

**COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC
UNDERTAKINGS
(1971-72)**

(FIFTH LOK SABHA)

TENTH REPORT

**[Action taken by the Government on the Recommendations
contained in the Sixty-ninth Report of the
Committee on Public Undertakings
[Fourth Lok Sabha]**

AIR INDIA

(MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION)



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(1971-72)

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GENERAL MATTERS**

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-

*Resigned from the Committee on Public Undertakings with effect from 29th July, 1971.

INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairman, Committee on Public Undertakings, having been authorised by the Committee to submit the Report on their behalf, present this Tenth Report on the Action taken by Government on the recommendations contained in the Sixty-Ninth Report of the Committee on Public Undertakings (Fourth Lok Sabha) on Air India, Bombay.

2. The Sixty-Ninth Report of the Committee on Public Undertakings was presented to the Lok Sabha on the 29th April, 1970. Government furnished their replies indicating the action taken on the recommendations contained in the Report on the 3rd November, 1970 and 16th April, 1971. The replies of Government to the recommendations contained in the aforesaid Report were considered and approved by the Committee on the 14th September, 1971 and the Chairman was authorised to finalise the Report on the basis of the Decisions of the Committee.

3. The Report has been divided into the following five chapters:
- (i) Report.
 - (ii) Recommendations that have been accepted by Government.
 - (iii) Recommendations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the Government's reply.
 - (iv) Recommendations in respect of which replies of Government have not been accepted by the Committee.
 - (v) Recommendations in respect of which final replies of Government are still awaited.

4. An analysis of the action taken by Government on the recommendations contained in the Sixty-Ninth Report of the Committee is given in Appendix I. It would be observed therefrom that out of 29 recommendations made in the report 69 per cent have been accepted by Government. The Committee do not desire to pursue 31 per cent of the recommendations in view of Government's reply.

M. B. RANA,
Chairman.

Committee on Public Undertakings.

NEW DELHI;
September 14, 1971.

Bhadra 23, 1893.

CHAPTER I

REPORT

The Committee on Public Undertakings are glad to observe that the recommendations contained in the Sixty-ninth Report of the Committee on Public Undertakings (Fourth Lok Sabha) on Air India, have been replied to by Government generally to the Committee's satisfaction.

CHAPTER II

RECOMMENDATIONS THAT HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED BY GOVERNMENT

Recommendation (Serial No. 4)

The Committee reiterate their earlier recommendation that Air-India has not been able to open new stations in this region. If new stations are opened after careful traffic survey Air-India should be able to attract adequate traffic from these areas. Fast political changes are taking place in this continent with the emergence of independent countries. This should make it easier for Air-India to spread its operations by entering into direct contracts with the Governments concerned. Air-India should endeavour to do so during the Fourth Five Year Plan period.

This Committee recommend that as soon as Air-India's Boeing 707 aircrafts become surplus from the India|U.K. route after the acquisition of Jumbo-Jets, the Corporation should utilise some of those aircrafts for opening new routes and touching some important stations in East|West Africa keeping in view the popularity of the stations touched and the profitability of the sector.

(Paragraph No. 2.46)

Reply of Government

The need to develop the African market is recognised. Having regard to the traffic potential of the countries concerned and the fleet position of Air-India, consideration will be given to opening new stations which would serve the best commercial interests of Air-India.

It is not possible for Air-India to get into direct contracts with the Governments as this is essentially a governmental function.

[Ministry of Tourism & Civil Aviation O.M. No. 4-AC(2)|70 dated 31st October, 1970].

Further information called for by the Committee

In para 2 of their reply, Air India have stated that it is not possible for Air-India to get into direct contracts with the Governments

as this is essentially a Government function. Ministry of Tourism and Civil Aviation have not stated their views in the matter. That Ministry may now indicate their views in the matter.

[Lok Sabha Sectt. O.M. No. 20-PU/69 dated 25th January, 1971].

Further reply of Government

As already observed, the need to develop the African market is recognised. Consideration will be given to opening new stations which would best serve our commercial interests having regard to the traffic potential of the countries concerned and the fleet position of Air-India.

[Ministry of Tourism & Civil Aviation O.M. No. 4-AC(2)/70-Pt. dated 16th April, 1971].

Recommendation (Serial No. 5)

The Committee note that in order to remain competitive and to offer a new type of aircraft, Air India is acquiring a fleet of 4 boeing 747 Jumbo Jets to operate a daily service on the India/U.K./U.S.A. route. The aircraft are stated to be more spacious, comfortable and would have large cargo capacity. The Committee, however, suggest that the Corporation should do careful planning of the utilisation of the aircraft and introducing frequencies of service on the route to draw sufficient traffic for the bigger aircrafts.

The Committee are concerned about the preparations at the four airports for the Jumbo Jets. The Jumbo's will begin flying in March, 1970 and Air India's Jumbo Jets will arrive in March, 1971. The Committee recommend that the work at the airport should proceed fast. The runways, parking bays, terminal buildings, facilities and amenities to passengers, servicing, facilities to aircrafts should be augmented and improved at the four international airports at Delhi, Bombay, Calcutta and Madras without any loss of time. The question of re-designing these airport to provide suitable facilities, not only for Jumbo Jets used by Air India, but also those that are likely to be used by other foreign airlines calling at these airports should be borne in mind.

(Paragraphs No. 2.64 and 2.65)

Reply of Government

The observations of the Committee have been noted and action is already afoot in the direction indicated by the Committee.

No international operator has yet started operation with Boeing 747 to or through India. Air-India expect to receive their first Boeing

747 aircraft in the middle of 1971 instead of March, 1971 as indicated earlier.

[Ministry of Tourism & Civil Aviation O.M. No. 4-AC(2)/70 dated 31st October, 1970].

