CHAPTER V
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The English Press – Restrictions & Reactions

Gagging of Press was a regular feature in British India resulting in sharp confrontations between the Press and the Government. During the first half of the 20th Century Press was gagged several times when it was a crucial period in the Indian History at the dawn of Indian freedom. “On the one hand it saw the climax of nationalist resistance of all shades, Congress Revolutionary, Socialist and even communal; on the other hand, it coincided with the stiffest resistance of the Indian Press which reached its peak prior to independence.”

Various important movements like Civil Disobedience & Non Cooperation, Khilafat, Quit India etc. were highlighted by the English National Dailies and periodicals and print media became the strongest weapon for the revolutionaries. The repressive policies during the Second World War led to the formation of All India Newspaper Editors Conference (AINEC) in 1940 and the evolution of a Voluntary Code for internal censorship for the Press gave a new twist to the developments.

Insipite of the implementation of the repressive Press Laws, the Press continued to defy the Government. The Govt. tried to suppress the Press with the help of Paper Control Order, Paper Economy Order, Newsprint Control Order and the arbitrary allotments of paper. Price-page schedule was followed during the war period.

The Press fully cooperated with the freedom fighters and instigated the minds of the common people, promoted hostile activities against the Govt. and as such there were outbreaks of lawlessness. Press control was envisaged with the sensing of the growing influence of the Press by the British who felt the element of danger and collected objectionable articles.

According to the statistical abstract for British India in 1904-05, there were 713 newspapers and 747 periodicals published in India. In the words of H.H.Risley, “This mass of matter has already gone beyond our control.”

H.A. Damson also recorded on 24th February 1907 that “The Press is a power for good and for evil in the land and it is very essential the Government should keep in touch with its temper, its tone and its tendencies.”

It was believed by Minto that the Extremists in India were influencing the Native army with the help of Press and circulation of seditious pamphlets. He sent a report to Morley on this respect.

Bipin Chandra, the chief exponent of extremism in Bengal, along with Subodh Chandra Mullick and C.R. Das started publication of the Bande Mataram with Aurobindo Ghosh as the Editor. The stirring articles stimulated the demand for Swaraj and freedom. Both Aurobindo Ghosh and Bipin Chandra Pal were tried and sentenced but this could not stop them. Two weeklies one in English and the other one in Bengali were started by Aurobindo Ghosh.

When, in an attempt to kill D.H. Kingsford, the District Judge, at Muzaffarpore, Khudiram Bose had to go to the gallows and his companion Profulla Chandra Chaki committed suicide, they were given much honour and publicity by the Press. Many fiery articles came in various newspapers. People reacted in violent and agitated manner. Many newspapers came in quick succession all over India although there were continuous prosecution. While some newspapers advised the preparation of bombs some contained extremely seditious and provocative news items and articles. One example can be cited from Sandhya (Calcutta).....”.....But mere words will not avail. Without the lathi and the bomb the Feranghi will not be brought to his senses and will not care for you in the least.”

Press was highly defiant in U.P. inspite of the enactment of the Newspapers (Incitement to Offences) act VII of 1908. The local authorities were empowered by Minto & Morley to take severe action against the editor of any newspaper which was found to be publishing seditious and provocative matters.

The Editors of Swarajya and Union Gazette were punished. The articles in the 21st and 28th June issue of Union gazette published an article on the freedom of the press in India and commented:.....”what is good for Englishmen is extremely
injurious for the Indians. Patriotism may be a spiritual fervour in the case of the former but with the latter it is sedition...\(^5\) "The Gagging of the Press, we are afraid will lead to serious complication."\(^6\)

Bold articles came in 'Swarajya' against the British Government in India. "The Indian newspapers rankle like thorns in hearts of the tyrannous rulers of India......Even addition of Section 153 A to the Penal Code did not satisfy them and the freedom of the people was being more and more encroached upon."\(^7\)

According to 'Swarajya' "such legislation is not calculated to destroy the germs of anarchists in India, but will help in their development......"\(^8\)

In fact the Govt. became suspicious of seditious acts in each and every movement of the citizens of India and considered the Press responsible for the same. Sending of seditious telegrams and letters went on among the editors and sub-editors. One editorial in Swarajya (Allahabad Edition) was written in the following manner:

"Brave men are not afraid of afflictions. They do not writhe (with agony) when dying on the scaffold. They are killed, they are trampled down, they are exiled. Oh! What do they not accomplish who die for their country."\(^9\)

The 11\(^{th}\) July, 1908 issue of Swarajya contained "on the one hand the people of India are on the verge of death owing to (continued) oppression and tyranny and on the other hand, the Secretary of State is desirous of torturing them still further......""........""you may oppress us, you may tyrannize over us, you may never look at us with the glance of affection. We charge you in the name of God not to spare us......."

'Yugantar' is said to be the organ of the Bengal terrorists. It came to an end officially in 1908 but they continued to publish their revolutionary appeals in the form of leaflets. On 21\(^{st}\) January, 1909, the court declared that the Press had been forfeited under the Newspapers Act 1908. But all these prosecutions and forfeitures of Press, in Bengal, Bombay and U.P. or other places were of no avail. Secretly all seditious write-ups and comments continued to come.
The publication of Swarajya stopped on 15th Feb, 1910, due to non-deposit of
security and conviction of the editor. The statement of newspapers and
periodicals published in the U.P. during the year 1910 recorded:
"The newspaper was started on the 9th November 1907 and was stopped on the
15th February 1910. The tone of the paper has been consistently defiant of
authority and full of hate and rebellious spirit. It was probably the boldest and the
most persistently seditious journals in the country, seeing that it maintained to
throw off the British yoke and produced four editors who one after the other
within three years, were sentenced to long terms of imprisonment or
transportation for sedition."

The moderates were also influenced by the newspapers like the extremists.
Patriotic poems, revolutionary poems and articles came regularly in the
newspapers. The Editor of Abhyudaya (Allahabad) Sunder Lal expressed his
inability to deposit the sum of Rs.9000/- as security and so both his papers
Karmayogi and Hindi Pradeep were stopped.

The 'Englishman' and 'The Statesman' reacted violently at the transfer of capital.

In 1910 a pamphlet "Chose, Oh Indian Princes,' (London) was imported in India
to incite the Indian Princes. On its discovery the Govt. of Bombay recommended
to the Govt. of India to issue an order Sec 26 of the Post Office Act VI of 1898 to
check the course of transmission by post.

In 1915 the Indian Press could gather sufficient courage to meet the Govt. over
the application of the security provisions. The need for an Association was felt
as the liberty of Press was curbed. The Association was formed in Bombay with
Mr.B.G.Horniman of the Bombay Chronicle as its Secretary.

Mrs.Annie Besant who bought a daily paper in Madras and renamed it as New
India, motivated the young generation, writing "Round this and the weekly
Common Weal was destined to rage the battle for Home Rule." She also wrote
"the chains of Press Acts here are inexpressibly galling but it is for India's sake
and for her, even slavery is welcome. Better to be in thrall here, at the mercy of
any ill-tempered official than to be in any other land."
The Madras Govt. suggested to the British authorities that she should be forced to leave India.

