

Shri M. C. Shah : All right. It was a separate judgment. There is no contradiction in terms. Once a case of such a nature is transferred, then naturally all those proceedings coming thereafter must be dealt with by that officer to whom that case has been transferred. My friend Pandit Thakur Das Bhargava need not have any apprehension with regard to the ordinary income-tax payers. It is not a pleasure for the Commissioners of Income-tax and the Central Board of Revenue to transfer ordinary cases in their charge. It is only when the cases are complicated, when it is found that a case requires a very thorough investigation and should be gone through deeply, such case or cases are transferred to those special circles. Therefore, it has become necessary to amend this law because of the judgment of the Supreme Court where they have said that the transfer refers only to the particular assessment year. Hence, we have used the word 'proceedings' very advisedly. Also the word 'person' has been used, because there are various assesseses and groups. So, in the interests of the public, it is most important that we should amend the Act as we have suggested. I hope that the House will agree to this amendment and adopt the motion for consideration of the Bill.

Mr. Speaker : The question is :

"That the Bill further to amend the Indian Income-tax Act, 1922, be taken into consideration."

The motion was adopted.

Clauses 1 and 2, the Enacting Formula and the Title were added to the Bill.

Shri M. C. Shah : I beg to move :

"That the Bill be passed".

Mr. Speaker : The question is :

"That the Bill be passed".

The motion was adopted.

STRIKE SITUATION IN KHARAGPUR

Mr. Speaker : The House will now proceed with the discussion *re* strike situation in Kharagpur, which has been given notice of under rule 212 by Shri Feroze Gandhi. First the Minister.

The Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri L. B. Shastri): In the statement made by me on the 23rd May, 1956, I had stated that a stay-in-strike

in the Kharagpur workshops started on 8-5-1956 and no reason had been given by the workers for going on strike either before or immediately after the stoppage of work nor was any notice served by them on the administration.

The stay-in-strike in the Kharagpur workshops subsequently spread to electric shops, general stores, signal shops and the locoshed. At the worst phase of the strike the total number of men working in the workshops, general stores and electric shops declined to about 476 out of a normal attendance of 12,000.

It was alleged that the strike was in sympathy with the stay-in-strike of brush-hand painters of the same workshop which had been going on since 1st March, 1956. These brush-hand painters numbering about 100 had commenced their strike without notice, the demand being that their work of marking rolling stock with stencils should be considered as a 'skilled work'. This demand was unwarranted and could not be agreed to.

From the very beginning of this strike the workers who wanted to attend to the work had been subjected to intimidation, molestation and assault by the strikers in spite of whatever police protection could be afforded. There had been a large number of cases of assault involving injuries ranging from minor ones to serious ones, including 5 fractures and one case of stabbing of a worker. The total number of cases recorded between 11th May and 27th May were 87. Not only the workers who wanted to work were attacked with lathis, stones and brickbats resulting in serious injuries and an Assistant Commandant of West Bengal Armed Police Force also received serious injuries along with 10 other police staff, but even the families of the loyal workers, while their men-folk had gone to work, were threatened and intimidated by the strikers, so much so that one day workers had to leave their work and were allowed to go back to look after their families.

As the attendance of workers in the Workshops increased from 729 on 23rd May to 3,362 on the 25th May, the strikers resorted to more violent methods by picketing and intimidation, and in order to keep themselves in the background, crowds of women and children helped by other rowdy elements, assembled outside time office gate on 26th morning and started pelting stones at the loyal workers trying to enter the

Workshop. The same morning, at about 6-40 hours, the train from Midnapore halted near the outer Signal, Kharagpur, to entrain workshop employees, the strikers forcibly pulled out the locomotive crew, manhandled them and opened the steam regulator and set the train in motion without the engine crew. As a result the train entered the platform, dashed against the buffer and mounted the platform causing damage to the station building. I regret to inform the House that a total of 63 persons were injured of which 14 are reported to be serious. It was lucky in this case the station was close by and the train had not gathered sufficient momentum and went against a buffer; otherwise it might have been a very serious disaster.

The Working Committee of the South-Eastern Railway Union have advised the workers to call off the strike.

I shall not quote the resolution here, but it is a pity that there is not a word of regret in the long resolution they have passed, in spite of serious violence and so much suffering caused to the people and to the co-workers.

Today, 11,942 workers have reported for duty against a total of 14,000 workers on roll. I do not wish to say anything more at present. If at all any thing is necessary, I may say a few words at the end.

Shri Frank Anthony (Nominated—Anglo-Indians): May I seek a clarification on two points?

Mr. Speaker: I hope the hon. Member wants to participate in the discussion that will follow.

Shri Frank Anthony: Yes, but I think it is necessary to have two small points cleared even now.

Mr. Speaker: Yes.

Shri Frank Anthony: The hon. Minister mentioned that out of 12,000 workers, 476 was the number that was found working at the worst phase of the strike. Can he give us the break-up or the breakdown showing how many belonged to Class III and how many to Class IV staff. How many Class IV people were predominantly involved and how many in Class III?

Shri L. B. Shastri: I cannot give that breakdown of the figures. Many belonged to Class III and Class IV. But mostly

they were workers working in the workshop. Of course, among them there are Class III and Class IV staff also but I cannot give you the exact figures.

Shri Frank Anthony: Is the South-Eastern Railway Union a recognised union?

Shri L. B. Shastri: No, Sir. That is not a recognised union.

Mr. Speaker: We have two hours for this subject. I shall allow Shri Feroze Gandhi 15 minutes. There are 16 Members who want to participate in the discussion. The Railway Minister will reply. The hon. Prime Minister also—I have received intimation—would like to intervene at a particular stage. Therefore, except for the mover, the Minister of Railways and the hon. Prime Minister all the other hon. Members will have five to seven minutes each. Of course, I shall select the hon. Members, and I shall give 10 minutes to the spokesmen of particular parties.

Shri Feroze Gandhi (Pratapgarh Distt.—West cum Rae Bareilly Distt.—East): Sir, my intention in raising this discussion is to draw the attention of the House and especially the Government to the near chaotic conditions prevailing at Kharagpur and the lawlessness which rules there.

I was shocked to read the description in yesterday's newspapers of the incidents which took place at Kharagpur on Saturday. For quite some time I could not believe what I was reading. What has happened at Kharagpur on Saturday and a few days before it, I think, a disgrace to the trade union movement in India and has done considerable harm to the cause of railway workers in particular. Never in the history of Railways has an incident of this magnitude taken place. The hon. Minister has given us details of the incident and I do not want to repeat that.

I was looking forward to a torrent of adjournment motions today to discuss the grave situation at Kharagpur and I must confess to a sense of disappointment when I discovered that none turned up. The Railways employ over 1 million people. Grievances are bound to arise from time to time. A machinery exists for the solution of these disputes from the lowest to the highest level and this machinery has got to be made use of. The hon. Minister has just revealed that the Railway Administration had no knowledge of why this

[Shri Feroze Gandhi]

strike had taken place. At Kharagpur, workers go on strike, women and children go and sit on the track. The same thing happens in Allahabad. Workers go and sit on the track. They take their women and children along with them and demand that the next morning their salaries have got to be paid. At Kanpur, there is trouble in the locoshed and the workers decide that the only way that they have got for getting their grievances solved is to hold up trains, goods trains and other trains at the Kanpur locoshed. The incidents which are taking place at Kharagpur require, I think, the immediate attention of the House. I would like the House to direct the Government to take the strongest possible measures to suppress this hooliganism and lawlessness.

Incidents like this are likely to shake the confidence of the people in the ability of the Government to assure safe travel and movement of goods in the country. This must never be allowed to happen. I call upon the Government to deal with the situation with an iron hand and severely punish those who have indulged in these criminal and terrorist activities. Sixtythree persons, the hon. Minister has revealed, have been injured. Fourteen have been injured seriously. A locomotive has been dashed into pieces. Coaches have been destroyed and the station has been damaged. Lawlessness reigns at Kharagpur. The nation's property has been destroyed and damaged. This has to be compensated for and I demand the immediate imposition of a collective fine on those who have participated in this vandalism and recover from them the cost of the locomotive, and the coaches and the expenditure incurred in repairs to the station. Let the Government make it clear that there shall be no negotiation and no assurance will be given unless and until this illegal strike is called off unconditionally. The Railway administration, for a long time, has patiently stood the strain at Kazipet, Kanpur, Allahabad, Kharagpur and some other places. My request to the Railway administration is, adopt strong measures, because the measures that you have adopted have failed and therefore, stronger measures are called for.

The Railways belong to the nation. They are run by the nation, for the nation. This Parliament has the right to demand from the Government an assurance that every possible measure will

be taken to safeguard the nation's property. I have been worried since yesterday when I came to know about this particular incident. We have heard of strikes, we have heard of labour troubles. But, this I think is the limit. If the crew of an engine can be dragged out and the railway workers could start a train and let it go and dash into a railway station, that, I think, is the limit and calls for the strongest action possible from the Government and the Railway administration in particular. I think the time has also come when all sections of the people should be clear in their minds whether they stand for orderly progress by democratic methods or are they out to destroy and murder democracy only to encourage chaos and anarchy. The Railway Minister has just mentioned that the South Eastern Railwaymen's Union has passed some resolution as a result of which the strike has been called off. My suggestion to the hon. Minister is this. He has just now mentioned, that there is no word of regret for what has happened in Kharagpur. Unless this Union expresses its regret, there should be no negotiation and if it is a recognised union, the union's recognition must be withdrawn, no matter what the consequences.

I was reading yesterday's papers and linking with it what the hon. Minister has now said. I would like to read four lines from Yesterday's *Statesman*. Its New Delhi special representative writes :

"Another 13 people were injured when the strikers threw stones. The strikers it is believed are being led by some agitators from Calcutta."

I hope that if you have found the agitators, you will deal with them in a proper manner and also deal with every one of these people who has indulged in this strike, indulged in this vandalism at Kharagpur severely and strongly and that you will not hesitate, if it is necessary, to dismiss them summarily from railway service, because people like these are a disgrace to our Railways.

Mr. Speaker : Shri Venkataraman.

Shri Venkataraman (Tanjore) : I thought I could speak after Shri Nambiar. I think that we might hear the other side, if you will kindly permit.

Shri Nambiar (Mayuram): We all are sorry to hear the most distressing news of the railway incident that occurred in Kharagpur. If the report is true, it makes us feel all the more concerned. But, in this matter, I request the House to view the situation most dispassionately. Nothing will be achieved by condemning the railwaymen wholesale.

I have got authentic reports of the situation that led to the strike and the happenings till the incident. In the application made by the General Secretary of the South Eastern Railwaymen's Union on 10th May, 1956, under sub-section (2) of section 10 of the Industrial Disputes Act, for referring the matter to adjudication which I quoted the other day during the discussion of the adjournment motion, every detail of the cause of the strike and efforts made by the Union to settle it were given. I am quoting two paragraphs of it here :

"Statement required under rule 3 of the Industrial Disputes Central Rules, 1947, to accompany the form of application prescribed under sub-section (2) of section (10) of the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947.

(a) Parties to the dispute. The workmen employed as painters in the wagon section of the South-Eastern Railway Workshop, Kharagpur, and the management of the workshop.

(b) Specific matters in dispute : 112 painters of the wagon section of Kharagpur Workshop are on illegal lock-out since 1-2-1956. Thirty-one out of these 112 were skilled hands originally but have been downgraded to semi-skilled on the eve of implementation of the Classification Tribunals Award. The rest 80 men are in the semi-skilled category.

2. The lock-out which is an enforced absence is primarily due to the insistence of the Railway Administration asking these men to do the job of stencilers. The men are not agreeable to do this job which is quite different from that of a Brush Hand Painter which is the correct designation of these 112 men."

In this long statement they have given the full details of the strike, the reasons for the strike and they have quoted

the efforts that they have made to settle the dispute under the existing law in force in the country. It is wrong to say that the strikers or the union did not at any stage inform the Railway Ministry about their grievances. Here is a copy. I am prepared to place it on the Table of the House. I have got this copy signed by the General Secretary of the Union before he was arrested and I lay it on the Table of the House.

Shri L. B. Shastri: Will the hon. Member give the date ?

Shri Nambiar: It was 10th.

Shri Feroze Gandhi: After the strike.

Shri L. B. Shastri: It was after the strike.

Shri Nambiar: The Railway Minister just now in his statement stated that no statement of grievances was placed before the Minister before or immediately after the strike.

Some Hon. Members: No, no.

Shri Nambiar: This is what he actually stated. The facts are there.

Shri Gadgil (Poona Central): Will you tell us the date ?

Shri Nambiar: That is what I have said. It was dated 10th May. The strike was started on the 8th May.

Subsequent to this, the Union's Working Committee has passed the following resolution, dated the 20th May, 1956, a copy of which was sent to all concerned. I have got it here. It runs like this.