Recommendation (Serial No. 6)

The Committee are much concerned about the heavy loss of revenue being sustained by Air-India due to undercutting in fares by some airlines. They recognised the necessity of setting up of a Government machinery to keep a watch on the observance of the Rules and Regulations by foreign airlines to check this malpractice, as exists in U.S.A.

“Undercutting had almost become a way of life in Airlines Business” owing to the existence of surplus capacity in the aircrafts compared to the passengers. The Committee would, therefore, suggest that any drastic step to prevent undercutting if adopted, should be taken with great caution to safeguard against retaliatory measure against Air-India. The Committee note the recent decision to amend the Aircraft Rules of 1937 making it obligatory for all airlines to submit tariffs to DGCA and to impose penalties for violation. They would like the Government to consider the setting up of a machinery as in U.S.A. to ensure observance of the Rules and Regulations by foreign airlines and to punish the violation. The Committee would like to watch the follow up action taken and results achieved in pursuance of this decision.

(Paragraph No. 2.71)

Reply of Government

The observations of the Committee have been noted. Government have since decided to set up a small cell in the Civil Aviation Department for tariff enforcement. The Aircrafts Rules are being amended so as to make it mandatory for all airlines operating to|through the country to file tariff schedules with the Director General, Civil Aviation as also to provide a suitable penalty for contravention.

[Ministry of Tourism & Civil Aviation O.M. No. 4-AC(2)/70 dated 31st October, 1970]

Recommendation (Serial No. 8)

The Committee has found the sharing of technician traffic between Air India and Aero Flot has been a matter of controversy.

The Secretary of the Ministry by giving evidence, explained to the Committee that generally Government insists that the technician traffic whose travel costs are paid out of Government funds do travel by Air India. He said, "Instructions have already been issued that where Government funds are involved, the travel must be by Air India. In our agreement with foreign countries/firms we insist on this. Unfortunately, in some cases where we cannot enforce, i.e., in the case of Russians they insisted that Aero Flot should be given a share and in the case of West German technicians, LUFT-HANSA insisted on their share, we had to allow them a fair share of the traffic."

The Committee finds that there is no proper machinery to check and ensure that the instructions of the Government were fully implemented.

From the statement of the General Manager of Air India, we find this sharing of technician traffic between Air India and Aero Flot has in the past been to the detriment of the Air India. The General Manager stated in evidence: "By and large, most of the technicians used to travel by Aero Flot. Firstly they had insisted that the technicians should travel by Aero Flot alone. In the last agreement in March, 1968, Air India insisted that at least technicians should be divided 50:50 and Aero Flot agreed, but somehow, it did not work and the balance remained in their favour. Now, in the latest agreement in November, 1969 Air India had got this 50:50 share which should be satisfactory if it could be brought on permanent footing."

Air India has further explained in a note that "a reciprocal arrangement exists between Air India and Aero Flot in respect of ticketing of passengers, freight and package. This arrangement requires Air India to ticket traffic on behalf of Aero Flot in India and requires Aero Flot to ticket traffic on behalf of Air India in U.S.S.R. Aero Flot are not permitted to hold ticket stocks and therefore, do not issue tickets in India unlike other foreign carriers who are permitted to do their own ticketing in India."

"Moreover, the major proportion of the traffic moving between India and USSR consists of Government project and technical traffic which in most cases originates in the USSR. They hold return tickets issued by Aero Flot in the USSR. Air-India is, therefore, not in a position to solicit this traffic. In fact even project traffic

originating in the USSR are paid for by the Indian Government is at times not available to Air India."

The Committee has noted the difficulties Air-India is facing with regard to getting its agreed share of 50 per cent of the technician traffic as explained above. This is largely due to the fact that Return Tickets are being issued at Moscow. There is still another factor which stands in the way of Air-India getting its agreed 50 per cent share of the technician traffic which was pointed out by the Secretary himself that the sharing of the technician traffic and their families is to be done "taking into consideration their preferences," whether they would like to fly by Aero Flot or Air-India.

The Committee feels that these two factors, *viz.*, the issue of the Return Ticket at Moscow at the originating point of the traffic and the provision that the preferences of the technicians and their families who were to be taken into account whether they would fly by Aero Flot or Air-India will ultimately defeat the agreement of getting for Air-India 50 per cent of the technician traffic which is being paid by the Government of India or by the undertakings.

The Committee would like that the Ministry and Air-India should sort out these two factors and should ensure to keep a watch that Air-India does get 50 per cent of the technician traffic as agreed to between the two Governments.

There is a Pool Agreement between Aero Flot and Air-India and in the past this arrangement has broken down primarily because Aero Flot felt that Air-India was not bringing in enough revenue to the pool and each time Aero Flot had to fork out payments to Air-India. The Committee has noted that Air-India operates at a disadvantage and that is why they have been failing to bring to the pool as much of revenue as the other party has been bringing. The factors which have inhibited Air-India in this respect are:

1. The Problem of Air-India getting the agreed share of 50 per cent of the technician traffic as explained above (Para 2.12).
2. Air-India is not permitted to solicit traffic in USSR whereas there is no reciprocal restriction on Aero Flot in India. Air-India is not permitted to advertise and do direct selling in USSR, because that is the general restriction applied not only to Air-India but to all foreign

Airlines operating in USSR. On the other hand Aero Flot is placed in advantageous position that it is in a position to advertise and sell in India as this freedom is available not only to Aero Flot but other foreign carriers operating in India. Air-India points out, "Inherent differences operating in controlled society and a democratic society cannot be completely removed". On the other hand the Committee has noted that Aero Flot gets the advantage through crediting to the pool earnings even from passengers going from Delhi to U.K. *via* Moscow on such passengers above 96 numbers as explained at para 2.34.

The Committee would, therefore, like the Ministry to take special note of the disadvantages that the Air-India is suffering and to resolve it as best as it could be.

