

12.00 hrs.

CALLING ATTENTION TO MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

REPORTED DISLOCATION OF INDIAN
AIRLINES SERVICES

श्री अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी (स्वा-
लियर) : अध्यक्ष महोदय, मैं अविलंब-
नीय लोक महत्व के निम्नलिखित विषय
की ओर पर्यटन और नागर विमानन
मंत्री का ध्यान दिलाता हूँ और प्रार्थना
करता हूँ कि इस बारे में एक वक्तव्य दें :

“कर्मचारियों द्वारा नई शिफ्ट प्रणाली
का विरोध किये जाने के कारण
इण्डियन एयरलाइन्स की सेवाओं
के अस्त-व्यस्त होने के सनाचार।”

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICA-
TIONS AND TOURISM AND CIVIL
AVIATION (SHRI RAJ BAHADUR):
Sir, I am thankful to you for giving
me this opportunity to inform the
House of the position in regard to
the revised shift system introduced in
Indian Airlines with effect from the
morning of 12th November, 1973.

The nature of the work in Indian
Airlines is such that several of its
Departments have to function round
the clock. The workload, however,
varies due to the pattern of opera-
tions. The shifts in Indian Airlines
prior to the 12th November, were
mostly on the 'balanced' pattern, so
that equal numbers of workers were
employed in the morning, afternoon
and night shifts, though the workload
involved varied from shift to shift.
This created artificial shortages when
the workload was high and left num-
bers of workers with little work at
other times. The detention of
workers from the lightly loaded
to the more heavily loaded shifts
thus became inevitable. This not

only led to inefficiency and in-
discipline, but also had an adverse
impact on the safety and reliability
of Indian Airlines operations. Fur-
ther, the old system resulted in a
large amount of unwarranted over-
time payment. Artificial shortages
of staff were accentuated by the grant
of compensatory 'time-off' for over-
time work and were further aggravat-
ed by liberal leave rules which
permitted individual employees to
stay away from their duty for a day
or two at a time without prior per-
mission. The Committee on Public
Undertakings has, in its 28th Report,
on the working of Indian Airlines
drawn attention to this disturbing
situation and recommended remedial
action.

To rationalise the shift system and
eliminate wasteful practices to the
extent possible, the Chairman, in
accordance with the specific provisions
contained in the agreements with the
staff unions, held discussions with the
representatives of the Air Corpora-
tions Employees Union on the 15th
October, with the Indian Aircraft
Technicians Association on the 16th
October, and with the All India Air-
craft Engineers Association on the
26th October. Time schedules for
detailed discussions on the proposed
revisions in the shift system were
agreed upon. Accordingly, the con-
cerned officials in the four Regions of
Indian Airlines invited the local union
representatives for consultation and
discussions and furnished them
Management's proposals for the revi-
sion of the shift system. Since no
agreement could be reached, the
proposals were, in accordance with
the agreements signed with the
unions, remitted to the Regional
Directors in the case of the Indian
Aircraft Technicians Association and
the All India Aircraft Engineers
Association, and to the Assistant
Managing Director in the case of the
A.C.E.U. The Assistant Managing
Director invited the Central Office of
the A.C.E.U. for consultations on the

8th November. At this meeting the union representative unfortunately took a negative attitude and raised issues which appeared to be designed indefinitely to postpone the introduction of the revised shift system. The Assistant Managing Director gave careful consideration to the whole matter and on the 9th November gave a decision approving the proposals of the Regions for decision of the shift system. The decision was duly communicated to the A.C.E.U. After due consultations with the Indian Aircraft Technicians Association and the All India Aircraft Engineers Association the Regional Directors took final decisions in regard to the revised shift system as applicable to their categories of staff:

Pursuant to these decisions, the Management notified, on the 10th November, that the revised shift pattern would come into effect from the 12th November. On the afternoon of the 10th November, Indian Airlines was informed by the Central Chief Labour Commissioner on the telephone that he had received a copy of a strike notice from the A.C.E.U. effective from the 25th November.

I regret to inform the House that despite specific provisions in the agreements with the unions for the revision of the shift system, and the detailed discussions between the Management and unions, the unions concerned are opposing introduction of the new shift pattern. They have resorted to action which has resulted in delays and curtailment of services causing serious inconvenience and harassment to the travelling public. Some employees also "Gheraoed" the Indian Airlines Regional Director in Calcutta with a view to bringing pressure on the Management.

The Chairman has made it abundantly clear that if as a result of experience the new shift system need any modifications, these will be introduced.

2100 LS—7

I am sure that this Honourable House will join me in expressing the hope that the employees concerned will realise that lawful decisions of the Management must be implemented.

श्री अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी : अध्यक्ष जी, श्री राज बहादुर जी के साथ हम लोगों की सहानुभूति है कि अभी अभी उन्होंने इस मंत्रालय का भार सम्हाला है और अभी यह संकट खड़ा हो गया है। कहावत है—सिर मुंडाते ओले पड़े। लेकिन श्री राज बहादुर जी का वक्तव्य सभी बातों पर स्पष्ट रूप से प्रकाश नहीं डालता है। पहली बात जो वक्तव्य को सुनने और पढ़ने से लगती है वह यह है कि आखिर इंडियन एयरलाइन्स में ऐसी शिफ्ट सिस्टम क्यों चालू की गई क्यों चलने दी गई जिसमें लीन पीरियड में उतने कर्मचारी रहते थे जितने पीक पीरियड में रहते थे? ऐसी व्यवस्था क्यों शुरू की गई कि जिसके परिणामस्वरूप कर्मचारियों को बहुत अधिक ओवर-टाइम देना पड़ता था?