"New India" was absolutely successful in instigating the public. Interviews of the leading journalists were published. Letters to the Editors came in large numbers. Freedom of Press became the burning issue of the day. Mrs. Besant's fight was acclaimed as India's fight by The Tribune (Lahore). The entire Press unitedly supported Annie Besant and when on September 18, 1917, restrictions imposed on Mrs. Besant under Sec 3 of the Defence of India Consolidation Rules 1915 were removed, it was hailed as a victory for the constitutional agitation carried on through the Press.¹²

An illustration of relationship between the publishers and the Government is given below from the testimony of Malik Barkat Ali, a former editor of the Observer of Lahore. Barkat Ali's statements were given before the Indian Press Commission whose task was to investigate the impact of the strict press laws on Indian press following World War 1. A verbatim record of the proceedings highlighting the questions of the President of the Indian Press Commission and the replies of Malik Barkat Ali is as follows:

Question: Were you called upon to furnish security under the Press Act?
Answer: The first trouble of that paper (The Observer) was that it was not directly under the Press Act, but it was under the Defence of India Act Rules. Under Rule 3 of the Defence of India Act Rules, I was called upon to submit for pre-censorship to the Press Advisor to the local Government all my writings. I could not submit to such restriction of this kind and so I ceased to be the editor of 'The Observer.' This was in fact our second difficulty. The first difficulty was under the Press Act. There was a change of Manager and the proprietor himself put in a declaration as the Keeper of the press. The District Magistrate refused to accept that declaration although under the law he had no discretion at all. The provision is mandatory that he shall authenticate the declaration. But he refused to authenticate that declaration.

Question: Was that declaration made under the Act of 1867?
Answer: The declaration had to be made of course, under the Press and Registration of Books Act, 1867 but the Press Act was also applied.
Question from Sir William Vincent: You went up to the Punjab Chief Court and they said that it is being a ministerial act, they couldn't interfere?
Answer: We went up to the Chief Court. The Chief Court, of course found that the provision was mandatory. Section 6 says that “every declaration shall be authenticated by the signature and official seal of the Magistrate.” But they said, “We are helpless; it is a ministerial act and we cannot interfere.” We had no remedy, and ultimately somebody else had to put in a declaration and a security of Rs.1,000 was asked for. I think it was Rs.1,000.

Question from President: The Observer then ceased to exist?
Answer: The security was furnished. A second attempt was made under the Defence of India Act Rules and the effect of that attempt was that I ceased to be editor of ‘The Observer’ and new editor had to be found. The new editor had not been long there when the Press Act was applied in consequence of an article in which the local Government’s selection of a High Court Judge was criticized, and the security was forfeited, as a result of that forfeiture The Observer ceased to exist.

Question: You said the security was forfeited?
Answer: There was a High Court vacancy and the popular opinion was that the importing of a gentleman to fill it was not the right thing; a protest was accordingly made which was the occasion for the forfeiture of the security.

Question: Was it merely because you protested against the security or because of some other remarks in the article?
Answer: The protest was interpreted as an attempt to bring the Government into hatred and contempt but there was nothing in it beyond a protest. It was a very ordinary article.

Question: Then the security was forfeited?
Answer: Yes

Question: Did you go to the Chief Court?
Answer: No

Question: Why not?
Answer: It was felt that the powers reserved to the High Court were mostly illusory and for that reason we did not go up to the High Court.
That the Press had massive potential power is clear from the statement of Barkat Ali which he gave to a Government Committee:

"The passion for journalism had descended to the market; shopkeepers and the masses now read the newspapers. It is not merely the educated classes who read them. The man in the street has begun to read the newspapers."  

The publication of 'Satyagrahi' (source: The Bombay Chronicle, 8.4.1919) on the 7th April, 1919 as an unregistered newspaper in the utter defiance of the Press Act, opened a new vista in the role of Press in Freedom struggle. It said – "Please read, copy and circulate among friends and also request them to copy and circulate this paper." It was a weekly paper edited by Mahatma Gandhi. Gandhiji's view regarding the newspapers was that Newspapers were a good means of education provided they stated "real views fearlessly but respectfully and bear the consequences." He encouraged the publication of unregistered newspapers. Following his example 'The Independent' started in U.P. which published in its first issue of Feb 5, 1919, "the organ of the Indian democracy in a sense in which very few journals that have yet been published in this country could claim to be ......"

The Govt. of India followed a repressive policy in the Punjab. The Bombay Chronicle had become very powerful in the hands of B.G. Horniman. Suspension order was issued by the Govt. against his papers. The Chronicle was resuscitated. The Young India which was being controlled by The Chronicle was removed to Ahmedabad and it became a strong tool for Satyagraha. On 7th March, 1920, Gandhiji released to the Press the manifesto on the Khilafat Question in which he stated "The Khilafat question has now become a question of questions. It has become an Imperial question of the first magnitude. Non-cooperation is therefore the only remedy left open to us........"

In connection with the elections under the Government of India Act of 919, the Hindu wrote on 8th July 1920: "The policy of non-cooperation is only the means to an end and not the end itself. In our opinion there is no violation of the principle of non-cooperation in nationalists offering themselves for election to the councils
and getting themselves returned. They need not go beyond the line of duty which the Irish nationalists and Sinn Feiners have prescribed for themselves......The elections are the immediate constitutional weapon which we possess to educate the mass of the people as to their rights and duties.\textsuperscript{19}

Regarding the schools boycott, courts boycott and council boycott in the Non-Cooperation Movement the Hindu remarked. “It is open to question whether he (Gandhiji) does not impose on his following conditions the rigour of which is greater than it can bear.....We cannot think of a surer way of committing national suicide than to deny the rising generation an education, however imperfect. Of the three steps (schools boycott, courts boycott and council boycott) enumerated, we condemn one as positively suicidal, the other as impracticable and the third as inadvisable.”\textsuperscript{20}

According to Mahatmaji’s article in Young India, (5.5.1920) “the first repressive move in connection with Khilafat movement,” commenced at Delhi in the shape of a notification under the Seditious Meetings Act and a gradual muzzling of the Muslim Press.\textsuperscript{21}

The Oudh Khilafat conference stimulated U.P.Delhi and Punjab. Fiery articles were published in the Zamindar (Lahore) which was followed by the Muhammedan extremist papers. The editor of the Zamindar Zafar Ali Khan declared General Dyer as a bastard. A highly inflammatory atmosphere was created by him in Lahore because of which he was prosecuted.

The Amrit Bazar Patrika (Calcutta) had been giving a tough fight to the Government ever since a security of Rs.5000/- had been demanded from it in 1913, for its comments on the Jagat Shri Ashram Affairs under the Press Act 1910.\textsuperscript{22} Motilal Ghosh was successful in warding off the security forfeited by the Govt. of Bengal. He got the support of the Court and the case against him was dismissed when he involved through his paper in the Barisal conspiracy case.

Gandhiji’s Civil Disobedience Movement got full support from The Hindu(Sind) and the Sind Observer.
The Amrit Bazar Patrika condemned the Press Act of 1910 as "a mere superfluous ushered into existence by a panicky government which read in the bomb its inevitable doom and was anxious to guillotine without the noise incidental to a regular trial certain newspapers which, in its opinion, openly encouraged violence of this kind." 

Jawaharlal Nehru's Boycott of Simon Commission was given a widespread publicity by the Press. Mass demonstration and propaganda started and violent methods were adopted by the Govt. to stop this agitation. The unarmed demonstrators faced ruthless lathi-charge. The action of the authorities was condemned by public. The virulent Press campaign was reported to the Govt. Again fresh restrictions were imposed on newspapers. The trial and execution of Bhagat Singh and his associates including their hunger strike and the death of Jatin Das were highlighted in such a way by the Press that the general mob became violent with anger and the Government became more strict with the newspapers. Chicago University micro-film reels (Nos. 3, 8, 9, 12, 50, 52, 35 & 36), The Revolutionary (1925), Satyagraha Sangram (Allahabad), Hindustan Socialist Republican Association Manifesto, The Philosophy of the Bomb etc. were considered provocative. Two out of seven ordinances promulgated by the Govt. of India were related to the Press. The Press Act of 1910 was framed in order to avoid difficulties which arose whenever a prosecution was launched. D.G.Mitchell wrote: "If the ordinary methods of criminal law are used, it is necessary to show that the printer or publisher had guilty knowledge of the objectionable matter on which he is being prosecuted and when he denies of guilty knowledge, the task of the prosecution is usually impossible." Lord Irwin promulgated the Press Ordinance in 1930.

