

circulation. While English papers have showed an increase of 0.9 per cent, Hindi publications declined by 8.8 per cent, Marathi publications by 17 per cent, Gujarati by 12.9 per cent; Punjabi publications in the north saw a cut of 16.1 per cent in their circulation and Tamil publications in the south an appreciable 10.3 per cent. Even if newspaper gross revenue is not directly linked with circulation figures, it is safe to presume that the time will come when the equation will be enforced and then -where does the working journalist stand? Is he to go to court every two years to fight a losing battle? And what is to prevent a publisher from deliberately establishing a case for re-classification, even if the gains that he may make are illusory?

Then, there is, among others, the question of remunerations to editors and assistant editors. Though the aura round the haloed head of an editor may be occasionally blinding, one sees no reason why he should be treated differently from assistant editors some of whom, in any given organisation, might be just as good. If not better, than the editor himself. While, undoubtedly, the editor leads the team and has therefore added responsibilities, it should not be forgotten that he enjoys certain privileges which come with the designation. What should be the appropriate lag in the remunerations of two individuals, who may have similar standing in terms of newspaper experience, but one of whom is elevated to the editorship while the other has to be the deputy? And why should the fate of Associated Editors, Resident Editors, Joint Editors and Deputy Editors be dismissed in such a lackadaisical fashion as the Wage Committee has done?

There is yet another field in which the Wage Committee might have cast its eye: and that is the remuneration paid to correspondents stationed in foreign countries. Though, it may be stated that this should be a matter purely of negotiations between the correspondent concerned and the employer, some general rules of guidance could conceivably have been laid down in this regard. The Indian press is becoming increasingly conscious of the need to send Indian correspondents abroad and indeed some of the major newspapers have already a string of correspondents

in various international capitals. These correspondents are "home-based" and have a basic job at home to which they are entitled a fixed salary. But often enough, the pay they get while abroad is not sufficient to meet their needs, but employers tend to comfort them with the suggestion that what is not met in terms of dollars or pound sterling is compensated by glamour!

One aspect of daily publishing which same working journalists at least, would want the Wage Committee to give further thought on, is the seventh day edition of a daily, that often goes under a *different* name.

The Committee in its recommendations says that "all dailies, including the seventh-day edition of a daily, by whatever name called, published by a newspaper establishment in the same language from the same centre should be taken together and treated as if they formed one unit and the revenues of all such papers put together should be deemed to be the revenue of such unit".

What are the facts about some of these 'seventh-day editions of

dailies? Some of these 'seventh-day' editions are more paying to a publisher than, say, a daily, which may reach fewer people and may have less advertisement. In at least some known instances, the seventh-day' edition had a separate "editor" who in entrusted with the responsibility, but not the designation, of an editor. It passes one's understanding why this invidious treatment of an individual should be continued and why he should not be given both the designation and a commensurate salary. The Wage Committee, no doubt, has tried to take the least problematic line in setting standards of classifying dailies but the invidious practice of publishers to name one person as a super-editor of a host of publications while getting work from assistant or even associate editors is not to be given encouragement. This may be outside the scope of the Wage Committee, but has relevance to the question on hand. Editorial work cannot easily be measured in terms of ergs or production units, but in fairness to the seventh day edition of a paper, the "editor" who is in charge of it should be put in a special category

Wider Convertibility

THE proposal for full convertibility sterling, which means convertibility into dollars, once regarded as essential for restoring to the City of London its pre-eminence as the international financial centre, has passed through many phases. It was actually put into practice, very prematurely and very unwisely, as early as 1947 but only for a few days. Britain emerged from the ill-fated experiment much shaken and determined never again to succumb to wily persuasions or powerful pressures for restoring full and free convertibility except at her own time and on her own deliberate decision. She refused to be trapped into any such misadventure during the post-Korean boom and the talk of "dash towards convertibility" at the time did not lead to anything. Instead of being rushed, Britain has proceeded cautiously, and proceeded step by step, to widen the area of convertibility needed for improving trade and for restoring the international markets in commodities

and gold, for which London had traditionally been the centre.

The unification of different kinds of sterling held by non-dollar-non sterling countries into one transferable sterling in March, 1954 was the biggest single step since the misadventure of full convertibility. To widen the areas of transaction in sterling. And when the Exchange Equalisation Account began systematically to intervene in the free market for transferable sterling from January 1955, transferable sterling became de facto convertible, being supported at less than 2, below official rate.