मंत्री महोदय ने पब्लिक अण्डरटैकिंग कमेटी का हवाला दिया है। पब्लिक अण्डरटैकिंग कमेटी ने जो आंकड़े दिए हैं वे सचमुच आखें खोलने वाले हैं। 1971-72 में 298.97 लाख ओवर-टाइम दिया गया जो कि टोटल सैलरीज वेजेज का 18.7 परसेंट था। पांच वर्ष में ओवर-टाइम में 170 परसेंट की इन्क्रीज हो गई। कमेटी ने सिफारिशें हैं कि इसका कम करने का प्रयत्न होना चाहिए, लेकिन कमेटी ने यह भी कहा है कि यह बातें कर्मचारियों से चर्चा करके तय की जानी चाहिए। मंत्री महोदय के वक्तव्य से यह पता नहीं लगता कि इस परिवर्तन के बारे में कर्मचारियों की सचमुच में आपत्तियां क्या हैं। एक स्थान पर उन्होंने कहा है :

[श्री अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी]

"At this meeting, the Union representative unfortunately took a negative attitude and raised issues which appeared to be designed indefinitely to postpone the introduction of the revised shift system".

में जानता चाहता हूँ कि कर्मचारियों ने उठाये ? अच्छा होता अगर मंत्री महोदय कर्मचारियों की नोयत पर शक नहीं करते । इस व्यवस्था को शब्दावली कुछ और ढंग से रखी जा सकती थी । लेकिन उन्होंने कर्मचारियों पर आरोप लगाया कि वे सारे शिफ्ट सिस्टम को रोकना चाहते थे लेकिन सदन जानने के लिए उत्सुक है कि कर्मचारियों ने विरोध और ठोस मुद्दे कौन से उठाए ?

कोई ऐसी व्यवस्था जिससे कर्मचारियों का ओवर-टाइम एकदम बन्द होता है; कर्मचारियों में असंतोष पैदा करेगा—इस से इन्कार नहीं किया जा सकता । व्यवस्था सही है या गलत, यह प्रश्न अलग है, लेकिन व्यवस्था आपने बनाई है, वे कर्मचारी ओवर-टाइम प्राप्त कर रहे हैं, उन्होंने अपने जीवन के रहन-सहन का ढंग उसी के अनुरूप ढाला है और अब अगर उसमें अचानक परिवर्तन किया जायेगा तो वह परिवर्तन बातचीत के द्वारा ही होना चाहिए । मैं समझता हूँ कि बातचीत कर के कर्मचारियों को एक तत्कालीन स्थिति पर लाना असम्भव नहीं होना चाहिए ।

मैं जानना चाहता हूँ कि मंत्री महोदय से क्या अपने स्तर पर उन्होंने कर्मचारियों के संगठनों से, उनके प्रतिनिधियों से बातचीत की है ? क्या वह कर्मचारियों के प्रतिनिधियों को बुला कर चर्चा करने के लिए तैयार हैं ?

आखिर यह सरकार और सरकार का यह विरोध मंत्रालय केवल प्रकृति काम नहीं कर सकता । ओवरटाइम और उस से मिलने वाले धन को समस्या केवल इसी

मंत्रालय की समस्या नहीं है । इस सदन में कई बार मामले उठ चुके हैं कि डाक तार में किस तरह से ओवरटाइम दिया जा रहा है, बैंकों में ओवरटाइम की दी जाने वाली राशि बढ़ गई है । अब अगर फैसले करने हैं तो वह फैसले टुकड़ों में नहीं होने चाहिए । वे एक समन्वित और सुनियोजित नीति के अन्तर्गत होना चाहिए । मैं मंत्री महोदय से जानना चाहता हूँ कि क्या उन का मंत्रालय इस प्रश्न को प्रतिष्ठा का प्रश्न बना कर बैठा है ?

यह कहा जा रहा है कि हम ने जो लागू कर दिया उसे मान लेना चाहिए । यह भी कहा जाता है कि अगर अनुभव के बाद ऐसा पता लगा कि उस में सुधार की जरूरत है तो सुधार किया जा सकता है । सुनने में यह बात बड़ी अच्छी मालूम होती है । लेकिन क्या यह सम्भव नहीं है कि अभी भी कर्मचारियों के प्रतिनिधियों, उन के संगठनों को बुला कर उन से बातचीत की जाय और ऐसा रास्ता निकाला जाय कि जिस से इंडियन एयर लाइन्स की क्षमता बढ़े । काम करने के घंटे जो कर्मचारी अधिक लगाते हैं उन में भी कमी होनी चाहिए, और मैं मानता हूँ कि जो ओवरटाइम दिया जा रहा है वह बहुत ज्यादा है, उस में कटौती आवश्यक है । लेकिन प्रश्न यह है कि इसे किस ढंग से किया जाय ? ढंग के बारे में मेरा निवेदन है कि ढंग में सुधार का मुन्दाइय था, और अभी भी है । अगर मंत्री महोदय अपने स्तर पर कर्मचारियों के संगठनों से बातचीत करें तो मैं समझता हूँ कि कोई रास्ता निकल सकता है, और उन्हें उसका प्रयत्न करना चाहिए, और ऐसे किसी प्रयत्न में सदन उन का पूरा साथ देगा ।

