

श्री धानक लाल मंडल : श्रीमन्, मैं यह कहना चाहता हूँ कि इतना बड़ा किसान सम्मेलन इससे पहले कभी नहीं हुआ था। (Interruptions) किसान लोग अपनी मांगों को लेकर और एक चार्टर आफ डिमांड लेकर यहां पर आए थे। वे लोग सब अपने खर्च से यहां आए थे। उन्होंने इस काम के लिए अपने साधनों का उपयोग किया था. . . . (Interruptions)

श्रीमती सरोज खावर्डे (महाराष्ट्र) : उपसभापति जी, मुजफ्फरनगर की प्रष्टाचार निरोधक समिति के अध्यक्ष कोई कृष्णबन्धु हैं जिन्होंने यह एक पर्चा छापा है जिसमें यह लिखा है कि—

“मुबारक हो जन्म-दिन तुझे ए चरणसिंह ।
कि तू है मसीहा सब किसानों का ।

प्रिय दोस्तों, आज भारत मां के लाडले सपूत, नखलों में सूर्य करोड़ों दिलों के महबूब आफताव, गजदूरों के सच्चे हमदर्द, सब की आंखों के तारे किसानों के मसीहा चौधरी चरण सिंह का 76वां जन्म दिन है। अगर जर्मनी के विस्मार्क, इंग्लैंड के लाई क्रामबल एवं इयूक आफ विलिंगटन तथा भारत के सरदार पटेल का सम्मिश्रण किया जाय तो एक लौहपुरुष का जन्म होगा— चौधरी चरण सिंह ।

हमें बता देना है कि किसानों के मसीहा चौधरी चरण सिंह के रास्ते में अगर किसी विद्रोही ने रोड़ा अटकाने की कोशिश की तो अपने रङ्गुमा की एक आवाज पर करोड़ों जाने कुर्बान हो जाएंगी और दुःखमन की बोटी-बोटी नोच जाएंगी ।

आज हम सब को हर-दिल-अजीज 'किसान-देवता' श्री चरण सिंह उर्फ 'ईमानदार सिंह' के 76वें जन्म दिन पर उनकी लंबी उम्र के लिए इवादात करनी है और प्रतिज्ञा करनी है कि जब तक हमारे शरीर में रक्त की एक भी बुंद शेष है हम जीवन के हर

मुमनघट संघर्ष में उनके लिए कुर्बान हो जाएंगे । मैं पुरजोर अल्फाजों में डेढ़ की चोट पर कहूंगा—

तसब्बुर तेरा रहता है हमारे दिल के दामन में,
तू आया करवां के बीच सब का रङ्गुमा बनकर ।
अन्त में मेरी तरफ से शेर हिन्द को लाखों
लाखों मुबारकवाद ।

निवेदन—कृष्णबन्धु ”

श्री कल्पनाय राय : आदरणीय उप-सभापति महोदय, इसके लिए एक कमेटी बिठाई जाए ।

SHRI S. W. DHABE: Let there be a Parliamentary Committee Sir.

(Interruptions)

श्री कल्पनाय राय : मंत्री जी जवाब दें ।

SHRI KAMESHWAR SINGH (Bihar): On a point of order. Sir. At least, my hon. colleagues should have the courtesy to listen when a lady Member is speaking and after that they can pass comments and not while she is speaking, in order to maintain the decorum _____

(Interruptions)

श्री कल्पनाय राय : आदरणीय उप-सभापति महोदय, मंत्री महोदय जवाब दें ।

REFERENCE TO CLOSURE OF NATIONAL HERALD'

MR. DEPUTY' CHAIRMAN-. Shri Lokanath Misra,

SHRI LOKANATH MISRA (Orissa): Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, many hon. Members in the House feel agitated about the Delhi Edition of the National Herald because it has rendered many workers jobless. About 400 workers have been feeling extremely unhappy about this decision and they have now decided to work through a co-operative and all the

workers. . . (*Interruption*) Would you kindly listen please? This has affected the entire staff of the *National Herald*. Let us find out a way if it is possible....

SHRI S. W. DHABE (Maharashtra): Why has the Government withdrawn the advertisements of Rs. 17,000 per year?

SHRI LOKANATH MISRA: Mr. Dhabe seems to be acting under a prejudice here. While speaking on all other occasions, he advocates ;to be championing the cause of the workers. Now that I am taking up the cause of the workers and I am talking about it, he should not come in with another side of the matter. If he has any other...

SHRI S. W. DHABE: I am support ing you.