"Southern Eastern Railwaymen's Union

Dated 21-5-1956

To

- (1) The General Manager, S.-E. Rly., Calcutta.
- (2) The District Magistrate, Midnapore.
- (3) The Regional Labour Commissioner (Central), Calcutta.
- (4) The Chief Labour Commissioner (Central), New Delhi.
- (5) The Secretary, Ministry of Railways, New Delhi.

[Shri Nambiar]

(6) The Secretary, Ministry of Labour, New Delhi.

Re : Kharagpur strike since 8-5 1956."

In this they have given three or four paragraphs of the reasons which led to the strike.

Shri Feroze Gandhi : Was the strike notice served on the railways ?

Shri Nambiar : The question is very clear. It was not a strike which was started after giving strike notice by the union or the workers. It was a spontaneous strike which the union started. It is not unknown in the trade union history of this country. Strikes used to start spontaneously. History shows that there used to be spontaneous strikes and the union to back them and also to intervene at the proper time. This is not new. There is not much grouse to work upon that point. In that resolution it is said :

"The Working Committee expresses its emphatic opinion that the cause for which there is stoppage of work in Kharagpur is just and the demand for adjudication of the relative claims is proper, as the best way for ending the present deadlock. This Committee urges upon the Government to ensure maintenance of industrial peace by providing for automatic adjudication on the request of either of the parties in case of failure of negotiations in a trade dispute as the best method of avoidance of strikes and lock-outs."

Then it goes on to say :

"In view of the failure of the management to afford necessary guarantees against the victimisation for participation in the strike in support of a *bona fide* trade dispute, this Committee requests the President of the Union to hold consultations with Shri V. V. Giri and move the Ministry of Railways and Labour, Government of India by proceeding to Delhi immediately and report the result to the Union with a view to enabling it to tender proper advice to those on strike."

This clearly shows that the strikers had no intention to create confusion. Whenever a situation arose, the union intervened properly and tried to negotiate and settle it. They never wanted

to create trouble for the Government or to stop the railway transport. These things are evident. I can give official copies sent by the General Secretary and you can go through them.

Subsequent to this, the General Secretary and other office-bearers of the union and many prominent members, numbering about 150 were arrested on the 22nd May. The union office was raided and ransacked. I am quoting a telegram which was sent to you, Sir, as the Speaker, dated 23rd May :

"Hon. Speaker, Lok Sabha New Delhi Police atrocities indiscriminate arrest including Subramanyam General Secretary let loose section 144 promulgated workshop protected area and lock-out against 17,000 peaceful and lawful satyagrahis railwaymen...."

Some Hon. Members : Satyagrahis ?

Shri Nambiar : Satyagrahis railwaymen.

An Hon. Member : A new term.

Shri Nambiar : This is the telegram sent on behalf of the General Secretary....

Shri Gadgil : Let us not create the Kharagpur situation here.

Shri Nambiar : ... to the Speaker of the Lok Sabha, with copy to so many others. It goes on :

"... union central office raided valuable documents forcibly taken away by police solicit intervention and settlement trade dispute.

Copy to Railway, Home and Labour Ministers, Government of India, New Delhi, Shri V. V. Giri, A. K. Gopalan, Asoka Mehta, K. P. Tripathy, D. C. Banerjee, K. A. Nambiar, Lanka Sundaram and Bhupesh Gupta, MPs. Lok Sabha New Delhi...."

Here is the copy. This was given on 23rd May, three days prior to the incident. This shows how far the railwaymen were prepared to settle the matter.

After referring the matter to adjudication, I sought an assurance of non-victimisation on the floor of the House which was stoutly refused. I met the hon. Minister in his chamber and begged of him to give at least a promise to me that there would be no victimisation so as to help those who were trying their utmost to settle the matter,

but the hon. Minister still persisted in his attitude. I also represented the matter to the Labour Minister and appealed to him to take a reasonable view of the matter and find out a solution before it went out of hand. He also expressed his helplessness in fetching an assurance of no victimisation.

I understand that Shri Guruswamy, the President of the Union, called upon Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri to make a representation. Nobody knows what transpired between them. I also heard that Shri Guruswamy contacted the General Manager at Calcutta and negotiated for a settlement, but this also did not materialise. Any amount of persuasion did not have any effect on the Railway Minister and the local authorities, Railways or police. In the absence of the leaders of the union some mischief-makers utilised the occasion and made the matter worse.

All the above facts show that there was enough ground for the workers to go on strike,—the main trouble started when 112 painters in the wagon shop were locked out of work—that the union did its best to bring about a settlement, that the attitude of the Railway Minister and the authorities was mainly responsible for the continuation of the strike, that the police zoolum and the indiscriminate attack on the railwaymen, women and children in their quarters had created serious bitterness among the workers and that an opportunity was created for undesirable elements to intervene in the absence of the leaders of the strike in jail. Under the circumstances I strongly demand that a judicial enquiry be conducted into the incident....

Some Hon. Members : No, no.

Shri Nambiar. ...and the reasons that led to the strike so that Parliament and the country could know who are responsible for such a situation and suitable steps may be taken to avoid recurrence.

It is not a small matter that over 15,000 workers go on strike suddenly and continue the same for twenty days. No one can imagine that such a thing could happen without reasonable grounds. No single person or group of persons can provoke such a large number of employees to go into a concerted action in such a short time unless the railway authorities created a situation for it and mounting grievances were existing. The country will be anxiously

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waiting to know the reasons that led to the strike. Let not the railwaymen be hanged for no fault of theirs.

Shri Gadgil : May I ask one question? Assuming what you say to be true, do you justify the action of some of the strikers in pulling out the crew?

Shri Nambiar: Never. I said it in my first sentence. I shall read it again. We are all sorry to hear the most distressing news of the railway incident that occurred in Kharagpur.

Shri Frank Anthony : May we know when they resorted to acts of violence? This notice was given on the 10th inst. May we know when the acts of violence were first resorted to?

Shri L. B. Shastri : I think the news regarding the assaults etc., came to us, or rather started coming to us, immediately after the strike started,—I think a day at the most. I cannot exactly give it, but perhaps it was a day later.

Shri Frank Anthony : That was on the 9th?

Shri L. B. Shastri : Yes, on the 9th. There were some cases of violence.

I would also like to inform hon. Members that the figure of 476 which I gave includes class III and class IV workers, but not supervisors, who number almost 528, and who were present in addition all along.

I should like to correct what I said earlier in regard to the total cases recorded. The total number of those who were injured is as follows:

11th May ..	5
14th May ..	1
17th May ..	2
22nd May ..	8
24th May ..	1
25th May ..	1
26th May ..	68
27th May ..	1

Shri Venkataraman: I am afraid that my hon. friend Shri Nambiar, by justifying the strike, has done a great harm to the railwaymen, and to the peaceful settlement of their problems. While we all agree in condemning the disastrous accident that has occurred as a result of vandalism on the part of a few persons, we should endeavour at the same time

[Shri Venkataraman]

to see that the normal relationship between the employee and employer is restored, and there is no recurrence of a strike of this nature in the future.

My hon. friend Shri Nambiar said that an application under section 10(2) of the Industrial Disputes Act was presented. My hon. friend is a fairly well-informed trade unionist, and he should know that under section 10(2) of the Industrial Disputes Act, joint applications are made by employees and employers for reference of disputes to adjudication.

Shri N. Sreekantan Nair (Quilon *cum* Mavelikkara): Either jointly or separately.

Shri Venkataraman: No. The hon. Member may kindly read the section better. A joint application ought to be made, but the application may only be presented either jointly or separately.

But under section 10(1) of the Industrial Disputes Act, applications for reference of disputes to an industrial tribunal are made, where one party wants a dispute to be so referred. So, the normal thing, if my hon. friend Shri Nambiar wanted to show that they were right, is to show that the employees or the workmen did present an application under section 10(1) to the authority concerned for reference of such a dispute to the industrial tribunal. Therefore, his flashing a few papers here and saying that they presented an application under section 10(2) is largely intended to somewhat mislead the House and the public.

Then, my hon. friend also knows that this is a public utility under the definition given in the Industrial Disputes Act. Under section 22, it is illegal for any union to declare a strike, or for any employee to go on strike, without giving notice under that Act. Obviously, a strike which is illegal has been started by some persons who want now to shirk the responsibility for it, and throw the blame on somebody else.

Now, let us take the grievances. Is it worth sacrificing sixty to seventy lives for the sake of the grievances of a few hundred and odd brush painters who paint the words 'III class', 'Ladies Compartment', 'Reserved' and so on, and who have not been classified as skilled workers? They have been classified as semi-skilled workers by an award of the tribunal in 1948, to which one of the representatives of the

all India Railwaymen's Federation was a party.

A matter which has been settled by a tribunal and in which their classification was upgraded from that of an unskilled worker to that of a semi-skilled worker is now being raised, as if a great dispute has been in existence, and the entire labour in the South-Eastern Railway is agitated over it. The whole world will agree that neither the grievance nor the number of persons involved is sufficient to justify the vandalism which was practised at Kharagpur.

Shri Nambiar then said that this is a stupendous strike. We all have led strikes. A strike is a cessation of work. But does a strike include also throwing of stones, squatting on railway lines and doing all sorts of things? That is no strike at all. It is just indulgence in violence, and nobody, and certainly not this House, will be prepared to countenance such a sort of activity on the part of labour.

Shri Feroze Gandhi: It is holding the country to ransom.

Shri Venkataraman: My hon. friend has very cleverly withheld one very important fact, namely that the real cause of the dispute is the anxiety and rivalry amongst the various railwaymen's unions to show that they command a large strength, a large support and a large following among various people. In order to show that, it is very unfortunate that poor uninformed workers are being made the scape-goats and then they are told that if they resorted to these activities, they would create such a confusion that they will be able to bring down the great administration to its knees. This certainly is against the spirit of trade unionism. A trade union always tries to negotiate a settlement, and failing that, it gives notice and then goes on strike. Nobody says that the right to strike should be taken away. Every trade unionist will agree that it should be resorted to after exhausting all the remedies available, all the procedures that have been prescribed and after giving due notice.

Here, there is absolutely no justification for the strike. In fact, the brush-painters have been made the instrument for trying to stage a show, and trying to bring down the prestige of the administration in order to enhance the prestige of the trade union which is not recognised. I say this with a full sense of responsibility that the trade union which has not been recognised, and

which has been asking for recognition for some time, and which is now trying to capture the All India Railwaymen's Federation is resorting to a series of activities like this all over the country in order to strengthen its organisation. This should be condemned outright, and certainly steps should be taken to see that there is no recurrence.

At the same time, I would make a fervent appeal to the Labour Minister that in dealing with the men, he should be very sympathetic. After all, they are misled; they are not the persons who have organised these acts of violence and vandalism. They are misled into such activities by the so-called leaders who appear on the scene and suddenly disappear under-ground. There have been very many instances in which leaders of trade union movement have come as heroes at the top of the unrest when the movement is at its height, and then when it is going wrong, have suddenly disappeared out of sight, leaving these poor people in the lurch. I would appeal to the Railway Minister that in dealing with this matter, he would take a very sympathetic view of the rank and file of the workers involved, and that, while I cannot endorse the suggestions made by Shri Feroze Gandhi that a punitive collective fine should be imposed, their mere apologies should be acceptable to Government....

Some Hon. Members : No.

Shri Venkataraman : ... and peace should be restored.

Shri Gadgil : I am interested in this whole business as a citizen of this great Republic. When I read the account two days ago, and when I had some discussion with my hon. friend Shri Feroze Gandhi, I thought that it was necessary that a statement of some fundamental principle should be made from the floor of this House not only by one party but by the House as a whole.

4 P.M.

I do not think that any Member of this hon. House is interested directly or indirectly in creating conditions which we are now meeting at Kharagpur. So far as this question is concerned, there are two aspects. One is the present situation as it has developed, and the other—and far more important—is how to prevent recurrence of such things in the future. In the latter aspect, the entire country is greatly interested.

So far as the first aspect is concerned, I think we must assure the hon. Minister of Railways that the entire House will be behind him in whatever effective steps he takes in order to meet the situation. For the last four years, the history of the railways is a history of accidents, strikes and overcrowding. Our Minister is doing his level best, and if he has not succeeded to the expectation or to the measure which we hoped, it is no fault of his. When we find people pulling down or pulling out the screw of a locomotive in motion, it is difficult to believe that they were not conscious of the certain consequences that would follow an action of that kind. We have, therefore, to view the whole thing in the proper perspective, whether these men are merely the victims of somebody's abetment or instigation or whether there is something radically wrong about it. If they are victims of abetment or instigation, there is one remedy for it. But have our people gone so basically wrong that they have no consideration for human life whatsoever? If that is so, it is a sad day for this country.

