

25th February 1927

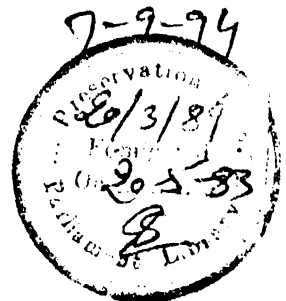
THE  
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY DEBATES  
(Official Report)

Volume II

(22nd February to 14th March, 1927)

FIRST SESSION  
OF THE  
THIRD LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY, 1927

Chamber No. 181X/23



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# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Friday, 25th February, 1927.

The Assembly met in the Assembly Chamber of the Council House at Eleven of the Clock, Mr. President in the Chair.

## MEMBER SWORN.

Mr. T. A. Chalmers, M.L.A. (Assam: European).

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

### PUBLICATION OF THE REPORT OF THE TARIFF BOARD ON THE MILL INDUSTRY.

579. \***Sir Victor Sassoon**: Will Government be pleased to say when the Report of the Tariff Board on the mill industry is likely to be made public?

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes**: With your permission, Sir, I will reply to questions Nos. 579 and 582 together.

Government recognise the desirability of publishing the Report as soon as possible. They consider it essential, however, that their decisions on the more important of the recommendations should be announced at the time of publication, and they regret that it is impossible at present to fix a definite date.

**Sir Victor Sassoon**: Will the Honourable Member give us any hope of its being published before the end of the Session?

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes**: All I can say is that we will do our best to publish it before the end of the Session.

**Sir Victor Sassoon**: Thank you.

### ROCKFELLER FELLOWSHIPS.

580. \***Mr. Abdul Latif Sahab Farookhi**: (a) Is it a fact that under the terms of a Rockfeller's Charity the Government of India has been given the discretion to nominate five Indians, with medical qualifications, to five scholarships tenable at the Rockfeller's Institute of America?

(b) If so, how many Indians have been recommended every year and what are their names?

(c) What steps are taken to find out candidates for these scholarships?

(d) Are they invariably Government servants or are private medical practitioners also given the benefit of the scholarships?

(e) Have Government on any occasion invited applications for the scholarships by means of advertisement in the Press?

(f) If so, how many applications have been received?

(g) If not, why was such advertisement not made?

**Mr. J. W. Bhoré:** (a) No. Selections for Rockefeller Fellowships are made by the Executive Committee of the International Health Board (Rockefeller Foundation) Fellowships on the recommendation of their representative in India. The number of Fellowships granted to Indians by the Board is not definitely fixed, nor are they awarded every year.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Local Governments are asked to nominate suitable candidates. The candidates are placed in order of preference by the Scientific Advisory Board, Indian Research Fund Association, in accordance with the instructions of the International Health Board.

(d) The candidates selected have not all been Government servants, but the scholarships are granted only to persons, who on completion of their training will be appointed to appropriate positions in the official health services of their country, or in schools of hygiene.

(e) No.

(f) Does not arise.

(g) The reason is given in the answer to part (d).

NET EXPANSION OR CONTRACTION OF CURRENCY IN EACH OF THE YEARS  
1920—26.

581. **\*Mr. Ghanshyam Das Birla:** Will the Honourable Member in charge of Finance be pleased to lay on the table a statement showing the net expansion or contraction of Currency effected in each of the calendar years 1920, 1921, 1922, 1923, 1924, 1925 and 1926?

**The Honourable Sir Basil Blckett:** The figures of net expansion and contraction of Currency from 1st January 1920 to 31st August 1924 were given by me in reply to a question by Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta, on the 23rd September 1924. The figures for the subsequent period are being compiled and will be furnished to the Honourable Member as soon as possible.

(Dr. B. S. Moonje then put Question No.† 582 on behalf of Mr. Ghanshyam Das Birla).

**Mr. President:** The Honourable Member must follow the answers given. No. 582 has already been answered.

NUMBER OF COMMUNAL OUTBREAKS FOR EACH OF THE YEARS  
1900—1926.

583. **\*Mr. Ghanshyam Das Birla:** Will Government be pleased to lay on the table a statement showing for each of the years between 1900 and 1926 the number of such communal outbreaks in the country as had their

†For answer to this question, see answer to question No. 579.

582. **\*Mr. Ghanshyam Das Birla:** Will Government be pleased to state when they expect to publish the Report of the Tariff Board Cotton Textile Industry Enquiry?

origin in quarrels over (1) Cow-slaughter, (2) Bamlila Processions, and (3) Music? And will Government be pleased to state when and where the first riot over the question of music with procession occurred?

**The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman:** The Government of India do not consider they would be justified in initiating the elaborate enquiries that would be necessary in order to furnish the Honourable Member with the statement he asks for.

As regards the date of the first riot over the question of music I would refer the Honourable Member to the answer that I gave on the 18th August last to Mr. Harchandrai Vishindas.

ADMISSION OF THIRD CLASS PASSENGERS TO THE HOWRAH RAILWAY STATION.

584. **\*Mr. Ghanshyam Das Birla:** Are Government aware of the inconvenience, and even harassment, caused to the third class passengers at the Howrah railway station by the present practice of regulating admission to the platforms: and if so, what action do they propose taking to bring home to the railway authorities concerned, the necessity of providing better facilities to such passengers for boarding trains?

**Mr. A. A. L. Parsons:** I would refer the Honourable Member to the answer given in this Assembly to starred question No. 212 asked by Mr. K. Ahmed on 23rd January 1923.

**Rai Bahadur Tarit Bhusan Roy:** May I put a supplementary question, Sir? May I ask whether it is not a fact that intermediate class ladies and gentlemen are also subjected to harassment and uncivil treatment at the Howrah and Sealdah railway stations?

**Mr. A. A. L. Parsons:** Not so far as I am aware, Sir.

MUHAMMADANS IN THE TELEGRAPH DEPARTMENT.

585. **\*Maulvi Muhammad Yakub:** (a) Will Government be pleased to say what is the total number of telegraphists, telegraph masters and telegraph superintendents: as well as the total strength of the engineering branch of the Telegraph Department?

(b) What is the proportion of the various appointments held by the Muhammadans in the Telegraph Department?

(c) Do Government afford any facilities for the recruitment of Muhammadans to the general service of the Department?

(d) In view of the great paucity of Muhammadan Telegraphists in the Telegraph Department, are Government prepared to transfer qualified Muhammadan postal signallers to that Department?

**The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra:**

(a) The total number of staff on the 1st January 1927 was as follows:

Telegraphists . . . . .	3,090
Telegraph Masters . . . . .	353
Telegraph Superintendents (Traffic) . . . . .	37
Strength of Engineering Branch staff of the corresponding grades . . . . .	361

(b) The proportion of appointments held by Muhammadans is as follows:

Telegraphists . . . . .	3.1 per cent.
Telegraph Masters . . . . .	8 " "
Telegraph Superintendents (Traffic) . . . . .	Nil.
Assistant Engineers, General . . . . .	Nil.
Deputy Assistant Engineers, General . . . . .	1.6 per cent.
Engineering Supervisors, General . . . . .	6 " "
Assistant Engineers, Telephones . . . . .	Nil.
Deputy Assistant Engineers, Telephones . . . . .	Nil.
Engineering Supervisors, Telephone . . . . .	4.8 per cent.
Assistant Electricians . . . . .	Nil.
Deputy Assistant Electricians . . . . .	Nil.
Electrical Supervisors . . . . .	1.8 per cent.

(c) The attention of the Honourable Member is drawn to part (c) of the reply given on the 12th March 1925 to unstarred question No. 242 by Mr. M. S. Sadiq Hasan and also to part (c) of the answer given in the Legislative Assembly on the 20th August 1926 to starred question No. 138 by Khan Bahadur W. M. Hussanally. The general question of future recruitment to the Department is under the consideration of Government.

(d) No, Sir. But in the scheme of future recruitment due provision will be made for minority communities.

#### OPENING OF A TELEGRAPH TRAINING CLASS AT THE MUSLIM UNIVERSITY ALIGARH.

586. \*Maulvi Muhammad Yakub: Is there any proposal to establish a telegraph training class at the Muslim University, Aligarh, such as at St. Fidelis, Mussoorie and La Martiniere, Lucknow?

The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra: The question of the establishment of new telegraph training classes in educational institutions is associated with general question of future recruitment, which is under the consideration of Government. There is no recognised telegraph training class attached to the La Martiniere College, Lucknow.

#### NOMINATIONS TO THE INDIAN CIVIL SERVICE.

587. \*Maulvi Muhammad Yakub: Will Government be pleased to state:

- (a) How many candidates were recruited for the I. C. S. this year, (i) by competition (ii) by nomination?
- (b) How many of them were Musulmans, either by competition or by nomination?
- (c) What is the rule governing the nominations? Do Government keep in view the claims of different Provinces in making nominations?

- (d) Do Government propose to give preference, in making nominations, to those Provinces from which no Muslim has yet been nominated?
- (e) What are the Provinces from which no Musulman has yet been nominated for the I. C. S.?

**The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman:** (a) The recruitment for the year 1926-27 is not yet complete. The last year for which complete figures are available is 1925-26. In that year 20 Europeans and 18 Indians were recruited for the Indian Civil Service by competition and 4 Indians by nomination.

(b) 2 Mussalmans were recruited by competition and 1 by nomination.

(c) and (d). Nominations are made in accordance with the rules made by the Secretary of State in Council under section 97(6) of the Government of India Act. Under rule 7 of these rules recommendations are made in the first instance from the list of candidates who sat at the competitive examination, and selection must depend on the material available. The number of candidates of minority communities suitable for nomination is frequently not large and Government cannot undertake to have regard to the province of origin of such candidates as well as to the communities to which they belong.

(e) Since 1922, when the present system first came into force no Mussalman has been nominated from Madras, Bombay, the United Provinces, Burma or Assam.

**MUSSALMAN REPRESENTATIVE OF THE DELHI PROVINCE IN THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.**

588. \***Maulvi Muhammad Yakub:** Are Government aware that the Musalmans of Delhi Province, who form about 40 per cent. of the population, have got no representative of theirs in the Legislative Assembly? How do Government propose to remove this inequity?

**The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman:** The Province of Delhi is a single general constituency for the purposes of representation in this Assembly. It is not under consideration to disturb this arrangement.

**CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE MAINTENANCE OF AERODROMES AT BUSHIRE, BUNDER ABBAS AND CHARBAR.**

589. \***Dr. B. S. Moonje:** (1) Is it a fact that the Government of India have agreed in 1921 and have continued to make a small contribution to the maintenance of the aerodromes at Bushire, Bunder Abbas and Charbar, equivalent to half the actual expenditure on them?

(2) If so, will Government be pleased to state:

- (a) the amounts spent year by year on the maintenance of the said aerodromes from the year 1921 up to date?
- (b) what is the nature of the so-called genuine interest which India was held to have in the maintenance of the said aerodromes?
- (c) whether it is not a fact that the maintenance of these aerodromes was a purely Imperial concern with which India has nothing to do?

- (d) whether besides India any of the British Possessions and the Dominions are believed to have any genuine interest in the maintenance of these aerodromes and have consequently been asked to contribute towards their maintenance; and if not, why not?

**The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra:** (1) Yes.

(2) (a):

	Rs.
1921-22 . . . . .	<i>Nil.</i>
1922-23 . . . . .	13,618
1923-24 . . . . .	2,539
1924-25 . . . . .	3,333
1925-26 . . . . .	1,014

(b) The nature of India's interest is the advantage to the commercial community in India from the establishment of an air service between India and the West. I may mention for the Honourable Member's information that the expenditure to which he refers was approved by the Standing Finance Committee on the 2nd June 1921, see page 8 of the proceedings of that Committee, Vol. I, No. 1.

(c) No.

(d) The Government of India have no information on the subject.

#### EXPENDITURE ON CIVIL AVIATION.

590. \***Dr. B. S. Moonje:** Will Government be pleased to state:

- (a) if the policy regarding Civil Aviation as enunciated in paragraph 10 of the Memorandum of the Indian Air Board, to give effect to which "a certain amount of money" has already been spent despite financial stringency prevailing in those years, as detailed in the said paragraph, was submitted to the Assembly for its approval, previous to the Government having spent money to give effect to the said policy,

(b) what amounts of money have been spent so far to give effect to that policy?

**The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra:** (a) The bulk of the expenditure was incurred before the Assembly came into being; any incurred thereafter has, of course, been submitted to its vote.

(b) The information is being collected and will be sent to the Honourable Member when available.

#### EMPLOYMENT OF TRAINED INDIAN AIRMEN IN CONNECTION WITH THE IMPERIAL AIR SCHEME.

591. \***Dr. B. S. Moonje:** Will Government be pleased to state if, before agreeing, as asked by the Imperial Government, to give assistance to their Imperial Air scheme, aggregating for the present, to nothing less than 4 or 5 Lakhs of rupees in the shape of a grant-in-aid, as detailed in sub-paragraph 2 of paragraph 13 of the Indian Air Board's Memorandum,

they contemplate to insist upon the acceptance by the Imperial Government of the condition that on their airships, trained Indian airmen, if available, shall be engaged as officers and suitable Indian lads accepted as apprentices for training? If so, what scheme, if any, has the Government evolved for recruiting such officers and apprentices; but if not, why not?

**The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra:** The assistance referred to was agreed to by the Government of India with the approval of the Standing Finance Committee and subject to the condition that they should retain a voice in the management of the service, and the bulk of the consequential expenditure was voted by this House in 1925-26, and in the Budget for the current year. The condition cannot, from its nature, operate until the experimental stage, which will probably be protracted, is complete and the question of a regular service becomes a live issue.

#### INAUGURATION OF INTERNAL AIR SERVICES.

592. **\*Dr. B. S. Moonje:** Will Government be pleased to state if plans have been matured in accordance with the recommendations of the Indian Air Board for inaugurating internal air services either of airships, or of aeroplanes or of both and also a seaplane service between Calcutta and Rangoon?

**The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra:** No, but Government hope shortly, and on the approval of this House to the supplementary grant asked for, to acquire a site at Rangoon for the terminal base of a Calcutta-Rangoon seaplane service.

#### TRAINING OF INDIANS AS AVIATION OFFICERS.

593. **\*Dr. B. S. Moonje:** Will Government be pleased to state if they propose:

- (a) to start college and a school attached to it, as early as practicable, for teaching both Civil and Military aviation to Indian lads for all grades of service from that of an officer down to that of an ordinary mechanic, and
- (b) to establish sufficient number of State scholarships, pending the above scheme maturing and coming into working order for enabling Indian lads to take their training as aviation officers in England?

**The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra:** (a) No. The attention of the Honourable Member is invited to the reply given to his starred question No. 399 in the Assembly on the 15th February 1927.

(b) No.

**Mawab Sir Sahibzada Abdul Qaiyum:** With your permission, Sir, I should like to postpone to some later date questions Nos. 594 to 601 and No. 604 as I understand that the answers are not ready.

\*594—601.†



PROVISION OF A RAISED PLATFORM AT JAHANGIRA ROAD RAILWAY STATION.

602. \*Nawab Sir Sahibzada Abdul Qaiyum: (a) Are Government aware that the Jahangira Road railway station in the Peshawar District, North-West Frontier Province, has a large passenger and goods traffic from the neighbouring Yusafzai *illaqa*?

(b) Do Government know that there is no raised platform, to the level of the compartments, for passengers to get into the trains and that the passengers are experiencing great inconvenience on that account?

(c) If so, do Government propose to remove the inconvenience?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: (a), (b) and (c). The Government have no doubt that the facts are as stated by the Honourable Member. It is the policy of Railway Administrations to provide raised platforms at stations where the passenger traffic is sufficiently heavy to justify the expense. The matter will be brought to the notice of the Agent, to whom a copy of the question and this answer will be sent.

Nawab Sir Sahibzada Abdul Qaiyum: Are Government aware that a similar reply was given to an Honourable Member of this House two years ago, and may I ask whether the matter was ever brought to the notice of the Agent and, if so, with what results?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: I am afraid that I cannot remember all the replies that were given two or three years ago to a question of this character.

FARES ON THE MARI LUKKI AND TANK RAILWAY.

603. \*Nawab Sir Sahibzada Abdul Qaiyum: Will Government be pleased to state if the rates charged for railway fares on the Mari (Attock)-Lukki and Tank Railway are the same as those charged on the other lines of the North Western Railway? If not, do Government propose to bring them to the same level?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: I would refer the Honourable Member to the reply given by the Honourable Railway Member to his question No. 760 on the 13th March 1924. The rates on the Mari-Lukki and Tank Railway had to be raised by 50 per cent. because the line was being worked at a heavy loss, and though the loss has consequently been reduced, it is still, on our latest figures, over 3½ lakhs per annum. In the circumstances it is not at present possible to bring the fares to the same level as on the North Western Railway.

Nawab Sir Sahibzada Abdul Qaiyum: May I ask how long it will take to work out the loss in order that the ordinary rates and fares may be applied?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: I am no prophet.

Nawab Sir Sahibzada Abdul Qaiyum: Is it because this is a strategic line that the rates have been raised?

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: As far as I recollect, the increase in the rates on this line was not in any way connected with the fact that the line is strategic.

Nawab Sir Sahibzada Abdul Qaiyum: Is it the case with all new lines opened, that the rates are fixed according to the expenses of the line?

**Mr. A. A. L. Parsons:** Our general scale of rates and fares is, of course, a scale which provides for the lines being a paying proposition.

**Nawab Sir Sahibzada Abdul Qaiyum:** Do the Government know that it is a very short line, without any great population on the other side of the river Indus, and that there is no likelihood of its ever being able to pay its expenses?

**Mr. A. A. L. Parsons:** I am aware that the line is a short line, but I should not like to state that it will never pay its expenses.

\*604.†

APPOINTMENT OF AN ADDITIONAL JUDICIAL COMMISSIONER IN THE NORTH WEST FRONTIER PROVINCE.

605. **\*Nawab Sir Sahibzada Abdul Qaiyum:** (a) Will Government be pleased to state if any improvement has come about in the judiciary of the North-West Frontier Province by the appointment of the Additional Judicial Commissioner?

(b) If so, is it in the quality of the work or in the speedy disposal of the work?

(c) What special inspection powers, if any, have been given to the Judicial Commissioners for the supervision of the lower courts?

(d) Do Government propose to give the newly constituted Bench the full powers of a Chief Court with respect to the general inspection, control and supervision of the lower courts in the Province?

**The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman:** (a) Yes.

(b) The appointment has diminished the pending cause list, and has expedited the disposal of both civil and criminal work. It is also fulfilling one of the main objects with which it was created, namely, that references in cases involving sentences of death and important civil appeals should not depend on the judgment of a single judge.

(c) and (d). I would refer the Honourable Member to sub-section (2) re-numbered as sub-section (5) of section 42 of the North West Frontier Province Law and Justice Regulation, 1901 (VII of 1901), as amended by Regulation IV of 1926 which vests in the Court of the Judicial Commissioner, the general superintendence and control over all courts and also to sub-section 1 (i) of section 44 of that Regulation as amended which authorises the Judicial Commissioner's Court to make rules providing for the inspection and working of the subordinate courts. In these respects the Judicial Commissioner's Court already exercises powers similar to those of a Chief Court and nothing further is contemplated.

OPENING OF A ZAMINDARS' BANK ON THE CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY SYSTEM IN THE HAZARA DISTRICT OF THE NORTH WEST FRONTIER PROVINCE.

606. **\*Nawab Sir Sahibzada Abdul Qaiyum:** With reference to their experiment of opening a Zamindars' Bank on the Co-operative Society system, in the Hazara District of the North-West Frontier Province, will

†Postponed.

Government be pleased to say whether they propose to extend the system to other districts of the Province and how soon?

**Mr. J. W. Bhare:** The question is under consideration.

OPENING OF NEW POST AND TELEGRAPH OFFICES IN THE NORTH WEST FRONTIER PROVINCE.

607. \***Nawab Sir Sahibzada Abdul Qaiyum:** (a) Will Government be pleased to state how many post and telegraph offices, separate or combined, have been opened in the North-West Frontier Province during the past three years in:

- (i) rural areas;
- (ii) towns and cantonments?

(b) How do these numbers compare with similar new offices opened in the neighbouring districts of the Punjab, of which the North-West Frontier Province forms a part, as regards the Postal and Telegraph Department?

(c) Are Government aware that last year a Member of this House approached the Director General of Posts and Telegraphs and the Postmaster General, Punjab, with a request for opening a combined post and telegraph office at Topi (Peshawar District of the North-West Frontier Province) proving by facts and figures the necessity of opening the office, but that the department insisted upon having a personal guarantee of nearly three thousand rupees a year before the office could be opened?

(d) Is it a general rule that no new office is to be opened without a personal guarantee?

(e) Are there any exceptions to this rule and if so what are the grounds on which these exceptions can be claimed or secured?

(f) Is not the fact of a large population and trade at a place treated as a good reason for opening a new office at a place?

(g) Do Government propose to find facilities for the rural population with respect to better telegraphic and postal communications and if so in what way?

**The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra:** (a) (i) Rural area:

Number of Post offices . . . . .	16
Number of Combined offices . . . . .	5

(ii) Towns and Cantonments:

Number of Post offices . . . . .	5
Number of Combined offices . . . . .	4

(b) (i) Rural area:

Number of Post offices . . . . .	9
Number of Combined offices . . . . .	5

(ii) Towns and Cantonments:

Number of Post offices . . . . .	2
Number of Combined offices . . . . .	2

(c) Government understand that such a request was made and that a guarantee of Rs. 2,075 was asked for.

(d) No.

(e) Does not arise.

(f) and (g). The policy of the Department is to open offices, without a guarantee, wherever there is reason to believe that they are required and will prove self-supporting within a reasonable time. In this connexion a copy of the Departmental General Order issued on the subject is placed on the table. Since then, the matter has been receiving close attention and every effort is being made to extend postal and telegraph facilities in rural areas as much as reasonably possible. All likely cases are reviewed; letter boxes are provided and village postmen are appointed if the establishment of a post office is in the first instance found to be out of the question.

### POSTS AND TELEGRAPHS.

(Post Office).

To

ALL POSTMASTERS-GENERAL, DEPUTY POSTMASTER-GENERAL, SIND AND BALUCHISTAN CIRCLES, ALL DIRECTORS, TELEGRAPH ENGINEERING, ALL DIVISIONAL ENGINEERS AND ALL SUPERINTENDENTS OF POST OFFICES.

*Director-General's G. O. No. 8, Calcutta, the 6th October, 1925.*

**SUBJECT:**—Extension of communication facilities to rural areas and the smaller towns.

The attention of all Administrative and Executive Officers of the Department is invited to the importance of extending communication facilities, e.g., postal, Telegraphic and Telephonic facilities—to rural areas and the smaller towns. In the past the activities of the Department were mainly directed to the extension and development of these facilities in large towns and suburban areas. The time has now come when the Department can no longer afford to neglect the claims of the rural areas and the smaller towns which must occupy a most prominent place in its future field of activity.

By devoting attention to the hitherto-neglected areas, the Department will not only be helping their commercial development but also opening up new sources of revenue.

2. In formulating schemes for the extension of communication facilities in the rural areas and the smaller towns, all Officers must however bear in mind that they belong to a Commercial Department. No schemes or projects can, as a rule, be taken in hand on mere utilitarian grounds. The financial effects of all schemes must be carefully worked out, before they are submitted for sanction. Further the facilities provided in the schemes must not be too ambitious; they should be just suited to and not greatly in advance of, the requirements of the rural areas. In order that these new schemes may prove a financial success, both the initial outlay and the operating and supervisory charges must be kept down to the irreducible minimum, consistent with efficiency.

3. As regards the Post Office, the facilities should be extended to the remotest villages, through the cheapest agency. There are many existing post offices, where the telegraph branch can be easily opened without almost any additional cost to the Department, there are several others, where the telegraph branch can be provided at a small cost by the use of light construction stores and by the utilization of materials and appliances which have become obsolete for the purpose of main lines and offices. A large number of Magneto Switchboards and Sub-station apparatus are in stock which can be profitably utilised for the development of the telephone industry in rural areas and the smaller towns.

4. For the successful expansion of departmental activities in the backward areas, it is of the utmost importance that all officers should come into contact with the people and personally ascertain and anticipate their requirements in this respect. Further,

there must be closer co-operation in future between the three main branches of the Department, viz., the *Post Office*, *Telegraph Engineering*, and *Telegraph Traffic*. All schemes for the extension of communication facilities in the rural areas and smaller towns, should be worked by the Postmasters-General and the Directors concerned in direct consultation with one another.

5. All Circle Officers will kindly take up this important question of extending communication facilities in the rural areas at the earliest possible date and submit their schemes and proposals in this connection by the 31st December 1925. A statement showing :

- (a) the number of new post offices opened,
- (b) the number of post offices provided with telegraph facilities,
- (c) the number of telephone exchanges and telephone offices opened,

in each Circle during the period 1st November 1925 to 31st March 1926, should also be submitted by the 15th of April 1926.

G. P. ROY,

*Offg. Director-General of Posts and Telegraphs.*

#### RECRUITMENT TO THE POLICE DEPARTMENT IN THE NORTH-WEST FRONTIER PROVINCE.

608. \*Nawab Sir Sahibzada Abdul Qaiyum: (a) Will Government be pleased to furnish figures of recruitment to the North-West Frontier Province Police for the year 1925-26 (i) in the rank and file and (ii) in the Officers class as Head Constables, Sub-Inspectors, Inspectors and Deputy Superintendents?

(b) How many of each class were Muslims and how many non-Muslims?

(c) Was the recruitment confined to the inhabitants of the North-West Frontier Province or were any outsiders recruited and if so, to what extent?

(d) Is it true that Government intend bringing up the non-Muslim element to one-third of the whole force and if so, will they please state the reasons for it?