SHRI LOKANATH MISRA:... .side to be represented on the floor of the House, he is free to do it. I have no quarrel with it. But when I am championing of the cause of the workers, Mr. Dhabe has no business, when he calls himself the champion of the workers, to bring in some other issue in order to side-track the issue.

Sir, as I was saying, the workers feel very unhappy about it and they are groping in the dark to find out a solution. They are thinking of forming a co-operative. Out of 400 workers, 399 are unanimous to forrr.' a co-operative. They are thinking of collecting their arrears of wages, and whatever gratuity amount they have, and making a consolidated fund out of it in order to run the newspaper. I do not know whether the newspaper *can* be run with that amount. Probably an amount of about Rs. 3 lakhs or 4 lakhs or even 5 lakhs may have been collected. They may need some more money. Therefore, they do know what to do. I raised this matter also on another occasion along with some other Member, probably Mr. Anand raised it and I supported the cause. But I do not know what

the reaction of the Government to this would be. I hope the Government would be coming to the help of the workers, whatever may be the quantum of help which may be rendered by the Government to the workers. I would like to know the reaction of the Government. What I am concerned with is this. When so many other national newspapers in this country are with the big business, we shall be extremely happy if this newspaper which was founded by Pandit Jawa-harlal Nehru is not closed. If it could continue its publication through the co-operative formed by the workers, it would be ideal. I would request the hon. Minister to kindly give his reaction in this matter so that the workers would not be rendered jobless.

SHRI S. W. DHABE: Sir, I support what he has said. The cause of the workers is important. There should be no misunderstanding on the part of my friend who raised this question.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA (West Bengal): Sir, there was a sit-in-strike led by Mr. Chalapathi Rau an eminent editor of our country. The matter is very much serious. I also wanted to raise it but you did not give permission. I am very glad that on the last day of this Session it has come. We would like to have a proper approach to this problem by the Government and all others in order to see that the '*National Herald*' is not closed. In any case, we should see to it that the workers' interest do not suffer. The two are inter-connected. When men like Mr. Chalapathi Rau have taken up their cause, despite his very close and long association with the '*National Herald*', we can take it that they are fighting for a just cause. As far as the management is concerned, we have heard the names of Mr. Yunus and others, not very creditable people these days, figuring here and there, before the commissions of inquiry and so on. We cannot leave the fate of these workers, journalists and non-journalists, in the hands of the so-called management. Nehru tradition has

[Shri Bhupesh Gupta]

gone long time ago as far as the paper is concerned. But something that remains should be preserved. In any case, it is a matter of public interest and a matter of great importance. We should see how we could help the journalists and the non-journalists in defending their rights and interests, apart from saving the newspaper, which has, in a way, become an institution in our country.

SHRI HARSH DEO MALAVIYA (Uttar Pradesh): Sir, I had a talk with some of the workers of the 'National Herald' and also with the eminent editor, Mr. Chalapathi Rau. They are very keen to run the paper. Apart from this, this is a national institution which was founded by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. Therefore, they are very keen to run it. They are prepared to form a co-operative and take the responsibility of running it. They are also saying that it will be a non-committed, independent, political newspaper. It would not be committed to any party. They are prepared for that. In order that the newspaper may be able to stand on its own feet, they want generous Government subsidy. This is one. Secondly, there are some allegations which are contained in a long memorandum- submitted by them. They have said that there has been some defalcation of funds by the management. Whatever it is. There is an audit enquiry now. It may take its course. All these things may happen. But I would appeal to Mr. Advani. He himself is a journalist and he knows the pangs of the workers and the pangs of dedicated men like Mr. Chalapathi Rau. I hope he will take a very generous view of the whole question and will be kind enough to give some sort of Government assistance so that this newspaper may be able to stand on its own feet.

श्री नागेश्वर प्रसाद शाही (उत्तर प्रदेश) : श्रीमन्, इसी विषय पर मैं भी कुछ कहना चाहता हूँ। इसके लिए मैंने काल अटेंशन मोशन दिया था लेकिन वह एडमिट

