

*553 and *554. [The questioner (Shri Nawab Singh Chauhan) was absent. For answers, vide cols. 3717-18 infra.]

ALLOTMENT OF QUARTERS TO GOVERNMENT SERVANTS

•555. SHRI MAHABIR PRASAD: Will the Minister of WORK, HOUSING AND SUPPLY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to allot the newly built double storey-ed flats at Pandara Road, New Delhi to Government servants entitled to residential accommodation in Class 'E' regular;

(b) whether the accommodation available in these flats is much less as compared to the accommodation in Class 'F' old 'D' type quarters;

(c) whether the monthly rental of these flats is higher as compared to the rent of other quarters in the same class;

(d) whether Government servants, who are at present occupying lower class accommodation, which is more spacious will be put to great inconvenience, if they have to shift to these flats; and

(e) whether Government have received representations from Government servants, in this connection; and if so, what action Government have taken or propose to take in the matter?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF WORKS, HOUSING AND SUPPLY {SHRI ANIL K. CHANDA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) and (e). A number of representations have been received. As it is proposed to classify these flats as 'Special E', it will not be necessary for those in occupation of regular 'F' quarters to shift to them.

SHRI MAHABIR PRASAD: May I know when the construction of these quarters at Pandara Road was completed?

SHRI ANIL K. CHANDA: Quite recently.

SHRI MAHABIR PRASAD: May I know the month, or may I have an idea of it?

SHRI ANIL K. CHANDA: I have not got the exact date with me. The construction of the buildings was more or less completed, but the service connections were not available.

SHRI MAHABIR PRASAD: May I know the number of quarters?

SHRI ANIL K. CHANDA: 388.

SHRI MAHABIR PRASAD: May I know the expenditure incurred in the construction of these quarters?

SHRI ANIL K. CHANDA: I want notice.

SHRI MAHABIR PRASAD: May I know what were the reasons for the delay in taking a decision about the classification of these quarters?

SHRI ANIL K. CHANDA: It is a very difficult problem, so many factors have to be taken into consideration and we also require Finance's concurrence.

SCHEME FOR A PRICE-PAGE SCHEDULE FOR NEWSPAPERS

•556. SHRI B. SHIVA RAO: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to refer to the reply given to Starred Question No. 225 in the Rajya Sabha on the 28th November 1957, and state:

(a) whether a detailed scheme regarding a price-page Schedule for newspapers was placed by the Secretary to the Ministry before a conference of newspaper, interests on the 4th August 1957;

(b) what were the reactions of the newspaper representatives to this scheme;

(c) whether intimation was given to the Indian and Eastern Newspaper Society on the 6th August 1957, on behalf of the Minister, that this scheme did not reflect the considered and definite views of the Government; and

(d) whether the newspaper interests that will be affected by a price-page Schedule will be given another opportunity to express their views on the considered and definite views of the Government before the announcement of the scheme?

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI G. RAJAGOPALAN) : (a) to (c). In order to give effect to the Price-page Act passed by Parliament, Government had convened a meeting in August of various groups of newspaper interests in order to elicit their views regarding a possible Schedule. A number of alternative proposals were discussed in this meeting including the one referred to in the question. In order to see whether any agreed formula could be evolved, a number of modifications of proposals already made were also suggested.

The discussion and exchange of views that took place in this meeting and in subsequent meetings were and are of a private nature and meant for eliciting the views of various interests concerned. It is not possible to reveal the details of either the discussions or the exchange of correspondence that might have taken place or is taking place today. This was also known from the beginning to those that participated in the discussions.

The only clear fact emerging from these and subsequent discussions was that it is not possible to have an agreed formula for a Price-page Schedule as it was found that the

opinion of the smaller and medium papers is opposed to the views expressed by the big papers. The smaller and medium paper interests have also made it clear to us that they refuse to accept the proposals put forward by the big papers.

