

RAJYA SABHA

(1964)

Point of privilege

Misreporting of the proceedings of the House by a newspaper

Facts of the case

On the 9th September, 1964, Shri Arjun Arora, a member, drew¹ the attention of the House to a report appearing in the Indian Express of that morning carrying 4 heading "Tariq apologises for remark against J.P." and that the news report had said that the member had apologised for his remark against Mr. J. P. Narayan.

Shri Arora said that the fact was that Shri Tariq, a member, had never apologised for any remarks that he made against Shri Jaya Prakash Narayan in the House on the previous day. All that Shri Tariq had said was: "I will withdraw it on one, condition" and before he could state the condition his sentence was not allowed to finish because of some interruptions. Shri Arora contended that by misreporting, the newspaper had committed contempt of the House.

2. The Chairman (Dr. Zakir Hussain) asked the member to furnish details in writing and added that he would look into the matter.

3. On the 11th September, 1964, the Chairman informed² the House:-

"....Before, however, I received Shri Arjun Arora's letter, I received a letter from the special correspondent of the Indian Express, who was responsible for the report referred to by Shri Arjun Arora, explaining that his report was based on the impression he formed of the proceedings of the House, sitting in a back row of the Press Gallery where the proceedings were not fully audible. He has expressed his regret that he should have caused pain to the member concerned' by his report and has assured that there, was no question of mala fides on his. part. He has also requested that the lapse may be condoned. In view of this, I decided that the matter may be closed. I would, however, like to impress upon the press that they should be extremely careful in ensuring accuracy in reporting Parliamentary proceedings".

1. R.S. Deb., dt. 9.9.1964, cc.538-40

2. Ibid, dt. 11.9.1964, cc.986-88