The Committee would like that the Ministry should have machinery to check as to how far the instructions that the traffic paid by Government of India or the Undertaking to travel by Air-India are being followed by the concerned authorities.

Air-India have submitted a letter detailing the arrangements and procedure followed in sharing of German technician traffic between Air-India and Lufthansa which is reproduced as appendix VI.

The Committee feel that the procedure followed to ensure that the sharing took place at 50:50 basis was fair and has worked satisfactorily since 1962. The Committee feel that Air-India/Ministry ought to have adopted some such procedure to ensure fair share of 50 per cent to Air-India in respect of 50 per cent share in technicians traffic between Air-India and Aeroflot. However, the Committee noted that in view of the latest revised agreement of pool and sharing on 50:50 basis between Air-India and Aeroflot, the share of technician traffic agreement has lot its importance.

(Paragraphs No. 3.23, 3.24 and 3.25).

Reply of Government

It is agreed that Air-India should get 50 per cent share of the technicians traffic. However, it is more important that the total traffic on India|USSR route should be shared equally between Air India and the USSR carrier, Aeroflot. In the agreement reached with the USSR authorities in April 1970, the principle of equal

distribution of traffic and revenues on the India/USSR route has been provided and it is hoped that as a result thereof, there will be equal division of the total traffic on the route as also equal division of revenues without any ceiling on payments.

[Ministry of Tourism & Civil Aviation O.M. No. 4-AC(2)/70 dated 31st October, 1970].

Recommendation (Serial No. 9)

The Committee are happy to note that the Corporation are alert to the revenue potentialities from the Charter market and note the Corporation's proposal for setting up a subsidiary company for non-IATA Charters.

(Paragraph No. 3.30).

Reply of Government

Noted.

[Ministry of Tourism & Civil Aviation O.M. No. 4-AC(2)/70 dated 31st October, 1970].

Recommendation (Serial No. 11)

The Committee feel that every effort would be made to increase the traffic load of the national carrier, since most of the Governments are helping their own International Airways. The Committee are, therefore, inclined to suggest that cultural|sports|film groups which usually hold a national representative character should appropriately travel by Air-India. The Government and the Reserve Bank should ensure that Air-India gets the maximum business of these groups. For the same reason the Committee also feel that the Government must insist that students travel abroad by Air-India.

(Paragraph No. 3.36).

Reply of Government

The Committee's suggestions have been noted. Government will continue to render all possible help to Air-India to increase its traffic load within the framework of the existing laws and obligations in the field of international air transport.

[Ministry of Tourism & Civil Aviation O.M. No. 4-AC(2)/70 dated 31st October, 1970].

Recommendation (Serial No. 12)

The Committee agree with the views of the Corporation that the traffic of emigrants from India to Commonwealth countries, particularly to U.K. is a part of the ethnic traffic which belong to the national carrier. With a view to attract such traffic Air-India has entered into a pool agreement with B.O.A.C. and has reduced the emigrant fare. The Committee feel that Air-India should be accorded all assistance by Reserve Bank to enable this travel scheme to succeed. Reserve Bank may consider restricting the approval of 'P' forms of emigrants for travel on other carriers.

(Paragraph No. 3.42).

Reply of Government

The emigrant fare scheme has been in operation since August, 1967 and during this period it has worked satisfactorily. No further restrictions in regard to the issue of 'P' form in this regard are contemplated.

[Ministry of Tourism & Civil Aviation O.M. No. 4-AC(2)|70 dated 31st October, 1970].

NOTE:—At the time of factual verification of this Action Taken Report, the Ministry of Tourism and Civil Aviation have intimated that orders regarding emigrant fares has since been withdrawn by Government in February, 1971.

[Ministry of Tourism and Civil Aviation O.M. No. H 1013/4/71-Ac. dated 22-10-71].

Recommendation (Serial No. 15)

The Committee note that the present arrangement of recruitment of pilots to Air-India from the Air France is working satisfactorily. The arrangement should, however, be made perfect on a long term basis.

(Paragraph No. 4.25).

Reply of Government

Noted.

[Ministry of Tourism & Civil Aviation O.M. No. 4-AC(2)|70 dated 31st October, 1970].

Recommendation (Serial No. 16)

The Committee note that in other countries travel Agents gave roughly 60 to 65 per cent of business to national carriers. Air-India had been able to achieve only 42 to 43 per cent of business from travel Agents. The Committee feel that besides Co-ordination with I.A.C., Air-India should take more positive steps to make the Travel Agents in India feel conscious of the responsibilities to the national carrier. The Committee suggest that representatives of Air-India

should meet the Travel Agents occasionally to persuade them to award business. The Corporation should furnish them the Air-India routes, maps and posters, brochures and show pieces in sufficient quantities for display in their offices just to remind the public about India's national carrier.

In regard to traffic on the routes not served by Air-India, the Corporation should function as a Travel Agent to make bookings on other carriers. Besides earning the commission, they would attract the reciprocal goodwill and client etc. of other foreign airlines.

(Paragraph No. 4.42 and 4.43).

Reply of Government

Noted. Air-India is constantly liaising with travel agents at all levels in an effort to give better service and obtain a larger percentage of business from the travel agents. Representatives of Air-India also meet office bearers of the Travel Agents Association of India from time to time for discussions.

Air-India has interline agreements with all the leading airlines of the world. Every effort is being made by Air-India officers all over the world to increase its sales of interline transportation to earn the interline commission and also to include other carriers to sell on Air-India.

[Ministry of Tourism & Civil Aviation O.M. No. 4-AC(2)/70 dated 31st October, 1970].

Recommendation (Serial No. 17)

The Committee feel that there should not be any difference in the treatment of Indian passengers and non-Indian passengers on Air India's flights. The Corporation should ensure that the services rendered to the passengers are of high standard on all the routes.

