different and divergent conditions which obtain in Punjab, in U.P., and in other parts of the country. However, that is one achievement of which we should all be proud that we have been able to evolve something of a common law of succession at least with respect to Hindus in general.

Then, Sir, I might say that the present law will be found not only useful but also a little workable, and I am sure that all the fears that have been expressed about it will soon vanish. After all, Sir, whatever the controversies there may be, I am sure that after the Bill is passed in the other House, the attempt of everyone in our society will be to try to implement it and to see that the purpose for which this legislation is passed is achieved. I really cannot adequately thank all the Members of this House, to whichever Party they belon'g, because some matters of differences etc. are always bound to be there. But by and large, we have taken a very broad view of things, as I understand it, and in spite of some differences, we have been able to pass this piece of legislation. I thank you again for the co-operation which all of you have extended to me in getting this Bill passed in this House.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI H. C. MATHUR) : You want the word 'discarded' to be replaced by the word 'deserted'?

SHRI H. V. PATASKAR: Yes.

THE VICE CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That the Bill, as amended; be passed."

The motion was adopted.

THE WORKING JOURNALISTS(CONDITIONS OP SERVICE) ANDMISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONSBLL, 1955

THE MINISTER FOR INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (DR. B. V. KESKAR) : Sir, I beg to move:

mat tne ma to reguiaxe certain conditions of service of working journalists and other persons employed in newspaper establishments be taken into consideration."

Sir, this is one of the important recommendations of the Press Commission. In fact, if we take the human angle into consideration, this is probably the most important recommendation of the Press Commission regarding this matter. The principles of the Bill that is now before the Rajya Sabha have been discussed by us many a time with the interests concerned. By 'interests' I mean the proprietors of newspapers on the one side, and on the other, the representatives of the working journalists. Even after the introduction of this Bill in the House during the last session we have had some opportunity of discussing its provisions further with representatives of both the organisations and of having the benefit of their views in the matter. In the light of that discussion also we have introduced a number of amendments which are before the Rajya Sabha. This is in any case a remarkable piece of legislation. And this is one of the first comprehensive Bills in which the service conditions of a particular profession are sought to be put under one legislation. And from that point of view also it is an important legislation which will, no doubt, serve as a landmark in the future.

In this Bill, as the hon. Members must have observed, we have dealt with a number of important points regarding the service conditions of working journalists. Firstly, there is the question of the application of the Industrial Disputes Act to working journalists. A Bill regarding this matter was, no doubt, passed by both the Houses, and that measure is at present actually functioning. But this matter has been brought in again and incorporated in this Bill so that the other Bill may not be necessary any more. Then the other matters which have been included in this measure are the question of notice period, i.e..

[Dr. B. V. Keskar.] the period of notice for discharging an employee from a newspaper establishment, the question of gratuity, the question of hours of work, the question of leave, the question of minimum wages and also the question of provident fund. There are also certain standing orders for making rules etc. All these matters are sought to be dealt with in this piece of legislation.

The first thing to remember regarding this is that this Bill, although it covers all these important points, should not be taken as a kind of detailed law covering every possible eventuality and every possible emergency that might arise regarding these various conditions. In a statute of this kind we are expected to put down the general principles, while other matters of detail are to be settled by rules and standing orders. Therefore, the hon. Members who might have been wondering as to why this thing or that thing has been left out will realise that small matters of detail can only be included in th« rules. And it is in fact not possible to have everything included in the statute itself.

The second point to remember is that in this measure also we have tried to see that as many details as are possible have been incorporated. In fact, Sir, it is hard to find a statute in which so many details have been put in as you find here. But if a particular item or detail has been excluded, that does not mean that it is not going to be applied. Rather it will be applied later by incorporating it in the rules etc. And therefore I would request those Members, who have given a number of amendments for including more and more details in the statute, to remember this point when they press their amendments.

Then, Sir, regarding all these items I would like to say a few words here, summarising all that has been incorporated in this piece of legislation.

Regarding the period ot notice, we have had discussions with various representatives of journalists, and we have given notice of an amendment by which the period of notice is practically the same as we find in the Press Commission's Report, *i.e.,* six months and three months.

The other question is gratuity. So far as gratuity is concerned, the main controversy is as to whether it should apply to all establishments or only to certain establishments which employ a minimum number of persons. I find from the amendments that have come that some Members would like that the provision should apply to all newspaper establishments regardless of the number of persons employed. Now, in a matter of this kind, we feel that it would not be right to impose this on all establishments, even those who employ one or two persons. It is not possible to say whether they will be able to bear the burden, though we have tried to find out a mean by which the largest number of establishments will be included in this. We have therefore moved an amendment to the original Bill by which the number in an establishment has been reduced from ten to six working journalists.

The other point is about retrospective application of this. We feel that it will be very difficult to apply it retrospectively to such establishments, as it will entail a heavy and sudden burden on newspapers. They might even bring down the number of working journalists. We do not want to envisage such a possibility. Of course, in the future it will apply to all those who have been defined in the Bill.

