

**Shri S. N. Das:** May I know whether, before this Committee was appointed, the grievances of these workers or officers were before Government and, if so, why Government did not take any action before the strike was undertaken?

**Shri Alagesan:** It is not correct to call these officers whose scale is Rs. 800 to 1,500 as workers. They cannot by any stretch of language be classified as workers. The Bombay Port Trust made certain recommendations in this regard, and the Ministry was studying its repercussions on the Calcutta port, and we were in fact taking steps to expedite a decision on that. In spite of that and even though they had knowledge of this they precipitated a strike.

**Shri K. P. Tripathi:** May I know the total amount of time for which this demand has been before Government from the beginning till the decision was taken.

**Shri Alagesan:** The Bombay Port Trust made a definite recommendation only some time back. I do not have the date with me, but it was not very far back.

**Dr. Ram Subhag Singh:** May I know whether any time-limit has been fixed for the Committee to submit its report?

**Shri Alagesan:** It is not usual to fix a time-limit but they have been asked to report as quickly as possible, and we expect they will do so within a month or two.

**Shri Dhulekar:** In view of the fact that government servants and officers go on strike, does Government contemplate to bring in legislation to make strike by government officers unlawful and punishable?

**Shri Alagesan:** Sir, I cannot give an answer to this question.

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** It is a matter of policy. Questions relating to policy

in general ought not to be raised in the Question Hour.

#### CORRUPTION AMONG RAILWAY EMPLOYEES

\*1559. **Sardar Hukam Singh:** Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state:

(a) the number of employees on the Northern Railway dealt with for corruption either Departmentally or otherwise during 1954; and

(b) the number whose cases were taken to courts and who were prosecuted during the same period?

**The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Shahnawaz Khan):** (a) and (b). Upto November, 1954 action was initiated against 154 employees; 11 of these were taken to Courts and prosecuted. In all disciplinary action was taken against 43 employees during the same period.

**Sardar Hukam Singh:** Are there any such rules or principles which guide the authorities in determining whether a case is to be sent to the court for action or dealt with departmentally?

**Shri Shahnawaz Khan:** It all depends upon the legal evidence that is available.

**Sardar Hukam Singh:** Were there any cases which were sent to the court but where the persons were acquitted for want of proof and even then they were dealt with departmentally and some punishment was given?

**Shri Shahnawaz Khan:** There may be some cases of that nature because a man who is prosecuted may be let off in the court of law for want of evidence or on some very technical point. But that does not mean that the man is not guilty, and departmental action is sometimes taken.

**Shri Bhagwat Jha Azad:** The Parliamentary Secretary stated that there were one hundred and odd cases out

of which about forty-three were taken to the court and punished. May I know if out of the hundred and odd cases there are still cases pending in the Department for punishment?

**Shri Shahnawaz Khan:** Yes, Sir. All I have stated in this answer was that action was initiated against 154 employees. Some have been dealt with, others are being dealt with.

**Shri L. N. Mishra:** May I know whether it is a fact that complaints which are entered in the complaints book, even by Members of Parliament regarding corruption etc., are not attended to and no action is taken on them?

**Shri Shahnawaz Khan:** I beg to re-  
fute that point....

**Shri L. N. Mishra:** It is a fact.

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** Order, order. The hon. Member says it is a fact and the Parliamentary Secretary says "No" Let us hear him.

**Shri Shahnawaz Khan:** I beg to submit that any complaint that is entered in the complaint book is looked into very thoroughly, and the entries made by Members of Parliament and other honourable gentlemen are attended to with all due care.

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** Evidently hon. Members are referring to complaints made independently of the complaint book.

**Shri Shahnawaz Khan:** Any complaint that is received in the Railway Ministry, either through the complaint book or verbally or in writing, is attended to.

**Sardar Hukam Singh:** Were there any cases during this period and, if so, how many which were dealt with departmentally where the only punishment given was warning or admonition?

**Shri Shahnawaz Khan:** For the break-up I want notice.

#### DEVELOPMENT OF AIR-CRAFT IN INDIA

\*1560. **Shri Krishnacharya Joshi:** Will the Minister of **Communications** be pleased to state whether Government have a scheme for the development of light economical air-craft which can be operated at low cost?

**The Deputy Minister of Communications (Shri Raj Bahadur):** The production of a light economical aircraft is one of the problems engaging the attention of the recently established Directorate of Development and Production (Air) in the Ministry of Defence. The proposal is at the preliminary stage of examination at present.

#### COFFEE LABOUR

\*1561. **Shri D. C. Sharma:** Will the Minister of **Labour** be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the prices of coffee have risen since 1953; and

(b) if so, what has been the increase in the net income of the labourers in coffee plantations on account of rise in coffee prices?

**The Deputy Minister of Labour (Shri Abid Ali):** (a) During 1954 the coffee prices have not shown an upward trend as compared to the price levels in 1953.

(b) The question does not arise.

**Shri D. C. Sharma:** May I know if the Government takes into account the rise in prices or the decline in prices when they determine the quantum of amenities to these labourers?

**Shri Abid Ali:** So far as the wages are concerned, these are stipulated according to the Minimum Wages Act. With regard to bonus, of course, the prevailing prices are sometimes taken into consideration.

**Shri D. C. Sharma:** May I know the range of bonus during the last three years so far as these coffee plantations labourers are concerned?