It is no doubt true that after independence, the full significance of the responsibility of a citizen of a free country is not realised by the people at large. Therefore, so far as the second aspect of the situation is concerned, I am not so much interested in the machinery of conciliation and settlement, this, that and the other. All those things ought to be there. We have guidance from other countries. We have precedents in this country also. All that must be done. At the same time, it is absolutely necessary, in my humble opinion, that our citizens must be educated in the way in which they ought to discharge their duties as citizens, and in this connection a greater responsibility rests with the Members of this House, in fact on all legislators. Whatever happens in this country, more or less an echo is found here; expressions are used and their grievances are ventilated here. Therefore, let us not do anything which will encourage whatever section of the people may be concerned for the time being; let us not think that simply because we have access to the legislatures in this country or to Members of Parliament, they are justified in doing whatever they like. It is our responsibility to tell them that this House stands for a fair and square deal to every citizen in this country, to every section of the population, but this House will not tolerate anything that will hold the community to ransom.

[Shri Gadgil]

My humble submission is this. Let us take one view with respect to the situation as it has developed. I entirely agree that there should be no negotiation. When a mild man like the Minister of Railways and Transport said what he said with respect to the strike of firemen at Hyderabad a few days ago, when a mild man like him is driven to that attitude, one must conclude that there is something very much seriously wrong in it. Therefore, I repeat that he will have the full support of every Member of this House in taking adequate steps, in bringing order out of chaos. The maintenance of the law and order aspect must be dealt with sternly, effectively and expeditiously, and in that he will have our full support. At the same time, let those who have real grievances—I do not know whether, and to what extent, they are real; I do not think that the strike was justified—have the benefit of having the matter referred to some judicial authority or to some adjudicator. I have nothing to say against that. But while everybody must be encouraged to ventilate his grievances in the lawful, legal and constitutional manner, there should be no obstacle put in the way and no consideration of prestige should come in the way; at the same time, let everyone realise that any departure from this will not be tolerated by any section of the House, and certainly not by the Government.

I am, therefore, making this appeal to every Member of this House. Whether the act is done by people who are under the influence of this party or that party, this is a question which transcends the normal consideration of party affiliation. Everyone of us is interested in the peaceful progress of this country. We cannot economically advance if our great system of transport fails us at the critical time. I do not think that any Member, of whatever party affiliation, will have anything but this consideration in his heart. I am, therefore, appealing to every Member of this House that instead of bringing heat into the argument, he should make some constructive suggestions to the hon. Minister of Railways and Transport as to how to deal with such situations if they arise in future, or better still how to prevent such a situation arising in future.

Some one referred to a trade union being responsible for this. Honest trade unionism is not responsible for this. But somehow or other, we have still a hang-over of what we had experienced in

the pre-independence days when every political party tried to enlist the sympathy of the organised workers for the purpose of the nation's political advancement. Now, that is not necessary, because there is universal franchise, and wide democracy and everyone is pledged to follow democratic principles.

Therefore, let us consider this question not as members of one party or the other, but as a question in which everyone of us is interested. Some may be interested in it for the benefit and advancement of the worker, but the great community is interested in having safe travel and in having convenient travel as much as possible in the present circumstances, I have nothing more to say.

Shri H. N. Mukerjee (Calcutta North-East): You will permit me, Mr. Speaker, to preface my remarks this afternoon with a reference to the Railway Minister himself. Sir, I consider it significant that while earlier we have had Railway Ministers selected for reasons that I consider accidental, our present Railway Minister has been General Secretary of the All India Congress Committee, and I pay him the credit of assuming that he is serious about the ideology propounded by his organisation. And that is why I suggest that in considering a matter of the sort that is now before us, he should reflect very seriously on the implications of whatever steps he has in contemplation and whatever pronouncements he proposes to make here and in the future.

I need not say, but I think it is necessary for me to repeat, that everybody in this House—ourselves certainly included—is unanimous in deeply deploring the incident which happened at Kharagpur. There is not the slightest suggestion of a question about it, we have seen also reports—I have here a Calcutta paper about Shri Guruswamy and other railwaymen's representatives expressing their deep perturbation at the news of the accident from Kharagpur. I want also to say that whatever was done by those responsible for letting go of that train, whoever was responsible for that kind of perpetration has been an enemy of the working class movement. And, I say it because of our experience of the trade union movement. I am sure Shri Venkataraman would agree with me that there have been agents provocateur, mischievous elements planted by the employer among the workers to damage their cause. (*Interruption*). I do not say for a moment

that the Railway Minister sent instructions that this kind of thing should be done. But, it has happened when a certain movement which is of considerable strength appeared—to judge from the reports given by the Minister himself—when that movement is going on strong,—to damage it, to defame it, and to sabotage it certain steps are taken by those whose interest it is to do so.

Shri Feroze Gandhi: There were several thousands workers when the train was stopped; not one or two.

Shri H. N. Mukerjee: I put it here as a categorical statement that an incident has happened which we all condemn. About that incident we have our suspicions. And, that is why we say that there should be an enquiry into the circumstances in which that incident happened. I beseech this House and I am happy the Prime Minister is here (*Interruption*). Do not let us rust to conclusions. Even when firing takes place and people die, you very often give the benefit of the doubt to the Government. Here is a case where you are going to damn the working class altogether. And, that is why I suggest, an incident has happened which we repeatedly declare we all condemn, which we all deplore and say, at the same time, that this kind of incident has happened before in trade union history when *agents provocateur* have appeared in the picture and it is necessary that there is an enquiry. I am very happy at the long deferred parliamentary activism of my friend Shri Feroze Gandhi and I am glad he has brought out this question. I am glad that he has brought this. . . .

Shri Feroze Gandhi: Why did you bring in an adjournment motion if you are keen on it?

Shri H. N. Mukerjee: You want the head of the working class on a charge, but it will recoil upon you.

My hon. friend the Labour Minister is there and he knows how one should behave when masses of people are concerned. You must have the psychological approach about which the Prime Minister tells us so often in grappling with the task. I am sorry to have to say that I do not see instances of the successful application of that type of approach.

I read very carefully the proceedings of the 23rd of this month when my hon. friend the Railway Minister made certain statements. I regret to have to say that he had showed an adamant

attitude, which I did not expect of him. I have said in this House before, that somehow I do consider our Railway Minister to be a person who takes his job very seriously and who, if he knows of certain facts, makes up his mind in regard to what he considers to be real justice. In this case I found him saying, 'Of course, I know there are grievances and there will be grievances. There they are today and they will be there in future because you are dealing with human beings and there are millions of people working on the railways.' He said that. And little later, when my friend, Shri Nambiar, interjected that victimisation was the main thing and asked: 'Can't you give us some little assurance even in an indirect way?' The Minister replied: "I shall not be prepared to consider even an iota of those demands'.

Legally you may be right, as far as the legality of it is concerned. But here is a strike which is illegal, which is unauthorised by the unions concerned and therefore you say, 'I am not going to touch these people with a pair of tongs'. What actually happened? If you refer to the history of trade union movement—I do not know much about the actual working of it; I am not a leader of railwaymen and because I am here I happen to help railwaymen's cause from time to time, but I do not have any detailed experience of the working of railwaymen's organisations—but it is known to everybody who has even a smattering knowledge of trade unionism in action, that you do get from time to time—it may be unfortunate—but you do get from time to time strikes happening spontaneously and the unions have to come into the picture later on. It happens—you may not like it—but it happens like that. On this occasion, a thing like that happened and it happened on a scale which my friend Shri Shastri had to admit when he said on the 23rd in this House that out of a total strength of 12,000 workers in Kharagpur, 11,000 were keeping away. Not more than a 1000 were joining their jobs. This is an indication of the way the workers' mind was moving.

My friend, Shri Venkataraman, said all kinds of things were being done, all kinds of enormities were being perpetrated by the workers there. I tried to listen very carefully to the catalogue of injuries which Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri mentioned except on the day when there was that train accident which we all deplore, the number of injuries was not

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particularly considerable. My friend, Shri Nambiar showed sheaves of telegrams showing how, on this side, there were so many injuries which Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri did not mention here. Actually, what were the enormities perpetrated by the people (*Interruption*), till the day when this particular train accident happened? As I said before, we have our suspicions about that accident and do not forget that the line between hunger and anger is very thin sometimes. It is possible that occasionally things happen which, in the ordinary course of things, we do not like to see happening but they do happen. And that is why we say that you should see how a situation had arisen in Kharagpur which was very undesirable and, therefore, something has to be done about it which will apply the healing touch to the situation. After all, repression won't help. After all saying that you won't consider even an iota of the demands will not help. Even after the proceedings in our House on the 23rd and before that train accident, the union executive met and they withdrew the strike and they took upon themselves the obligation, the responsibility of going to Kharagpur and persuading the workers to rejoin work, in spite of the absence of an assurance from Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri, only on a very remote anticipation that if the strike was withdrawn, then, Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri's heart might melt. Only on that assumption, they withdrew this strike before that train accident happened and now you are going to lump the whole thing together and you are going to condemn the entire trade union movement there.

My friend, Shri Venkataraman comes forward with his very ingenious explanation. As I said before, I am not an expert in trade unionism. But, it is said by Mr. Venkataraman that there is a contest, a struggle and competition between rival trade unions and, therefore, this strike has happened. A most amazing thing. (*Interruption*). There is one test by which you are going to judge which trade union is the representative organisation; and, that is the support of the workers. If it so happened that 11,000 out of 12,000 workers in Kharagpur go a particular way, then it makes one conclude that that organisation is the real representative body and not that because there was competition between A organisation and B organisation in Kharagpur which may be in Mr. Venkataraman's pocket there was

trouble. I do not appreciate that kind of deduction. On the contrary, I say that in Kharagpur, a situation had developed which was due only to the inept handling of the problem by the Labour Ministry. It is not the business of the Labour Ministry in a State like ours, which has the socialist pattern of society as it aims, it is not the business of the Labour Ministry or any other employing Ministry for the matter of that, to take its stand on ceremony, on the platform of legality every time. It is not their business at all. When the second Plan is there and when everybody is coming forward—you may not believe our bonafides; I know there are some people in the treasury benches who do not believe us and who think that we have all kinds of things up our sleeve—and for the time being we ask that this Plan should be worked for all it is worth—it may not be worth as much as we wish to be, but as far as it is worth, we are going to see that it succeeds. They may not believe it. But I say that you have got to believe it. If you do not believe, then it is a different story. We say that there is a Plan now being launched; and at this point of time, if you are going to condemn a whole lot of railwaymen altogether, what is going to happen? I have heard Shri Shastri paying compliments to the million strong body of men who manned our Railways; we also have paid our compliments to these people. In Kharagpur, what are the 12,000 people like? Are they all Bengalis with a penchant for all kinds of disturbances? No. There are Bengalis, there are people from all over South India, people from Western and Central India. It is, altogether, a cross-section of Indian humanity. It is a representative chunk of the Indian working class. If today in this House through Shri Shastri's words or actions an impression is going to be produced on the Indian working class and the railwaymen in particular, that Government is insensitive to their real desires, if such an impression is produced on them, then nothing really effective would be done about such things as the Second Five Year Plan. I say, therefore, that Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri should not answer the debate in a huff. I say it is not his business to take his stand on pure legality. I tell him that it is his business to understand the mind and heart of the railwaymen. If the railwaymen are occasionally liable to go astray, it is his business to find out why that happens, it is his business to correct that situation. That is the criterion

of a leader of Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri's sort. If he does not satisfy that criterion, he does not deserve to be where he is. As I said when I began my speech today, I have developed a certain kind of feeling that he does take his job seriously and he does try to apply his mind. I put him, so to speak, on a pedestal of responsibility, and I say this. Look into the mind, look into the heart, look into the condition of your people, look at the demands that they are making a second pay commission for example and so on and so forth, look at the whole picture, look at the kind of things which we all want to do here and now, all marching together, and then make up your mind what you should do. Do not look at this incident in an isolated fashion. Do not isolate it from the rest of the happenings in the country, and do not condemn a representative cross-section of the Indian working class in the manner which has been suggested by my friend, Shri Feroze Gandhi, and in a kind of revolutionary way by my friend, Shri Venkataraman.

The Prime Minister and Minister of External Affairs (Shri Jawaharlal Nehru): I am glad that this matter has come up for discussion before the House because it is not only serious in itself but also significant of the type of things that is developing in this country.