श्री राज बहादुर : मैं माननीय सदस्यों या बहुत श्रेणी हूँ उन की सहानुभूति

के लिए कि जो उन्होंने मेरे प्रति व्यक्त की। मैं इतना ही कहना चाहता हूँ कि यह मेरा-सीमावर्त रहा है कि मैं श्रमिक संगठनों के सम्पर्क में रहा हूँ। उन वे सदस्य की धर्मनों को समझ सकता हूँ। नाननय सदस्य ने एक शब्द का प्रयोग किया कि "सर मुझने ओले पड़े"। मैं यह कहना चाहता हूँ कि "भण्डाले इतनी पड़ी मूज पर कि आसां हो गई"। उन्होंने एक बड़ा प्रश्न किया है कि यदि कुछ डिस्टेंशन और इन्ट्रिन्सिज शिफ्ट पैटर्न में आ गये थे, कुछ कुंठित हो गये थे, या कुछ गलत थे या सामंजस्य नहीं था, तो यह क्यों हुआ और यह क्यों शुरू की गई? मैं इस के इतिहास में नहीं जाना चाहता। लेकिन मैं जानना चाहता हूँ कि क्या माननीय सदस्य इस बात से सहमत नहीं हैं कि यदि कोई अवमानतायें या सामंजस्यविहीनता प्रतीत होती है तो उस को ठीक किया जाय? अनुभव से हम सीखते हैं और चलते हैं।

श्री एस० एम० बनर्जी (कानपुर) : माननीय मंत्री जी से कहूंगा कि वह इतनी शुद्ध हिन्दी न बोलें कि कुछ समझ में ही न आये, क्योंकि आजकल हिन्दुस्तान में कोई चीज शुद्ध नहीं मिलती है।

अध्यक्ष महोदय : मंत्री जी आप इतनी भाषा में न जाइये। प्रश्न का जवाब ही दीजिए।

श्री राज बहादुर : उन्होंने कुछ ओवरवैजन्स कर दिये। मैं उसी पर आ रहा हूँ। उन्होंने डंग के बारे में आपत्ति की, उन्होंने ओवरटाइम के बारे में आपत्ति की। उन्होंने बताया कि 1971 में ओवर-टाइम की घनराशि 18 '7 प्रतिशत तक पहुँच चुकी थी और अब वह लगभग 22 परसेंट तक पहुँचने को सम्भावना है। और यह भी निश्चित बात है कि खाली ओवरटाइम की बात नहीं है, प्रश्न यह

है कि जब कि सबरे के वक्त बहुत सी सर्विसेज आती हैं उस वक्त अगर स्टाफ कम हो और दोपहर के वक्त ज्यादा हो तो उस में समंजस्य लाने की जरूरत है। इस के वास्ते एक मुआहिदा हुआ और उस मुआहिदे पर हस्ताक्षर हुए सम्बन्धित यूनियन के और मैनेजमेंट के। उस के अनुसार सारी व्यवस्था की बातचीत की और चर्चा की। 15 अक्टूबर को जैसा मैंने स्टेटमेंट में कहा एयर कौन्सिलर एमप्लोईज यूनियन से इस की चर्चा हुई, 16 अक्टूबर को ए० आई० टी० ए० से और 26 अक्टूबर को एक दूसरी यूनियन से बातचीत हुई। 29 अक्टूबर, से 8 नवम्बर तक बराबर चर्चा रही विभिन्न तरह से। और जहाँ तक ए० आई० टी० ए०, टेक्नीशियन्स और इंजीनियर्स का सम्बन्ध है वह अपने से सम्बन्धित लेबिल पर लेंगे, फिर चोफ़ इंजीनियर लेबिल पर लेंगे और फिर रीजनल डायरेक्टर उस का अन्तिम निर्णय होगा। इसी तरह ए० सी० ई० यू० के सम्बन्ध में यह निश्चय था कि पहले उसे रीजनल लेबिल पर और लेबिल पर लिया जाय, और वहाँ अगर समझौता हो सके तो जो असिस्टेंट मैनेजिंग डायरेक्टर है एयरलाइन्स के वह उस का अन्तिम निर्णय दें। तो इसीलिए कंसल्टेशन के लिए बुलाया गया, और चर्चा में कोई कसर नहीं रखी गई।

माननीय सदस्य ने कहा कि उदासीनायत पर मैंने कुछ कहा किया है, और हमसा किया है। मेरा इस प्रकार का कोई इरादा नहीं है। उन्होंने ऐसी सूचनायें कुछ मांगी कि जो सूचनायें हमारे पास थीं ही नहीं, यह अवेलेबिल नहीं हो सकती थी और बहुत समय लग सकता था, दूसरे यह कि सारी असंतोषजनक चीजें चल सकती थीं। अगर मैं उन के बिस्तार में जाऊंगा तो स्पीकर साहब भी मुझे रोकेंगे।

श्री अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी : कई साल तक यह गलत व्यवस्था चलती रही, कुछ दिन और नहीं चल सकती थी ?