Sir John Simon had tried to mollify the public demand for the association of Indians with the work of his Commission. Motilal Nehru, in the debate on the subject made it clear that what political India wanted was that an equal number of Indians must be appointed to the Commission by His Majesty the King before Indians could co-operate. This point of view was upheld by a clear majority of 68 votes to 62. Hardly had this result been declared, when from the Press...
Gallery an attaché case was thrown down by a Reporter of the Hindustan Times (Chamanlal) which hit Sir Basil Blackett on the head. Sir Basil was not injured but felt partially stunned for a few moments. There was some excitement in the Press Gallery.\textsuperscript{25}

Patel as Speaker of the Central Assembly during the period 1925 – 1930, was acting to the spirit of the times, entertaining friends with only barley water at luncheons, no alcohol being visible anywhere near about the place. So great was the fervour of the campaign that at one luncheon given by Patel, Pandit Motilal Nehru got up and declared: “Let us drink to the toast of a dry India.”\textsuperscript{26}

In 1938 a different scene was witnessed by the members of Press where in a function arranged by the Chief Whip of the Congress Party in his personal capacity at which some members indulged in alcoholic drinks. This was mentioned by the Press members recalling at the same time the famous statement of Motilal Nehru. The Statesman(Delhi) carried this message in a box in the main news page and when it came up to Simla the next day a mild social upheaval was created and there was no social engagement for the next ten days.

The Congress Bulletins continued to be circulated which unnerved the Govt. On 17\textsuperscript{th} June the Govt. of India sent a telegram to the Secretary of State for India, London to the effect: “Congress have as a counter blast to the Press Ordinance, for some time been issuing in many periodicals or daily bulletins or news sheets.”\textsuperscript{27} Malicious abuse of Govt, seditious matter and propaganda of Civil Disobedience Movement kept the Govt. under pressure. In Bombay, particularly, thousands of bulletins were sold openly in streets. The Govt. tried to put an end to this. During 1930-35 the Press Emergency powers had been most effective in restraining sedition in the province. Emergency Powers Act 1931 followed by lapse of the Press and unauthorised News-sheets and Newspaper Ordinance, led to more grievances. Among the specimens of objectionable articles collected by Govt. were stories, poems, dialogues, biographies, histories of revolution in Russia, Ireland and other countries. Anarchists and revolutionaries like Sardar Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev and Rajguru were glorified by some of the newspapers.
The newspapers wrote fearlessly that India had begun to realize that it was a grave insult for her to live under the shadow of the foreign sword. The Indian Press Ordinance which had been promulgated on April 27, 1930 and has lapsed on October 26, 1930 was soon followed by the Press and unauthorized News-sheets and Newspapers Ordinance of Dec 23, 1930 which expired on June 22, 1931. Thereafter the most comprehensive Indian Press (Emergency Powers) Act came into operation from Oct 9, 1931. Thus according to Govt. notings and comments, the Press was without any special control for only three and a half months, i.e., from June 1931-Oct 8, 1931. The extremist papers however continued their propaganda in a very intensified way. 'The Pratap' wrote after the failure of Round Table Conference "what is required is that the message of death should resound from one corner of the country to the other."

Next came the Indian Press (Emergency Powers) Act of 1931, according to which when security was demanded by a District Magistrate his reasons were to be recorded in writing and no application could lie to the High Court against such orders. The deposited security was to be returned if within 3 months the local Govt. had not passed any order under section 4 of the Act. The section covered such matters which incited or encouraged violence or even directly or indirectly expressed approval or administration of any such offence. According to this Act the press or newspapers had the right to know their offence and to apply to the High Court. If there was an alternative remedy of forfeiting security, the Act could not forfeit a Press. The Govt. considered this Act to be less drastic. None of the acts could suppress the patriotic zeal and spirit of the Press which continued to publish political and revolutionary ideas and objectionable articles in favour of communism. Confidential note on the press prepared in U.P. for the week ending Jan 17, 1931 also catalogued the newspapers and periodicals which carried on political propaganda inspite of the Press Ordinance. (U.P.Home Police, F no.1589-1931 pp 319/48-321/4) Through the newspapers the eminent revolutionary thinkers and political thinkers urged the people even to sacrifice their lives for the sake of the country. The subjects covered in the newspapers were Treatment of political prisoners, Swadeshi and boycott movement, Agricultural situation, No-tax campaign, Economic Situation etc.
The Congress held its sessions in Calcutta and Delhi amidst police vigilance, bans and curbs on press which caused greatest sensation in the nationalist newspapers. A complete account of the 47th session of the Congress was covered in the 2nd April, 1933 issue of 'Calcutta'.

Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya, the President elect who had been arrested prior to Delhi session also in April, 1932, became the champion of Congress propaganda in 1933 at Calcutta. As he was the only leader that time who was out of jail, he exposed the Govt. policy of repression to the public through the Press. The Govt.'s attempt to hide police atrocities and mis-represent the Congress activities failed.

A few examples of press release in 1934 are:

"The representatives of the Indian Nation have resolved on the banks of the Ravi to attain complete freedom. It is therefore, that the Indian nation views the Parliamentary Committee's Report with indifference."32 It also wrote "we should bid adieu to the Report from a respectable distance. Indians can attain real freedom only by standing on their own legs."33

The Provincial Governors demanded the extension of the Press Acts which was appreciated by the then Viceroy, Willingdon. There was deterioration in the communal situation; religious controversies appeared in the newspapers. Danger was being sensed from Bolshevism. All these compelled Lord Willingdon to press the Secretary of the State for permission to proceed with a Bill that would make the emergency provisions permanent. The proposal was accepted by the Indian Council without any amendment. Inspite of the effort of the officials to impress the legislatures with a dossier of 429 pages of objectionable material, the Assembly members rejected the Bill by 69 to 57. The leader of the opposition on the part of the congress party said, "We are convinced that we can govern this country in her best interests without this law." Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant mocked at the attempt of the Govt. to compile only 30 pages from newspapers, periodicals, books, pamphlets and posters issued in all the provinces and over ten years, namely from 1921 - 1931 when there was no Press Act. The leader of the opposition Bhulabhai Desai alleged that the
Government had no desire to concede the right of freedom to men or to the press. Sir Henry Craik said that the ordinary law was not sufficient to deal with terrorism and communism. Ultimately the motion was rejected by 71 to 61.

The Bill was certified by Willingdon although it was rejected by the Legislative Assembly. P.N. Sapru criticised it appreciating the journalists. The bill was ultimately passed. Ban was imposed on communist and Socialist Literature as Congress had kept contact with foreign correspondents. The entry of 'Daily Worker' from London was banned in 1930 and its copies were confiscated. In the 10th July, 1930 edition of 'Daily Worker' a news had come under the caption: "We kill them like flies" which was an extract from a letter reported to have been written by unnamed rifleman of K.R.R.C. Lucknow. Besides 'Daily Worker' there were extracts from the 'New Leader' and 'The Worker'. With the fear that such extracts could incite British soldiers to mutiny in India, the Govt. in U.K. started consideration of the prosecution of 'Daily Worker' under Incitement to Mutiny Act. However the Viceroy was informed on 24th Aug, 1930 that suggestion of prosecution would probably not be entertained by Home Office.

'The United Press' and "Herald Tribune" protested against the censorship attempted by British India on the outgoing despatches. There was a debate on this issue in the British parliament too. Samuel Hoare in his speech on 25th Feb, 1932 said "There was no censorship in India of any reputable foreign newspaper correspondent."