(e) Do Government propose to extend the scheme to the constabulary force; if not, why not?

(f) If the reply to the above is in the affirmative do the Government intend to get the non-Muslim recruits for the rank and file from among the people of the Province or are they prepared to import them if necessary?

**The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman:** The information asked for is being collected and will be furnished to the Honourable Member.

#### GOVERNMENT TRAINING COLLEGE, PESHAWAR.

609. \*Nawab Sir Sahibzada Abdul Qaiyum: Will Government be pleased to state if there is a Government Training College at Peshawar, North-West Frontier Province and, if so:

(a) What was the total initial expenditure on the building of the institution, etc?

(b) What is the annual recurring expenditure of the same?

- (c) How many classes there are in the College and how many students in each class?
- (d) Are there any B. T., S. A. V. or J. A. V. classes?
- (e) Is it a fact that the Education Department of the North-West Frontier Province are sending their teachers and candidates for teacherships for training to the Punjab Colleges from year to year?
- (f) If so in what numbers and at what total cost each year?
- (g) What is the average cost per man per year of these people, both in tuition fees and in stipends?
- (h) Are Government aware that the system is not popular with the people of the North-West Frontier Province and that there is always a scarcity of suitable candidates for training from among the true children of the soil?
- (i) Do Government propose to open B. T., S. A. V. and J. A. V. classes in the Peshawar Training College—if not, why not?

**Mr. J. W. Bhore:** Yes. The other information asked for in parts (a) to (i) of the question is being obtained and will be supplied to the Honourable Member in due course.

EXPANSION OF EDUCATION IN THE NORTH-WEST FRONTIER PROVINCE.

610. **\*Nawab Sir Sahibzada Abdul Qaiyum:** (a) Is it a fact that while in the Punjab the percentage in education had gone up from 3·8 males and ·79 females in 1916-17 to 6·04 and 1·0 per cent. respectively in 1922-23, of its total population, the percentage in the North-West Frontier Province which stood at 3·5 and ·44 respectively in 1916-17 had only reached the figures of 4·1 and ·5 respectively in 1922-23?

(b) Is it a fact that towards the end of the year 1925 certain proposals were submitted by the Local Government for the consideration of the Government of India drawing attention to the educational backwardness of the Province and asking for a special grant of rupees five to twelve lakhs in five years to improve the situation, but that the Government of India only allowed Rs. 75,000 extra for the year and postponed the full consideration of the scheme to some later date?

(c) Will Government please state if they have arrived at any decision on the subject and whether they are going to allow any special grant for the purpose this year?

(d) If not will they please state how they propose to remove the educational backwardness of the North-West Frontier Province?

**Mr. J. W. Bhore:** (a) and (b). Yes.

(c) and (d). It is not proposed to make any special grant this year in addition to the sum of Rs. 75,000 already provided. During the next five years, however, it is hoped, subject to the voting of the funds by the Legislative Assembly, to make to the North West Frontier Province for the expansion of education, additional grants amounting to nearly 16 lakhs for non-recurring expenditure and of Rs. 1,62,000 in 1927-28 rising to Rs. 4,65,000 in 1931-32 for recurring expenditure.

**Nawab Sir Sahibzada Abdul Qaiyum:** If, as I understand, the claim of the North West Frontier Province to an additional grant for education has been established, will the Government be pleased to state if they will provide some special grant to meet that demand?

**Mr. J. W. Bhore:** I have just endeavoured to explain to the Honourable Member that for the next five years there is going to be a progressive and very much enlarged grant on education in the North West Frontier Province.

**Nawab Sir Sahibzada Abdul Qaiyum:** Do I understand that the figures given by the Honourable Member include the grants already allowed?

**Mr. J. W. Bhore:** No, Sir. I used the words "additional grants".

NUMBER OF POSTS ON THE CADRE OF THE INDIAN EDUCATIONAL SERVICE IN THE NORTH WEST FRONTIER PROVINCE, ETC.

611. **\*Nawab Sir Sahibzada Abdul Qaiyum:** (a) Will the Government be pleased to state how many posts of the Indian Educational Service there are on the cadre of the North-West Frontier Province and by whom they are held now?

(b) Is it a fact that one of these posts is held by a senior member of the Indian Educational Service who is working as a Headmaster of the Government High School, Peshawar?

(c) Do Government propose to utilise the services of this highly educated member of the Indian Educational Service in some more useful way?

**Mr. J. W. Bhore:** (a) There are five posts in all, three of which are held by the undermentioned officers and the remaining two are in abeyance:

Director of Public Instruction—Mr. J. H. Towle.

Headmaster, Government High School, Peshawar,—Mr. Inayatullah Khan.

Inspectress of Girls' Schools—Miss G. Littlewood.

(b) Yes.

(c) No. The Government of India know of no other suitable opening where his services can be more profitably utilised.

**Nawab Sir Sahibzada Abdul Qaiyum:** Is it the want of a suitable appointment or the importance of his present work that keeps him in that post?

**Mr. J. W. Bhore:** Sir, we cannot find any other suitable appointment for him.

**Nawab Sir Sahibzada Abdul Qaiyum:** Is it not a waste of qualifications and a waste of money to employ a man of that salary and experience on running only an ordinary Government High School?

**Mr. J. W. Bhore:** Does the Honourable Member suggest that we should axe him?

**Nawab Sir Sahibzada Abdul Qaiyum:** I thought the Indian Empire was wide enough for a man of his qualifications?

**Mr. J. W. Bore:** The Honourable gentleman does not realise that education is a transferred subject and we cannot force an officer on the Provincial Governments.

**Nawab Sir Sahibzada Abdul Qaiyum:** May I ask if he cannot be appointed as Inspector of Vernacular Schools or even as Principal of the Training College in the same province, where men of lower qualifications belonging to the provincial service have been working?

**Mr. J. W. Bore:** He is considered more suitable for the position which he holds.

**Nawab Sir Sahibzada Abdul Qaiyum:** What is the standard for judging a man's suitability for a particular work, is it educational qualifications or any physical suitability?

**Mr. J. W. Bore:** If the Honourable Member will kindly put down his question, I will give him a complete reply to it.

THE RAILWAY BUDGET—LIST OF DEMANDS—*contd.*

SECOND STAGE—*contd.*

*Expenditure from Revenue—contd.*

DEMAND NO. 1—RAILWAY BOARD—*contd.*

*Grievances of Subordinate Railway Employees—contd.*

**Mr. President:** The House will now resume consideration of the motion of Mr. Acharya that the Demand under the head "Railway Board" be reduced by one rupee.

**Mr. C. S. Ranga Iyer** (Rohilkund and Kumaon Divisions: Non-Muhammadan Rural): On a point of order, Sir, before I resume my speech. I see under Rule 47, Appendix 2, the debate on a particular Demand cannot be continued beyond two days . . . .

**Mr. President:** If the Honourable Member does not wish to continue he had better resume his seat.

**Mr. C. S. Ranga Iyer:** I do not know if that rule applies to-day.

**Mr. President:** Is it for the Honourable Member to raise that point? Will he resume his speech?

**The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett** (Finance Member): May I rise on that point of order. According to paragraph 155, Rule 46 (2), of the days allotted, not more than two days shall be allotted by the Governor General to the discussion of any one Demand. I do not know whether you would hold that the fact that we have discussed this Demand for two days would prohibit us from going on. I think it will be very much in the interests of the House that we should not as a rule discuss one Demand for more than two days.



**Mr. President:** The Honourable Member thinks that it will be very much in the interests of the House that it should not as a rule discuss one Demand for more than two days. The House is the best judge of its interests and not the Chair. The Rule mentioned by the Honourable Members has no application in this case. That rule gives power to the Governor General to allot two days for one grant. No such allotment has been made and the Assembly is therefore entitled to discuss the first Demand for all the four days allotted for the discussion of Demands for Grants. The Chair has no power to intervene.

**Mr. C. S. Ranga Iyer:** I thank you very much for your ruling. I am not at all surprised that the Government should have ventured to burke the discussion on the question of the discrimination between Indians and Europeans on the railway services. Sir, yesterday I dwelt on the grievances of the lower subordinate employees. I was very much concerned with the professor from Madras who did not seem to have so much concern for the lot of these poor employees. After having slept over my reply, he looks refreshingly fresh this morning and I believe he now agrees with me.

**The Revd. Dr. E. M. Macphail (Madras: European):** On what point?

**Mr. C. S. Ranga Iyer:** On the subject that the plight of the railway employees has no analogy whatever with the plight of the agricultural labourers and that the anti-Brahmin stuff of the Madras Presidency cannot be applied on an all-India scale and that there is not a majority of Brahmins among the all-India railway employees as well as the subordinates with whom I dealt yesterday. I am sure, Sir, he looks convinced and now I shall proceed with the grievances or rather the racial discrimination among the upper subordinates in the railway services. Even a cursory perusal of the documents in my hand will convince any one in the House that the Government ought to be ashamed of this racial discrimination. Perhaps they are, judging from the fact that they have attempted to conceal some facts. I shall presently prove to this House that they have made an attempt to conceal this fact of giving preference to Anglo-Indians. There is no classification so far as I can see of Anglo-Indians as such. They are put under "Other Classes" and under the category of "other classes" the Parsis and others are included. I wish they had given certain facts under the heading Anglo-Indians. Before dealing with that I shall deal with the statistics which they have supplied to us of the Upper Subordinate Staff drawing Rs. 250 on 12 State-managed Railways on the 31st March, for the years 1924 and 1925. They gave the following total numbers and the percentages:

Europeans and Anglo-Indians: 2,818, 2,786, *i.e.*, 38.06 per cent. and 37.62 per cent. respectively.

For 1924 the total is 5,604, *i.e.*, 75.68 per cent.

Muslims and Non-Muslims 216 and 1,584, total 7,404, percentages 2.92 and 21.40, respectively.

In 1925, for Europeans and Anglo-Indians it was 35.85 per cent. and 37.61 per cent. The total was 5,759, *i.e.*, 73.46.

The figures for Muslims and non-Muslims are 259 and 1,822. The percentages were 3.30 and 23.24.

The total for 1925 is 7,840.

These figures were admirably commented on by my friend Rai Bahadur Chandrika Prasad of Ajmere in his beautiful address at the Madras Trade Union Conference last year. I find, Sir, that the Government in nominating Members to this House have taken jolly good care not to nominate the only railway expert in India, who can open his fire of criticism here and make the position of Government very difficult. I am glad there is Mr. Joshi here so far as Labour is concerned.

I may summarise what Rai Bahadur Chandrika Prasad brought out. Europeans and Anglo-Indians, who were 11.42 per cent. among the total population of literates, I mean knowing English, held 75.68 per cent. of the appointments in 1924 and 73.46 per cent. of the appointments in 1925, whereas Muslims and non-Muslims, who were 88.57 per cent. in the same population of literates, had only 24.32 and 26.54 per cent. of these appointments. No further proof is necessary to demonstrate the racial discrimination practised against Indians by this benevolent Government, I shall not say "Anglo-foreign bureaucracy" and the still more benevolent railway administration.

Sir, this criticism of the President of the annual conference of the all-India Railway Federation held in Madras in January 1926, seems to have gone home because the presentation of figures this year has undergone some kind of alteration. They have changed the classification of service to conceal the figures and I cannot understand why the figures which appeared for nearly three quarters of a century against the Anglo-Indians and Europeans should have been concealed. We do not find that head this year at all because Mr. Acharya brought forward a motion that there should be an inquiry committee. If you ask for bread they will give you stones! Therefore, instead of giving a committee of inquiry they decided to present a confusing budget in which the Anglo-Indian population who are getting preferential treatment—it is all preference, the railway itself is a preference subject—should be concealed under the head "Other classes". According to the present classification, which my Honourable friends over there will find in page 99 of this red book the Report of the Railway Board according to the present qualification for the year 1925, there were 2,412 Europeans, that is to say, 38.8 per cent., and for 1926, Europeans 2,134, that is 26.1 per cent. Now while bringing Anglo-Indians under "other classes", they have divided Hindus and Muslims, who come under the head "Statutory Indians"—(Laughter)—Hindus 1,482 in 1925, that is 18.9 per cent., Anglo-Indians 38.8 per cent., more than double the Hindus: Muslims 239, that is 3 per cent. Are there less Muslims in India than Anglo-Indians or less Hindus? They are, both Hindus and Muslims, treated with uniform courtesy at least in this particular matter of racial discrimination! In 1926 the figures are 1,593, that is 19.5 per cent. for Hindus and for Muslims 247 that is 3 per cent.: other classes 3,689, that is 47.2 per cent. and 4,207 for 1926, that is 51.4 per cent. However, Sir, the above figures for 1925 do not tally with the figures that were shown in the previous report, but those are stated to be "revised figures." In the previous figures those shown merely as non-Muslims have been merged into the total of Anglo-Indians, so that the undue preference given to Anglo-Indians may not be noticed.

To make the figures clear the Railway Board should show separately the figures for each community included in the "other classes", which they do not at present show. I hope the Honourable the Commerce Member, who will not be here to compare the figures, in the future, and who

[Mr. C. S. Ranga Iyer.]

at any rate does not, I believe, like this kind of confusion, will issue instructions to his successor, though perhaps his successor will not be bound by his instructions. It is due to these tactics that the Railway Board have made themselves liable to the criticisms which I have levelled against them, and I am sure even the Honourable the Commerce Member cannot say that it was ungenerous criticism, because they were criticisms based on facts presented to us.

I wonder, Sir, why this partiality should be shown to the Anglo-Indians. I have nothing against the Anglo-Indians as a community. I do not mind in the least their getting what they are getting. That is not my grievance at all. I do not mind the Anglo-Indians getting even much better promotion and prospects, etc. But what I want is this, that Indians should be raised to their level immediately. It is far from my intention to pull down the Anglo-Indians. I know it is very difficult in these days to live for people who live in the style that Honourable Members on the other side would prescribe for others, not for themselves, the style which the Lee Commission would prescribe for the highly placed and not for those who are not so highly placed. (*An Honourable Member*: "Why should they prescribe at all?") I hear a voice, "Why should they prescribe at all?" But the prescription is there, and I want it to be uniform; I want that Indians should be granted the same kind of treatment. We have heard a lot of tall talk about equality. The Queen's proclamation, and each successive Viceroy has endorsed the principle of equality. But it is all verbal; it is all words. So far as the Queen's proclamation of equality, the "honour" of the Government stands "rooted in dishonour", "and faith unfaithful keeps them falsely true" to their professions.

Sir, the railway service is a vast service, perhaps even vaster than and as lucrative as the Indian Civil Service. The Government have been trying to keep this railway service a close corporation; as the day before yesterday's discussion on the Railway Board showed, they are unwilling to admit an Indian to the Railway Board, whereas Indians have been admitted already even to the Governor General's Executive Council. Now, Sir, that policy of discrimination is not only confined to the top. It also extends to the upper subordinates. This policy must be given up if the Government want to be as good as they pretend to be. Statistics which I can place before you show that 75 per cent. of the gazetted appointments are held by Europeans.

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes** (Member for Commerce and Railways): May I rise to a point of order.

**Mr. President**: The Honourable Member can only refer to racial discrimination among railway employees. He is not entitled to roam over the whole field of racial discrimination in all the services.

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes**: I rise to a point of order. This motion deals with the grievances of subordinate railway employees, not the railway officers.

**Mr. C. S. Ranga Iyer**: I quite agree with the Commerce Member, but there are two classes of subordinates, upper and lower subordinates. I dealt yesterday with the lower subordinates; I am now dealing with the upper subordinates. (Laughter.) I quite agree with your ruling, Sir, and I

submit to it. I was only referring to the statistics in regard to the railway. Those statistics show that 75 per cent. of the gazetted appointments and 74 per cent. of the upper subordinates appointments are held by Europeans and Anglo-Indians, while 25 and 26 per cent., respectively, are held by pure Indians, including Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs and Parsis. The Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs and Parsis have not got their due share in the railway service on the population basis. The details of the gazetted officers on State Railways on the 31st March, 1926, are given as follows:

Europeans 1,509 or 73·4 per cent. ;
Statutory Indians, Hindus 294 or 14·3 per cent.,
Muslims 56 or 2·7 per cent.,
Other classes 190 or 9·6 per cent. ;
total 540 or 26·6 per cent.

Sir, these are some of the grievances. There are many more grievances and many things have not been placed before us. The most proper thing to do is to appoint a committee of inquiry. But when a Resolution of this House is passed, the Resolution, as you picturesquely put it before your elevation to your present place, is consigned to "the waste-paper basket". I do not think, Sir, the Resolution relating to the removal of grievances and the appointment of an inquiry committee is a Resolution which should have been consigned to your waste-paper basket. I hope the Honourable the Commerce Member, before he leaves these shores, will earn the gratitude of the railway employees by appointing this commission of inquiry. Sir, the profits of the railways ought to go to the amelioration of the condition of the people who run the railways. Therefore, Sir, I hope he will meet this point, not by argument and explanation and excuses and pretensions, but by an actual gesture of conciliation, namely, by a promise to appoint a commission of inquiry.

**Several Honourable Members:** I move that the question be now put.

**Sir George Paddison** (Madras: Nominated Official): Sir, I do not propose to follow Mr. Ranga Iyer in his disquisition on the racial question. (*Honourable Members:* "Speak up, please." (*Sir Hari Singh Gour:* "We can not hear.") I am sorry. This is my first attempt, and I cannot tell how far my voice will carry. What I was going to say was that I do not propose to follow Mr. Ranga Iyer into the question of racial discrimination. It is a question of which I know little and which I am not competent to deal with. What I would wish to speak about is the question of the poorer labourers with whom I have had to deal intimately for the last 8 or 9 years. I have been concerned specially with the labouring classes in the Madras Presidency, and wherever there was a dispute or the likelihood of a dispute, it has been my duty to try and prevent that dispute, and if one has actually broken out, I have had to keep a watching brief on behalf of the Government, so that I do not say that I have any wisdom—I am not so foolish as to claim that, but I do say that I have a considerable knowledge of the trend of feeling and the difficulties that occur in matters of this sort. Now the first difficulty that I find is to get the employers—I am not speaking of railway men for a moment, Mr. President—to get the employers and the men to meet and to know each other a little better than they do. That is the cause of many disputes. The men are illiterate, as Mr. Joshi says, it may be

[Sir George Paddison.]

our fault, the fault of the Anglo-foreign bureaucracy of which I am one—but the fact remains that the greater part of the poorer labourers are illiterate and have got in consequence no very great power of expression: so that whenever I have had to deal with these things, the first thing I have tried to do was to bring the employer and the employee together and try to find out exactly what is wanted on the other side. Now it seems perhaps that I am arguing in favour of this motion. I am not. I am arguing directly against it because, in order to bring people together and to find out what they want, the worst thing perhaps I can think of is to discuss the dispute on the floor of this House where all sorts of allegations are flying about on both sides, which are telegraphed all over the country and which arouse the anger of the people on each side and make them more stubborn and thus prevent them from coming together. But the point that I wish to make is that nothing is worse to my mind than to have a general inquiry into a general grievance, for a roving Commission, as I understand the proposal of the gentleman opposite, to go round the country-side calling upon everyone to put forward or to prepare grievances will not bring forward the real grievances which the men themselves feel. Over and over again have I seen and heard and read long strings of grievances—like the one which I did not hear yesterday because I was suffering from a slight defect of hearing for the moment, and I did not hear the speech of Maulvi Muhammad Yakub describing the grievances of a particular lot of men, the long and detailed account of the things with which they would not be satisfied. Now if you have your inquiry of that sort, all those long lists will be brought up before you, and if the men have at the back of their minds some particular point, you will not very likely get at that point at all. I do not think I speak in the interests of the men themselves and I have studied their interests for a long time—I do not think that this inquiry which is suggested would really benefit the men. It would accentuate differences, it would exacerbate feelings, and very likely at the end of it all, the men would be so embittered after the high hopes that had been raised by speeches of gentlemen in this House and outside of it, they would be so embittered that the relations between employers and employees, which are what we want to better if we can, would become very much worse. It may be said that there are grievances. I am not saying that there are no grievances. I do not know. It may be said that there are grievances, and how, if you say this public inquiry is not started, do you propose to get them remedied? Well, one thing, one clear thing, that is coming now is that the Trade Unions Act is for the first time coming into force in this country; and certainly down in my own Presidency the men are eagerly looking forward to the time when their Unions which are now apt to be disorganized will be better organized and they themselves will have a finer organization and will be able to get into touch, better touch, closer touch, with the employers. The second thing I would urge upon employers here specially is that every man—I do not know much of railways but it is the most important thing of all, every man who is in charge of a very large body of men should know his men and know thoroughly and intimately the language with which they have to deal. (Hear, hear.) This is a point that over and over again I have seen personally. I have found it—of course in Madras it is very difficult because we have so many languages there; there is one station in which water is sold in five different

languages, "Jalam," "Pani," "Neelu", "Thanni", "water" (Laughter)—very difficult in Madras. But it is not so difficult in other parts of India, and I do think, that, however great the difficulty is, you must know your languages and know your men—not at large meetings with a reporter sitting round the table and everything else—to get to know exactly what the real trouble is and where the shoe is pinching. Sir, I have one word more to say, and I want to say it very briefly, and that is about the condition of the agricultural labourer. We perhaps are in a position worse in Madras than elsewhere, I hope that is so, but I cannot, having represented on the Madras Legislative Council and in my daily work the depressed classes for several years, let the assertion go by that the agricultural labourer has a security of tenure, is able to get land, and is relatively equally paid with the men on the railways and works. This is not so. I do not want to go into details. I am very anxious, not to, we do not want to wash our dirty linen in public, but I cannot help protesting against any suggestion, especially from men like Mr. Ranga Iyer who I fear has deserted the Presidency which I am proud to represent at the moment—I cannot allow him to suggest to us on the floor of this House that the agricultural labourer in Madras has a better time than the industrial man. To sum up, then, Sir, I would ask all—apart from party politics and apart from local and temporary triumph for the Government,—I would ask all who are interested in the lot of the labourer, to see that this motion is not carried. It would arouse all sorts of hopes that no man can live on less than Rs. 25 a month and that the proportion between his pay, my pay or other people's pay will be enormously enhanced, and in my opinion it will do no good whatever. It is not the way to deal with this difficult problem and I say that with very great and lengthy experience on this and cognate matters.

**Lieut.-Colonel H. A. J. Gidney** (Nominated: Anglo-Indians): Sir, in addressing this House I have never before felt such difficulty as to what status I really do occupy in it. I have, however, no difficulty in my mind on the motion for I rise to support it. When I became a Member of this House I entered it as the nominated representative of the Anglo-Indian community. When I defend my communal needs for occupational purposes such as railway employees I look upon myself and them as statutory natives of India, although, I understand, Mr. Neogy, the other day, objected to this. Sir, whatever I am I have a duty to perform to my community, the same as those on the opposite Benches have to theirs and all I desire of them is to let me perform my duty to the best of my ability, the same as I am prepared to let them do. Perhaps you are not familiar with the fact that it was in 1870 the British Parliament passed a Statute which gave to the Anglo-Indian Community the status of statutory natives of India. I was not consulted then for I was not born; but had I been consulted I should have certainly refused that status. But, Sir, I accept it as my economic saviour and in seizing it with both hands I am trying to do my best. Uncertain as I am, my position, I fear, has been made somewhat more complex—almost alarming by my friend Mr. Jamnadas Mehta, who I am sorry to see is not here. When talking on the general discussion on the Railway Budget he referred to me as a sort of an animal someway between a bird and a beast. I know one of Mr. Jamnadas's hobbies is that he dabbles in finance, but, I did not know that hybridisation between birds and beasts was another pastime. He advised my friend Mr. Hayman that if he wanted to get on in this world he should

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avoid that man, Colonel Gidney. I have no doubt Mr. Jamnadas was looking at a mirror outlining his own reflection. I also should like to give Mr. Hayman a little piece of advice, regarding Mr. Jamnadas and it is this:

"When the Currency Bill comes and uncertain is your view,  
 'Tween one and four and six which ratio to pursue  
 Take Mr. Jamnadas' advice and what'er he advise  
 Do just the very opposite and you're sure to do wise."

**Mr. President:** Order, order. I want the Honourable Member to come to the point.

**Lieut.-Colonel H. A. J. Gidney:** I will, Sir.

**Mr. R. K. Shanmukham Chetty** (Salem and Coimbatore *cum* North Arcot: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Can a Member speak in verse, Sir?