The hon. Member who has just spoken said a great deal about our not condemning the working class or the labour movement. Of course, I entirely agree with it, but one factor seems to be forgotten in this incident, that is, the people who had suffered are workers. Who were the engine driver and the fireman that were thrown out of the railway engine? Who were the persons in the railway train behind them who were injured? They were workers. So, the talk about something being against the working class is completely beside the mark. As a matter of fact, what has pained me most in this matter is how injury is being done to the working class and the trade union movement in this country. I believe in the trade union movement in this country. I think that it is essential that the trade union movement should develop on sound and healthy lines and be strong, and, if I may say so even as Prime Minister, strike when necessary. I am not against strikes although I do think that in the modern age, it is a sign of extreme maladjustment for strikes and

lock-outs to occur. But there it is. I do not wish to deprive the workers of their ultimate weapon of strike till some better method is evolved to settle all their disputes. I am worried and distressed at the way the working class movement and the trade unions are being pushed sometimes in the wrong direction, much to their discredit. I speak without accurate knowledge, but I think that the trade union movement may be said to have started; some of the unions started previously, but in an organised way nearly 40 years ago in India, I think round about the First World War. After that, it had begun to take shape. Naturally when a trade union movement starts, it takes some time to become mature, to organise, to function peacefully and achieve strength. One can forgive a movement like this in its early days to be disorganised, to indulge in what may be called lightning strikes and the like. In fact, in the early days of the trade union movement, really they did not work in the shape of trade unions; they were strike unions, people striking and calling themselves a union, not organised regular trade union working. One can understand that in the early days. Gradually, the trade union movement in this country grew and in a large measure became mature. I say in a large measure because in a measure it did not become mature, and I do not blame the workers for that. But I do think that some of those who led those trade unions, directed them, put them in the wrong path, put them in the path of the kind of lightning strike or repeated strike, trouble or something of violence, with the result that if sometimes they gained something, more often they lost, as was inevitable.

I believe firmly in the rule of life, that if one takes wrong action, wrong results flow from it. I have no doubt about it. That is a law of nature. It represents some of the results to come, the results you see in India even today. I am not referring to any particular group of unions or organisations. But one sees mature trade unions, strong trade unions, trade unions which have protected the interests of the workers and advanced them, and themselves through their efforts collected and given so many facilities to their members, whose organisation and peaceful strength are respected, whose words carry weight. On the other hand, this type of union which indulges in lightning strikes, as they are called is also there. What do we see? Suddenly without any previous intimation or notice, one sees in the

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newspaper that there is a lightning strike there. Then, a little later, some people want to make others not to work. They throw stones at them. Police come into the picture. Then hon. Members opposite get telegrams of police atrocities. It is a regular succession. The hon. Member, Shri Nambiar, showed a sheaf of telegrams. It is quite easy to send them, but whether they represent facts or not, it is impossible to say. But a regular succession of events we see. A lightning strike, something happens. Workers prevent others from going to work, terrify them, threaten them and sometimes completely prevent them from working. When the police come to protect the people, it is called police atrocities; police gets into the neck. If it does not come, you cannot stop the strike. If it comes and tries to do something, then also it is blamed. I have not heard anybody bringing in an adjournment motion or drawing attention to the violent activities, to the stone-throwing, etc., that have become almost a common feature in this country. I am not talking about the workers only but even in public meetings and the rest, it is becoming a regular feature—throwing stones, hurting policemen, hurting them badly, apart from the members of the public. Where are we going to? It is not a democratic method, whatever it may be, and obviously it has nothing to do with what we might call the Indian method of dealing with things—we have to deal with things in the Indian method, of approaching things peacefully. What exactly are we doing? I am worried about it; I am exceedingly distressed about it.

This matter, I do submit, has absolutely nothing to do with the merits or demerits of a claim. It can be examined separately; certainly it should be examined. It is a bad method and I say even with a hundred per cent right demand, if this method is employed, it is a bad method; it is an evil method and a method that should not be tolerated and that should be suppressed. I am not for the moment dealing with the merits of the question. I know nothing about the merits of this particular matter.

I have listened to Shri Nambiar. A strike occurs. Lightning strike, it is called. It is a small strike, apparently for some simple reason. He has given certain dates. I do not know what dates the Railway Minister would give. Two days afterwards they met together and sent some kind of a long communication

which had not reached Delhi yet. They have posted it; it has not reached here. It might have reached the railway headquarters in Calcutta or whatever it is. There were the statements and demands etc. There was no doubt reference to police *zulum*. It is a constant factor that is brought in everywhere because it is expected that everybody will immediately accept any charge of misbehaviour by the police. The poor police is so used to be kicked and cuffed like that and always condemned. It is easy to make a charge against the police.

I am not here to defend the police but I know the thing. It is becoming intolerable always for this poor policeman to be condemned for trying to do his duty in the most difficult of circumstances. Let us punish the police man when he is guilty or anybody else when he is guilty. But the stone-thrower becomes a hero and is taken out in procession—may be—and the poor policeman who gets the stone on his head is a person who is guilty of *zulum* and atrocities. I leave that out. We have to consider this larger question. Two or three questions, I should like the House to consider—broad questions. We must, as I said, stop this creeping in of violence in our public activities—not only strikes and the like but in other activities.

What has been happening recently in the Punjab? It is astonishing that any organisation that claims to be an organisation, should not only encourage but deliberately organise this breaking up of public meetings and throwing of stones, etc., and also shout from housetops; "We will not allow these persons; we dislike their speech." When the other party, finding that something has to be done, comes into the picture and tries to restrain these persons who throw stones, there are telegrams—police *zulum* and this *zulum*. It is really astonishing. Have we lost all standards? Have words ceased to have any meaning? Where are we drifting? I say: no Government—I do not care what party governs—can tolerate this kind of thing wherever it comes from, whatever part of India it comes from, whatever party it comes from. I would invite every party and group here to state publicly, here or elsewhere, how they stand about this matter because, I do submit, it is to their interest and to everybody's interest to be clear on this issue—to be clear that there must be no violence.

Let us have the fullest freedom of expression. It does not matter what it

is. But there must be no violence. That must be the basic thing which all of us agree. In theory we agree. I say, in practice we must agree. It is no good defending people who have committed violence. It is no good trying to find excuse for them. There is no excuse, I say, for a person who commits violence. I can even find an excuse for a murderer but not for any person who throws stones. A person, in a fit of passion, may commit a murder. I have lived with many murderers in the prison—rather I got to like them. But, I have no sympathy for the stone-thrower. I believe he is a mean and despicable person and we have no sympathy for him.

Let us be clear about this matter and let us lay down that where stone-throwing comes in, it must be stopped. Every party must stop it, condemn it and make that man or group of persons who throw stones or otherwise misbehave, pariahs of society. It is disgraceful, despicable and contemptible to do so. It is not going to be tolerated by society in India, whatever it may be for. That is a broad issue.

Then we come, more specially, to the strikes and the rest. Of course, that is covered, partly, by this broader issue. I am interested, as I said right at the beginning, in the good of the working class as such, in the trade union being built up because it is necessary to have strong trade unions, disciplined trade unions acting with strength but not in this way. How can a trade union grow up like this? It was years and years before a trade union movement in this country functioned with any kind of mature strength. These things happen simply because the leaders of these trade unions in some parts of the country encourage them to go in for these so-called lightning strikes.

There is another place where trade union movement got into a completely different direction. It was in Ahmedabad under Gandhiji with the result that, I imagine, the strongest and the best-knit trade union grew up in those areas. It indulged in strikes; it did not rule out strikes but so far as I know, never in the lightning strikes. Always, when there was a conflict between them and the employers, they proceeded with strength and told them; went through all the processes and tried to come to terms. If they did not, ultimately they went on strike and on a complete strike—disciplined and organised strike. The result? If you have registers somewhere, which I have not got—I think you will

find that the action that the Ahmedabad workers took after due deliberation was a much more powerful action, and much more conducive to obtaining the results than those lightning strike elsewhere.

Sometimes, a lightning strike may succeed, especially if it deals with any kind of service which is essential to the community. You may hold up society or community to ransom. It means that. What does it mean? It does not mean that you are dealing with the merits of the question nor does it show the organised strength of labour. It is holding up of the community to ransom, with this weighty revolver over its head.

The whole of the trade union movement, in spite of its mistakes and errors must gradually grow. I am glad it is growing. I want it to grow in India. But, I do wish this House to consider, how this trade union movement—looking at it strictly from the point of view of the workers leaving out the others—can grow much more and become mature in action in the way it behaves, in the way it organises so that it keeps certain standards of behaviour of peaceful action, organised action, action after full thought, full notice, full attempt to come to and arrive at a settlement. If not, well, then there it is; you have the strike. Have it by all means. But what is this kind of thing—this kind of lightning strike?

For me to be told that it has become so intolerable that one strikes in this way? Well, I am prepared to agree that conditions in India, in many places, are intolerable. I am not quite sure how I would behave if I were subjected to those conditions. That is a different matter. But I say: because conditions are intolerable, it does not mean that a wrong action and wicked action should be indulged in because it does really harm and injures the group and the individual. And you get into a vicious circle from which you cannot come out. That is not the way for either trade unions or working-class movements to grow in any event. These are broad generalizations that I am putting before the House.

But this particular instance, I would remind you again, it has nothing to do with your condemning the working-class or the trade union movement because the persons who suffered here are the workers. It is the railwaymen who have suffered. They have been kicked out and they have been injured. Nobody

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else has been injured. I think it is monstrous for people to go in like this. It is a sheer chance that these 63 or 64 persons did not die. Just look at it; first of all going in and throwing out the engine driver and the firemen—whoever it was—and then accelerating the engine and getting out of it. I cannot conceive of a more monstrous and more criminal act. It is a sheer murder or an attempt to murder; nothing short of it. It is a sheer chance that nobody has actually died; some may die in hospital now. And, against whom? Against the workers and not against anybody else. Against the workers who refused to be terrorised into not going. Remember this. The hon. Member opposite said: see the strong feelings of these workers when out of 12,000 only—to begin with a relatively smaller number went to work—476 or something like that went to work. But I should like to know, I should like to find out under what pressure people did not go, because the pressures are very great preventing the people to go. One may think of the pressure inducing them to go, but there are pressures on the other side too. A handful of people who are prepared to threaten and coerce can prevent others from going and one can see this.

Now, suppose this has happened—before this of course there was stone throwing—and another strike occurs there naturally, people will be afraid or may be afraid that they might be killed, when this kind of thing has been done. The result is that, willy nilly, whether they want to or not, they are threatened and coerced into not going. If they try to go, a handful of people may throw stones at them. Therefore, a handful of people can coerce a great majority.

Of course, this cannot be done if they are well organised into good unions. It only happens where there is utter lack of organisation and a number of completely irresponsible people are there to twist the workers this way or that way. A handful of people can make a difference in these circumstances.

Take again this question. Why was this railway business done? Probably,—I am guessing—because nearly 4,000 workers had gone back and this no doubt irritated the organisers of the strike and they wanted to do something to frighten them even more. Stones were not enough. They had used stones previously. So, they did this trick of getting on a railway engine, pushing out

the driver and the firemen and accelerating it and jumping out with all those workers in it who were going to the factory to work, sending them almost to certain disaster. It is a monstrous thing.

Are you going to build up your working class movement, your trade union movement in this way? I know nothing about the union that functions there. There are only two explanations of that union to me. Either it is directly or indirectly responsible for all that has happened, or it is completely incompetent, because there is no third explanation to it. Then that has no business to come to me and talk to me about terms, this and that. When they cannot control the labour, they have no business to be there. With whom am I to talk to. If they are directly or indirectly responsible for all that has happened then they ought to be punished with the rest of them. Where does that union come?

I am all for trade unionism, I repeat, but I do not wish trade unionism in India to be dragged into the mire by some people who are always making use of it to indulge in these evil and wicked practices. Whether it is a trade union, whether it is any other union or whether it is any other group of community, it is not going to prosper by these attempts of violence and coercion, because, if there is violence, violence breeds violence; there is no doubt about it. And the result in the ultimate analysis is all kinds of petty or big violences taking place all over the country, conflict in the final analysis, or if you will put it as big as you like, civil war in the country, because the community is not going to be coerced. If you like you may coerce here and there, for a short while or a short period, but where this becomes a method to be employed to coerce the community, then the community reacts to it and sometimes reacts wrongly to it. Then you have this vicious circle of evil leading to evil, violence leading to violence and ultimately, I suppose, somehow or other, by sheer exhaustion or sheer disgust, it may stop in this process.

Therefore, I submit that this kind of thing must be considered by us in its larger context. What is the good of my condemning those poor persons who have been guilty of this? But, certainly if they are found guilty they should be punished certainly and punished heavily.

Yet, I am not so very angry with them, if I may say so. They are poor ignorant people. Who has set them to do this? Who has led them down a path which inevitably led to this? That is what my concern is. Why do we produce these incidents? Why do we produce the atmosphere which produces them? It is only six weeks ago that I was in Kharagpur—may be, two months ago, I forget. I had gone there for some other function in the Technological Institute. But I passed through Kharagpur twice, coming and going, and large crowd of these railway workers there gave me a very very friendly welcome, which I appreciated greatly. They were good people. They were friendly people, nice people and it hurts me to think that these friendly and nice people should be misled in this way.