The latest step makes the de facto position *de jure*. Transferable sterling has therefore now been made convertible at the official rate. As any unilateral measure towards convertibility would put too much strain on sterling, this step has been taken as a part of a collective project towards convertibility by the major European countries. The American account

the registered account and the transferable sterling-- all these have now been merged in to an external account sterling. Similarly, Western Germany, Belgium, Italy, France, Norway, Sweden, Finland and Denmark have declared their currencies convertible for the non-residents.

The extended measure of convertibility reflects the competitive strength of the European and the

Scandinavian economies. The move would increase confidence in their currencies and the other countries would now be more willing to hold their balances as well as make their transactions in sterling. To this extent, sterling will be strengthened and Britain's invisible earnings will improve. But what are the prospects of extending convertibility to the sterling area countries? The demand is now bound

to grow. After all it is rather awkward that residents in the sterling area should be deprived of a privilege which is now freely enjoyed by non-resident holders of sterling. Though restrictions on convertibility are no longer very odious nor widely advertised, most sterling area countries, and India among them, still maintain fairly rigid restrictions on dollar imports and dollar expenditure generally.

Weekly Notes

Fund Quotas

THK Governors of the International Monetary Fund had asked the Executive Directors at the Delhi meeting to consider the desirability of increasing the Fund's resources. The Executive Directors have now come to the decision that the Fund resources are inadequate; the world trade since 1944 has nearly doubled, and dollar prices have increased by at least 50 per cent, while the foreign exchange resources of the countries outside the United States have increased by only 50 per cent and the Fund quotas, with minor exceptions, have remained at the amounts determined in 1944. Under the circumstances, the Executive Directors feel that the Fund quotas should be increased by 50 per cent and that the quotas of Western Germany, Japan and Canada should be increased by more than 50 per cent as their original quotas were much too low.

The Governors of the I M F will vote on this proposal by February 2, 1959 and the increases will take effect only if member countries having 75 per cent of the total of present quotas consent to the increases in their individual quotas before September 15, 1959.

Of the increase in quota, each member will have to pay 25 per cent in gold. There will be facilities for deferred payments of gold by countries not in a position to pay immediately, but in any case full gold payment will have to be completed within a period of about four years.

If these proposals are accepted, India's quota will increase from \$400 mn to 600 million or about Rs 295 crores and she will have to pay a little less than Rs 25 crores or \$ 50 million in gold. The increase in the German quota will

entitle West Germany to a permanent seat on the Executive Board at the expense of India, but since KMT China is not likely to be able to increase her gold subscription, India may still remain one of the Big Five.

In the whole of the report of the Executive Directors, there is no mention of the particular payments problems of developing countries and the need for larger Fund quotas in the light of these problems. The Fund has still to understand that in the changed economic set up in the post-war period, rapid development is the problem of the age and all international institutions have to be attuned to it.

Bengal Opposes Transfer

HOW are the boundaries of a State changed? According to the Constitution, Parliament may increase or diminish the area or alter the boundaries of any State. But the Bill for the purpose can be introduced only on the recommendation of the President and it has to be referred by the President to the Legislature of the State concerned for expression of its views on it. But, when the boundary of a State is changed and its area is increased or diminished for "implementing any treaty, agreement or convention with any other country or countries". Parliament has also to pass a Bill to give effect to the change, but such legislation does not have to be referred to the Legislature of the State whose boundary or area is affected. Therefore, the views of the West Bengal Legislature on the changes of boundary provided for in the agreement reached by Pandit Nehru with Feroz Khan Noon last year do not affect the powers of Parliament to validate the agreement. This is what

the Constitution lays down. Certain things may be perfectly constitutional and may have been provided for at a time when no such eventuality was thought of by the framers of the Constitution. Is such action also politically feasible? Doubts naturally arise from the unanimity on this issue reached among all the parties in the West Bengal Legislature, including the Congress Party.

Readjustment of boundary and the exchange of territories affect vitally the people of West Bengal and yet on so important a question, even the State Government was not consulted and Dr B C Roy or rather the Congress Whip in the Legislature, has created an extremely delicate situation by allowing Congress members complete freedom to express their opinion on the subject, resulting in united opposition to the proposed transfer. The manner in which this delicate question has been handled may be cited as a classic example of how public relations should not be handled by a popular government, however unquestionable its majority may be in Parliament. According to the letter of the Constitution, the parts of the agreement which relate to interpretation or enforcement of the award according to which territories were divided between India and Pakistan do not require the legislative sanction of Parliament. It is changes that are not in implementation of the Award which alone require such validation.

The operative parts of the Agreement relating to Indo-Pakistan boundary in West Bengal and Assam fall under both these categories. The first official statement on the implementation of the Nehru-Noon Agreement presented to Parliament on November 29 by Shrimati Laxmi Menon, Deputy Minister for External Affairs, was either a studied