श्री राज बहादुर : मैं भी नया हूँ और श्री चेयरमैन, मैनेजिंग डाइरेक्टर हैं, एयर पीपल मार्शल पी० सी० लाल, उन्होंने 8 अगस्त से जब से चार्ज लिया खूब बातचीत की और तभी से बराबर सम्पर्क में रहे हैं, उन्होंने कर्मचारियों का सहयोग मांगा है, उन से कहा है कि सेवाओं को किसी प्रकार से ठीक कीजिए, इस असन्तुलन को दूर कीजिए। ये सारी बातें हुई हैं। कोई एक दिन की बात नहीं है। लेकिन एक हद होती है जहाँ तक हम जा सकते हैं, उस के बाद नहीं जा सकते। इसलिए कोई उन की नीयत पर हमला नहीं है।

माननीय वाजपेयी जी ने पूछा कि क्या मैं उन से बात करने के लिए तैयार हूँ ? मुझे यह बताने में प्रसन्नता है कि जो यूनियन के पदाधिकारी हैं वह मुझ से मिले थे और मैंने उन्हें सलाह दी कि यह मामला ऐसा है आप खुद सोचिये कि अगर मैनेजमेंट और रीजनल डाइरेक्टर्स और चीफ इंजीनियर यह तय नहीं कर सकते कि कौन सी शिफ्ट कितनी बड़ी हो, कौन सी शिफ्ट में कितने आदमी आयेंगे, और इस काम में मिनिस्टर दखल दे तो वह मैनेजमेंट कैसे चल सकता है ? और मेरे पास उतनी जानकारी भी नहीं है जिसके लिये एक्सपर्टीज चाहिए। इसलिए मैं कहना चाहता हूँ कि जिस स्तर पर यह बातें तय होनी चाहिए उस स्तर पर रहने दीजिए। मैंने कभी मिलते से इन्कार नहीं किया। अखबार में चेयरमैन ने स्टेटमेंट दिया है कि वह हमेशा तैयार है बात करने के लिए। उन्होंने कहा है कि अगर चेंज की जरूरत है तो चेंज करने के लिए तैयार हैं। लेकिन इस को चलने तो दीजिए, लागू तो होने दीजिए। क्योंकि काम को बन्द करने

से सब को तकलॉफ हो रही है, कर्मचारियों को और उन के परिवार वालों को तकली हो रही है।

मुझे प्रसन्नता है कि माननीय वाजपेयी जी इस बात को स्वीकार करते हैं कि ओवर टाइम भी एक महत्वपूर्ण प्रश्न है। लेकिन केवल वही प्रश्न नहीं है। प्रश्न यह है कि हमारी सेवाओं में आवश्यक सुधार आये और उनमें आवश्यक व्यवस्था उचित रूप से हो।

श्री अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी : नये शिफ्ट सिस्टम से ओवरटाइम में कितनी कमी होगी इस का कोई अंदाजा लगाया गया ?

श्री राज बहादुर : यह मैं अभी नहीं कह सकता।

SHRI VASANT SATHE (Akola): Once again we come before this House with disturbing news from a sector where the employees are one of the highest paid in the country. Last time it was the pilots. Before that it was the engineers. Now it is the technical staff. We are really surprised that in this sector there must be some communication gap between the Management and the Staff.

It is always said that at least in the public sector there should be better labour-management relationship. When we talk so much about labour participation in management, in a sector where all the people are of high technical calibre, right from the smallest technician to the highest engineers and pilots, why should we not take them into confidence and why should there not be a feeling of belonging among the workers, particularly when a seasoned and famous Air Marshall of this country like Shri P. C. Lal is heading this organisation? We were all thinking that

this communication gap would be abolished. Now that Shri Raj Bahadur has come in, there is greater reason why the gap should be reduced because, as he says, he knows and flies of the highest order and employees. But he has taken over this portfolio only the other day. This problem arose mainly because of this communication gap.

As a trade unionist I have absolutely no sympathy for those employees who start this type of agitation. The workers do not do their work in the scheduled time of 8 hours and want overtime to do the work after those 8 hours. This can never be appreciated or supported by anybody. There can be no sympathy for such employees. The opposition to this shift, particulars by the A.C.E.U., appears to be that they are now going to get less overtime wages; no other reason has come from the other side. I have tried to see the newspapers to understand whether the union has come out with any genuine grievances why the shift arrangement should not be changed. The only reason that they have given is that their overtime will be reduced. The employees of the engineering division and technicians have also accepted this. Therefore, there can be no sympathy with this demand of the union and the attitude of the employees.

I would like to appeal to the employees not to pursue this policy. I would also appeal to opposition leaders like Shri Vajpayee to unequivocally oppose this kind of attitude by the employees. This attitude is plaguing not only this sector but also the banks, posts and telegraphs, railways and other spheres of life. This is detrimental to the economy of the country.

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE: The Government is responsible for this.

SHRI VASANT SETHI: Why do you blame Government for everything?

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE: Whom else am I to blame? Should I blame the opposition?

SHRI VASANT SATHE: Yes, the opposition also if you want to support the demand of the employees. You want to blow hot and cold in the same breath. You want to blame the Government and support the employees. It is this kind of attitude among the opposition that encourages the workers to indulge in these things. Therefore, let us not take this attitude. If the Government is to be blamed, we should accept it. In a public sector undertaking, let there be a sense of belonging. I want to know from the hon. Minister, now that he has taken charge of this Ministry, whether this communication gap will decrease. Now, that Shri Lal is heading the undertaking, will you now start this new era of complete understanding with all the employees?