As the House probably knows, in Kharagpur there is a very mixed crowd of workers. By 'mixed' I mean, people from all over India. There are relatively very few Bengalis. There are a good number of people from Andhra and from other places. That is one reason, I fear, why no real organised trade union has grown up there, because of this mixed crowd which cannot coalesce easily into a trade union, which in moments of excitement may be made to behave in a particular way. It is unfortunate. But, that means the leaders of any union that is being formed there should be more careful, should all the more act in a responsible way and not in this way.

Then again, I am a little weary of hearing this word satyagraha hurled at me, and having heard this word many times in different contexts previously. When Gandhiji first used it and practised it, when the time came he told us that nobody in India is a satyagrahi except himself. He told us that, and quite rightly too. In spite of all our efforts, now everybody in India is a satyagrahi. Everybody who breaks law, everybody who breaks heads is a satyagrahi. Every stone-thrower in India is a satyagrahi. This is most extraordinary, where words are misused and abused. Well, if a person wants to break a head, if I can stop him, I will stop him. But I do hope that the word 'satyagraha' will not be used in that connection.

Shri P. C. Bose (Manbhumi North): After what has happened at Kharagpur as reported in the press and disclosed by the Railway Minister, it is really distressing for those who are connected

with labour to participate in this debate. I have sponsored the cause of labour for a very long time and I had opportunities of making a comparative study of labour conditions and problems of our country with those of other countries. I had a very good impression and I was proud of the fact that our labourers were better behaved in many ways than the labourers of other countries. But this incident, I am very sorry to say, has not only put us to shame but has brought condemnation on themselves and their friends all over India. Whatever the original cause may be, there was no reason for these labourers to behave in the way they have behaved. The other day, I was surprised to hear the hon. Railway Minister saying that there is a plan of conspiracy in the labour movement in the railways to create mischief. I could not really believe that, because I had great faith in the sense of responsibility of the railway labourers in particular. Though I was connected with other labourers, I also had some association with railway labourers. I helped the B. N. Railway which is now called the South-eastern Railway during a strike in 1927, when there was a prolonged strike for over a month all over the line. If I remember aright, there was not a single incident of violence or anything of the kind. But today it is really a puzzle to me how these things are happening on the same line among our own labourers. I have great faith in their behaviour and their conduct, and I am therefore very sorry that these things have happened at Kharagpur.

I think that my friends are right in suggesting that action should be taken so far as these incidents are concerned but, at the same time I am one with my friend Shri Venkataraman that the poor labourers should be treated differently, because they are really scapegoats and misguided people. They have done these things either due to terrorism or due to misunderstanding or misguidance by some interested people.

I also suggest that a thorough enquiry should be made to find out who are the people responsible for such a lightning strike. The other day the Minister said that real cause of the strike was some incident at Muri station somewhere near Ranchi, and away from Kharagpur. There, one of the railway staff—some ticket-collector or somebody—was assaulted by a police constable and the

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staff demanded the dismissal or suspension of the constable. The railway authorities did not agree or they did not attend to that, and that was the real cause of the strike. Later on, these demands were probably added on or have been raised in a different way. But it is my experience that many times, due to misunderstanding of the psychology of the workers by the officers concerned, trouble arises. I also venture to hope that the Railway Minister will enquire into this matter, namely, why this matter which was very easy to settle was not taken up by the officers there so that the trouble might have been nipped in the bud.

Finally, I again express regret for the incidents that have happened at Kharagpur and request the Minister to have some sympathetic understanding in the case of the illiterate and the ignorant workers.

श्रीमती तारकेश्वरी सिन्हा (पटना पूर्व) :
इसी संसद भवन में रेलवे कर्मचारियों की मांगों के बारे में सिफारिश करते हुए कितनी बार मैं यह पर खड़ी हुई हूँ और रेलवे के मंत्री महोदय से मने उनकी मांगों की सिफारिश की है और जो काम नहीं हुए उनके प्रति असन्तोष जाहिर किया है।

आज इसी संसद भवन में मुझे खड़े होकर यह कहना पड़ रहा है कि उन रेलवे कर्मचारियों ने ट्रेड यूनियन के नाम पर घब्रा लगाया है जिन्होंने कि इस तरह की करामत की है। उन्होंने ऐसा करने से ट्रेड यूनियन और हिन्दुस्तान के नाम पर एक जबरदस्त कलंक लगाया है और वह चीज आगे आने वाले इतिहास में कलंक बन कर लिखी रहेगी। जो कालिख उन्होंने लगाई है वह कभी मिट नहीं सकेगी। इस तरह से ट्रेड यूनियन के नाम पर गलत तरीके से स्ट्राइक (हड़ताल) करना, जब कि यहाँ के जितने संसद के सदस्य हैं जो कि वहाँ की जनता का प्रतिनिधित्व करते हैं, वह इस बात की मान चुके हैं कि कानून और न्याय हमारे प्रजातंत्र की कसौटी है और उसी कानून और न्याय को प्रजातंत्र की कसौटी समझते हुए हमारे दो संसद के सदस्यों ने श्री एच० एन० भूकर्जी और श्री नम्बियार ने एक बार भी यह नहीं कहा कि उन रेलवे कर्मचारियों ने गलत तरीके से काम किया और उनका यह काम गलत था और भविष्य में वे ऐसे कामों के होने देने में रुकावट डालेंगे और सरकार को साथ कंधा से कंधा मिलाकर वह इस बात की

तरफ बढ़ेंगे कि राष्ट्र की थाती का इस तरह से दुरुपयोग न होने पाये। मैं यहाँ पर यह मुनने के लिए बैठी हुई थी कि वे जो यहाँ पर उन ट्रेड यूनियन का या उन कर्मचारियों का प्रतिनिधित्व करते हैं वे इस बारे में क्या कहते हैं? उन्होंने यह फरमाया कि वे बेचारे भूखे और गरीब मजदूर हड़ताल करने पर तुल गये और उन्होंने यह मनमानी कर डाली पर उनके मुँह से यह कभी नहीं निकला, कि जिमेदार सदस्यों के नाते उनका यह फर्ज भी हो जाता है कि अगर जनता की आवाज को यहाँ पर वे रक्खा करें तो जनता को भी वह सही सही रास्ता दिखला सकें और उनको गलत रास्ते पर जाने से रोके। लेकिन मुझे श्री एच० एन० भूकर्जी के मुँह से यह सुनकर बड़ा ताज्जुब और अफसोस हुआ है जब उन्होंने यह फरमाया कि मालम होता है कि सरकार की तरफ से कोई एजेंट इसमें काम कर रहा था। मैं समझती हूँ कि उनका ऐसा कहना बड़ी शर्म और लज्जा की बात है। मैं चाहती हूँ कि रेलवे मंत्री महोदय इस बात की तहकीकात करायें कि इस चीज की जड़ में कौन सी शक्ति है जिसने इस तरह की करामत करवाई है। यह आज की ही बात नहीं है। अगर आप ट्रेड यूनियन के इतिहास को देखें और रेलवे के विगत ३, ४ वर्षों के इतिहास को देखें तो आपको मालम होगा कि इस प्रकार के तत्वों ने हमेशा यही कोशिश की राष्ट्र की थाती खड़ी रह जाय, हमारा कोई काम ठीक तरह से सम्पन्न न हो सके और हमारा जो यातायात का रास्ता है वह रुका रहा जाये। आज जो कुछ वहाँ पर हुआ है वे पिछले इतिहास को देखते हुए कोई अचम्भे की चीज नहीं है क्योंकि हमें मालूम है कि सन् १९४८ में जिस समय रेलवे वालों ने हड़ताल की थी उन्होंने यह नहीं सोचा था कि देश में इतना बड़ा तूफान आया हुआ है, इस देश में, यहाँ पर इतने अन्न की कमी हो गई है कि लाखों आदमी भूख से तड़प तड़प कर मर जायेंगे। यही सदस्य लोग जो यहाँ पर उसके बारे में वकालत करते हैं उन्होंने कभी यह नहीं सोचा कि राष्ट्र के आगे बढ़ने के रास्ते में उन्होंने कितनी रुकावट डाली हैं और कभी तो वह उन कर्मचारियों को अच्छा रास्ता दिखाते और अच्छी राय देते। उनको राष्ट्र के साथ कंधा से कंधा मिला कर राष्ट्र की उन्नति के कार्य में जुट पड़ने की सलाह देते। मुझे यह खेद के साथ कहना पड़ता है कि उन्होंने कभी उन मजदूरों को सही सलाह नहीं दी। उन्होंने आज राजनीति के दामन में हमें बदनाम करने की सोचा है। मैं इस बिज के चैलेंज के साथ कहना चाहती हूँ कि

उनकी राजनीति अगर अराजकता का दामन पकड़ती है तो वह राजनीति राष्ट्र का कलंक बन जाती है। मैं पूछना चाहती हूँ कि जिस तरह से छुपे स्तम्भ की भाँति उन्होंने उन गरीबों को भड़काया है, उसके लिये क्या कोई भी प्रजातांत्रिक देश या किसी भी देश की प्रजातांत्रिक सरकार उनको इसके लिए माफ कर सकती है? मैं तो समझती हूँ कि दुनिया का कोई भी राष्ट्र और दुनिया की कोई भी हूकूमत इस बात को गवारा नहीं कर सकती थी कि ऐसी हरकत उसके यहाँ हो और वह चुपचाप उसको सहन कर ले। मुझे यह देख कर बड़ी खुशी है, जो अपील उनको तरफ से आई वह यहाँ पर जम नहीं पाई। पर हमारे एक कांग्रेस के सदस्य ने यह अपील की है कि हमको उनके साथ मेहरबानी से पेश आना चाहिये। मुझे इस अपील को सुन कर हैरानी भी है और खुशी भी है। इस सम्बन्ध में मैं यह अवश्य कहूँगी कि मुझे भी कुछ अवसर रेलवे कर्मचारियों के बीच काम करने का मिला है, श्री बेंकटरामन् के बराबर तो उनके बीच काम करने का अवसर मुझे नहीं मिला है लेकिन मैं भी एक कार्यकर्ता की हैमियत से इस बात को बड़े जोर से कहना चाहती हूँ, कि इन बातों में सरकार को कड़ा से कड़ा रास्ता अपनाना चाहिए। क्योंकि आज तो इस प्रकार की शरारत करके उन्होंने १०० आदमियों को घायल किया तो कल को वह इससे भी बड़ी शरारत कर सकते हैं और भूसाफिर गाड़ियों के साथ उसी तरह की मनमानी कर सकते हैं। यह गुस्से को जाहिर करने का हरगिज तरीका नहीं हो सकता कि लोग इंसानियत को छोड़ दें और इस तरह लोगों की जानों के साथ खिलवाड़ करें और राष्ट्र की संपत्ति को नुकसान पहुंचायें। यह कोई कानून का विरोध नहीं है और न ही यह स्ट्राइक करने का कोई तरीका है। हम ऐसे अमानुषिक तत्वों के खिलाफ अगर कड़ी कारवाई न करें तो दूसरे रेलवे मुलाजिमों के दिल में यह शुबहा पैदा होगा कि सरकार डर के मारे उनके खिलाफ कोई कड़ी कारवाई नहीं करती है जो कि इस तरह की गलत हरकतें और गुंडागर्दी करते हैं। इसलिये अगर ऐसे गलत और शरारत भरे काम करने वालों के खिलाफ सरकार द्वारा कड़ा कदम न उठाया जायेगा तो दूसरे रेलवे कार्यकर्ताओं पर बड़ा खराब असर पड़ेगा। आज अस्पतालों में बहुत से रेलवे कर्मचारी जो कि उन लोगों की गुंडागर्दी का शिकार हुए हैं और घायल अवस्था में पड़े हुए चोटों से कराह रहे हैं और पता नहीं कि उबमं से कितने शायद खत्म भी हो जायेंगे, वे

