

Pradesh Vishesh Sashtara Bal Adhinyam, 1968, issued under sub-section (3) of section 139 of the Border Security Force Act, 1968. [Placed in Library. See No. LT-2147/81]

ANNUAL REPORT AND REVIEW OF INDIAN INVESTMENT CENTRE, NEW DELHI FOR 1979-80.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SAWAISINGH SISODIA) on behalf of Shri Maganbhai Barot:

I beg to lay on the Table:

(1) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Indian Investment Centre, New Delhi, for the year 1979-80 along with Accounts.

(2) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government on the working of the Indian Investment Centre, New Delhi, for the year 1979-80.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT-2148/81].

12.17 hrs.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE
TWENTY-FIFTH REPORT AND SIXTH
REPORT ON ACTION TAKEN BY GOVERNMENT

SHRI CHANDRAJIT YADAV (Azamgarh): I beg to present the following Reports (Hindi and English versions) of the Public Accounts Committee;—

(1) Twenty-fifth Report relating to Salal Hydro-Electric Project.

(2) Sixth Report on Action Taken by Government on the recommendations contained in the Hundred and forty-ninth Report (Sixth Lok Sabha) relating to Union Excise Duties.

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC UNDERTAKINGS

NINTH REPORT

SHRI BANSI LAL (BHIWANI): I beg to present the Ninth Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Committee on Public Undertakings on Action Taken by Government on the recommendations contained in the Forty-second Report of the Committee on Public Undertakings (Sixth Lok Sabha) on Perquisites enjoyed by Public Sector Executives and Perquisites enjoyed by Air India Executives—A case study.

COMMITTEE ON ABSENCE OF MEMBERS FROM THE SITTINGS OF THE HOUSE

THIRD REPORT

SHR P. V. G. RAJU (Bobbili): I beg to present the Third Report of the Committee on Absence of Members from the Sitzings of the House.

12.18 hrs.

CALLING ATTENTION TO MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

REPORTED DISCRIMINATION AGAINST INDIAN JOURNALISTS AT A PRESS CONFERENCE REPORTED TO HAVE BEEN HELD IN U.S.

श्री राम स्वरूप राम (गया) : अध्यक्ष महोदय, मैं अविलम्बनीय लोक महत्व के निम्नलिखित विषय की और विदेश मंत्री का ध्यान दिलाता हूँ और प्रार्थना करता हूँ कि वह इस बारे में एक वक्तव्य दें :—

“नई दिल्ली स्थित अमरीकी दूतावास में श्रीमती चार्लट डुव्वल द्वारा 19 मार्च, 1981 को बुलाए गए कथित प्रेस में भारतीय पत्रकारों को धाग लेने से रोक कर उन के प्रति बरते गये भेदभाव का समाचार।”

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI P. V. NARASIMHA RAO): Mr. Speaker, Sir, on March, 17th Government saw newspaper reports about the protest made by Shri K. N. Gupta, President of the Delhi Journalists Association, to the U.S. Embassy against Indian correspondents not being asked to come to a meeting with an American citizen Mrs. Charlotte Rubbell as well as the statement made by Shri S. K. Pande, Secretary General of the Delhi Union of Journalists in which he described as "a humiliation" the fact that Indian correspondents were not called to a meeting of U.S. correspondents with Mrs. Hubell. Taking note of these protests the Ministry of External Affairs made enquiries with the American Embassy about this reported discrimination, stressing that if it were true, it was unacceptable. The U.S. Embassy officials, however, gave clarifications which are as follows:

An American citizen, Mrs. Charlotte Hubbell, who was travelling with her husband in the Pakistan International Airlines plane which was hijacked to Kabul on March 2, 1981, was among the women and minors released at Kabul. Mrs. Hubbell flew from Kabul to New Delhi on Wednesday, 11th March and her stay in Delhi was arranged by the U.S. Embassy in Delhi, where she awaited the outcome of the hijacking episode. Immediately after her arrival, journalists in New Delhi wished to interview her about the hijacking incident. She, however, maintained that until her husband and other hostages were released, she did not wish to meet the press or make any statement relating to her hijacking experience as it might jeopardise their lives. When indications were available that the hostages were to be released, she agreed to meet the Press on Sunday, March, 15th, in the first instance. The Press Section of the American Embassy had indicated that she would be willing to meet pressmen of all categories, both Indian and foreign, on the afternoon of March 15th. Mrs. Hubbell, however, changed her mind before the scheduled meeting,