I would first like to know why you called your first shift a balanced one. I think it was the most unbalanced one.

SHRI DINESH SINGH (Pratapgarh): It is also a communication gap.

SHRI VASANT SATHE: As far as these shifts are concerned, having the same number of workers in each shift is not a balanced pattern. It has no relationship to the work at all. We would like to know how you will remove this imbalance as also the imbalance that prevails in the relationship between the management and the employees. I would also like to know when we can expect you to come and inform the House that as far as the Indian Airlines is concerned, there is complete agreement and a feeling of belonging among all the levels of employees and also appreciation between the employees and the management.

SHRI RAJ BAHADUR: Sir, I deeply appreciate the spirit of the observations made by my hon. friend, Shri Sathe, I wholeheartedly agree with that spirit. I do recognise the importance and need of having no communication gap whatsoever and having complete understanding and harmony, so far as the operation and working of the Indian Airlines is concerned, so far as its efficient running is concerned. I also appreciate the compliment he has given to Shri Lal. He himself having been a pilot and flier of the higher order and merit we cannot support for a moment that Shri Lal would ever like to have any lack of understanding or lack of communication between him and the workers. As I said earlier, an autonomous organisation like the Indian Airlines Corporation should settle this problem by negotiation with the employees and certainly the Minister and the Ministry will provide whatever help we can. I do not think the hon. Member has asked for any other information.

SHRI H. M. PATEL (Dhandhuka): Sir, I must say that I agree with what Shri Vajpayee said right at the outset that why is it that it is only now the Government has realised that these shifts of equal strength was not the right course for so long. Why is it that it is only now that they have thought of changing it? The answer he gave is perhaps something with which I do not agree. Shri Sathe has likewise talked of a communication gap. I think that is again stating something that does not tally with facts. It is quite clear that in this case there was no communication gap. In this case—I am going by the statement of the Chairman of the Indian Airlines in the press conference—the Chairman has been in touch with the union authorities for several weeks and that the union had agreed that something needs to be done. Then how did the negotiations break down? It is said that the ne-

gotiations broke down because of the fact that the information that the unions sought from the Indian Airlines was not made available to them. According to the Chairman that information would have taken weeks or perhaps months to collect and it had really no relevance to the points at issue. Then, what is the justification for saying that there is communication gap?

According to a report in *The Statesman*. Shri Mazumdar, General Secretary of the A.C.E.U., denied that the union was insisting an uniform strength in each shift. That is precisely the point at issue. Now there are three shifts, morning, afternoon, and night, of equal strength irrespective of the workload. It is well-known to everybody that only during certain periods the air traffic is intense. Therefore, the strength of staff for a shift must be linked with the volume of work that has to be done during that shift. That was not done so far. Now the union says that it agrees to this change and that it is not objecting to the revision but it was not given any opportunity for discussion. And this they say after discussions had gone on for days on end. The IAC Chairman said that Mr. Mazumdar's statement was not correct and that the A.C.E.U. was not prepared to take a realistic and practical attitude. And that is correct. After all, the reason for staff objection is quite obvious. It is perfectly understandable. How can anybody readily agree to forgo large sums of money which they were earning through overtime? This change in the shift system must result in that. If the Chairman has said that the change was going to result in a saving of a crore or two, how does that saving of a crore or two arise except from the fact that less overtime will be paid to these people? Therefore, it is going to hurt their pockets and they are bound to object.

At the same time, the point to consider is this, and this is why I wel-

come Government's awakening, late though it is, to realities, and how to administer such organisations. These are problems for the management. The management did not manage so far; now the management has begun to manage. These are not issues for workers to decide as to what the strength and number of shifts there should be, for how many hours the pilots should work, what should be the night halt and what the periods of rest, etc. The pilots have accepted this. They were also not happy with these changes which will result in substantial savings. The engineers too realise because in the main the engineers must work not during the day time when there are no aircraft to work on; they must work on the aircraft and the aircraft come only in the night. Would it be right to insist that we will have equal shift strength even though during the day time there will be no aircraft and we will have to sit idle? Is that what this House would desire to be continued? Is that what Mr. Vajpayee would like to be continued? Is that what Mr. Sathe would like to be continued because there is a communication gap? Of course, not.

This overtime has become a racket not only in this sector but in a number of others also. The bank workers, for instance, start work after the day is over, which causes a great deal of inconvenience to the general public.

The other reason why these concessions have been given by the Indian Airlines is also obvious. It is an essential service. One would have imagined that, in an essential service which is also run by the country, by the Government, by a national organisation, the workers would work with a will. But that has not been the experience. On the contrary, they utilise the fact of its being an essential service for threatening to go on strike, knowing that they would disrupt the services and cause enormous

inconvenience to the general travelling public thereby, and that is their strong bargaining hint. It is because the public has not been prepared to put up with that inconvenience, it is because Government is not prepared to put up with unpopularity lest it should affect their voting strength or whatever it may be, that so far concessions have been given which are totally unreasonable. Will the Government, now that they have realised what the correct attitude should be in the management of such large organisations....

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE:
I doubt whether they have realised even now.