सरकार के इस रुख को देख कर क्या कभी इस बात की हिम्मत कर सकेंगे कि ऐसे शरारती कर्मचारियों के विरुद्ध कोई कदम भविष्य में उठायें और कानून का सहारा पकड़ करके देश के काम में कंधा से कंधा मिला कर आगे बढ़ सकें। मैं समझती हूँ कि सरकार के इस नमी के रुख को देख कर उन बेचारे वर्कर्स की कमी भी हिम्मत न पड़ेगी कि वे अस्पताल से ठीक होकर निकलने पर उन गुंडों के विरुद्ध कोई कदम उठा सकें और कानून का सहारा ले सकें। आप यह न सोचिये कि चूँकि वे गरीब मजदूर हैं इसलिये उन पर मेहरबानी दिखाई जाये। वे बालिग आदमी हैं, एक वोटर हैं और एक गणतंत्र के वोटर की हैसियत से उसमें इतनी जिम्मेदारी होना चाहिये कि कौसा किसके साथ सलूक किया जाय। इसलिये मेरा तो मत है कि अगर बालिग होकर उन्होंने कोई ज्यादती की है तो उसके लिये उनको कड़ी से कड़ी सजा मिलनी चाहिये। मैं तो यह मानती हूँ कि सरकार ऐसे शरारती लोगों के खिलाफ कड़ा रुख दिखा कर ट्रेड यूनियन के काम को आगे बढ़ायेगी क्योंकि सब पर यह साफ जाहिर हो जायेगा कि जो लोग गलत रास्ते पर चलते हैं और दूसरे को गलत रास्ते पर चलाते हैं, उनके प्रति सरकार कड़ा से कड़ा कदम उठाने से भी नहीं हिचकिचाती मुझे तो कतई ऐसे लोगों के साथ कोई हमदर्दी नहीं है जिन्होंने कि इस तरह से ट्रेन को उलटने की कार्यवाही की, यह तो ईश्वर की कृपा थी कि वह ट्रेन बहुत तेज रफ्तार में नहीं थी और कुछ ही लोगों को उसने घायल किया और स्टेशन की इमारत से जा टकराई वरना अगर वह ट्रेन कहीं उलट जाती तो पता नहीं क्या होता और कितने अधिक और आदमियों की जानें जातीं। उस ट्रेन के स्टेशन से उतराने से जो घायल हुए और कुछ उनम से बहुत सस्त घायल हुए, उनके खून से हमारी लोक सभा तर है। क्या इस तरह की बात हम लोग ठंडे दिल से चुपचाप बर्दाश्त कर ले यह नामुमकिन है और ऐसा कभी नहीं होना चाहिये।

5 P.M.

अध्यक्ष महोदय, मैं यहाँ पर कोई बहुत तूफान के साथ नहीं बोल रही हूँ, मैं बहुत ठंडे तरीके से बोल रही हूँ, परन्तु यह बात ऐसी नहीं है जिसमें इस तरह से बोला जा सके। मेरा दिल कहता है कि यह जो बातें हुई हैं, वह सरासर ज्यादती है और वह इंसानियत के साथ और राष्ट्र के साथ गद्दारी है और मेरी अपील है कि उन राष्ट्रों के गद्दारों को सही सही रास्ते दिखाया जाय।

[श्रीमती तारकेश्वरी सिन्हा]

मेरी यह भी अपील है कि जो इसके पीछे हैं जैसे कि श्री नम्बियार साहब ने बड़े जोर के साथ कहा कि इस मामले में इनकवायरी होना चाहिये, तो मैं भी कहती हूँ कि इनकवायरी जरूर होनी चाहिये ताकि यह मालूम हो सके कि दरअसल इसकी जड़ में क्या चीज है। हालांकि उधर की तरफ से इस बात से साफ इंकार किया गया है कि उनका उसमें कोई हाथ रहा है लेकिन मैं जानती हूँ कि ऐसे लोगों का हाथ ऐसे कामों में बराबर रहा है और आगे भी रहेगा...

Shri Nambiar: We also agree. There may be enquiry.

श्रीमती तारकेश्वरी सिन्हा : मैं रेलवे मंत्री महोदय को चेतावनी देना चाहती हूँ कि दूसरी पंचवर्षीय योजना के पहले वर्ष में आपने अपना कदम रखा है और अगर इस तरह की बातें होती गईं और हमने उनको सख्ती से नहीं रोका तो हम कोई भी देश की तरक्की का काम पूरा नहीं कर सकेंगे। अगर हमने इस प्रकार के शरारती तत्वों को सख्ती से नहीं दबाया तो यह हमें कोई राष्ट्र का कार्य नहीं करने देंगे और नतीजा होगा कि उधर लोग भूखे मरेंगे और जो हमने जीवन का एक उन्होंने उद्देश्य बनाया है वह पूरा नहीं होगा और निराशा पल्ले पड़ेगी और यही लोग जाकर, लोगों में कहेंगे कि देख लीजिये इस सरकार ने कौन सा काम अभी तक जनता के हित में किया है। ये लोग आज आपको भड़काते हैं कि काम मत करो और राष्ट्र की उन्नति में साथ मत दो और कल यह ही लोग जनता को यह कह कर भड़कायेंगे कि यह सरकार वास्तव में सरकार होने के लायक नहीं है क्योंकि तुम्हारे लिए यह कोई काम नहीं कर रही है। इसलिए मैं मंत्री महोदय से अपील करती हूँ कि आप इस बारे में पूरी तरह सावधानी बतें। उन बेचारे कर्मचारियों ने जिन्होंने आपके साथ अपनी वफादारी दिखाई है, उनको आप स्वयं समझ सकते हैं कि गुंडों से कितना खतरा होगा। उन्होंने इतना खतरा मोल लेकर अपना फर्ज अदा किया है इसलिये उनके लिये मैं आपसे अपील करूंगी कि वे बेचारे जो आज बेपनाह अस्पताल में पड़े हुए हैं और जो चंद लोग काम पर आये हैं उनको आप मुआविजा दीजिये। उनको आप सहायता या मुआविजा देकर एक तो उनको सहायता देंगे ताकि उनको आगे काम करने का बड़ावा मिले और दूसरे कार्यकर्त्ताओं को भी काम करने का प्रोत्साहन मिले। जो वफादारी उन्होंने दिखाई है और कर्तव्य पालन

की भावना दिखाई है उसके लिये उन्हें कम्पेंसेशन की तौर पर कोई चीज अवश्य मिलनी चाहिये यही मेरी आपसे छोटी सी अपील है। इतना कह कर अध्यक्ष महोदय, मैं आपका शुक्रिया अदा करती हूँ कि आपने मुझे यह मौका दिया। जहां तक इनकवायरी करने का सम्बन्ध है आप जरूर इसकी इनकवायरी करायें। आप पूरी रिपोर्ट प्रकाशित करें कि इसके बीच में किस राजनैतिक पार्टी का हाथ है। और किस राजनैतिक दल के लोग इस तरह की खुराफात कर रहे हैं और जिनके द्वारा भविष्य में भी ऐसी बातें की जाने की सम्भावना है जिस से लोगों को यह मौका मिल सके कि वह समझें और देखें कि वह कितने गहरे पानी में हैं और किन लोगों पर देश विश्वास कर सकता है तथा किन पर नहीं।

Shri Frank Anthony: I deliberately refrained from speaking earlier in the debate because I wanted to hear the views which have been expressed from both sides of the House. Against the background of facts as they have been relayed to us by the Minister, I feel that every Member in this House must admit that this strike, particularly its characteristics of hooliganism, goondism and violence that supervened, must have been disquieting. I feel that there can be no doubt that every right thinking Member in this House, and in fact, every right thinking person outside the House must condemn without any qualification the indiscipline and violence that have characterised this strike. As a person who has been an unyielding champion of railwaymen for close on to 20 years, I condemn the strike, particularly the violence, and vandalism that have accompanied it, without any qualification.

I feel that it is a matter not only for condemnation, but for shame that railwaymen who are supposed to be the custodians of railway property should deliberately turn round and destroy them. I feel that it is a matter for greater shame that the railwaymen should turn round and injure, intimidate and indulge in violence against their co-workers. I believe that it is a matter for the completest shame—I was particularly perturbed by what the Railway Minister said—that the strikers had even threatened the families of the railway workers. I feel that that perhaps was the worst feature of this whole

strike that these strikers should, in the name of securing their grievances redressed, not hesitate not only to do violence to railway property, not only to do violence to their co-workers, but descend to intimidate the families of their co-workers. Violence is condemnable. But, this kind of threatened intimidation and violence against the families of railwaymen, is a form of despicable cowardice which I cannot find adequate words to condemn.

I say this to the Railway Minister that in bringing home to the various people who have been guilty of violence, the punishment, perhaps, which they deserve, he will have to tread carefully, as my hon. friend Shri Venkataraman suggested, with sympathy. I have had not a little to do with railwaymen. I know that by and large they are bluff, hearty, honest people. They can easily be led; they can be easily misled. My fear is that in this whole rather sordid affair, a number of essentially ignorant unthinking railwaymen might have been stamped into courses of action and perhaps even to commit violence which they are bitterly regretting today. I feel that those who deliberately unloosed this engine by dragging out the driver and the fireman, must have absolutely exemplary punishment meted out to them. And I would ask the Minister to investigate carefully the position of the South-Eastern Railway Union. I feel that in this matter the people who are behind the so-called organisation have perhaps deliberately organised this violence and this vandalism. And if he is to repel this creed of violence which is spreading insidiously but definitely through railway trade unionism in this country, he will have to get at the real inspirers of this violence. It will not do if he gets hold of a few brush painters and dismisses them. Perhaps they may deserve it, but I say this: he will have to pin down the actual inspirers of this strike and he must deal with them not only sternly, he must deal with them ruthlessly. He must set an example to railwaymen throughout the country that people who organise this creed of violence in railway trade unionism can expect nothing but the shortest shrift from the Government.

I feel here that the Minister may make a mistake. He is good person who sometimes errs on the side of leniency. It is a good thing when you are dealing with men, men who are essentially good and honest. But if he gives the appearance of making any concession to violence, he will do to the railways what

has been done when the Government in fact—though they do not admit it—succumbed to political blackmail typified in the case of Andhra. He will place a premium on violence so far as railway trade unionism is concerned. Had violence not supervened, had goondaism not taken place, had there been no intimidation of the railwaymen, I would have got up and said: "Do not take your stand on a technical or legal position." I would have said: "Go into the grievances of these brush painters. They may not have given a notice, they may not have conformed to the technicalities of the Industrial Disputes Act, but investigate it." But I say this today since these other features have supervened, you cannot go into these grievances however legitimate they may be. If you go into their grievance, if you concede their grievance you will immediately exalt violence. People will say that the Government once again have succumbed to violence. That is the unfortunate thing. However legitimate their grievance, you will have to refuse to look into it, you will have to refuse to consider it.

Having said that, I want to make an earnest appeal to the Minister. I have repeatedly warned this House against a certain deterioration in the administration, particularly with regard to the handling of staff problems. As recently as March of this year I underlined in this House the fact that the personnel branch of the railways, the branch which deals with the problems of railwaymen is a shambles. It is not sufficient for us only to condemn in this House, because there is a strong, widespread and deep feeling of resentment and frustration among all classes of railwaymen today, because their legitimate grievances are not being properly or adequately dealt with, and if they feel that because unfortunately this whole problem has become confused in and bogged down by this violence the general attitude of the Government is an unsympathetic attitude, that the attitude of the Minister is an unsympathetic attitude, that the attitude of the Prime Minister is an unsympathetic attitude, then you will only be driving in deeper this poison of resentment which is among the railwaymen today, and that is my analysis of the position. Why did 11,000 out of 12,000 men or more join the strike in the first instance? The Prime Minister's analysis may be correct that some of them joined because of the threat of intimidation, because of this fear of a

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nemesis. But my analysis is this, that a lot of them joined from a sense of frustrated sympathy. For, almost every class of railwayman today has a grievance and he cannot get anybody to deal with it, and there is this insensitive, bureaucratic, unresponsiveness from the General Managers downwards. The men joined, I feel they joined because they thought: "We also have grievances. Let us give moral support." But then when somebody takes advantage of the general feeling of resentment and frustration which there is in every section of railwaymen, you get certain organisations committed deliberately to this goal of violence which take advantage of the naive and ingenuous attitude of the railwaymen. That is why I say that while we must condemn without qualification violence, while the Railway Minister must investigate the activities of this union, while he must look into the grievances which are supposed to have set off this strike, there must also, I say, this to him with all respect, be heart-searching on the part of the railway administration. The railway administration will have to revalue its ideas, particularly its dead, bureaucratic ideas which continue as a legacy from the old administration. If he does that, I feel that much of the present tendency for railwaymen to fall into the hands of extremist organisations, to succumb to extreme counsels, will be put into reverse gear. I say it will not be sufficient for Government to say that they will adopt stronger measures, that will put this violence down as it deserves to be put down. That is only one aspect of the question. The other aspect is that you must now realise that you are dealing with one million people, that there is a tremendous feeling of dissatisfaction with the way in which the problems of railwaymen by and large are being handled. And I would suggest this—it may not be very relevant—I would ask the Railway Minister to do this. I feel that his administration has become detached from people who are aware of the problems of railwaymen. One of the greatest disservices that has been done to the Railway Minister and to the administration is the fact that you exalted to a sort of godhead this National Federation of Railwaymen, an organisation that had no capacity, no knowledge of railwaymen's interests, with the result that today railwaymen are groaning under all manner of grievances which cannot be redressed. You had a standing committee or consultative committee of

this House. Why not resurrect it? You got the advice of people who had been dealing with railwaymen and their problems for decades and for longer periods. Do that. As I said, there should be a definite attempt to, on the one hand, make it very clear to railwaymen that you will not tolerate any form of violence, any form of incitement to it, on the other hand let railwaymen know that you are prepared to deal with their real grievances sympathetically and with understanding.

