

Shri Jyotirmoy Basu: We have a Tea Board. The Tea Board is a very impressionable thing, but what they have given to the nation amounts to nothing. They go round all over the world. The new Chairman comes to Delhi every week. He draws a fat travelling allowance. He goes to New York. There are attractive lady assistants drawing fat salaries. But what is the net result? We do not get one-fourth of what the housewife pays in the foreign countries. The Indian labour gets 4 annas for a pound of tea whereas a labourer in a foreign country pays Rs. 20 for a pound of tea. A cup of tea, you will be surprised to know, might cost you anything between Rs 3 and Rs. 6 in foreign countries. In a middle-class cafe it costs anything between Rs. 2 and Rs. 3, and the Government had been sitting over it. The late Dr. Shivaswamy made specific recommendations in the Plantation Inquiry Commission Report and the Government had been only watching, making big buildings for the Tea Board, constructing air-conditioned rooms, guest houses for the big team of officers and all that. We do not want all these things. I suggest that a Tea Marketing Corporation be formed and we take marketing of tea in packets like as they do in the case of horlicks and scotch whisky so that with the tea we will be able to sell packing material, packing labour and shipping freight. That is the only way-out

17 hrs.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

The Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and Communications (Dr. Ram Subhag Singh): With your permission, Sir, I would like to announce a change in the programme of our discussion on Demands for Grants. On the conclusion of the discussion and voting on the Demands for Grants relating to the Ministry of Home Affairs, the Demands for Grants of the Ministries of Irrigation and Power and Com-

munications may be taken up giving precedence over the Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Food and Agriculture. This change has been necessitated to facilitate the Minister of Food and Agriculture to participate in a conference of Chief Ministers and Ministers of Agriculture and Irrigation in States to be held on the 6th and 7th of July

Shri P. C. Sen (Purnea): Sir, I rise to a point of order. May I know what is the time taken by this side and that side

Mr. Speaker: I do not know. I have not calculated.

Shri Nath Pal (Rajapur): This is perhaps the longest point of order ever raised in this House.

17.03 hrs.

DISCUSSION RE: STRIKE BY AIR-INDIA PILOTS

श्री कंबर लाल गुप्त (दिल्ली सदर) अध्यक्ष जी, यह दुर्भाग्य की बात है कि आज एयर इंडिया के विमान चालकों द्वारा हड़ताल हुई है। [जैसा कि सब को विदित है इस हड़ताल से करीब तीन करोड़ रुपये का फारेन एक्सचेंज का नुकसान होगा। इस के प्रतिरक्त जिस सब्सिडी के बारे में हमारे देश का नाम ऊँचा है उस को भी घटका लगेगा। आज अध्यक्ष महोदय, फारेन एक्सचेंज की हमारे देश में कितनी कमी है और कांग्रेस के 20 साल लगातार गतत आर्थिक नीतियों के चलाने के कारण से देश की स्थिति यहाँ तक पहुँच गई है कि सरकार बुनियादी में बालटेन से कर के फारेन एक्सचेंज डूब रही है। यह जिस देश की स्थिति हो उस में यह हड़ताल और उम में इतना नुकसान यह देश के लिए बड़ी चिन्ताजनक बात है। अध्यक्ष जी, तय क्या है? मुझे बहुत बड़ी उत्सुकता है नजर नहीं आती। 1 जुलाई 1965 के तीन साल के

लिए ऐग्रिमेंट हुआ मनेजमेंट और एयर इंडिया के पाइलट्स के बीच में और उसे नेशनल इंडस्ट्रियल ट्रिब्यूनल द्वारा कन्फर्म कर दिया गया। इस के बाद एक इंडियन एयर साइन्स कारपोरेशन के पाइलट्स और मनेजमेंट में जनवरी, 1966 में ऐग्रिमेंट हुआ। वह भी ट्रिब्यूनल द्वारा कन्फर्म कर दिया। अब उस ट्रिब्यूनल के घन्वर जो घबाड़े हैं उस के अध्यक्ष महोदय, दो हिस्से हैं। एक पार्ट (ए) है और दूसरा पार्ट (2) है अब सगढ़ा पार्ट (2) का है। सरकार कहती है कि पार्ट (2) बाइंडिंग नहीं है। पाइलट्स कहते हैं कि बाइंडिंग है। पार्ट (2) में इंडियन एयर साइन्स कारपोरेशन के पाइलट्स और एयर इंडिया के पाइलट्स की सर्विस और एलायंस के बारे में कुछ बाइंडिंग साइन्स की हुई है। सरकार का कहना यह है कि क्योंकि यह एवाइड दिया हुआ है यह स्ट्राइक गैर-कानूनी है और सरकार यह कहती है कि इतना पैसा इन को मिलता है जो मायद किसी को भी नहीं मिलता। इस से नुकसान कारेन एक्सचेंज का होगा, इस से दूसरे सार्थियों को नुकसान होगा जिन को नीकरियों से थोड़े दिन के लिए हटना पड़ेगी, इसलिए उन्हें यह चीज नहीं करनी चाहिए। उन का कहना यह है कि जो चीज निश्चित है उस की गारिटेन्शन में देने की जरूरत नहीं है। सरकार ने उस को एकतरफा ऐडजुडिकेशन के लिए दे दिया।

अध्यक्ष महोदय, जो स्टेटमेंट मंत्री महोदय ने सदन के सामने रख है कुछ अंधूरा सा है। उस में तथ्य पूरे साफ तौर से नहीं आते और मुझे बड़ा दुःख है। अध्यक्ष महोदय, मंत्री महोदय बहुत अच्छे घादमी हैं, मैं उन की बड़ी कदर करता हूँ लेकिन मैंने उनसे कहा कि मुझे ऐग्रिमेंट की कापी दी जानी चाहिए। लेकिन मुझे ऐग्रिमेंट की कापी नहीं मिली क्योंकि मुझे इस में कुछ मौलमाम समता है। जो स्टेटमेंट मुझे नज़र आता है और जो स्टेटमेंट

और जो तथ्य कोट किए गए हैं वह सही नहीं हैं। कुछ हिस्सा बताया गया, पूरा नहीं बताया गया, ऐसी बूझा में आती है। इस स्टेटमेंट में कहा है :

"The Tribunal held that there should be parity or near-parity between the workmen of Air India and workmen of IAC with regard to comparable categories of workmen performing similar functions. In the case of Air India the flight crew are entitled to additional overseas allowance to which the pilots of IAC will not be entitled."

यह एक जो कोट किया है वह तो लगातार है उस के प्रांग कुछ बाद में कोट किया है, वह भी मैं पढ़ता हूँ -

"I am informed that many of the agreements between IAC and its workmen are shortly to expire and fresh negotiations will have to be undertaken. These negotiations will no doubt be influenced by my remarks while dealing with Part II of the Schedule. It is also said that any award that I am making in regard to Part II of the Schedule cannot be said to have the same binding force as my award on Part I, which is between the two parties who have been exhaustively heard on each and every item."

अध्यक्ष महोदय, अब पाइलट्स का कहना है यह जो पार्ट (2) है यह बाइंडिंग है...

Shri Ranga (Srikakulam): How can it be binding when the Tribunal says that it is not binding?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Member should conclude now.

Shri Kanwar Lal Gupta: I have taken only five minutes.

Mr. Speaker: Here we cannot go on the basis of a half-an-hour discussion. All the parties want to participate in the discussion.

Shri Kanwar Lal Gupta: You should give me at least 15 minutes. Otherwise, it will not be possible for me to do justice to the debate.