stating that as she did not have any clear confirmation that her husband had been released and was really safe, she did not wish to meet the Press. So when Indian and foreign journalists went to the Embassy on March 15th they were told by the U.S. Embassy authorities that her meeting with the press stood cancelled. However, the next day, March 16th Mrs. Hubbell finally agreed to have a purely informal and private chat with the representatives of the American Press located in New Delhi. According to information given by the senior officials of the U.S. Embassy, she insisted on her conversation with the journalists not being considered a press conference. Resident American correspondents agreed to this, and correspondents representing the A.P., U.P.I., N.B.C., V.O.A., Times Magazine and Washington Post met Mrs. Hubbell on Monday, March 16th for about half an hour.

The meeting between Mrs. Hubbell and the journalists was entirely a matter of her discretion, according to U.S. Embassy officials. The Embassy has informed the Ministry of External Affairs that there was no intention of any discrimination against Indian correspondents. Mrs. Hubbell left Delhi for Frankfurt on Tuesday, March 17th.

श्री राम स्वराज राय : अध्यक्ष महोदय, माननीय विधान मंत्री ने जो जवाब दिया है उस सदन में, अगर हम इसकी गहराई में जायेंगे तो हमें स्वयं इस बात का पता चलेगा कि प्रेस कॉन्फ्रेंस में हमारे देश के जो पत्रकार बन्धु थे उन को भाग नहीं लेते दिया गया।

12.22 hrs.

[MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER in the Chair]

जैसा कि आप जानते हैं कि हाईजैकिंग एक बहुत बड़ा पाप है और इस से बड़ा दूसरा कोई पाप नहीं है। जिन कारणों से ऐसे काम होते हैं उनमें जो बड़ी शक्ति है, अमेरिका, उसका बड़ा हाथ रहा करता है।

11 मार्च को जब हाईजेक किये गये विमान को छोड़ कर वे नई दिल्ली पहुंची तो हमारे देश के पत्रकार बन्धुओं ने, जो कि लोकतंत्र के प्रहरी माने जाते हैं, इस बात का पता लगाने की कोशिश की कि इस हाईजेकिंग के पीछे कौन-सी शक्ति है ताकि वे देश के लोगों को यह बता सकें कि इसके पीछे हाईजेक करने वालों का क्या मंशा था, क्या इरादा था। हमारे सारे देश की जनता का और लोगों का इस पर ध्यान लगा हुआ था कि वे यह जानें कि इसकी अहमियत क्या है, इसके पीछे राज क्या है और इसके पीछे कौन-सी शक्तियां हैं। ऐसे वातावरण में हमारे पत्रकार बन्धु श्रीमती ह्यूबेल के पास गये यह जानने के लिए कि आपने प्लेन का जो हाईजेकिंग हुआ है और उसके कारण आपको जो कठिनाइयां हुई हैं उनसे हमारे देश का एक एक नागरिक, एक एक बुद्धिजीवी, एक एक पत्रकार बहुत दुःखी है और वह यह पता लगाना चाहता है कि इसके पीछे कौन-सी परिस्थितियां थी, इसमें आपको क्या क्या दिक्कतें आयी। पहले तो उन्होंने प्रेस बन्धुओं को इनोअर किया और बाद में यह ऐलान किया गया कि 16 मार्च को प्रेस कॉन्फ्रेंस करेंगी।

मान्यवर, प्रेस कॉन्फ्रेंस में तमाम पत्रकार बन्धु होते हैं—चाहे वे रूस के हों, चाहे अमेरिका के हों, चाहे भारत के हों, सभी को बुलाने की बात होती है।

उपाध्यक्ष महोदय : , हिन्दुस्तान टाइम्स में जो 17 मार्च, 1981 को रिपोर्ट प्रकाशित हुई है वह यह है —

"Sorry, Sir. We are brown-skinned. The Press conference at the American Club in the American Embassy today was exclusively for the foreign media."

