

Ministry of Education and Scientific Research (Department of Cultural Activities and Physical Education):—

(i) Notification S.R.O. No. 271, dated the 21st January, 1958, publishing the International Copyright Order, 1958.

(ii) Notification S.R.O. No. 272, dated the 21st January, 1958, publishing the Copyright (International Organisations) Order, 1958.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT-528/58.]

SUPPLEMENTARY DEMANDS FOR GRANTS FOR EXPENDITURE OF THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT (EXCLUDING RAILWAYS) IN 1957-58.

SHRI B. R. BHAGAT: Sir, I beg to lay on the Table a statement showing the Supplementary Demands for Grants for Expenditure of the Central Government (Excluding Railways) in the year 1957-58.

THE INDIAN POST OFFICE (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1957

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI RAJ BAHADUR): Sir, I beg to move:

“That the Bill further to amend the Indian Post Office Act, 1898, be taken into consideration.”

Sir, the general purpose of the Bill is to take powers for the Post Office to intercept and destroy postal articles which are found during transmission to contain unauthorised lottery tickets or advertisements or other publicity material which will induce persons to participate in lotteries. It

will also enable the Post Office to get powers to take action to prosecute the senders of such articles. The Bill when it is made into law will, it is believed, leave no scope or possibility for such matter to be sent through the Post Office. The justification for the Bill is that instances have come to our notice where large numbers of book packets which contain unauthorised lottery tickets, advertisements and other literature pertaining to such unauthorised lotteries, have been sent. In a particular instance in the year 1955 it was found in Delhi that as many as 40 postal bags containing such book packets had to be dealt with. We referred the matter to the Deputy Commissioner that he should take appropriate action under the law. We were, however, advised by the Law Ministry on that occasion that so far as the Post Office is concerned, it can only take action under its own rules and regulations which did not empower the Post Office to intercept or destroy such articles. According to section 23 of the Indian Post Office Act, with the exception of certain articles which are detained and described under sections 19 and 20, an unauthorised article has either to be sent to the destination or it has to be returned, leaving thereby no scope for the Post Office employees to deal with such articles in the manner in which they should be dealt with. I hope there will be no difference of opinion that we should not and cannot countenance a position in which unauthorised lottery tickets and literature pertaining thereto, is allowed to be transmitted by the Post Office. The purpose of the Bill is to prevent the use of the Post Office machinery and the good offices of the Post Office to carry on or perpetuate an institution which on the face of it is a social evil. So the Bill that is before us is intended to achieve that purpose. We have powers to frame rules specifying the articles which will not be transmitted and to lay down the manner of disposal of such prohibited articles. This power vests in the Central Government but we have no