

## **Communication to the Press by Officials**

### **(8.2.1) Sub: Communication to the Press by Officials.**

Reference (i) this office letter of even number dated 4.11.67 communicating inter-alia the directive issued by the Governing Body of the CSIR at its meeting held on 5.7.1967 to the effect that steps should be taken to put a stop to unauthorised Publications in the press in the interest of the efficient working of the CSIR, and (ii) this office endorsement No. 33(11)/67-G(A) dated 2.9.67 circulating Home Ministry's Office Memorandum No.2519/67. Estt(A) dated 4.7.67 regarding safeguards against leakage of classified official information through the press.

1. The question of communication to the press by officials of the CSIR again came up for discussion at the meeting of the Governing Body held on 24th July, 1970.

2. There was considerable discussion. The President, CSIR, summed up that as far as scientific matters were concerned, Scientists should have freedom to publish their work and express their views. They should also be encouraged to publish their research findings. Scientists should also have freedom to express their views on scientific policies but when it came to ventilating their personal or individual grievances or expressing their views on organisational matters, it would not be proper for them to go to the press.

3. The Governing Body agreed that the Directors and others should desist from going to the press to ventilate their individual grievances or to express views on organisational matters but that they should have freedom to publicise scientific work and also express their views on scientific policies and directed that suitable instructions may be formulated and issued in this connection.

4. In view of the above directive of the Governing Body, the attention of all concerned is, once again, drawn to the relevant provisions in this regard as contained in the Manual of the Office Procedure and the Central Civil Services (Conduct) Rules, 1964, which are reproduced in the enclosed annexure for ready reference and which would apply to CSIR employees subject to the following modifications-

- a) Scientists shall have freedom to publicise scientific work
- b) Scientists shall have the freedom to express their views on scientific policies.

(CSIR Letter No: 1/31/65-VIG., dated 28th November, 1970).

Relevant extracts from the provisions in the Central Civil Services (Conduct) Rules, 1964 and the Manual of Office Procedure, as made applicable to the employees of the CSIR.

**C.C.S. (Conduct) Rules, 1964.**

**"(8) Connection with Press or Radio:**

No Government servant shall, except with the previous sanction of the Government or the prescribed authority, or in the bonafide discharge of his duties, participate in a radio broadcast or contribute any article or write any letter either in his own name or anonymously, pseudonymously or in the name of any other person to any newspaper or periodical:

Provided that no such sanction shall be required if such broadcast or such contribution is of a purely literary, artistic or scientific character".

11

No Government servant shall, except in accordance with any general or special order of the Government or in the performance in good faith of the duties assigned to him, communicate, directly or indirectly, any official document or any part thereof or information to any Government Servant or any other person to whom he is not authorised to communicate such document or information".

**"9. Criticism of Government:**

No Government servant shall, in any radio broadcast or in any document published in his own name or anonymously, pseudonymously or in the name of any other person or in any communication to the press or in any public utterance, make any statement of fact or opinion.

- (i) which has the effect of an adverse criticism of any current or recent policy or action of the Central Government or a State Government that in the case of any Government servant included in any category of Government servants specified in the second proviso to sub-rule(3) of Rule 1, nothing contained in this clause shall apply to bonafide expression of views by him as an office bearer of a trade union of such Government servants for purpose of safeguarding the conditions of service of such Government servants or for securing an improvement thereof; or
- (ii) which is capable of embarrassing the relations between the Central Government and the Government of any state; or
- (iii) Which is capable of embarrassing the relations between the Central Government and the Government of any foreign state <![endif]>

Provided that nothing in this rule shall apply to any statements made or views expressed by a Government servant in his official capacity or in the due performance of the duties assigned to him".

## **Manual of Office Procedure**

### **1information to press**

Information to the Press should normally be communicated through the Press information Bureau by an officer authorised to do so".

### **155. Functions Information Officer**

Information Officers of the Press Information Bureau are attached to every Ministry of the Government of India. It is the duty of an Information Officer, on the one hand, to arrange to give due publicity to the activities of the Ministry to which he is attached and on the other, to keep the Ministry informed of the popular reactions thereto. In order to discharge his duties properly, the Information Officer will maintain a close liaison with the Ministry to which he is attached and the latter will give him the necessary facilities".

### **16Communication o Information to the Press**

Only Ministers Secretaries or other Officers specially authorised by the Minister, may give information or be accessible to the representative of the Press. Any other Officer, if approached by a representative of the Press, should refer him to the Principal Information Officer of Government of India".

**Re: Issue Press Release etc.**

The policy on issue of press release as also publicity of work done, such as development of processes etc., in our Laboratories, was reviewed by DGSIR recently. It was felt that while our achievements need to be publicised, and ill informed criticism of the CSIR should be rebutted, there is need for some caution in this regard. Instances have come to light where premature and undue publicity has been given to the processes developed in the laboratories which in the long run prove counter productive.

Press releases, particularly on major issues, should be issued only with DGSIR's approval. Similarly the News-letters brought out by the Laboratories and the CSIR News should not also publish premature information about the achievements made in different Laboratories.

(CSIR Circular No 1(28)/80-E III, dated 24th Nov., 1981).