SHRI H. M. PATEL:and are anxious to see that the management is able to manage, that proper functions of management are entrusted to them—I greatly appreciate what Mr. Raj Bahadur stated today, namely, how can he interfere in a matter of which he knows next to nothing—, when a Minister has that realisation and allows experts to do their work within their sphere: policy-making would be his sphere undoubtedly, but the implementation of policy he makes is somebody else's and there should be the least interference possible in that. Will the Government now assure this House that it will stand firm on the line it has taken now until such time as a settlement is reached which ensures a satisfactory reform in the entire system and programme of work, in the working of the Indian Airlines?

That is what is at issue to-day. If you give in, if there is any compromise now, I think it will only result in further weakening and inefficient functioning of the Indian Airlines.

How is it that—I think, Mr. Vajpayee quoted certain figures—the operating expenses rose from Rs. 41.37 crores in 1970-71 to Rs. 50.71 crores in 1971-72? And they have been rising over a period. If you take the earlier

(Shri H. M. Patel)

years figures, they show a steadily rising trend so that they would really leave no profit margin whatsoever. It seems to me, therefore, that the time has come to declare that while being fair to the labour, we intend also to be fair to the management and to the general public. I think this is an important point.

Public sector enterprises must make profits. To talk as sometimes one talks that profits should not be the criterion for judging the efficient working of a public sector enterprise, is to talk utter nonsense. It is the only criterion. If it is suggested that you have to make some concessions, etc., on sociological grounds and other grounds, you can always allow all that in your calculations and show that the enterprise nevertheless functions at profit and if the Indian Airlines is to function at profit which should also be the objective of the entire public sector, I think you must stand firm on this and ensure the workers a fair treatment but ensure also your management that for its operational efficiency, whatever kind of arrangement is necessary, the workers must accept it as reasonable. This is my question. Are you prepared to stand firm until a settlement can be arrived at ensuring all these things that I have mentioned?

SHRI RAJ BAHADUR: Mr. Patel has again put the same question—why was it tolerated until now—all these imbalances and distortions that have crept in? In any human organization or institution, our experience is that over the years we do experience, despite our best judgment, some imbalances or distortions creep in. When they are in the process of creeping in, we really do not always succeed in perceiving or noticing them and it could not be wise on my part or on the part of Mr. Patel with all his wisdom and experience, to be wise after the event.

But the fact of the matter is that when the demands of the various Unions of various classes of employees came up before this House, did we or did we not lend our support also at that time? However, let bygones be bygones and if the matter is that we have to put the whole thing in order, he has warned me, 'Because it will cause inconvenience to the public, it may cause unpopularity to the Government or to the Minister; therefore, you will give in or you may give in.' I would say most humbly and in great humility that it is not important—whether the Minister becomes popular or unpopular. In fact, we do regret the inconvenience that is caused, the great inconvenience that might be caused to the travelling public and for that we would really apologise. But so far as this thing is concerned, when we think that a thing is right, when we think that the course that we are going to take is correct and that these distortions and imbalances have crept in, there is no reason why we should not be able to persuade even the Unions and their leaders to come round to the table and talk the things over. I would not really play the Samson, shake the whole pillar and bring it down crashing. I would say that the leaders as also the workers are our own nationals and are a patriotic people doing their duties. May be some distortions have occurred, some differences of opinion have occurred.

As far as the discussions were concerned, the matter has been thoroughly discussed at all levels and I can assure the House and even to-day, in his last statement to the Press, the Chairman has invited, 'Let us work it and if after working it is considered necessary that the system requires some changes', he has said:

I quote:

'We are prepared to consider changes as we go along.'

(Shri Samar Guha)

by my hon. friend, Shri H. M. Patel, Shri Majumdar of the Airlines Employees Union, had said that reasonable time was not given to them. They have no objection to the revision, but they were not given an opportunity for discussion.

There is also another point. The Secretary of the Union, Shri Majumdar, said that they were not furnished with all the necessary data so that they could come to a conclusion whether this new shift pattern of service was in accordance with the principle of revision and former agreement and how it would affect them. Air Marshal Lall has admitted that he has not been able to give them the necessary data. He said that it would take much time to collect the data. If so, on what scientific basis have they come to the conclusion they did? Without having proper data at their disposal and without making the necessary calculation on the basis of that, how have they come to the conclusion that a new shift pattern is called for? This is a very important point. Neither the Air Marshal nor the Minister has replied to this charge made by the Union employees. Unless you give the data, how can there be any fruitful, reasonable discussion between the employees and the employer?

I am sorry to say that the Air Marshal, the soldier Chairman, had acted as if he was dealing with soldiers. But he forgot that he had to deal with a new type of soldiers. Everyday they are not having to exercise that type of discipline that the soldiers are used to. On the 26th, Air Marshal Lal concluded the dialogue with one of the Unions, and on the 9th, within two weeks, he introduced the new shift pattern. I should say he has done the whole thing in a mood of too much haste; I should say a little bit of tact was necessary for him.

There is another thing. He should have consulted the Ministry. Perhaps

he thought that was not needed because the then Minister was shifting to a new Ministry and he was not sure whether the new incumbent would be in permanent charge or in temporary charge of the Ministry, besides his regular charge of Communications. Probably there was a doubt as to whether he would be able to go in depth into the problem.

