

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: I am quite conscious of that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please go ahead.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: We are second to none . . . (Interruptions)

SHRI A. D. MANI: This is not fair.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: It is a strange thing. You are quite right. If I say anything which is against the interests of the country . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: You please sit down. I have allowed you to speak. But I would like you to put a question or ask for a clarification.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Anyway, can I speak now, Sir?

MR. CHAIRMAN: You cannot make a speech, you can ask for clarification.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: That is why I ask: What steps are the Government taking apart from other steps . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: That you have already asked.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: That is what I asked.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You need you ask it twice?

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: My mind is such that I wish to be put in an Indian bomber to drop some bombs on the Patton tanks on the Kashmir frontier. I volunteer my services for it. (Interruptions).

STATEMENT RE GROUNDING OF CARAVELLES BY INDIAN AIRLINES CORPORATION

MR. CHAIRMAN: We pass on to the next item. Shri Raj Bahadur to make a statement.

SHRI BIREN ROY (West Bengal): On a point of order. The Calling

Attention notice was given immediately when the Caravelle flights were stopped; it was given not only by me but I think also by one or two other Members. Now, I do not understand the allergy of the Minister—why was not this Calling Notice motion accepted and replied? Instead, a statement comes. We welcome the statement. We do not want to suppress the statement because we want clarifications too. But it would have been better if the Calling Attention Motion had been accepted, and we could have asked questions. This kind of allergy is not good.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It is neither better nor worse. I would ask you to sit down.

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI RAJ BAHADUR): About the Calling Attention Motion, it was entirely for the Secretariat and your good self, Sir, to say whether to allow it or not.

MR. CHAIRMAN Since we received intimation that he was going to make a statement, we did not allow the Calling Attention Motion.

SHRI BIREN ROY: When notice has already been given, why . . .

SHRI RAJ BAHADUR: I can assure the hon. Member. My statement is four pages long. Shall I read it, Sir?

MR. CHAIRMAN: What is the opinion of the House?

श्री विमलकुमार मन्नालालजी चौरङ्गिया (मध्य प्रदेश): अगर बहुत बड़ा स्टेटमेंट हो तो संक्षेप में उसका जिस्ट दे दें।

SHRI RAJ BAHADUR: Then I will have to read it because giving piecemeal information might lead to a misreading of the situation.

MR. CHAIRMAN: If you wish, it can be laid on the Table or . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: How many pages?

SHRI RAJ BAHADUR: Four pages. I will read it in eight minutes.

SHRI BIREN ROY: Again, on a point of order. If this is laid on the Table of the House, then we cannot ask for any clarification. Will you allow us to ask for clarification later on if it is laid on the Table of the House?

MR. CHAIRMAN: He is going to read it, he is reading it.

SHRI RAJ BAHADUR: With your permission, Sir, I would like to make a brief statement on the grounding of Caravelles by the Indian Airlines Corporation. Members of the House have rightly shown some concern about the grounding of these Caravelles which the Indian Airlines Corporation had to order last week in view of a spate of failures of fuel pumps on the Avon engines fitted on three out of the four aircraft which constitute the I.A.C. fleet. I wanted very much to come to the House at the earliest possible opportunity to deal with this matter but the problem was technical and certain investigations were being made and any premature statement from me might have been mis-construed by interested parties or might have been held to prejudice the final conclusions. In the circumstances, I thought it best to await developments until I could give to the House some definite information.

The first failure occurred on the 22nd August, 1965 when the aircraft VT-DSB was operating the Bombay-Delhi service and had to land on one engine only. During inspection the fuel pump drive shaft was found sheared. Detailed check was carried out, the fuel pump was changed but the engine could not be started. It was found that the fuel system was contaminated with metal and the rectification of this defect involved laborious and extensive work. The

engine was, therefore, replaced and the old engine was taken back to Bombay for rectification under the supervision of Rolls-Royce experts.

The second incident took place on another aircraft when it was operating Bombay-Delhi service on the 27th August, 1965. The pump of the engine was then replaced and the aircraft left Bombay for Madras the next day. Ten minutes prior to landing at Madras, it gave rise to the same symptoms as in the earlier two cases, namely, the engine flamed out and the fuel pump drive shaft was found sheared on inspection. In the meantime, a bad leak was discovered at Delhi on the 28th on another aircraft VT-DPP when it was stopping in Delhi while operating service from Bombay to Delhi. This was at about 21.30 hours on the 28th evening.