Then the other question is regarding hours of work. The Press Commission, on the basis of the Government Service Rules, has recommended a number of working hours per week for the working journalists. The hours of work that we have suggested are those that are in vogue at present

by agreement in countries like Great Britain between the working journalists and the proprietors.

Regarding the question of leave also, the difference is minor, *e.g.,* regarding the question of casual leave. As I would further say when the various amendments come up for discussion, questions like casual leave are not decided by statute. They are always put in the rules. There are also other questions, like the co aversion of sick leave which can a ways be and should be regulated under the rules and not in the statute.

I would like here to deal at greater length with a question regarding which there has been a great deal of controversy and difference of opinion, *i.e.,* the question of a minimum wage. We have been criticised and questions have been asked as to why the Government has not accepted the view of the Press Commission that certain sums or figures recommended by them as a minimum wage siould not be applied at once as a statutory minimum. If hon. Members will carefully read the Press Commission's report itself, they will find, for example, that in the very begiining the Commission has said:

> "It has not been possible for us to examine in detail the adequacy of the scales of pay and the emolu ments received by the working journalists having regard to the cost of living in the various centres where these papers are published and to the capacity of the paper to make adequate payments. Such an examination would have entailed an elaborate enquiry. As we have pointed out earlier, this Commis sion could not undertake a detailed investigation into the working con ditions, having regard to the time at its disposal..... "

because they had many other problems to look into. Regarding this question, they say further in paragraph 540 of their report:

> "But it has been urged belore us that we should give some indication of our opinion as to what would constitute a minimum wage for an employee in this profession. Here again the problem is beset with the same difficulty which we have mentioned in connection with the fixation of the scales of pay. All that we can do is to express our view as to what we consider should be the minimum wage of a journalist anywhere in India."

Now, hon. Members will see from this that the Commission had, because of paucity of time and their inability to go into the question very thoroughly, given a view—I would not say very definitely—or at least their feeling that something should be done about a minimum wage. Though they say that they have not been able to go into all the details of the question, they have given their views as to what should be considered as a minimum. Now, Members will remember that up to the present a statutory minimum has not been applied to or given in any industry whatsoever excepting those which are considered to be as sweated industries. There also by a certain due process of appointing Boards and going into the question thoroughly, a statutory minimum has been laid down. Until the question of a national minimum for all has been taken into consideration, the general principle that has been followed has been that only in sweated industries a statutory minimum should be laid down. Here, for the first time we are going to initiate a statutory minimum for a very honourable and liberal profession and in doing so and while accepting the principle, we are bound to consider what its implications are and what the repercussions of granting a statutory minimum wage to working journalists would be on other similar industries. When we accept the principle for working journalists, we are bound to extend it to other similar professions. There is no getting out of it, and therefore, when we decide to accept this princi-

[Dr. B. V. Keskar.] pie, we have to see that we lay down a procedure and a method which can be applicable to all, so that, when other demands come, we can also by the same method give them a statutory minimum wage. The difficulty is that, when we give this minimum, other professions are also likely to demand the same thing to be done regarding them and it will lead to great difficulties for us in dealing with other professions and categories of industries. Therefore, I would request hon. Members to consider this question in the larger context of settlement of all industrial disputes and settlement of a minimum wage for all important industries. If they look at it from that point of view, they will realise that, unless we carefully look into all aspects of the question and do it by certain regulated procedure, we might have to tackle in other professions much more complicated difficulties than we are having here. It is for this reason that the Government have carefully thought over this matter and decided to lay down a definite procedure as to how minimum wage should be fixed for working journalists, which will serve as a model for other professions and other industries also as far as the question of minimum wage is concerned, because this can be done easily and made applicable to other industries also. The other point which I would like hon. Members to take into consideration is that the Commission wrote this more than three years ago and conditions on which the recommendations or the views of the Commission were based, have changed. It is quite possible that even a higher minimum might now be considered necessary if you have an investigation today. The standard of living has gone up in certain localities and as the Commission itself have said that they have not been able to go very thoroughly into this question, and I myself have felt that In the categorisation some injustice is apparent to certain categories of towns if we look into the question more carefully and therefore, we felt that even from this point 01 view, a more careful consideration of the categorisation and the recommendations is necessary and is probably in the better interests of the working journalists themselves. In my discussions with the working journalists, I have noticed an underlying apprehension that all this will mean delay and therefore whatever should be done, should be done quickly as already a lot of time has been lost. Now I fully sympathise with them and I also would like that there should be no delay. As far as the procedure laid down here is concerned, I might assure them that it will not mean delay. For example, if hon. Members read the Bill carefully, they will find that the Board that has been set up will give a decision which will be automatically implemented. They have not to come to the Government and report for the latter to consider it and put it into practice. Whatever decision is given will be implemented and automatically will come into action without the Government's interfering or having to interfere in the matter. Secondly, the time-limit that can be fixed will be the very shortest like 3 or 4 months in which they will have to report on this question. A large amount of data regarding this question is already there and I think on the basis of that, with some further data which they may have to collect, they will be able to come to their conclusions very quickly. So the apprehension of delay is needless. No doubt, in certain cases which have been quoted, there has been delay but in this case, I can assure them that we will see that there is no delay, that things are done quickly and expeditiously and whatever decisions are taken are automatically put on the Statute Book and become effective. There is no need to come to the Government for further sanction regarding this matter.