In 1933 Pandit Nehru expressed his belief in socialism and linked India's freedom struggle with the world struggle against capitalism and imperialism. The Govt. of India continued to ban socialist or communist literature under the Sea Customs Act and the Emergency Powers Act which continued till 1938.

The All India Congress Committee in its meeting in Madras on 19th October, 1935 proposed to counteract the anti-Indian propaganda abroad by imperialist powers. Pandit Nehru, in a letter to Dr. Rajendra Prasad suggested that international contacts should be developed by visiting foreign countries and employing young men in foreign work. Publicity and contacts must be based on a strong and ably-staffed foreign department of the Congress in India. He also
suggested to develop bureaus in suitable countries abroad e.g., Czechoslovakia, New York and some places in the Far East. "The Indian National Congress in Great Britain" was started. Nehru gave an interview to the Editor, Manchester Guardian on 7th December 1935 in which he exposed the Bengal Govt. and the spectres of terrorism and sedition.37

After becoming the Congress President, Nehru gave more stress to his idea of foreign propaganda. He talked of the freedom of press with the journalists and assured them of getting all cooperation from the foreign department of A.I.C.C. and the Civil Liberties Union which had 130 members in Calcutta and "heralded the end of an era of confrontation which lasted from 1930 – 35, but its scope was extremely limited."38

The Press (Emergency Powers) Act of 1931 as amended by the Criminal Law Amendment Act 1932 and 1935 remained in force throughout the British rule in India. After Independence it was removed as recommended by the Press Laws Enquiry Committee. (Press Commission Report pt 1 p.378). The Ordinance of 1931 was replaced by The Foreign Relations Act of 1932 which also remained in force throughout the British rule. The Indian States (Protection Act) continued till independence.

According to the Press Commission report "There were intervals, though brief, of understanding between the Govt. and the Congress, particularly in the period between 1937 and 1939 when as a result of an assurance that the Governor would not interfere with the day to day administration of a province outside the limited range of his special responsibilities."39

According to the seventh schedule of the Govt. of India Act 1935, "newspapers, books and printing presses" appeared at item 17 of the Concurrent Legislative List. On the basis of this it was surmised that "the Central Govt. has legislative powers and presumably, therefore the Governor General would have Ordinance making powers."40
There was a controversy regarding the treating of Press censorship as Central or Provincial subject during the Second World War.

Amrit Bazar reported “Pandit Nehru attached very great importance to the question of freedom of the press.” And in reply to the address of welcome presented by the Indian Journalists Association on 5th Nov, 1936 he assured them of all cooperation and help from the foreign department of A.I.C.C. and the Civil Liberties Union.  

On another occasion, while replying to an address of welcome from the journalists of Bombay, 24th August, 1936, Pandit Nehru stated that “In India there is the possibility of suppression of facts either by the govt. or by private proprietors or at the dictates of advertisers.”

The Editor of Sind Observer was directed by the proprietor to refrain from giving certain news and reports in the paper. As it was reported by the 26th July, 1936 issue of The Hindustan Times, the journalists and Editors in Bengal particularly had to face the day to day pressure and threats.

Among the organs of the public opinion which helped in the reorientation of the Congress policy the Hindu occupied a very high place and S.Satyamurthi, a prominent Congress leader of Madras in a letter to the Hindu wrote “I should like to offer my congratulations to ‘The Hindu’ for the success which has attended its bold and consistent attitude on the question of office acceptance by The Congress.”

S.Srinivasa Iyengar had resigned from the Congress mainly due to his differences with Gandhiji. He called upon Gandhiji to retire from the political scene. In a letter, which was published on the Editorial page of The Hindu he said, “No spiritual minded man who worships in the shrine of Ahimsa has any need of Swaraj, for the soul of an enlightened slave in an autocracy can be as free as that of the foremost democrat.”

On July 14, 1938 the Congress Ministries completed one year in office which was stated to be satisfactory by the Press. There were demands for responsible
governments in the Indian States like Travancore, Mysore etc. which also received wide—spread support in the Press.

The Government of India had shown its extreme determination to keep Press curbs on the statute Book but it didn't use them widely between 1937 and 1939. There were vigorous opposition and protests against demands of security from Presses and censure of editorials prior to publication. The U.P.Govt. with its Congress Ministry cancelled the securities which had been taken under the Press Act and refunded the money. The Govt. was careful in not allowing communal animosity to get aggravated. A Press Consultative Committee was appointed by the U.P.Govt. in 1938 in order to take the press into confidence. It consisted of four representatives each of the English and Indian Press, two of news agencies and one of the public Information Department of the Govt. and its tenure was 3 years after which Govt. could re-elect a Press Consultative Committee. An old journalist Durga Das headed the first such committee.

In the Bombay Province, the Congress Ministry took prompt measure to refund the securities of many newspapers and lifted the ban from hundreds of associations.44

The Provincial autonomy and setting up of autonomous Governments brought a remarkable change in the attitude of Press and they started giving more attention to Provincial issues.

The Nationalist Press and well established newspapers like Amrit Bazar Patrika in Bengal, the Tribune in Punjab and the Leader in U.P. didn't hesitate to criticise the Congress whenever its decision or policy went wrong. The Anglo-Indian Press like the Statesman, The Times of India and the Madras Mail tried to strike a balance and were reluctant to criticise the Congress.

There was a proposal to start U.P.Congress Daily. Financial help was given to the National Herald.

In an article written for the inaugural issue of the National Herald, Pandit Nehru wrote: “For a newspaper like the National Herald which seeks to represent not
the small group that runs it, but to be the herald of a great national movement and to give utterance to the urges and thoughts of a people struggling for freedom and seeking ways to develop in themselves in a thousand directions, the task if in comparably heavier.\(^45\)

The National Herald represented the policy and programme of the Indian National Congress and was believed to be the Congress newspaper.

During the Second World War when Britain declared war against Germany, the Viceroy of India issued two proclamations in which he declared “a grave emergency exists whereby the security of India is threatened by War” and “war has broken out between His Majesty’s Government and Germany.” This was followed by promulgation of Ordinance No.5 providing for special measures to ensure the public safety and interest and the defence of British India and for the trial of certain offences.\(^46\)

The Govt. of India was duly empowered to make such rules as might be deemed necessary for securing the defence of British India, the public safety, the maintenance of public order, or the efficient prosecution of war or for maintaining supplies and services essential to the life of community. The plans for a Federal Govt. at the Centre were suspended for the duration of the war.\(^47\)

Censorship was imposed on Post and Telegraph including money orders and parcels. The Defence of India Bill was passed by the Legislative Assembly, but hardly within a week Press was gagged again as it was reported from Bengal. The Indian Journalist’s Association at its Executive Committee meeting expressed its grave concern at the revival of Press Censorship in Bengal in the name of advising the Press.\(^48\) For each and every matter the Newspapers were being threatened. On October 2, 1939 came the report from Bombay that the journalists of Bombay condemned the order of the Bombay government on five newspapers of the city, banning them from publishing any news of the note of August 1, or expressing any views on the Urban Immovable Property Tax. The order was issued by the City Magistrate under Section 144.\(^49\) When the Viceroy announced about Victory first and War Aims next, the Congress was surprised.
Gandhiji remarked - "We asked for bread and got stone." The Congress demanded freedom after war which should be the central responsibility.

The conditions imposed on press in India was highly unsatisfactory. The suppression of opinion was widely criticised. Particularly, the papers of Bengal suffered rigid censorship. A memorandum on hardships of the profession was proposed and adopted by the Executive Council of the Indian Journalist's Association at its meeting on 6th October 1939.

