

up in the open in the Alexandra and Victoria docks, Bombay making movement of even vehicular traffic difficult;

(b) what efforts have been made by the Government to clear the docks of the present accumulation;

(c) whether any steps have been taken to see that there is no congestion in the docks in future by the accumulation of steel imports; and

(d) if so, what steps have been taken in the matter ?

**The Deputy Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Alagesan) :** (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (d). The Port Trust have opened a dump at Haji Bunder with effect from 9th June, 1956 for storing cargoes of iron and steel lying uncleared in the docks. As a result, the congestion in the docks has been cleared. The Port Trust Authorities are fully alive to the situation and the dump will be enlarged suitably so as to cope with any future increase in traffic.

**Shri Gidwani:** May I know whether the Government have taken steps to divert steel shipment to other ports in the immediate future in view of the fact that serious congestion will occur in the Bombay docks, if that is not done?

**Shri Alagesan:** Wherever it is possible, steel shipment will also be diverted to other ports. Other steps are also being taken like increasing the capacity of the dumps, if necessary, the opening of another dump etc. These are also under consideration in the port of Bombay, so that arrivals may be cleared soon. Certain other steps are also being taken in this regard.

**Shri Gidwani:** May I know whether the Government propose to construct a warehouse at Haji Bunder for stocking future steel imports?

**Shri Alagesan:** A warehouse cannot contain all these.

**Shri Gidwani:** Are Government aware that in view of the difficulty of clearing the imported steel from the docks, the consignees have to pay heavy demurrage charges which ultimately fall on the consumers? If so, what steps have been taken in that direction?

**Shri Alagesan:** The consignees have been asked to clear the arrivals of goods within 24 hours; if the steel is taken to the dump, then they will have to pay an additional charge of Rs. 12. This has created a situation in which the consignees are anxious to remove the goods as soon as they arrive.

### Surface Transport

**\*620. Shri Matthen:** Will the Minister of Transport be pleased to state:

(a) whether his attention has been drawn to an article in the *English Digest* page 7 under the heading "Why not scrap English Railways"; and

(b) if so, whether, in view of the bottleneck in transport consequent on the inadequacy of the Rail Transport, during the Second Plan Government propose to pay more attention to the development of Surface Transport than what is paid to their development at present?

**The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Shah Nawaz Khan):** (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) It will be realised that conditions obtaining in U. K. and India are not similar. Steps are being taken to ensure the co-ordinated development of all forms of transport viz. rail, road and sea.

**Shri Matthen:** According to this article, the railways are the slowest way of transporting goods—about 2 miles per hour is the average. Is it correct and what is the average in India?

**The Deputy Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Alagesan) :** As is stated in the written answer, the conditions obtaining in U.K. and India are completely dissimilar. The suggestion has been made in an article by some expert that the British railways should be scrapped and replaced by road transport. This had arisen out of this situation, namely, that the British railways are losing to the tune of 20 million a year, whereas the Indian Railways are absolutely a paying concern. Our surpluses are perhaps increasing year by year and as such, this question of substituting railway transport by road transport in our country does not arise. The conditions in the two countries are dissimilar.

**Shri Matthen:** I did not suggest any scrapping. I only asked the hon. Minister whether the statement is correct and what is the average speed in India of the transport of goods by rail. Will he please answer this question? It is said that the Railways are the slowest way of transport of goods: about two miles an hour on the average. Is it correct? What is the average in India. That is my question.

**Mr. Speaker:** I myself was not able to understand the hon. Member's question. As my hon. friend's question is indefinite, it elicits an indefinite answer.

**Shri Alagesan:** That is a statement contained in that article.

**Mr. Speaker:** What is the average speed in India?

**Shri Alagesan:** I should like to have notice.

**Shri Feroze Gandhi:** What was the average speed of goods trains in India in 1954 and 1955?

**Mr. Speaker:** He wants notice.

**Sardar Iqbal Singh:** May I know whether it is a fact that even at the end of the Five Year Plan, there will be bottlenecks in the railway? Will the Government consider other means of transport plans for their speedy development? If so, what are the steps taken in the matter in the Second Plan?

**Mr. Speaker:** These are all suggestions for action.

**Shri T. N. Singh:** Is it a fact that road transport as it is functioning in India today is costlier than rail transport?

**Shri Shah Nawaz Khan:** That is so.

**Shri Matthen:** A railway coach carries 1½ tons of dead weight per passenger while a bus carries the same weight to carry 16 passengers. Is it correct?

**Mr. Speaker:** I am afraid the hon. Member is examining the hon. Minister.

**Shri Alagesan:** These are statements in that article. I am as much competent to state whether these statements are correct as any hon. Member.

**Shrimati Tarkeshwari Sinha:** May I know whether the Government propose to appoint an Enquiry Commission as stated by Dr. Ghosh, a Member of the Planning Commission to make a Comparative study of the load or weightage on the wagons in the railways and motor transport?

**The Minister of Railways Transport (Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri):** I regret I cannot understand what recommendation the hon. Member is referring to. These matters are, as the House is well aware, under active consideration of the Transport Ministry. We had appointed a Study Group which has submitted its report. We are thinking of ways and means to increase the present number of buses and trucks and improve the present services also. We have also suggested in Transport Advisory Council and advised the State Governments that they should try to avoid levying of double taxes and that there should be no restriction between one State and another. Also we have asked the State Governments to inform the Railway Ministry if there are any specific routes for which the present code of principles should be relaxed. For example, there is a restriction of 150 miles. We are prepared to relax that restriction, provided the Railways are not able to cope up with the traffic offering on that section. We have asked the State Governments to inform us. The Railways do not want to come in the way in that section.

Similarly, in the case of private carriers, we have advised the State Governments that licences should be issued freely and private carriers can travel any distance they like. These are the specific steps which we have taken recently. We propose to take other steps also. We have set up a Central Board of Transport so that there may be better co-ordination between rail and road.

#### Central Anti-Locust Organisation

\*621. **Shri Ram Krishan:** Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to make retrenchment in the Central anti-Locust Organisation.

(b) if so, the reasons thereof; and

(c) whether Government will adopt means to absorb the retrenched staff?

**The Minister of Agriculture (Dr. P. S. Deshmukh):** (a) Yes.

(b) Due to continued low locust activity in the country and small chances of incursions from outside, it is considered that the continuance of the entire staff is not necessary.

(c) Yes, as far as possible.

**Shri Ram Krishan:** May I know the total number of persons affected by this retrenchment?

**Dr. P. S. Deshmukh:** One hundred and five.

**Sardar Iqbal Singh:** May I know whether a warning was given by the London Locust Centre of a new locust invasion and may I know whether even after the warning there is retrenchment?

**Dr. P. S. Deshmukh:** The warning has been received. But, the breeding is on such small scale that we do not want all the personnel that we have now.

**Shri Bhagwat Jha Azad:** May I know the total number that would be absorbed out of the 105 likely to be retrenched?

**Dr. P. S. Deshmukh:** According to the present calculations, about 50 are likely to be absorbed against the existing vacancies. Various steps are being taken to see that they have full employment.

#### N. E. R. Claims Office

\*622. **Shri Jhulan Sinha:** Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state the present position with regard to the shifting of the N.E.R. Claims Office from Calcutta to Gorakhpur?

**The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Shah Nawaz Khan):** A statement showing the requisite information is placed on the Table of the House. [See Appendix IV, Annexure No. 10].