नहीं हो सका। जब 400 कर्मचारी अपनी मजदूरी और अपना श्रम लगा कर इस अखबार को चलाने के लिए तैयार हैं तो अखबार का मैनेजमेंट क्यों सहमत नहीं हो रहा है? इसके पीछे मुझे कुछ राज मालूम होता है और कर्मचारियों का यह आरोप सही मालूम होता है कि नेशनल हेरल्ड के हिसाब किताब में काफी गोलमाल व्यवस्थापकों ने किया है। मिस्टर जदी को हफ्ते पहले कहते हैं इस अखबार को चलाने में पिछले साल 10 लाख रुपये का मुनाफा हुआ और दो हफ्ते बाद यह कहते हैं कि हमारे पास धन नहीं है और घाटा हो रहा है इसलिए अखबार नहीं चलाना चाहते हैं। एक तरफ कहते हैं कि तीन करोड़ की सम्पत्ति अखबार के पास है और 10 लाख रुपये का मुनाफा भी है और दो हफ्ते बाद यह सारी सम्पत्ति सारा मुनाफा खत्म हो जाता है चूंकि कर्मचारियों ने मजदूरी बढ़ाने की मांग की। बोनस की मांग की और एक्स प्रेशिया सरकार ने देने की बात कही थी, उसकी मांग की। परन्तु जब उनके प्रतिनिधियों ने यह देने से इंकार किया तब कर्मचारियों ने कहा कि आपने फंड्स में और हिसाब में गोलमाल किया है। आपने हिसाब के दो रजिस्टर बनाये हैं एक सही और दूसरा जाली। इस पर कर्मचारियों को दंड देने के ख्याल से, बदला लेने के ख्याल से कि उन्होंने क्यों हिसाब के गोलमाल की बात कही, कर्मचारियों को नौकरियों से निकाला गया और अंत में अखबार बंद कर दिया गया। मैं मंत्री महोदय से कहना चाहता हूँ कि जैसे 8-10 साल पहले 'अमृत बाजार पत्रिका' जो इलाहाबाद का हिन्दी अखबार था, जब उसके मालिकान ने इसको बंद किया तो कर्मचारियों ने उसको टेक अप किया और अखबार चलाया। इसलिए मैं कहना चाहता हूँ कि उसी तरह यह अखबार भी क्यों नहीं चलाया जा सकता...

(Interruptions)

श्री विश्वम्भर नाथ पांडे (नामनिर्देशित):
वह चला नहीं था।

श्री नागेश्वर प्रसाद शाही : प्रयास किया गया था चलाने का, पांडे जी आप जानते हैं। अतः जब कर्मचारी चाहते हैं तो इस पर क्या एतराज हो रहा है। मैं मंत्री महोदय से यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि क्या वे कर्मचारियों द्वारा चलाने के बारे में कोई व्यवस्था करेंगे ?

श्री कल्पनाथ राय (उत्तर प्रदेश) :
आदरणीय उत्समापति महोदय। . . .

श्री उत्समापति : आप काफी बोल चुके हैं।

श्री कल्पनाथ राय : एक मिनट लूँगा। 'नेशनल हेराल्ड'—के बंद हो जाने का प्रमुख कारण यह रहा है कि 1,35,000 रुपये के लगभग जो उसको सरकार की तरफ से एडवर्टाईजमेंट मिलते थे, वह इस सरकार ने न जाने क्या कारण है—जायद वह जवाहर लाल जी से संबंधित अखबार है इसलिए—कि उसे देना बंद कर दिया। यही कारण है कि उस अखबार का दिवाला निकल गया और इसीलिए अखबार बंद हो गया। अब उसको पुनः चलाने के लिए कुछ काम करना चाहिए।

SHRI DINESH SINGH (Uttar Pradesh): May I just say one point here that it appears that the management does not want to run this paper and it is quite clear that the people feel that the management has misappropriated money or at least mismanaged it? I would suggest that this would be a proper case to be gone into under the Company Law Act, but that is besides the point because that will take some time, and while that investigation is going on I think every encouragement should be given to the workers to start the paper because we

have many papers in this country which are mostly run by one or the other big house and here is an opportunity for an independent paper to be run by the workers. I hope the Government would give every assistance to them.

SHRI JAGJIT SINGH ANAND (Punjab): I would like to take just one minute, Sir, because in this case conciliation proceedings have been flouted by the management. The House already knows that the workers went to the "conciliation authorities. The conciliation authorities served a notice both on the workers and the management on the 17th and on 18th the paper was closed down. In this situation, first of all the management must be taken to proper task. Secondly, it is not the case of loss of revenue from advertisements, etc., that a situation had been reached to closed down the paper because the balance sheet of October 1977 itself shows a profit of Rs. 25,000.

Sir, in this case it is the question of the name of Pandit Jawahar'al Nehru. The present day management may be looking at it as the other monopolists, like the Tatas and the Birlas are looking at their own papers, but we cannot allow this thing to go this way. Therefore, they must be compelled to part with all their assets in Delhi,¹ including buildings, etc., and on the basis of the workers' co-operatives the 'National Herald' must be kept alive.

