5826 The Times of India 9/4/1992

Truth As Evidence

Sir, — This has reference to the news report that some members of Parliament have complained about Mr Minoo Masani's description of MPs as "howling hooligans".

The renowned editor of a reputed English daily of Bombay once described members of the ruling party in the Parliament of the First Republic of India thus: "Khadi cap on the head, nothing below it and the majestic vacuum is filled with erroneous notions". Members took umbrage and reported the matter to Mr Nehru, who in his impish style referred the matter to the law ministry. The attorney general, after examining the facts, is reported to have opined that truth is the best defence in a defamation suit. The matter was dropped.

Not long ago, even the Vice-President, Dr S.D. Sharma, was brought to tears by the unruly behaviour of Members of Parliament. The latest incident, before the presentation of the annual budget by the finance minister which was witnessed over Doordarshan by the nation, did not earn any credit for members of the Opposition, and the Speaker and finance minister deserve praise for conducting themselves in a dignified manner.

If one takes into account the above, one would not consider Mr Masani's observation to be far from the truth. One expects Members of Parliament to be mature enough to take such observations in their stride.

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