The Journalists further lost all hope when Congress ministry resigned in 7 provinces and Governor's rule was imposed. Jinnah charged Mahatma Gandhi 'libel' for his article on Hindu-Muslim unity in Harijan. In his reply to London Times Editorial on the minorities issue Gandhiji asked -"Will British statesmen play the Game of playing the Muslim League against the Congress?" The Marathi Journalists Conference held at Bombay on December 4, 1939 condemned the use of Press Emergency Powers and Defence of India Acts against the journalists as the same was a negation of the freedom of press and fundamental rights.

The Censorship Regulations(India) had been revised by September 1939 and sent to all concerned. By 1940 the process of revision, despatch and acknowledgement of amended and revised regulations regarding Censorship was completed. The U.P.Govt. appointed the then Director of Information Mr.D.P.Mukherjee as Provincial Press Adviser in order to take action against the imposition of control over Press. He was there till October 31, 1940. After that from November 7, 1940, C.B.Rao, I.C.S., Under Secretary to the Government of U.P.was appointed as Provincial Press Adviser.

In April 1940, prosecution was launched against 'Sainik' - Agra whose manager was arrested and the press was seized. Pandit Nehru in his letter to the Editor, Hindustan Standard from Allahabad on March 4, 1940 expressed regret and amazement on the order served on the paper by the Government of Bengal. He wrote - "I think this order, asking you to submit all editorial matter to the censor before publication, was highly objectionable and I am glad you did not submit to
No self-respecting newspaper can accept such a precensorship of articles. In 1940 the Editor of National Herald was instructed to submit all headlines relating to war news to the scrutiny of the Secretary of the Information Deptt. The Press Commission confirmed that a similar censorship was imposed on posters. For six months the National Herald published war news without any headline. The paper was also warned for printing full text of Nehru’s statement at his trial in Gorakhpur. When Gandhiji started his individual Satyagraha movement, the Govt. had issued notification to the effect: "In exercise of the powers conferred by clause (b) of subrule (1) of the rule 41 of the Defence of India Rules, the Central Govt. is pleased to prohibit the printing or publishing by any printer, publisher or editor in British India of any matter calculated directly or indirectly to foment opposition to the prosecution of the war to a successful conclusion or of any matter relating to the holding of meetings or the making of speeches for the purpose, directly or indirectly, of fermenting such opposition as aforesaid. Provided that nothing in this order shall be deemed to apply to any matter communicated by the Central Government or a Provincial Government to the Press for publication."

The order was withdrawn 17 days later following discussions between the Govt. and the A.I.N.E. representatives under the Defence Regulations was highlighted by K.Srinivasan, Managing Editor of the Hindu in his opening address at New Delhi on the 10th November, 1940 as President of the Newspaper Editors’ Conference. He exclaimed that "It was with amazement therefore that all of us were greeted with the order issued under the Defence of India Regulations which, if conformed to, would reduce the position of an editor to that of an inanimate automation. The conditions that were sought to be imposed by that order were such that no self-respecting editors could submit to them." The President at the conference held in New Delhi said that the Press would be free to express its news without official interference. Independent press became the need of the day. The Press Advisors were urged to ensure cordial relations between the Govt. and the press. There was an understanding between the
Govt. and the Newspapers that the former would not impose any undue restrictions on publication of news relating to the war provided the newspapers will not publish material which was considered to impede the prosecution of war. The A.I.E.N.C. was decided to act as a mediator.

The U.P. Government refused to come to any compromise and there were allegations against the National Herald and Rama Rao. The Goodwill Mission did its best to remove the deep-seated prejudice which persisted against K. Rama Rao and ultimately U.P. Govt. agreed to reform the procedure and the enlargement of the committee.

1941-42 were the years of total control of Press and other Mass Media. Sir Maurice G. Hallett, The Governor of U.P. adopted the policy of ruthless suppression policy of total control of mass media. Hallett in his speech at the Lucknow District War Committee in 1941 said – “What are the possible emergencies which we in India have to face? It may appear to some, in particular those who believe in that extra-ordinary policy of non-violence, that it is unnecessary to work out schemes for protection against war attacks. I do not agree and as long as I have any responsibility for the safety of the inhabitants of this province, I shall devote attention to this subject….”

Nehru’s statement in court at Gorakhpur in 1940 was published by the National Herald which was regarded as prejudicial to the war effort. The paper received a warning from the Chief Secretary of the Govt. of U.P. Government. Extracts of Nehru’s speeches were asked for from the U.P. Govt. The Reuters sent the messages to U.K. & America in 1941 on Nehru’s arrest and trial.

The Collector of Agra had on November 23, 1943 directed a Managing Trustee that “until a declaration was filed as keeper by a person who would actually be incharge of the Sainik Press, the same which was seized by the police could not be returned.” Against this order it was submitted that the law did not require a fresh declaration, “and certainly there can be no declaration before one has a press to own.” Two notices were served demanding securities of Rs.3,030.00 each. All over India the Press acclaimed the resolution of the Standing
Committee of the Editors’ Conference. The Govt. of India decided to consult the Govt. of U.P. regarding the resolution to obtain their views. A number of letters and telegrams followed this. Another resolution was passed by the Standing Committee which appeared in the Press. The Govt. of India counselled moderation to the Press. Correspondence continued and the constitutional issues were raised and the U.P.Governor welcomed a general discussion at Dehradun. He however expressed his attitude towards Press and said:

"It seems to me increasingly clear that the National Herald and the Hindustan Times are doing all they can to boost the Satyagraha movement. The annual number of the Hindustan Times is particularly bad."61 The topics covered by Hindustan Times which irked the Governor were criticism against U.P.Jail administration, compulsory war subscriptions etc.

On May 1, 1941, a suggestion was made by K.Ramakrishnan of the National Herald, Lucknow to the address of K.Srinivasan of the Hindu that the past record of the newspaper, prior to Delhi Agreement be ignored.62 According to the Editor of National Herald, "while the Congress was in exile after November 1939, the Herald became the authoritative spokesman of the party atleast in the U.P."63 The paper constantly gave instructions to the party members what they should or should not do. About forty articles from the National Herald were picked up and placed before the Press Advisory Committee of the U.P. The topics were related to war, misrule and suppression of liberties, Atlantic Charter etc. The Headlines of the paper were also said to be provocative. Scrutiny and precensorship was ordered by the Govt. which according to Rama Rao was "absurd, impractical, mischievous and malicious."64

After some times, the National Herald which had ceased to write editorials resumed the publication of the same. But a new confrontation had been waiting which took place when the paper was asked to deposit Rs.6000/- in respect of three editorials which were considered objectionable under the Indian Press (Emergency) Act. There was no alternative but to pay the security which was managed from the well wishers and the editorials again began to appear.
The Home Department had to deal with three other points brought to their notice by Srinivasan of the Hindu. These were (1) the advice of Home Deptt. to the Muslim League resolution about Iran without consulting the Central Press Advisory Committee (2) Censorship of their correspondent’s messages from England in which portions were deleted by the Censors. (3) Srinivasan asked whether Govt. would allow a few Editors to pay a visit to Deoli in order to satisfy themselves about the conditions there.

With short intervals, constantly securities were demanded from National Herald but public sympathy was always there with the paper and more amount than the security money was collected everytime.

When the Civil Disobedience Movement was going on the Editor of National Herald published two articles which were considered objectionable. In one he mentioned about the lathi-charge on some political prisoners and assault on them outside the jail in Lucknow. In the editorial he also mentioned about inhuman torture on the prisoners with shoes, and beating and dragging of the Satyagrahis in the barracks. The other one was also an editorial on the same subject which appeared on August 26 under the caption ‘Jail or Jungle.’ The Editor K.Rama Rao was tried and sentenced to six month’s imprisonment with a fine of Rs.750.00.

In the 16th April, 1942 issue of the National Herald Nehru’s declaration on fighting with Hitler and Japan appeared. It attracted tremendous attention. He also declared that he would fight even Subhas Chandra Bose and his party along with Japan.

