

26th February, 1926

THE

# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY DEBATES

(Official Report)

Volume VII, Part II

(10th February to 1st March, 1926)

## FOURTH SESSION

OF THE

## SECOND LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY, 1926



DELHI  
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA PRESS  
1926

# Legislative Assembly.

## *The President :*

THE HONOURABLE MR. V. J. PATEL.

## *Deputy President :*

DIWAN BAHADUR T. RANGACHARIAR, M.L.A.

## *Panel of Chairmen :*

MR. K. C. NEOGY, M.L.A.

SIR DARCY LINDSAY, M.L.A.

LALA LAJPAT RAI, M.L.A., AND

MR. ABDUL HAYE, M.L.A.

## *Secretary :*

MR. L. GRAHAM, C.I.E., M.L.A.

## *Assistants of the Secretary :*

MR. W. T. M. WRIGHT, C.I.E., I.C.S.

MR. S. C. GUPTA, BAR.-AT-LAW.

MR. G. H. SPENCE, I.C.S.

## *Marshal :*

CAPTAIN SURAJ SINGH, BAHADUR, I.O.M.

## *Committee on Public Petitions :*

DIWAN BAHADUR T. RANGACHARIAR, M.L.A., *Chairman.*

DIWAN BAHADUR M. RAMACHANDRA RAO, M.L.A.

COLONEL J. D. CRAWFORD, M.L.A.

MR. JAMNADAS M. MEHTA, M.L.A.

MR. ABDUL HAYE, M.L.A.

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# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Friday, 26th February, 1926.

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

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## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

### DATES OF THE COMING GENERAL ELECTIONS FOR THE PROVINCIAL LEGISLATURES AND THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

977. \***Mr. A. Rangaswami Iyengar**: Will the Government be pleased to state whether they have received any representations from the Madras Government, the Bombay Government or other Local Governments in regard to the time of holding of the coming general elections both in respect of the provincial Legislatures and of the Legislative Assembly and if so, whether the Government have arrived at any decisions in the matter?

**Mr. L. Graham**: The Government of India have received letters from the Local Governments of Madras and Bengal making certain proposals. In each case a reply has been sent to the effect that, having regard to the fact that the power to appoint dates for the holding of elections for the Central and provincial Legislatures is vested in the Governor General and the Governors, respectively, the matter is not one for correspondence between the Local and Central Governments.

**Mr. Harchandra Vishindas**: In view of the fact that general election activities begin in September and elections generally take place in November, could the Government enlighten us as to the date of the next Simla Session?

**Mr. L. Graham**: There is no information available at present on the point, I am afraid, Sir.

**Mr. A. Rangaswami Iyengar**: May I know if the Government of India have any information as to when this House is likely to be reformed or when the next general election is going to come on?

**Mr. L. Graham**: I have no information, Sir.

**Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh**: Have the Government received any proposals from the Bihar and Orissa Government as to the holding of the next election for the provincial Council there?

**Mr. L. Graham**: No, Sir.

**Mr. A. Rangaswami Iyengar**: May I know if the Government of India will have absolutely no voice in regard to the fixing of dates for the general elections for the local Councils?

**Mr. L. Graham**: I do not say they will have no voice; they will not have the final voice.

**Mr. A. Rangaswami Iyengar:** May I therefore ask what is the voice they will have in fixing these dates. May I know if the Government of India have made any suggestions?

**Mr. L. Graham:** We have made no suggestions, Sir.

DATES OF THE COMING GENERAL ELECTIONS FOR THE PROVINCIAL LEGISLATURES AND THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

978. **\*Mr. A. Rangaswami Iyengar:** Will the Government be pleased to state whether, subject to the exercise of powers of the Governor General or the Governors concerned as to dissolution, there is any intention on the part of the Government to vary the dates of the coming general elections and if not, whether they have arrived at any and if so what provisional conclusions as to the time at which the coming general elections to the Assembly and the Legislative Councils in the several provinces will be held?

**Mr. L. Graham:** As I pointed out in my reply to the last question, there is no power in the Central or in the Local Government to appoint dates for the holding of elections to the Central and local Legislatures, respectively. It is, therefore, impossible for the Governor General in Council either to have any intention to vary the dates of the coming general elections or to arrive at any conclusion as to the time at which the coming general elections will be held.

DEPUTATION OUT OF INDIA AT STATE EXPENSE OF NON-OFFICIAL MEMBERS OF THE FIRST LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

979. **\*Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh:** Will the Government be pleased to lay on the table a statement, showing the names of the non-official Members of the first Legislative Assembly, who were sent out of India at State expense, and giving the following particulars?

Number.	Names of members.	Where sent.	Object of visit.	Year of visit.	Total expense incurred in each case.	REMARKS.
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**The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman:** In the opinion of the Government, no public purpose would be served by collecting this information in regard to the Members of the first Legislative Assembly now, and they do not, therefore, propose to supply it. Some information in regard to the deputations to the Imperial Conferences and the Assemblies of the League of Nations can be gathered from the replies given to questions asked by Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan on the 27th May, 1924, and the 23rd of January, 1925.

