

*Plan (CA)***CALLING ATTENTION TO  
MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC  
IMPORTANCE****Reported hijacking of an International  
Plane from Delhi Airport**

**PROF MADHU DANDAVATE** (Rajapur) I call the attention of the Hon Minister of Tourism and Civil Aviation to the following matter of urgent public importance and request that he may make a statement thereon.

"Reported hijacking of an international plane immediately after its departure from Delhi Airport on the 22nd February, 1972 and steps taken by the Government to tighten the security measures at the Airport"

**THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION (DR KARAN SINGH)** A Lufthansa Boeing 747 aircraft on a scheduled flight from Tokyo to Frankfurt arrived at Palam from Tokyo via Hongkong and Bangkok at 2359 hrs on February 21, 1972 with 130 passengers and a crew of 15. Six passengers disembarked at Palam while 48 joined the flight, including 3 Oman nationals. All the passengers boarding the aircraft at Palam were frisked and their hand baggage searched by the security staff at the airport.

The aircraft departed from Delhi at 01 08 hrs IST for Athens and reported its position over *Lankaransar* which is within Indian territory at 01 39 hrs. Subsequently, at 02 09 hrs a message was received from the aircraft as follows

"I repeat will not answer again  
The aircraft LH-649 from New Delhi is now in control of victorious Jeddah New Captain Yousaf Alsini"

The aircraft landed at Aden at 06 30 hrs. local time (09 00 hrs IST) and information to this effect was received by the Lufthansa office in Delhi at about 10 00 hrs IST on February 22, 1972. According to the Station Manager, Lufthansa Airlines, Delhi, the Captain of the plane revealed at Frankfurt after release that the aircraft was hijacked by five Palestinian guerrillas who

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used hand-grenades and pistols and had brought on board a large quantity of explosives. According to him, one guerilla had embarked at Hongkong and another at Bangkok and three at Delhi. *Prima facie* it appears that the hijackers had brought the explosives and fire-arms on board at a station earlier than Delhi. Enquiries made so far do not show that there was any lapse on the part of the security authorities at Palam Airport. Information regarding the incident was communicated telegraphically to the International Civil Aviation Organisation as also to the aeronautical authorities of the Federal Republic of Germany. Security measures continue to be enforced at all on airports.

**PROF MADHU DANDAVATE** Has the hon Minister of Civil Aviation taken note of the fact that the hijacking of the Lufthansa Boeing 747 Jumbo Jet on 22 February, 1972 after leaving Palam is not just an isolated event? Early last year an aircraft leaving Kashmir was hijacked to Lahore and was unceremoniously burnt to ashes. The hijacking on 22 February, 1972 was the repetition of the same tragedy on a bigger scale.

The failure to make adequate security arrangements is again not the failure of the Government for the first time. In this very House the late Shri Nath Pai had moved an adjournment motion to censure the security arrangements by the Government when the notorious smuggler Walcott had made a vain effort to escape with the help of an aircraft. Is the Government aware that the security problem arising out of hijacking cannot be treated merely as an administrative problem but political motivations of the hijackers are also to be taken note of? Has the Government taken note of the reported motivation of the Arab Commandos who hijacked the Jumbo Jet on 22 February, 1972? Were the Arab Commandos responsible for hijacking, aiming simultaneously at the Government of West Germany and Egypt, the former because it had extended financial credit to Israel and the latter because it was trying the alleged murderers of the Jordanian Premier?

Are any steps devised to seek international co-operation to prevent acts of hijacking? Does the Government propose

stern action against any group or individual that hijacks on aircraft or a Government which directly or indirectly lends support to such hijackers as a deterrent? Since hijackers were able to rush to the aircraft evading security check and since explosives were found in the aircraft, how far practices of corruption and bribery in the airport administration were responsible for the tragedy?

During the Chinese aggression of 1962 through bribes to the authorities concerned bags containing saw dust and sand had replaced some ammunition bags. In this case of hijacking ordinary baggage seems to be replaced by explosives. Has an investigation been made of these facts? What are the results of such investigation?

The routine failures of the airport administration and its inefficiency only cause delay to the commuters and persons like me only miss the meetings of the Consultative Committees of Parliament. However, failures in the security arrangements keeps a sword of insecurity of life hanging on the heads of the commuters. Does the Government propose to avoid such insecurity in the future?

DR. KARAN SINGH : The hon. Member has made a number of comments. This question of hijacking is an international menace. It is not only here, but all the world over it has taken place, and it has become a menace to civilised and organised air transport. The motivations of hijacking are as varied as the hijacking incidents themselves. It is impossible to lay down any motives; some are political, some are financial, some are different.

