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March 26, 1992
Col/

My dear PC,

Many thanks for sending me a copy
of your excellent letter to The
Times. I hope they publish it.

With best wishes,

Yours sincerely,

M.R. Masani

Mr. P.C. Chatterji,
Flat 2D, Block F, Saket,
New Delhi 110 017.

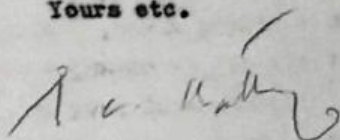
18.

The Editor,
Times Of India.

Sir,

This is with reference to reports in the press, including the Times, of anger expressed by some members of Parliament because Mr. Minoo Masani has dared to criticise them. When Parliament is in session we frequently read press reports which tell us in screaming headlines, 'Furore in Lok Sabha: Proceedings held up for eighty minutes.' 'Noisy Scenes witnessed in Rajya Sabha ending in Walk out.' and the like. Has Mr. Masani drawn one of the possible conclusions from such reports? Mr. Advani says that we should ignore Mr. Masani's remarks. May I suggest instead that Parliamentarians think seriously over what Mr. Masani has said and rectify their behavior where they have gone astray. Let them also recognise that in our polity it is the people who are supreme.

Yours etc.



Mr: Minoo Masani for information.

I hope they publish it!

I'm leaving for Washington early tomorrow
and as you can imagine, up to my neck.
Will write on return expected on 6th April '77.

Times - 30.1.92

Second thoughts on Parliament telecast

By AMITA MALIK

IT is ironical that an item should have appeared the very morning the column is being typed about the response to DD's telecast of parliamentary proceedings. Quoting a Doordarshan survey, the agency item says the survey about viewer reaction to the coverage of question hour revealed that 52 per cent found the coverage satisfactory, 38 per cent found it interesting, and the remaining 10 per cent did not find it interesting at all. It might be mentioned that this result was released by the Lok Sabha secretariat to the press on Wednesday last. And, significantly, this survey comes over three months after the parliamentary telecasts were introduced on December 3.

One wishes the release had given the date or dates on which this survey was conducted. Because an informal survey conducted by this columnist amongst a wide range of viewers, from the servants' quarters to the intellectual elite of Delhi in the course of normal social, domestic or professional contacts, reveals a very different story. If one may put it very bluntly, the ordinary viewer, meaning those not immediately connected with politics or Parliament or having a personal or professional interest only, are fed up with the telecasts. And the progression has been gradual amounting to a crescendo.

In the beginning, to the vocal, thinking elite of the country, the very principle of telecasting parliamentary proceedings vindicated a right which should be natural in democracies. Of course, they were disappointed with the fact that the telecasts were only on the screen the next day, thus taking away the immediacy and advantage over newspaper coverage. Besides, there was suspicion that they might be edited or censored. The very fact that some parliamentarians themselves had urged that the proceedings be carried live, proves that there is still room for debate on the matter.

As for the ordinary viewer, and more particularly voters, it was like

— SIGHT & SOUND —

a follow-up on their MPs after they had been voted to power. The very fact that some MPs are said to have had telephone calls at the very beginning from their constituents asking them why they had not spoken is a tribute to the alertness of the Indian voter and an index of their sharp democratic instincts.

As for the MPs, they have taken the telecasts very seriously indeed, from sprucing up their wardrobes to some speaking more than usual because of the attraction of appearing on TV and even qualifying as stars. This has been proved time and again through the telecast themselves when both the speaker

and the different people occupying the chair, beginning with the vice-president and Ms Najma Heptulla, have been heard to make amiable references, supported by amiable laughter from MPs themselves, about their TV-consciousness.

So far, so good. But of late there has been a distinct back-lash and I am not referring only to the furore caused by elder star-men such as Mr Minoo Masani. I am quoting my maid, and I say this without disrespect because I should imagine the MPs themselves would like to know. This morning my maid told me in chaste Bengali, and she can barely sign her name and read the numerals on the phone: "I don't like this Parliament, why are they always doing *jhagra* (fighting)?" I didn't answer and I certainly will not comment here for obvious reasons. For another thing, some of my best friends are MPs.

Yet, for the people I know who get up early enough and get something out of the morning programme, they say it is not fair that their morning entertainment and information programmes, such as they are, should be completely usurped for such a long time by a debate in which they might not be interested. To this the elite add: "programmes in Parliament are badly written and worse read. It is mostly a roll call of MPs who, speak with one-line quotes, which hardly convey anything and which is like accounting

for their constituents. Instead, they should carry the question hour or whatever from Parliament late at night, as they do for films. This would give Parliament's media wing and DD enough time to put their programme together. Those who are genuinely interested would surely sit up to see it, say from 11 p.m. to 11.30 p.m., and it would save everybody some heart-break. Much as we like the disappearance of some inane programmes in the morning because of the Parliament telecast, this is depriving even DD of the chance to put on some worthwhile programmes."

Some media specialists and this columnist even feel that DD can start exploiting the metro channels in the morning on an experimental basis to channel away some of the compulsory viewing DD thrusts on them, mostly for political or what they term "developmental" reasons, to allow the flowering of stifled talent to cope with the satellite invasion. And in this context, they suggest revising the scope, timings and range of telecasts about Parliament, to make them more newsy and at the same time not rob the viewer of some relaxation and entertainment when the viewer expects and needs it.

Tail-piece: will someone please tell Mrinalini, one of the most frequent newscasters there days, that the french deep sea specialist's name is Jacques Costeau and not pronounced as jackass coss-tew?

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May 1992, both days inclusive, for the purpose of
 payment of dividend for the 53 weeks ended 4th January 1992.

Change of address, Tax Exemption Certificates, Form 15G and Dividend Mandates
 for this dividend payment should reach the Office of the Company's Registrars & Share
 Transfer Agents, Messrs. Choksey Bhargava & Co., P22 Bondel Road, Calcutta 700 019
 on or before 24th April 1992.

Payment of any dividend declared at the Annual General Meeting will be made
 only to those members whose names are registered in the books of the Company on
 13th May 1992, or to their mandates.

Place : Calcutta

Date : 25th March 1992

By order of the Board

R MANNATH

Deputy Secretary

part nance

By ZAGLUL A. CHOWDHURY

The Times of India News Service

DHAKA, March 29: A
 Bangladesh foreign office spokes-
 man on Friday welcomed the
 understanding reached in New
 Delhi regarding the modalities
 the implementation of the terms of
 lease providing for the right of
 passage for Bangladesh through the
 Tin Bigha corridor to two
 Bangladesh enclaves.

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