Regarding the question of application of Standing Orders, I would like hon. Members who have tabled amendments to go through those

which I consider, are matters more of detail than of principles and which we can certainly accept and put into the body of rules rather thaii put them in the Statute Book as they deserve more to be in the rules because rules can be changed wi;h the changing circumstances for greater facility of the working conditions while for every small change in a statute, you have to come and get Parliament's sanction before if can "be changed for the better advantage and therefore small matters of detail are always better there. I have Eound that a number of Members have expressed to me the feeling that a Bill of this kind should have been debated much longer and much further before it is put on the Statute Book. I respectfully submit that I do not agree with this. I do not mean to say that full and long deliberations should not take place but it has already been under discussion for a very long time—more than six months or even more. It has been discussed with the proprietors many times, it has been discussed even more with the various organisations of journalists and even after the tabling of the Bill here, all aspects of the Bill have been thrashed out and therefore no doubt all the points of difference are very clear but at the same time there s no aspect about which it can be said that it had not been carefully thought over and therefore we cannot give our opinion and the House cannot give its careful opinion about the matter. I feel, on the other hand, that th<» Bill has been delayed too long. I extremely regret that we were not able to take up consideration of this Bill daring the last Session. I realise that it has meant a great deal of hardship to working journalists who have been, for that period, denied of the advantages that they could have got from such a statute and it has led to a certain amount of uncertainty also and the earlier it is ended, the better. I also feel that certain proprietors, who have expressed apprehension regarding the passing of such a Bill in that it will create endless points of disputes between proprietors and working journalists, are, 1 tninK, under a misapprehension. Because by laying down of such fundamental rights—labour rights for the journalists, they are helped, in my humble opinion. They are helped because we are laying down certain minimum conditions of service which will serve also as an ideal and a model for many other liberal professions also. Secondly, where, in that industry, there has been chaos and uncertainty regarding all these matters and everybody was working in his own way, there is no doubt that it was not leading to a very happy state of affairs. We have to look at the human aspect of the question also. And everyone will have to acknowledge that the working journalists, like others, have their rights and the proprietors also will be the first—or ought to be the first—to acknowledge that when they employ journalists to work in their papers, they must also be made to work only under, what you call, proper conditions and in the end, I do feel that the enforcement of such regulations will give better results in journalistic output. There will be better standards and the standard of papers also will improve. There are many matters concerning the points to which I have made a very brief mention—even regarding minimum wages—to which I would like to refer after I have heard hon. Members and when that question also comes up. I don't want, at the very beginning, to take too much of the time. I therefore move that the Bill be taken into consideration.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI H. C. MATHUR) : Motion moved:

> "That the Bill to regulate certain conditions of service of working journalists and other persons employed in newspapers establishments be taken into consideration."

[MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN in the Chair.]

SHRI S. MAHANTY (Orissa): Mr. Deputy Chairman, this is a welcome measure inasmuch as it seeks to ensure social justice to a very impor-

[Shri S. Mahanty.] tant section of our working force. Sir. I am sure this Bill will receive approbation from all sections of the House but nonetheless this Bill has certain features which, I am afraid, are going to be highly controversial and in the order of priority, I will state those points of controversy which according to me, are not quite unexceptionable. In the first place, I would come to the appointment of a Minimum Wage Board. The hon. Minister, like a very good lawyer, quoted certain portions of the Press Commission's Report relating to the subject while he suppressed the other portions. It is true that in paragraph 538 the report says:

> "It has not been possible for us to examine in detail the adequacy of the scales of pay and the emoluments received by the working journalist having regard to the cost of living in the various centres where these papers are published and to the capacity of the paper to make adequate payment."

But in the next paragraph, the Report further states:

> "We have given indication later in this section as to what in our opinion should constitute minimum emoluments at the present day cost of living."

Then again, in paragraph 540 the Report says:

> "But it has been urged before us that we should give some indication of our opinion as to what would constitute a minimum wage for an employee in this profession."

So it is not a matter of argument whether the Press Commission, taking all facts into consideration come to what they considered as minimum wage for the working journalists or not. The Commission nowhere has said that they have not gone into that question at all. In fact, they have gone into this question at considerable length. They have not only relied on the classification of regions as was done in the case of the Bank Award, but they have also modified, for very good reasons, the classification of the regions. They had gone into the question at great length and they fixed a national minimum at Rs. 125 per month, which has to be augmented by other emoluments. In the face of this, we are really at a loss to understand why the hon. Minister asserts that the Press Commission had not determined the minimum, or rather the minimum wage which is to be paid to the working journalist.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Before proceeding further, let me remind the House that the time allotted to this Bill is five hours. So we will give Jhree hours for the general discussion and two hours for the clause by clause discussion. And there are 63 amendments. So each hon. Member will please confine himself to about ten minutes.

SHRI S. MAHANTY: Ten minutes?

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Yes.

SHRI H. N. KUNZRU (Uttar Pradesh): But I do not think there will be so many Members interested in this Bill, as to require this restriction.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I may inform Dr. Kunzru that already I have received nine names and some more will be springing up. That is why I am rationing the time from the very beginning.