He has been rather uncharitable to our airport authorities, because, as I have said in my statement, we checked again and have ensured that, in fact, these three people who boarded from Delhi were fully searched and checked. Therefore, I have said that *prima facie* it appears that this ammunition was brought on board at an earlier station, where perhaps the checks were not stringent. I would like to say that no country has been able to evolve a hundred per cent hijacker-proof system. Even in so advanced and affluent a country like the United States, every month or almost every

week you find such incidents. Therefore, what we can do is to strengthen the arrangements which we are doing.

He mentioned at the end of his statement this question of passenger convenience. In a way the two things are contradictory, because the more stringent the checks the more inconvenience is caused to the passengers. We have got to balance in a rational and logical manner the convenience of the passengers and the requirements of security checks. I can assure the hon. Member and the House that we are fully aware of this problem. We have already instituted certain checks of various type and we will continue to strengthen them wherever and whenever possible.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : I asked whether any concrete measures are being taken to ensure international co-operation to avoid such hijacking.

Further, let me make it clear that I am not at all uncharitable to the authorities of the airport. I cannot be uncharitable to any one. What I did was to pose this question. During the Chinese aggression, concert evidence was available that ammunition bags and packages were replaced by sand and sawdust, and as a result of that, there was failure in defence arrangements. It is possible that such things may have happened. He has only said that there is a *prima facie* case. He has not said that he has undertaken rigorous investigation.

DR. KARAN SINGH : On the question of international co-operation, there are two bodies, the International Civil Aviation Organisation and the International Air Transport Association. One is the airlines organisation, and the other is the ground airports organisation. In both of these the question of hijacking has received very careful attention over the last four or five years. Our representatives have attended these conferences. I personally attended the ICAO conference, and the international community is seized of it. The IATA is, in fact, sending round a team of officials from their head-quarters all over the world to check upon security arrangements, and just a week ago we got a letter from the Secretary-General, Mr. Hammerksjoeld, saying that he was going to send a team

[Dr. Karan Singh]

here also. We are glad because we are certainly want to know if there are any weaknesses in our organisation.

As far as this question of bribery and corruption is concerned, as far as I am aware, our enquiries reveal that there is no such element at least in this particular incident. But we are being very vigilant within the realms of what is feasible and possible.

12.10 hrs.

#### RE. INTERRUPTIONS DURING PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

SHRI CHINTAMANI PANIGRAHI (Bhubaneswar) : I want to bring to your notice and to the notice of the hon. House the incident which occurred yesterday when the hon. President was addressing the joint session of Parliament. The incident was so unseemly, I do not want to use any stronger word. With all my respect to the hon. Members, I would like to say, the incident which occurred yesterday was so undignified and unseemly that the entire country has taken note of it. I was looking at your face, Sir, and though you were enjoying the fun, I could realise how wounded your feelings were. Therefore, as a matter of grace if the House does not want to take note of it or you do not want to take note of it, still, in view of the fact that the entire country has taken note of this incident, I would like to get your advice. Members will be benefited by your advice in this matter, because we feel that the incident, was so undignified and so unseemly that it should be taken note of. Last year, you were good enough to appoint a committee to go into this problem. I hope you would kindly agree to refer this incident also to the committee. I hope the committee will look into this incident and submit the report and perhaps the House will take note of it.

MR. SPEAKER : The hon. Member has raised this question. I had something in my mind also and I was thinking over it since yesterday. It happened last year but only two individuals—one from the Rajya Sabha and one from our House—were involved. We appointed a special committee to examine the whole issue. I am just waiting for a report from that committee. But one thing

is very certain, When the Head of the State is addressing, he is addressing as President of India. It has never happened in any country that when the President is there, any disrespect is shown to him—not only discourtesy but also disrespect and that too, it is deliberate disrespect. We were all very sorry because on that occasion, we have all the diplomats from various countries coming to listen to the President and also distinguished citizens of our country from all walks of life. If it were to be taken like that, it means, that it happens not only at ordinary public meetings or sometimes we have certain disturbance even in our House, but it has gone right up to the President of India, It is highly deplorable. I have been thinking of ways and means to deal with it. It happened with some of the Governors and now it has moved to the Parliament. It is very sad affair, but we are just waiting for the report of that committee. I wish that committee would re-examine it, in view of the happenings that were witnessed. It was a very sad affair and I am very sorry. I think we drop it now and wait for the report from that committee.

SHRI N. K. SANGHI (Jalore) : I entirely agree with what my friend, Shri Panigrahi, has said. It is a matter of very serious concern. The report of that committee is going to be delayed. I request that at least against the members of this House who behaved so badly during the President's Address, some action should be taken by the House.

12.13 hrs.

MR. SPEAKER : Papers to be laid.

#### PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE FORTY-FOURTH AND FORTY-FIFTH REPORTS OF LAW COMMISSION

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE  
MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE  
(SHRI NITIRAJ SINGH CHAUDHARY) :  
I beg to lay on the Table—

- (1) A copy of the Forty-fourth Report of the Law Commission on the appellate jurisdiction of the Supreme Court in civil matters. [Placed in Library. See No, Lt—1389/72]