Mr. Speaker: Let us establish some procedure. If you want 15 minutes in a half-an-hour discussion, I do not mind; then, I will allow only questions to a few members and then call the Minister. But here all the parties want to participate in the discussion. Now, if every party has to be given that much time, how many hours will it take? Just imagine the position. If only one member is going to speak and then the Minister is going to reply, I do not mind it; I have no objection if he takes even more than 15 minutes; but not here. There is the PSP, the Swatantra Party and there are other parties. As you know, seven parties are there in the Opposition. And, then, the Congress Members are also there.

Shri Kanwar Lal Gupta: Please extend the time by 15 minutes.

Mr. Speaker: No.

Shri Kanwar Lal Gupta: Otherwise, there is no use. I cannot do justice to it.

Mr. Speaker: That means, others cannot speak. What do you want me to do with the other parties? You tell me something realistic and I am prepared to follow any suggestion that you make. But to say that you alone should get so much time, I am not able to appreciate and accept.

Shri Randhir Singh (Rohtak): Fifty-fifty.

Mr. Speaker: I am not able to give a chance even to ten per cent on this side.

श्री कान्वर लाल गुप्ता : अध्यक्ष महोदय, जब इस के प्रश्न पर चर्चा करनी है ? इस

की जो सीगल पोजीशन है वह यह है जो पार्ट 2 है, उसकी सीगल पोजीशन यह है कि यह वाइन्डिंग है, इस में गाइड लाइन तय की हुई है और गवर्नमेंट कूब-बे से उस से रिगल-आउट होना चाहती है। इस का फायदे-नाशक इफेक्ट कुछ भी नहीं है, इस में 200 रु० उनकी तनखाह बढ़ेगी और इन्कम-टैक्स काटने के बाद केवल 70 रु० महीने का उनको लाभ होगा, बर्कन मवान 70 रु० का नहीं है। मवाल यह है कि अगर आप किमा से कोई एग्रीमेंट करते हैं, तो उस को ध्यान करना चाहिये। जो पैरिटी का प्रिन्सिपल है, एग्रीमेंट आता तय किया गया है कि एयर इंडिया का एग्जाम्पल कार्पोरेशन के पायलेट्स में यह फर्क होगा, उस पैरिटी का प्रिन्सिपल को मानना चाहते हैं या नहीं मानना चाहते हैं। मझे तो सरकार की नीयत माफ नजर आती है कि वह इसे नहीं मानना चाहते हैं। वे 70 रु० की चिन्ता नहीं करते हैं, लेकिन उन को ध्यान है कि कल आई० ए० सी० के पायलेट्स को तनखाह यदि बढ़ाना है तो यह भी ज्यादा मांगेंगे और इस लिये वह इस पैरिटी को खत्म करना चाहते हैं, धाने के लिये—यह सरकार की हमेशा नीति रही है। यह एक प्रकार की स्टोन टाइप की, व्यूरोक्रेटिक टाइप की एग्रीमेंट है जो कि वैनी वाइण्डिंग पाउण्ड फलित के समान है। जो दफ्तर में बैठे हुए हैं, वे एग्जाम्पल निकाल देते हैं और बड़ी शाबाशी देते हैं। उन को मालूम नहीं है कि इससे कितना नुकसान होगा। सरकार ने बेतार को धार देकर तीर पर इसको प्रेस्टिज का सवाल बना दिया है। जो एक गाइड लाइन तय की हुई है, उस से बैक-आउट क्यों होना चाहते हैं।

अध्यक्ष महोदय, हमारी चीज आपने कही कि यह स्ट्राइक इतना बुरा है कि इन्कम-टैक्स नहीं है, इसलिये किमे हा सकडी है जब कि सरकार एग्रीमेंट को इम्प्लीमेंट नहीं करना चाहती है। जो एग्रीमेंट को इम्प्लीमेंट नहीं करता है वह

कसूरवार है, सरकार इसके लिये जिम्मेदार है, इसलिये वह इस्तीफा नहीं ही सकती। हाँ, अगर एसेन्शियल सर्विसिज के आधार पर स्ट्राइक को इन्जीगल कर दें तो वह दूसरी बात है, वरना अपनी जगह पर स्ट्राइक इस्तीफा नहीं है।

तीसरी चीज, सरकार की आज जाग खुबी है, अगर उसी क्वेश्चन में सरकार बदल करना चाहती तो कर सकती थी, इन्डस्ट्रियल डिस्प्यूट्स एक्ट के सेक्शन 16 या 17 के मानहत उस को पावर है और उसको मं डिफाई कर सकते थे, लेकिन सरकार ने मं डिफाई नहीं किया। आपको कद होमा, अध्यक्ष महोदय, वं उदात्त मं डिफाई हुआ था उस समय शायद श्री गिरी नेबर मिनिस्टर थे, बाद में उन्होंने इस्तीफा भी दिया था। इन्लिये आपको चाहिये था कि उसी वक्त मं डिफाई करते लेकिन आपने मं डिफाई नहीं किया और आज एक छोटी सी बात को जहनो बना दिया है। वह एक प्रेस्टिज की बात है, प्रिन्सिपल की बात है। यह रिटो का मवाल है, आपने का सवाल है, आप उस को डिमरिट करना चाहते हैं।

कहा जाता है िये बहुत रैसा लेते हैं। मैं पूछना चाहता हू कि ए-एक मंत्री के ऊपर 12-12 हजार दाय्य खर्च होता है इतना होने के बाद भी मंत्री लोग अपना जो घोषो का बिल है वह भा दफ्तर में डालना चाहते हैं . . .

संसद-कार्य तब सचर नंबी (डा० राज सुभष सिंह) : यह कहाँ से आ गया ?

Mr. Speaker: You are going into the things which are not relevant; otherwise, you could have finished your speech long ago.

श्री कंचर लाल यशना : इस लिये अध्यक्ष-महोदय- मैं यह कहना चाहता हूँ कि

यह जो ब्यूरोक्रेटिक एग्रीज है इस को छोड़ कर सरकार को रियलिस्टिक एग्रीज लेना चाहिये। हाँ, अगर राष्ट्रीय दृष्टिकोण से सोचा जाये, तो मैं समझता हूँ कि पायलेट्स का कदम हेस्टी है, खास तौर से इतने हाइली-पेड लोग इस तरह से बिहेव नहीं कर सकते, जिम तरह से कि एक प्राइमरी इन्डस्ट्रीयल बकर बिहेव करता है। उन मे यह आशा थी कि लोगों के सामने, जनता के सामने सारे तथ्यों को रखते और उस के बाद अगर जरूरत होती तो एक्सट्रीम कदम उठाते। मैं समझता हूँ कि यह एक बहुत ही हेस्टी कदम है। पैट्रियटिज्म का डिमाण्ड यह है कि देश के लिये, जहा फोरन-गवर्नमेन्ट का इतना नुकसान हो उन को इस तरह का काम नहीं करना चाहिये था।

मैं सरकार से मांग करता हूँ कि मिनिस्टर साहब उनको बुलाये, उनसे बातचीत करे तथा पायलेट्स से मैं अपील करता हूँ कि देश का हित की दृष्टि से उन्हें यह हड़ताल वापस ले लेनी चाहिये तथा मिनिस्टर साहब से मिल कर आपस में बातचीत कर के कोई भी रास्ता ऐसा निकाले जिससे दो-तीन दिन के अन्दर यह झगड़ा खत्म हो जाय। गाली देने से, चिल्लाने से या बलाबुरा कहने से कोई लाभ नहीं होगा, मिनिस्टर साहब समझदार आदमी है अभी तक पोलैटिकल रटीम की छाप उन पर नहीं लगी है, वह डेमोक्रेसी में विश्वास करते हैं, आप ब्यूरो-क्रेटिक टाइप के जो अफसर हैं उन के कहने मे मत जाइये, उन को बुलाइये, उन से बातचीत कीजिये, और उन से अपील कीजिये। मैं समझता हूँ कि उन को भा इस सदन की भावना का आदर कर के हड़ताल को वापस कर लेना चाहिये।

Shri Nath Pal (Rajapur): Mr. Speaker, Sir, last time, when we discussed the strike by the Air India pilots, I had to cross swords with you. This time, you are presiding over this discussion.