इन सारी बातों से पता चलता है कि अमरीका एक रंग-विभेद वाला कन्ट्री है। सिर्फ

दिखावे के तौर पर ही वे डेमोक्रेसी की बात करते हैं, प्रजातंत्र की बात करते हैं, लेकिन उन्होंने हमेशा तानाशाही प्रवृत्तियों का समर्थन किया है और हमेशा कोई न कोई बहाना बनाते रहते हैं। हमारे रिप्यूटेड जर्नालिस्ट श्री के० एन० गुप्ता और श्री एस० के पाण्डे ने कहा है कि यह पूरे हिन्दुस्तान का ह्यूमिलिएशन है। यह सिर्फ पत्रकार-बन्धुओं का ही ह्यूमिलिएशन नहीं है। इससे इस बात की गंभीरता का पता चलता है कि हिन्दुस्तान के प्रति अमरीका की नीति क्या है। अमरीका हिन्दुस्तान के बारे में क्या सोचता है। अमरीका हिन्दुस्तान को हमेशा टेंशन में रखना चाहता है और यह कार्य इसीलिए किया गया है।

उपाध्यक्ष महोदय : आपका प्रश्न क्या है ?

I am learning!

श्री राम स्वर्ण राम : मैं इस विषय की गंभीरता को देखते हुए तजुबेकार और विद्वान मंत्री महोदय से जानना चाहूंगा कि इस नापाक रवैया के बारे में जो उनके द्वारा अपनाया गया, क्या इसकी जांच कराई जाएगी ?

श्री पी० बी० नरसिंह राव : श्रीमान, मैं पहले ही कह चुका हूं कि उनके पास से जवाब आया है, उनका यह रवैया नहीं रहा और इसलिए विशेष जांच का प्रश्न उपस्थित नहीं होता।

श्री राम स्वर्ण राम : उपाध्यक्ष महोदय, मुझे एक सवाल पूछने का और मौका दिया जाए।

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: No; this is not question. You have exhausted. No two questions are allowed.

SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO (Mormugao): Sir, I for one do not think that the right of anybody, including that of this lady from Iowa, USA, to have a restricted briefing and to call

[Shri Eduardo Faleiro]

for a press conference only certain people and not others can be disputed. This is the right of everybody and no one can dispute it. But now, according to my information, among these gentlemen of the Press who were called to this conference, one of them was an Indian working as a Correspondent for an American agency. This raises to my mind a very deep pertinent and important question. The question is this. The American Embassy in India as well as all foreign countries, particularly in Asian countries, African countries and Latin American countries these nonaligned countries—the American Embassy as well as the embassies of other great powers—keep close to them a particular group of journalists whom they treat as favourites, whom they pamper. The American Embassy, the USIS, which is their cultural wing—now ICA, International Communication Agency—has large funds at its disposal and these funds are according to my information, very often used to keep a particular group of journalists happy. As a result these journalists, wittingly or unwittingly, project the American interests here. Sometimes this projection of American interests, or for that matter interests of other great powers, can contribute, and has contributed, if not in India, in many other similar countries in Asia, as I have mentioned, in Africa, in Latin America, to the destabilisation of their regimes there. Therefore, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether they keep a check on the funds disbursed by the USIS—I have in my mind all the great powers, but here since the question pertains to the American Embassy. May I know from the hon. Minister whether the Government keeps a check on the foreign funds being disbursed by the USIS and now ICA as far as press is concerned on the so-called cultural information and cultural activities.

Journalists and other press-men are kept happy sometimes in ways which one can call legitimate, by

sending them to the United States on study tours, seminars and so on and so forth. The journalists go there with the permission of the Government of India. I would like to know from the Government whether they are prepared to lay on the Table of the House a list of journalists who have gone to the United States at the invitation of the United States Government or the United States Embassy or allied organisations of the United States Government, within the last three years for the purpose of study tours, seminars and so on and so forth.

The second point which I would like to raise is this. It is not merely the American Embassy, as has been projected here, that pampers the American correspondents. Our own Government wittingly or unwittingly pampers them. You are aware that when the United States President gives a press conference, foreign correspondents are never allowed to ask questions. And international relations work on the basis of reciprocity. Why is it, in this state of affairs, our top leaders allow foreign correspondents to ask questions and do not comply with the rule of reciprocity? But definitely our Government must make efforts with the United States so that this rule which they have been following should be changed so that foreign correspondents and for that matter Indian correspondents should also be allowed in terms of reciprocity to ask questions from the United States President.