(Paragraph No. 4.45).

Reply of Government

Air-India have always endeavoured to ensure that Indians and non-Indians travelling by their aircraft are shown the same consideration and courtesy. This aspect is given particular emphasis in the training of cabin crew and is carefully checked by supervisors in flight.

[Ministry of Tourism & Civil Aviation O.M. No. 4-AC(2)/70 dated 31st October, 1970].

Recommendation (Serial No. 18)

The Committee feel that it is very essential that announcement in respect of flights of Air-India and Indian Airlines should be made in national and regional language since many understand the regional language only.

(Paragraph No. 4.47).

Reply of Government

It has been the practice in Air-India to make announcements in Hindi first in India and in English first abroad. Air-India, however, do not find it practicable to introduce regional languages in their announcements.

In so far as Indian Airlines are concerned, they are making announcements in regional languages also.

[Ministry of Tourism & Civil Aviation O.M. No. 4-AC(2)/70 dated 31st October, 1970].

Recommendation (Serial No. 19)

The Committee have noticed that there is no proper transport arrangements at the Airports to take the passengers to the cities or their hotels. At times the passengers are badly treated and put to much inconvenience. The taxies sometimes run without meters.

The Committee recommend that there should be a special tourist police arrangement at the Airports to look after the convenience of the tourist traffic, and to break the racket of unauthorised taxi-operators and their agents. The Committee feel that special attention should be paid to this problem.

The Committee would also recommend that the Government should introduce mini-buses at the Airports to provide quick transport to passengers at reasonable rates in consultation with ITDC and inter-national airlines.

(Paragraph Nos. 4.50 and 4.51).

Reply of Government

By and large, airlines do provide surface transport. There have been complaints of misbehaviour by taxi drivers but these are handled firmly and there has been an improvement.

The question of having a special tourist police at airports and elsewhere has been examined but there are constitutional and legal difficulties in the way of creating such a force. Efforts are afoot to open police stations at the airports which would solve the problem to large extent.

The feasibility of operating mini-buses from the airports is being examined by the ITDC.

[Ministry of Tourism & Civil Aviation O.M. No. 4-AC(2)/70 dated 31st October, 1970].

Recommendation (Serial No. 21)

The Committee feel that since sari reflects a distinctive Indian character it should remain the basic dress of air hostesses.

(Paragraph No. 4.55).

Reply of Government

Noted.

[Ministry of Tourism & Civil Aviation O.M. No. 4-AC(2)/70 dated the 31st October, 1970].

Recommendation (Serial No. 23)

The Committee suggest that Air-India offices abroad should maintain upto date files of leading Indian newspapers and periodicals. The Committee would also like some Hindi Newspapers and Periodicals be kept in Air India Aircrafts.

(Paragraph No. 4.58).

Reply of Government

Air-India offices abroad a re-receiving leading Indian newspapers and periodicals and a few Hindi papers. Air-India have issued instructions to their offices abroad to maintain files of leading newspapers and periodicals for a period of about two months.

[Ministry of Tourism & Civil Aviation O.M. No. 4-AC(2)/70 dated 31st October, 1970].

Recommendation (Serial No. 24)

The Committee after examining all the facts have come to the conclusion that it will be in the larger interest of Air-India to put up

hotels. They also agree with the suggestion that the hotels be put up and managed by the subsidiary of Air India and they hope that Air India will show and demonstrate the same competency and efficiency in the management of hotels as they have shown in the management of their Air transportation business. The Committee would, however, like to emphasise that Air India should put up hotels only after a thorough feasibility report in order that the new hotel venture may be a commercially successful venture.

The Committee, however, are perturbed and distressed that the Air India Board's decision to go in for foreign consultancy particularly in the drawing up of the conceptual drawings of the hotel is not based on factual data. In the written reply from Air India and in the evidence given both by the General Manager and by the Director General of Tourism, it has been stated that India does not possess enough expertise nor they have capable and talented architects to produce conceptual drawings of hotels to meet the needs of international tourist traffic. In support of their contention they gave the example that the conceptual drawings of Ashoka Hotel and Oberoi Intercontinental at Delhi were furnished by foreign architects and by the foreign collaborators at Oberoi Intercontinental. The Committee took the following evidence on their points:—

1. The President of the Indian Institute of Architects.
2. The Managing Director of Oberoi Inter-continental Hotel, namely Shri M. S. Oberoi, M.P.
3. Shri Piloo Mody, M.P. who was the architect of Oberoi Intercontinental.

The Committee have found that Ashoka Hotel was designed by an Indian Architect. They have found that the conceptual drawings of Oberoi Intercontinental was also done by Indian Architects and the shell of the building of Oberoi Intercontinental according to the conceptual drawings of the Indian Architects, was completed long before Intercontinental entered into a foreign collaboration. Mr. Oberoi has also stated in his evidence that he has put up hotels not only in India but abroad at Tehran, Ceylon & Nepal whose conceptual drawings were given by Indian architects. He has further stated that their hotel Oberoi Sherton at Bombay is also being put up on the conceptual drawings given by the Indian Architects. Mr. Oberoi has stated that they take the help of the foreign consultants in certain limited areas where their advice would be of use and assistance to them in order to improve the working and the quality of the hotel but in every case the primary architect consultant is an Indian.

The Committee has noted the evidence of the President, Indian Institute of Architects in which he has said that there is enough architectural talent available to design hotel in India of any requirement and dimension. This has been further corroborated by the evidence of Shri Pilo Mody.