**Lieut.-Colonel H. A. J. Gidney:** Sir, after having dealt with Mr. Jamnadas, I now come to the question under discussion. This question of railway grievances is a hardy annual. It has been before this House, as far as I remember, for the past 2 years, and on each occasion I have walked with my friends on the opposite side into the lobby and voted against Government. I did this because as a representative of skilled labourers who have played a very important part in the Railway Administration of India and which my Honourable friends on the opposite side seem apt to forget. I felt that they suffered from many unjust grievances. Our Resolution for this Enquiry Committee has been refused by the Honourable Member on two separate occasions, this is the third time that this House is to cast its vote and to raise its voice in protest about the grievances of our railway employees. In my judgment the points at issue are two. The first is this. Are there any grievances and are they genuine, and are they so widespread and serious as to command the serious attention of this House? If they are, the second question arises, namely, what steps have been taken by Government and have such steps proved adequate? If not, what further steps should be taken by this House? Personally I am in the happy position in my public life of being in touch with those of my community employed on the Railways almost throughout India and Burma. A large number of grievances are sent to me. Most of them come from the undesirable employee and are puerile or not genuine. Some are sadly genuine. I however make bold to state on the floor of this House—and I state it with an acute sense of responsibility—that there are certainly grievances in the Railway administration of this country and these grievances exist in every community, in every department and in every grade, including the official grade. Now, Sir, what are these grievances? I have no desire to detail them. I only want to refer to a few of the most important and my first and most important is the service agreement or bond and its attendant insecurity of service. In this service bond,—I would prefer to call it a bond of slavery—it is stated that the service of an employee is of a temporary nature which means that even after 15, or 20 or 30 years of service he is still a temporary servant. This is not all. It states that one's service is terminable with one month's notice or one month's pay in lieu of notice. I can hear my business friends saying "But that is nothing unusual. One's servant can be dismissed without giving him a reason or even a defence if such terms have been arranged." It is world-wide, as my friend Mr. Cocks says. But, I ask, does this service bond exist in any other department of the Government? If it does not

then why should it exist and be confined to the Railway Department? I of course speak subject to correction. (*An Honourable Member*: "The Railway is a business concern.") No, Sir! not the State Railways. I will go further and say that even our red-coated chappassis, who are never to be seen in this House when wanted, are not subject to such terms of service. Why should this exist only on the Railways? Now, Sir, as a matter of practical fact railway men do not seriously object to this term of agreement. What they do object to is that this service bond and its term of agreement is not being properly used. It is at times misused. It is used as a lever to suit the operator's own desires or as a cloak to cover up illegal and irregular acts done by the junior officials which they could not have done except for this term of agreement. It means this, that so far as this service bond is concerned there is a very thin tissue paper dividing discharge from dismissal. Now, the dismissal of a servant entails the observation of certain formulæ; in a discharge this is not needed, because the terms of agreement state that a man can be discharged whenever the employer chooses to do so and if necessary without giving him a reason. I levelled no such charges against the Railway Board, or the Honourable the Chief Commissioner of Railways. They are too busy men to think about these matters. I would even exonerate Railway Agents, for they too are very busy men. It is the junior officer, it is that man, who is devoid of the human element and sympathy, who makes use of this bond for his own purposes. You can imagine the atmosphere in which some young junior officers are working. His word and his orders are everything in his little station and must not be questioned. If they are, he often exercises this power to the fullest extent unmindful of what the results will be to the subordinates. I realise, Sir, that this is a serious indictment to make against the railway official, but, Sir, I am glad to say that this is not a common practice and is resorted to by a few officers only. But why should any officer have this power, and why should that officer be only a railway officer? But perhaps this House wants proofs. Well, I can give it proofs. I have no desire to wash dirty linen in public. But, when there are grievances, when these grievances have been brought to the notice of officials and when they have not been remedied, then one has no alternative but to publicly proclaim them. I desire to refer to just a few cases, and so, with your permission, Sir, I shall refer to three Anglo-Indians and two Indians who were dismissed from the East Indian Railway because of their connection with the cotton waste scandal case in Howrah and about

12 Nov. whom I recently asked some questions in this House. I have already given the details and shall not repeat them.

Here we have a case of five men who acted under the orders of their superior officer, the Controller of Stores. One of these five men was acting as Stores Superintendent Howrah, and was charged with having violated a certain old established practice and thereby causing serious losses to the Railway. On examination it was however proved that instead of having caused losses there was an excess. It is also on official record that he acted under the direct orders of his superior officer. In reply to his defence submitted to the Agent he was told without any further enquiry that he was summarily dismissed and he was deprived of his bonus and gratuity amounting to about Rs. 12,000. The other four men were likewise summarily dismissed and also deprived of their bonus and gratuity. It is immaterial to me whether these men were felons or not. What I submit is that no man should be dismissed without being given a full and proper trial. This has been denied to these five men, and why?



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Let me quote another case of a man named Conroy, who held the important appointment of Loco Foreman on the Great Indian Peninsula Railway. On examination of the coal under his control an excess was found. He was discharged summarily by the Chief Transportation Superintendent, Bombay, and deprived of his gratuity of Rs. 8,000, given an unfavourable discharge certificate and he and his wife and children are walking the streets to-day. That man with 25 years' good service to his credit, appealed to his immediate superior officer, the Deputy Transportation Superintendent, who said he could not hold out any hope to him. He appealed to his next superior officer, who declined to investigate the matter. He next appealed to the Agent, who replied: "your right of appeal is to the Chief Transportation Superintendent only". He next appealed to the Railway Board, who turned his appeal down and said it was outside their province and referred him to the Agent or the Transportation Superintendent.

I give another case of an Indian driver who received an injury to his eye. The doctor who examined him said he would be quite fit in a few days' time. He lost the sight of his right eye, and the doctor said that there was a likelihood of the other eye being similarly affected. He was taken before his departmental officer who told him that unless he had his eye taken out by a certain date he would be either discharged or dismissed. He came to me, I operated on him, and he is still on the railway. That man's services would have been done away with unless he submitted to an unnecessary surgical operation. Was this a correct exercise of power by this officer?

There are other cases in which men are made to work long hours, 10 to 16 hours, and should they in their exhaustion take a rest or sign sick they are classed as "rotters" and "wasters" and are dismissed or discharged as "undesirable" or "unprofitable employees". I say it is this lack of human sympathy with the employees from which the junior officer suffers. He comes to this country ignorant of its ways, manners and customs and has to rely largely on his upper subordinates whose opinions he usually upholds and so occupies the position of both accuser and judge of the employee. I can mention many cases in which men have in this way been summarily discharged. I ask if this is how the service bond is being abused, what are the Government rules protecting the employees and controlling employment on railways? I am not sure of these rules, but I did ask the Honourable Member in one of my recent questions whether Rule 14 of the Home Department, dated June 1924, operated on railway employees. He said it only operated in Provincial Governments, not Central. If this is so, I should like to know what rules do operate to control or determine security of railway service? Surely there are rules which protect these men from being summarily dismissed and discharged without any defence or trial? I again ask, are there any rules to protect these men? I believe that the rules controlling railway subordinates are the following and I should like to be corrected if I am wrong:

"That before a Government servant, other than a menial servant, is reduced, removed or dismissed, the charge against him, his defence and the order thereon shall be committed to writing: he shall be allowed an opportunity of cross-examining witnesses against him and of producing witnesses on his own behalf.

If reduced, removed or dismissed, he shall be furnished with a copy of the documents showing the grounds on which his reduction, removal or dismissal was ordered.

In the event of the reduced, removed or dismissed servant appealing, these documents, together with his character roll or service book, if any, shall be forwarded with the memorandum of appeal.'

The orders further direct that no servant shall be removed or dismissed otherwise than on proof of dishonesty or of repeated neglect or disobedience of orders or of continued inefficiency or of any other circumstances by reason of which the officer or authority concerned is of opinion that the retention in service would be detrimental to the efficient administration of the service."

If these are the rules—and I speak subject to correction—I ask why any railway officer has the power or is permitted to ignore them. Quite a different set of rules operate on the British railways. The British Railway Unions and the railway officials, in the course of recent negotiations at the National Wages Board, decided on the following agreement between employees and employer:

"Men charged with misconduct, neglect of duty, or other breaches of discipline will be permitted to state their defence, to call witnesses, and to advance any extenuating circumstances before their officers, prior to a final decision being arrived at. At such interview the man may be accompanied by an advocate. In all cases a man shall be informed in writing of the nature of his offence and the punishment it is proposed to inflict. Where doubts arise, or where serious results to men are likely to follow, the cases should be placed before the higher officials of the Company. Appeals after punishment lead to a difficult position, and the necessity for them should be avoided. If after such investigation of a charge against an employee, he is adjudged guilty and is to be punished for the offence, he shall have the right of appeal to a superior officer for a reconsideration of his case, provided that such right of appeal shall not extend to cases of a trivial character. Any such appeal must be made in writing within seven days. If the employee so desires, he may be heard in person, and, in that case also, he may be accompanied at the interview with the superior officer by a spokesman, who may be either a fellow-workman or a representative nominated by the man's Trade Union."

Now, Sir, that is the position in England. Let this House draw its own comparisons and conclusions from the cases I have just detailed. I hope I have proved to the House that insecurity of service does certainly exist on the railways, because no rules are being observed to protect the interests of these employees.

Sir, I again repeat in these cases where protection is not given to these subordinate employees, it is not the fault of the Honourable Member. It is the junior officer who is mostly to blame. For it is seldom his opinion is upset and so it amounts to a question of *suppressio veri and suggestio falsi*.

The Honourable Member told us yesterday that he held the Agents responsible to him and his Government for the proper discharge of their duties. Have the Agents shown to him that they have been truly and adequately responsible in such cases? I submit that they have not. They are too busy men to find time for such details. The only time they seem to interfere is when a strike is declared and then it is usually too late.

There is the question of increased or "sweat" labour due to longer hours of work. If these men refuse work, the Loco. Foreman has his knife into them and report them on the slightest provocation and the man is fined or his increment delayed, etc. If the driver appeals to his official he at times gets no hearing or justice. I should like to know how would this junior railway officer, or how would any member of the Railway Board act if they were similarly treated and yet they allow their men to be treated in this manner—left to the tender mercies of even the Loco. Foreman.

Another grievance is that of double punishments. The worst criminal is punished only once for a crime; whereas on some railways, the Great Indian Peninsula, for instance, its servants are punished twice for the same

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crime. There are several cases in which men after having been dismissed by the Great Indian Peninsula Railway have been handed over to the police who in turn punish them again.

Then, Sir, there is the question of the retention of the Local Traffic Service on the East Indian Railway, which utilises the services of subordinates in *quasi* official capacities although the Secretary of State for India abolished it in 1922. The next grievance is the employment for years of subordinates as officiating officials. On the Great Indian Peninsula Railway I understand that nearly 75 per cent. of the official and sub-official appointments are held by subordinates who have been kept on officiating for years. Why should these officiating subordinates be sweated at lower rates of pay? Is this a means by which the Agents effect economies and so effect retrenchments in the lower grades? Why should these men, good and true subordinates, be held as the officials sacrifice on the altar of economy to enable the Agent to show to this House that his railway has been able to effect retrenchments and economy? It is interesting to note that a saving of Rs. 10 lakhs is anticipated in 1926-27 on the administration of the railways. I feel sure that some of this money will be obtained in this manner. I call this absolutely dishonest economy. I submit it is not right to use your subordinates in this way. They should be given the same opportunities of advancement as the imported officials. Sir, there is another question I desire to touch upon. I suppose my Honourable friends on the other side will say that only they are entitled to any complaints in regard to Indianisation. Whether I look upon myself as a statutory native of India or as belonging to "other classes", a new category in this year's budget, I wish to place before this House the fact that Indianisation as it is practised on the Railways does affect men who are born in and belong to this country, I refer to the Anglo-Indians and the Domiciled Community. This operates more on certain railways than on others, particularly on the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway. In the Ajmere Workshops you will find British preference markedly observed; you will find that most of the foremen are Europeans, covenanted or recruited in this country. I say this is not right. It is not the fault of the officer in charge of these workshops, for the Agent of that Railway entered into an agreement with the Government of India, as other railways have done, in regard to Indianisation, and if the Agent of this Railway does not adhere to his promise of Indianising these appointments, he is guilty of a breach of trust. This is a serious grievance of the Anglo-Indian and Domiciled European employees in this workshop and requires remedying. In the question of Indianisation as one of their grievances, I have no doubt that my friends on the other side of the House look upon the Anglo-Indian Railway employee, as an eyesore and an irritant. I am not surprised if they do. But, I ask, since when have the other side or Indians evinced an interest in and a desire for employment on the railways? You must admit this has been a post-reform desire, but all these years who have driven you thousands of miles as you sat comfortably in your railway carriages? It was the Anglo-Indian engine driver and guard. I do not say this with any desire to irritate you, I say it because it is an undeniable fact and that it was the Anglo-Indians who laid the first sleepers of the railways of this country, and who have rendered such splendid service to India and its Railways. But you, my countrymen, your demands to-day are unreasonable and unfair, for you want to replace this tried, trusted and experienced

Railway servant before you are adequately trained. Again why wish to replace him until he has done his work and retires when you can jump into his shoes? Why not let him enjoy the fruits of his experience and labour until his time comes to go? Personally I am persuading my people not to enter the railways and, believe me, you will preach the same in time to come because the moment you join the railways you become an automaton. Of course I do not include my friends on the official Benches there. But I say it is not right for Members on the opposite side of the House to make so little of the services that have been rendered to Indian Railways by my community. I quite realise their viewpoints and their desire to secure employment on the Railways and so replace the Anglo-Indian, but do it fairly and properly and let the best man win. Surely this is not the way you are going to treat a minority community when you are in power. As statutory natives of India we are entitled to equal treatment.

**Mr. President:** Will the Honourable Member address the Chair?

**Lieut.-Colonel H. A. J. Gidney:** If this is the way you intend to treat minority communities, then I consider it is not just nor right. I however agree with you that the time has come for us to take up this question of grievances for your interests are the same as mine, but I do not think it is right for you to overlook or to undervalue the railway services of the Anglo-Indian community in the way you are doing to-day. The main question now is how can we remedy these grievances? The remedy, as we have resolved on two separate occasions, is the formation of a Railway Committee to investigate the grievances of the railway servants. I submit that is the only remedy, although my Honourable friend Sir George Paddison was dead against it. I however support it. I know the Honourable Member objects to this. Indeed in his reply last year he said "the Government of India are not in agreement with the motion and they do not therefore propose to initiate the inquiry suggested." He "would draw the attention of the railway authorities to the debate on the motion and on the Budget" and he had "no doubt that any genuine grievances would be remedied by the railway administration concerned", and he thought "the railway Agents were competent to dispose of such cases." That was two years ago. Does the evidence we have heard in this House to-day satisfy us that the Agents have remedied these grievances? Are these grievances still with us or not or have they even been ameliorated? If they still exist, we should again press for a committee to be appointed. The House, when it votes to-day, and I hope the Mover will take this to a division, will, I feel sure, vote for the formation of this committee. The Honourable Member says, that such an enquiry is not necessary, that the railway Agents and the Railway Board are quite capable of dealing with these grievances. Now, what happens when a man does appeal to the Railway Board? The Honourable Member himself admitted in reply to a recent question of mine that the procedure he adopts is to write to the Agent of the Railway for his opinion. I ask, of what use is the opinion of that Agent? He has already expressed his opinion and he is not the superman to change his opinion; he will adhere to his opinion, and the Railway Board in reply to its letter receives nothing else but a repetition of this opinion. What use is this to the man who has appealed? No use whatever. And so he gets that stereotyped reply, "the Railway Board regrets it cannot interfere with the action taken by the Agent." Now, Sir, the Honourable Member also fears, and he was supported in

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this by the last speaker, Sir George Paddison, that if a Railway Committee were appointed to investigate these grievances, it might result in the spread of disorder, discontent, unrest and all sorts of lamentable sequel. Why should the Honourable Member be apprehensive of this so far as the Railways alone are concerned? There have been other committees appointed to inquire into the grievances of the Telegraph Department, the Postal Department, the Police, the Customs and the I. C. S. The last Lee Commission was nothing else but an inquiry into the grievances of the I. C. S. Did these result in any strikes? Did unrest spread? Did anything untoward happen? Sir, this is a lame excuse to bring forward. One might equally say that Government is afraid lest such a Committee exposes the misdeeds of and irregularities of some of the railway officials. I support this motion and I urge the Honourable Member in his desire and anxiety to swell the railway finances and improve the returns from the railways, to give greater consideration to the needs of his humble workers for it is due to their collective labour that he has been able to present such favourable budgets during the five years' tenure of office. Representing, as I do, about 12,000 of my people who are employed on Indian Railways, I say emphatically to this Honourable House that the time has come when there must be an inquiry into the grievances of the railway servants. There must be some appellate body to which genuine cases of grievances can be sent for revision and justice administered to our railway servants. With these words, Sir, I support the motion.

**Mr. T. C. Goswami** (Calcutta Suburbs: Non-Muhammadan Urban): Sir, I propose to confine myself within the strictest economy of words, on this point. In fact I just want to mention one thing. I believe, Mr. President, I am right in thinking that the unanimity between the Chair and the Government side of the House in the matter of the Kharagpur strike is only with regard to the bayoneting and the use of the buck shot. But I submit, that any reference to the grievances of the Bengal-Nagpur Railway employees is not necessarily out of order. As a matter of fact, the grievances of the Bengal-Nagpur Railway employees have been very definitely formulated, and I have got papers here, and other Honourable Members, similarly, have got papers. As I said on a previous occasion, I do not want the Government now and on the floor of the House to commit themselves to a statement, either that they accept the grievances as genuine or that they deny that the grievances do exist. All I pressed for on the last occasion was an inquiry, and that is what the Bengal-Nagpur Railway Union, which is a recognised union, has been pressing for. I should have thought that was a modest, legitimate demand. The thing I wanted to mention here is the phenomenon that the Agent of the Bengal Nagpur Railway, at least during the earlier part of the strike when I had occasion to visit Kharagpur, had shut himself up in his Calcutta office, and, that all the notices regarding the strike were being signed by "T. R. Wynne, on behalf of the Railway administration." Now, there is a queer look about it; and further this Sir T. R. Wynne, Managing Director of the Bengal Nagpur Railway, I understand, comes to hibernate in this country for a month or two in the year. Now, Sir, my point is this. Whenever we ask searching questions about the Railway administrations the Government always tell us, "Look here, we have got the Agent, the man on the spot, and we have got to rely on him." In this case, I have reason to believe—Sir, I state definitely that I have reason to believe—that the Agent was

mind to do the right thing; and the matter in which Government, I understand, has claimed credit is a matter which is due to the action of the Agent with regard to a particular employee who had been transferred unjustly and fined; though the order of the Agent cancelling the transfer and the fine was disregarded by a subordinate officer. The Agent's order mitigating the injustice done to this particular employee was actually shelved, and it was allowed to be shelved, I understand, by the Managing Director of the Bengal Nagpur Railway.

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** May I know, Sir, whether the Honourable Member is referring to the order cancelling the fine or whether he is referring to the transfer?

**Mr. T. C. Goswami:** I am referring to the fine also.

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** The fine was never collected and the order imposing it was cancelled.

**Mr. T. C. Goswami:** The aggrieved party was never informed that his fine had been cancelled.

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** Oh yes, he was.

**Mr. T. C. Goswami:** Not till much later.

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** On the same day.

**Mr. T. C. Goswami:** Not till after the strike had been declared. Take it from me. Now, Sir, it is a very notorious fact and it is being felt, at any rate on the Calcutta side of the country, that the Agent is not being allowed to discharge his duties. We have reason to believe that the Agent, if he had been left free, would have acted in the right manner and a very serious strike, involving, on Government's own admission, more than 25,000 men, would have been averted, or that, at any rate, an early settlement of the strike would have been effected. Sir, I expect a clear reply from Government.

And further, Sir, before I sit down I still urge that a committee of enquiry is by no means too late. I agree with Sir George Paddison when he says that the great difficulty in these disputes is to bring the employers and employees together. But in this case it is very easy for the administration to get into touch with the men, through the efficient Union which exists and which, as I said before, has been recognised by the Railway authorities.

**Mr. N. M. Joshi** (Nominated: Labour Interests): Sir, I fully realise that the House at this stage is certainly tired of hearing speeches on this subject. (*Cries of "No, no."*) I am glad to hear there are at least some Members who are not yet tired; but, Sir, considering the importance of this subject which affects 700,000 railway employees, I have decided to inflict a speech on this House even if it is an infliction. Sir, the grievances of the railway employees are innumerable and they cannot be sufficiently described in a short speech but I assure you, Sir, I do not wish to make a very long speech. I shall describe those grievances as briefly as I can. Some of those grievances are common to all employees of railways and some are special grievances. I shall first very briefly deal with those grievances which are common to the employees on all lines. First among them is the grievance about racial discrimination. Several speakers have spoken on this subject and I know, Sir, every year the Honourable the Commerce

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Member gives a stereotyped reply. But, Sir, the Honourable the Commerce Member cannot deny that there is racial discrimination in the treatment of the subordinate employees of the Indian railways. It is true the Honourable the Commerce Member is trying to put a cloak over this racial discrimination. He is not anxious to remove racial discrimination but he is making an attempt to conceal it so that it may not be seen. What he is doing is that in each class of railway workers he is dividing them into several grades—first grade, second grade, third grade, fourth grade. The upper grades will be practically reserved for Europeans and Anglo-Indians, the lower grades for Indians. Not that they will be reserved in so many words, but Indians will not be appointed to the upper grades, while Europeans and Anglo-Indians will be appointed to the higher grades all at once. Now, Sir, the Honourable the Commerce Member the other day said that as a Briton and a Scot he is very jealous of his honesty and good faith. Sir, I challenge him to-day to lay his hand on his heart and say whether there is no racial discrimination on Indian railways. Sir, this racial discrimination is not only confined to pay. Racial discrimination exists as regards the leave rules. Racial discrimination exists as regards the issue of passes. An Anglo-Indian or European employee, whatever may be his salary, gets a second class pass; but an Indian—I am leaving aside the statutory Indian for the present—if he gets a salary of Rs. 50 will be entitled only to a pass for the intermediate class. I ask the Honourable the Commerce Member to make enquiries and find out whether such racial discrimination exists or not. Then, Sir, there is racial discrimination in the case of education. The railways find money for the education of European and Anglo-Indian boys but the railways have hardly any money for the education of Indian boys. The same racial discrimination is to be seen as regards quarters. One type of quarters is constructed for Europeans and Anglo-Indians and a smaller class of quarters constructed for Indian employees. Not only that, but I read the other day that in the case of the Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway employees they make distinctions even as regards the provision of clothes. Sir, in the case of these employees, racial discrimination does exist and if Government say it does not exist, may I make one suggestion to them—that the appointment of railway employees should be handed over to the Public Services Commission even in the case of the subordinate employees. If the Honourable the Commerce Member will agree that all appointments on the railways will be made on merit only and will be made through the agency of the Public Services Commission, Sir, I shall be satisfied. But I am quite sure the Honourable the Commerce Member will not hand over the appointment of subordinate employees to the Public Services Commission. The Public Services Commission is meant only for the higher services. I remember the Honourable the Commerce Member once justified his conduct and the conduct of his department in making racial distinctions at least in the case of Anglo-Indians on the ground that Anglo-Indians have inherited railway experience. Sir, I have known the Honourable the Commerce Member to be a good administrator but I only recently heard that he had also studied biology (*The Honourable Sir Charles Innes: "Psychology"*) and eugenics. Sir, the Anglo-Indian may or may not have inherited experience of railways. The Honourable the Commerce Member is on very doubtful ground when he says that railway experience can be inherited. I hope, Sir, he will not plead these excuses for making racial distinctions in the case of Anglo-Indians and Indians. I assure my Honourable friend Colonel Gidney that I have absolutely no grudge against the Anglo-Indian.



I am quite willing that Anglo-Indians should retain all the privileges which they are enjoying to-day. My demand is that these privileges should also be given to the Indian employees.

Now, Sir, the second grievance of the employees of the Indian railways is that about insecurity. There are more frequent dismissals on the railways than anywhere else. Not only that, but there is hardly any appeal against these dismissals. I am quite aware that the rules may provide that any dismissed employee of the railway may appeal to the Railway Board or even to the Government of India and that he has also a nominal right of appeal to the Secretary of State for India. But, Sir, it will be a very good thing if the Honourable the Commerce Member can tell us how many appeals were received by him. In the first place, the Agents refuse to forward the appeals; and if the Agents forward the appeals, the Railway Board does not consider them; and if the Railway Board does not give justice the Railway Board also will not in most cases forward the appeals to the Secretary of State, if the employee cares to appeal to the Secretary of State.

This, Sir, is not the only grievance. As my Honourable friend Colonel Gidney has mentioned, the whole of the railway service is considered to be temporary service. Every railway employee has to give an agreement binding himself to those conditions of service. I do not know why the railway employee alone should be asked of all the Government employees to sign an agreement of this kind.

Then, Sir, the insecurity of service is also the result of the policy of indiscriminate retrenchment on railways. If the attempt at retrenchment is genuine I do not make any complaint; but the retrenchment is only in name. What happens on most occasions on railways is that a large number of people are sent away on the ground of retrenchment and immediately their places are taken by fresh men, perhaps on smaller wages. Sir, this is what is called retrenchment on Indian railways.

Then, Sir, there is the question of the daily-rated men on railways. On railways there are some people who are called monthly-rated people and some who are called daily-rated people. Of course we must leave aside the covenanted men whose service is permanent and who want compensation if their job is retrenched. In the case of the daily-rated men their difficulties are many. Not only is there insecurity of service every day of their life, but they are not given the same privileges as regards leave, gratuity and provident fund as are given to monthly-rated men. I find it difficult to understand why the railway authorities in India should treat in this way people who serve them for ten and fifteen and twenty years as daily-rated men. The only object, to my mind, of the railway authorities is to save money by not giving them leave, gratuity or provident fund on the same conditions on which these concessions are given to the monthly-rated employees. I hope, Sir, the Government of India will consider the position of the daily-rated men very seriously; their number is not small; they are not kept at the daily-rate because they are temporary men—these daily-rated men have served on the railways for ten, fifteen or twenty years some times, and I cannot understand why they should be considered as daily-rated men.

Then, Sir, there is the question of the hours of work. Fortunately the hours of work in workshops are not very long. But in the case of the running staff and the station staff the hours of work are very long indeed. The station staff has to work for twelve hours a day, and the running staff



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has to work ten hours and even twelve hours (*An Honourable Member*: "Sixteen hours.") and even sixteen hours a day; they do not get sufficient rest between two periods of work. Now, Sir, I would like the Government of India to consider this question of the hours of work of the railway employees.