SHRI KHURSHED ALAM KHAN (Delhi): I think it is not fair to draw inferences as the hon. Member on the other side has done. The real fact is that for a long time there was a conspiracy that this paper should not be successful and everything possible was being done in this behalf.

SHRI NAGESHWAR PRASAD SHAHI: Hundred per cent wrong, hundred per cent wrong.

SHRI KHURSHED ALAM KHAN: Let me say. The worse thing that was done by the Government was to stop the advertisements to this paper that resulted in a loss of Rs. 1,75,000. Besides, the workers were given increment in their wages and that has resulted in an extra expenditure of Rs. 8 lakhs per annum. If this is so, we are very anxious that this paper should run. There are no two opinions about this. The only thing is that there has been a big conspiracy against this paper and as a result of this conspiracy, it has not been possible for the paper to be run. Unless the Government changes its attitude and really wants to help them, the paper will not be successful whether you make any other experiment in the management or not. I am sure the hon. Member on the other side has said something which is based on his own experience perhaps. But I think that was an inference and on inferences we cannot come to any conclusions.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: I can tell you, Sir, that we on this side are no party to conspiracy of any sort. We want the National Herald to prosper. We have done it in the past. We hold Mr Chalapaii Ran in the highest esteem and the name of National Herald touches our emotions in some respects. But it does appear—I have got plenty of papers—that a lot of financial manipulations and other things have taken place. I do not want to go into them. I have got a copy of the notice served on Mr. B. K. Joshi, Chief of the Bureau, terminating his services by the Managing Director of the Associated Journals Limited, which control the National Herald. From that it would be clear that they are not bothering about the law. You cannot just terminate services or close down things like that in the manner in which they are doing. Therefore, I would ask my friend to use his good offices in this matter. He knows some people in the management—men like Yunus and others. I do not say anything about them—for and again-

st. But some thing has been fishy. Now, if they are not giving advertisements, I deplore that. The National Herald should not be prosecuted by the Government or anybody.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Order please.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: The paper must come and the journalists and non-journalists in the paper must be guaranteed that they shall continue and the proposals they have made should be seriously considered for running the paper.

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI LAT. K. ADVANI): Sir, by and large most Members have expressed concern that a paper of this standing should be forced to close down in this manner, or should, be about to close down. I am sorry that towards the end, just before my friend Bhu pesh Ji spoke, a Congress Member tried to inject a dimension into the whole debate which is totally uncalled for. I do not know how in a question of this kind, words like "conspiracy" fit in. Some people seem to suffer from a conspiracy-complex. They see conspiracy every where. And in this particular case, the use of the word is all the more unfortunate because it seemed that he was trying to hold a brief for the management. I would say that the Government would be happy if the management continues the paper on its own with the same policy, with the same approach and we would be happier still if the management

SHRI N. G. RANGA (Andhra Pradesh): With the same editorial board?

SHRI LAL K. ADVANI: I am not at all concerned. We would be happy if the paper continues. We would be happier still if the offer made by the workers there, by the journalists there that they are willing to run the paper as a cooperative is accepted by the management and they are allowed to run it. But the situation is that they are trying to force on the workers and on the Government a kind of situa-

tion in which they know that the Government, being committed to Press freedom, would be very reluctant to intervene in any matter and they are trying to take advantage of it. This is rather unfortunate. And in the same context, I would say that right from the very beginning I have been very particular to see that so far as advertisements are concerned, there should be absolutely no discrimination against any paper irrespective of the policy that it pursues. When this situation developed, I immediately tried to check up with the D.A.V.P. whether there has been any string-ness in the matter of grant of advertisements and I was fully satisfied that, considering the circulation of the paper and the normal norms that are applied in the matter of grant of disbursement of advertisements, advertisements have been given to the National Herald on a proper basis, on rather a somewhat liberal basis. There can be no complaint on that score.

SHRI N. G. RANG A: May I know if there has been any fall in the total money that was being paid for advertisements?

SHRI LAL K. ADVANI: I have always maintained that if there is any paper or journal which received extra bonus and extra liberal treatment during the emergency that should not be there: there should not be any discrimination either in favour of or against any paper on the ground of political policy. ..

SHRI SHYAM LAL YADAV (Uttar Pradesh): That means it has been reduced.

SHRI LAL K ADVANI: May be. I was wanting to get the papers. If during the emergency a puner got Rs. 5 000 per paffo of advertisement that would be reduced. I am very narticular from the very beginning I told the DA V.P that there should be no discrimination either in favour of or aeainst. If there has been any discrimination in favour of any paner that should stop. But I can give the House full figures.

SHRI SHYAM LAL YADAV: What is the ratio between the advertisements that were given before the emergency and now?