Yes, Mr. Mahanty, please continue.

SHRI S. MAHANTY: In the Statement of Objects and Reasons attached to this Bill, you will find it stated:

"All these aspects are covered >n the Bill which *generally follows* the lines indicated by 'the Press Commission; the determination of minimum wages has, however, for various reasons, been left to a Board to be constituted for this purpose." The hon. Minister, while moving for the consideration of this Bill at least indicated to us one reason,

namely, that according to him, the Press Commission did not go into the question in detail. But what are the other reasons? I think the ion. Minister owes it to the House to :ake us into his confidence and let us know in detail, all the reasons that weighed with Government in not accepting the Press Commission's recommendation, so far as it related to the minimum wage. After all, what the Commission recommerded as the minimum wage was itself most inadeauate. The Press Commission has said that journalists should be eouated with university lecturers. On page 209 of the Report, you find a statement, of the initial salaries which are paid to the Assistants in the Government of India Secretariat in Delhi, stenographers and lecturers in Delhi University. We find that an Assistant in the Government of India Secretariat draws an initial salary of Rs. 160 per month and a stenographer also draws a salary of Rs. 160 per month while the lecturer in the Eelhi University gets a salary of Rs. 200 initiallv. But the Press Commission has recommended to the journalist a minimum salary of Rs. 125. Therefore what the Commission proposed as the minimum wage was not adequate. It was most inadequate—Rs. 125 per month, even though they >aid very high encomiums to the members of the profession. The Commission says the fixation of the minimum wage for this kind of a profession should be so determined as to attract talent into the profession. The Press Commission has shed tears from the beginning to the end, over the deterioration in the standards of journalism and they have come to the conclusion that the wages should! be so determined as to invite talent to this profession. It has to be remembered that this is not merely an industry, it is also an art. It has not only a mechanical side of production but also an artistic side of its own which can only be ensured if mei of real talent are attracted to the profession. If it is considered that stenographers or Assistants in the Government of India Secretariat are to be rated more than journalists who are attributed with all the virtues under the sun, then I am sure, there is something wrong in the valuation somewhere.

Therefore, without going into that question what I would like to know from the hon. Minister in very categorical terms is as to why he deviated from this most important recommendation of the Press Commission, of fixing Rs. 125 as the national minimum wage for journalists, which is to be, of course, augmented by other emoluments. The hon. Minister said that if this classification is accepted, then certain injustices would be done in certain towns. I do not know which towns he has in his mind. At least he should have told us at the beginning what considerations weighed with him, which towns he had in mind, in which towns journalists would suffer injustice if this kind of classification of the Press Commission is accepted.

Sir, I would also submit that this Bill suffers from an isolated approach. It is true that a minimum wage will be prescribed for the journalists and certain minimum qualifications should be prescribed which will be there if this minimum wage is to be received. We hope that the other recommendations of the Press Commission for improving the professional standards will also be forthcoming. But since we do not find any mention of that in this Bill, frankly speaking, we have been disappointed.

Then there is another aspect—a small one—to which I would like to invite attention and that relates to gratuity. We find in sub-clause (2) of clause 5 of the Bill provision for payment of gratuity. Gratuity, it is said, will be paid if the services are terminated by the employer or if the employee voluntarily resigns or if he dies while in service, and so on and so forth. But what about the person who retires after superannuation?

DR. B. V. KESKAR: That has been given in another amendment. It has been included.

SHRI S. MAHANTY: Thank you, then that solves my problem.

As I stated earlier, by and large this is a very welcome measure except that its provision for appointment of a minimum wage board, will result in delay. Therefore, the apprehensions expressed by the working journalists is well justified. In view of the specific recommendation of the Press Commission in regard to the minimum wage, a minimum national wage, I do not see why the hon. Minister should have taken into his head to appoint another wage board to go into this question.

With these words, Sir, I commend this Bill.

SHRI S. N. MAZUMDAR (West Bengal): Mr. Deputy Chairman, I have listened to the speech of my hon. friend, Dr. Keskar, but some of the points which he has requested us to consider have not at all satisfied us. However, before coming to those points, I wish to make a few general observations.

Dr. Keskar has said that there is a human angle to this Bill, meaning thereby that the conditions of the working journalists and the help which this Bill is going to render to them. My approach to this Bill is not conditioned by considerations of sympathy to the working journalists only but it is conditioned by a sense of importance which the working journalists have in the matter of the functioning of a truly democratic and free press in our country. From that consideration, I believe that the Legislature particularly has a duty to the working journalists and it is for us to see how we shall be able to satisfactorily discharge that duty. This Bill certainly is a result of the longstanding fight of the working journalists for which I take this opportunity to congratulate them. As a trade-unionist, I congratulate them in having taken to the path of trade-unionism, in having joined as the workers oy tne pen witn me workers by the hand, they have taken to the path of struggle and by their successful and consistent struggle, they have succeeded in putting this piece of legislation on the anvil of the Legislature.