Then, Sir, there is the grievance about fines. There is no service, there is no department of the Government of India where fines are levied with such levity and with such frequency as on the railways; so much so that the railways have built up a large fines fund. Now, Sir, the Government of India several times give us statistics as to how many Muhammadans are appointed in a certain department or how many Hindus occupy places in a particular department. I would like the Government of India to extend their communalistic spirit to this fines fund and give us statistics as to the amount of fines collected from Europeans, Anglo-Indians and Indians; and not only that; but it will be interesting for this House to know how that fines fund is utilised. Sir, poor Indian employees are made to pay fines and most of the fund is spent for the benefit of the European and Anglo-Indian staff. It is true that out of the fund a small amount may be spent on the Indian institutes or for the benefit of the Indian employees, but if the Government of India will take the trouble of finding out how much of this amount is spent for Indians and how much is spent for Anglo-Indians and Europeans, I am quite sure the House will await the result with great interest. I hope, Sir, the Government of India will spend the necessary amount of money to find out those statistics. I have tried my very best to get the Honourable the Commerce Member to furnish us with those statistics, but he has been systematically refusing to do so.

Now, Sir, there is the question of wages. This is a very important question, and it is difficult to deal with it adequately in a short speech on this occasion. I fully agree with those Members who said that it is the agricultural wages which regulate the rate of wages in industrial concerns. It is true unfortunately that in our country the agricultural wages are very low and it is because agricultural wages are very low that the industrial wages are also very low. I do not agree with those Members on the opposite side who stated that the agricultural labourer is in a much better condition than the industrial wage-earner. That is not true. The truth is that simply because the agricultural wage-earners get very low wages—and more so in the province of Madras than anywhere else—therefore our industrial workers also suffer from very low wages. Sir, that fact is clear to any one who has studied the problem. Agricultural workers from Madras go to Ceylon for Rs. 9 a month; they go to Malaya for Rs. 12 a month. That is the history of agricultural wages in Madras and it is that that has been responsible for the lowness of wages in many industrial concerns in our country. But, Sir, it is not enough for Government to state that agricultural wages are low—therefore the industrial wage-earners must also receive low wages. The Honourable the Commerce Member knows very well that especially in these modern times it is not right for any one to say that wages of wage-earners must be fixed on the principle of supply and demand. That principle has been exploded by the Treaty of Versailles and the Honourable Member knows that very well. The Honourable Member knows very well that that treaty lays down that the principle that the wages of wage-earners must be fixed on the principle of demand and supply will no longer continue to operate. Sir, they have laid down in that treaty that labour should not be treated hereafter as an article of commerce,

that labour should not be treated as a commodity. Therefore, the Honourable the Commerce Member cannot give any excuse that, because the wages in the surrounding districts are low, therefore the wages in the railway workshops must also remain low.

Now, I shall say only a few words with regard to the non-recognition of the Unions on railways. My Honourable friend from Madras, Sir George Paddison, stated that it is better that the employers and employees should meet often and discuss questions of common interest. Sir, I agree with him entirely. But unfortunately the employers and the employees must have opportunities of meeting together. The railway authorities refuse to recognise the Unions; and if the railway authorities refuse to send replies to letters they will refuse to meet the Unions. Sir, the workmen are not at all unwilling to meet their employers, but it is the employers who are unwilling to meet their men. I know that on some lines in India they have started what are called joint committees, but if the Honourable the Commerce Member studies this subject he will find that the Agents are proceeding on entirely wrong lines with regard to these joint committees. The joint committees are based on the report made in England by a committee which was started under the chairmanship of Mr. Whitley, and that committee is known as the Whitley Committee. That committee has laid down one broad principle, that if the joint committees are ever to succeed, they can only succeed if the Unions are recognised, and these committees will only succeed in those industries where the Unions are organized. Sir, the Whitley Committee has made it clear that these joint committees can never be a substitute for the Unions, and they have also made it clear that if ever an attempt is made to substitute joint committees for the Unions, those attempts will fail. Sir, I want the Railway Board to take a lesson from the advice given by that authoritative body. On all the railway lines there is at present an attempt made to start joint committees as substitute for the Unions, and that attempt, according to the principle laid down by the Whitley Committee, is bound to fail.

Sir, I do not wish to go into more of the grievances of these men, but I want to say only a few words as regards one special grievance of the men on one line. The only thing I wish to say as regards the special grievance is the position of porters on the Howrah station. On the Howrah station there is a contractor who takes a contract to supply porters. I can understand, Sir, a contractor undertaking to supply goods, but I cannot understand a contractor undertaking to supply porters. But, unfortunately, such a contractor exists on the Howrah station. This contractor who supplies porters, charges each porter Rs. 7 a month. There are 600 porters on the Howrah station, and this contractor gets Rs. 4,200 a month from these porters. I am told that he has appointed two Anglo-Indians as supervisory porters and one or two assistants, and that he spends about Rs. 1,500 a month out of the Rs. 4,200 that he gets from these porters. Thus this contractor gets a large sum as his salary for doing what? For supplying porters to the station at Howrah. Now, Sir, this is a very lucrative occupation for retired European officers of Indian railways. As a matter of fact, these contractors are retired European officers of Indian railways. Sir, I asked several questions on this point in this House, and the Honourable the Commerce Member promised to make certain inquiries. I am told that he had appointed an officer to make inquiries, and that this officer has submitted his report, but unfortunately that report does not see the light of day. I am also told, Sir, that the Railway Advisory Committee in

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Calcutta wanted to see a copy of this report. The report will be useful to the Local Advisory Committee, because if the porters have to pay Rs. 7 each per month to the contractor, naturally they must charge higher rates from the passengers. Therefore, the Railway Advisory Committee being interested in the matter asked for a report, and I am told that they were not supplied with a copy. I hope, Sir, the Honourable the Commerce Member will publish the report of the officer whom he deputed to inquire into this matter.

Sir, I do not wish now to go into the details of the other grievances, but I should like to say one word with regard to the method which the Government have adopted to deal with this question. The Honourable the Commerce Member stated several times that he did not propose to make an inquiry. And why? He stated several grounds. In the first place, he said that the Agents are now made independent. He said the same thing yesterday in regard to the question of the purchase of stores. This is the result of the new policy which the railways have adopted. It is true, Sir, that the Government want to make these Agents responsible for the good management of railways. We want also the Members of the Executive Government to be responsible to the people of this country. But, Sir, are we to understand that simply because we want certain officers to be made responsible for the work they do, they should be made great Nawabs of the olden times? Is that what the Honourable the Commerce Member means when he says that the Agents must be made independent, they must be given greater control over questions of treatment of railway workmen into which neither the Government of India nor this House can inquire? Sir, if that is the meaning of the Agents being made responsible, it is better that the Agents are not made responsible at all.

Then, Sir, the Honourable the Commerce Member stated that if we appoint a committee of inquiry, there will be disturbances, and I was very sorry to find that my Honourable friend Sir George Paddison also stated that if any inquiry is made there will be disturbances and discontent. But, Sir, . . . . .

**Sir George Paddison:** I never said there will be disturbances. I said that feeling will be exacerbated and there will be discontent.

**Mr. N. M. Joshi:** I now realise, Sir, that the Honourable Member is against discontent. May I ask my Honourable friend when the Lee Commission was appointed, was there discontent? Was there a dangerous discontent among the superior services? But, Sir, it is said that the superior services are superior services, and there must be discontent among them, but unfortunately these subordinate employees are subordinate employees and why should there be discontent among them? Sir, it is a very curious thing which I am really unable to understand. Why should there not be discontent among the subordinate employees? Sir, I would like the subordinate employees to be discontented rather than that they should remain contented. Sir, it is the right of every human being to be discontented with the conditions in which he is placed, and the railway employees have every right to be discontented with the position in which you have placed them. Moreover, Sir, I do not feel that the enquiry will create a dangerous form of discontent among these men. The discontent already exists. I remember very well, Sir, that about two years ago the Honourable the Commerce Member stated in this House that I was the author of all these

grievances, as if one can manufacture grievances. I ask the Honourable the Commerce Member to-day whether I am the author of these grievances. I remember very well the Honourable the Commerce Member stating very boastfully on that day that recently there were no strikes on Indian railways. I ask him now whether since then there have been any strikes; the House knows very well that since then the country has seen two of the biggest strikes on Indian railways. Sir, the Honourable Member perhaps believes in these strikes. He refuses to accept any evidence of discontent from a man like me or from any other Member of this House, and the only evidence about discontent which he will believe in is the actual existence of strikes. Sir, he is the maker of strikes in India and nobody else. Sir, I do not wish to go further on this occasion. I am quite sure, Sir, that this House, and may I also hope the Honourable the Commerce Member, will give serious consideration to the grievances of the railway employees.

But, Sir, before I close, I want to say one word and it is this, that having studied the conditions of workers in India, I must admit that the conditions of workers on railways are not the worst, for the railway employee has got some concessions which are denied to the employees in other concerns. The railway employee gets a gratuity. He gets a provident fund and he gets leave on pay. I am fully aware of that. But, Sir, let the Honourable the Commerce Member remember that railway employees are Government employees and if the Government of this country is a trustee for the masses of the people of this country, they cannot say that they are on equal terms with the other employers in this country. It is their duty as trustees of the people to show that they are much better employers than the other employers. They ought to be model employers of labour in this country and, if that is so, they cannot plead any excuse that the other employers, *e.g.*, of agriculture, pay less or other employers do not do for their labour what they do. What they have to see is whether their labour is treated as human beings and whether their employees get all the comforts which every employee ought to have. I therefore hope, Sir, that the Honourable the Commerce Member will not refuse to give us an inquiry into the conditions of work and service of the railway employees, and I can assure him that instead of there being any disturbances which he fears, there will be more contentment in the ranks of the railway employees. I hope, Sir, this House will pass this motion.

(Several Honourable Members then moved that the question be put.)

**Mr. President:** The question is that the question be now put.

The motion was adopted.

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** Sir, I have at least got one admission out of this debate. I have listened to debates of this kind for many years, but it is for the first time I have heard an admission from my Honourable friend Mr. Joshi that on the whole employees on the railways are treated better than the employees in other industries. Sir, I thank Mr. Joshi for this one small mercy.

Now, Sir, before I get down to my main case I should like to refer very briefly to just a few points which have been taken. I do not think that my Honourable friend Mr. Ranga Iyer quite appreciated the point of the Rev. Dr. Macphail with regard to agricultural labourers in the Madras Presidency. My friend Mr. Ranga Iyer, I see, comes from Chittur taluk of the

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Cochin State, that is to say, from a place adjoining the Malabar district. My friend Mr. Acharya was for some years, I understand, a master at the Ottapalam High School, also in the Malabar District. Now, Sir, what has impressed the Rev. Dr. Macphail, Sir George Paddison and myself is this extraordinary solicitude on the part of these two gentlemen for the welfare of railway labour. What has struck us during the course of this debate is that these two Honourable Members do not realise the truth of the old saying "Charity begins at home" or at any rate that it should begin at home. Both these Honourable Members will bear me out when I say that the agricultural labourers in the Malabar District—there are 500,000 of them—live in what are called *Cheruma chalas*, miserable little huts. They have got no land of any sort or kind and they are not even allowed to come within a specified distance of their landlords or of the people under whom

1 P.M. they work. If Mr. Ranga Iyer were to go and hold a labour meeting of these *Cherumas* in the Malabar district Mr. Ranga Iyer would have . . .

**Mr. C. S. Ranga Iyer:** May I inform the Honourable . . .

**Mr. President:** Is it a personal explanation that the Honourable Member wants to make?

**Mr. C. S. Ranga Iyer:** Yes, and it is this, that I supported a campaign for the admission of these so-called untouchables at Vaikom into the temples by proceeding to the spot.

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** I am very glad to hear that and I withdraw what I have said as regards Mr. Ranga Iyer, but at any rate we have felt that when conditions among the agricultural labourers not only in the Malabar district but in other parts of the Madras Presidency are as they are at the present time, it seems to us that these Honourable Members will be better advised to attack that problem rather than transfer their attention to railway employees, since, as Mr. Joshi has told us, the railway employees are on the whole better treated than employees in other industries.

Let me turn to my Honourable friend, Colonel Gidney. Colonel Gidney brought up the question of security and the service bond. I am at a loss to know what the complaint of Colonel Gidney is on that matter. We have, it is true, a service bond. I have here the terms of the service bond of the Great Indian Peninsula Railway. It declares that the service is permanent and non-pensionable, and it says that the service is terminable at a month's notice. Our gazetted officers on the railways—practically all of them—their services are terminable at six months' notice and in the case of the subordinate services, their services are terminable at a month's notice. Why? It is because, after all, we do try to run the railways as a business concern, and that is the reason why we differentiate railway service from service in other departments of the Government of India. In other departments of the Government I think you will get men cheaper if you tie, so to say, a safety label round their neck and make it more difficult to dispense with them. But you could not run a business concern if you cannot get rid of the inefficient men. You could not run that service as a remunerative service, as a paying service if you are compelled to keep on men whom you would not think it worth your while as a business man to retain in your employ.

**Lieut.-Colonel H. A. J. Gidney:** May I interrupt the Honourable Member . . . . .

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** No, I am not going to give way. Colonel Gidney referred to the case of Mr. DeCruz. He suggested that the case of Mr. DeCruz had not been properly considered by the Railway Board. Here are the records of that case, but I think it would be cruel to go in detail into the facts of that case. But in self-defence, as Colonel Gidney has mentioned it, I must say quite publicly that that gentleman and other gentlemen were implicated in what is nothing more nor less than a case of fraud. An inquiry was made into it; they were given an opportunity of explaining the charges. All the papers in the case were submitted not once but twice to the solicitors of the East Indian Railway and eventually, on the advice of the solicitors, all the men engaged in that matter were dismissed. We were told by our solicitors that there was absolutely no reason to doubt that there had been a daring attempt to defraud the East Indian Railway and these men were implicated in it. Their case has again been scrutinised by the Railway Board, and I think it is wrong for Colonel Gidney to try and bring up an individual case of that sort in a discussion of this kind, because it is quite impossible either for me or for him to go into it in such detail as would be fair both to him and to me.

I am accused from that side of the House of unfair discrimination on the railways in favour of Anglo-Indians and then the representative of the Anglo-Indian community gets up and states that Anglo-Indians do not get a fair chance or fair conditions on the Indian railways.

**Mr. N. M. Joshi:** When they conflict with the Europeans.

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** These speeches will be read by the Agents all over the country. Those Agents will see the views held by the representative of the Anglo-Indians in this Assembly as to the conditions of railway service and I only hope that the Agents will not drive the impression that the Anglo-Indians do not like railway service, for I should like to repeat, what I have repeatedly told this House, that we in the Railway Department have for many years had loyal, good and efficient service from the Anglo-Indian community serving on the Indian Railways and we hope that we shall continue to get it.

Now, Sir, let me bring the House back to the point before it. We are not discussing whether there are grievances on Indian railways or not. Of course there are grievances. I do not deny it for a moment. You have 78,000 men. Does any one suggest that when you have got a staff of that size some of them would not have grievances, and no doubt legitimate grievances, against their employers? But we are not discussing that, we are discussing the question whether or not the Government should be censured because they did not act upon a Resolution of this House that we should appoint a committee of inquiry to go into those grievances. The actual wording of the Resolution was that the Governor General in Council should take immediate steps to institute an inquiry into and report on the grievances of the subordinate employees and that the inquiry should be conducted by a committee consisting of five Members to be elected by the Legislative Assembly, three representatives of railway employees to be appointed by their organisations and three men to be

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appointed by the Government of India. That is the Resolution that was passed.

**Mr. Chaman Lall** (West Punjab: Non-Muhammadan): Is the Honourable Member prepared to appoint a committee of his own choice?

**Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas** (Indian Merchants' Chamber: Indian Commerce): That is not the Resolution that was carried.

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes**: That is the Resolution I have got here in any case, that this House should appoint a committee of inquiry to go into the grievances of Indian railway employees . . . .

**Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas**: If the Honourable Member would give way, I would remind him that the Resolution was to the effect that the Central Advisory Committee at least might go into the grievances, and I think it would be very interesting to know why the Government of India rejected even that Resolution on which no division was sought.

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes**: The suggestion was that we should have a roving committee inquiring into railway grievances. I pointed out then, and I adhere to my view, that you cannot manage a great labour organisation if you appoint committees of inquiry of this kind. Whether it is the Central Advisory Committee or a roving committee, I claim that the history of the last two or three years has confirmed the view which I expressed to the House in 1924 and to which I adhere to-day. Mr. Acharya suggested that I did not believe in 1924 that there were grievances and that now at any rate I have reason to believe that there was discontent. Sir, what were the facts in 1924 when this Resolution was passed. For 2½ years we had not had a single strike. So far as we in the Railway Board knew, and so far as the reports from Agents went, the relations between ourselves and our men were thoroughly good; and then, Sir, one morning, like a bolt from the blue, came notice of a Resolution given by my friend Mr. Joshi, that we should appoint this committee of inquiry. And, Sir, what has been the result? The result has been that ever since at every Railway Union meeting there has always been a cry that this committee of inquiry should be appointed; and, Sir, I would like the House to realise what the character of railway employees is. Mr. Joshi only the other day referred to them as illiterate and ignorant men.

**Mr. Chaman Lall**: Not all.

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes**: Not all, of course. But the great majority of them are ignorant and illiterate men.

**Mr. Chaman Lall**: Only the lower staff.

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes**: The lower staff comprises the great portion of our railway staff. You have all over the country vast bodies of rather poorly paid men, who are mostly ignorant and illiterate and this House suggests that this inquiry should be held. Well, naturally, what

do they think they are going to get out of this inquiry? I do not believe myself that the vast bulk of these men care two straws about this racial discrimination which looms so large in this House. What they want is more pay, and when they hear the Legislative Assembly has passed a Resolution of this kind, the only inference they draw is that they will get more pay. And that, Sir, is why the House I consider was grossly unfair to me and to the Indian Railways when they passed that Resolution in 1924. I entirely agree with Sir George Paddison—and I should like to take this opportunity of congratulating the Honourable Member on his first speech in this Assembly. (Applause). I entirely agree with what Sir George Paddison has said. He said practically what I said three years ago, and he said it with a much greater authority, because, as he himself told us, Sir George Paddison is well known in the Madras Presidency for his great knowledge, for his great experience of, and his great sympathy with, all these labour questions. Now, Sir, he has told us that what you want in order to improve the relations between masters and men is to get the personal touch between the Agent and his officers and his men. And, Sir, we are trying to get that personal touch. I am quite aware of the Whitley report to which my friend Mr. Joshi referred. I am quite aware that the Whitley report said that the shop committees would not be really useful unless they worked with the Railway Unions. But, Sir, I ask Mr. Joshi how many Railway Unions are there in India which are real, live, beneficent bodies? My Honourable friend is silent. (Mr. N. M. Joshi: "No.") Well, he ought to be. He knows as well as I do that there are very few really good Unions. And, Sir, is it right for my friend Mr. Joshi or for anybody else to criticise an Agent when the Agent, just with that object to which Sir George Paddison attached so much importance, tries to set up in the different parts of the line station committees, where the officers of the station and the workmen can be brought into touch one with another. If there are Unions there, there is absolutely no reason why the Unions should not be represented on these station committees and so come in touch with the officers. Though theoretically the station committee may be wrong if it does not work in with the Union, at any rate they have been working well on the Indian railway system.

Now, Sir, I have told this House, and it is quite useless for me to go on repeating it, of the action we took upon the Resolution passed in 1923. We had already considered the matter and I have told the House what view we took. We thought it would be dangerous and it would be wrong to appoint a committee of that kind or start any general inquiry. We came to that conclusion for the very reason given by Sir George Paddison, namely, that if you once set on foot an inquiry of that kind you create grievances where they do not exist, you would embitter the relations between railway officers and their men. But we did bring the matter to the notice of every Agent and we issued a circular. I read a large extract from that circular in my speech on this subject last year, and I do claim that that circular has done good. Take this very strike here in the Bengal Nagpur Railway. Mr. Goswami in his speech said that they had no complaint against the Agent, and he thought that if the Agent had been able to deal with this matter himself without the intervention of the Managing Director of the Board of Directors things would have gone much better. At any rate I gathered from the Honourable Member's speech that he had no complaints against the treatment by the Agent of the Labour Union at Kharagpur.



**Mr. T. C. Goswami:** All I said was that on this particular occasion the Agent was appearing to do the right thing, but the Agent did not seem to be free to do what he wanted to do, what he perhaps thought it was right to do. I said "seemed to be" advisedly.

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** I see the Honourable Member is grudging even in his praise of the Agent.

**Mr. T. C. Goswami:** I was not distributing testimonials—obviously I was not able to state definitely that he was restrained from doing the right thing, but from all evidence it seemed that he was not allowed a free hand in the settlement of the strike. Nor is it possible for me to say exactly what he would have done if he had been free.

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** At any rate, Sir, I can claim that the Agent in this matter has recognized the Union, and that he has gone into this matter to the greatest possible length with the Union.

**Mr. T. C. Goswami:** I admit that he recognized the Union.

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** He has endeavoured to meet the Union in every possible way. And on the complaint of insecurity of service, what did the Agent do? There were 15,000 men concerned at Kharagpur, and there were only 40 cases of dismissals. He said that the Chief Mechanical Engineer would review those cases, and that in his review two Labour Union officials would be present. Now, Sir, is not that an advance, is not that an attempt to adopt a conciliatory and sympathetic attitude towards the grievances? Then, Sir, when they complained of insufficiency of pay, when they said that some of the minimum scales of pay were too low, what did he say? He said that if there were cases where the minimum scales of pay seemed exceptionally low, he himself is prepared to go into it—and I claim, Sir, that this advance on the part of the Agent is the net result of the pressure which has been put on him from us up here during the last two or three years.

**Mr. Varahagiri Venkata Jogiah** (Ganjam *cum* Vizagapatam: Non-Muhammadan Rural): May I know if the Agent's orders were carried out by the Chief Mechanical Engineer?

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** I understand, Sir, that, if the Honourable Member is referring to the inquiry, the inquiry was interrupted by the strike. And, Sir, what reward has the Agent got? Here we have an Agent who has gone out of his way to work in with the Union, who has gone out of his way to extend a sympathetic consideration to the grievances put before him: what reward has he got? The men, as usually happens with Indian workmen, got out of hand against the advice of their leaders, have declared a strike; then there is the inevitable collision, and then the Union decides to declare a general strike. Now, Sir, I would like to ask Mr. Joshi, I would like to ask Mr. Chaman Lall and Mr. Jogiah whether the history of the strike is calculated to induce the Agent to carry on these methods. Has the Agent of the Bengal Nagpur Railway been rewarded properly for his attempts to meet the Union in this matter? The only reward he has got is that he is confronted with a general strike. That shows the whole difficulty that we have got to meet on the railways. As Mr. Joshi knows, these men are ignorant and illiterate. They get inflamed

by what are usually called "agitators", though I do not like the word myself. When they come under the influence of agitators of that kind, then they get out of hand at once: and Mr. Joshi and this House want me now to appoint a committee of inquiry into their grievances, the grievances of ignorant, illiterate men of this kind. They say that if we appoint this committee of inquiry, we shall not excite false hopes but we shall merely relieve discontent. I say, Sir, that the whole history of the last few years contradicts flatly that statement. I say, Sir, if we accept this committee of inquiry, the only result will be that we shall probably have violent labour disturbances all over India because we should have excited hopes which we could not possibly fulfil. These ignorant and illiterate workmen will hear the statement made by my friend, Mr. Jogiah, that no man should get a pay of less than Rs. 30, or the statement made by Mr. Acharya that it is impossible for a family to live on Rs. 20 a month. Surely Mr. Acharya knows that there are many families that live on Rs. 20 a month: and does the Honourable Member suggest that we should take the lead on the railways and have a minimum salary of Rs. 20 a month? Is the Honourable Member prepared to stand increased rates and fares? Does the Honourable Member realise that if we did that in the railways, every employer of labour, every Local Government, would have to follow suit, and that the only way in which we can meet the bill will be by increased taxation?

**Mr. Chaman Lall:** It would be a most excellent thing.

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** I entirely agree with my friend Diwan Chaman Lall that it would be a most excellent thing. I have always said that the one thing that is necessary in India, one thing that is desirable in India, is that we should raise the standard of living, and if it lay in my power to raise the standard of living by raising the pay of these wretched men all over India, nothing would give me greater pleasure. But we are practical men, not idealists and we must know that it is not practical politics. Now, I come back to the point where I started. Mr. Joshi has said that on the whole railway servants are better treated than employees in other industries.

**Mr. N. M. Joshi:** I want to make my position clear, Sir. I never said that they are better treated than employees of all other industries, but of some industries.

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** At any rate, Sir, I hold that on the whole railway employees are better treated than servants in other industries. They get approximately the same rates of pay and in addition they get many concessions and advantages in the way of free travelling, warm clothing and housing, and I defy anybody to deny that. I say, Sir, that if this House passes this amendment, they will not in any way improve the lot of these men, but they will create disturbances in this country and in the long run do more harm than good, and I think the House ought not to go on passing Resolutions of this kind which are liable to be gravely misunderstood throughout the country.

**Mr. President:** The question is:

"That the Demand under the head 'Railway Board' be reduced by Re. 1."

The Assembly divided;

AYES—54.

Abdul Matin Chaudhury, Maulv.  
 Acharya, Mr. M. K.  
 Aiyangar, Mr. C. Duraiswamy.  
 Aney, Mr. M. S.  
 Ariff, Mr. Yacoob C.  
 Ayyangar, Mr. K. V. Rangaswami.  
 Ayyangar, Mr. M. S. Sesha.  
 Belvi, Mr. D. V.  
 Bhargava, Pandit Thakur Das.  
 Chaman Lall, Mr.  
 Chetty, Mr. R. K. Shanmukham.  
 Chunder, Mr. Nirmal Chunder.  
 Das, Pandit Nilakantha.  
 Dutt, Mr. Amar Nath.  
 Dutta, Mr. Srish Chandra.  
 Gidney, Lieut.-Colonel H. A. J.  
 Goswami, Mr. T. C.  
 Gulab Singh, Sardar.  
 Haji, Mr. Sarabhai Nemchand.  
 Ismail Khan, Mr.  
 Iyengar, Mr. A. Rangaswami.  
 Iyengar, Mr. S. Srinivasa.  
 Jayakar, Mr. M. R.  
 Sinnah, Mr. M. A.  
 Jogiah, Mr. Varahagiri Venkata.  
 Joshi, Mr. N. M.  
 Kartar Singh, Sardar.  
 Kelkar, Mr. N. C.