[Shri Nath Pai]

It is indeed a great pity that the State-owned enterprise which is the pride of the nation should be compelled to suspend its operation because of the unfortunate development of a strike. I would like to bring to your notice how the country feels about this enterprise. This is what the Public Undertakings Committee Report has to say:

"It is against these odds that the operation of Air India has to be viewed. Judged from the financial results and the conscious efforts made to better its standards, the performance of Air India needs to be commended."

Shri P. G. Sen (Purnea): Sir, how much time has been allotted to Members on this side and on that side?

Mr. Speaker: No time has been allotted for anybody. The discussion has just started. I have got the names here. He may please sit down.

Shri P. G. Sen: Some time will be taken by the Minister and that will also be debited to the time of the Congress Members.

Mr. Speaker: The Minister belongs to the Congress Party. You have to tolerate him, whether you like it or not. (Interruption).

Shri Nath Pai: Some private tuitions should be arranged by the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs because the behaviour displayed by the Members of the ruling Party is staggering.

I was reading from the Report of the Public Undertakings where they have made a mention of the performance of the Air India International. . . (Interruption). It says:

"Air India is operating in an intensely competition industry. . ."

Sir, I am equally distressed that so soon after assuming office and after raising such expectations that he will

be bringing a new approach to the handling of this nationalised enterprise, Dr. Karan Singh should be saddled with tackling a strike in the Air India International. I would like to point out only a few things which we can rectify even at this late stage. I feel and perhaps the whole House will agree with me that matters have been allowed to develop where a strike became inevitable. Anyway, whether it was inevitable or not, the strike has been resorted to. I think, this happens because there is a pattern of behaviour on the part of the Government in these matters. I would not like to apportion the blame because I want to make an appeal for a constructive and a sympathetic approach. Let us not try to make it a prestige issue. I know it will be said that the pilots have made it so. But if we want to have a happy solution and an amicable settlement, that will not do because there is much that can be said about the way the Air India management sometimes looks after the affairs. Many things can be rectified by more imaginative handling of the affairs, be it the recruitment of the pilots, be it the provisioning of the stores and all that. There is economy that can be effected at every stage. But today is not the time for that.

Unfortunately, this year, the Ministry's Demands may not be taken up and we may not get an opportunity. . . (Interruption). What is this? Can't you control this man?

Mr. Speaker: Order, order.

Shri Nath Pai: What is this, Mr. Speaker? I know my way. I am not going to take lessons from them. (Interruptions).

Shrimati Tarakeshwari Shaha (Barh): They are not second-class citizens to be treated in this way.

Shri Nath Pai: Five times you have appealed to him. If he has any

sence... (Interruptions). I am not going to take lessons from them.

Shrimati Tarkeshwari Sinha: We are not second-class members of this House.

Shri Bheo Narain (Basti): We are not second-class members here. (Interruptions).

Shri Nath Pal: If the hon. Member has any complaint, it cannot be against this House. He can settle it with the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs.

Shrimati Tarkeshwari Sinha: Why is he bullying like this? Why is he losing his temper?

Shri Nath Pal: I am not going to take lessons from these people.

Shrimati Tarkeshwari Sinha: He cannot treat us as second-class members.

Shri Bheo Narain: We are not second-class members here.

Shri Nath Pal: I am not going to be intimidated by all this. (Interruptions).

Mr. Speaker: Order, order. Please address the Chair.

Shri Nath Pal: I am addressing the Chair. I am telling you, Sir, that you should control this hon. Member.

Shri Bheo Narain: He is not the Headmaster of this House.

Shrimati Tarkeshwari Sinha: The manner of bullying is no good.

Mr. Speaker: Order, order. At the lag end of the day, when we are discussing something, why should all these things happen? Let us be orderly. (Interruptions).

Mr. Nath Pal: may continue his speech.

Shri Nath Pal: I think, it strikes us enough because very often, as you will recall, there is a breakdown of communications between the affected group and the Government of India. If communications were properly maintained, these mis-understandings which cropped up and which led to

unhappy developments like strike, could perhaps have been avoided. I know, a few days back, the Minister was telling the Secretary of the Department to go and talk to the pilots. I think, the complaint has been hanging fire for more than 18 months. They have been wanting to get a hearing on this issue. It may be right or wrong. For 18 months they have been pleading for a hearing on this issue. I think, the hon. Minister was good enough to discard the protocol, met them and talked to them. I also think, that is my information, that he held out an assurance, which he meant to keep. I am sure, that he would try to settle the dispute in less than a month. Afterwards, what happened, I do not know. I do not know where the things went wrong. Not even a reply was given, it seems. Where do we stand today? In the midst of a strike. How costly it is! How it is going to perhaps damage the reputation of an undertaking, of an enterprise, which, in the competitive world, has earned prestige for itself. To whom do we owe it? We owe it to the management, but very largely to the pilots and crew who operate this. If the credit which we give to the Air India is to be shared fairly and equitably, the pilots have a part to play. In this background, is it fair for the Chairman of the Air India International, who normally is a very sober man, given to restraint, to make a provocative statement of this nature? May I read it out to you? The Chairman in his statement says:

"In the view of the Management, such action can only be termed totally irresponsible and unpatriotic. The fact that this action will be in breach of the law and at a time when the country is passing through the most severe economic crisis, it has faced since Independence, and when as a result millions of our countrymen are suffering untold hardships, misery and even starvation makes it even more reprehensible."

[Shri Nath Pai]

I feel that the Chairman has vitiated the atmosphere by unnecessarily talking about patriotism of a group of highly talented people.

Mr. Speaker: He may conclude now

Shri Nath Pai: Three-fourths of my time has been taken away by interruptions. Anyway, I will conclude.

I would now like to draw your attention to this thing. I think Government made an offer for arbitration. The pilots at this stage have been asking for a thing which Government seem to concede but there again it seems the Finance Ministry comes in the way of granting it. This is a point on which agreement can be reached. This is a point on which a job evaluation committee should be appointed, if Dr. Karan Singh still stands by his statement. This is what he has told the House:

"At the same time, Government agreed to appoint a job evaluation committee."

The pilots have some legitimate grievance. It is not just about Rs. 200. If I understand the hon. Minister aright, they have said that Air India is not the only one international airlines which operates on international standards. If the emoluments happen to be the highest, it is something that we do not do only here; the rest of the world does it too. It is an international standards on which the emoluments are settled.

Job evaluation has been a long complaint. If the Ministry agrees to have it done, why should they not make this small concession that whatever the findings of the job evaluation committee, retrospective effect will be given to them? I would like the House to bear with me and particularly the supporters of the Treasury Benches to bear with me for a minute, when I say that now the strike is on this small point; Government agree to have job evaluation; the pilots sug-

gest that after the job evaluation has been done, retrospective effect should be given to the findings. After all, it is nothing new. It has been the practice invariably with regard to the findings of committees to give them retrospective effect. You will recall that even today Shri Morarji Deas, the Finance Minister, had assured this House that retrospective effect would be given with regard to dearness allowance. Now, the pilots are asking for job evaluation, and the hon. Minister is agreeing to accept their demand for job evaluation, but the hitch has come over this simple thing about the point of implementation. I think they are entitled to ask for retrospective effect. May I ask Dr. Karan Singh that let him not make it a trial of strength? Let us not allow this element of prestige; let us not get bogged down into considerations of who is more patriotic. There is a strike which is on in a very vital sector of our national life, and it needs a solution. I would appeal to him, therefore, that there shall not be the attitude that Government is strong and infallible, there is this strike which is on, it needs commonsense to solve it. I hope he will bring to bear a sympathetic and imaginative look and try to reach a settlement with the pilots.