In view of the impossibility of any agreed formula, Government is considering the question and trying to evolve a proposal which might reflect the greatest common measure of agreement possible. Government at no stage put forward any definite proposal and has not been able to finalise its views even now.

(d) Newspaper groups have been invited many times for discussion and exchange of views regarding this question. Moreover, important individual papers have made known to us their detailed views on the subject. There is no present proposal to have any further consultation, but if at any stage it is found necessary, they will certainly be called for further discussion.

SHRI B. SHIVA RAO: My hon. friend said that Government is now trying to evolve a proposal which will command the greatest common measure of agreement. Is my hon. friend aware of the obligation imposed on the Government by the Price-page Schedule Act with particular reference to sub-section (4) of section 3 which says that before making any order under this section the Central Government shall consult the associations of publishers and such publishers as are likely to be affected by the order with respect to the action proposed to be taken?

DR. B. V. KESKAR: Government is aware of the Act and it is in pursuance of that that the consultations took place. When our views will be finalised, then also opportunity will be taken to consult these various publishing interests.

SHRI B. SHIVA RAO: Do I understand the hon. Minister to say that before Government finalises its **pro-**

posals, another opportunity will be given to the newspapers or their representatives to discuss those proposals?

DR. B. V. KESKAR: I cannot say whether opportunity will be given to discuss these proposals, but we will certainly consult them before they are finally decided upon and published.

SHRI PERATH NARAYANAN NAIR: May I know how long will the Government take to evolve their own proposals in this behalf?

DR. B. V. KESKAR: That I am unable to say now.

SHRI B. SHIVA RAO: Government have taken very substantial powers to control the operations of the Press in the country. Is my hon. friend aware that even when a Price-Page Schedule Act was in operation in Britain at no stage the Government interfered either with the working of that Schedule or took powers to itself to enforce that Schedule?

DR. B. V. KESKAR: This is an argument as to whether there should be a Price-Page Schedule Act or not. This question was considered by the Government and if it passed such a Bill, it was in pursuance of the overwhelming opinion of the Press itself and Parliament.

SHRI AMOLAKH CHAND: A fortnight back the hon. Minister was pleased to say in a reply that they expected this Price-Page Schedule as early as possible. After making that statement, may I know if circumstances have changed on account of which the hon. Minister is not in a position to say by what time this would be ready?

DR. B. V. KESKAR: When Government says as soon as possible, it means it is trying to expedite the procedure. I cannot say, there are a number of factors involved, and it is an important question and it might be delayed. But we are trying our best to do it as soon as possible.

FINANCIAL AID GIVEN TO THE DEPENDENTS OF COAL MINERS SUFFERING FROM T.B.

*557. SHRI V. C. KESAVA RAO: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether any financial help is given to the dependents of coal miners who suffer from tuberculosis; and

(b) if so, what is the number of families who are being given this assistance at present?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI ABID ALI) : (a) Yes. Under a scheme recently sanctioned, the dependents of coal miners who are suffering from T.B. and are undergoing treatment at T.B. clinics, hospitals or sanatoria where beds have been reserved by the Coal Mines Welfare Fund Organisation are given subsistence allowance upto a limit of Rs. 50 per month per patient for a maximum period of six months.

(b) None. Only a few applications have so far come and they are being scrutinized. More are expected shortly.

SHRI V. C. KESAVA RAO: May I know whether the Government is aware that the dependents of these people suffering from tuberculosis are undergoing a lot of trouble to get this financial assistance?

SHRI ABID ALI: There should not be any difficulty. The scheme has been sanctioned and a Committee consisting of the Coal Mine Welfare Commissioner and the Superintendents of the two hospitals has been appointed. They should receive applications and decide them quickly and favourably.

SHRI B. K. MUKERJEE: May I know what are the sources from which this money is paid to these families of workers in coal mines suffering from T. B. and whether this concession is likely to be granted to workers suffering from T. B. in other industries also?

SHRI ABID ALI: The scheme has been framed by the Coal Mine Wel-