Khin Maung, U.  
 Kunzru, Pandit Hirday Nath.  
 Lahiri Chaudhury, Mr. Dharendra  
 Kanta.  
 Lajpat Rai, Lala.  
 Malaviya, Pandit Madan Mohan.  
 Mehta, Mr. Jamnadas M.  
 Misra, Mr. Dwarka Prasad.  
 Moonje, Dr. B. S.  
 Naidu, Mr. B. P.  
 Natiq, Maulvi A. H.  
 Neezy, Mr. K. C.  
 Prakasam, Mr. T.  
 Purshotamdas Thakurdas, Sir.  
 Rananjaya Singh, Kumar.  
 Ranga Iyer, Mr. C. S.  
 Rao, Mr. G. Sarvotham.  
 Roy, Rai Bahadur Tarit Bhusan.  
 Sarda, Rai Sahib M. Harbilas.  
 Sarfaraz Hussain Khan, Khan  
 Bahadur.  
 Singh, Mr. Gaya Prasad.  
 Singh, Mr. Narayan Prasad.  
 Singh, Mr. Ram Narayan.  
 Sinha, Kumar Ganganand.  
 Sinha, Mr. Siddheswar.  
 Tok Kyi, U.  
 Yakub, Maulvi Muhammad.

NOES—47.

Abdul Aziz, Khan Bahadur Mian.  
 Abdul Qaiyum, Nawab Sir Sahibzada.  
 Akram Hussain Bahadur, Prince  
 A. M. M.  
 Allison, Mr. F. W.  
 Ashrafuddin Ahmad, Khan Bahadur  
 Nawabzada Sayid.  
 Ayyangar, Mr. V. K. A. Arvamudha.  
 Ayyangar, Rao Bahadur Narasimha  
 Gopalaswami.  
 Bhole, Mr. J. W.  
 Blackett, The Honourable Sir Basil.  
 Chalmers, Mr. T. A.  
 Coatman, Mr. J.  
 Cocke, Mr. H. G.  
 Crawford, Colonel J. D.  
 Donovan, Mr. J. T.  
 Dunnett, Mr. J. M.  
 E'jez Rasul Khan, Raja Muhammad.  
 Gavin-Jones, Mr. T.  
 Graham, Mr. L.  
 Greenfield, Mr. H. C.  
 Haigh, Mr. P. B.  
 Hayman, Mr. A. M.  
 Hezlett, Mr. J.  
 Hindlev, Sir Clement  
 Howell, Mr. E. E.

Innes, The Honourable Sir Charles.  
 Jowahir Singh, Sardar Bahadur  
 Sardar.  
 Keane, Mr. M.  
 Lamb, Mr. W. S.  
 Lindsay, Sir Darcy.  
 Macphail, The Rev. Dr. E. M.  
 Mitra, The Honourable Sir Bhupendra-  
 Nath.  
 Moore, Mr. Arthur.  
 Muddiman, The Honourable Sir  
 Alexander.  
 Nasir-ud-din Ahmad, Khan Bahadur.  
 Paddison, Sir George.  
 Parsons, Mr. A. A. L.  
 Rajah, Rao Bahadur M. C.  
 Roy, Mr. K. C.  
 Ruthnaswamy, Mr. M.  
 Shah Nawaz, Mian Mohammad.  
 Singh, Rai Bahadur S. N.  
 Singh, Raja Raghunandan Prasad.  
 Svkes, Mr. E. F.  
 Tonkinson, Mr. H.  
 Willson, Sir Walter.  
 Young, Mr. G. M.  
 Zulfiqar Ali Khan, Nawab Sir.

The motion was adopted.

The Assembly then adjourned for Lunch till Half Past Two of the Clock.

The Assembly re-assembled after Lunch at Half Past Two of the Clock, Mr. President in the Chair.

*Railway communication between Gauhati and Shillong.*

**Sir Darcy Lindsay** (Bengal: European): Sir, I move:

"That the Demand under the head 'Railway Board' be reduced by Re. 1" the subject being the failure of the Board to consider the possibility of railway communication between Gauhati and Shillong.

My reason for bringing forward this subject, Sir, is due to a reply given by my Honourable friend Mr. Parsons to question No. 177 on the 1st February. He stated:

"A connection by railway between Shillong and Pandu has often been mooted but as there is a good motor road and motor service between the two places it is not likely to be a paying proposition and there is no present intention of taking it up."

Now, Sir, the point I wish to make is that while it is true there is a good road and a motor service between the two places the means of transport is very inadequate for the needs of the people, particularly in regard to the agricultural production. The reason I desire to urge the Railway Board for a full investigation of the matter is that in my opinion such a railway would become a paying proposition and develop what I might refer to as a backward tract. I ask the Railway Board not to be deterred by the disinclination or possible disinclination of the local Administration to have such a railway built. I know one reason is that they are making revenue out of the motor service and there are other reasons put forward to which I will not refer, but many of us know what they are. The Local Government receive from the motor service, I think for the present year, a sum of Rs. 1,96,000 and this money is really found by the people who use the motor service for the transport of their goods and very largely out of the pockets of the cultivators of potatoes in the Khasia Hills. The excuse for this charge is that the road has to be maintained in a good state of repair. Well, Sir, that may be perfectly true and it is only right that the motor service should contribute something towards the upkeep of the road because their usage causes greater expenditure than might otherwise be the case. But I believe I am not incorrect in stating that the cost of maintenance is somewhere about Rs. 1,65,000, whereas the Government as I have pointed out received Rs. 1,96,000; and one or two years previously it was nearly Rs. 3 lakhs. When I say that the agriculturist has to pay for the most of this. I would explain that the rates for potatoes from Shillong down to Gauhati is very much higher than the rate of transport for goods from Gauhati to Shillong. It was formerly, I believe, as much as Rs. 3 a maund as against Rs. 1-8-0 for upward goods; this year I understand the arrangement is Rs. 1-12-0 for potatoes and Re. 1 for other goods. Now, Sir, as regards this question of potatoes I would like with your permission to read from the *Times of Assam* under date 29th January what has been written on the subject. It is from a correspondent in Shillong:

"Inquiries made since I last wrote show that the holding back of supplies for higher prices was only a minor cause of so large a proportion of the summer potato crops remaining unexported. The principal cause was insufficiency of motor carriage during the export season which lasts from July to October. After that the Shillong potato, with its higher cost of carriage cannot compete with the Burma product which then comes into the Calcutta market. Insufficiency of carriage is clearly demonstrated by the following figures. The carrying company which has the monopoly of carrying maintains 36 lorries. Supposing all of these lorries were always in working, which can never be, this complement would allow of 18 lorries down and 18 up daily. The lorries carry 125 maunds each, so that 18 down lorries daily would carry 67,500 maunds monthly or in four months 2,70,000 maunds. A good year's average crop of potatoes is 4,00,000"

[Sir Darcy Lindsay.]

maunds, so that from the above figures it will be seen that 135,000 maunds is unprovided for. Some of this surplus has been got away in past years by overloading lorries, by the use of luggage vans and the No. 2 passenger omnibus service which latter is not ordinarily much used and some of it has been taken down by bullock and pony carts. Even so, a large balance remains uncarried as happened last year, and the producers are the losers in that the potato does not keep, and only a part of it can be used for seed for the next summer crop and a still smaller part for local human consumption as the latter is not wanted when the smaller winter crop comes in. Consequently the larger part of the unexported balance has to be thrown to the pigs, which means a great loss to the producer. Now this year still more land is going to be put under potatoes as one means of utilising part of the unexported balance. This means that given a favourable season this year's crop may be 5,00,000 maunds and the want of carriage may be even more felt than it was last year unless steps are taken meanwhile to meet the difficulty."

Now, Sir, it may be said that it is quite open to the motor service to put on more lorries. They can certainly do so. But they will be charged by the local Administration another Rs. 6,000 per lorry and merely to carry down the potato crop they would have to charge even higher rates to recover that Rs. 6,000 without even providing for the cost of running and the purchase of the lorry. Also, Sir, there is great insecurity of tenure with regard to this motor service. The contract for running the service is for a period of 10 years, after which time other arrangements may be made. There is, therefore, no encouragement to the motor company to expend large sums of money in providing for sufficient transport. I hold, Sir, that in addition to what transport is already available there are great potentialities about this part of Assam in the way of minerals. It is well known that there are large deposits of coal in these hills that could be tapped by the railway. At present very little leaves the district owing to the high cost of transport. Some years ago I believe a survey was actually made and, if I am not mistaken, the cost of such a railway was estimated at Rs. 65 lakhs. As to running costs I suggest that there is a very good water supply that could be harnessed for generating electricity and this might possibly reduce the running costs. In any case, Sir, I contend that a good case can be made out for a full inquiry as to whether such a railway would be a paying proposition, and I ask the Railway Board not to be turned away from the views that have been put forward by the local Administration. They should regard the subject as to whether they are benefiting that part of India. They must also look at it from the point of view of their other railways. These districts will feed the Eastern Bengal Railway and bring in more money to that branch. For these reasons, Sir, I move my amendment.

**Sir Clement Hindley** (Chief Commissioner for Railways): Having come back from lunch, my Honourable friend, Sir Darcy Lindsay, seems to be impressed by the value of potatoes. He has opened up before our eyes a wonderful land full of potatoes and coal and he asks us to put up a railway into that promised land. I had the fortune a few weeks ago to visit Shillong and I went up this motor road from Gauhati and saw what the actual conditions were for myself, and I also took the opportunity of talking with some local people and finding out what the real feeling there was about this railway. The fact that impressed me more than anything else when I went up there was that this was the finest hill road that I had ever come across in India. It is one of the best constructed roads and best maintained roads for going up into hill tracts that I have ever come across anywhere. It is also served by a very good motor service both for passengers and for goods, and, as far as I could see at the time, there was ample

accommodation for the people travelling and for the goods moving. I was told about the potatoes and I realise that at certain times there is an excess production of potatoes in Shillong. But whether that would be the case, whether potatoes would be produced to a greater extent with the assistance of a railway than they are with the assistance of a motor road is a matter, I think, very much open to opinion. There is a fairly large tract of country to be cultivated, but there is not a very large population, and I am told that the people who cultivate potatoes are in fact doing very well and are living very comfortably on the small amount of land which is available for cultivation. I have just put these facts forward because I thought that what Sir Darcy Lindsay said may have magnified the matter somewhat in the minds of Honourable Members. As regards coal, there is a certain amount of very inferior coal brought in by carts along the tops of the hills in Shillong. Whether there is beneath a deep deposit or not I am not in a position to say, but it was pointed out to me—I was taken up to a point above Shillong called "The Peak" where I could see the whole country round very well and I was pointed out the whereabouts of coal. The coal was in the neighbourhood of Cherrapunji and it occurred to me that it would be a practically impossible matter to run a railway down the cliff to the bottom of the great gulf that lies there below Cherrapunji in order to get at the coal. If it can be got at, it can be got at only from the other side.

**Sir Darcy Lindsay:** I was not talking about Cherrapunji coal. I understand that there is a very large deposit not very far from Burrapani.

**Sir Clement Hindley:** Perhaps I did not get all the information I might have done, but that is the impression I have got.

The position that I am in is this. We have a really good motor road in existence and the motor traffic is well looked after, well maintained and we are asked to replace that at once by a railway. We have got to consider what other railways we have to build. Assam is a province which has so far been very ill served by railways and there are many important railways in Assam to be constructed—railways which will serve important industries there and which are, I consider, of prior importance to this particular railway.

The line from Gauhati to Shillong was surveyed originally in 1912 and was taken up again a few years later, and an alternative line was surveyed from Pandu to Shillong—that was in 1918,—and then in 1919 a detailed survey of that line was made. From those surveys estimates were prepared and it was found that the line, which would be 66 miles long, would cost about Rs. 67 lakhs to build. Some member asks why it should cost a lakh a mile. It is not a very easy country in which to build a railway. It is not a flat country and it would be a matter of considerable engineering difficulty to build a railway up there and the estimate of a lakh a mile would be an under-estimate. We estimate a return on that railway of about 3 per cent., that is to say, we are asked to put down Rs. 67 lakhs to earn 3 per cent., . . . . .

**Sir Darcy Lindsay:** The traffic will very much increase.

**Sir Clement Hindley:** I have no doubt it will, but at the moment I have got other lines where I can earn 5 to 6 per cent. straightaway and this one will have to await its turn. But what is the position of the Local Government? I did not quite understand Sir Darcy Lindsay's argument. He said that they make revenue out of it. I take his figures because I

[Sir Clement Hindley.]

have not got any others and, with due apologies to the Assam Government if they are not correct. He says that the poor potato people and others (including Sir Darcy Lindsay, I suppose, when he goes there to put up in a hotel) pay altogether one lakh and 96 thousand to the Assam Government, out of which on his own showing the Government have to pay 1 lakh and 66 thousand for maintenance of the road. Well, there is a bare surplus of 30,000, but I very much doubt the accuracy as a permanency of those figures of one lakh and 66 thousand for the cost of maintenance. So the Assam Government is in the very enviable position of having a good trunk road which is by proper commercial management not costing them anything. Now, does Sir Darcy Lindsay expect the Railway Board to build this railway for 67 lakhs and take less than one lakh and 96 thousand out of these potato people and Sir Darcy Lindsay?

**Sir Darcy Lindsay:** Yes.

**Sir Clement Hindley:** I beg to differ. Supposing we get even a net profit of two lakhs, where is the interest coming on our capital of 67 lakhs? That is the proposition. I do not want to stress it too much because we have many cases of this kind where the construction of a railway appears to be advisable, but on an examination we find that we cannot at present make a commercial proposition out of it. What we actually do about this is as follows. As the House probably knows, we have an arrangement by which we consult Local Governments annually about the railways required in their provinces and so far the Assam Government have placed this project in a low place on their programme. I had no indication from them that they are in any way antagonistic or opposed to the construction of this line but they have placed it in a low position on their programme. This programme comes up for re-examination every year. In May the Local Governments are required to inform the Agents of the railways what projects they consider of urgent importance, and I have already issued orders that when this case comes up under that procedure, it is to be carefully examined in the Railway Board's office and further investigation made of the possibilities of the line. That we shall do as a matter of course, but, in view of what the Honourable Member has said to-day, I will look into the matter further and see if there are any factors which we may have overlooked in examining it. It will come up again definitely for examination next August when we get those reports of programmes from the Local Governments and Agents. In view of this, I suggest to the Honourable Member that he might perhaps withdraw his amendment.

**Sir Darcy Lindsay:** In view of what my Honourable friend Sir Clement Hindley has said, I ask for leave to withdraw my motion.

The motion was, by leave of the Assembly, withdrawn.

*Powers and Formation of Advisory Committees.*

**Mr. N. C. Kelkar** (Bombay Central Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural): I have put down this motion\* for a cut of Rs. 100 . . .

**Mr. President:** They have not got Rs. 100.

**Mr. N. C. Kelkar:** I will therefore make it a one rupee cut. The points to which I want to draw the attention of the House are . . .

\* "That the Demand under the head 'Railway Board' be reduced by Rs. 100. (Appointment of an Indian on the Railway Board: Decentralisation of Railway Board's work: Powers and formation of Advisory Committees.)"

**Mr. President:** Will the Honourable Member tell the Chair exactly what points he is going to take up? The first two points in his motion have already been covered.

**Mr. N. C. Kelkar:** The appointment of an Indian to the Railway Board has been disposed of and also the question of the efficiency of the Railway Board—whether in favour of the Railway Board or not does not matter. The only question I want to take up now is the decentralisation of the Railway Board's work and the powers and formation of Advisory Committees. The two points practically go together. What I want is that the Railway Board should be prepared to go in for a large scheme of decentralisation of their work and powers. The point I want to raise is however partly a point of information and partly a point of complaint. Perhaps I may not be in possession of the information about the real facts that prevail at present regarding the decentralisation of control and powers of the Railway Board, and I should thank the Honourable Member in charge of the Railway Department if in his reply he will enlighten me on the point, as to whether steps have been taken for decentralizing the powers and functions of supervision and control of the Railway Board in any particular manner. The point I wish now to raise is not so much about the control as about co-operation in supervision, co-operation between officials and non-officials, in seeing whether the work of the Railway Department is being properly done or not. In my opinion it does require co-operation between officials and non-officials to see that the work is done properly and orders carried out properly at all ends of the Department. Taking up the point of the Advisory Committees I want first of all to know whether by this time Advisory Committees have been appointed for all the railways, including the Company Railways as well, and, secondly, whether those Committees have been approximately conforming to the model supplied to us by the Acworth Committee in its Report. I take it that the Railway Board are perfectly cognisant of the recommendations of the Acworth Committee, but there may be some Members of this House who may not be aware of the model which has been suggested in its Report by that Committee. Therefore I will just read a paragraph or two out of that Report for the information of those Members who may not be aware of it. At page 47 of the Report the Committee says:

"In no country was the control of railways more autocratic than in Prussia; yet it would probably be true to say that in the generation before the war the railways of Prussia were subject to less hostile criticism from their public than those of any other country. In Prussia there was a carefully planned system of railway councils, a single national council and a number of local councils. They consisted of the representatives of the Departments of State specially concerned with railway matters, associated with a majority of members nominated by the Chambers of Commerce, the Chambers of Agriculture, the great municipalities and similar bodies representing the public. They had no powers but they had great power. They had a Secretary and met at stated intervals with an agenda on which any member could put down any subject for discussion he thought fit, and on which the railway officials put down any subject, such as changes and improvement in train services or alterations in rates for and classification of merchandise, which concerned the public interest and convenience. The railway administration, so it has been reported, very rarely acted except in accordance with the views expressed by the councils in all matters within their competence."

And in a footnote, to which reference has been made in the body of the Report, they gave the model of the constitution of a Polish railway council. It consists of:

"(1) Representatives of the Ministries of Trade and Industry, Agriculture, Posts and Telegraphs, Finance, Public Works, Food, and Military Affairs, who will be appointed by the corresponding Ministers, one for each Ministry."



[Mr. N. C. Kelkar ]

- (2) One representative of each of the ten largest towns in Poland to be appointed by the corresponding City Councils.
- (3) Sixteen representatives of industrial and commercial associations.
- (4) One representative of each railway directorate.
- (5) Six experts to be appointed by the Minister of Railways.
- (6) Representatives of other Ministries, at the invitation of the Minister of Railways, it matters concerning such Ministries are under discussion."

That, I suppose, gives a very good idea of what an Advisory Council on a large, representative basis should be for exercising the kind of supervision which I have got in view, and I would like to know from the Honourable Member in charge of the Railway Department whether the idea was ever considered as to whether Advisory Committees in India should be established on that larger, representative basis, and if not, what were the difficulties in the way of such formation of Advisory Committees? I know there are some Advisory Committees working; perhaps Mr. Jayakar may be able to say whether the work of the Advisory Committees is good or bad. I personally have no experience of being on any Advisory Committee, but I believe that a great deal of complaint is being made about the want of close touch between non-official public opinion in the mufassil and the officialdom in the Railway Department. I lay special stress, Sir, on this point, for in my opinion it is not enough that you should have at the headquarters a Central Railway Council which helps the Department in exercising control and supervision; what is necessary I think is the formation of Advisory Committees not only in metropolitan towns or the headquarters of railways, but even in the interior and in the mufassil so that, as I have said, the railway officials in the mufassil should be brought into close contact with non-official public opinion on the spot. There is one sentence which struck me most in the paragraph I have just read; it is that the Advisory Committees have got no powers but they have got very great power. It is pithily put in my opinion: in order to have power, you must not necessarily have administrative or conclusive powers of control. But such Advisory Committees not being appointed in the mufassil, what practically happens is this, that if you want to make a complaint about the maladministration of the Railway Department or the misconduct or misbehaviour of any particular railway official in the mufassil or the non-fulfilment of any conditions imposed by the Department upon the conduct of officials, you have got to seek out which is the Advisory Committee and to lay the complaint before that Committee. In most cases, as my friend says, the Advisory Committee has got no powers given to them in that respect. But from the paragraph in the Report that I have read it will be found that these Committees are given such powers of supervision and co-operation, given such facilities of co-operation that they become effective, and as has been stated in this Report with regard to the railway administration in Prussia, "it very rarely acts, it is reported, except in accordance with the views expressed by the Council in all matters within their competence". The present question is not a question of exercising any control at all. We do not want any definite powers, but we want power for non-official public opinion, power such as is ordinarily created by establishing points of contact between the exponents of non-official public opinion and the people who administer the Railway Department in the mufassil. That is the principal point I wish to raise in this case, and I shall feel obliged if the Honourable Member in charge will give me information.

**Mr. K. C. Neogy** (Dacca Division: Non-Muhammadan Kural): Sir, I gave notice of a separate motion of reduction for the purpose of raising the question with regard to the functions and powers of the Central Advisory Council, but I would take the opportunity of the discussion which has been raised by my Honourable friend Mr. Kelkar and have my say on that subject. Sir, my Honourable friend has already read out an extract from the Acworth Committee's Report with regard to the functions of the Prussian Advisory Councils. When the Acworth Committee came out to India, they found that they had to deal with not merely questions of administrative imperfections, but also very grave public grievances against Railways; and the principal recommendations that they made with a view to bringing the railway administration more into touch with the travelling public were with regard to the formation of the Central as also Local Advisory Councils. So far as the Central Advisory Council is concerned the constitution which they laid down in their report has been materially departed from by the Government, but I do not complain on that score, because I acknowledge that there are certain advantages to be gained from the constitution which has been accepted by Government in accordance with the recommendations of this House. But what are its powers? The Acworth Committee distinctly contemplated a Central Railway Advisory Council on the model of the Prussian Advisory Councils, and from the extract which my Honourable friend Mr. Kelkar has read out, Honourable Members must have found that one of the most important powers which Councils in Prussia enjoys is that every member of every Council is in a position to set down any subject for discussion. But what is the position of the Advisory Council here? The Central Advisory Council, as constituted by the Government of India, is an advisory body to advise the Honourable Member in charge of Railways on such subjects on which he may choose to invite their opinion. I was a member of the Central Railway Advisory Council for some time, and on one occasion I wrote a letter to the Secretary suggesting that certain important subjects ought to be brought up for discussion at the next meeting of the Central Railway Advisory Council. I was immediately reminded in reply that the functions of the Advisory Council were wholly advisory, and therefore no member had the authority to suggest any subject for discussion. I wrote back in all humility inquiring whether it was not permissible for a member to suggest to the Honourable the President that he might seek the advice of the members of the Central Advisory Council on the subject which I had the temerity to mention in my letter, and the reply which I got was couched in that same peremptory tone, and it stated that I had absolutely no right even to make that humble suggestion. The result was that the subjects which I thought might very well be brought up for discussion at the Central Advisory Council were never put down on the agenda. Sir, this I maintain is a very serious departure from what was contemplated by the Acworth Committee when they made the recommendation for the formation of the Central Railway Advisory Council. I take another test as to the importance that the Acworth Committee intended to attach to this Council. We find that in paragraph 102 of their report, the Acworth Committee mention three main sections in which the work of the Honourable Member in charge should be divided. In the first place, the Acworth Committee stated he would be the head of the transport organisation. Secondly, he would be the Chairman of the Central Railway Advisory Council. Thirdly, he would control the Posts and Telegraphs through the existing organisation of that Department. So, I take it, Sir, when they made that recommendation

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they thought that each one of the three functions would be considered to be quite important as any other. Then, again, Sir, I happened to come across a passage in a comparatively recent debate in the House of Commons, in which the Under Secretary of State, while taking great credit for the very great things that were happening in India in the Railway Department, mentioned the fact that "the Central Railway Advisory Council had been very greatly strengthened." Strengthened undoubtedly it has been, perhaps in point of numbers, but this strength is not going to be of any use to us, unless the Honourable Member really gives effect to the intention of the Acworth Committee. It is interesting to find that the Honourable Sir Clement Hindley in his statement before the Acworth Committee, while he was Agent of the East Indian Railway, had something to say with regard to the formation of a Central Advisory Council, and what do we find? His conception of such a Council at that time was much more in line with the popular demand than at present. On that occasion, Sir Clement Hindley went the length of recommending that the functions of the Railway Board as advisers to the Government on general railway policy should be entrusted to an advisory body representing various interests which should assemble at Government headquarters periodically. I do not forget that his conception of the reconstructed Railway Department varied considerably from what we have got at present at the headquarters of the Railways. But that leaves my point absolutely untouched, because when he was advocating Company-management of Railways he thought that the Railway Board's functions could very well be delegated to an honorary set of workers like an Advisory Council, but now that he finds himself at the head of the railway administration in India, he perhaps does not consider it necessary to have any advice from any outside agency. I do not know whether that is his view.