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members on the Congress Benches are a little annoyed naturally, because they would like that one or two on their side also should be called. So, I want the Members in the Opposition not to be annoyed if I call one or two of them also, because it is natural to call some people from the Congress Benches also in between.

Shri Inder J. Malhotra (Jammu): Some of us also should get a chance

Mr. Speaker: I have myself argued his case. I am trying to balance. But there are several parties in the Opposition and I have to call one from each separately.

Shri Krishna Kumar Chatterji (Howrah): It is a matter of deep regret that the honourable gentlemen of the Indian Pilots' Guild have gone on strike in spite of the fact that the matter has been referred to the Government for arbitration....

Mr. Speaker: I would like to appeal to hon. Members not to take 15 or 20 minutes each. If everyone of them takes 15 to 20 minutes, what can be done? There are seven Members to be called from the Opposition and seven from the Congress Benches or at least four from the Congress side.

Shri Pileo Mody (Godhra): You may call only those Members who will take only two or three minutes each and you may leave out the ones who want 15 to 16 minutes.

Mr. Speaker: When the hon. Members get up and begin speaking then it is very difficult for me to stop them.

Shri Pileo Mody: You may look at their past records.

Shri Krishna Kumar Chatterji: and in spite of the appeal from the Government and the Air India authorities not to precipitate a strike in the international tourist year and that too in the busiest season of tourist travel in India.

I have no quarrel with the Indian Pilots' Guild over their endeavour to increase their emoluments by such processes. But it must be said without mincing matters that while deciding upon this course, they have not been moved by patriotic or national considerations. (Interruptions). I would submit that the question of discipline has also got to be considered apart from the question of the economic improvement of their conditions. It is highly deplorable that such highly paid officers should choose to go on strike. They are forgetting all the while the millions of our government servants who are living from hand to mouth year in and year out. Not only that. Some of these government servants,

in fact quite a large number of them, thousands of them, are on the borderline of starvation. I am one of those who is always against a privileged class, even if that class is the result of possession of expert or technical knowledge. We must be patriotic enough and national enough to understand the conditions in this country. These highly paid officers draw more emoluments than Cabinet Ministers. One of my nephews who was a pilot had met a tragic end in an aircrash in Calcutta. I know the life they live.

Therefore, I am appealing to the members of the other side: let us not encourage this thing, which will go against our national interest.

Shri Shrichang Goel (Chandigarh): Is he ready to exchange places?

Shri Krishna Kumar Chatterji: In this country, democracy has been interpreted as adjustments and compromises. Democracy has degenerated into monopoly for a privileged class.

Mr. Speaker: I am receiving this even now when I have already many names with me.

श्री अजं करनेन्डीत्र (बम्बई-दक्षिण) :
प्रध्यक्ष महोदय, जो हड़ताल हुई है उसका जल्दी से जल्दी समाप्त करना चाहिये इसके बारे में कोई दो रायें नहीं हो सकतीं। पाइलट्स गिल्ड की धोर से लगातार पिछले 18 महीनों में, यानी जब से नेशनल इंडस्ट्रियल ट्राइब्यूनल के पार्ट 2 का प्रवाह आया है, तभी से यह कोशिश हो रही थी कि उसमें जो सिफारिशें की गई हैं उन पर प्रमल करने की कोशिश सरकार करे। टाटा साहब का बयान मैंने पढ़ा और मंत्री साहब का बयान भी मैंने पढ़ा लेकिन 18 महीनों से इस मामले को हल करने के लिये उन्होंने क्या क्या किया यह हमारे सामने नहीं आई। मैं इस बात का खुलासा चाहूंगा कि सरकार की धोर से यह मैनेजमेंट की धोर से पिछले

[श्री जार्ज फरनेन्डीज]

18 महीनों में क्या कोशिश की गई है और क्या सुझाव उन्होंने पेश किया है तथा पाइलट्स गिल्ड की ओर से उनका क्या जवाब मिला।

जहां तक पाइलट्स की मांग का सवाल है, मैनेजमेंट के कहने का अर्थ मैं यही समझ पाया हूँ कि इसमें पैसे की बात कोई महत्व की चीज नहीं है। अगर सरकार उन्हें 200 रुपया ज्यादा देगी तो, जैसा सरकार या टाटा साहब का कहना है, उस में से 130 रुपया उनके पास वापस आ जायेगा टैक्स के रूप में, क्योंकि वह कहते हैं कि 200 रुपया जो दिया जायेगा वह केवल उनको हाथ में देने की बात है। उनके पास केवल 70 रुपया ही जायेगा। बाकी 130 रुपया इनकम टैक्स वर्गारह में कट कर वापस सरकार के पास पहुंच जायेगा। इसलिये पैसे की कोई बात न होकर असल बात इज्जत की है। वह भी व्यक्तिगत इज्जत नहीं, नाट पर्सनल प्रेरिटर, नौकरी की इज्जत की बात उन्होंने कही है, स्टेटस की इज्जत। जिन लोगो को इस बन्दे की जानकारी है, मैं नहीं समझता कि वह लोग इस मामले में ज्यादा चिल्लाने का काम करेंगे। ब्रिटीश पाइलट्स हिन्दुस्तान में ही नहीं चलते हैं, दुनिया के नमामुल्कों में चलते हैं। इसलिये कोई भी इस सदन के सदस्य या सदन के बाहर के लोग इस मामले में विचार करने हुए बोइंग पाइलट्स को दूसरे मुल्कों में किस ढंग से देखा जाता है उसके बारे में विचार अवश्य करेंगे और तब अपना फैसला देंगे, ऐसा मैं समझता हूँ।

मैं दो एक सुझाव आपके द्वारा रखना चाहूंगा। पहला सुझाव यह है कि प्राइवेट आरबिट्रेशन को सरकार तत्काल मान ले और इंडस्ट्रियल ट्राइब्यूनल वर्गारह के झगड़ को छोड़ दे। इससे उस का कोई मतलब नहीं है। वह किसी भी मामले को हल नहीं करता है। सरकार प्राइवेट आरबिट्रेशन को तत्काल मान ले। वह पाइलट्स गिल्ड वालों को बुझा कर उन से पूछ ले कि उन को किस

का आरबिट्रेशन मंजूर है। हो सकता है कि वह अध्यक्ष महोदय को मंजूर कर लें। या सेक्टर मिनिस्टर को मंजूर कर लें। मैं यही कहना चाहता हूँ कि सरकार को प्राइवेट आरबिट्रेशन मान लेना चाहिये।

दूसरी बात यह है कि नेशनल इंडस्ट्रियल ट्राइब्यूनल के पार्ट 2 का जो अर्बाई है उस की सिफारिशों को जिस दिन से अर्बाई आया है उस दिन से अमल में लाने का एलान सरकार द्वारा किया जाना चाहिये।

तीसरे जो जब इवैल्यूएशन का मामला है वह भी बहुत ही गम्भीर प्रश्न है। पाइलट्स का कहना है कि अर्बाई आने से पहले कैरवेल पाइलट्स को बोइंग पाइलट्स के मुकाबले में 80 फी सदी तनख्वाह मिलती थी लेकिन आज उनको बोइंग वालों के समान मिलती है या कुछ ज्यादा मिलती है। आज उनका यह कथन है कि जब इवैल्यूएशन की चर्चा करने में मिनिस्टर साहब ने हमसे थोड़ी भी चालाकी की है। आप देखिये कि उनका जो बयान है उसमें वह क्या कहते हैं। श्री नाथ पाई ने भी इसका जिक्र किया है

