

received by Government that this habit is on the increase.

**Shri D. C. Sharma:** May I know, Sir, if the WHO is contemplating to conduct an enquiry into the use of sleeping tablets in India as they have done in Europe?

**Shrimati Chandrasekhar:** I have no information, Sir.

**Shri D. C. Sharma:** May I know, Sir, if the sleeping tablets that are in use in India have been analysed by any research laboratories?

**Shrimati Chandrasekhar:** All the drugs are analysed.

**Shri D. C. Sharma:** May I know, Sir, if the Minister is aware of the fact that the use of sleeping tablets is like addiction to drugs and whether the Ministry is going to educate the public about the pernicious effects of these tablets?

**Shrimati Chandrasekhar:** These tablets are issued to the public only under medical practitioner's certificates.

**Shri V. P. Nayar:** Are Government aware that drugs like Gardinal are sold free to people and there have been cases already of over-dosage and death. Especially, when people want to commit suicide such drugs are used.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, order.

#### RAILWAY PORTERS

\*705. **Shri D. C. Sharma:** Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state what action Government have taken on the representation made by the Delhi railway porters on the 5th of August, 1953?

**The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Shahnawaz Khan):** The hon. Member is presumably referring to

the representation headed "A Memorandum on the demands of the licensed porters working in Delhi for consideration of Members of Parliament" submitted by the Railway Coolie Union, Delhi, a copy of which was sent to the Minister for Transport and Railways. A statement indicating the results of the examination made of the various demands of the Railway Coolie Union, Delhi Jn. is placed on the Table of the House with reference to an undertaking given in reply to one of supplementary questions asked in connection with Starred Question No. 1088 on the 7th September, 1953. [See Appendix IV, annexure No. 3.]

**Shri D. C. Sharma:** May I know, Sir, if the railway porters are not railway servants, under what category do they come?

**Shri Shahnawaz Khan:** They are not railway servants; they are licensees.

**Shri D. C. Sharma:** May I know, Sir, what is the difference between a railway servant and a Licensee, as my hon. friend is trying to make out?

**The Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri L. B. Shastri):** He is engaged by a contractor; therefore, he is not a railway employee. He is not directly paid by the railway.

**Shri D. C. Sharma:** May I know, Sir, whether Government are aware of the evil effects of the contract system under which these railway porters are engaged?

**Shri L. B. Shastri:** We are aware of that. We consulted several unions at different places and they have not favoured the proposal of the contract system being dropped and the decasualisation system being introduced.

**Shri D. C. Sharma:** What efforts are Government making to overcome the evil effects of the contract system?

**Shri L. B. Shastri:** It is for the coolies to agree first.

**Sri A. N. Vidyalankar:** May I know whether similar representations have been received from porters working at other stations too?

**Mr. Speaker:** The question is restricted to Delhi railway station.

**Shri Sarangadhar Das:** May I request the Minister not to use the word "coolie" but porter?

#### SHORTAGE OF RAILWAY WAGONS

**\*706. Shri D. C. Sharma:** Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the shortage of wagons is keenly felt in the Northern Railway; and

(b) what steps Government are taking to overcome it?

**The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Shahnawaz Khan):** (a) Until the end of November there was hardly any shortage of wagons on the Northern Railway and loading was generally current. During the busy season, which lasts from December to June, however, it is not possible to meet currently all the demands for wagons.

(b) By getting more wagons and locomotives.

**Shri D. C. Sharma:** May I know, Sir, if people have not complained against the short supply of coal on account of scarcity of wagons?

**Shri Shahnawaz Khan:** There have been very few complaints. Whatever complaints have been received have been very thoroughly scrutinised.

**Sri D. C. Sharma:** May I know, Sir, if complaints have not been made to the effect that certain goods could not be sent to other places because of short supply of wagons?

**The Deputy Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Alagesan):** I do not know what specific complaint the hon. Member refers to. Up till Novem-

ber we have been able to move the traffic that offered currently and there were no outstandings. From December onwards it may go up a little.

**Sri D. C. Sharma:** I must say it is not the right way of replying. You will not give us time; otherwise I can give a list of the complaints.

**Mr. Speaker:** The hon. Member will appreciate that Question Hour is to be utilised for getting as accurate information as possible with the least of argument.

**Shri D. C. Sharma:** All right, Sir. Have the hosiery merchants not complained that they are not getting the required number of wagons for the transport of goods?

**Shri Alagesan:** I can only state that on the Northern Railway as far as the month of October is concerned we have been able to move the goods that offered for loading. That shows that we are able to move the traffic currently. I have figures with the help of which I can make that statement.

#### WIRELESS FREQUENCIES

**\*707. Sardar Hukam Singh:** Will the Minister of Communications be pleased to state:

(a) whether the number of available frequencies for radio is far outstripped by the present total world demand;

(b) whether the contemplated list indicating the specific frequencies to each wireless circuit in the world could be agreed to, and any frequency assignment plan has been prepared by E.A.R.C. Geneva in 1951; and

(c) whether our "Wireless Planning and Co-ordination Branch" has been able to clear frequencies for our present needs?

**The Deputy Minister of Communications (Shri Raj Bahadur):** (a) Yes.

(b) India was a participant in the Extraordinary Administrative Radio Conference held at Geneva in 1951