The hon. Minister said that there had been a lot of delay. It is true and I am not at all satisfied with the reasons offered by the Government for this delay. We are not at all satisfied with this piecemeal or isolated approach adopted by the Government as has been remarked by my hon. friend, Mr. Mahanty. While we discussed the recommendations of the Press Commission almost the entire Members of Parliament unanimously accepted the recommendations and commended to Government to act on them. Unfortunately, Government could not make up its mind for a long time; unfortunately the Government has not been able as yet to make up its mind and make an integrated approach to this problem. The hon. Minister will say that it will be a very comprehensive piece of legislation, that it will have many complications and so on. He has referred in the other House to the Company Law but the Company Law has been passed. We had sufficient time before us to take an integrated view and the failure of the Government to make an integrated approach to this question is not merely due to complications. It is open to suspicion that the pressure of the press barons is also acting upon the Government and making it hesitate. That hesitation is reflected in this piece of legislation. As has been pointed out by my hon. friend, Mr. Mahanty, on the most important question, the question of the minimum wages, Government has taken a very hesitant attitude which has no justification. Listening to the arguments of Dr, Keskar, it seemed to me that these were arguments of a person who wanted to eat the cake and have it too. In one breath he was saying that the Press Commission was not able to go into the question fully so as to fix a

national minimum wage and for statutory application, while on th[5] other hand he referred to the standards of living having risen and said that the minimum recommended by the Press Commission might be surpassed, that there might be a higher minimum. Now, Sir, a man of practical sense will say, "Let us have tint the minimum which has already bee 1 recommended by an authoritative body and then let us try to raise it higher". However, that sort of an approach has not been accepted by him. He has referred to various difficulties and complications which might arise in other industries if a statutory minimum is applied to this industry. As regards the other industries also, I will say that the principle of fixing a national minimum should be accepted by the Government and should be proceeded with. It is no u?e talking about a socialistic pattern of society while refusing to take the necessary steps. However, I would not like to go into those considerations within the short time at my di; - posal. For the sake of this Bill, it should be clearly borne in mind that the newspaper industry is in a special position. The class of workers with whom we are dealing with at present is in a special position. As has been pointed out by the Press Commissi *en* and quoted by Mr. Mahanty, the question of applying a statutory minimum should not be in the same technical or mechanical manner a regard to the many other industries. The argument that the Press Commission has not gone into the question thoroughly does not hold water. He said that the minimum wage board will not take much time. It may n>it take much time if the Government desires so but we of the labour movement have not such a very happy experience about these boards. Even if the board does not take much time;, we cannot be at all sure that the recommendations of the Press Commission will be accepted. Moreover, why spend money on a work which has already been accomplished. The Press Commission has gone into every aspect of the question. It is not a

question of fixing the scales. True the Press Commission has not fixed the scales of pay but. it is not a question of fixing the scales of pay. Still, the Press Commission has made certain recommendations which fall far short of the demand made by the working journalists. After the labours of the Press Commission, after we have the recommendation of an authoritative body whose recommendation has been consented to by the entire Parliament, I do not understand why Government is going away from that position. That is why, I say, that the hesitancy of the Government is reflected in the Bill itself.

Secondly, in the case of Standing Orders, Dr. Keskar has said that some of the amendments have dealt with the details and that we should here be concerned only with the principle. Therefore, he has relegated the question of the application of the Standing Orders to the details. We of the trade union movement know to our cost that it is not a matter of detail to *be cast aside in such a light hearted manner. The Standing Orders that exist now have to be thoroughly overhauled. The Standing Orders that exist now in the different industries are being utilised by the employers against the movement and against the workers. There are many irrational things in them. There are provisions existing in some of the Standing Orders in the different industries that are repugnant *to* the spirit of the Constitution. An employer can dismiss a worker without any notice in case of gross misconduct and the decision as to whether it is gross misconduct or not is left to the employer himself. There are this sort of things in the Standing Orders. Therefore, we are urging upon the Government to come forward with a Bill amending the present Standing Orders Act and drafting a set of model standing orders. The model standing orders have been drafted as far as I know, but the Standing Orders Act has not been amended as yet. So, as the Standing Orders Act at present stands, the employers can only change

[Shri S. N. Mazumdar.] the standing orders whether they be satisfactory or unsatisfactory to the labourers. The hon. Minister says that there are so many difficulties and so many complications, but the complication in such cases, particularly in this case, is being created by the dilatory tactics of the Government itself, maybe it is not due to the Minister for Information and Broadcasting, but surely I shall say it is due to the dilatoriness of the Ministry presided over by Mr. Khandubhai Desai, because the Standing Orders Act needs overhauling and it should be done immediately.

(Time bell rings)

Now, Sir, as you have rung the bell and as my time is very short I shall not be able to touch on some of the main points which I wanted to touch, but I propose to touch on them at . the time of discussing the amendments, but I request you to give me one or two minutes and I shall finish.