'At the same time, Government agreed to appoint a job evaluation committee, as had earlier been suggested by the Indian Pilots Guild with a view to making a proper and thorough job of valuation of various categories of employees of Air India and IAC'

अब पाइलट्स की मांग यह नहीं है कि आप बैरियस कैटेगरीज का जब इवैल्यूएशन कीजिये। बैरियस कैटेगरीज के जब इवैल्यूएशन में बहुत समय लग जायेगा। प्राइवेट रेटिंग सिस्टम पर जब इवैल्यूएशन करेंगे तो कम से कम दो तीन साल लग जायेंगे। पाइलट्स का जब इवैल्यूएशन वर्गारह विज्ञा वि बोइंग तत्काल किया जाना चाहिये।

तीसरी बात जिसका बहुत गम्भीरता से सवाल को सोचना चाहिये, वह यह कि आप एयर इंडिया के आपरेशन के बारे में जांच कीजिये।

बीच बीच में कई बार एयर इंडिया के सम्बन्ध में कई तरह के आरोप लगाये गये हैं, लेकिन इसके बारे में जांच का काम नहीं किया जाता है। मैं समझता हूँ कि पाइलट्स की श्रांति से जब यह कहा जाता है कि आपरेशन के बारे में जांच की जाये, तो उसका कुछ न कुछ कारण जरूर होगा। आपके ऐसा कहने का कोई मतलब नहीं कि आप के सामने इंडिविजुअल केसेज रखे जायें तब आप उनको देखेंगे। आप इसकी जांच को मजूर कीजिये।

श्री भी बत यह कि जो भी अमट होता है उसका एक कारण यह भी है कि इंडियन एयरलाइन्स कारपोरेशन और एयर इंडिया के अलग अलग कारपोरेशन रखे गये है जो कि बेमनलब है। मैं नहीं जानता कि इस पर कभी विचार किया गया या नहीं। लेकिन दुनिया के किसी भी मुल्क में इस किस्म में देश के अन्दर के लिये एक कारपोरेशन और अन्तर्गष्ट्रीय एयरलाइन्स के लिये दूसरा कारपोरेशन नहीं है। हम में एयर-फ्लोट है और अमरीका में टी० डब्ल्यू० ए० है। उसी तरह यहाँ भी होना चाहिए और अन्दर और बाहर दोनों के लिए एक कारपोरेशन होना चाहिये।

श्री रणवीर सिंह . अध्यक्ष महोदय, जब बाइ ही खेत को खेती तो खेत में क्या बचेगा? इन आफतों का शर्मभार चाहिए। यह सिन्धुस्तान में सब ने ज्यादा तन्ख्वाह पाने वाले आदमी हैं, पकि आफिमस। जब माते चार हजार और पांच हजार रुपया माहवार तन्ख्वाह पाने वाले अफसर स्ट्राइक करेगे तब बाकी लाखों आदमी जो सर्विस में हैं उनका क्या हाल होगा?

दूसरी बात में यह कहना चाहता हूँ कि यह बरीब लाग एक्स्प्लोडेशन के शिकार हैं। हमारे यहां कहावत है कि राउतों रडापा काट दे लेकिन रंडुए नहीं काटने देते। यह जो सयासी पार्टीज के लीडर हैं यह बसने

नहीं गे किसी को, न छोटे अफसर का और न बड़े अफसर को। मैं अपने पाइलों को बुरा नहीं कहता लेकिन हमारे देश की राजनीति इतनी खराब हो गई है कि हर एक बात में सयासन घा जाती है।

Shri M. L. Sondhi (New Delhi).
This is not very polite, this is obscene, unparliamentary.

श्री रणवीर सिंह: यह बात उन्हें चुभती है इस लिये वह ऐसा कहते हैं। मैं आप से कहना चाहूंगा कि एक बिल्ली कबूतर के पाम गई और कहा कि मैं आपकी ब्या मेवा कर सकती हूँ। कबूतर साहब कहने लगे कि आप यहाँ में तणरीफ ले जाइये, मैं आराम से रह लगा। आज सयासी पार्टी वाले उन के पास जाते है और उन को उकसाते है। लेकिन इस में देश का भला नहीं होता एक ऐसे मोके पर जब कि देश को इंटरनेशनल टर्मिन में बाकी इनकम हा सकती है, तैम गोजत में जा कि बिजिनेस मंजन है, उन लाग ने स्ट्राइक किया है। इस लिये वह किसी भी हमदर्दी के मतलब नहीं है। आज ऐसे मोके पर जब कि करोड़ों रुपयों का नुकसान इस देश का हो रहा है वरतु हिट बिलो बि बेल्ट का काम करने है। इन चीज का देश को याद रखना चाहिये।

अध्यक्ष महोदय मैं आप से कहना चाहूंगा कि एर गिफ. 20000 का मवाल नहीं है। 20000 का फर्क की बात को ले कर यह घेगव में भी ऊपर चले गये। मैं आप से दख्वास्त करना चाहूंगा कि यह देश के लिये बड़ा भारी प्रोब्लेम है। यह एकनाकी तौर पर एक गलत काम है। यह लाग सयासी तौर पर शिकार हो गये है और खामख्वाह एक एजिटेशन चला रहे है, जिन वक्त प्रोसीडिंग्स चल रही है और प्रवाइ तक की बात चलनी है। मैं जानना चाहता हूँ कि क्या वह लोग थोड़े दिन तक इन्तजार नहीं कर सकते।

[श्री रणधीर सिंह]

मैं ही नहीं वे भी कहना चाहता हूँ कि वह ही हमें सब का डेका न ले लिया करे। यह सरकार सब के मफाद की पासवान है। यह बड़े, छोटे गरब सब के मफाद को देखती है। अगर यह भाई मेहरजानी कर के मयास पार्टियों के बलु से बच निवसे तो मैं आपका माफेंन श्री साहब से देखना कहूँ कि वह उन लोगों के साथ नहीं दिखनाये और वा उन के मनालवात हैं उन के ऊपर हमदर्दी से गारवें। जाँच उनका लेजिटिमेट बात है उस का मान लिया जाये लेकिन उस से एवो स्ट्राइक अनकॉन्डिशनली विवडा जाना चाहिये।

Mr. Speaker Mr Piloo Mody

Shri Kanwar Lal Gupta: If Mr Piloo Mody is a pilot, what will happen to that plane?

Shri Piloo Mody: That is why they are building bigger and better planes.

Mr Speaker, Sir to begin with, I would like to say how proud I am that there is in India one institution left like Air India. When every public institution has gone to pot, then I think of Air India, it gives me some self-satisfaction that there is one particular organisation in this country which has maintained a quality of which India can be proud.

I would also like to make it quite clear that I have nothing against the pilots of Air India. I think they are fine technicians, they are all talented, work hard and are well paid, as they should be. However, I must express my sorrow that they have used the strike as an instrument for furthering this particular demand of theirs. I am not against strikes. I think strikes are a very legitimate instrument of labour disputes.

An hon. Member: So, you concede

Shri Piloo Mody: Yes; we conceded it many more years before your philosophies were born. It is a legitimate instrument of labour disputes, but I do not think that these gentlemen who earn anywhere from Rs. 2,000 to Rs. 8,000 a month can be considered labourers in that sense.

