

Supersonic Fighters from U.S.S.R.

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- Shri Hem Barua:
 - Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath
 - Shri Nath Pal:
 - Shri Subodh Hansda:
 - Shri Daji:
 - Shri S. M. Banerjee:
 - Shri D. C. Sharma:
 - Shri Maheswar Naik:
 - *1204. { Shrimati Maimoona Sultan
 - Shri Raghunath Singh
 - Shri P. C. Borooah:
 - Shri P. K. Deo:
 - Shri Y. N. Singha:
 - Shri Bhakt Darshan:
 - Shri Rameshwar Tantia:
 - Shri Warrior:
 - Shri Surendra Pal Singh:

Will the Minister of Defence be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are negotiating an agreement with the Soviet Union for the purchase of supersonic fighter planes or missiles for the Air Force; and

(b) if so, the nature and broad outline of the proposed agreement?

The Minister of Defence (Shri Krishna Menon): (a) Government have made necessary investigations from different sources including the U.S.S.R.—No negotiations for any agreements have yet been made.

(b) Does not arise at present.

Shri Hem Barua: May I know whether it is a fact that Soviet Russia proposed to offer these jet planes at half the price quoted by western manufacturers and that too in rupee currency and if so, how far is this correctly interpreted as military aid as western circles have done?

Shri Krishna Menon: It is not military aid. It would be purchase of a commodity like any other commodity.

Shri Hem Barua: May I know whether it is a fact that there is some apprehension so far as Britain's con-

cerned that military secrets that Britain has so far made available to this country may be exposed to Soviet Russia and if so, how far this apprehension is correct?

Shri Krishna Menon: The apprehensions are totally unfounded.

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath: Are there offers in this regard from several countries and are all those offers being examined as to which of them is most advantageous to India politically, financially, tactically and operationally and if so, at what stage is this examination at present?

Mr. Speaker: All these adjectives and adverbs were used yesterday.

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath: I did not use them yesterday. I said advantageous—only one word. Have they been examined from all these angles?

Shri Krishna Menon: Yes.

Shri Warrior: Is it not a fact that there was a report that the Government had also entered into negotiations and final stages had been reached and they left it on the protest of the American Ambassador?

Shri Krishna Menon: It is very difficult to keep track of the reports because they are so contradictory and they are so various. Whatever information there is, I have given. Any way in the debate that follows, this subject will be dealt with because it has been raised by so many hon. Members.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Minister is dealing with the subject because it has been taken up by several hon. Members in the debate. He will be answering these questions.

Shri Nambiar: It may be included in his speech which is yet to be delivered.

Mr. Speaker: Next question.