The position was reviewed between the D.G.C.A. and the I.A.C. authorities in the light of these repeated failures and it was decided immediately to ground the aircraft as a precautionary measure. Immediately instructions were also issued for the collection of fuel from tanks of all the four Caravelles, all the A.T.F. bowzers, Dispensers, Hydrant systems and the storage tanks of the two refuelling companies. These samples are being received and analysed at the Research and Development Directorate of the D.G.C.A., Delhi.

In the meantime, during mid-life check of a Viscount aircraft VT-DIX, it was found that Slipper Pads had been very badly affected and silver plating was flaking off. All the four pumps of this aircraft were removed, dismantled and inspected. Immediately instructions were issued for the inspection of fuel pumps of all the Viscount aircraft and flush the fuel system progressively. We have also sent two of the Caravelle fuel pumps to England with an expert of Rolls-Royce and an officer of the Directorate General of Civil Aviation for inspection. An expert of Rolls-Royce

[Shri Raj Bahadur.]

has also arrived yesterday morning and is making investigation; a representative of Sud Aviation, the manufacturers of the aircraft, attached to us in Bombay has also gone to France with some samples for detailed chemical analysis and in order to check them for microbiological contamination. Facilities for this check do not exist in our country.

From the investigations so far carried out it seems that the silver plating of the fuel pump has been subjected to erosion on account of the presence of sulphur in the fuel and this has caused the failure of the fuel pump system. A definite conclusion can be reached only after the results of investigations abroad are known. Efforts are being made to pin-point the source of sulphur contamination. The officers of the Directorate General of Civil Aviation, of the Indian Airlines Corporation, of Rolls-Royce and Sud Aviation are jointly engaged in these investigations and discussions will also be held with the representatives of the Oil Companies concerned, both to finalise the investigations and clear up the question of source of contamination. In the meantime, procedure for decontamination of all the aircraft tanks and systems as also the ground storage installations are being worked out and measures for preventing recurrence of such contamination in future are under consideration. The Indian Airlines Corporation, as a matter of further precaution, has ordered that the fuel pumps of other aircraft, namely, Viscounts and Fokker Friendships should also be inspected and where necessary replaced.

At very short notice, the Indian Airlines Corporation has devised alternative methods for dealing with the operational and traffic problems consequent to the grounding of Caravelles. An Air-India Boeing which Air-India were good enough to place at the disposal of the Indian Airlines Corporation for return service between Bombay and Delhi has been pressed into service. The other services have

been provided by the use of Viscounts and Skymasters. The international services of Air-India are also being utilised to carry passengers on domestic routes. As a result of these measures it has been possible to provide for most of the traffic at the cost of suspension of only three services, namely, one between Calcutta and Rangoon, one duplicate service between Calcutta and Madras and one duplicate service between Delhi and Srinagar.

I am sorry that due to these unforeseen reasons which have come up so suddenly, considerable inconvenience has been caused to the passengers but in such matters where the safety of passengers is involved, it is better to be cautious and take precautionary measures in time rather than take risks with the life of those who patronise the services. I can assure the House that as soon as possible, after necessary measures have been taken to ensure the safety of operations of Caravelles, the flights would be resumed. As far as I am able to judge at present, it should be a matter of few days and the day I can give a more clear indication of precise reasons for the failure of fuel pumps and the date of resumption of Caravelle services, I shall make a further statement to the House.

SHRI BIREN ROY: Sir, I should commend the action of the Directorate first that they have stopped the flight of the Caravelles on the very first day after they found the three failures of fuel pumps out of the four aircraft. The point is it is not the defect in the Caravelles at all, it is a question of the fuel pumps in the Rolls-Royce engines which became defective. The Minister has spoken about three items which need clarification. He has stated about:

- (i) the silver plating of the fuel pumps;
- (ii) the microbiological contamination inside the pumps creating fungus; and

- (iii) that they are waiting for a report from abroad because we have nobody here to find out the cause of this microbiological infection.

Why not? Sir, this factor can only come from fuel contamination and nothing else. It cannot come just from the air. Now, there are reports in the newspapers which can lead to some of these items, whether it is even political or not.

Sir, there is a report from Bombay, on August, 27, When only one of these failures occurred, nothing was reported. At the same time, it was reported that all the Caravelles engines, rather the Rolls-Royce engines were coming in for overhaul and these would not be now flown to Glasgow but will be taken up here at the Air-India factory in Bombay to save some foreign exchange because they have flown near about 20.00 hours or more. So it is all there in advance, a preparatory report that all the aircraft engines would come for overhaul.