The Committee has also been informed that the Government policy is to use Indian consultancy as far as possible in every field of activity. The Secretary of the Ministry while giving evidence before the Committee has stated as follows:—

“I entirely agree that any work which can be done by Indian architects or technicians or talent must be done by them. I fully support this view, apart from the foreign exchange aspect of it, that until we encourage our own talent, we are not going to get anywhere. If a hotel can be designed by an Indian architect or a group of Indian architects certainly it should be done by them. But this is a question for consideration and will have to be gone into in great detail. But anything which can be done in India should be done in India.”

The Committee is, therefore, convinced that as far as construction of hotels are concerned and also as far as giving the conceptual drawings and designs for the construction of hotels there are adequate talent available in India which should be made use of instead of commissioning and engaging foreign consultancy for this type of work. Engagement of foreign consultancy service in areas where adequate such facilities are available in India not only causes avoidable drain of our scarce foreign exchange but also disheartens and hurts national pride and hinders to provide employment opportunities to our qualified Indian architects who are in no way inferior to International architects.

(Paragraph No. 4.81)

Reply of Government

The Committee's observations regarding—

- (a) the need for a thorough feasibility report for the new hotel venture; and
- (b) the desirability of utilising the talent available in the country for the drawing up of conceptual drawings for the buildings.

have been noted and will be kept in view and Indian talent made use of to the extent possible.

[Ministry of Tourism & Civil Aviation O.M. No. 4-AC(2)/70 dated 31st October, 1970].

Recommendation (Serial No. 25)

The Committee feel that the Corporation should suitably modify their overhaul workshop at Bombay as early as possible to take up the overhaul and repair works of Jumbo Jets when they arrive, so that sending of Jumbo Jet engines abroad for repairs and overhaul could be avoided. That would save the expenditure in foreign exchange.

The Committee find that Air India has been approached by certain foreign Airlines (e.g. Saudi Arabian Airlines) to undertake their repair jobs in the Air India's Overhaul and Repair Workshop in Bombay. The Committee recommend that Air India should give top priority to the acceptance of such work. Since foreign exchange would be earned by undertaking the work from foreign Airlines, special attention deserves to be attached to their jobs. Should the Air India find that after accepting the work of foreign Airlines their spare capacity is exhausted they may consider transferring such work (e.g. I.A.F., I.A.C., work) to the Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd. Workshop which is adequately experienced and is having spare capacity at present.

(Paragraphs Nos. 5.11 and 5.12)

Reply of Government

Noted Efforts in the direction are already afoot.

[Ministry of Tourism & Civil Aviation O.M. No. 4-AC(2)/70 dated 31st October, 1970].

Recommendation (Serial No. 26)

The Committee are unhappy to note that out of a surplus stock of Rs. 22.52 lakhs of aircraft spares and stores so far the Corporation have been able to realise Rs. 1.20 lakhs by way of sales. The Corporation have not been able to dispose of spares and store of a heavy amount. These stores and spares pertaining to Boeing 707 aircrafts that would become difficult to sell after some time. The Committee would like Air India to make earnest efforts to dispose of their

stocks as early as practicable and would like to watch the follow up action taken.

The Committee feel that the inventory of spare parts and stores of the Corporation had been on the high side. They recommend that the Corporation should do better inventory control of these spare parts and stores taking into account the average life of an aircraft and the obsolescent rate.

(Paragraph No. 6.12).

Reply of Government

Noted. The Corporation are already seized of the problem of surplus stores and inventory control, and propose to process all future ordering of spares and stores through electronic data processing machines.

[Ministry of Tourism & Civil Aviation O.M. No. 4-AC(2)/70 dated 31st October, 1970].

Recommendation (Serial No. 27)

The Committee have noted that the fuel consumption of Air India is slightly better than the other operators and appreciate the performance of Air India in the matter of fuel consumption. The Committee hope that it would be maintained in future also.

(Paragraph No. 7.9)

Reply of Government

Noted.

[Ministry of Tourism & Civil Aviation O.M. No. 4-AC(2)/70 dated 31st October, 1970].

Recommendation (Serial No. 28)

The Committee are glad to note that the Corporation have made steadily progress in its profit during the last few years, and they hope the progress will be maintained in future years. The Committee are happy to note that Air India is one of the very few public sector organisations which is running at a profit and that too inspite of heavy competition.

(Paragraph No. 8.4)

Reply of Government

Noted.

[Ministry of Tourism & Civil Aviation O.M. No. 4-AC(2)/70 dated 31st October, 1970].

Recommendation (Serial No. 29)

The Committee find that the operating cost of the Corporation have gone up during the last two years and feel that this has lowered the profits in 1968. The Committee recommend that the Corporation should try to keep down the operating expenses as much as possible in future.

(Paragraph No. 8.8)

Reply of Government

The bulk of Air-India's operating expenses consist of items such as salaries and wages, fuel and oil, landing fees, handling fees, cost of passengers amenities including food and hotel accommodation etc. in respect of which there is not much scope for reduction. On the contrary, inflationary trends in India and abroad escalate the costs every year. The Corporation, however, is very conscious of the need for keeping down expenses and has taken various measures which are being constantly reviewed. These include studies on certain aspect of their operations by experts and action on their reports, better aircraft utilisation, life development programmes of aircraft engines, and setting up of a Management Services Unit for rendering services in the fields of 'operational research', 'systems analysis' and 'organisation and methods' to keep down expenditure and increase revenues and improve profitability.

[Ministry of Tourism & Civil Aviation O.M. No. 4-AC(2)/70 dated October, 1970].

CHAPTER III

RECOMMENDATIONS WHICH THE COMMITTEE DO NOT DESIRE TO PURSUE IN VIEW OF GOVERNMENT'S REPLY

Recommendation (Serial No. 1)

The Committee note that the Air India is touching the maximum number of stations within their available capacity of 10 aircrafts. The Committee has also noted that the India-U.K.-U.S.A. route happens to be a "Blue Ribbon" route contributing the major portion of the revenue to the Corporation. The Committee would like that the Air-India should do all that is necessary to maintain and to improve the profitability of this "Blue Ribbon" route. Keeping this in view the Air-India may consider touching either more or alternative stations in the India-U.K.-U.S.A. route including Tel Aviv, in the wake of acquisition of 747 Jumbo Jet Aircraft. But the Committee would like that the objective of improving profitability and the popularity of the route should also be kept in view in making selectional choice of stop over.