In June 1942 the office of the National Herald was raided, papers were seized and the premises was under lock and key. A conference of journalists was organised by Rama Rao in protest which was of great success. Rama Rao in his speech asked the question “How long could the Press cooperate with a Government that was putting an end to our national existence? What would it lose by closing down?”
The Home Department, Govt. of India advised the U.P.Govt. against the forfeiture of security while approving action against the Herald under the Press Act. But the U.P.Govt. felt that it was imperative that the security of the paper be forfeited at the earliest. Mudie said that "No action against anti-war propaganda can be successful in the Province unless action is first taken against the National Herald."

The following are the articles on which action was proposed:


There was much propaganda of the failure of Cripps Mission and Quit India Resolutions by the Press. In view of the tense situation in U.P. the management of National Herald decided to close down the paper before any order came from the Govt. However the Govt. action came in the form of seizure of the building in August 1942. National Herald's last Editorial 'Vande Mataram' was a challenge to the British Govt. and British Indian Govt. to do its worst to the Mass Media.

The Hindu reports PROTEST AGAINST GAGGING OF THE PRESS---------

Calcutta, Aug 17, 1942 - The nationalist newspapers of Calcutta, both English and Vernacular have decided to suspend publication for an indefinite period from the morning of Friday, the 21st August as a protest against the latest restriction imposed on the newspapers by the Govt. of India. This decision was taken at a meeting of the proprietors and editors of the various newspapers held this afternoon, with Mr. Hemendra Prosad Ghosh, editor of Basumati, presiding. The newspapers to be affected by this decision are Amrita Bazar Patrika, Jugantar, Hindustan Standard and Ananda Bazar Patrika.

The same paper also covered the news just before the closure of National Herald:
Lucknow, Aug 17 – The police searched this morning the office of the National Herald; the search is still continuing. Earlier the police searched the residence of Mr. Rama Rao, editor of the paper. After a thorough search of the office lasting over 6 hours the police took possession of the office premises.67

The Nagpur edition reported:

The police searched early this morning the office of the English Daily Nagpur Times, the Hindi Daily Navbharat, the English Weekly Independent and also the houses of the managers of the papers (A.P.)68

1942-43 witnessed the ruthless repression of Press. After the Quit India Resolution in August 1942 repressive measures were taken against All India Congress Office in Allahabad and its publications. Suppression had started even before Quit India resolutions were taken. Some papers like Bombay Chronicle and Hindustan Times did much publicity of Gandhi and Nehru in the U.S.A.

The notification as per the Press Gag of 8th August, 1942 was.69

"Home Department, Orders Poll.(1), New Delhi, the 8th August 1942.

No.3/13/42 – In exercise of the powers conferred by clause (b) of sub rule (1) of rule 42 of the Defence of India Rules, the Central Government is pleased to prohibit the printing or publishing by any printer, publisher or editor of any factual news which expression shall be deemed to include reports of speeches or statements made by the members of the public) relating to the mass movements sanctioned by the All-India Congress Committee or to the measures taken by Government against that movement, except news derived from and stated in the newspapers which published it to be derived from –

(a) official sources, or

(b) the Associated Press of India, the United Press of India or the Orient Press of India

(c) A correspondent regularly employed by the newspaper concerned and whose name stands registered with the District Magistrate of the district in which he carried on his work."

Sd/- R.Tottenham

Addl.Secretary to the Govt. of India
Under this order the newspapers could publish only news derived from the Govt. controlled agencies or subsidised ones. The A.I.N. Editors were advised to stay away from publishing any statements or articles containing direct or indirect incitement or instigation. When the Govt. banned publication of all news on demonstrations and Congress movement, the newspapers could not help protesting or suspending publications. Lord Linlithgo still felt that enough controls and restrictions were not imposed on press although he boasted of closing down as many as 14 newspapers of Calcutta leaving only the Statesman and the Star of India. The Indian Press reeled under "Confidential Press Instructions for War," including Press Notes No.XIX issued with Chief Press Adviser's letter No.411/42, dated 17th August, 1942.70

The Bihar Governor accused press to be unhelpful and Bihar's newspapers the Searchlight and the Nation were suppressed. The editor of the former was sent to jail and the latter refused to publish Govt. Press Notes or to submit Editorial opinions for pre-censorship as that was regarded as an insult to the journalistic profession.

The Intelligence Bureau (Home Department) gave panicky reports about Rama Rao and his colleagues. In a secret Note dated 3.9.42 it was alleged that K.Rama Rao, A.S.Iyangar and P.D.Sharma were advocating non-compromise with the Government. According to the Intelligence Bureau, "Rama Rao has been exceptionally bitter in abusing Govt." and is reported to have disclosed that, according to his information Gandhi would fast unto death in the jail. If that happened, he declared pointing to Arthur Moor and Low, "not a single Englishman will escape from this country."71

The Govt. presented an amended draft in its next meeting with the approval of the Home Member. It issued letters No.3/13/42 – Poll (1) Aug 1942 and enclosed therewith a copy of the D.O. letter to Srinivasan, President of A.I.N.E.C. for the information of the Provincial Governments.72 By another letter it cancelled its order in the Home Department No.3/13/43, dated 8th August, 1942 so far as it applied to Editors and publishers in the province of Delhi.73
The Intelligence Bureau intercepted letter dated 2.9.42 from the Convener, suspended Newspapers Editors’ Conference, Nasik Chambers, Frere Road, Fort Bombay, to the Editor, The National Herald Lucknow. It was alleged that an unprecedented situation had arisen due to the suspension of about ninety newspapers throughout the country.74

The suspended nationalist newspapers met in Bombay on 14th September. K.Rama Rao attended the meeting. Some resolutions were passed which were as follows:

a) Declaration that it was impossible for newspapers to function with dignity under the restrictions.

b) Appeal to all nationalist newspapers which had not already ceased publication to do so forthwith.

c) A.I.N.E.C.was condemned for its failure.

d) it disavowed the undertakings given by the A.I.N.E.C. which led to unjournalistic practices.

e) favouring formation of another body known as the Indian Nationalist Press Congress with Ramnath Goenka as President and a Committee including Devdas Gandhi, K.Rama Rao, K.P.Narayan and Samaldas Gandhi.

The Govt. of India then modified the orders which were not accepted by all states and Provinces.

There was restlessness among the Editors. Some of them met and under the Presidentship of Ramnath Goenka, Editor, the Indian Express passed several resolutions the most important one being –

"This Conference is of opinion that the Standing Committee of the A.I.N.E.C. has failed to give the right and proper lead to the Nationalist Press of the country and in the difficult situation in which it is now placed. It, therefore, calls upon the Conference to desist from all understanding purporting to be given in the name of and on behalf of the Nationalist section of the Press. It also disown all understandings already so given."75
The Pioneer dated 29th May, in its article entitled 'The Herald' expressed sympathies on the forfeiture of its security. U.P. Government had alleged Rama Rao saying "Mr. Rama Rao, Editor of the National Herald who is the Convener of the Provincial Press Advisory Committee has by his Editorial under reference openly flouted the undertaking regarding the secrecy of the Committee proceedings given by him to Government as member of the Press Advisory Committee and has thus not only caused embarrassment to Government but has in addition been guilty of a gross breach of faith."

The Press adopted secret methods of publishing bulletins, unauthorised leaflets etc. We come to know about some of the underground work of Rama Rao in his book 'Pen as my Sword.' J.N. Sahani had stated in his 'Truth about the Indian Press' that in Delhi he had established a secret press and gave bulletins about the war and the national movement.

Restrictions were imposed upon the newspapers of the capital also. On September 28, Dr. H.N. Kunzru, in the Council of State presented a charge sheet on Press - Advising and exposed Government policy. He complained that the Govt. was penalising the publication of news by the Indian Press which had no connection whatsoever with the war.