I have something else against this particular mode of agitation. Air India has not one union; it has many unions except that some unions, being a little more proud of themselves, call themselves guilds. You have the Pilots Guild, the Engineers have their own organisation; the navigators have their own organisation. If each organisation in turn finds that they cannot get something that they want and if they go on strike, that means the entire industry has to close down, and the poor labourers in their organisation have to suffer. And this sort of behaviour results in what is happening. (Interruption)

What happens today is this: the pilots of Air India constitute only one and a half per cent of the number of people that they employ. Similarly, other trades have a very small fraction which has formed itself into a group. If each one negotiates for its own benefits separately and then goes on strike as a result of this, I am afraid that Air India is going to be on strike perpetually.

I really sympathise with my hon friend Dr Karan Singh who has recently taken over this onerous burden on his rather young shoulder. That he should have been put into this position at this particular moment,—to face a particular situation not of his own creation. I have sympathy for what has been said by some of my hon friends over here that when certain things are on the anvil, it should not take 18 months to come to any decision. I think it is entirely wrong for the Government to have done this, or by promising that we will do this; we will do that.

Either they should have said categorically, 'No' and faced the strike 18 months ago, or they should have said, "We will consider it through this procedure". I think that a great deal of frustration that arises in this country is due to the inept handling of things by the Government. I am not blaming the hon. Minister. I have already said that this is something that he has been pushed into, but I am talking now of the Government as a whole, and unless the Government learns to become more responsive to the attitudes and to the feelings of people, particularly, its own employees, I am afraid that it is going to have a strike permanently on its hands.

Thank you. I hope I have not taken too much of your time.

Mr. Speaker: No. You are the only person who has stopped before I rang the bell.

Shrimati Tarkeshwari Sinha: Mr. Speaker, Sir, though this strike has been rather unfortunate at this moment, by examining the hon. Minister's statement, I was feeling that the whole attitude of the Government as well as the pilots has been created due to misunderstanding of the whole situation. From the statement itself, I am sorry to say that I would not agree with my hon. friend sitting on my left, and I should disagree with them. Without knowing and understanding the problems of the particular organisation, they should not come to this conclusion that a set of people who are manning Air India are unpatriotic. It is not a question of their being unpatriotic; it is not also a question of their being stingy-minded and bothering about some funds here and there. I am sorry to say that Mr. J. R. D. Tata and the Minister who has supported him have taken that very thing to disown and hurt the Air India pilots' association that they are bothered about Rs. 70. I am sorry to say, if anybody is showing a petty mind and

stinginess, it is the persons who have said that they are bothered about Rs. 70. They are not bothered about it. A person getting a high salary can never bother about Rs. 70 or Rs. 200. The Minister comes from such a good family and knows that persons with a capacity to spend Rs. 4,000 would not bother about getting Rs. 70 more or less. This is not the psychology of the highly paid pilots. Their feeling is, for a very long time they have not been having a sense of security. Secondly, there is a feeling generated in this country that because Mr. J. R. D. Tata is so efficient and because the intelligence of the civilian employees of Government cannot be compared with his, therefore, he should be left alone with whatever he does.

Sir, it is said that they are foreign exchange earners, as if it is the concern of the Air India pilots only to earn foreign exchange and not the concern of the Government. It is an indivisible job in which the Air India pilots are fulfilling some technical assignments. It is indivisible and it is the responsibility of all, including the officers, management and the Government.

The whole discontent has been generated because of the length of time that is taken in order to solve this problem. Sir, when you were Minister in charge of Civil Aviation, there was strike by the Navigators vis-à-vis Flight Engineers. This is nothing compared to that. That was a very complicated problem and you managed to deal with it by showing patience and perseverance and not allowing the doors to be closed. Our Deputy-Speaker, as a non-official member who had nothing to do with the management, took the responsibility of talking between you and the Pilots' Guild and was able to bring about an amicable settlement. The Prime Minister also had been considerable about that. The same method can be followed now.

[Shrimati Tarkeshwari Sinha]

I would like to tell the Minister of Civil Aviation that he has created a very good impression in the minds of the Air India pilots. He is the one person in the entire hierarchy of civil aviation who has created this impression. I am talking with some authority in this matter. These young pilots have been very much impressed by the open-minded attitude and reasonableness displayed by him when they first met him. My whole concern is this. This is yet not a political issue. The opposition members are going to make it a political issue; I am not going to make it a political issue. (Interruptions). The hon. Members have started with very sweet reasonableness and I would like to take advantage of their reasonable frame of mind before they change it. I would appeal to the Minister to catch hold of the point in dispute, i.e. retrospective effect. This point need not have been sent to arbitration. I have never heard of arbitration where Government has got cent per cent discretion to deal with something. It is not an award or evaluation of wages. The only point is they want retrospective effect. That should be done by the executive orders of the Government. Let some Members of Parliament take charge of it, negotiate between the Government and the pilots and bring about a settlement.

Dr. Bhanu Sen (Barasat): Mr Speaker, Sir, there is a tendency today to denounce these pilots. While I do not fully endorse all the statements made by these pilots, I have to say that the management of the Air India have bungled in this situation. For long months they had been waiting. Now it is no good holding these pilots responsible for the crisis that has arisen today.

Secondly, I would like to say that the Government of India, this Ministry, should now look after this Air India business and it should not depend solely on Shri J. R. D. Tata. He may be a very successful businessman but he is not a successful em-

ployer. Therefore, Tata should be given *ta ta*. Otherwise, Sir, how can the Government explain this? As soon as the strike starts the whole staff is going to be laid off gradually. For the action of a section of the employees why should other sections who form the majority be victimised or penalised. Therefore, I want to say that this matter has not been handled properly.

Thirdly, many people have mentioned about this question of job evaluation. Why should not the Government of India agree to this job evaluation? There is no difficulty in that. In the trade union movements it is a demand of the workers. The employees demand job evaluation when they have some grievances.

Fourthly, there is a demand from these pilots for an enquiry into the working of the Operation Department since the Boeing service started. This is also a demand which the Government should look into sympathetically. There is nothing wrong in making this demand.

Therefore, what I say is, this lay-off should not have been made, this inordinate delay should not have taken place by this Air India management. The whole question now depends also upon the attitude of the pilots. There also I want to say that though it is a fact that for long months they have waited, I cannot fully subscribe to the attitude they have taken and the statements they are making. They are raising the question of status whereby they are alienating another section of the pilots, namely, the IAC pilots. This is not proper. Therefore, I would appeal to the pilots also to try and settle these differences and withdraw the strike. The hon. Minister should take the initiative to call a bi-partite meeting. They are demanding a bi-partite meeting. Why should they go to a tribunal? Why should you declare the strike illegal. Even if the strike is

illegal, the Minister can take steps to call a bi-partite meeting to settle the differences. There is no legal bar to that. There have been so many examples in our country to that effect

श्री काशीनाथ पाण्डेय : (पदरीना) :