(Paragraph No. 2.15)

Reply of Government

The Committee's recommendation has been noted and the question of opening new on-line stations is constantly under review. During the period 1968-70 Dubai and Amsterdam were added as additional points on Air-India's route to London and New York. A wider examination of stations in West Asia is being made and Air-India proposes to include Dhahran in Saudi Arabia as a point on one of its India-USA flights during the winter of 1970.

In regard to Air-India serving Tel Aviv, the matter has political implications and this Ministry must be guided by the advice of the Ministry of External Affairs.

[Ministry of Tourism & Civil Aviation O.M. No. 4-AC(2)|70 dated 31st October, 1970]

Further information called for by the Committee

It has been stated that in regard to Air-India Serving Tel Aviv, the matter has political implications and this Ministry (of Tourism & Civil Aviation) must be guided by the advice of the Ministry of

External Affairs. It may please be stated whether the advice of Ministry of External Affairs was specifically solicited in the matter and if so, what views do they hold in the matter.

[Lok Sabha Sectt. O.M. No. 20-PU|69 dated 25th January, 1971]

Further reply of Government

The Ministry of External Affairs have been specifically consulted in the matter. They have advised that on political ground and in our national interest it would not be wise to alter our policy.

[Ministry of Tourism & Civil Aviation O.M. No. 4-AC(2)/70—Pt. dated 16th April, 1971].

Recommendation (Serial No. 2)

The Committee feel that the Corporation should pay more attention to developing the India-Japan route. They find that this sector is running at a loss owing principally to lack of frequency and the highly competitive sector. The Committee is of the view that profitability in this route can be gained by introducing daily frequency and halting at new stations having tourist interest. In that connection Air-India's suggestion to Government to establish a link with Taipei deserves to be considered. Although the Corporation had not conducted traffic survey of this sector but if they operate through Taipei they should be able to earn revenue out of this operation. As regards link with Taipei the Committee feel that since STC and MMTC are operating in Formosa on commercial basis it should be possible for Air India also to enter into agreement on reciprocal basis. The Air India|Ministry of Civil Aviation may undertake a traffic Survey of this operation through Taipei and if it is found profitable, they should endeavour the opening of this route on commercial basis.

(Paragraph No. 2.23)

Reply of Government

The need for development of India-Japan route is recognised. Air-India have been endeavouring to steadily increase capacity on the route to achieve a fair share of the market. To this end, inter-Governmental negotiations were held in July 1970, as a result of which the agreement of the Japanese authorities has been secured to increase the frequency of services on the route from the level of 4 services per week, (apart from one additional service permitted

temporarily upto September 1970) upto 8 services a week as indicated below:—

- (i) 5 services a week from 1.9.70
- (ii) 6 services a week from 1.4.71
- (iii) 7 services a week from 1.10.71
- (iv) 8 services a week from 1.4.73

Air-India would also be entitled to operate services to|through Japan via additional intermediate points such as Singapore and Malaysia (in addition to the intermediate points presently served viz. Bangkok and Hong Kong). Further, at a future date, Air-India would be entitled to operate high capacity aircraft, such as Boeing 747 Jumbo Jets to Japan. Thus, a firm basis for expansion of Air-India's services on the India/Japan route both in regard to frequencies as well as additional traffic rights has been achieved.

Operations through Taipeh have political implications and this Ministry will follow the advice of the Ministry of External Affairs.

[Ministry of Tourism & Civil Aviation O. M. No. 4-AC(2)70 dated 31st Oct. 1970].

Further information called for by the Committee

It has been stated that operations through Taipeh have political implications and this Ministry (of Tourism & Civil Aviation) will follow the advice of the Ministry of External Affairs. It may please be stated whether the Ministry of External Affairs have been approached in the matter and if so, what views do they hold in the matter.

[Lok Sabha Sectt. O. M. No. 20-PU|69 dated 25th January, 1971]

Further reply of Government

The Ministry of External Affairs have been consulted and they have advised that as we do not recognise Taiwan we cannot have any official dealings with it. If Air-India is to operate through Taiwan, the matter will have to be taken up with Taiwan authorities at a governmental level and we would also have to accept in principle grant of reciprocal facilities to an airline from Taiwan to operate through India. Politically it would not only be inconsistent with our declared policy but against our interests.

[Ministry of Tourism & Civil Aviation O. M. No. 4-AC(2) 70-Pt. dated 16th April, 1971]

Recommendation (Serial No. 3)

The Committee find "a Commercial Agreement" was first signed between Aeroflot and Air-India in June, 1958 which provided for sharing of the revenues earned by the two on the Delhi|Bombay|Moscow route on a mutual agreed basis. Between August, 1958 and March, 1965 Air-India earned about Rs. 96 lakhs as a result of the pool settlement from Aeroflot. This agreement was suspended unilaterally by Aeroflot in April, 1965 and became inoperative until March, 1968. Owing to the fact that Aeroflot was dissatisfied with the fact that the adjustments were continually in our (Air-India) favour. When further discussions with U.S.S.R. were opened as a result of the suspension of this agreement Rs. 87.7 lakhs could not be recovered from Aeroflot under the pool arrangement. In March, 1968 a number of agreements were reached between Air India and Aeroflot according to which it was decided that all revenues in respect of passengers, cargo and excess baggage traffic carried by two Airlines should be brought into the pool by the two and that the revenues could be shared equally. At the same time it was also decided that pool adjustment would be limited to 5 per cent of the revenue brought into the pool by the two partners. Air-India was thus allowed to carry 96 passengers up to U.K. per week in each direction (calculated separately for each summer and winter period) and the revenue in respect of these 96 were outside the pool. If Air-India carried more than 96 passengers then the revenue of the excess would be brought into the pool by Air-India at the average traffic applicable for Delhi-Moscow Sector. Unfortunately, even this did not work. Air-India got only Rs. 20.6 lakhs in 1968-69. If the 5 per cent ceiling had not been there they would have got about Rs. 38 lakhs. Again in November, 1969 it was decided with the USSR authorities that the ceiling on the pool of 5 per cent would be suspended and Air-India and Aeroflot would share 50:50 until the end of April, 1970 before that further discussions would take place.