When Gandhiji decided to fast for 21 days, the Press remained completely restrained even when his condition became grave. All the Congress papers however kept hammering for his release without any condition. The Bombay Chronicle and Free Press Journal as a protest against pre-censorship orders decided not to comment editorially on the issue of fast.

The Chief Commissioner, Delhi, had already served on the Hindustan Times on Jan 1, 1943 a ban relating to news of disturbances and demonstrations. This was followed by another order served on 12th February, 1943 regarding the ban on Publication of matter relating to Gandhiji's fast which was lifted on March 11, 1943.

Most of the Indian newspapers observed a 'Hartal' on 6th January, 1943.
Publication of Louis Fisher’s address on 23rd February 1943 to a packed audience in the Town Hall of San Francisco in the ‘National Call’ on 20th May and Hindustan Times on 22nd May unnerved the Chief Press Adviser. The Government of India passed an order:

a) all matters relating to India, written or spoken or purporting to have been written or spoken by Mr. Louis Fisher, the American journalist and author, shall, before being published in British India, whether in the original or in a translation in any book, pamphlet, newspaper or other document be submitted by the printer, publisher or editor of the document to the Chief Press Adviser, New Delhi, for security.

b) no such matter as aforesaid shall be published by any printer, publisher or editor in British India except with the written permission of the Chief Press Adviser, New Delhi.

Sd/ V. Sahay,
Jt. Secy. to Govt. of India.

100% Censorship was issued on the following newspapers and members of their staff:

- The Hindu, Madras
  - Mr. K. Srinivasan, Madras
  - Mr. B. Siva Rao, New Delhi.
- The Indian Express, Madras
  - Mr. Ram Lal Goenka, Madras
- Hindustan Times, New Delhi
  - Mr. Devdas Gandhi
  - Mr. G. V. Kripa nidhi
- National Call, Delhi
  - Mr. J. N. Sahni, Delhi
  - Mr. K. D. Kohl.
- Bombay Chronicle, Bombay
  - Mr. S. A. Brelni
- Free Press Journal, Bombay
  - Mr. Sadanand
  - Mr. K. Srinivasan
- Anand Bazar Patrika
- Hindustan Standard, Calcutta
  - Mr. Hem Chand Nag
Mr. T.K. Ghosh

Mr. Murli Manohar Prasad

Mr. Subramaniam
Mr. P.T. Chandra

Mr. Krishna Ram Mehta

Mr. Mani

Some names were suggested to be examined who were in the U.S.A.:

Sardar J.J. Singh of the Indian League of America, Mrs. Ada B. Mc Cormick, of the ‘Latter’, Mr. Hencry Luce and his wife Mrs. Clare Booth Luce, Mr. John Gunther and Mrs. Gunther, Lin-yu-Taing.

The Bureau of Public Information, Government of India, kept an up-to-date list of Foreign Press Correspondents in India and informed the Home Department accordingly.  

The most prominent among them are:


- Agence Francaisa, Ind.
- Central News Agency of China
- Tass Agency of Moscow.

The Home Deptt. remained vigilant regarding the activities of all.

The news of the Do-Nothing Policy of the British Indian Government to continue till the end of World War II came in most of the Indian newspapers. The situation at that time was described as a “great mess” by C. Rajagopalachari. The All India Congress was absent from Allahabad Conference and its unity and strength was lacking. The Non-Party Conference was not effective at all. An interesting new
item was the 6 months extension granted to the then Viceroy Lord Linlithgow although he had enjoyed two extensions previously. The Indian Press feared the continuation of the policy of repression. The relation between the Press and the Govt. became strained particularly at the time of 21 days fasting of Gandhiji when there was very heavy criticism of the Govt. in the press. According to the Home Member he had done his best to maintain a cordial relationship between the Govt. and the Press. The Bombay Resolution which was approved by the Govt. of India was accepted by almost all the provinces. However misuse of censor continued to take place in the provinces. Sayed Abdullah Brelni in his Presidential address at the Newspaper Editors' Conference at Madras on 10th January, 1944 said –

"...the Press in India has never been free, but it has always been struggling to be free. The consultative machinery to the establishing of which Govt. were compelled to agree in 1940 as a result of the united front presented by the Press, irrespective of political differences, offered an opportunity, such as the Press had never had, of carrying on that struggle with greater hope of success than ever before........."80 Ignoring the recommendations of the Provincial Advisory Committees, pre-censorship orders were served on Hindustan Times, Sind Observer, Amrit Bazar Patrika and many other newspapers.

'The Radiance' a Khaksar newspaper was suspected to be containing inciting matters but later on as per observations of the U.P. Government they were considered to be comparatively harmless in comparison to other materials which appeared in the Press. Khaksars and similar militant forces became sources of violent incitement at the dawn of independence and necessitated re-imposition of Press Control.

The Associated Press was the only source of collecting news about the Burma front and the activities of the Japanese across the border. The U.S. papers prominently published news about I.N.A. and the contribution of Subhas Chandra Bose which were reproduced by Amrit Bazar Patrika and other Indian newspapers. The Reuters in its report to New York Times in May 1944 gave out that Japan's political hopes had evaporated in the midst of the battle and they
were on the run. In 1944 a bitter controversy arose between Eric Underwood and Dr. Anup Singh over India's Freedom of speech raged in U.S. Press. This controversy lasted for 2 months. Underwood raised the question "why should England who freely ceded independence to Canada, Australia New Zealand and South Africa, wish to withhold it from India?" It was revealed that facts were suppressed by the British spokespersons. Dr. Singh gave a true picture of how the Bombay Sentinel was forced to suspend publication and the National Herald had to close down; about 200 daily newspapers were temporarily suspended for expressing disapproval when Mahatma Gandhi was arrested. Besides this, it was a common practice to force newspapers out of business by demanding excessive monetary security from influential editors, e.g., The Free Press Journal was required to deposit half a lakh.  

The Anglo - U.S. differences continued for some time till a combined propaganda Committee was formed whose first number known as BACIS (British-American Counter Intelligence Summary) was published on 15th July, 1945. At the end of the war it became insignificant.

According to an editorial in the Amrit Bazar Patrika, Government of India's propaganda being a third party affair was worthless, and the message of so-called hope that the A.I.R. spread to countries like Burma, Malaya, the East Indies, Siam, Indo-China etc....ultimately resolved itself into post-war security of the Imperialist Powers to "rule undisturbed by threats of the ruthless Japanese...."  

The American Press continued to render its support to the independence of India. The A.I.N.E.C. persistently opposed the Provincial Governments. It also acted vigorously when there was refusal to publish the new-year honour list of 1943. Thus, during 1940-45 it was a period of continued tussle, "a passage of arms, a series of growls and counter-growls between Government and the Editors’ organisation."  

In the words of Sitaramayya, "This dark chapter of press censorship and this ugly controversy over the subject, at last came to a close with the end of the war on the 14th August, 1945," which was followed by a notification by the Chief Press
Adviser, Govt. of India, issuing instructions not to "press advise messages any longer."\(^8^4\)

The Press however suffered from the Paper Economy Orders and inadequate quota of newsprint.

Amrit Bazar Patrika reported regarding this: "Newsprint Famine to remain for 3 yrs. Empire Press Conference Delegates' Impression – Britain finds her National newspapers limited to, 4 pages whereas the 'Melbourne Herald' is getting one-third of the paper it used before the war.\(^8^5\) Besides the newsprint control orders, the problem of machinery and its import from abroad at reasonable costs provided with the Govt. a reasonable excuse to exert its control over the Press. During the war years there was a price-page schedule against which newspapers could not raise their voice. Due to the Government of India's attitude and its power under the Newspapers Control Order, the Paper Control Order of 1942 and Paper Economy Orders, no new newspaper could get newsprint and other kinds of paper, except with prior permission of the Central Govt.

