of a daily paper to which reference was made, 'The Swadheenath'. Then I was also an editor of "The New Age", and I can tell you, very much active and acting Editor, both that way. I do not believe in acting. Either I am an editor or I am not an editor. Simple thing. I can tell you that much that our papers were not given advertisement. Why? Because we are supposed to be not very favourable to the Gov-

ernment and the big business in Calcutta, specially the British firms. They issued a circular that Swadhinata should not be given advertisement because it supports the working class and the trade unions against their empires, in the fight against the British Government, some such thing I think one of these circular letters we had better publish it to show how the big business was directing all their associate bodies and associations not to give advertisement to such papers. I think this is more or less the experience of many a small paper, medium paper, unless, of course, you are a Congress paper. That is the point.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN) Now please finish.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA I will not finish today.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN) There are other speakers.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA I know I want more people to speak on it.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN) They have other work also.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA But this work is very important. Now here I can give some more examples. Unpalatable things I am saying. And I know these are not liked. But I cannot help it. But this is another matter. Therefore, the Press Council should be given clear protection from this extraordinary pressure with regard to protecting the small and medium papers. That is to say, in the matter of advertisement, the government and other bodies like the public sector bodies should have consultations with the Press Council or the Press Council should be authorised to supervise the manner in which advertisements are given, or keep an eye on how advertisements are being distributed. Here I am not bringing in a party issue at all because most of the papers in the country are not party papers so to say directly affiliated with any party.

Most of the papers are run by individuals or companies or some such people who may have their affiliations in other ways for this or that party. But I am not concerned with it at the moment. They should be helped. Unless you do this thing the language papers in the country cannot grow. Protect the language papers from the tycoons controlling the press. Therefore, it is necessary that in the provincial centres or district centres like Nagpur and other places, Kanpur and so on, language papers should be given advertisements by the Government. This should be their policy, and I think in this respect the Press Council will have to do a lot.

As far as the Government is concerned, they are also discriminating. I would ask the hon. Minister who has taken over charge of this portfolio not to encourage McCarthyism in the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. I have used the word because it is a popular expression. I always despise this McCarthyism. Therefore, I think this is a better way of clinching business when you call a spade a spade. Therefore, I say McCarthyism in whatever form should not be encouraged in the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. The Ministry suffers from a lot of McCarthyic spirit. That is what I say. I do not say they are McCarthys because nobody can beat McCarthy. But there is a tendency of that kind. And you know what happened last year. They published a newsreel showing the 'Great March' when we presented the petition to Parliament. Having released the newsreel to the Films Division they suddenly decided to withdraw it because Mr Mahavir Tyagi did not like it. He wrote a letter to the Minister, Mr Satya Narayan Sinha, and got it stopped. This is not the right approach as far as journals are concerned. I think this mentality is exhibited in a rather crude way and sometimes in a subtle way. I may venture to give you an information in this connection. I have found out today, again on very high authority

[Shri Bhupesh Gupta]
that it is not the Minister of Information and Broadcasting who decides this thing. They are supplied the list by the Ministry of Home Affairs. It is on the basis of the material supplied by the Ministry of Home Affairs that things are done. I would ask you here to tear up that list and I would ask Mr Pattabhi Raman to put that list in his pipe and smoke it—that is what I would say—if he is a smoker I do not know.

SHRI A D MANI He does not smoke.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA I would ask why the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting should be guided in the matters of newspapers and journals by a list drawn up by the Intelligence Officers or CID officers who, we know, are guided by certain pre-conceived notions in this matter. It should not be done. Let the people judge for themselves. Some will like them, some will not like them. I will not ask for stopping advertisements altogether to Hindustan Times. But I would like it to be restricted. Similarly advertisements given to a paper which supports the Communist Party or trade unions or others or the Socialist Party, or even Mr Chandra Shekhar, should not be denied advertisements. That should not be done. This is what I am asking the Government to do. Therefore I would implore here—and since I have got the chance to express—that the McCarthy type of screening for the big business should be given up in the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. I want a new outlook to be developed there.

As far as the Press Council is concerned the provisions are there. There are one or two points with regard to the Bill. That, of course, will be gone through, I believe, by our friends in the Select Committee in a proper way. They would make the Committee reflect over it from every point of view.

Here I would invite your attention to just one or two minor things. For

example, take the composition of the Council. You say that the Council Chairman is a person to be nominated by the Chief Justice of India. I do not know who is going to nominate if you do not have the Chief Justice. I do not know what is the correct alternative. Although Dr Sapru said that the Chief Justice should not be brought into any controversy, I do not think that if we allow him to nominate, he necessarily comes into any controversy. He nominates. There his job is finished. Sometimes certainly he may be subjected to some kind of failings and criticisms also. But that you cannot avoid. Then who is likely to be the most independent in this matter? The suggestion was made that the Speaker and the Chairman—I have respect for the Speaker and especially for the Chairman because I have lived in this House for twelve years—should nominate. But I do not think that this is a good arrangement. Therefore, I would suggest some other thing if you do not like the Chief Justice. I am not dogmatic in this matter. I hope the Select Committee will consider it too. But it must have absolute impartiality. It must not only be right but it should be made to look right. Not only the Members of the Select Committee should hold out the assurance of impartiality but their nomination itself should suggest impartiality to the larger sections of the public. That is very very important.

About members you will find that there are 13 members from among the working journalists, of whom not less than six shall be editors of newspapers. I know why you are saying "not less than six". You can say if you like, "of which not less than six shall be editors of newspapers" or acting editors or real editors. I want a protection against masquerading editors because this is quite conceivable that out of the six editors, three may have nothing to do with the editing of any paper, may have never written an article. All that they have to write perhaps is to

sign cheques or write some letters to their family members and friends or sometimes to some Ministers also, and that is all. Now, why should they include it? I cannot understand it. Therefore I say that you can say 'working editor'. Whether he is a real editor or not it is very difficult to find but you can have that. So I say put it in that manner if you like but I should like to keep it as 'working journalists'. This covers working editors. There I do not see any special weightage being given to editors in this manner because the journalists will certainly respect their leaders who are the working editors. They specially command their confidence and they will be happy to see some of them on the Board but the proportion I cannot say. Then I do not see why there should be six members from among persons who own or carry on the business of management of newspapers . . .

SHRI DAHYABHAI V. PATEL (Gujarat): We may carry on tomorrow. It is already late.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN): I would like the approval of Members of the House that if they would sit for a few minutes more, Mr. Gupta may finish.

SHRI DAHYABHAI V. PATEL: No, tomorrow.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN): How much time more will you take, Mr. Gupta?

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: I would not like to detain them longer. I see the sense of the House.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN): You have spoken for an hour and a half. I would like to know how much more time you want.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: I cannot say that. To-morrow I will resume.

SHRI DAHYABHAI V. PATEL: Yes, We are suffering from the shock of the information that we have which has been given to the other House. We might adjourn now.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN): All right. The House stands adjourned till 11 A.M. tomorrow.

The House then adjourned at five of the clock till eleven of the clock on Thursday, the 10th September 1964.