After examining the whole issue the Committee feel that the history of the India-USSR route has been very unfortunate in the sense that Air-India has never been to get its proper share of traffic and revenue. Air-India could neither operate freely nor could get its reasonable revenues. The Committee think that the pooling arrangement did not serve the best interest of the Corporation. The Ministry of Tourism and Ministry of External Affairs should endeavour to protect the commercial interest of Air-India by helping them to work in a new pooling arrangement satisfactorily in future.

(Paragraph No. 2.40)

Reply of Government

The working of the Air-India/Aeroflot pool has been outlined by the Committee. Government do not, however, share the view that the pool did not serve the best interests of Air India. Had there been no pool, Air-India would have been in direct competition with Aeroflot on this route and this would have resulted in considerable diversion of traffic by Aeroflot due to the tight control over traffic originating in the USSR and even on Soviet traffic originating in India.

There was no agreed pool formula during the period April 1965 to March 1968 and the question of any recoveries for this period does not therefore arise.

In the inter-Government negotiations with the USSR held in April 1970, the 5 per cent ceiling on pool payments was removed. Additionally the principle of equal distribution of traffic on the India-USSR route was accepted. The previous arrangements whereby Air-India's India-London carriage revenues, in excess of 96 passengers per week, pro-rated for the New Delhi-Moscow sector, was to be brought into the pool and shared equally, has also been liberalised. The agreement reached as a result of these negotiations held in April 1970, is regarded as satisfactory. Briefly, its provisions are as follows:—

- (i) 4 frequencies per week for each airline;
- (ii) equal sharing of traffic and revenues on the India-USSR route;
- (iii) 5th freedom traffic rights for Air-India at Moscow to point beyond in Europe including London and similar rights to Aeroflot to points in Asia, limited to 1000 passengers per annum; and
- (iv) right to operate Air-India services beyond Moscow upto New York|Canada and of Aeroflot services upto Australia|New Zealand.

[Ministry of Tourism & Civil Aviation O. M. No. 4-AC(2)|70 dated 31st October, 1970].

Recommendation (Serial No. 7)

The Committee now understand that the Government have removed certain restrictions on travel abroad. Travellers going to foreign countries for the first time and those who have not gone out of the

country for three consecutive years no longer need to get 'P' forms. They would be released a foreign exchange to the extent of \$ 100 if travel is by Air-India. The Government have also introduced a bonus scheme for attracting Indian national to travel by Air-India on the London|India route. The Committee hope that the Corporation would take the maximum advantage of these relaxations and it would lead to a substantial increase in traffic load of Air-India.

(Paragraph No. 3.10)

Reply of Government

The Committee's observations have been noted. The earning of Air-India have shown an increase since the relaxation of the 'P' form restrictions from March 1, 1970.

It has not so far been possible to give effect to the Travel Promotion Scheme (Bonus Scheme), in the absence of clearance from the UK authorities. The matter is being further processed with them. [Ministry of Tourism & Civil Aviation O. M. No. 4-AC(2)/70 dated 31st October, 1970].

Further information called for by the Committee

The latest position about the Travel Promotion Scheme (Bonus Scheme) may be indicated.

[Lok Sabha Sectt. O. M. No. 20-PU|69 dated 25th January, 1971]

Further reply of Government

The Travel Promotion Scheme as originally envisaged is not acceptable to the U. K. authorities in view of their Race Relations Act. If re-drafted to conform to the requirements of the UK Race Relations Act, the Scheme would change its basic character, in that it would be no longer restricted to persons of Indian ethnic origin. Moreover, new excursion fares since established by IATA, already provide for a discount of approximately 41 per cent on the normal applicable fare. In view of this, it is considered that there is no longer any justification for this special Travel Promotion Scheme and it is proposed not to pursue it.

[Ministry of Tourism & Civil Aviation O.M. No. 4-AC(2)|70 dated 16th April, 1971].

Recommendation (Serial No. 10)

The Committee are surprised to note that so far adequate coordination between Indian Airlines and Air-India for traffic was lack-

ing. The Committee feel that this may have been one of the factors responsible for low load factor of Air-India. Internal Air-line is primarily responsible for feeding the country's international carrier. The Committee, therefore, strongly urge that Air-India should take up this matter immediately with IAC at the highest level to secure more traffic for Air-India.

The Ministry of Civil Aviation being in overall control of both the undertakings should ensure co-ordination between Air-India and the IAC.

(Paragraph No. 3.32)

Reply of Government

The load-factors in Air-India compare well with those of other international carriers and these cannot be compared with load factors of domestic airlines which work in a non-competitive field.

Air-India and Indian Airlines operate in a complementary way and there is no lack of co-ordination.

[Ministry of Tourism & Civil Aviation O.M. No. 4-AC(2)/70 dated 31st October, 1970].

Recommendation (Serial No. 13)

The Committee note the proposal of the Corporation that the number of Board Members should be increased and out of them a certain number of members should be actually functional Directors and recommend that this may be given effect to since Air India would be required to take over more responsibilities in the near future. The Committee further suggest that the question of inclusion of labour and pilots representatives in the Board may also be examined.

