

RAJYA SABHA

(1973)

Point of privilege

Alleged imputation of motives to a member by a newspaper for his speech in the House.

Facts of the case and ruling by the Chair

On the 10th December, 1973, Shri Chandra Shekhar, a member, made¹ a complaint to the House against the Editor of Janyug, a Hindi daily of Delhi, for publishing an editorial in its issue dated the 8th December, 1973, allegedly imputing motives to him for his speech in the House on the 7th December, 1973. The impugned editorial² read inter alia as follows:-

"The Congress member, Chandra Shekhar, styles himself as a great leftist but always adopts pro-American postures. This much support by Shri Chandra Shekhar to this American agent Minhas, who claims himself as an eminent economist, expresses his own political attitudes."

While raising the point, Shri Chandra Shekhar stated inter alia as follows: --

"...It is a clear case of breach of privilege But I do not intend to move a formal motion of privilege only because this editor does not know his limitations..... I just want to bring to your notice and to the notice of the House so that this upstarting journalist could be duly warned so that in future he may behave in a proper way..."

2. Thereupon, the Vice-Chairman (Shri V. B Raju), who was in the Chair, observed³ inter alia as follows:--

"...The hon. member has raised the point in his narration that the press has not correctly reported what he said here the press is given the best of facilities in Parliament and it is our hope and desire that it takes sufficient care in reporting the proceedings of the House correctly..... Mr. Chandra Shekhar met the Chairman and sought his permission to raise the point with an assurance, with a categorical statement, that he is not formally moving any privilege motion...As far as today's actual raising of the point before the House is concerned, he has raised it only for the purpose of recording, and it is recorded."

The matter was, thereafter closed.

1. R.S. Deb., dt.10.12.1973
2. Original in Hindi
3. R.S. Deb., dt. 10.12.1973