Therefore, neither the former Minister or the present Minister was in a mood to go into the problem which has been hanging for many years. Therefore, I have used the word 'tact'. With certain tact and with certain patience, the Air Marshal could have dealt with the problem that is not of sudden occurrence or growth but was hanging over for years.

The word 'overtime' is creating trouble with all common people. Today overtime has become regular time for work not only in IA but in every department of government. Overtime has become the time for regular work. In the regular time, few people do work in the different offices. Therefore, I think among people outside and among all members here, there will be no second opinion that this overtime business, this overtime bill, must be cut, must be rationalised.

There is another thing. The Union Secretary has said that in Calcutta, 80 per cent of the overtime bill is due to increase in salary. Secondly, he has charged that there is under-staffing also. These two charges have not been met by the management, by the soldier-Chairman. This has to be clarified. Therefore, nobody will feel happy at the way in which they are adopting this sort of tactics. Now, it is a very interesting thing to note the reply given by the Union leaders. What do they say? They said that they would be happy if overtime payment is taken away completely, but that the management should not ask them to work longer hours. That is, they are against overtime work. Now, you have come up with a new shift pattern. Therefore, I want the hon.

Minister to tell us if you want to take away the overtime benefit from them. They are now working overtime at the moment.

Lastly, in the statement of the Minister itself, it is said that the "Indian Airlines was informed by the Central Chief Labour Commissioner on the telephone that he had received a copy of a strike notice from the ACEU..." etc.

Also, there is another statement by Mr. Majumdar wherein he has said that any democratic decisions worked out as a result of negotiations are acceptable to them and they stood by their agreement of 1971-72 and they also agree even with the internal democratic agreement.

I would request the hon. Minister to see whether it is possible that on arbitration with the Chief Labour Commissioner can be set up so that there may be a reasonable negotiation and a reasonable dialogue, and the data may be supplied to the employees so that on the basis of the data, a reasonable conclusion is drawn because they are also agreeable to the very objective that they do not want any overtime benefit.

SHRI RAJ BAHADUR: Sir, to begin with, I must really express my regret that Mr. Samar Guha should have chosen to describe the Chairman as a soldier-Chairman, especially when other Members have said that he is a person of whom we should all be proud.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: There should be a certain dialogue and therefore I said that a little bit of tact and patience is necessary.

SHRI RAJ BAHADUR: I would like to disabuse one thing from the mind of the hon. Members. Air Chief Marshal Lal has been for five years, I am told, the Chairman and Managing Director of HAL. He had also been, earlier, the Managing Director—I do not know whether he was Chairman

too—of the IAC, when it was called as IAC then. So, he has had enough experience of the public sector undertakings and management and the dealings with labour. He has dealt with labour in the HAL and the Indian Airlines. So, he is not new to labour. Therefore, to say that he is only a soldier-Chairman would be, to say the least, less than fair.

So far as the question of agreements is concerned, I would like to put on record to say that agreements were reached between the union and the management—I have got the records here—on 2-6-1971, 10-1-1972 and 15-2-1972 with the ACEU. I quote:

"The Corporation may revise from time to time the shift arrangements on a different basis, both in regard to the composition of the shift as well as the shift timings, so as to meet variations in workload. This may include provision of an alternate night shift. Before the shift arrangements are revised, the revisions will be discussed with the union and every endeavour will be made to reach an agreed decision. In the event of no agreed decisions, the matter will be referred to the Assistant General Manager for a final decision after necessary consultations with the Central Office. The shift items need not be uniform for all departments. The shifts will be so organised as to ensure that no employee is made to work for more than 34 hours in a week and further no employee being made to work for a spread-over in excess of what is permissible under the Factories Act, 1948."

So, his second question is also answered; that they cannot be made to work longer hours than is permissible under the law. But the agreement is here. There is also a similar agreement in the case of technicians and the engineers as well. All these matters about revision were discussed and whatever has been provided in the agreement has been followed. So naturally, it

[Shri Raj Bahadur]

cannot be said that this has been suddenly imposed upon the workers.

I am afraid he has blown hot and cold at the same time. He says overtime must be given and then he says the employees' unions have not laid emphasis on overtime as such! We have first of all to find out and come to a judgment ourselves whether it is or it is not necessary to link the strength of a particular shift with the workload on that shift. If the answer is in the affirmative, there is no other alternative but to leave this work to those who can do it, viz., the management. It is not the type of question which can be referred to adjudication or arbitration or to a tribunal. It is a matter which has got to be essentially worked out by the people who are going to run it. It does not at all affect the terms and conditions of service of the workers. (*Interruptions*). Overtime is not a matter of right and no one can insist on it. But so far as the terms and conditions are concerned, it should be worked out according to the formula in the agreement which I have quoted already.

श्री अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी : अध्यक्ष महोदय, अगर मैनेजमेंट खुद करना चाहता था तो फिर बातचीत क्यों की कर्मचारियों से ? मंत्री महोदय मानते हैं कि कर्मचारियों से बातचीत करने की जरूरत थी और की गई ।

SHRI RAJ BAHADUR: Under the agreement, the final decision has been left to the Assistant Managing Director and the Regional Director.

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Nawal Kishore Sharma.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: What about arbitration by the Chief Labour Commissioner? He has not replied to that.

MR. SPEAKER: I have called Shri Naval Kishore Sharma. I have

not called anybody else. Why should they go on speaking?