Secondly, next day, on the 29th August, a general order was issued that the Caravelles be stopped because of two more fuel pump failures. It has been stated in a newspaper that the cause of the failure is not due to the pilots. Nobody said so nor even asked for this. But the newspapers have stated that it is not due to the pilots, but that there were some engineering spurs and some other things which were not available and, may be also, due to contamination of fuel.

Then, Sir, next day again in another newspaper it appeared that the I.A.C. maintained that the problem concerning these engines was not non-availability of fuel pumps at all; they have enough of these pumps. So they could change the fuel pump. So it is clear there is something in the quality of the fuel currently supplied.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Do you want the Minister to answer for the newspaper?

SHRI BIREN ROY: There are three points. It is not the question of either silver plating which he has stated. It is not a question of even replacing the fuel pumps. It is now a question of fuel. The problem is the oil policy which was being discussed in the other House and in this House. And before that there were a number of things happening. I have a report here that some fuel has been purchased which is kerosene.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Do you want some clarification or do you want him to answer for the newspapers?

SHRI BIREN ROY: I am putting this fact to the Minister so that he can get the clarification.

MR. CHAIRMAN: But he cannot answer for the newspapers.

SHRI BIREN ROY: It is not a newspaper report that I am stating, Sir. I am just putting the facts which I have got, so that he knows the facts and he can place them before his officers for clarification. Then we can have it. It is reported that some kerosene has been imported from Middle-East through a London broker, which has been mixed up with other kerosene here to be supplied to some of these aircrafts. I do not know the total amount and where these were used. But it is reported that this kerosene which should be used in the jet aircraft like the Caravelles flying at about 31,000 ft. should have a freezing point of less than -50 degree Centigrade. If it is not, there can be a vapour locking and freezing and some water can develop contamination, and with that bad fuel might even develop microbiological organisms or fungus. We want to know whether this kind of contaminated fuel has been used or not and at what airport. This is the clarification I want. This has to be gone into, and afterwards, when he makes a further statement, then we will ask further question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I am afraid he will not be able to tell you; you seem to know more than he does. He has said that the thing is being investigated and he will make a statement when further information is available. But you seem to offer certain explanations of your own and I do not know if he will be in a position to confirm or controvert them.

SHRI RAJ BAHADUR: I do agree with you, Sir, that so far as the information contained in the newspapers, the cuttings of which he has made plentiful use of, and the various types of views and opinions expressed in the matter and the inferences drawn, from whatever source they may have been drawn are concerned, of course, he knows more than I do, but as far as facts in regard to this particular matter are concerned, I may say for the information of the House that it is for the first time that such a trouble has occurred or has been detected on the Caravelle, and the trouble, it has now been established, has not occurred on the air-frame, that is the body of the plane itself; it has not occurred even on the engine; it has occurred only in the fuel pump of the engine. And those fuel pumps are not made by Rolls-Royce—these are made by a sub-contractor, Lucas—and here it is where the silver plating has been found to be eroded perhaps on account of some action by sulphur. Wherefrom that sulphur contamination came is the subject-matter of the present investigations. We are trying to locate it, and at present I do not have the source of contamination, and so long as this is not had, I do not think I can profitably answer any questions. Thank you, Sir.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE TO DR. B. N. PRASAD

MR. CHAIRMAN: I have to inform Members that the following letter dated the 18th August, 1965, has been received from Dr. B. N. Prasad:

"Since I have to proceed to Europe to represent the Indian Science

Congress at the 127th Conference of the British Association for the Advancement of Science at Cambridge, and to make a scientific tour in Scandinavian countries, I apply for leave from the Rajya Sabha for one month."

Is it the pleasure of the House that permission be granted to Dr. Prasad for remaining absent from all meetings of the House during the remaining part of the current session?

No hon. Member dissented.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Permission to remain absent is granted.

THE REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE (SECOND AMENDMENT) BILL, 1964.

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW (SHRI JAGANATH RAO): Mr. Chairman, I beg to move:

"That the Bill further to amend the Representation of the People Act, 1951, as passed by the Lok Sabha, be taken into consideration."

Sir, if any question arises as to whether a Member of Parliament, or of a State Legislature (including the Legislature of a Union Territory) has become subject to any disqualifications specified in article 102, or article 191, or section 14(1) of the Government of Union Territories Act, 1963, the question is referred to the President under article 103, or under section 14(3) of the Government of Union Territories Act, or to the Governor under article 192 of the Constitution for decision, and the President or the Governor, as the case may be, the Governor is required to obtain the opinion of the Election Commission on the question, and decide it in accordance with such opinion.

Before the Election Commission can give a considered opinion on such a reference, the Commission naturally