RELEASE OR INTERNMENT IN HIS OWN HOME OF HARI KUMAR CHAKRAVARTY, A DETENU IN INSEIN JAIL.

980. **\*Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh:** (a) Has the attention of the Government been drawn to a petition of Srimati Pannabala Debi, wife of Srijut Hari Kumar Chakravarty, who is a detenu in the Insein Jail, in which she states that she is suffering from a wasting disease, and is bedridden, with no one to look after her?

(b) Is it a fact that Srijut Hari Kumar Chakravarty is also ill in jail, and that his weight has come down from 154 lbs. to 134 lbs.?

(c) In view of the assurances given by the Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman in this House the other day that individual cases will be reconsidered on representation, do the Government propose to look into this case, and either to release the detenu in question, or to intern him in his home?

**The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman:** (a) I have seen a copy of the lady's letter in the Press.

(b) The prisoner was suffering from bronchitis and malaria at the end of December. The latest report received this month was that his health is now good.

(c) I have already explained the general policy pursued in this matter and I am not prepared to interfere with the discretion of the local Government primarily concerned in this particular case.

**CRITICISM OF THE ACTION OF THE CONTROLLER OF PURCHASE, INDIAN STORES DEPARTMENT, KARACHI, IN REGARD TO THE PURCHASE OF 800 PEN WOOD SLEEPERS.**

981. \***Khan Bahadur W. M. Hussanally:** 1. Has the attention of Government been drawn to a leading article in the *Sind Observer*, dated 9th February, 1926?

2. Is it a fact as stated therein that "after opening the tenders for sleepers he (Mr. Stephen) recommended the lowest tender of Messrs. Dowlatram & Co., of Karachi to the Executive Engineer at Ruk for acceptance; but subsequently he changed his mind; asked Messrs. Esaji and Co., to bring their tender down to the level of that of Messrs. Dowlatram & Co. and placed the order with them against all notions of fairplay and business morality"?

3. (a) Is it a fact that Colonel Alexander "one of the chiefs of the Stores Department at Delhi" made a statement in that paper when he went to Karachi "that he had gone thoroughly into the matter of the Ruk contract and that he was fully satisfied with the conduct of Mr. Stephen . . . "?

(b) If so, what were the exact words used by Colonel Alexander in his letter to the Press?

(c) If it is a fact that Colonel Alexander did make a statement to that effect, was that statement true or false in the light of the fact that the Honourable Member for Government has pronounced the conduct of Mr. Stephen as "an act of indiscretion"?

(d) If false, was it deliberate or accidental? If the former, what action do Government propose to take in the matter. If the latter why did not Colonel Alexander ascertain facts before rushing to the Press?

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

(2) The facts are that the Controller at first proposed to accept the lowest tender, with the concurrence of the Executive Engineer, but subsequently changed his mind because he came into possession of information which led him to believe that the lowest tenderer would not be able to carry out the order satisfactorily. The Controller gave the order to

Messrs. Esaji & Co., and arranged that their price should be reduced to the level of the lowest tender. There was no violation of the principles of fairplay and business morality.

(3) (a) and (b). A copy of Colonel Alexander's letter to the Editors of the *Daily Gazette* and *Sind Observer* is placed upon the table.

(c) The statement made by Colonel Alexander was true; and I am also satisfied that the action taken by the Controller in placing the order with Messrs. Esaji & Co. was correct. The indiscretion to which I previously referred was in his requiring that firm to reduce the price at which they originally tendered; this did not, however, determine the placing of the order with them.

(d) Does not arise.

INDIAN STORES DEPARTMENT.  
Office of the Chief Controller of Stores.  
Bristol Hotel,  
Karachi, the 9th December 1925.

From

Lt.-Col. H. M. ALEXANDER, D.S.O., O.B.E.,  
*Director of Purchase and Intelligence,*

To

The EDITOR,

(on tour).

"Daily Gazette"  
"Sind Observer" Karachi.

DEAR SIR,

My attention has been drawn to a paragraph in the issue of the *Daily Gazette* and *Sind Observer* of yesterday's date in which the action of the Controller of Purchase, Indian Stores Department, Karachi, in regard to the purchase of 800 Pen Wood sleepers was criticised. I have gone carefully into this matter and have examined the papers in connection with the transaction referred to. I find that the facts are not as stated in your paper and am fully satisfied that the action taken by the Controller was perfectly correct.

The order was placed in this case with a tenderer other than the lowest for good and sufficient reasons with the concurrence and approval of the indenting officer.

Yours faithfully,

*Lt.-Col.,*  
*Director of Purchase and Intelligence.*

**Mr. Harchandrai Vishindas:** Is it a fact that Esaji, whose tender was accepted, was the fourth lowest tenderer and that there was a jump over three other tenders. Is that true?