I want to say one word about the real worker. I have not been able to get any first-hand information of what precisely happened in Kharagpur. But my own fear is this. The railway administration has for the past 100 years been able to continue because you have had a hard core of loyal workers who refuse to subscribe to sabotage and subversive movements. You have still that hard core of loyal workers. These men are prepared to face anything, they are prepared to face strikes, they are prepared to face violence, they are prepared to face danger. But one thing they are not prepared to do. They are not prepared to allow their wives and their children to be exposed to violence. They will give you any kind of service, down to laying down their lives, but if their womenfolk and their children are exposed to violence, then a time will come when they also will say: "We are prepared to serve the Government, to serve it loyally, but we are not prepared to serve it at this price." I do not know what has happened at Kharagpur. I hope you gave adequate protection, not so much to the loyal workers—they are men, they have to endure these things—but I hope you gave adequate protection to their families, wives and children. I repeat my request to the Railway Minister that he should use this occasion as an occasion for heart-searching, for re-assessing certain values particularly on the administrative side, and he will find that today, essentially and particularly among the class III staff and class II staff and the preponderant class IV staff he has got an essentially good hard core of loyal reliable workers. All that they want is an assurance from the Railway Minister that while he is not prepared to condone violence, he is always prepared to listen to their grievances, and always prepared to deal with them sympathetically.

Mr. Speaker: Since there is no time left now, and the two hours' time is

practically over, I shall now call upon the Minister. Representative opinions from all sections of the House have been expressed already.

Shri L. B. Shastri : I have very little to add to what the Prime Minister has already said. The Prime Minister has dealt with the bigger issues, and I think it is for the trade union leaders to think and ponder over them. He has also indirectly replied to the points made by Shri H. N. Mukerjee, and I would not like to go into them again.

To begin with, I would like to clarify the confusion which was created by Shri Nambiar's speech, in regard to the *bona fide* claims of 112 brush-hand-painters. He said that they were on a strike from 1st March, 1956. What he said was correct. But the strike of the brush-hand-painters at Kharagpur was due to the following reason; their demand was that they should not be asked to do marking with stencils, because that was skilled work, and for such work, they should receive skilled wages. This was their demand. On 1st March 1956, 9 brush-hand-painters in the semi-skilled grade of Rs. 35-60 refused to do stencilling work, on the ground that such work require skill, although this staff had been previously doing this work as part of their normal duties. Other brush-hand-painters also joined in sympathy and claimed the skilled grade of Rs. 55-130.

As has been said by Shri Venkataraman, this matter relating to the brush-hand-painting and marking with stencils was referred to the tribunal, and this work was classified as semi-skilled by the tribunal on which a representative of the All India Railwaymen's Federation also served. The House should know that similar staff in the workshops at Kancharpara and Lillooah are being treated as semi-skilled workers. Therefore, it was felt that there is no case for re-examination of this question. The tribunal having given its decision once before, and similar staff working in other workshops being treated as semi-skilled workers, there was no case for the Kharagpur brush-painters to be treated as skilled workers and to get a higher scale of pay.

It is also wrong,—as Shri Nambiar perhaps wanted to make out—to say that there was a lock-out from our side. In spite of the repeated persuasions and warnings, the brush-hand-painters abstained from their legitimate duties. To cover their lapses for staging this illegal

stay-in strike, they carried on a propaganda of an illegal lock-out on the alleged ground that the workers were prevented from doing brush-hand-painting work, which they were prepared to do. That is quite contrary to the actual facts. As a matter of fact, these men have along been permitted to lift their tickets and to come to their sections to do their normal work, which, however, they have been persistently refusing to do, and as such, they are responsible for resorting to this illegal strike. It will be appreciated that there is no question whatsoever of any illegal lock-out. We have also obtained legal opinion which confirms the view taken by the administration that the brush-hand-painters in the wagon-shops have been on an illegal strike, and that there is no question of there being an illegal lock-out on the part of the administration.

A reference to adjudication also was made when strike after strike started. Shri Nambiar's speech has created some confusion, or might have created some confusion in the minds of hon. Members, as if an adjudication was demanded for the bigger strike which has started from 8th May. In fact, the adjudication was asked for the strike of the brush-hand-painters. So, I would like to make the point clear that the question of adjudication did not arise at all in the case of the bigger strike in Kharagpur which started from 8th May. My hon. friend is a trade unionist, and I do not think any trade unionist will ever justify such a big strike as has taken place in Kharagpur, in sympathy with the strikers who number only about 112, for a trival demand from their side. So, the Kharagpur strike could not be justified in any way. Even if the strike of the brush-hand-painters was there, it was necessary, firstly, for the leaders of the union there to take to legal methods, and if, of course, they did not succeed in it, then the matter could have been considered in a different way. But instead of advising the brush-hand-painters, they have resorted to other methods. And here also is a confusion which should be cleared up.

The Kharagpur strike was never started in sympathy for the strike of the brush-hand-painters. I would like to make that clear. The Kharagpur strike was started in sympathy with the strikers at Adra and other places. In Adra and other places, there was some trouble. I need not go into that story again. The strike started in Adra and nearabout

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places. The Khargpur people started a strike in sympathy with the strikers at Adra and other places. Later on, when they found their position weak, they felt that they would switch on this thing to the strike of the brush-hand-painters. And they said—as to whether—I do not agree with what they say—that they were right when they said that their strike was on account of the strike of the brush-hand-painters.

Shri Nambiar : The application for adjudication, which I had read out, had made it very clear, that it was on that ground that the others supported the brush-hand-painters.

Shri L. B. Shastri : The papers that the hon. Member has referred to were written two days after the strike started at Kharagpur. Therefore, I say that the strike started on other grounds. It was in sympathy with the strike at Adra and other nearabout places, where later on they felt that they were in the wrong and therefore they thought that they would now say that the reason for that strike was the strike of the brush-hand-painters.

I have heard with great patience the speeches of Shri Nambiar and Shri H. N. Mukerjee and I can only say that they did not satisfy me at all.

Shri H. N. Mukerjee referred to the ideology of the Congress. I entirely agree with him that I do believe in the ideology propounded by the Congress. But the Congress has always demarcated between violent and non-violent activities. The Congress may have committed violence occasionally, and the leader used to condemn it in the strongest possible terms. The House knows that sometimes violence was indulged in by those who were not actually Congressmen but by those who were considered to be the followers of Congressmen or those who were working in association with Congressmen. For their actions also, Gandhiji held Congressmen and the Congress leaders responsible. In fact, on one or two occasions when there was any talk of truce or peace, Gandhiji used to say, 'I am not prepared to defend the cause of those who have been indulging in any form of violence'.

I think Shri Frank Anthony touched the right point when he had said that there should be a clear demarcation between violent activities and non-violent

activities. So my trouble at the present moment is that it does not satisfy me or ease me in any way; in fact, I feel ashamed to stand before this House to admit that some of our railwaymen have behaved in this manner. Fortunately, I have the honour to preside over the railways at the present moment. I want to identify myself with each and every workers of the railway, and for whatever good done, I want to take credit, and for whatever evil is there, I think I should be criticised and condemned.

So with that attitude, I do not know how am I to deal with the workers of Kharagpur who have behaved in this manner, which is simply horrible and shocking. It is said that they should not be victimised. I shall never like to victimise the innocent workers, hundreds of them who are working there. There again, you have to make a difference between the leaders and the workers. Who led them to this kind of activity? The leaders were responsible. Who were the leaders? It is for the people there and for the members of the so-called radical parties to decide as to who were the leaders and who instigated these people to go on strike.

I do not mean to refer to, and I do not want to accuse, any party, but there is no denying the fact that some of the leaders there hold pro-communist views. I would like to be quite frank in that matter.

Shri Nambiar : None of the leaders there is pro-communist. I know most of the leaders there.

Shrimati Renu Chakravarty (Basirhat) : Is it a crime ?

Shri L. B. Shastri : It is not a crime. I say it is good that they hold pro-communist views. I have no quarrel on that. Let them hold pro-communist views. But what I want to say is that those leaders who are pro-communist still believe in this kind of activities. They still think that they can coerce the administration by indulging in violence or in violent activities. And that has always been the mistake which the Communist party have committed since their inception in India. The communist party have always assessed the situation wrongly in this country. Their assessment has always been wrong. They have not understood the people of their country. They do not understand, and they have not understood, the real approach and outlook of our

people. Therefore, they have always committed blunders. I still say that the communist party has to think over . . .

Shri A. K. Gopalan (Cannanore): Is the union there communist or are the leaders there communist? They are not communist. If you want to accuse, why do you bring in the party?

Shrimati Renu Chakravartty: Why do you take it as a party affair?

Shri L. B. Shastri: I am not accusing. If hon. Members are not even prepared to hear something about the views of others about them, what can I do?

Shri A. K. Gopalan: We are always ready to hear. But you are simply accusing. I only wanted to know whether the union there is a communist union. You can accuse us always.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Minister referred to some leaders as communist.

Dr. Rama Rao (Kakinada): Can the hon. Member abuse the communist party like that?

Shri L. B. Shastri: Am I abusing? If I say that the communist party has not assessed the situation in this country properly, am I abusing? Do not the Members of the communist party say either in public or here in Parliament that the Congress does not represent the people or does not understand the outlook and approach of the people correctly, that it is not trying to meet the needs of the people, that its ideology is wrong? As a member of a political party, I have certainly a right to say what I am saying, and I am putting it in the mildest form possible.

Shri A. K. Gopalan: May I make it clear that the communist party spokesmen here have clearly said that they have nothing to do with the union? They have said that they have nothing to do with what has happened there, and they disapprove of what has happened (*Interruptions*). Can I not talk here? What is this going on?

It has already been said that some of the people out of the 12,000—I do not know whether they are four or five or six or ten—may be communists. When anything happens in the country, though the communists have nothing to do with the union, they are accused of being responsible for it. This kind of thing will not help. The communist

party has said, like other parties, definitely here that we do not want these things to be done, and we have nothing to do with the union there also. Then what is the point in saying that some of them are pro-communist? Out of 12,000 or 13,000 workers, there may be some who may be communist. What is wanted is not to single out one party like this, and say that some leaders are responsible for this.

Dr. Rama Rao: You make a mess of it and then blame us.

Mr. Speaker: Shri H. N. Mukerjee said something about the hon. Minister. He started with a preamble and said that it would be useful for arriving at a conclusion. Then he said that he was General Secretary of the All India Congress Committee. Therefore, he referred to the ideology of the Congress. Now the hon. Minister referred to the ideology of some leaders in Kharagpur who are of communist tendencies. He wanted to say something about that ideology. Therefore, both are entitled to say what they want to say about this (*Interruptions*).

Shri Kamath (Hoshangabad): Let there be a debate on ideologies tomorrow for one hour.

Shri L. B. Shastri: The hon. Members opposite do not want to know nor want to hear anything.

Shri Nambiar: No, Sir, we want to hear.

Dr. Rama Rao: But we do not want to hear nonsense.

Mr. Speaker: Order, order. That is not right.

Shri L. B. Shastri: They do not want to hear anything about the method of their work. I shall not say so, but I think there is no future for that party, the party which is not prepared to hear criticisms against its method and approach—I do not think that party has any future. I am prepared to hear for the Congress party any criticisms or any condemnation from that side. But I am amazed at the attitude of that party. Is that the way political parties want to function in a democracy? Is it the way of your approach that you will refuse to hear the mildest things that are said in this House?

Shri A. K. Gopalan: We are not refusing to hear.

Shri L. B. Shastri : They do not want to hear anything against them. Is this the way they function on the political plane? I am really amazed.

What I want to lay stress on is that those friends who are members of the communist party, if they are the leaders there on the South Eastern Railway, should know and think and ponder over the fact that this method of indulging in violent activities will not lead to any fruitful result. I know that some of the leaders who have been arrested there hold communist views; but I do not know whether they are members of the Communist party. Therefore, I say that they hold pro-communist views. There is an attempt—of course, Shri Nambiar might not like it and might get angry if I use the word 'infiltration'—at infiltration.

Shri Nambiar : No, Sir.

Shri L. B. Shastri : But there is an attempt—whether they are communists or not—to join the union. By all means join the union if you like. But the method of their entering into other unions and their continuing to adopt the methods which they used before will injure the cause of the union as well as the cause of the workers.