The Hindustan Times in its 31.1.1945 issue published an article entitled 'Blood Hypocrisy' which annoyed U.P. Govt. because it described the Governor's regime in U.P. under Section 93 as one of a Police State. "They have not hesitated to go beyond the scope of their duties to help us." This is a line from a letter written by Trobton to his wife which was published in Hindustan Times.\(^8^6\) Following the Do-Nothing policy of the Central Govt. the U.P. Govt. could only give a stern warning to the paper.

When the Evening National Call published the news of the Wavell's departure for England with banner headlines – Wavell's Sudden Departure for England, an hour and a half before the news was officially released, it was considered by the Home Deptt. to be a deliberate breach of Press Instructions for war. But it could not take any action against the paper and kept the case pending.
The Press Commission Report has also recorded that, "The records of the Conference shows that from time to time the A.I.N.E.C. intervened with success in favour of newspapers against which action had been threatened by the Government."  

Even after the lapse of the Press Advisory system, the legal sanctions for the control of the press remained as they had been; special attention was drawn to the remaining Press Instructions affecting the Home Department, namely Press Notices No.XIII, para 3 (c), VII & XIX 1(b). The Home Deptt. conveyed "that at the withdrawal of these Notices it should be made clear that the withdrawal does not imply the removal of all the restrictions mentioned in these Notices." The Home Deptt. put stress on the point that the secrecy enjoined by Section 16 of the Enemy Agents Ordinance was to be maintained. Any amendment to Section 505 I.P.C. which aimed at censoring reports calculated to produce mutiny was also not contemplated.

The Press became explosive in 1945 following the Court-Martial of members of the Japanese sponsored I.N.A. Gandhiji's Private Secretary Pyrelal, the Editor of Harijan said, "The undertrial members of the I.N.A. who had fought the British in Burma for India's independence were lionised by the public." The Indian Press unitedly sympathised with the accused and through articles by eminent jurists like Dr. Katju and others, the I.N.A. was idolised.

When the death news of Subhas Chandra Bose in an alleged plane crash rocked the world, the Press continuously published the reactions of Indian leaders and British authorities. Netaji became the most live issue to be discussed by the Press both in India as well as abroad. Although the biographer of Auchinleck, has not commented on the results of the opinion poll in the Indian Army, the National Herald (Lucknow) announced that an independent vote of the army went eighty percent in favour of their release.

The Press also warned the R.I.N.Ratings against political manipulations. On 26th February, the Editor of Amrit Bazar Patrika met Wavell as the new President of
A.I.N.E.C. Wavell took him to task for the unleashed enticing news items presented by the Press during the last six months which had resulted in outbreaks in Bombay.

The New York Times, in its editorial, dated 22\textsuperscript{nd} February 1946 published:

"The revolt of Indian Seamen in Bombay........underlines the urgency of the mission of three Cabinet Ministers which the British Government is sending to India." When the Cabinet Mission left India, unsuccessful in its mission, Rama Rao remarked – "The Mission was a tremendous political bluff, as it was finally revealed, on the part of Churchill and his henchmen."\textsuperscript{91}

The Hindustan Times captured the reactions of two political leaders – Pandit Nehru and Acharya J.B.Kripalni regarding the dismissal of Lord Wavell. While welcoming H.M.G’s statement Nehru characterised it as a "wise and courageous decision."\textsuperscript{92} When Acharya Kripalni was asked to comment on Attlee’s statement on India, he smiled and said, "The only thing definite in the statement is that Lord Wavell will quit and Lord Mountbatten will come."\textsuperscript{93}

By the end of 1945, the Home Deptt. became more alert of the internal situation and decided to discontinue the ‘Foreign Publicity.’ On 1\textsuperscript{st} January 1946, the necessary orders regarding this were issued.

The Press became a free media of the vigorous election campaign launched by the Congress Party. Both the National Press and the Communal Press had played a significant role in the General Elections in 1946. The Nationalist Press criticised the Prime Minister’s (Mr.Attlee) reference to India at the Lord Mayor’s luncheon in London which is as follows: "India had never enjoyed the degree of political freedom which Mr.Attlee has taken great pains to parade before the world."\textsuperscript{94}

The Hindustan Times took note of the "slow deterioration in political situation" due to "terrible repression" following the August disturbances, the I.N.A. trial and the use of Indian troops in Indonesia.\textsuperscript{95}
With the date of the transfer of power drawing nearer, there arose the hope and fear for Partition and as such Communal violence broke up throughout the country particularly in Calcutta. The communal bitterness continued to increase so much so that by the beginning of the year 1947 many of the Provincial Governments were compelled to resort to Ordinances in order to bring the situation under control. These were later on replaced by emergency legislation by the various Provincial Legislatures. The following Enactments listed by the Press Law Enquiry Committee of 1948 were put on the Statute Book:

i) The Central Press (Special Powers) Act, 1947
ii) The Assam Maintenance of Public Order Act, 1947
iii) The Bengal Special powers Act, 1947
iv) The Bihar Maintenance of Public Order Act, 1947
v) The Bombay Public Security Measures Act, 1947
vi) The C.P. and Berar Public Safety Act, 1947
vii) The Madras Maintenance of Public Order Act, 1947
viii) The Punjab Public Safety Act, 1947
x) The Orissa Maintenance of Public Ordinance 1948.

The Indian Press recognising the emergency, raised no voice against these enactments. But the Press again started reacting harshly during the pre-partition days in 1947. The Press (Special Powers) Ordinance was therefore enacted in January 1947. The Interim Cabinet agreed to the enactment of the Ordinance and decided at the same time that a bill should be introduced in the Legislative Assembly on the lines of the Ordinance. A bill was introduced in the Assembly on the 5th February, 1947. When the news of Western Punjab started appearing in the newspapers the situation deteriorated. Master Tara Singh's statements which appeared in the Hindustan Times increased bitterness and stimulated a feeling of revenge. Action was taken in a number of cases in Delhi under the Press (Special Powers) Ordinance.

The 'Dawn' (Lahore) condemned the riots in Bihar and reported that they were planned attacks and the local authorities had the knowledge of the same. The paper openly criticised Mountbatten and even Jenkins and highlighted the
sufferings of the Punjab Muslims under Sec 93 regime. The Dawn published 3 objectionable articles in its issues of 12th, 16th and 21st June respectively. Orders were issued on July 23 1947 against Dawn under Sec (a) of the Ordinance. Regarding its previous ban in Feb’ 47 the ‘Morning News’ had reported – Punjab Govt’s Ban on ‘Dawn’ Extended – Lahore, Feb 14 – The Punjab Govt. issued an order today under the Punjab Public Safety Ordinance prohibiting the bringing into the Punjab for another period of 15 days any issue of the ‘Dawn’ – an English daily of Delhi, containing such matters connected with the Muslim League agitation against the provisions of the Punjab Public Safety Ordinance as is not contained in statements and communiqués issued officially. The order says that the ‘Dawn’ continues to publish matter connected with the agitation which is prejudicial to the public order and as a result the provincial Government is satisfied that for the purpose of preventing or combating such further activity of the said paper it is necessary to take action against it.99

In July again when the paper was undergoing suppressive actions the July 20th issue reported: Referring to an open letter written by the Editor of ‘Dawn’ to him in today’s issue in which he had mentioned about the sufferings and fears of Muslim minorities in U.P. giving a number of instances in support, Mahatma Gandhi said he would reply that even if the allegations were proved true there would be no justification for similar treatment in Sind as Sind’s misdeed would be none in U.P.100

Despite the heavy odds against the Press, it could show the indomitable zeal and spirit of defiance and succeeded in keeping the foreign Government on their toes.

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