Now, Sir, at least a minimum standard of security of service to the working journalist is necessary for the working of a really free press because we know that the press today is dominated by monopolists, by press barons who had nothing to do with journalism and who by sheer chance and by the strength of their purse have acquired domination of the press and have given a slant to the news, as has been commented upon very moderately by the Press Commission. We know to our cost that news regarding the struggle of the workers and peasants and middle-class employees is completely blacked out by the owned by the monopolists. If the working journalists are assured of security of service and proper living conditions, they can fight to see that, whatever may be the editorial policy, at least the news is objectively presented. Only one example and I am finishing. Sir, when the Congress Parliamentary Party discussed the recommendations of the Press Commission and accepted them, the news went to some Calcutta papers. The editor of the paper decided to put it in the back page and the journalists in that paper raised the question. At this he referred to another press lord over the phone and he replied, "You completely black it out instead of giving it on the back page". Then the matter was taken up by the Working Journalists Federation and they said, "We shall then send telegrams to Members of Parliament saying that even this innocent piece of news is being blacked out" and then only it found a place though in a less prominent corner. In this way news is blacked out. So, the working journalists, if they are assured of certain conditions of service, they at least will be strengthened in their fight to see that news is presented objectively.

श्री बनारसी दास चतुर्वेदी (विन्ध्य प्रदेश) : श्रीमान् उपसभापति महोदय, समय बहुत कम है लेकिन उसमें ही मुझे दो तीन बातें कहनी हैं । पहली बात यह है कि मिनिमम वेजेज बोर्ड के बारे में इस समय पत्रकार संघ कोई भी समझौता करने के लिये बिल्कुल तैयार नहीं । डाक्टर केसकर साहब ने कहा और इस बात को मंजूर किया है कि देर हो गई है । लेकिन उन्हें यह जानना चाहिये कि यह मिनिमम वेज का सवाल पत्रकारों के सामने कम से कम १९, २० वर्ष से है । पहले कानपुर में यह सवाल उठाया गया था । उसके बाद मराठी जर्नलिस्ट्स ने इसको नागपुर में उठाया । यह शायद सन् १९५४ की बात है । फिर पंजाब में लाहौर में उठाया गया । उसके बाद आल इंडिया न्यूजपेपर एडीटर्स कांफ्रेंस में उठाया गया और उन्होंने इसके लिए एक कमेटी कायम की थी जिसका सदस्य होने का सौभाग्य मुझे भी प्राप्त हुआ था और मैं हिन्दुस्तान के भिन्न भिन्न भागों में इसके लिए घूमा भी था । लेकिन सब से बड़ी मुश्किल हम लोगों के सामने यह थी कि हम लोगों ने तय तो कर दिया पर उस चीज को कार्य में परिणत कराने के लिए हमारे पास कोई साधन मौजूद नहीं थे । इस लिए केवल इतना भर कह देने से कि देर हो गई है और इसके लिए हमें खेद है, डाक्टर केसकर साहब अपने आप को

इससे बरी नहीं कर सकते । देर थोड़ी नहीं हुई हैं, अगर वे देखें तो बारह वर्ष से बेचारे पत्रकारों का यह मामला अटका हुआ हैं ।

इस मामले में एक बात और भी ध्यान देने योग्य हैं और वह यह हैं कि जब से वह कमीशन कायम हुआ, बहुत से पूंजीपति पत्रकारों ने विक्टिमाइजेशन की नीति से काम लिया हैं । हमसे पूछा जाता हैं कि उनके नाम गवर्नमेंट के पास क्यों नहीं आये । मेरा ख्याल हैं कि गवर्नमेंट के पास ऐसी मशीनरी हैं और यदि नहीं हैं तो होनी चाहिये, जो इसका पता लगाये । वैसे मैं एक एक करके २५ नाम आपको सुना सकता हूं जो इस प्रकार हैं :

(१) मिस्टर विनय नारायण सिंहा, सीनियर असिस्टेंट एडिटर, सर्चलाइट, पटना. ६ *अगस्त*, १९५२ को बर्खास्त कर दिये गये थे ।

(२) मिस्टर लीलाधर त्रिवेदी, सीनियर सब-एडिटर, नवराष्ट्र, पटना, जो सात वर्ष काम कर चुके थे, वे आन दि गाउंड आफ इकोनामी बर्खास्त कर दिये गये ।

(३) मिस्टर आर० पी० शर्मा, रिपोर्टर ।

(४) मिस्टर रामनरेश पाठक, सब-एडिटर, राष्ट्रवाणी, पटना ।

(५) मिस्टर के० चन्द्रशेखरन्, करेसपांडेंट आफ केरल कौमुदी ।

(६) यू० पी० के १७ जर्नलिस्ट्स विलांगिंग टू अमृत बाजार पत्रिका, इलाहाबाद, लीडर, इलाहाबाद, और विश्वामित्र, कानपुर ।

(७) मिस्टर परमानन्द गांधी ।

(८) श्री के० वी० पच्छीकर ।

(९) मिस्टर जी० जी० गोखले ।

(१०) मिस्टर आर० एल० शास्त्री और नारायण दत्त, सब-एडिटर, प्रजातंत्र ।

(११) अहमद हुसैन साहब ।

इस तरह से बीसों आदमियों के मामले इस बीच में हुए हैं और यह हम लोगों को जानना चाहिये कि पूंजीपति पत्रकारों में विक्टिमाइजेशन की मनोवृत्ति आ रही हैं । उनमें कुछ लोगों ने गवाहियां दी थीं, इस लिए उनको बर्खास्त कर दिया गया ।