There is another thing. I admit Shri Mukerjee has, for the first time, clearly stated that he deploras what happened at Kharagpur. But, Shri Nambiar had not the courage to say that. He said that very mildly in one or two words and in the first sentence he made a slight reference to it. What am I to understand? No labour union, no important leader of the trade union movement has, so far condemned what has happened in Kharagpur, the other day, about the railway train accident and other activities which were indulged in Kharagpur.

Shri Nambiar : There is a report in *Swadhinta* stating that Shri Guruswamy, while approached by a Press reporter, condemned the action. Unfortunately, I cannot read Bengali; otherwise, I could have read it out.

Pandit Thakur Das Bhargava (Gurgaon) : On the contrary, they say that it is the work of *agents provocateur*. What does it signify? Is it honest to say so without there being any foundation for such an insinuation.

Shri L. B. Shastri : I shall not here refer to Shri Guruswamy.

Mr. Speaker : Is Shri Guruswamy a member of the Communist party?

Shri L. B. Shastri : He is not; but I do not want to deal with that. He is not a member of the Communist party but, sometimes, you communists try to associate with him.

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao (Khammam) : He is more near to you than to us.

Shri L. B. Shastri : I do not know that but I would welcome him to come very much nearer to me. One of the important leaders made a speech the other day. He congratulated the workers at Kharagpur.

Shri Nambiar : Who was that?

Shri L. B. Shastri : He is a very important trade union leader of the South Eastern Railway. He congratulated the workers of Kharagpur on the unity and strength which they had shown on the occasion of this strike. He also congratulated the women and children of Kharagpur who so bravely participated in the demonstrations. He also quoted the instance of Bishma from Mahabharat and said that they must like Pandus combine their efforts in battling it. He pointed out to them that they must go to work and they should have no grudge against anybody whether Police or Railway. He said that the strike at Kharagpur is legal because it had followed in the wake of the illegal lock-out of the brush hand painters. He exhorted the workers that those charge-sheets which had been served should not be replied. He again congratulated the women for the part they had played in the present struggle and stated that even women had been arrested and sent to jail. He said that he will do his best to get justice done to the workers. This was the speech which he made at Kharagpur and he said that the strike at Kharagpur was more genuine than the one at Hyderabad. All this he stated only last evening.

I shall read out only portions of a certain resolution that was passed.

"The Working Committee expresses its admiration for the recent fight undertaken by the KGP workers to vindicate the *bona fide* claims of 112 brush hand painters under illegal lock-out.

The Committee expresses its grave concern at the launching of police action by promulgation of prohibitory orders and the wholesale arrests of trade union workers

engaged in a *bona fide* trade dispute and appeal to the Chief Minister, Government of West Bengal, to intervene and avert a grave tragedy.

In view of the statement made by the Railway Minister on the floor of Lok Sabha, that consideration to grievances can only be given if the strike is called off, and as the strike has served its purpose by focussing public attention at the enormity of the injustice done to the workers and with a view to allay any public apprehension that there has been any procedural defect in the strike undertaken, this Working Committee appeals to the workers on strike in KGP to call off the strike."

Mark the language and the trend of the sentence.

At the end, they say :

"This Working Committee request the President to move the Chief Minister of the Government of West Bengal for securing the release of those arrested and being prosecuted in connection with KGP dispute. This Working Committee directs the President of the Union that appropriate steps be taken to move the Ministry of Railways to protect the strikers against any victimisation."

So there is not a word of regret or denunciation against the activities that were indulged in. Instead of that, they have congratulated the workers for their unity and solidarity.

This is the situation in which I am asked by Shri Mukerjee to take a lenient view and to act according to the ideology of the Congress in which I believe. I do not want to take much time of the House, but I would like to make it clear that there are two views held in the country at the present moment about the working of the trade union movement. The INTUC has clearly said—and for this, perhaps, they might be criticised by the radical element—that they do not believe in any kind of strike when the Five Year Plan is under implementation, whether it is the first Plan or the second Plan or if there be some other Plan. For the time being, it is for the second Plan. For this second Plan, they have made it clear that they do not want to indulge in any sort of strike. They have said that whatever their grievances, whatever their difficulties, they should be

tackled by means of mutual negotiations and discussions with the employers or, if it is the Railways, with the Railway administration. The other view held by some friends is that they shall indulge in strikes whether the Five Year Plan is implemented or not and whether the Plan is successful or not. I think the House and established trade union leaders will have to make up their minds to accept one of these views, and see whether the first view held by the INTUC is correct or whether the second view held by some others is correct. It might be said that Congress leaders are in the INTUC and so I am supporting that. I am not saying so. But, this is the basic question which has to be considered by all those working in the field of labour. I think the INTUC has given a very bold lead. They can be criticised for that. They say that the interest of the country is of the utmost importance; and, at the present moment even in the interests of the workers, it is essential that they should not be asked to go on strike and suffer themselves and allow the country to suffer.

I, being in charge of the Railways, naturally feel that I should deal with that union which gives me an assurance that it will not go on strike on trivial matters and that it will not indulge in lightning strikes. If there is any union which does not offer any co-operation to the Railways, which wants to indulge in strikes every day and which wants to go its own way, what advantage has the Administration got to meet them, to talk to them and negotiate with them? Therefore, I have been thinking for some time whether a condition should not be imposed before giving recognition to any union that it will have to give a clear assurance that it will not indulge in any strike, say, at least, for the next Five Year Plan.

Shrimati Renu Chakravartty : So it means the right of strike will be taken away.

Shri L. B. Shastri : The right of strike will be there; but, every effort has to be made, negotiations, adjudication machinery, negotiating machinery even at the highest level and even arbitration by an independent tribunal. All that I concede. If no satisfactory solution is arrived at even after that, certainly the workers have full right to go on strike. I do not deny the right to strike. But this kind of strike which is being indulged in day in and day out is making the situation simply impossible.

Therefore, I refer to the two clear views being propounded in this country

[Shri L. B. Shastri]

by two different sets of labour leaders. For railwaymen, I have no doubt that the best course for them to adopt is to accept that they will never indulge in strikes. I shall not go into the general question. Hon. Members no doubt realise the amount of worry we have to undergo when there is even a strike for one hour. There are delays in the trains. At the present moment, the Railways have to undergo a very heavy responsibility. The stoppage of trains for one hour, two hours or one day means huge accumulation at different points. There was a question this morning from Shri Feroze Gandhi about the shortage of coal in Delhi. It is true that we have supplied them coal, but then in the months of February and March because of the strikes at various places we could not supply them the adequate number of wagons. They are not small things, arrival of coal in Delhi for the consumption of the people in Delhi is not a small matter for the residents of Delhi; it may be a small thing in a larger context. If a railwayman goes on a strike, he is damaging the cause of the Railways as well as injuring the cause of the people as a whole.

I would, therefore, say it very clearly that it would not be possible for me to take a lenient view in the matter of lightning strikes or in the matter of resorting to violent activities. I do not say that I am a very mild person, but it is true that I have tried to deal with labour as mildly as possible not because it was something good for me, but it was something good for the Railways as well as for the country. I treat them as my colleagues, co-workers. I have felt no difference between the workers and myself. Even a railwayman, a pointsman, a stationmaster, is in no way less responsible than the Minister who presides of the administration of the Railways. Therefore, when I take up that attitude and I find that the workers do not respond correspondingly, I am really pained and I do not know as to what action I should take when they indulge in these kinds of activities. Sometimes, even the son has to be chastised; there is no way out. Here in Kharagpur, the workers have behaved in a fashion which will perhaps go down for ever in the history of the Railways as a black chapter—I have no doubt on that point. Therefore, the question is this. The leaders who led the workers, hundreds and thousands of them, into these sufferings, I think, should suffer. How can

I prevent it if they have been arrested for violent activities, if they are prosecuted in the courts? The Railway Ministry is not going to stop it. We are not going to do that; we cannot do that. Immediately when we indulge in violent activities, it becomes a question of law and order and it does not become a railway problem. The State Government has to deal with that. We cannot come in its way. But if there are other workers, who were just misled on the spur of the moment, I cannot take a stiff attitude about them. But it is absolutely essential that this union, which is unrecognised now, will remain unrecognised as has been suggested by the General Manager. The General Manager has made it clear that unless they behave properly, unless they act in a legal and proper manner, he is not prepared to give recognition to this union. I want to give my full support to the attitude adopted by the General Manager. Unless there is a clear denunciation of the activities indulged in Kharagpur, unless the leaders clearly tell the administration that they feel they have acted wrongly, I think we cannot have any truck with those who are in charge of the activities of that union. I need not say anything more.

I have calculated every word of mine, and I give the assurance that I shall not go a step further than what is required, because I feel that the interest of the worker is my interest and the interest of the Railway Ministry or Administration. But the sense of duty has to be there. Sometimes I may have to perform a difficult operation, but as one who holds a post of responsibility, I have to be harsh but I shall not go a step further than what is required. I should very much like that there should be a clear denunciation on the part of the workers as well as the unions so that the situation might improve a little after that.

Shri H. N. Mukerjee: *rose.*—

Mr. Speaker: We have had sufficient discussion.

Shri H. N. Mukerjee: Can we have a clarification from the the Minister?

Mr. Speaker: We have had enough discussion. Is it the desire of the House that we should take up the discussion of the Working of the Preventive Detention Act today?

Some Hon. Members: Not today.

Shri H. N. Mukerjee: Can I ask the Minister a question for clarification?

Mr. Speaker: All right.

Shri H. N. Mukerjee: My question is this. The Minister asked for a denunciation by the union concerned of certain incidents which are alleged to have happened....

Some Hon. Members: Not happened!

Shri H. N. Mukerjee: They deny responsibility and they regret it. In the absence of an assurance from the Minister regarding a proper enquiry into the circumstances of those alleged incidents, can the Minister demand a denunciation without a repudiation of the responsibility of the union concerned for this particular incident? This is the clarification that I want.

Shri L. B. Shastri: I do not want to say anything on the question of enquiry at the present moment. But I do not think much proof is required for the wrong type of activities indulged in at Kharagpur. After all if some of the leaders have been put in jail, is Shri Mukerjee prepared to say that he is not responsible for the strike which took place at Kharagpur? They had been arrested red-handed in the sense that they were in the midst of a crowd where assaults were taking place.

Shrimati Renu Chakravarty: The whole of it is *sub judice*.

Shri Kamath: Yes, *sub judice*

Shri L. B. Shastri: Shri Mukerjee says that the leaders have denied any responsibility. It is strange to say that; it surprises me. It will be very unfair to ask the workers to go on strike and the leaders holding back and saying that they are not responsible for the activities that were indulged in or were resorted to there. Let him ask the question again. What I have understood is that the leaders have completely no responsibility for this strike. If that is correct, I cannot answer him.

6 P.M.

Shri H. N. Mukerjee: It is not with regard to the strike. It is in regard to certain alleged happenings which are supposed to have been undesirable. There, the whole question arises. The leaders repudiate responsibility. (*Interruptions.*) For instance, Shri Guruswami's statement, telegram, statement in the press—they are all there. In that

case, what else do you expect. Do you want the labour leaders concerned to denounce certain things for which they say they have no responsibility. On the part of the Government, there is not the remotest suspicion of an assurance that a proper enquiry will be made into the alleged happenings? (*interruptions.*)

Mr. Speaker: Order, order.

Pandit Thakur Das Bhargava: May I ask one question from hon. Shri Mukerjee—

Mr. Speaker: This will become endless. Why should there be questions after questions? Something has happened. The train has been switched on without a proper driver. Possibly, the hon. Minister wants that whoever might be responsible for it, ought to be condemned by any person in this country; that is what he wants. Now, the hon. Members need not say that they condemn it; they have not taken the responsibility for it; it is a wrong act. Likewise the leaders must openly condemn this act. That is what the hon. Minister evidently wants. What is the further clarification? I proceed to the next business.

NATIONAL DISCIPLINE SCHEME

Shri S. C. Samanta (Tamluk): Sir, I want to raise this question of urgent importance—National Discipline Scheme which has been adumbrated by our hon. friend, Shri Bhonsle. He has experimented it in his Rehabilitation Department. So many exhibitions have taken place. The Members of Parliament, the people outside and even some foreigners, were pleased to see the wonderful work that has been done by our revered friend, Shri Bhonsle. Some months back, some hon. friends approached the Education Minister about this scheme because they were enamoured of it, because of the character-building property that was being infused by the introduction of such a scheme.

Here is Kasturba Niketan where the children of displaced persons were living. General Bhonsle went there and gave them training in discipline. Within two years, you will be surprised to hear that a new hope had arisen in the hearts of those unfortunate displaced children. They now feel that they can carry on.

Government may say that they have made arrangements for character-building and discipline in the NCC and ACC schemes and boy scouts and girl guides