So far with regard to the Central Advisory Council. Coming to the Local Advisory Councils, I find that the constitutions of the various Councils attached to the various railways differ very materially from the constitution as contemplated by the Acworth Committee. The Acworth Committee contemplated a Council, half of the non-official section of which would be representative of the rural interests and the travelling public. I had occasion to go through the names of the members of the Advisory Council attached to each railway in India, and I found that there is a preponderance of representation of commercial interests, European commercial interests, if you please, and very little of the rural interests and the travelling public beyond one or two representatives elected by the local Legislative Council. I would be the last man to complain if the recommendation of the Acworth Committee had not been given effect to to the letter, provided we had got the proportion of representation which they contemplated to give to the rural interests and to the travelling public. Sir, as my Honourable friend, Mr. Kelkar, has said, the importance of the Local Advisory Councils is not less than the importance of the Central Advisory Council. There is one particular reason why the Local Advisory Councils can be called to be more important even than the Central Advisory Council. Seldom does a day pass in this House when questions regarding administrative details of railways do not come up, and we are not told that such questions of minor detail had better be discussed in the Local Advisory Council, that is to say, the Legislative Assembly ought to delegate certain of its functions in favour of the Local Advisory Councils. I think that is what it comes to; and

if we are really expected to impose a self-denying ordinance on ourselves and delegate certain of these functions to the Local Advisory Councils we are entitled to know what the constitution of these Councils is and who determines the constitution of these Councils. The Honourable Member in charge will bear me out when I say that the constitution of each of these Local Advisory Councils is a matter within the discretion of the local Agent. The Honourable Member has little to do with regard to laying down the lines on which these Local Advisory Councils shall be constituted. I hope I am correct in making that statement. I find my Honourable friend the Member for Railways shaking his head. I should like him to justify the great disparity which we find in the matter of the representation of the various interests on these Advisory Councils. If he has got any hand in the determination of the constitution of these Local Advisory Councils, I would expect him to justify the differences he finds in the constitutions of these Advisory Councils. I would particularly commend to his attention the constitution of the latest among these Local Advisory Councils, I mean the Council attached to the Bengal Nagpur Railway which refused even to constitute a council for all these years. It is at last that they have agreed to have a council, and will the Honourable Member in charge tell me if he had any hand—I quite know he had none—in determining the constitution of the Bengal Nagpur Railway Council? Then again we find on a reference to the Railway Administration Report that while the Central Advisory Council was summoned on four occasions in 1924-25, it was summoned twice in 1925-26. I do not know how many times it met in 1926-27. These Local Advisory Councils, however, meet a little more frequently, but the number of meetings is not the same on the different railways, and here I come back to my first point. It is because the members of these Councils have not the power of initiating discussion on any particular point, however important it may appear to be in their judgment, it is because of this that we find that some of the Councils have met very seldom and some of them more often. So, I do hope that the Honourable Member in charge will give his earnest attention to the very important questions which have been raised in this debate.

**Mr. N. M. Joshi:** Sir, I do not wish to make a long speech as I have already spoken on this subject to some extent. I wish to make one or two suggestions as regards the constitution of the Central as well as the Local Advisory Councils. The first thing I would like to suggest is, that all the interests which are concerned with the railways should be properly represented. At present the commercial bodies are represented, in my judgment, adequately, but unfortunately the third class passengers are not sufficiently represented. The only representatives who may be expected to speak for them in the Advisory Councils are the representatives of the local Legislature. Now, Sir, you know the constitution of a Legislature. The Legislature itself represents the big landlords and the commercial magnates and there are only a few representatives of the ordinary men. Now if that local Legislature elects representatives of the passengers, the commercial men again will get in, the big landlords will again get in, and there may be one man on behalf of the ordinary passengers. I therefore think that the constitution is faulty. What I would suggest to Government is, that the whole of the Local Advisory Council should be elected by the local Legislature, so that the Advisory Council will be a sort of smaller edition of the local Legislature and so that there will be some chance for the representatives of ordinary people getting into the Local Advisory Council as well as sometimes on the Central Advisory Council. If that

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is not done then your Advisory Councils will be councils of representatives of rich people and ordinary people will not have a sufficient voice in them. This is my suggestion as regards the constitution of these Advisory Councils. Then, Sir, as regards the constitution there is one more point and it is this, that the employees of the railways should be represented on these Advisory Councils. It is a good principle that the employees of any industrial concern should have some voice in the management of that industrial concern. The employees of the railways, some of them at least, are educated people and they will be able to advise the management of the railways on some points much better than the representatives who are on the Legislatures. Unfortunately the Railway Board considers that the employees are the only people who should have absolutely no voice on these committees, that their questions should not even be considered—that the employees are to be untouchables and their questions to be untouchable. As far as these Advisory Councils are concerned, I hope the Railway Board will be willing to receive some suggestions, some advice, from the subordinate employees of the railways.

Then, Sir, as regards the functions of the Central Advisory Council, there is hardly anything done. I heard that only two meetings were called during last year. What I would suggest, Sir, is that the functions of these bodies should be laid down in accordance with the functions of these Legislatures. In this Legislature there is no doubt Government have got the predominant voice; the Governor General has got the veto, so after all this Legislature is an advisory body and so your Central Advisory Council and this Legislature are on the same level (Ironical cheers). Now if you really want a Central Advisory Council, give them at least the same powers which this Legislature has got. Let a member of the Central Advisory Council have power to move a Resolution. Let the Governor General—I do not know who is the Governor General in this matter—let the Governor General disallow the Resolution on the ground of peace and order or good government or whatever the excuse may be; but let there be the power given to members of the Central Advisory Council to move Resolutions and to ask questions. One other thing I would suggest. In the case of the Central Government there is a Standing Finance Committee for Railways which looks into the Budget. I would suggest that the budget of every line should be placed before the local Advisory Committee. What is the difficulty of putting the budget of a local line before the Advisory Committee so that the Committee will know what provisions have been made for projects and how the budget should be altered, if necessary? Now, Sir, there will be a great advantage if we alter the functions and the constitution of these Advisory Councils. After all, the whole of our railway system is at present being managed by the Agents, and it is the policy of the Government of India to make them as independent as the Government of India would like them to be, and they have given them freedom and it is said that they have made them responsible. But as a matter of fact what has happened is, as I stated only a few hours ago, that you have made these Agents the Nabobs of the old East India Company. The Government of India does not keep any control over them and there is no other method by which their actions can be controlled. Now, Sir, if the Government of India want to abdicate their functions let them do so. I have no objection to their abdicating their functions. But we are not willing to abdicate our functions. We are anxious to have control over the Agents,

and therefore I say that the functions of the Local Advisory Councils should be extended, their powers should be extended and their constitution should be widened. It is only then that the Agents will be responsible to those people to whom the railway really belong. I hope, Sir, this motion will be carried.

**Mr. M. R. Jayakar** (Bombay City: Non-Muhammadan Urban): Sir, as reference has been made to me in the course of the speech made by my Honourable friend, Mr. Kelkar, I may be permitted to state in a very few words my experience as a member of the Local Advisory Committee in Bombay. Sir, I had the honour of being on that Committee for two years as a representative of the Bombay Legislative Council.

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes** (Member for Commerce and Railways): Which railway?

**Mr. M. R. Jayakar**: The Great Indian Peninsula Railway; and in the course of the short time I spent as a member of that Committee, I found that a great deal depended upon the temperament of the man who presided. Fortunately for us, the President in my time happened to be Sir Robert Maclean, the Agent of the Great Indian Peninsula Railway, who later on left this country, thereby swelling the tradition that the best men in our railways in course of time leave India and get employed outside, giving the benefit of their experience to Non-Indian firms, and creating thereby a tradition which we, from the non-official point of view, regard as extremely unwholesome. But, speaking of the functions of that body, the Local Advisory Committee in Bombay, we found that time after time questions were tabooed on the ground that they related to the "personnel and discipline"—I am quoting two important words of the committee's constitution—of the railway staff which matters were taken out of the purview of that Committee. We found that notwithstanding the fact that the Acworth Committee's Report requires that all questions of 'public interest and convenience' should be considered by the Advisory Committees, many questions affecting public interest and convenience were excluded, because they in a way affected internal discipline. Very often questions came up relating to the behaviour of the railway staff; for instance, their insubordination, or inattention to the comfort and convenience of passengers in which a guard or a railway official was concerned; but we were powerless to discuss such questions or bring them on the agenda of our meetings on the ground that they related in a sense to the discipline of railway officials. I submit, Sir, that this was stretching the letter of the law too far and that a little relaxation of the rule is necessary, so as to give power to these Advisory Committees to go fully into such questions where they affect public comfort and convenience. where for instance railway officials come into conflict with public interest and convenience. Very often cases came up where a guard refused to listen to the request of a passenger to have a meal ordered at the next station. This House is aware that it is the common experience of Indian passengers on our railway that very often their wants are not attended to. I have personally been subjected to many indignities on these railways; very often I have had to tell the guard to wake me up at about five o'clock in the morning and the guard has refused to take any notice of it. These are exactly questions which affect "public interest and convenience." However, when such questions came up before the Advisory Committee, we were often told that they related to the "discipline" of the railway officials, and as such the committee was powerless

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to go into them. I want, therefore, the Honourable the Commerce Member to consider the advisability of relaxing these rules so as to give these Advisory Committees power to enter into such questions where they conflict with public interest and convenience, although in another sense they may be regarded as questions relating to discipline of the staff.

We also felt, Sir, that the Indian interests on these Advisory Committees were not adequately represented. As an instance, I may say that there is a body, Sir, in Bombay presided over, not by a political agitator like some of us, but by a merchant prince of Bombay, Mr. Lalji Narainjee. It goes by the name of "Passengers and Traffic Relief Association". It has been in existence for several years. It has ramifications all round. It has a number of office bearers, whose duty is to go on the railway platform, watch cases of overcrowding, insubordination, often times of insolence and arrogance, and make a list of these cases or prepare a report for the edification of the public. Will you be surprised, Sir, that this Association has been knocking in vain at the door of the Great Indian Peninsula Railway Advisory Committee for admission for several years? It is extraordinary that while the Advisory Committee of the sister Railway, I mean the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway, of which my Honourable friend Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas happens to be a member, admits one member as a representative of the Passenger Traffic Relief Association, . . .

**Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas:** No, not a member representing that Association.

**Mr. M. R. Jayakar:** I thought there was one such member admitted, but if he is not, then the grievance of which I complain is all the more serious. The Passenger Traffic Relief Association has been urging that its representative should be allowed to be on this Advisory Committee, and although the Acworth Committee's Report says quite clearly that the one-half of the advisory committees should be the representatives of rural interests and of the Indian travelling public, no representative of this Association has so far been allowed to be on the local Advisory Committee. Fortunately, for the Indian public in Bombay there happens to be this body, constituted for the express purpose of representing the grievances of the Indian travelling public, and yet, to my surprise, the Great Indian Peninsula Railway Advisory Committee has not so far allowed a representative of this body to be on their Committee. I submit, Sir, that some way ought to be found to redress this grievance as soon as possible.

Another particular, Sir, on which a departure has been made is that, although the Acworth Committee says that the representative of the Bombay Legislative Council need not be necessarily a member of that body, and although, Sir, the original circular of the Government of India which constitutes these Advisory Committees does not make it necessary that the representative of the Bombay Legislative Council should be a member of that body, for some curious reason, the Great Indian Peninsula Railway authorities in Bombay have made it necessary that that representative must always be a member of the Bombay Legislative Council. The result is, Sir, that a person who ceases to be a member of that body and is yet a very useful member of the public, having gathered experience and knowledge in the course of three years,—the elections come on every three years—Sir, has automatically to cease to be useful to the public. I submit, Sir, that the Acworth Committee showed very great wisdom in



not making it compulsory that the representative of the Provincial Legislative Council on these Committees should also be a Member of that Council. But for some curious reason which I have not been able to understand, this has been departed from in Bombay, with the result that when a useful and energetic person ceases to be a member of the Bombay Legislative Council, although he may be very anxious to continue as a member of that Committee, he has to give up his useful work as a member of the Advisory Committee. Reliance is placed on some resolution of the Great Indian Peninsula Railway in Bombay that such representative must be a Member of the local Legislative Council; and that if he is not, he ceases to be a member of the Advisory Committee. I submit, Sir, that this is contrary to the terms of the Acworth Committee's Report which ought to be adhered to . . . .

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** Will Mr. Jayakar tell me what he means by the resolution of the Great Indian Peninsula Railway?

**Mr. M. R. Jayakar:** There are two circulars, Sir; the Government of India Resolution did not make this necessary, and I think I am right.

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** Quite right.

**Mr. M. R. Jayakar:** But there is some local resolution . . .

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** Of the Local Government?

**Mr. M. R. Jayakar:** I think of the local railway authorities. I think the Agent or some such individual issued, a circular, and we were governed by its terms which made it necessary that the moment that a representative, however useful he may have been to the public, ceases to be a Member of the provincial Legislative Council, he must necessarily cease to be a member of the local Advisory Committee. These are a few of the suggestions which I wished to make, and I am sure if these are borne in mind and carried out these local Advisory Committees will be more useful than they have been so far.

**Mr. H. G. Cocks (Bombay: European):** Sir, this subject of the indirect control or the advisory control of the public over railways is a very complex and a very difficult one. You have the railway administration presided over by the Agent and you have the local Advisory Committee, which is a Committee of comparatively recent growth, dealing with certain minor matters of administration, passengers' convenience and so on. I have not served on any one of those local Committees and I am therefore really somewhat ignorant of their duties and the powers exercised by them. I do not therefore want to touch upon that aspect of the matter. Apart from the local advisory control, you have the control by the State. We are, fortunately or otherwise, concerned with a system of State-managed railways. Therefore, the principal control is by the State at Delhi and Simla, and it is about the Committees that advise the State that I want to say a word or two. It is perfectly reasonable that the State should be advised by an expert body known as the Railway Board, the Board of which we have heard a good deal in the last day or two. Then, as regards the advisory assistance that the State receives from Members of this House, either by means of the Finance Committee on Railways or by the Advisory Council, that is where it seems to me considerable room for improvement arises. I think the chief trouble is that there is not any very real and direct and constant touch between the Members of this House sitting on these Committees and the State as represented by the Honourable the Railway Member and the Railway Board. I know the



[Mr. H. G. Cooke.]

question of distance is a very difficult one, but it seems to me that something ought to be done in the way of more constant meetings of these Committees. After all, although it is not a question of a Board of Directors directing one particular railway, it is necessary in my opinion that these Committees should be in constant touch with the running of the railways as a whole and that very many more subjects should be put before these Committees at their regular meetings. I understand that last year there were merely two meetings of the Central Advisory Council. I do not know whether it would be possible for that Council to meet at least once a month and really to be kept more in touch with the administration of railways, to consider the monthly returns and the programme of construction and any question of labour grievances and so on, thereby keeping this House very much more in touch, and making it a much more real advisory body than it is at present. I think this is a matter which will have to come up in the future and possibly it is just as well that it should be considered now. This House will have to have—I do not say more control—but it will have to be kept more in touch with the railway management of the country than it is at present.

**Sir Hari Singh Gour** (Central Provinces Hindi Divisions: Non-Muhammadan): Sir, we understand that the accounts of the railways have been commercialised and I should like to draw an analogy from the management of commercial corporations. We know that in all commercial corporations we have periodically a meeting of the shareholders. We have also such a thing as managing agents. Then we have the Chairman of the Board of Directors and the Board of Directors themselves. Now, if in all these corporations throughout the world which are run on a purely business basis the managing agents, the shareholders, the Board of Directors and the Chairman of the Board of Directors have definite duties to perform and responsibilities to discharge, I should expect that the system of railway management in this country would be assimilated to the management of these large corporations. Now, it is perfectly clear that, so far as the shareholders are concerned, a general meeting of the shareholders is impossible. But the representatives of the shareholders are in this House and for that purpose we may take it that the Legislative Assembly represents the body of shareholders who are the proprietors of the railways in India. Now, then we have the managing agents and I should expect that the managing agents who are the executive head of the railways in India might be regarded as the Railway Board who manage the railways in India on behalf of the tax-payer and the shareholders. And then we have the Board of Directors. Now, the difficulty is that in the railway management the managing agents and the Board of Directors are the same body of men. The function of the Board of Directors in a commercial concern is to lay down the policy and to check and control the work of the managing agents. But in the railway administration we have no such thing as approximates to the Board of Directors though we have such an official as the Chairman of the Board of Directors, and I should expect that the Honourable Sir Charles Innes is now fulfilling that function. I should expect therefore that in a successful commercial concern like the railways in India the Railway Central Advisory Council would be given some functions which would be akin to the functions discharged by the Board of Directors, and as the Board of Directors lay

down the policy I should expect that the Central Railway Advisory Council should also be given some power to lay down the policy which the Railway Board as the managing agents of the concern should ordinarily be bound to carry out. I submit that so far as the Central Railway Advisory Council is concerned, as has been pointed out by several Honourable Members, the meetings are held during the Session of the Legislative Assembly once or twice a year, and speaking for myself—and I have been a member of the Advisory Council ever since it was started—the only business that it does is to give its opinion on matters which are placed for its advice. The Railway Board and the Honourable Member in charge of Railways are not bound by the advice tendered by the Central Railway Advisory Council, nor is it necessary that in all cases that advice should be accepted. But what I suggest is that in order to make the Central Railway Advisory Council a real living organism, capable of guiding and controlling the policy of the railway administration in this country, a definite rule should be laid down giving it the power and charging it with the responsibility of initiating policy and guiding and controlling the policy of the railway administration in this country. At present the Central Railway Advisory Council is subject to no rules, except this rule that whatever agenda is prepared by the Railway Department is sent round to the members, and the members meet for about an hour—it has seldom been more than an hour—and one by one the items of business placed before them are subjected to their vote and after that their opinions are recorded and the members disperse. That, I submit, is not a sound policy and was certainly not the policy laid down in paragraph 139 of the Railway Report. I find from this Report on the Railway Administration of India that in all countries the Advisory Councils, or what approximate to Advisory Councils, exercise vast powers. It is pointed out that “in no country was the control of railways more autocratic than in Prussia, yet it would probably be true to say that in the generation before the war . . .”—that has been read out. I repeat once more that the railways are subjected in all countries to a real control by some Council and I submit that in all countries commercial corporations receive their policy from a central body and here in the railway bureaucracy its policy is laid down by the managing agents or by the Honourable Member and no responsibility attaches to the Central Advisory Council and that is the reason why the Central Advisory Councils have not really functioned. The Member for Commerce nods his head disapprovingly. Well, Sir, that may be so, but I speak from experience and I think my Honourable colleagues who have sat in the Central Railway Advisory Councils will bear me out that so far as minor matters are concerned their advice is taken and so far as the question of policy is concerned they are sometimes consulted; but on the broad question of policy as to the administration and what is more the power of initiating policy and asking the Government to do certain things, the Railway Advisory Councils have no power. I would therefore suggest to the Honourable Member that definite rules should be laid down giving them larger powers, calling the meetings of the Central Advisory Councils oftener than has been the case in the past, and the powers and functions of the Central Advisory Council must approximate as far as possible to the Board of Directors who must act subject to the general supervision and control of the shareholders’ representatives represented by the elected Members of the Legislative Assembly. These are the suggestions, Sir, I beg to offer to the Honourable Member for Commerce and I hope he

[Sir Hari Singh Gour.]

will now initiate a policy giving the Central Advisory Council some real work to do and some real power and responsibility to discharge.

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** When I hear my Honourable friend Dr. Gour make a speech like that I always wonder why or where he derived his reputation as a lawyer. I always understood myself that a lawyer had to speak very carefully and very accurately to his brief. Now, Sir, I think that the Honourable Member was trying to impress upon me the necessity of giving the Central Advisory Council the same power as the Central Advisory Council had in Prussia and in Poland.

**Sir Hari Singh Gour:** On a point of order, Sir. I never said that you should give the Central Advisory Council the same power as in Prussia. All I said was . . . .

**Mr. President:** That is not a point of order.

**Sir Hari Singh Gour:** By way of personal explanation, Sir. I never said you should give the Central Advisory Council the same power as it possesses in Prussia. All I said was that you should give it some real power.

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** I see, Sir, that even in his interjections the Honourable Member is inaccurate. At any rate the Honourable Member began to read out same passage from the Acworth Committee's Report which Mr. Kelkar had read before. He read that out in support of his proposal that the Central Advisory Council should be given the powers of a Board of Directors. Now, Sir, he said that they should have executive powers, the powers of initiating and controlling policy. The whole idea of the Acworth Committee—and I think Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas will bear me out in this—in proposing the Central Advisory Council was that the Council should not have any particular power but that it should have great influence upon the railway administration. They definitely suggested that it should be an advisory council and should have no executive powers of any sort or kind. That is the only point I wish to make in regard to Dr. Gour's suggestion that we should give the Central Advisory Council powers of a Board of Directors. I do take exception very strongly to his suggestion that the Central Advisory Council has no responsibility and that it does not perform any particular useful function. I am quite prepared to agree that in forming a Central Advisory Council such as we have formed we did depart from the recommendation of the Acworth Committee. The Acworth Committee had the idea in mind of a Central Advisory Council outside the Legislature composed very largely of leading business men and representatives of other classes and bringing their influence to bear upon the railway policy of the country. Well, for reasons that may have been good or may have been bad, we definitely thought that in the first instance at any rate we should begin with a Central Advisory Council drawn from the ranks of our own Legislature; and I am glad to see that Mr. Neogy has come round to agree in that constitution. But, Sir, I want to challenge what Dr. Gour said. It may be that we have not had very many meetings of the Central Advisory Council but we have put before that Council several very important questions of policy, and we have received the very best advice from them. And I go on further to say that wherever we could we have acted upon their advice. For instance, the whole of our new proposals for training and recruitment were laid before the Central Advisory Council. They were criticised by the Central Advisory Council and we did try to alter the schemes in order to give effect to

their criticisms. I have here a list of the subjects that we have placed before the Central Advisory Council since it first came into existence. State *versus* Company management—that question was discussed with them

**Sir Hari Singh Gour:** Did you carry it out?

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** Well, we have carried it out since. Strategic railways; branch lines; Local Advisory Councils on separation of Budgets; Rates Tribunal; amendment of the Railway Act to make travelling without tickets a cognizable offence; depreciation fund; provision for new construction; report on technical training, separation of railway finance; the North Western Railway contract for sleepers; technical training; stores balances; purchase of stores; Railway School of Transportation at Chandausi; financing of branch lines; locomotive building in India; recruitment and so on. Only two serious criticisms have been made to-day in regard to the Central Advisory Council. One is Mr. Neogy's suggestion that any member of the Central Advisory Council should be allowed to bring up subjects for discussion. The present position is that only those subjects can be brought before the Central Advisory Council which the Member in charge wishes to have their views on, but it is understood that if members want to have questions discussed they can send in those questions to the Chairman of the Central Advisory Council and I will undertake that they will be considered. Mr. Neogy tells me that he sent in certain subjects for discussion and apparently I refused to allow them to be discussed. Well I do not remember what those subjects were, but probably in my opinion they were entirely unsuitable for discussion. But in any case we can make it a rule that members of the Central Advisory Council who want subjects to be put down for discussion by the Central Advisory Council should send in their suggestions to the Chairman, and I will undertake—and I will give the assurance here and now—that those suggestions will be considered. I am quite prepared to make that suggestion. Then Mr. Cocke has suggested that we should meet more often. I am also prepared to take that suggestion into consideration. Indeed I may say that all through this debate I have had suggestion after suggestion not only in regard to the Central Advisory Council but the Local Advisory Councils as well. Our invariable practice after a debate of this kind is to make an examination of all that has been said in the debate, and I will undertake that all the suggestions made in the debate, whether in regard to the Central Advisory Council or in regard to the Local Advisory Councils, will be most carefully considered.

As regards Local Advisory Councils I may say I have derived a great deal of encouragement from this debate. I think I am correct in saying that Honourable Members in this House were at one time rather inclined to scoff at these Local Advisory Councils, and I am very glad to note from to-day's debate that Honourable Members are indeed I think beginning to realize that these Local Advisory Councils are performing a useful function. Certainly, that is the experience of our Agents and I have had the personal testimony of many Agents that they did find these Local Advisory Councils of great service to them. As regards the criticisms which have been made of the composition of Councils—well, Sir, this is one of the cases in which I did take the advice of the Central Advisory Council, and the instructions which were issued to the Agents in regard to the composition of the Local Advisory Councils were the instructions which I decided on in consultation with the Central Advisory

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Council, and I did carry out the Central Advisory Council's recommendations in that case. The trouble of course is that as these Local Advisory Councils get more and more influence, more and more bodies wish to be represented on them, and it is a matter of great difficulty to provide for the representation on these Local Advisory Councils, which to be useful, I think, ought to be comparatively small bodies, of all the bodies who would like and in many cases ought to be represented on it. Mr. Jayakar, who I regret to see is not in his place, complained that he had to resign from the Great Indian Peninsula Local Advisory Council because he had ceased to be a Member of the Local Legislature, and he seemed to put that down to the wickedness of the Agent of the Great Indian Peninsula Railway. What I think happened was that he was one of the three representatives of the Legislative Council of the Government in whose jurisdiction the headquarters of the railway are situated. These Members should be selected to represent the rural interests of the travelling public. We said in our Resolution that those representatives of the Legislative Council need not necessarily be Members of the Council. But I have no doubt—I think I am correct in saying—that the Local Legislative Council took a different view. They wanted to be represented on the Local Advisory Committees, and I believe I am correct in saying that they passed a Resolution to the effect that there should be a sufficient number of their body to represent them on the Local Advisory Committees. At any rate I do feel that these Local Advisory Councils are beginning to make their weight felt. I am quite prepared to admit that they probably vary from railway to railway possibly in accordance with the personnel of the Agents. But I have here a letter which has given me great pleasure. It is a letter written to the Agent of the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway and it is a letter which Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas, who wrote it, has given me permission to read. He says:

"I wish to record my opinion after working on your Committee that the hopes and expectations of the members of the Acworth Committee can be said to have been realized."

Now, Sir, that shows that on one Railway at any rate the Local Advisory Committee is doing very excellent work, and I think that it may also be said that on other railways too they are doing excellent work. I hope Honourable Members will be satisfied with the assurance I have given. I shall not attempt to follow up the various suggestions that I have noted down here, but I will give the assurance that when we get the record of this debate, all the suggestions made will be carefully taken into consideration. In the circumstances, I hope Mr. Kelkar will withdraw his motion.