प्रत्यक्ष महोदय, मैं पिछले वर्ष से ही एयर इंडिया के कार्यकर्ताओं के संबंध में बातें सुन रहा हूँ। मुझे ऐसा लगता है और यह सब भी है कि जहाँ लोग ज्यादा तनख्वाह पाते हैं वहाँ एक पहली भावना आती है कि कौन बड़ा साहब है। (व्यवधान) आप सुन लेंगे, सुनिए। पिछले मतों में जो एयर इंडिया की स्ट्राइक हुई थी वह केवल इंजीनियरों की तनख्वाह रिवाइज करने के ऊपर हुई थी। उन के ऊपर नैविगेंट्स की स्ट्राइक हुई थी। यही नहीं कि वह इस बात से अमनुष्य थे कि उन की तनख्वाह कम थी बल्कि वह नाराज हुए इस से कि इंजीनियरों की तनख्वाह क्यों रिवाइज हुई? मुझे ऐसा लगता है कि कुछ मौलिक रूप से इस संगठन में कुछ गलती है और इन लोगों के विचार में कुछ गलती है। मैं स्ट्राइक को अच्छा समझ सकता हूँ एक छोटे वर्कर्स के लिए। उस की तनख्वाह आज के जमाने में कम है। वह स्ट्राइक में जाते हुए जोभा पाता है। लेकिन बावजूद इसके लिये लोग लम्बी तनख्वाह पाते हैं इन्होंने हड़ताल का प्रश्न प्रश्नाया इसके डा० रनेन सेन ने जो कुछ भी कहा, गो टाटा एक प्रोइवेट प्राइमरी है, लेकिन इस ने इनकार नहीं कर सकते कि एयर इंडिया की जो सारे मसालों में एक रेपुटेशन है उसमें उनका बहुत बड़ा हाथ है। ... (व्यवधान) ... लेकिन मैं आप को बताऊँ कि इस तरह हम लोगों के बहुत करने से बजाय इसके कि एयर इंडिया की रेपुटेशन बढ़े हम उस की रेपुटेशन को घटाते हैं और उन लोगों को प्रोत्साहित करते हैं जो बक्त पर गलत काम करते हैं और देश की तरफ जिन का ध्यान नहीं उठता। लेकिन मैं साथ ही एक बात और भी कहना चाहता हूँ और यह बात मैं स्पष्ट रूप

से कहना चाहता हूँ। कि इन की हड़ताल से हम को कोई सहानुभूति नहीं है। मैं यह समझता हूँ कि पाइलेटों को तुरंत अपनी हड़ताल वापस लेनी चाहिए। लेकिन एक बात यह भी है, मैं एक प्रश्न करना चाहता हूँ मिनिस्टर साहब से कि मिनिस्ट्री को किसी जज के बिनी रिमार्क पर जो भी वह कहे उस के प्रति सम्मान होना चाहिए। चाहे वह सेकेंड्री पार्ट ही क्यों न हो। आप के ऊपर बाइंडिंग नहीं, लेकिन एक जज ने जब कोई बात कही उस की एक ग्रहमियत हो जाती है। अगर इस तरह से हम ठुकराने लगे तो उन की कोई इज्जत नहीं रहेगी। आपको चाहिए या कि उन सेकेंडरी पार्ट के ऊपर एक ट्रिपाट्राइट कान्फरेस बुलाते और उसको सब की सम्मति से निपटाने की कोशिश करते तो पब्लिक ऑपिनियन आपके पक्ष में होती। जब स्ट्राइक होती है तब कमेटी बनाने की बात करते हैं और दूसरी बात करते हैं। मैं यह समझता हूँ कि वह स्ट्राइक विद्वा करे और आप जज के रिमार्क पर अमल करे। उस से यह होगा कि कभी आप के पक्ष में भी फैसला होगा तो दूसरे लोको पर भी उस का यही प्रभाव होगा।

Shri Umanath (Pudukkottai): Mr. Speaker, Sir, all those who are interested in really settling this strike must first see to it that the invectives and slanders against those who are on strike are first stopped. The first necessity is that the invectives must be stopped against the strikers, if they are really interested in bringing about a peaceful atmosphere for the purpose of settlement of the dispute. Shri Tata's statement has been mentioned here. He has stated that the strikers are unpatriotic and irresponsible. I want to know what moral right Shri Tata has got to talk of patriotism, especially when on defence orders he is not prepared.

Mr. Speaker: We are not discussing Tata's.

Shri Umanath: As Chairman of Air India he has made a statement.

Mr. Speaker: We are discussing only that statement.

Shri Umanath: On the question of defence orders, for the sake of the defence of the country, he is not prepared to reduce the price of truck by Rs. 4,000 which is the profit. He is not prepared to reduce that. If it is reduced, he will say "I cannot produce trucks for you". What moral right has such a person to talk about the pilots, who are maintaining the prestige of our airlines?

The crucial question is this. One has already been mentioned by so many friends, namely, job evaluation. The other question is the rent for their technical ability, a term used in common parlance. I would like to submit that for the same technical ability international airlines are paying more than Rs. 5,000.

Shrimati Tarkeshwari Sinha: Including the pilots of the Soviet Union?

Shri Umanath: I am saying international lines.

Shri Pileo Mody: In the United States Senators are paid \$20,000.

Shri Umanath: The crucial question is not these Rs. 200 or 300. These two crucial issues have not come up just now. There was an opportunity available to the Government to avert a strike long ago when the navigators went on strike. Then they could have looked into the question of job evaluation and rent for the technical ability. When Shri Khadlikar as mediator intervened in the dispute these two issues were brought up. Immediately after the settlement was arrived at, if the Government had taken a decision on these two issues then itself and settled the matter, this strike would not have happened. So, I now say that today we are losing Rs. 10 lakhs of rupees every day be-

cause of the failure of this Government to act promptly at that time. Here I do not want to name any particular Minister but I will certainly say that because of the failure of the Government we are losing Rs. 10 lakhs a day. Now, I want to know who is irresponsible—the pilots or the Government which failed to settle these two issues then itself. It is most unpatriotic and irresponsible of Government (Interruption).

18 hrs.

The Government must change its attitude. I propose that as an interim measure immediately let the Government accept this. They say that the difference of Rs. 4,000 has been reduced to Rs. 200. Let the difference of Rs. 400 be maintained and simultaneously a machinery be constituted to decide the question—the particular issue which has arisen between Caravelle and Boeing—of job evaluation and rent for their technical ability.

Finally, I support their important demand that there must be an investigation into the working of this Corporation. Perhaps, Shri Tata is afraid because these people have put up this demand. So far Shri Tata is well known to hon. Members as a fine man.

Mr. Speaker: He is a fine man, no doubt.

Shri Umanath: Shri Tata is afraid that if the investigation into the working of the Corporation takes place, so many weaknesses will come out. That is why he is angry with these pilots and is calling them unpatriotic. I demand that a Parliamentary Committee or Commission be appointed to go into the entire question and to see the working of the Corporation.

Shri Inder J. Malhotra: Mr. Speaker, Sir, after listening to my hon. friend, Shri Umanath, I have come to one conclusion and that is that the statement which the hon. Minister gave the other day in the House is so com-

prehensive and complete that he had no arguments to come forward to plead the cause of the pilots and he had to rely upon Shri Tata and then had to jump on the international air-lines.

Shri Umanath: I have not jumped on you

Shri Inder J. Malhotra: I will certainly agree hundred per cent with one speech which has been made in this House, that of Shri Mody—very reasonable and very realistic. Regarding the other speakers, most of the points were already covered and were duplicated. Everybody wanted to say that the strike is ill-timed and is uncalled for. Everybody wanted to appeal to the pilots that they should come back to their duty immediately. I also associate myself with that appeal.

I would not like to take much time of the House because there is hardly any argument on either side which can be put forward. In the end, I would however appeal to the hon. Minister. As Shrimati Tarkeshwari Sinha has already said, the pilots have exhibited already their confidence in his personality. I appeal to the pilots and also to the hon. Minister that he should kindly see that that confidence is increased and encouraged and if there are certain bottlenecks created by the management, they must be removed. Every effort should be made to see that this strike comes to an end as soon as possible.

The Minister of Tourism and Civil Aviation (Dr. Karan Singh): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I fully share the sense of distress and anxiety which the whole House has shown on the very unfortunate situation in which we are placed today as a result of the strike. I think I should say right in the beginning that although the pilots have said that it is a prestige issue, as far as I am concerned and the Government is concerned, we do not consider it a prestige issue. We look upon it in a way as a national issue.

