

## FOREWORD

This is the second part of the compendium relating to adjudications and principles in matters falling under section 13 of the Press Council Act, 1978 and should be read along with my Foreword to the publication of what may be called the first part entitled "Violation of Journalistic Ethics and Public Taste".

Section 13 is very widely worded and contains the powers and functions of the Council, *inter alia*, for helping newspapers and news-agencies to maintain their independence and to build up a code of conduct for newspapers and newspapermen in accordance with high professional standards. It also empowers the Council to ensure that high standards of public taste are maintained by newspapers, news-agencies and journalists. The growth of a sense of responsibility and public service among all those engaged in the profession of journalism has also to be encouraged. There are several other matters contained in the said section which it is not necessary to give in detail and which can be referred to by those interested in knowing them.

The adjudications and decisions that have been digested, deal with various aspects of interference with freedom of the press and have been covered under the heads 'Pressurisation and Harassment of Newspapermen'; 'Accreditation and Freedom'; 'Advertisement and Freedom'; and 'Freedom of the Press (Miscellaneous)'. These should be perused in the light of the provision contained in section 15 (4) of the Act which reads as follows :

The Council may, if it considers it necessary for the purpose of carrying out its objects or for the performance of any of its functions under this Act, make such observations, as it may think fit, in any of its decisions or reports, respecting the conduct of any authority, including Government.

The power conferred above is of a unique nature. There is no authority including the Government which can escape the scrutiny of the Council and its observations and strictures, if it is found that an attempt has been made to interfere with the freedom of the press. It may be that the Council cannot exercise any penal powers or enforce its conclusions or decisions by any sanctions. However, the public condemnation of any authority which can be widely publicised in newspapers is more than adequate to create an awareness among the legislators, the Government and the judiciary of interference in different ways with the freedom of the press. The adjudications which have been reported would amply demonstrate this observation.

**The effort which has gone into the preparation of the compendium and and elucidation of the principles on which those decisions or adjudications are based is highly commendable, and there is no doubt that this work will prove as useful as the other studies which have been hitherto published by the joint effort of the Press Council and the Indian Law Institute.**

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