Government gives permanent accreditation on the basis of permanent residence. But it is a well known fact that very often, many of them do not stay for more than 89 days at a stretch in this country to avoid taxes. Is the Government keeping a check on this? What action does the Government contemplate either to withdraw the accreditation or to see that the money due to the exchequer is paid by them? Again, my information is that there are some foreign correspondents who very often declare their income

as not exceeding Rs. 3000 to evade taxation and our Government is quite liberal and complacent and condescending over that. However, in the case of our own people, their accounts are strictly looked into.

I would like the hon. Minister to kindly tell something about these points.

SHRI P. V. NARASIMHA RAO: I find that most of the questions do not either arise from the calling attention or it would not be proper for me to give any off the cuff replies. I would only make available information that the hon. Member wants, to him or to the House and in particular the list which he has asked for of all correspondents who have gone at the invitation of the American Government. That list can be furnished to the House. There is no difficulty about that.

About the presence of one Indian among those who met her, I have no precise information. But I know for a fact that some correspondents of foreign papers happen to be Indians. Therefore it may be in that connection that he was there.

PROF. N. G. RANGA (Guntur): Was he invited? Or did he go by himself?

SHRI P. V. NARASIMHA RAO: This was not a regular press conference. The one organised on the previous day was cancelled. The next day it was only a get-together absolutely informal and Mrs. Hubbell insisted, according to the authorities of the Embassy, that it should not be treated as a regular press conference. Therefore, I think, this point has been clarified. We have taken up the matter and they have given an explanation to it. We need not go further on it and the matter should rest there.

DR. SUBRAMANIAM SWAMY (Bombay North East): One question he has not answered....

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: This will not go on record.

DR. SUBRAMANIAM SWAMY: I am raising it under rule 355.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: I am not permitting you.

DR. SUBRAMANIAM SWAMY: He is willing to answer it.

SHRI P. V. NARASIMHA RAO: I have already answered that this is one of the questions about which I am not prepared to give an off-the-cuff answer.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: He has already stated it.

DR. SUBRAMANIAM SWAMY:

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: This also will not go on record.

SHRI NAWAL KISHORE SHARMA (Dausa): The Minister, while replying to Shri Ramswaroop Ram, has not replied to the relevant part of the report in *The Hindustan Times*, which says: "Sorry, Sir, we are brown-skinned". This is the crux of the problem. Of course, this may be an informal chat, as has been claimed by the American Embassy, though the previous day a regular press conference was organised by the American Embassy. The importance of this Calling Attention is with regard to the behaviour of the American Embassy towards the Indian journalists. What is to be enquired into is whether a reply "Sorry, Sir, we are brown-skinned" was at all given by the American Embassy. Though the Minister in his reply to my friend, Shri Faleiro, has stated that this matter should not be pursued, I would still like to know from the

[Shri Nawal Kishore Sharma]

Minister whether this discrimination on the part of the Americans, on the basis of colour, is at all justified, particularly....

DR. SUBRAMANIAM SWAMY: Not colour; one Indian was there.

SHRI NAWAL KISHORE SHARMA: Dr. Swamy says there was one Indian; but we do not know the facts. It has not been confirmed by the Minister that there was one Indian. But the question which is more important, though not coming out of the Calling Attention, is this: is it not an indication of the hardening attitude of the American Government towards India? Because, we have press reports wherein it is stated that America is going in a big way to arm Pakistan.

DR. SUBRAMANIAM SWAMY: That should have been the Calling Attention Notice.

SHRI NAWAL KISHORE SHARMA: In view of this international incident and the Reagan Administration's attitude towards the non-aligned countries, and India particularly, is it not indicative of the hardening attitude of the American Administration? If so, what steps the Minister proposes to take in this regard?

SHRI P. V. NARASIMHA RAO: Firstly, I do not think there is any question of skin involved in this. In regard to the American attitude, we do not have to look into incidents of this type. There may be many other indications, about which I am prepared to make a statement, if the matter is raised.

DR. SUBRAMANIAM SWAMY: Will you admit a Calling Attention on this?