**Mr. N. C. Kelkar:** Sir, in view of the explanation given, I have no objection to withdrawing my motion.

The motion was, by leave of the Assembly, withdrawn.

*Railway rates of Freight in relation to the Indian manufacturer.*

**Mr. N. C. Kelkar:** Sir, I wish to move the amendment that stands against my name as No. 9. I wish to point out in the first place that there is a misprint in the words in brackets; the words should be "Grievance of railway rates of freight in relation to the Indian manufacturer." Sir, during the last few days in which we have been discussing the Railway Budget and the Demands, this House has been I think doing very benevolent work.

(At this stage Mr. President vacated the Chair, which was occupied by Mr. Deputy President, Maulvi Muhammad Yakub.)

This House has been doing in my opinion very benevolent work, namely, the work of enabling the Railway Department to discover for itself that it has great imperfections. One of the imperfections is,

I think, that it has no national soul or conscience, and I think  
 4 P.M. that that charge has been proved to the very hilt with reference to the question of wagons, stores purchase, the scheme of Indianisation and other things; and in the question which I wish to bring up I think I shall only do my bit to add to that benevolent work of enabling the Railway Board to discover that it has got no national soul or conscience. The question I am taking up is the bad treatment which the Railway Department gives to Indian manufacturers generally, whereas it should be the care and the concern of the Department specially to look after these nascent and infant industries in the country and give them as much help as the Department by itself could give. We all know that Indian industries are dependent for their success upon many things. First of all, there is the question of capital, then there is the question of raw material, then there is the question of local facilities, then protective duties, bounties and protection and preference in railway freights. On the present occasion I am concerned only with the question of railway freights. The other questions of course have got their own importance, but the present is not the occasion, I think, for bringing them in. This question of the indifference of the Railway Department to the interests, to the genuine interests of the Indian manufacturers and traders, this grievance is a very long standing one. In this very House—by that I mean the old Supreme Legislative Council—this question was discussed at great length in the year 1915, when Sir Ibrahim Rahimtulla, who represented Bombay at that time, very forcefully discussed this question and brought home to the Government the neglect with which they treated Indian manufacturers. That was in the year 1915, the year after the War. And with his foresight he saw that after the War was over Indian industries were bound to suffer when they would be face to face with the revival of British and European industries after the close of the War, and he gave a distinct warning then that, unless Government were prepared to mobilise all their resources and put together all their patriotic instincts in the matter of giving preference and protection and other kinds of help to Indian industries, Indian industries were bound to go to the wall. That was the warning which he gave and he said that the demonstrations you hold and the amount of lectures you give in this matter of the industrial regeneration of India is of no avail actually. In that particular Resolution, the question which was brought up by way of giving aid to the Indian industries was the question of capital. I am not referring to that subject here. I am quite sure that since that time Indian capital has become less shy and more bold. It is coming out in large quantities. Small manufacturers are now putting forward their capital, either their private capital or capital raised in the manner of joint stock companies. I am also prepared to recognise that Local Governments have been doing their bit to encourage local industries by giving such local facilities as may be necessary, but beyond that they cannot go. It is not in their hands, as I will presently show, to help Indian industries in the matter of protective duties, for which they have got to come to this Assembly, or bounties which is the latest in that direction, or railway freights, because

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the Railway Department is an Imperial business. Government themselves have had experience even after the War, I think, about the failure of carrying on Indian industries to a successful issue, and in this connection I would remind the House of one great industrial failure that happened in Madras when a big factory carried on with Government capital was brought into liquidation and was practically there for sale to anybody who might like to take it. There was the other instance of the glass factory at Jubbulpore. The Central Provinces Government, I think, spent about two lakhs of rupees over that concern, and ultimately it was knocked down for the small sum of ten thousand rupees because no one would take it. Now, when Government with their own large resources cannot make the Indian industries come into existence and cannot set them on their feet, you can very easily imagine the great difficulty which may be experienced in this matter by owners of small factories.

Now the demand in connection with this point that I am bringing before the House is not one of general reduction of rates. The demand is limited and in relation to particular industries located in particular localities who wish to have preferential and easy rates for the transportation of their goods. But the tendency of the Railway Department is generally to favour imports going from ports to the interior, so far as manufactured articles are concerned, and to favour the export of raw materials from the interior to the ports. This policy, of course, has got to be changed. That is our demand and if the limited demand that I am making is gracefully conceded, it will ultimately be found that the Railway Department is not a very great loser. If the demand were for a general reduction of rates, then they may naturally bring forward the question as to what rates traffic will bear and what rates traffic will not bear, or the question what rates it would be legitimate to charge for particular traffic, and what rates not to charge for particular traffic. Again I say I am not bringing forward that large or unlimited question but only the limited question of the Railway Department making investigations and paying attention to the requests made by Indian manufacturers to give them preferential or protective or easy rates. In this matter I am going to give one or two or three instances, and even then, in order that it may not be considered that I am giving a kind of political colour to the question I am bringing forward, I will not act the part of the middleman but like a common carrier I will actually deliver the goods of the complainants as put forward by the complainants.

I will first take the case of the Kirloskar Brothers, who are producers on a small scale of steel and iron things. The three particular articles, however, of which I wish to make mention are ploughs, chaff-cutters and small cane crushers. Now all these three are really agricultural implements as any fair-minded man will see for himself. What happens, however, in the case of the rates given by the railway company to Kirloskar Brothers is this. They only recognise ploughs as railway implements but chaff-cutters and crushers the railway company is not prepared to class favourably, and they are given only second class rates. The ploughs of course are given first class rates. Note however in connection with this that foreign sugarcane crushers of a small type and worked by bullocks, exactly similar to those supplied by Kirloskar Brothers, are classified by the Customs Department as agricultural implements and allowed to come into the country without any payment of customs duty. But Indian cane



crushers of the same type are not regarded by the railways as agricultural implements. The Customs Department takes one view and the Railway takes another view. But let it not be said that the attention of the Railway Department to the iniquity which was thus perpetrated was not specifically drawn to this question. What happened in this particular case was this. The case was taken by the manufacturer to the Agricultural Department, which is supposed naturally to look after the manufacturer who supplies agricultural implements. There at the head of the Bombay Agricultural Department we have got Dr. Harold Mann. He took up the case and he endorsed the petition of Kirloskars and sent it on to Government. In that he wrote as follows:

“The position they (the Kirloskar Brothers) take up and in which I strongly concur is that the classification of the small crushers as Sugarcane mills and component parts is wrong. The sugarcane mills referred to in this classification are those large machines used in industrial undertakings and not the small crushers which a man obtains as part of his ordinary farm equipment just as he gets a plough. These are agricultural implements pure and simple and should be treated as such.”

I will close this point by saying that this recommendation of the head of the Agricultural Department, though it was forwarded with a recommendation of their own by the Bombay Government, the Railway Department disregarded and did not act upon. They stuck to the view that these cane crushers and chaff-cutters were not agricultural implements and second class rates were charged on them whereas only first class rates should have been charged. Foreign agricultural implements at any port in India pay exactly the same freight c.i.f. That is my information. If I am wrong, I may be corrected, but I am told that foreign implements of this kind reach any port at the same rate of freight. That means that they reach different ports where the manufacturer in the interior of course cannot compete with them. They have got that initial advantage and facility. Now I recognise this fact that I must not bring up the question of competition between water rates and railway rates. I recognise the fact that water rates will necessarily always be lower, but what I wish to bring to the notice of this House is the fact that these foreign implements have a kind of protection already given to them, and in order to countervail that protection and balance that advantage, it is the business of the Railway Department to pay special attention to the rates to be given to Indian manufacturers. Then again I wish to draw the attention of the House to one or two allied things in this matter. That of course is not a question of agricultural implements, but the facts which I am going to place before the House will illustrate how Indian manufacturers have got to work at a disadvantage in the matter of foreign competition. This is the information supplied to me by the Kirloskar Brothers. Mild steel bars from Tatanagar to Bombay cost Rs. 35 per ton as railway freight. The same ton of steel bars shipped from Antwerp cost Rs. 27/8/0 to reach Kirloskar Wadi. Now out of this freight Rs. 9/8/0 is water freight about which we cannot complain and the remaining Rs. 18 is freight from Bombay to Kirloskar Wadi which is a distance of 254 miles.

The case also should be mentioned of the match factories, and in that connection I will only give one instance which I have got from the manufacturers of matches at Karhad. They say, they wrote to me—to name only one instance—that the railway freight for matches from Karhad to Bangalore is higher than the freight from Bombay to Bangalore. In this case of course water freight does not enter at all. It is a question of only



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railway freight and this I think illustrates how the Indian industry is very badly treated in point of rates given to them.

Then again Kirloskar Brothers point out the disadvantage they have got to work under and it is this. Referring to their steel articles they say:

"If mild steel bars can be had at Rs. 7 per cwt. nuts and bolts can be had at Rs. 10-8 per cwt. in Bombay. Notwithstanding this exceptional position in the bolts market our condition has been further aggravated by the adverse location of our plant because we are required to pay a railway freight of nearly Re. 1 per hundredweight on the mild steel bars brought into our factories and one more rupee per hundredweight on the manufacture of nuts and bolts which we are required to take back to Bombay again for selling, it being the only large centre of distribution. This alone brings the cost of our raw material approximately to the cost of the above nuts and bolts in Bombay, let alone the additional manufacturing cost and other expenses. This means that since the manufacturing of nuts and bolts was undertaken by us we are put to a loss of Rs. 300 to Rs. 400 per week with the consequence that we are practically required to close this department."

I go on to the case of the glass manufacturers; and in this connection I will read a paragraph or two from the representation which a number of glass manufacturers in India together have presented to the Railway Board. I suppose that is being considered now by the Tariff Board. This is a representation made not by a single glass manufacturer but by many of them who are practically spread over different provinces. They are:

The Ogale Glass Works, Ltd., Ogalewadi, Satara.

The Paisa Fund Glass Works, Talegaon, Poona.

The U. P. Glass Works, Ltd., Bahjoi, Moradabad.

The Ganga Glass Works, Ltd., Balavali, Bijnor.

The Bengal Glass Works, Ltd., Calcutta (Ebram Peer Mahomed & Co.)

The Qnama Glass Works, Gondia, C. P.

And now will come forward the case of the Jubbulpore Glass Works which was recently bought, as I said, for Rs. 10,000 a property worth about 1½ lakhs bought by a Poona manufacturer for about Rs. 10,000. Of course he is in the same predicament as the other glass manufacturers and he also, I suppose, will join in this demand for protection.

Now, what they say in their representation is this:

"At present there is an *ad valorem* import duty of 15 per cent. on soda ash which is used in large quantities in the manufacture of glass and which has to be imported. This duty is a positive handicap to this industry" . . .

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** I rise to a point of order, Sir . . .

**Mr. N. C. Kelkar:** Of course that does not concern your department, but just wait and you will see that it is relevant as showing that they are already suffering from the initial disadvantage: That prepares the ground for the attack on your department:

"The crucibles or pots which have also to be imported to a great extent have to pay an import duty of 15 per cent. Facilities for transporting by rail the finished products are not what they should be. Indian railways have so far pursued a policy in this respect which has certainly not been very encouraging to the growth of indigenous industry, railway rates schedules having been based on high and indiscriminate bases. It is but natural for us to expect the Indian railways to give preferential treatment to the products of Indian industries and to remove certain unreasonable restrictions and obligations imposed on the booking of glassware. The traffic conditions relating to raw materials required

for the finished products turned out by the Indian glass industry should be made more favourable, and since everything has come down to the pre-war level, the railway rates which were substantially increased from 1919 to 1922 should be reduced to that level. But they still continue to be high, though a slight reduction is made in the case of coal alone."

And now they give the reasons:

"Concentrated glass industry will not be a boon to a vast country like India since hollow and fragile wares require a far higher cost to transport them than that required for the transport of their raw materials. The works must therefore remain scattered over the country as at present, serving the needs of local areas. This proves the necessity of making raw materials mobile as far as possible by giving facilities for their easy and cheap transport."

Now, Sir, I will conclude by drawing the attention of the Railway Board to a paragraph in Mr. Acworth's book on Railway Economics. It directly bears upon this question. He is there discussing the question as to what rates traffic will bear. He has tried at length to elucidate that question; but what is pertinent to my point is only this:

"The real meaning of the phrase is that, within the limits already described—the superior limit of what any particular traffic can afford to pay, and the inferior limit of what the railway can afford to carry it for—railway charges for different categories of traffic are fixed, not according to an estimated cost of service, but roughly on the principle of equality of sacrifice by the payer. So regarded, 'what the traffic will bear' is a principle, not of extortion, but of equitable concession to the weaker members of the community. Had Railway managers in the past declared that their principle was 'tempering the wind to the shorn lamb', their descriptive accuracy would have been equally great, while their popularity might have been greater."

I would only conclude with drawing the attention of the Railway Board to be kind-hearted and to temper the wind to the Indian shorn lamb.

**Mr. T. O. Goswami:** Sir, it is certainly not my fault, and, in my humble judgment I do not reckon it my misfortune, that I have not yet attained my second childhood; but it may be an explanation of the undeniable fact that I do not always understand the points that Sir Charles Innes attempts to make or thinks he is making. Sir, in his usual, typical, peroration, winding up the general discussion on the Railway Budget . . .

**Sir Walter Willson** (Associated Chambers of Commerce: Nominated Non-Official): On a point of order, Sir. Are we not discussing Mr. Kelkar's motion?

**Mr. Deputy President:** He has just started, and that is a preliminary. He is perfectly in order.

**Mr. T. O. Goswami:** Sir Charles Innes took me to task for having casually mentioned in my speech the question of railway rates. I do not remember whether he said that the question was "obsolete." If he said or implied that the question was obsolete, I venture to suggest that it was for Sir Charles Innes, and not for me, to study facts and read up. If, however, he meant that the question of railway rates is an anachronism, I would certainly endorse that proposition in the sense that differential railway rates should have been abolished by this time.

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** What do you mean by differential rates?

**Mr. T. O. Goswami:** You know very well that I am referring to rates which are preferential to foreign importers and exporters.

Sir, my Honourable friend, Mr. Kelkar, has given several instances. I do not propose to multiply them; but I wonder if the story of Brunner Mond and Company has been fully told. They are, I understand, among the largest manufacturers of alkaline products in Great Britain, with a

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Capital of something like 40 million pounds; and we know that Ahmedabad is a large consumer of alkaline products, such as soda ash, and that it has been a long-standing grievance that rates on imported materials are favourable as compared with rates at which Ahmedabad can be supplied by local manufacturers. I am bringing this to the notice of the Railway Member. It may be that the grievance is no longer acute, but I cannot find that it has been removed.

Sir, it was only within the last year or two that the coal-freight scandal,—the word 'scandal' has been used and permitted in this House and I propose to employ it,—the coal-freight scandal with regard to Ahmedabad, exposed by Mr. Kasturthai Lalbhai when he was a Member of the Assembly, was removed, as a consequence of that exposure. I will not weary the House with references to the actual Proceedings, which, however, I have got ready here.

Then, Sir, I can give you another instance,—with regard to Sholapur. The Sholapur Mills have made a representation without any effect, that rates are more favourable to Bombay manufacturers and to importers with regard to markets at Calcutta, Cawnpore, Amritsar, etc. On this point, there is an official answer given as late as February the 1st, 1926, in reply to a question in the Assembly by Mr. Kumar Shankar Ray; the answer was, "the rate from Bombay to Calcutta is Rs. 1-8-0 per maund and from Sholapur Rs. 4-8-0 per maund". And there was this additional rider.—"The Bombay rate was reduced in December, 1924, owing to the competition of the sea route, which factor does not operate in the case of Sholapur." Now, I do not wish to multiply instances, though I could easily do so. But I do wish again to say that the question of railway rates is not yet obsolete. I wish, I sincerely wish, the Railway Member were in a position actually to say that this is an obsolete question to-day.

Sir, the Honourable Sir Charles Innes was good enough to impart a little advice to me the other day: May I gratefully offer him in return some advice too? Whenever he is charged with any irregularity in the railway management and he does not find arguments enough to justify himself, he exclaims, "But I am an honest man!" He uses that argument, if it is an argument, so frequently that I am reminded of a conversation which is reported to have taken place between two literary men, in a café in Paris. The English literary man was discussing with the French literary man contemporary literature and contemporary critics of literature; and the English man of letters in the course of argumentation suddenly exclaimed, "But do you not think I am a genius?" The Frenchman, who was at first taken aback, after recovering his composure, said, "*c'est comme disent les marchands de plaisir*,"—which literally translated would be something like this: "That is how the professional purveyors of pleasure advertise themselves!" Sir, I quite admit, and I verily believe, that there are honest men in the administration which as a whole we condemn. I verily believe that there are men who inside the administration fight for correcting the administration. There is a sort of martyrdom in that, because these men are precluded from criticising the administration publicly, while they have to bear criticism which perhaps they personally do not merit. Sir, there are only two courses open for such men; either to endure that martyrdom, which is not without a real reward in their consciousness of

right and the blessing of self-satisfaction, or to turn rebels against an iniquity in which they are no longer able to participate.

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** Sir, my Honourable friend Mr. Goswami tempted me the other day to depart from my usual practice and I in common language "went for him". If he will excuse me I do not propose to do it again. But, Sir, I really am surprised at the Honourable Member. The other day he definitely accused the Railway Department of manipulating the railway rates so as to favour exports and imports at the expense of local production. I think he will bear me out. That is what he said. The reason why I called that a hoary fallacy was because I thought that that statement had been pinned down once and for all by the Report of the Acworth Committee, which was after all composed of my Honourable friends, the Right Honourable Srinivasa Sastri, Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas and many other distinguished Indians as well as Europeans. They have definitely stated as follows:

"In one respect, at least, the Indian railways have refrained from following the accepted railway practice in other countries. It is usual in most countries to concede for export traffic through a seaport rates which are not available to that seaport for local traffic; and *vice versa* in countries which adopt a Free Trade policy, to fix lower rates for the carriage inwards of goods imported through a port than for goods produced locally at the port town. This practice is not, so far as we have been able to ascertain, followed in India. Bombay receives from up-country large quantities of raw cotton, part of which is worked up on the spot and part exported. Similarly, Bombay distributes to up-country points large quantities of cotton cloth, part of it locally manufactured and part imported. The raw cotton rates down to Bombay port and to Bombay town are the same, and so are the manufactured cotton rates upwards. The same principle, we understand, is applied elsewhere, in the case, for instance, of the great Calcutta jute trade."

Sir, there is the Acworth Committee's Report definitely examining that old charge against the Indian railways and definitely stating that it is without foundation, and yet year after year we find it repeated in this House and elsewhere. Mr. Kelkar is labouring under the same delusion and I do hope that Honourable Members will remember once and for all that that charge has been exploded by the Acworth Committee and that we shall hear no more about it.

Mr. Goswami referred to Mr. Kasturbhai Lalbhai's complaint of what he called the coal freight scandal. I am totally unable to understand what he meant by it. He also referred me to what he called the Sholapur cotton rate scandal.

**Mr. T. C. Goswami:** That I did not call a scandal.

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** But I think he said scandal with regard to coal freights. In any case "scandal" is such a common word with Mr. Goswami that I may be pardoned if I attribute it to him a little too often. What I would suggest to Mr. Goswami and to Mr. Kelkar with reference to his complaint with regard to sugarcane crushers being wrongly classified is that we have now set up the Rates Advisory Committee. The Rates Advisory Committee exists for the purpose of investigating cases of this kind. If any Honourable Member of this House is interested in any industry which industry complains that it is not getting fair treatment in respect of railway rates, either on the ground that preferential rates are given to other industries or on the ground that the rates are unreasonable in themselves, I do hope that they will tell that industry that it can get its remedy by applying to the Rates Advisory Committee and that that Committee will examine the whole matter. Mr. Kelkar will realise that

[Sir Charles Innes.]

it is quite impossible for me to say anything about the question of cane crushers, nor can I deal with his complaint about bolts and nuts. As I heard him speak, it seemed to me that the trouble with regard to bolt and nut manufacture was that the manufacturers had placed their factory geographically in the wrong place. That very frequently happens in India. But I do want Mr. Kelkar and this House to understand that it is not true to say that Indian railways have in any way any bias against Indian manufactures or that they do not give concessions to Indian manufactures. I have here taken out in the last few days from our tariff rates a list of the special concession rates given to Indian manufactures in India, and if the Honourable Member will look through this list of special concessions, he will see that Indian railways do their very utmost to encourage infant industries by way of freight concessions. The House will no doubt remember that within the last two years we have had reports from the Indian Tariff Board on the Indian steel industry, on the Indian paper industry, on the Indian cement industry and on the Indian magnesium chloride industry to which I think Mr. Goswami referred. It is a very noticeable fact that in each and every one of those reports we find the Tariff Board recording the fact that those industries had been helped by special concessions from the Indian railways. In the case of those four industries special concessions had been given by the railways and I have here a list of other special concessions. Mr. Kelkar complained about glassware. I find that on the East Indian Railway special reduced rates are given from Naini to all stations on that railway. In respect of bottles, chimneys and globes and other things made at the Naini Glass Works special reduced rates are given here—bottles, chimneys, globes, stoneware, tanning extracts, iron, steel, and so on. I would be very glad afterwards to show this list to Mr. Kelkar, and when he sees it I hope he will realise that we have given special concession rates to local industries. And why do they do it? They do it because it pays them. If an Indian railway thinks that by encouraging or helping an Indian industry by giving reduced rates it will enable that industry to flourish and bring more traffic to the railway, then you may depend upon it that special freight concessions will be given. With us it is merely a matter of business. If we see that by giving these concessions we shall get more grist to our own mill, Indian railways will have no hesitation in giving the concession and that is the policy we are following and have always followed. That is the policy we are following with regard to the Tata Iron and Steel Company which has got a most valuable concession from the Bengal Nagpur Railway in respect not only of its iron and steel but also of some of its raw materials. In the circumstances I hope my Honourable friend will withdraw his amendment.

**Mr. N. C. Kelkar:** In view of this statement, I withdraw my motion.

The motion was, by leave of the Assembly, withdrawn.

*General control and supervision, Indianisation, regulation of capital expenditure, etc.*

**Pandit Nilakantha Das** (Orissa Division: Non-Muhammadan): Sir, I move that. . . . .

**Mr. Deputy President:** The Honourable Member will see that the first portion of his amendment has already been discussed and, therefore, I hope

he will confine himself to the last portion of his motion that has not been discussed.

**Pandit Nilakantha Das:** Control and Indianisation—these are the two subjects that have been discussed. But when I put down those two words, I may say, I meant this. By control I rather meant the control of finances and by Indianisation I meant that the services should be Indianised so far as the Indian standard of living was concerned.

**Mr. Deputy President:** What the Chair has said is that the same matter should not be introduced, which has already been discussed.

**Pandit Nilakantha Das:** That is exactly what I mean, if you will allow me to expand it . . . . .

**Mr. Deputy President:** Go on.

**Pandit Nilakantha Das:** I shall do it very briefly, as it is getting late. I should only like to suggest that we are having services at an enormous cost, and so far as our labour as well as the lower rank of service is concerned there is a real grievance. All over the country I admit it is a standing grievance. But how can we satisfy it? My friend Mr. Ranga Iyer said "Let the Anglo-Indians and Englishmen get whatever they like and we Indians in service should get the same thing". Now, I do not know where the money is to come from. Are the entire earnings of the tax-payer in our pockets to be given? Why should not the services be Indianised in this sense, that if the Anglo-Indian and the European gets 1,000 and the Indian gets 200, the pay of the Anglo-Indians and Europeans should be brought down to 200. Why should not they adapt themselves to the Indian standard of living? It is high time that our services were remodelled accordingly on a new set of regulations. It was only the other day that our brothers in South Africa were forced to adopt the English or Western standard of living or else they would have to leave the land under a system of assisted emigration. If we go on like this in our Indianisation by raising salaries by competition, the day may come when even in our home in India we should have some assisted emigration in store for us. Or, just the other way about; let us rather have a "Round Table Conference" and we shall be ready to pay for the assisted emigration of those who refuse to adopt the Indian standard of living in this land. This will solve the problem. I wish to press this point of view of real Indianisation upon the House.

Another matter is control of finances. So much of the tax-payer's money is coming in to our hands, but we do not know how to curtail our expenditure for the proper relief of that tax-payer. I have not got the books here. (Laughter). Nor is there time for quoting figures. Year after year our expenditure is growing more and more. One thing has struck me, particularly in this Budget. We have been given by our Honourable friend Mr. Parsons a comparison of accounts under the 1s. 4d. and the 1s. 6d. ratio, where it must be presumed, according to the view taken by the Members of the Government, that our living, etc., has been adjusted to the latter new ratio, at least to a certain extent, and so we get in the income at least one anna if not two annas more in the rupee. But what regulations are there in contemplation to make that reduction in the expenditure in view of the fact that we are getting so much more money from the tax-payer? And without considering that, we boast that we have given relief to the third class wayfarers or, say, the first class passengers. What do we give? That means nothing. We have taken much more and it is

[Pandit Nilakantha Das.]

high time for us to contemplate some proper regulations for reducing the expenditure if, of course in this instance, the ratio is not so unreal as it may come down any day.

These are the points I wanted to make, and they are to some extent evidently inter-related. As I find now that my proposed reduction is one hundred rupees . . . . .

**Mr. Deputy President:** No, one hundred rupees are not now left. If the Honourable Member wants to have a cut of one hundred rupees then I am afraid he will have to cut down his speech.

**Pandit Nilakantha Das:** I know there is not enough money left in the Demand to allow of my cut. Only Rs. 98 is left. Therefore, I propose that the demand be reduced by Rs. 97.