(Paragraph No. 4.4)

Reply of Government

A Bill to amend the Air Corporation Act, 1953 has been introduced in Parliament which *inter alia*, provides for increasing the number of members on the Board of Air-India from 9 to 15. One of the reasons for increasing the number is to appoint Functional Directors.

The general question of having representatives of labour on the Boards of Government undertakings is under consideration of Government.

[Ministry of Tourism & Civil Aviation O.M. No. 4-AC(2)|70 dated 31st October, 1970].

Further information called for by the Committee

The decision since taken by the Government of having representatives of labour on the Board of Government undertakings may be indicated.

[Lok Sabha Secretariat O.M. No. 20-PU|69 dated the 25th January, 1971].

Further reply of Government

The question of associating labour representatives on the Board of Government Undertakings is still under consideration.

[Ministry of Tourism & Civil Aviation O. M. No. 4-AC(2)/70-Pt. dated 16th April, 1971].

Government have since decided that the scheme for Workers' participation of Board of Management of Public Sector Undertakings, should be initially tried in one or two Undertakings, if the following conditions are met:—

- (i) that there is a duly recognised union in the undertaking, whether under the Code of discipline or under law;
- (ii) that the office-bearers of the recognised union are predominantly workers in the undertaking;
- (iii) that the representative sponsored by the recognised union, for appointment as a workers' director, is actually a worker employed in the undertaking; and
- (iv) that relations in the undertaking, as between the management and the recognised union, have remained cordial with a tradition of mutual settlements of disputes.

The scheme is applicable to industrial undertakings, except financial and commercial institutions.

Since Air-India is a commercial Undertaking, the question of associating a labour representative on its Board of Management will not arise at this stage.

[Ministry of Tourism & Civil Aviation O.M. No. 4-AC(2)|70-Pt. dated 21st June, 1971].

Recommendation (Serial No. 14)

The Committee are of the opinion that once such an advisory Committee was appointed, it was the duty of Air-India to hold its meetings regularly and no attempt should have been made to minimise its importance. The Corporations should have given full co-operation to the members of this Committee and sufficient importance to their suggestions. Sometimes the suggestions made by the Members of Advisory Committee are of vital importance being suggestions from as Members of the Committee who have travelled far and wide. The Advisory Committee should have been asked to look into the question of whether the provisions of the IATA were properly implemented. The Committee feel that there is greater need for such committees and in a democratic set up the participation of consumers in such advisory committees has an added value. The Committee, therefore, recommend that the meetings of the Advisory Committee should be held more frequently and the suggestion made by them should be carefully processed for implementation.

(Paragraph No. 4.20).

Reply of Government

A Bill has been introduced in Parliament to delete section 41(1) of the Air Corporation Act, 1963, since experience has shown that the Advisory Committees have not served any useful purpose.

[Ministry of Tourism & Civil Aviation O.M. No. 4-AC(2)|70 dated 31st October, 1970].

Recommendation (Serial No. 20)

The Committee suggest that the porters should be required to pin an identity card with their photograph on the coat as is the practice in Hong Kong and other important airports. The Committee would like that either the porters should be Government paid employees or their tariff fixed as in the Railways.

(Paragraph No. 4.52)

Reply of Government

The recommendation of the Committee is under examination.

[Ministry of Tourism & Civil Aviation O.M. No. 4-AC(2)|70 dated 31st October, 1970].

Further information called for by the Committee

The latest position in this regard may be indicated.

[Lok Sabha Secretariat O.M. No. 20-PU|69 dated 25th January, 1971].

Further reply of Government

A decision has since been taken in principle to abolish the present system of free portage facility in international travel and the question of introducing a system whereby a fee will be charged from passengers for such facilities is being examined. When such a system is introduced, the question of requiring the porters to wear identity badges will be kept in view.

[Ministry of Tourism & Civil Aviation O.M. No. 4-AC(2)|70 dated 16th April, 1971].

Recommendation (Serial No. 22)

The Committee recommend that on Air India aircrafts the name should first be written in the national language and then in English.

(Paragraph No. 4.57).

Reply of Government

As Air-India's aircraft call at a large number of non-Indian airports, it is considered useful image-wise and recognition-wise that Air-India in English should be seen at once as painted on the aircraft. The name in Hindi is equally prominent on both sides of the aircraft.

[Ministry of Tourism & Civil Aviation O.M. No. 4-AC(2)/70 dated 31st October, 1970].

CHAPTER IV

**RECOMMENDATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH REPLIES OF
GOVERNMENT HAVE NOT BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE
COMMITTEE**

NIL

CHAPTER V

**RECOMMENDATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH FINAL REPLIES
OF GOVERNMENT ARE STILL AWAITED**

NIL

NEW DELHI;
September 14, 1971

Bhadra 23, 1893 (Saka).

M. B. RANA,
Chairman,
Committee on Public Undertakings.

APPENDIX

(Vide para of Introduction)

Analysis of the action taken by Government on the recommendations contained in the 69th Report of the Committee on Public Undertakings (Fourth Lok Sabha)

I.	Total Number of recommendations made	29
II.	Recommendations that have been accepted by Government (Vide recommendations at Sl. Nos. 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 11, 12, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 21, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28 and 29)	
	Number	20
	Percentage to Total	69
III.	Recommendations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of Government's reply (Vide recommendations at Sl. Nos. 1, 2, 3, 7, 10, 13, 14, 20 and 22) :	
	Number	9
	Percentage to Total	31
IV.	Recommendations in respect of which replies of Government have not been accepted by the Committee	
	Number	replied 7 Nil
	Percentage to Total	Nil
V.	Recommendations in respect of which final replies of Government are still awaited	
	Number	Nil
	Percentage to Total	Nil