डाक्टर केसकर साहब ने इस प्रोफेशन को आनरेबिल कहा हैं । लेकिन हम उम्मीद करते हैं कि हमारे साथ उतनी सहानुभूति होनी चाहिये जितने के हम हकदार हैं । आज से बीस वर्ष पहले लीग आफ नेशन्स ने यह बात मंजूर की थी कि यदि पत्रकारों के साथ सहानुभूति का बर्ताव किया जाय और उनकी आर्थिक स्थिति ठीक रक्खी जाय तो वे अच्छी तरह से काम कर सकते हैं । तो यह मामला आज का नहीं हैं, कितने ही वर्षों से चला आ रहा हैं । मालूम ऐसा होता हैं कि जो हमारा श्रम विभाग हैं वह हमारे सूचना तथा प्रसारण विभाग पर हावी हैं और श्रम विभाग ही शायद हमारे इस मार्ग में सब से अधिक बाधक हैं । इस लिए हम श्रम विभाग के माननीय मंत्री, श्री खंडूभाई देसाई, से सारी बात जानना चाहेंगे कि कहां तक वे हमारे मार्ग में बाधक हैं अथवा उनको क्या क्या कठिनाइयां हमारे इस काम में पड़ रही हैं । जब तक उनसे सारी चीज मालूम न हो जाय तब तक इस बारे में पूरी पूरी बहस नहीं हो सकेगी । मैं इतना ही कहना चाहता हूं ।

श्री कन्हैयालाल वाँ० बैद्य (मध्य भारत) : उपसभापति महोदय, इस बिल का मैं हृदय से समर्थन करता हूं और माननीय चतुर्वेदी जी ने अभी जो कुछ कहा हैं उसका भी मैं पूरी तरह से समर्थन करता हूं ।

हमारी सरकार ने प्रेस कमीशन को कायम करके जो एक क्रांतिकारी काम किया हैं वह एक इतिहास की वस्तु हैं । प्रेस कमीशन ने भी हिन्दुस्तान के वर्किंग जर्नलिस्ट्स के सुधार के बारे में जो सुझाव दिये हैं वे भी वास्तव में बहुत ही क्रांतिकारी और ऐतिहासिक कदम हैं । जहां

[श्री कन्हैयालाल दाँ० वैद्य]

