

SHRI K. C. GEORGE: The hon. Minister said that "strict instructions have been given". May I know when these instructions were given?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: They have been there for a long time.

SHRI K. C. GEORGE: Is the hon. Minister aware that even then this thing is going on in full swing as before?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: I regret that it is so.

KHWAJA INAIT ULLAH: No doubt strict instructions are being issued as per the reply of the hon. Minister. Will the Government look into it to see whether these strict instructions are being carried out in practice by those concerned?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: We are taking every step. We are seeing into it that these instructions are carried out. Special squads go about trains and see that these beggars are ejected. I have got some rough figures with me according to which 2,28,000 beggars have been ejected so far. Still it is true that many beggars go on entering trains as well as platforms. But here I may be permitted to point out that the misplaced sympathies of the travellers also add to it.

DR. SHRIMATI SEETA PARMANAND: Is the hon. Minister aware of the fact that a number of beggars travel without tickets every day on the footboards of the Grand Trunk Express between Itarsi and Bhopal, that this is the case during the last 3 or 4 years and that nothing has been done to stop these prospective thieves and gangsters.

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: I do not think beggars discriminate against any section of the railway. They go into the trains or travel on the footboards on many sections and on sections where the nuisance is greater, the railways take special steps and send these squads.

SHRI J. R. KAPOOR: Begging being an offence under the Railways Act, have there been any prosecutions of beggars and if so will the hon. Minister kindly give us an idea of the number of prosecutions in any one year?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: My hon. friend being a lawyer knows very well that it is not very profitable to prosecute beggars.

VIKING AND DAKOTA AIRCRAFTS OF THE INDIAN AIRLINES CORPORATION

*315. SHRI S. C. KARAYALAR: Will the Minister for COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether all the Viking aircrafts now operating in India were grounded shortly before they were taken over by the Indian Airlines Corporation; if so, for what purpose; and

(b) whether the Dakota aircrafts now in operation have not served their normal life and yet have not to be replaced?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER FOR COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI RAJ BAHADUR):

(a) All the Viking aircraft which had flown more than 6,500 hours since manufacture were grounded in April-May 1953 under instructions from the manufacturers, pending replacement of the lower spar of the outer wing with a modified type, as it had failed due to fatigue on one of the Viking aircraft belonging to the Central African Airways in East Africa, resulting in a fatal accident. All Viking aircraft have since been modified and are in operation.

(b) No, Sir.

SHRI S. C. KARAYALAR: May I know whether any structural defects were discovered when they were grounded and examined?

SHRI RAJ BAHADUR: Yes, Sir, the manufacturers discovered the defects.

SHRI S. C. KARAYALAR: May I know whether it is a fact that the manoeuvrability of Viking aircraft

during take-off is not so very satisfactory as compared with the manoeuvrability of the Dakota?

SHRI RAJ BAHADUR: I do not think that is so.

SHRI S. C. KARAYALAR: May I ask the hon. Minister whether he knows that such a comment was made in the press sometime back when they were grounded?

SHRI RAJ BAHADUR: My attention has not been drawn to it, I am sorry.

SHRI RAJAGOPAL NAIDU: What are the normal flying hours of Dakota aircraft?

SHRI RAJ BAHADUR: 40,000 hours. It has been found to have flown as much as 40,000 to 60,000 hours in the U.S.A. and Australia.

SHRI RAJAGOPAL NAIDU: How many hours is it in the case of the Dakotas which our National Airlines have taken over.

SHRI RAJ BAHADUR: The maximum hours flown by any of the Dakota Aircraft in India is 14,000 hours.

SHRI R. P. N. SINHA: Is it a fact, Sir, that further production of Dakota aircraft has been stopped?

SHRI RAJ BAHADUR: Yes, Sir, that is so, but it is not on account of the question of safety of the Dakota aircraft but on account of the obsolescence of that type of aircraft.

SHRI S. C. KARAYALAR: Is it a fact that engine trouble is a matter of frequent occurrence on the service between Madras and Trivandrum?

SHRI RAJ BAHADUR: No, Sir.

FALL IN THE POSTAL REVENUE

*316. SHRI V. S. SARWATE: Will the Minister for COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received representations from the public and from book-sellers and publishers in connection with the increase in postal rates on book packets and registration; and

(b) if the reply to part (a) above be in the affirmative, what action has been taken on these representations?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER FOR COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI RAJ BAHADUR):

(a) Yes.

(b) In view of the fact that the Postal Branch of the Department is running at a loss, Government do not consider it feasible to reduce the rates.

SHRI V. S. SARWATE: Has the Government received from the Gita Press a representation showing that whereas their monthly average of expenditure on this account was Rs. 2,760, it is only Rs. 1,900 and Rs. 2,100 in May and June this year?

SHRI RAJ BAHADUR: Expenditure on what?

SHRI V. S. SARWATE: Expenditure on registration and V. P. packages.

SHRI RAJ BAHADUR: I do not know anything about the expenditure incurred by that particular institution which the hon. Member refers to but for the information of the Members of the House I may say that we did make a sample check-up of the traffic and in the course of that it has come to our notice that under the name of 'book packets' many things were passing, for example, samples and commercial communications, and these things taken together constituted as much as 90% to 95% of the total traffic under 'book packets'. As a matter of fact the 'book packets' as such constituted only 5 per cent.

SHRI K. C. GEORGE: Is the Government in a position to state that