श्री नवल किशोर शर्मा (दोसा) : आज जिस विषय पर हम चर्चा कर रहे हैं और देश में जो हालात पैदा हुए हैं, उनमें ऐसा लगता है कि अव्यवस्था व्यवस्था बनती जा रही है, हड़ताल आये-दिन की बात होती जा रही है, डी० आई० आर० का मखौल बनाया जा रहा है और ओवर-टाइम अधिकार बनता जा रहा है। ऐसी स्थिति में अभी हमारे विरोधी दलों के मित्रों ने यह कहा कि श्री पी० सी० लाल साहब ने एक सोलजर की तरह से काम किया है। सरकार ने और मैनेजमेंट ने एम्पलाइज से बात नहीं की और बात न कर के उन के अधिकारों का हनन किया है। लेकिन इस का किसी को चिन्ता नहीं है कि आम जनता के साथ क्या बात रही है, टैक्स-पेअर के साथ क्या हो रहा है। इन आये-दिन की हड़तालों से जनता परेशान है, फिर भी हमारे कुछ दोस्त इन हड़ताल करते वालों की हिमायत करते हैं।

13.00 hrs.

यह सही है कि मजदूरों को अधिकार है, कर्मचारियों को अधिकार है—अपनी बात मनवाने का और यदि उस में वाजबीयत है तो सरकार को उन की बात सुननी चाहिए और सुननी पड़ेगी, आखिर वे भी उस के एक अंग हैं, लेकिन इस के मायने यह नहीं हो सकते कि आम जनता के साथ खिलवाड़ किया जाय। आज यह हालत है कि कौन-सा हवाई-जहाज किस टाइम पर जायगा, इस का पता नहीं है। खाना मिलेगा या नहीं मिलेगा, इस का पता नहीं है। खाना मिलता है तो उस में मिर्चें झाँक दी जाती हैं। मेरे एक मित्र कल बम्बई से आये थे, वे कह रहे थे कि खाना

ऐसा था जिस में मिचें झोंक दी गई थीं, पानी भी हवाई-जहाज में उपलब्ध नहीं था। अगर यह हालत हो, इतना कैलस-एटीचुड हो, तो मुझे उन लोगों पर शर्म आती है जो इन की हिमायत करते हैं।

मैं चाहता हूँ कि उन की समस्याओं का समाधान होना चाहिए। इस लिए मैं मंत्री महोदय को, श्री पी० सी० लाल साहब को बधाई देना चाहता हूँ, उन्होंने मजबूती से इस समस्या के समाधान का एक निर्णय किया है और संकेत दिया है। एक न एक दिन आप को ऐसे सवालोंने निबटना पड़ेगा और मजबूती से निबटना पड़ेगा। पिछले दिनों आप ने जो-कुछ कमजोरी दिखाई, उस का नतीजा यह है कि आये-दिन ये हड़तालें देश को खायें जा रही हैं।

मैं, श्रीमान, आप के माध्यम से मंत्री महोदय से यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि एम्पलाइज के सैक्रेटरी जैन्टल श्री मजूमदार ने यह आरोप लगाया है कि सरकार और मैनेजमेन्ट ने 1971 में उन के साथ जो समझौता किया था, उस का वायोलेशन हो रहा है। उस समझौते के विरुद्ध उन्होंने शिफ्ट पैटर्न को बदलने की कोशिश की है। मैं जानना चाहता हूँ कि क्या उन का यह आरोप सही है। यदि यह आरोप सही नहीं है तो मैं दूसरी बात यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि इन हालात में जैन्टल पब्लिक, ट्रेवलर-पब्लिक की सुख-सुविधा के बारे में आप क्या करने जा रहे हैं?

मैं यह भी जानना चाहूंगा कि इन हालात में क्या आप अपने मैनेजमेन्ट को फ्रीडम देंगे, उस के हाथों को मजबूत करेंगे? मेरी राय में सारा सदन इस मामले में आप के साथ है और आप के हर एक्शन का स्वागत करेगा, यदि वह देश और जनता के हित में हो।

SHRI RAJ BAHADUR: I have already given all the answers to these questions. There is only one point which my hon. friend has raised which remains to be answered, and that is about safety, a point which was made by other hon. Members also. I want to give this assurance that due care will be taken of the safety standards and the security of the passengers during these days. I will, certainly, say, there are rules laid down by the D.G.C.A. which have to be observed and shall be observed. If the rules cannot be observed because of these conditions, we shall ground the planes. We will not take any risk about the safety of the passengers at all.

As far as other things said by the hon. Member, are concerned, I welcome the things he mentioned.

MR. SPEAKER: Papers to be laid.

13.07 hrs.

PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE

COPY OF THE INVESTIGATION OF INDUSTRIAL UNDERTAKINGS OWNED BY COMPANIES IN LIQUIDATION (PROCEDURE), RULES UNDER INDUSTRIES (DEVELOPMENT AND REGULATION) ACT, 1951

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI C. SUBRAMANIAM): I beg to lay on the Table a copy of the Investigation of Industrial Undertakings Owned by Companies in Liquidation (Procedure) Rules, 1973 (Hindi and English versions) published in Notification No. G.S.R. 915 in Gazette of India dated the 25th August, 1973, under sub-section (4) of section 30 of the Industries (Development and Regulation) Act, 1951. [Placed in library. See No. LT-5681/73.]