तक माननीय मंत्री महोदय के भाषण का सम्बन्ध है उन्होंने अभी एक बहुत मजे की बात कही। यद्यपि यह बात ठीक है कि हर कानून को बनाते वक्त उसको रिट्रास्पेक्टिव इफेक्ट दे देना, पिछले दिनों के लिए उसको लागू कर देना, कुछ उचित नहीं होता है। लेकिन कुछ कानून ऐसे होते हैं जिनमें इस बात की व्यवस्था करना आवश्यक हो जाता है। जहां तक पत्रकारों के सम्बन्ध में ग्रेच्युटी और दूसरे प्रश्न आते हैं हमें उनकी ओर विशेष ध्यान देना चाहिये। वे पत्र जो आज भी इस बिल के अन्तर्गत बड़े पत्रों में नहीं आते हैं और छोटे पत्रों में काउंट होते हैं उनके द्वारा पत्रकारों ने अपने जीवन को होम करके और अधिक से अधिक श्रम करके इस देश के स्वतंत्रता आन्दोलन में जबरदस्त काम किया और वे कभी किसी प्रकार के लालच में नहीं आये यद्यपि जैसा कि मंत्री महोदय ने कहा कि व्यापक रूप में, व्यापार के रूप में और शोषण के रूप में जो बड़े बड़े पूंजीपति पत्रों पर कब्जा किये हुये हैं, वे उनका उपयोग करते हैं। जैसा कि आपने बताया कि बहुत सारे पत्रों की जो दशा है, मंहगाई और काम करने की जो परिस्थितियां हैं उनके बारे में कमीशन पूरी तरह से जांच नहीं कर सका इसलिये यह आवश्यक हो जाता है कि उसने मिनिमम वेज वगैरह के बारे में जो सिफारिशें की हैं उनके लिये हम कुछ नये कदम उठायें। परन्तु जैसा कि चतुर्वेदी जी ने कहा कि यदि कानून के द्वारा उसको अमली जामा पहनायेंगे तो जैसा कि आपने खुद स्वीकार किया है, छः महीने का समय हो चुका है और इसकी जो और व्यवस्थायें हैं उसके करने में भी काफी समय लग सकता है और पत्रकारों का भविष्य एक पेचीदा स्थिति में पड़ सकता है। जहां तक छोटे पत्रों का सम्बन्ध है उसके बारे में मेरा यह कहना है कि छोटे पत्रों की व्याख्या में आप किसको मानेंगे। आप छोटे पत्रों की गणना में उनको मानेंगे जिनके अन्दर दो या चार आदमी काम करते हैं परन्तु मैं आपको बताना चाहता हूं कि इस देश में ऐसे छोटे छोटे पत्र मौजूद हैं जिन्होंने कि लाखों और करोड़ों की सम्पत्ति पैदा की है और केवल दो, चार आदमियों से दैनिक पत्र निकाल कर अपना काम निकालते हैं। जहां तक अन्तः प्रान्तीय पत्रों का सम्बन्ध है वे आपकी जानकारी में हो सकते हैं लेकिन पार्ट "बी" और पार्ट "सी" स्टेट्स में जो दैनिक पत्र निकलते हैं उनको छोटे पत्रों की श्रेणी में ही समझा जायेगा। ये छोटे छोटे दैनिक पत्र लाखों और करोड़ों रुपये कमाते हैं लेकिन फिर भी उनके जर्नलिस्ट्स को वेतन भी नहीं मिल पाता है। वे पत्र उन जर्नलिस्ट्स का एस धरा उपयोग कर लेते हैं परन्तु न तो उनको समय पर वेतन देते हैं और न उनको इतना वेतन देते हैं कि वे अपने जीवन का निर्वाह किसी तरह से कर सकें। मैं ऐसे कई उदाहरण दे सकता हूं जिनमें कि इन पूंजीपतियों और शोषकों के कारण पत्रकारों को हार्ट फेल होने से टेबिलों पर ही मर जाना पड़ा है या क्षय का शिकार होना पड़ा है। जस्टिस राजाध्यक्ष जहां तक पत्रकारों की वर्किंग कंडीशंस में जा सकते थे गये और इसके लिये उन्होंने काफी समय भी दिया और बहुत विचार के बाद यह रिपोर्ट गवर्नमेंट को दी है तो फिर मेरी समझ में नहीं आता कि जो उन्होंने निश्चित सुझाव दिये हैं उन पर अमल करने में गवर्नमेंट को क्यों संकोच हो रहा है। उसको तो उन पर अमल करने में कोई संकोच नहीं होना चाहिये। यह ठीक है कि गवर्नमेंट को सब प्रकार की स्थिति पर विचार करना होता है और जो बहुत सारे हित हैं उन हितों को ध्यान में रखना पड़ता है और उनकी तरफ से जो बातें कही जाती हैं उन पर विचार करने का प्रश्न गवर्नमेंट के सामने होता है, परन्तु जब हमने वेलफेयर स्टेट के अन्दर सोशलिस्ट पैटर्न का ढांचा बनाने का निश्चित किया है तब मैं समझता हूं कि पत्रकार तो पहला व्यक्ति होना चाहिये जिसके विषय में आप मिनिमम वेज के सिद्धांत को स्वीकार करें। मिनिमम वेज के बारे में कमीशन ने अपनी रिपोर्ट के अन्तर्गत जो सुझाव दिया है उस सुझाव को मान कर यदि उनको उतना वेतन देते हैं तो उनकी स्थिति में वास्तव में सुधार हो सकता है।

इस सम्बन्ध में मुझे एक बात और कहनी है और वह यह है कि यदि आप उन सुझावों को रिट्रास्पेक्टिव इफेक्ट नहीं देंगे तो उसका परिणाम यह होगा कि उनके जीवन की जो समस्यायें हैं वे हल नहीं होंगी । यदि किसी पत्रकार ने किसी अखबार में अपना सारा जीवन लगा दिया है और वहां से एक या दो वर्ष में रिटायर होने वाला है और गवर्नमेंट इसको रिट्रास्पेक्टिव इफेक्ट नहीं देती है तो उसका परिणाम यह होगा कि उसको साल या दो साल की ग्रैचुएटी का पैसा मिल जायेगा और उसकी समस्या हल नहीं होगी । यदि आप वास्तव में पत्रकारों के जीवन की समस्याओं को हल करने में तत्पर हैं तो आपको उसकी पूरी सहायता करनी चाहिये ताकि वह अपने लिविंग स्टैंडर्ड को कायम रख सकें और सांशलिस्ट पैटर्न के समाज के अन्दर जिन्दा रह सकें ।

इस समय उठने का समय हो गया है इसलिये मैं समझता हूं कि अच्छा हो कि आप मुझे कल थोड़ा सा समय दे दें ।

श्री उपसभापति : आपका टाइम हो गया है । You have already finished your time. You finish your speech in three minutes more.

श्री कन्हैयालाल वी० वैद्य : तीन मिनट में तो नहीं खत्म कर सकूंगा । मुझे कल पांच मिनट ही बोलने का समय दे दीजियेगा ।

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: All right. There is a message.

MESSAGE FROM LOK SABHA

THE ABOLITION OP WHIPPING BILL, 1955

SECRETARY: Sir, I have to report to the House the following message received from the Lok Sabha, signed by the Secretary of the Lok Sabha:

"In accordance with the provisions of Rule 157 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha, I am directed to inform you that Lok Sabha, at its sitting held on the 30th November, 1955, agreed without any amendment to the Abolition of Whipping Bill, 1955 which was passed by Rajya Sabha at its sitting held on the 25th August, 1955."

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The House stands adjourned till 11 A.M. tomorrow.

The House then adjourned at five minutes past five of the clock till eleven of the clock on Thursday the 1st December 1955.