PROF. K. K. TEWARY (Buxar): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, this incident of humiliation meted out to the Indian journalist at the American Embassy has not come a day too

soon. In fact, we are in for a bigger shock, as my friend has said, about the American attitude. I think the basic question is not of the skin, though, of course, that is very much there. The real question is that of the attitude, and I am inclined to believe that in the wake of the change of the American administration, there has been a definite change..

AN. HON MEMBER: Arrogance.

PROF. K. K. TEWARY: ...and this is in fact organic to the American traditions to the traditions of colonialism, imperialism and America, as we all know, is in the vanguard of all these forces. (Interruptions). Sir, Dr. Swamy will keep on interrupting me.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: No, he cannot.

PROF. K. K. TEWARY: As we all know, from Indian Ocean, Deigo Garcia, to Dr. Swamy Americans are creating problems for us! (Interruptions). This attitude of America towards Indian journalists is symptomatic of what they think of us, specially the countries of the Third World. These people were responsible for the medieval butchery of Vietnam, friendly designs on Kampuchea, then their unabashed collaboration with South African regimes in the killings of freedom fighters of Namibia and the latest genocide which is taking place in El Salvador. In all these events America has played a major role.

Incidentally, I may refer to another incident which, I am sorry to say, was taken with admirable imperturbability by our Government and that related to a written statement of assessment of the functioning of Indian democracy and Indian Government by the High Commissioner of Australia. Surreptitiously he smuggled out a report to Australian Government and it was deliberately leaked in American press and the Australian press and the tendentious remarks were that the Indian democracy was sinking and dictatorship is round the corner, and

that journalist, I am told, is still growing strong in India. In any other country he would have been thrown out of the boundaries of the country. But he is still here. So, taken together, how I perceive this incident is in totality, the American attitude, and I would request the Foreign Minister not to sidetrack the real issue. This incident may be just a small incident, although I do not regard it as a small incident, but it is an insult to the Indian journalists and an insult to the Indian people. But let us take it in a bigger perspective.

America, as you all know—it is coming out daily in the newspapers—has written us off, although they have not written off Dr. Swamy. But India as a country, India as a political entity, the biggest democracy in the world, has been written off by the Americans, and as Mr. Sharma suggested, they are inducting arms worth \$ 2 billion in our neighbourhood and then the Americans are out to create instability in India, they are out to create a situation of destabilization in this country. Taken in this context, I think the incident speaks volumes about the Americans attitude towards India and it is time for us, I think I am sure our Government has not allowed grass to grow under their feet. They are seized of this matter and I would request him to take this small incident seriously, although I do not take it as a small incident, though as characterised by him, this incident should be dropped now. I think we should formulate our policies because Americans think that they are still saddled with the white man's burden and they are here or anywhere in the Third World countries to civilise them, to educate them, to exploit them. This attitude has to be met firmly and resolutely. So, I would make a humble request to the Foreign Minister to shed some light on this incident in the totality of our perception as he has been insisting in this House, the totality of our perception about American role in destabilization, about American role in creating situations of tensions, bring-

ing Big Power rivalry to our door step. How does this incident stand in the totality of the situation?

SHRI P. V. NARASIMHA RAO:
 Sir, I consider this incident neither small nor big.

DR. SUBRAMANIAM SWAMY:
 Prof. Tewari's thesis must be discussed.

SHRI P. V. NARASIMHA RAO:
 About the other aspects, we have only six days to go till the 26th when we are going to have a debate on the Demands for Grants of the External Affairs Ministry and the hon. Member will have to repeat all this perhaps at that time!

DR. SUBRAMANIAM SWAMY:
 Do not deflate him like this.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE:
 (Jadavpur): It may be taken as having been said.

ELECTION TO COMMITTEE

CENTRAL SILK BOARD

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN
 THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE
 (SHRI KHURSHED ALAM KHAN):
 I beg to move:

"That in pursuance of clause (c) of sub-section (3) of Section 4 of the Central Silk Board Act, 1948, read with Rules 4 and 5 of the Central Silk Board Rules, 1955, the members of this House do proceed to elect, in such manner as the Speaker may direct, one member from among themselves to be a member of the Central Silk Board vice Shri M. V. Chandrashekara Murthy resigned."

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The question is:

"That in pursuance of clause (c) of sub-section (3) of Section 4 of the Central Silk Board Act, 1948, read