SHRI LAL K. ADVANI: I can compare what is given to the Statesman, or the Indian Express or the National Herald or the Patriot, and on that basis you will see that it is absolutely equitable. If the National Herald or the Surya or any paper was given bounties during the emergency, I am sorry I am not going to continue it.

SHRI N. G. RANGA: I would like to know what was being given to the National Herald before the emergency.

SHRI LAL K. ADVANI: What I have said is that what is being given to all the papers during this regime is being given on a fair basis.

SHRI N. G. RANGA: That is not enough.

SHRI LAL K. ADVANI: I said if any paper during the emergency received bounties it will not be continued. And if (he National Herald is among those papers, then I am not going to continue it.

SHRI N. G. RANGA: Mr. Advani. on that basis the workers will not be able to run it.

SHRI LAL K. ADVANI: I would like to point out that the workers have never complained on that score. They have not complained that the Government has denied advertisement to the National Herald.

As I mentioned in the other House while giving statement on this issue. I said that the matter is being dealt with essentially by the Delhi Administration. So far as this Government is concerned, it is my colleague, in charge of the Labour portfolio who is dealing with It. To some extent even the Company Affairs is involved. And the position, as it now stands, as

[Shri Lal K. Advani]

I have been informed, is that the conciliation proceedings have failed. The Delhi Administration has now decided to treat the suspension of this publication as a lock-out, and this issue of lock-out is being referred for adjudication, whether the lock-out is legal. And if it is not legal what relief can be provided to the staff there? These are the issues which the Delhi Administration is looking after.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: If it is lock-out obviously it is illegal because under the law notice has to be served and time has to be given for lock-out.

SHRI LAL K. ADVANI: As I said, they are treating the suspension of the publication as lock-out... (*Inter-rruptions*) There is no formal lockout by the National Herald but the suspension of publication is being treated by the Administration as lockout and the lock-out issue is being referred for adjudication.

SHRI JAGJIT SINGH ANAND (Punjab): In the context of the lock-out adjudication proceedings have not been initiated.

SHRI LAL K. ADVANI: The notice that has been served on the Delhi Administration by the Herald authorities that they want to stop publication is being examined in the context of the Industrial Disputes Act, and the Company Affairs Department has already ordered an enquiry into the accounts of the establishment. And they have been told to expedite this enquiry.

My friend, Mr. Dinesh Singh, made a suggestion. This suggestion is very much in our mind. . .

SHRI JAGJIT SINGH ANAND: I also made a suggestion.

1 P.M.

श्री हर्षदेव मालवीय : आप सहायता दे रहे हैं या नहीं बर्कर्स कोआपरेटिव को ?

श्री लालकृष्ण झाडवाणी : सरकार ने अपना दृष्टिकोण व्यक्त किया है। इस संदर्भ में आप लोग यह बात भी एग्जीशिवेट करेंगे और इस बात को स्वीकार करेंगे कि एक अखबार में और एक इंडस्ट्री में या एक फैक्टरी में फर्क होता है और इसीलिये अगर कोई फैक्टरी होती तो उस के केस में तो इम्मीडियेट टेक ओवर हो जाता, लेकिन वैसी बात एक अखबार के संदर्भ में नहीं हो सकती और ऐसा करना उचित भी नहीं है। इसलिये इस सीमा को, इस निबंध को, इस पाबंदी को स्वीकार करते हुए हम यह चाहते हैं कि, जैसा मैंने पहले बताया कि यह पत्र बंद न हो और यह पत्र चलता रहे यह हम चाहते हैं। मैनेजमेंट चलाये वह सब से अच्छा है और मैनेजमेंट न चलाये तो वहां के जो काम करने वाले हैं या पत्रकारों ने आफर किया है कि हम एक कोआपरेटिव के नाते इस को चलाना चाहते हैं उस बात को वह स्वीकार कर लें। अगर ऐसी कोई बात हो तो सरकार को बहुत प्रसन्नता होगी। Government is seized of the issue and it is watching closely every development that is happening.

श्री हर्षदेव मालवीय : आप सहायता दोगे या नहीं द्रव्य की ?

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Order, please. Yes, Mr. Kumaran.

REFERENCE TO GRANT OF FREE-DOM FIGHTERS' PENSION TO PARTICIPANTS IN THE PUNNA-PRA-VAYALAR STRUGGLE

SHRI S. KUMARAN (Kerala): Sir, I wish to mention a matter of public importance.

There is great resentment among the people of Kerala in general, and freedom fighters in particular, following the recent decision of the Central Government not to recognise the