We look upon it as a national issue because the stakes involved are very high, and my prestige is linked up with the prestige of Air India as an organisation, a complete organisation—one of the finest in the world which includes the Chairman, Shri Tata, who is a very fine person, and these pilots who also in my view are fine people and very well qualified. Long before I became a minister, I was flying in these planes all over the world and I was happy to see the high regard in which Air India was held all over the world. Therefore it is impossible for me to feel that people of that stature should really want to do anything unpatriotic. I would not think that they would like to do anything unpatriotic. But I will say that the strike at this juncture is extremely detrimental to the interests of the country.

Shri Ranga: Therefore, they are unpatriotic

Dr. Karan Singh: I would not like to charge them with anything unpatriotic . . . (Interruption) The strike is unfortunate because there is a loss of foreign exchange which takes place everyday, because Air India's reputation in a highly competitive field may be damaged, and the House will agree with me that reputations are built up with very great difficulty but they can be damaged very easily. Therefore, anything which damages the reputation of Air India would be very unfortunate. Also, thousands of other employees of Air India who are much less paid than the pilots are adversely affected. This is a tourist year and, therefore, all these things put together will show that the strike at this time would certainly be very unfortunate and very detrimental to the interests of the country.

Sir, I do not want to go through again, the ground that I covered in my statement. I would like to make only two points. First, with regard to the N.I.T. award. In July, 1965, the agreement was signed between Air

[Dr. Karan Singh]

India and the Pilots Guild for three years; in November, 1965, the I.A.C. Agreement was signed and in January, 1966, the N.I.T. gave this award. If the N.I.T., at that stage, had clearly wanted that the difference of Rs. 400 should be maintained, it was open to N.I.T. to have said that either you reduce the I.A.C. by Rs. 200 or you increase the Air India by Rs. 200 to maintain the difference. But they did not do so. They made what we consider to be a general remark with regard to this difference. All that they said was that the pilots of Air India would be entitled to an overseas allowance which the I.A.C. pilots are not entitled to. That is all that the N.I.T. said. It, of course, can be interpreted to mean that the I.A.C. pilots might be entitled to some other kind of allowance. Therefore, it is by no means unambiguous. I would like to meet the point which the first speaker made today that it is a clear reading of the N.I.T. award and that it should be implemented. That is not so.

We were prepared to refer this particular point, as to whether Part II of the N.I.T. Award was mandatory or not, for arbitration because it was not possible for us, on our own, to vary these agreements once signed sealed, and delivered, just on some ambiguous type of reading. As somebody very rightly pointed out, there is not only one union involved but there are seven unions in Air India and seven unions in the I.A.C. and once we start tampering with one, the whole agreement with the others might collapse. Therefore, we said, let us go for an arbitration as to whether Part II of the N.I.T. Award is binding or not. If it is binding, well, the management will pay and the Government will agree with that, but if it is not binding, then the pilots should accept it with good grace. I think, you will agree that this was a reasonable offer.

Shri Nath Pai: When was this offer made?

Dr. Karan Singh: This offer was made right in the beginning. I sent my Secretary to Bombay to meet the pilots and to make this offer of arbitration.

Shri Nath Pai: That was after the strike notice had been given; they have been agitating for months.

Dr. Karan Singh: They met me first and we had a long discussion. In a way they put it to me sounded very simple. But when we looked into it a little further, we found that there were a number of complications. Therefore, this offer of arbitration was made to them and that was rejected. Therefore, that offer has now gone to adjudication, under the law. About the first point as to whether Part II of the N.I.T. Award is mandatory or not, we were prepared to go in for arbitration.

Shrimati Tarkeshwari Sinha: May I make a submission? When he agreed for the job evaluation, the entire basis of the award was again to be re-examined. What was the necessity of having such a rigid attitude over that?

Dr. Karan Singh: I was coming to that. The first point was about the N.I.T. Award and its interpretation. I was trying to clarify that.

The second point was about the job evaluation. The job evaluation is certainly something which is very desirable and very necessary. Even if there had been no strike, I feel, I would like to have a thorough job evaluation done because the existing agreements are going to come to an end and we must have some method, some rational system, whereby we can look into these things in future. Therefore, we are prepared for the job evaluation. They say that the job evaluation must be made retrospective. Now, the job evaluation is not a wage board. The job evaluation is a scientific study of the various types of jobs that are done and that cannot be confined, with due deference to the hon. Member, Shri Fernandes, arbitrarily to one pilot

from the I.A.C. and one pilot from Air India. The navigators are involved, the flight engineers are involved, in this. When you evaluate, at the most what you can do is to evaluate the cockpit crew. But the other categories of employees are also subject to various agreements. Therefore, job evaluation is a highly technical matter and it lays down a scientific principle. Their agreements are going to expire next year in August. What I feel is that by the time these agreements expire, the job evaluation can be completed; let them negotiate new agreements on that; at that time they can put forward their claims, if they so feel, that it should be given retrospectively. If the management agrees, it is well and good otherwise, it will go to the Tribunal. If the Tribunal at that stage says that it should be given retrospectively, we have no objection. But the point which I would like to make and which I am sure the House will agree, is that it is not possible for us to vary one of these without upsetting the whole spectrum of agreements which we have made, not only with seven unions in IAC, but also with seven unions in Air India and various other categories.

I would not like to take up too much of time. The position today is this. They have gone on strike. I would not say that they are unpatriotic, but I would certainly submit that it has been very unwise for them because every hour they go on strike, the country is losing so much, and what is more, the strike is illegal. What I would say is this. Let them not go into the problems of prestige. Certainly everybody has his prestige, whether he is a pilot or whether he is the lowest paid workman in Air India. Everybody has a right to have his prestige. But this prestige cannot, and should not, be at the cost of tremendous losses to the country because then that prestige becomes not only a prestige, but it becomes something else, it degenerates; I would not like to use any other word; it becomes a very unfortunate happening.

Today the question of NIT award is before adjudication. I would again say that the pilots would be very well advised to withdraw their strike and await the result of the adjudication. If the adjudication says that the award means that we should pay them, I am sure that the Management will agree in good grace and the Government will agree. If the adjudication says that it is not mandatory, I am sure they will agree.

One of the hon Members has been good enough to say that the pilots have some personal regard for me. I can assure her and the House that I have also personal regard for these pilots. If they have personal regard for me, I would, even today, appeal to them that they should withdraw their strike and should await the result of the adjudication, and after the adjudication . . . (Interruptions).

Shri Kanwar Lal Gupta: Will he call them and talk to them?

Mr. Speaker: Order, order. Let us hear him.

Dr. Karan Singh: Meanwhile, I am, on my own, going ahead with the setting up of the Job Evaluation Committee, because I feel that job evaluation is essential and it will be looked into. The results of this Committee will be available. It will take some months. As some hon Member pointed out, it is a technical matter. (Interruptions)

An hon. Member: Will it be binding or not?

Dr. Karan Singh: When this point, whether it is binding or not, is before the Tribunal, I should not pass any judgment on the merits of the case at this stage. That might complicate the solution. I would like to add this. Every hour that these pilots remain on strike, they are not only causing losses to the country, they are not only jeopardising the positions and jobs of their colleagues in Air India itself, but they are also going against the law. The longer they do it, the more the complications will be. I feel

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that the sense of the House is—all the members who have spoken on this have said—that the strike should finish as early as possible. I do not want to make it a prestige issue. I feel that this point about the NIT award (Part I) is before adjudication. We live in a democratic society. Let the adjudicator decide whether it is binding or whether it is not. If the adjudicator says that it is binding, then nobody will grudge paying them, because to the other unions we can say that all that they are doing is implementing the award of the

National Industrial Tribunal and we are not doing anything arbitrarily.

Therefore, they should withdraw the strike. We should await the result of adjudication. Meanwhile, I am setting up a job evaluation committee.

18.16 hrs.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Friday, June 30, 1967/Asadha 9, 1889 (Saka)