[At this stage Mr. Deputy President vacated the Chair which was resumed by Mr. President.]

**Mr. A. A. L. Parsons (Financial Commissioner, Railways):** Sir, I think the House will realise that the Honourable Pandit Nilakantha Das has given me rather a difficult task. For I do not find it very easy to discover on exactly what point, in the motion which he has moved, he has been attacking the railway administration. So far as I was able to follow him I think that his suggestion was a general reduction in the pay of all—I am not sure whether it was officers or subordinates?

**Pandit Nilakantha Das:** I said some regulations to the effect in contemplation, of a Round Table Conference if you like.

**Mr. A. A. L. Parsons:** I am afraid I am still in the dark as to what the exact point of the Honourable Member was and therefore I can really do nothing to meet it. And there I must consequently leave it.

**Mr. President:** The question is:

“That the Demand under the head ‘Railway Board’ be reduced by Rs. 97.”

The motion was negatived.

**Mr. President:** Before we proceed further I should like to make one observation. I do not know whether there is any real disposition on the part of the House to get on to the more important Demands for Grants. On the one hand I have been receiving requests signed by several Members that I should sit late to-night in order to enable the House to discuss other more important Demands, and on the other hand I find Member after Member getting up and moving cuts of Re. one on Demand No. 1. I am willing to sit as long as the House desires, but I would like Members to proceed in a businesslike manner so that they may get on to other more important business.

I take it that Members do not wish to raise any further question on Demand No. 1?

**Colonel J. D. Crawford (Bengal: European):** Yes, Sir, I wish to.

**Mr. President:** Colonel Crawford.

*Reduction of freight on Petrol.*

**Colonel J. D. Crawford:** Sir, I rise to move:

“That the Demand under the head ‘Railway Board’ be reduced by Re. 1.”

My object, Sir, in bringing forward this motion was to concentrate the attention of the House on the question of the freight on petrol. As the House is aware, I was one of those who had been considerably interested in the development of motor transportation throughout India, and I am alive to the fact that the Honourable the Commerce Member is sympathetic towards that object, and that I have with me the House, as so many Members supported me in balloting for a Resolution for the appointment of a Committee to study the whole subject. For that support I am very grateful. But that is only one method whereby we can force the development of motor transportation, and I wish to take this opportunity of drawing the attention of the House to the very high freight which is now charged on petrol. Those Honourable Members who come from the ports, where we pay Re. 1-4-6 pies per gallon must have noticed how very heavy is the cost of petrol when we get up to the mufassil. Here, for instance, we pay a sum of Re. 1-12-6 pies per gallon. A study of the subject will show that the freight on one gallon of petrol from Budge Budge to Delhi works out at 6½ annas a gallon, and I feel that if that high freight is to remain, it is one of the factors that are definitely preventing the development of motor transportation in the mufassil. So far as I can understand the position, the Railway Board fixes the grade in which a particular commodity shall be carried. They have fixed the minimum and maximum rates at which petrol shall be carried, and I believe that the rate at the present time lies between a maximum and a minimum of .83 pies per maund per mile to .166 pies, and that particular railways have the right to move within these boundaries. But I find that they do not move very much away from the top rate, and that .83 pies per maund per mile is the freight generally charged on petrol. Now what we want to get at is to endeavour so far as is possible to reduce the distribution cost of petrol in the mufassil, and I believe that that can be done . . . . .

**Mr. Arthur Moore** (Bengal: European): Sir, is it correct to describe the capital of India as the mufassil?

**Colonel J. D. Crawford:** I believe that that can be done if we develop the transport of petrol in bulk; and what I particularly want to press on the Railway Board is that they should themselves take a hand in this question and not leave it entirely to the different railway administrations, and that they should encourage the carriage of petrol in tank wagons. I believe that by these means the whole of the cost of distribution of our petrol, particularly in the mufassil areas, will be very considerably reduced. There is some suggestion, I believe, that the oil companies themselves could do a great deal more. I know that they are already doing a very considerable amount on their side to reduce this cost of distribution, and I for one shall not fail to continue to press on them that they do their part. What I want to do to-day is to ask the Railway Board if they cannot also assist in cheapening motor transportation throughout the mufassil. The Finance Member has already done something in the way of reduction of the excise duty. The Commerce Member, as the head of the Commerce Department, is prepared to assist in the consideration of the whole question by appointing a Committee and I ask the Railway Board if they cannot do something to bring in something in the nature of telescopic rates for petrol carried in tank wagons. I am under the impression, perhaps wrongly, that the mentality of many of the railway administrations is that they are likely to meet with competition from motor transportation, and



[Colonel J. D. Crawford.]

possibly their attitude towards this question is looked at from that mentality. I hope that is not the case and I know that Sir Clement Hindley takes an entirely different point of view. I believe that in a monopoly service like our railways, the policy is that they should give cheap and efficient service compatible with an adequate return on their capital, and that is the principle that I would like them to adopt in this question of petrol; I hope that the Railway Commissioner will be able to give me an assurance that something will be done to see whether this freight on petrol carried in tank wagons cannot be reduced.

**Mr. C. Duraiswamy Aiyangar** (Madras ceded districts and Chittoor: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, . . . .

**Mr. President:** Does the Honourable Member wish to raise a point of order?

**Mr. C. Duraiswamy Aiyangar:** No, Sir. I want to speak on this motion.

I own a motor myself and still I oppose the motion made by Colonel Crawford.

**Sir Clement Hindley:** Sir, the question of competition between motor transportation and the railways is one which naturally gives us a great deal of anxiety and calls for most careful examination. I have no doubt that Honourable Members are aware that in other countries this matter of motor competition with railways has assumed in some cases a very serious aspect and I have noticed recently that railway managements in England, where competition is very keen, have been considering their general policy and attitude towards road competition. We also have had the matter under consideration and I have discussed it with the Agents of all railways on two occasions during the last year. I found that we had a general agreement amongst us, that is to say, myself and the Railway Board and the Agents of all railways, that where road motor transport could act as feeders to railways and as an extension of the transport provided by railways we had every inducement to foster it and to assist it, and in many directions the different railway administrations are now seeing to what extent they can get into business relations with motor transport companies for extending the railway transport services. Where road motor traffic comes in competition with us, the matter is not so easy. There are certain points where it is quite impossible for us to compete—short-circuiting roads and so on—and it is very difficult to attempt to reduce railway rates in order to compete. Where, however, we have what we call paralleling services and where we consider it a business proposition, it is the business of the railway administrations to do their best to compete with road motor transport by offering better and cheaper services if possible on the railways. That is the general policy which we have in regard to road motor transport and I do not think that anyone will quarrel with that. But when it comes down to the particular point which Colonel Crawford has mentioned, we have to see how that policy applies to the question of freight on petrol. Now, in the first place, I find that all railways are charging the same rates for petrol. I mention that, because it might be assumed that certain railways charge higher rates in order to prevent road motor transport being carried on. That is not the case. There is a uniform rate. The Railway Board prescribe the maximum and minimum rates for petrol and all

railways, except the Assam Bengal Railway and the Eastern Bengal Railway, charge at that rate and no less. Special rates have been quoted by the Assam Bengal Railway for the petrol which 5 P.M. comes from the Digboi oil-fields in Assam. The rate is. I consider, a low one looked at from this point of view, that it plays a very small relation indeed to the price of petrol itself. Colonel Crawford has, I think, quoted the rates. My information is that the maximum rate is 1.04 per maund at railway risk, '83 per maund at owner's risk and the minimum .166 per maund per mile. My point is that the railway freight is a very small part of what we have to pay for petrol when we buy it. Colonel Crawford mentioned that he pays in Calcutta Rs. 1-4-6 per gallon for petrol, whereas we pay here Rs. 1-12-0 per gallon. Now the actual freight from Calcutta to Delhi is 5 annas. It would be interesting to know how the 8 annas difference between the Calcutta and Delhi rate is made up. 5 annas is what is paid on railway freight between here and Calcutta.

As an instance of the relative value of the freight to the petrol, I would mention that it is possible to carry petrol for 400 miles for one-tenth of its selling value, and it cannot really be said that the rate charged by the railway really affects the price which we pay. I am not in the confidence of the oil companies and therefore do not know how they arrange their selling prices in various parts of India, but I do feel that we at any rate play a very small part in raising the price of petrol. That is not, however, all I wish to say.

I began by giving a little outline of the policy which the railways as a whole have adopted towards motor transport. We have always felt that anything which will improve transport generally in the country is to the ultimate advantage of the railways, and therefore on general grounds there would be a very good argument for charging a low rate on petrol. For that reason I propose to ask the railway administrations again to consider this question of petrol rates.

I would say one thing more. Colonel Crawford has mentioned the carriage of petrol in bulk. We have done a great deal to encourage the carriage of petrol in bulk wagons. I must admit that when the question was first put before us, having had experience of carrying kerosene oil, we found very considerable difficulty because the ordinary tanks in which we have been carrying kerosene oil would not hold petrol. It is a very fine spirit and gets through the ordinary rivetted tanks. We had therefore to have specially welded tanks and had to import special tanks for this purpose. I recently saw some new tanks which had been brought out and erected on the Assam Bengal Railway, and was very much struck by the great improvement in them. We are not waiting for encouragement from outside to carry petrol in tanks. We will carry it in tanks wherever the oil companies wish us to take it and as soon as they have petrol bulk installations constructed we shall be ready with petrol tank-wagons. I think that meets Colonel Crawford's point. I have met it in another way by saying that we shall have the question of petrol rates looked into again.

**Colonel J. D. Crawford:** Sir, in view of what Sir Clement Hindley has said, I wish to withdraw my motion.

The motion was, by leave of the Assembly, withdrawn.

**Mr. President:** The question is:

"That a reduced sum not exceeding Rs. 98 . . . ."

(To Mr. Joshi) Does the Honourable Member wish to move his motion?

**Mr. N. M. Joshi:** Yes, Sir.

**Mr. President:** If there is no disposition on the part of the House to get on to other Demands, I had better adjourn.

If the Honourable Member wishes to raise the question of third class fares it means a good two hours. Does the Honourable Member desire to move his amendment?

**Mr. N. M. Joshi:** If the House is not in a mood to discuss the reduction of third class fares I will not move it.

**Mr. President:** The question is:

"That a reduced sum not exceeding Rs. 98 be granted to the Governor General in Council to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1928, in respect of the 'Railway Board'."

The motion was adopted.

#### DEMAND NO. 2—INSPECTION.

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** Sir, I beg to move:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 1,21,000 be granted to the Governor General in Council to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1928, in respect of 'Inspection'."

**Mr. C. Duraiswamy Aiyangar:** Sir, I may at once state that I do not propose to move any of the three motions I have tabled here, but I wish to oppose the motion made by the Honourable Sir Charles Innes under this head. Sir, yesterday I put a question which is of constitutional importance, and which involves the very legality of the demand under this head and the answer which was given to me was so perfunctory, so slipshod, that I never expected such an answer to a question in the course of the debate on the Demands. It was an answer such as is given to the Assembly in the first hour, not a serious and reasoned one to a question which was raised on a Demand. Sir, my first point therefore is that this Demand encroaches on one of the most precious privileges of this House and I would therefore request the House to keep a careful watch over any encroachment or invasion of the privileges of the House. Sir, under ordinary circumstances, by virtue of the Indian Railways Act and by virtue of the Government of India Act, we ought to be in a position to control the entire expenditure under 'Inspection' because this must come under a votable heading. Sir, under section 4 of the Indian Railways Act, the power is entirely vested in the Governor General in Council to appoint in two ways, either by name or by virtue of office, the Inspectors who are called Government Inspectors. Sir, if that appointment has to be made in accordance with section 4 of the Indian Railways Act, this House will be in a position to vote or not to vote, to sanction or not to sanction the expenditure under the heading 'Inspection'. But, Sir, what is sought to be done by the Honourable Member for Railways, or the Government, let us take it collectively, is to take away that power from this House, by introducing for this departmental inspection persons

who are supposed to be protected under sub-clause (3) of section 67A of the Government of India Act. They seek protection under the wording there which says that salaries and pensions of persons appointed by or with the approval of His Majesty or the Secretary of State for India in Council are not to be submitted to the vote. Sir, I ask you, is it fair to the Government to introduce in a votable department persons whose salaries are not votable? The question is: "Can this Government take away from this House the power which is vested in it under the Government of India Act and also under the Railways Act for voting a particular Demand"? You see, Sir, under section 67A, clauses 2, 3 and 4, these are all departments which are non-votable. Thereby a large power is taken away from a popular House like this of voting supplies which the Government demands, and one small clause is left there—clause 5—which says that the proposals of the Governor General in Council for the appropriation of monies or revenue relating to heads of expenditure not specified under the above heads shall be submitted to the Legislative Assembly in the form of Demands for Grants. Thus you find a large number of heads are included in the earlier clauses thereby depriving this House of voting a large number of heads of expenditure. A small room is still left for this House to exercise control over expenditure. Is it fair to introduce even into this clause some exceptions of your own not provided by any Statute?

**Mr. President:** I have not done so! I thought the Honourable Member was addressing the Chair.

**Mr. C. Duraiswamy Aiyangar:** Sir, through the Chair I appeal to the Government, to the Treasury Bench, whether it is fair on the part of Government to take away one valuable privilege of this House? Now it is argued that very often it is so done and pleaded that since they have been appointed by the Secretary of State although they may have been transferred to other departments, so long as they are persons originally appointed by the Secretary of State they are always protected and their salaries in whichever department they may work must always be non-votable. Sir, the sense of security with reference to the propriety of such an expenditure seems to have been sprung on the Government more from habit than from conviction. I am sure they have never reaped it. I am sure the Law Member or the Audit Department or the Finance Department have never considered the propriety of such expenditure. I maintain, Sir, that so long as a particular Demand has under Statute to be placed in the hands of this House, they have no right to deprive the House of that privilege. The obvious result will be that you will introduce into a votable item—or rather you will make a votable item non-votable by introducing a person who has been appointed by the Secretary of State into a Department which ought to be appointed only by the Governor General in Council you will replace a man, who is so taken away from the original department by another person who is appointed by the Secretary of State. Therefore you create in the place of one non-votable post two non-votable posts and take away from this House the one votable post which had been placed in the hands of this House. You can in this way convert a whole department from votable to non-votable by taking persons appointed by the Secretary of State into departments which ought to be subject to the vote of the House and thus take away the effect of the clause. In other words, the interpretation Government puts on clause 5 is an interpretation which turns it into an *in and out* clause. We may vote and yet cannot vote. That is the net result of the

[Mr. C. Duraiswamy Aiyangar.]

interpretation that is being placed by the Government on this clause; and I take it therefore the responsibility lies on the Audit Department in auditing against sanction whether this expenditure ought to have been permitted at all or not. And therefore I do expect a reasoned and a cogent explanation for the procedure that has been adopted by Government instead of giving me a perfunctory answer in the manner in which Mr. Parsons gave yesterday. You see, Sir, now under this Demand No. 2 there is a footnote which says the demand is more by Rs. 20,000 than the expected expenditure in the current year due chiefly to the appointment as Senior Government Inspector of a non-pensionable officer whose salary is votable. You have introduced among 8 persons there one gentleman who has cast his lot with this House, but I want you to tell me when that gentleman was appointed; probably in May 1926 according to a list that I have—but I do not know who that gentleman was, and when he was appointed. In the last year's Budget everything was non-voted. There was no votable item at all and now when you introduce a person there without the vote of the House . . . .

**Mr. President:** The Honourable Member will address the Chair.

**Mr. C. Duraiswamy Aiyangar:** It is very difficult, Sir, to manage.

**Mr. President:** The Honourable Member must address the Chair.

**Mr. C. Duraiswamy Aiyangar:** Very well, Sir. The Government introduced among this group of eight Inspectors one senior Inspector somewhere in the month of May 1926; and they have been paying him a salary which has never been voted by this House during the last Budget. During the last Budget the entire Demand under Inspection was put down as non-voted and we have been paying his salary and I do not know if till now you have applied even for sanction by a Supplementary Demand. Now, Sir, what is exactly the net result of an operation like this? This benevolent Government has introduced a gentleman there whose salary was not voted, whose salary has nevertheless been paid without any audit objection. Is this fair on the part of Government to introduce a gentleman like this without the vote of this Assembly? It is the result of this kind of irregular and improper procedure that seems to have been prevailing in this department.

Now, Sir, coming to the merits (Laughter)—that was certainly the technical aspect of it—but coming now to the merits I stated that this department is altogether out of date; it is an antiquated antediluvian department. I wonder what the necessity is for these Inspectors at the present day, when there is the Railway Board with a large establishment of people with technical knowledge, engineering knowledge; what is the object of maintaining this department at a time when all these railways have come under the management of the Government aided by a costly Board which is supplemented by a large number of engineers and other technical experts? It might have been in place at a time when the railways were managed by private companies with a board of control somewhere in London and when the Government had to take care that the passengers' safety had to be looked after. It might be that these Inspectors were doing very good work—that they were very good Samaritans to the Government at a time when they wanted to inspect the lines, whether they were fit for passenger traffic and so on. But I ask now, what is this Railway Board doing?

What are those persons employed under the Board as engineers, as directors of civil engineering and mechanical engineering, what are all these for? And then there is a large engineering staff under each railway which is in itself very costly. With all these departments, what is the necessity for continuing this department? The plea is that it is a statutory body. The plea is that it is a statutory institution. What if it is a statutory institution? The Railways Act does not compel the Governor General in Council to have a staff of eight Inspectors; it only authorises him to engage Inspectors if there be need for them. I submit, Sir, there is absolutely no need at present for having this staff of Inspectors. And what is the function of these Inspectors according to the Railways Act? One of their functions is to examine after accidents are over—to go to the spot and find out the cause of the accident. What are these Agents, Traffic Managers, Engineers and all these people doing, if not to go to the spot and examine what the cause of the accident was? What is the necessity for one Inspector going when there is a large staff like that? Sir, this provision for the appointment of Inspectors seems to have been borrowed from an English Statute, 34 and 35 Vict. cap. 78, section 3. There, there is a provision for the appointment of these Inspectors by the Board of Trade. But here when the whole administration is being conducted by a large, expensive and extravagant staff which is otherwise provided for, I fail to see the necessity for this post; and one of the two functions of the Railway Board is the administrative function which covers detailed supervision over the construction of new lines and other things. If a new line is constructed and if the Railway Board and its staff inspect it, they are the persons to say whether a particular line is fit for traffic or not. Therefore, Sir, I feel that this department of Inspection must altogether go. There is absolutely no necessity for it. Therefore, Sir, I oppose the motion made by Sir Charles Innes, or to be more technical or accurate, I say the Demand be reduced to zero.

**Mr. L. Graham** (Secretary: Legislative Department): Sir, before this discussion gets on to the merits of the case, I should like to take the opportunity to reply to the point with which my Honourable friend began his speech. I was in the House yesterday when he began his speech with precisely the same point, and I personally was under the impression that he had been given a complete reply by my Honourable friend Mr. Parsons.

Now, the point which the Honourable Mr. Duraiswamy Aiyangar makes is that he objects to finding, apparently under the same Demand, the salaries of certain officers shown as non-voted and the salaries of other officers shown as voted, and he bases his objection on the provisions of the Railways Act which require in respect of these Inspectors that they shall be appointed by the Governor General in Council. Sir, it is perfectly true that they are appointed to this particular post by the Governor General in Council, but they are already men in the railway service. They have to be appointed to some post or other while they are in railway service, and whatever post they hold, their salary, while they are in that post, is non-voted. That is the expression. . . .

**Mr. A. Rangaswami Iyengar** (Tanjore *cum* Trinchinopoly: Non-Muhamadan Rural): Why?

**Mr. L. Graham**: Because it is so provided in the Government of India Act.

**Mr. A. Rangaswami Iyengar**: Read the section.

**Mr. L. Graham:** That provision is as follows:

"The proposals of the Governor General in Council for the appropriation of revenue or money relating to the following heads of expenditure shall not be submitted to the vote of the Assembly".

Now amongst those are included the salaries and pensions—we are now dealing only with the salaries—payable to persons appointed by or with the approval of His Majesty or the Secretary of State in Council. Salaries which are shown as non-voted in this list are payable to officers who are inspectors of Railways and are as a matter of fact payable to persons who are appointed to the Indian Railway Service of Engineers by or with the approval of the Secretary of State in Council. I think it is by the Secretary of State in Council.

**Mr. Rangaswami Iyengar:** Not to their present posts.

**Mr. L. Graham:** They were appointed to the Railway Service of Engineers by the Secretary of State in Council, and in virtue of their being appointed to it, they become eligible for these particular appointments. They are appointed by the Governor General in Council, but they are protected as persons. It is persons who are protected under the Act and not posts, and I think that point is so clear that, I imagine, it is not necessary to say anything more on that. The whole idea of this provision in the Government of India Act was the protection of persons, and that is why persons are expressly named, not persons while they are holding particular posts, but persons as such. That, Sir, is a complete reply, I think, on that point. I propose to leave it to experts to deal with the question on its merits.

**Sir Clement Hindley:** Sir, Mr. Duraiswamy Aiyangar has brought up something similar to this on previous occasions.

**Mr. C. Duraiswamy Aiyangar:** That was a different point. I only said they were very ineffective, and inefficient in their supervision.

**Sir Clement Hindley:** I quite understood the Honourable Member's speech; I had no difficulty in understanding it at all. He made an attack against these people, because, as far as I can understand, he had not the foggiest idea of what they do. I tried last year to explain to the House, when Mr. C. Duraiswamy Aiyangar brought this matter up, what the duties of Government Inspectors are, and in looking through some of the extracts just now I find that I made a similar attempt the year before. I really do not know whether Mr. C. Duraiswamy Aiyangar means this criticism seriously or not. I am rather at a loss to know what he really means. I did my best to explain the matter to him last year. If he did not understand, he might have come and asked me. On a previous occasion, perhaps the House will remember, he complained very bitterly that he had never yet seen a Government Inspector. He said he had heard of him travelling but he had not been able to see him. I said I would try and arrange for him to be present when one of these officers got out of his saloon. He did not go further with the business and therefore I did not make any further arrangements. It seems to me from the nature of his speech to-day that during the interval he had completely forgotten Government Inspectors and only just remembered now that they existed and so he wanted to axe them. Why does he want to do so? He does not give any reasons. He simply says, "All these railways are run by the State. Why do you want any Inspector?" Supposing all the Railways were run by the State. Should we not have Inspectors? Is it not

necessary in the interests of the travelling public that there should be some statutory inspection of our safety appliances and our methods of carrying passengers? He first of all begs the question by saying that all these railways are run by the State, because I would remind him that we manage here from the Railway Board less than half the mileage of railways in India. We manage 15,500 miles while the companies manage 17,000. Are these companies to be left without inspection on behalf of the Government and the public? Does the Honourable Member seriously mean to move the rejection of this vote because there are no Inspectors wanted? Sir, on previous occasions cases have been brought up in this House of serious accidents and we have been criticised considerably for not having made proper inquiries. Our answer has been that Government Inspectors make inquiries into these serious accidents. Does the Honourable Member mean to imply that Government Inspectors of Railways in future are not to inquire into serious railway accidents? What are the methods that he proposes to adopt to inquire into these accidents? He said, "What do you want these Inspectors for? You have got the Agent and the Traffic Manager in these cases. Can't they go down and inquire into the accidents?" I do not believe that there is anybody in this House who would sympathise with the Honourable Member if he really made that suggestion seriously. Does he suggest that the railway officers alone should inquire into these most serious accidents? I have never heard it suggested anywhere before and I have never heard of any sympathy for it before at all. I think that . . . . .

**Mr. C. Duraiswamy Aiyangar:** May I ask whether you seriously think that Inspectors are necessary?

**Sir Clement Hindley:** I did not hear the question.

**Mr. C. Duraiswamy Aiyangar:** May I ask whether you seriously think that Inspectors are necessary?

**Sir Clement Hindley:** If the Honourable Member can make a remark like that, it does not call for an answer.

**Mr. C. Duraiswamy Aiyangar:** You cannot say I am not serious.

**Sir Clement Hindley:** Because it is perfectly obvious to any business man, to any public citizen, that where railways are being worked, where dangerous machinery is being handled as in mines and so on, it is necessary that in the public interest inspection should be made on behalf of Government by statutory Inspectors, and in the case of Railways I am really surprised to hear a proposal like that from the Honourable Member. I do not think it is necessary for me to say anything more on this motion.

**Mr. President:** The question is:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 1,21,000 be granted to the Governor General in Council to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1928, in respect of 'Inspection'."

(After Mr. President had declared "I think the Ayes have it" two or three Honourable Members on the Congress Party Benches cried "No".)

Do the Honourable Members want to divide?

(Some Honourable Members on the Congress Party Benches: "No".)

If they do not really want a division I warn them not to continue saying, "No, no". Otherwise they will have to go to the lobbies against their wish some day.



[Mr. President then declared, "The Ayes have it".]

The motion was adopted.

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** Before you take up the next motion, may I ask you, Sir, what your intentions are about sitting late to-night? I should like to bring to your notice the fact that the Members of the Executive Council have got a Council meeting at 6 o'clock, and it would be a great convenience to Government Members and a great many other Members of the House if you would adjourn now. I submit that for your consideration.

**Mr. President:** I was willing to sit till 7 or 8 o'clock in response to the request made to me by several non-official Members in order to enable them to discuss some other Demands for Grants. I thought I ought to comply with their request in view of the fact that to-morrow is the last day for this discussion and according to the rules I am bound to close the debate at 5 o'clock on the last day. I find, however, that there is no disposition on the part of some Members of the House to adjust themselves to the needs of the occasion. I, therefore, accede to the request of the Commerce Member and propose to adjourn now.

The House now stands adjourned till 11 o'clock to-morrow morning.

The Assembly then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Saturday, the 26th February, 1927.