**The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra:** I believe that is true though I have not got the papers here with me.

**Mr. Harchandrai Vishindas:** If that be true, might I ask whether those two other persons were also considered to be disqualified, and, if so, on what grounds?

**The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra:** The grounds were the same as those already referred to, that is, the Controller came to the conclusion after making personal inquiries that this particular tenderer was in the best position to comply with the tender.

**Khan Bahadur W. M. Hussanally:** Sir, I have had a telegram last night from the Contractors of Karachi which runs as follows :

“ Storchase absent office twelfth tenders held up losing business. Arrange substitute. Serious reflection Department.”

Does the Honourable Member know anything about this matter?

**The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra:** Sir, I received a similar telegram myself yesterday and immediately started inquiries on the subject.

**Khan Bahadur W. M. Hussanally:** Have you received any reply?

**The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra:** No, Sir, not yet.

SEPARATE REPRESENTATION FOR MUHAMMADANS IN THE LOCAL BODIES  
OF AJMER-MERWARA.

982. **\*Maulvi Muhammad Yakub:** (a) Are Government aware that the system of mixed electorate in the local bodies of Ajmer-Merwara is prejudicial to the interests of the Musalmans of that Province?

(b) Do Government propose to consider the desirability of asking the Local Government to introduce a system of separate representation of the Musalmans on these bodies through separate electorate on the lines of the Congress-Muslim League Pact?

**Sir Denys Bray:** Government are not so aware; but are referring the point to the local administration.

ADMISSION OF INDIANS TO THE EUROPEAN APPRENTICE CLASS OF THE  
BOMBAY, BARODA AND CENTRAL INDIA RAILWAY WORKSHOP AT  
AJMER.

983. **\*Maulvi Muhammad Yakub:** Will the Government be pleased to state how many Indians were admitted to the European apprentice class of the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway workshop at Ajmer during the last three years and how many of them were Musalmans?

**Mr. G. G. Sim:** Inquiry is being made and the information will be furnished to the Honourable Member.

NUMBER OF MUHAMMADANS EMPLOYED IN THE TRAFFIC DEPARTMENT OF  
THE BOMBAY, BARODA AND CENTRAL INDIA RAILWAY AT AJMER.

984. **\*Maulvi Muhammad Yakub:** How many Indians are holding posts above Rs. 200 p. m. in the Traffic Department of Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway at Ajmer and how many of them are Musalmans?

**Mr. G. G. Sim:** The Honourable Member is referred to the statistics given in Appendix G of Vol. I of the Report on Indian Railways for 1924-25 showing the numbers, by departments, of superior and subordinate staff employed on Railways classed under European, Anglo-Indian, Muslim and non-Muslim.

NUMBERS OF MUHAMMADANS APPOINTED IN THE VARIOUS DEPARTMENTS  
IN AJMER-MERWARA DURING THE LAST THREE YEARS.

985. \***Maulvi Muhammad Yakub**: Will the Government be pleased to state how many "Gazetted" appointments were filled up in the various departments in Ajmer-Merwara during the last 3 years, owing to retirements, transfers and deaths of permanent incumbents, and how many of them were given to the Musalmans?

**Sir Denys Bray**: The information is being collected and will be supplied to the Honourable Member in due course.

THE INDO-NEPAL TREATY OF 1923.

986. \***Maulvi Muhammad Yakub**: Will the Government be pleased to lay on the table the full text of the Indo-Nepal Treaty of 1923?

**Sir Denys Bray**: I have had a copy of the treaty with Nepal placed in the Library. I may mention that it was published in the Press the day after signature.

DISTRESS AMONG THE POOR AND MIDDLE CLASSES IN BIHAR AND ORISSA  
OWING TO THE RISE IN THE PRICE OF WHEAT.

987. \***Raja Raghunandan Prasad Singh**: With reference to the answer given by them to my question No. 542 on the 2nd February last, will the Government be pleased to say if they propose to put an embargo on the export of wheat at least till the next harvest season and take suitable steps to prevent cornering? Are the Government aware that in some parts of Bihar and Orissa the high market rate of wheat is actually causing distress among the middle and poor classes?

**Mr. J. W. Bhore**: The reply to the first part of the question is in the negative. The price of wheat in Bihar and Orissa is not higher than the price of wheat in some parts of other provinces and Government have no information that its present market price is causing distress among the middle and poor classes in that Province or elsewhere.

RUNNING OF AN EXPRESS OR MAIL TRAIN ON THE LOOP LINE VIA  
JAMALPUR, EAST INDIAN RAILWAY.

988. \***Raja Raghunandan Prasad Singh**: Do the Government propose to run an express or mail train on the Loop Line *via* Jamalpur, East Indian Railway?

**Mr. G. G. Sim**: The Honourable Member is referred to the answer given on 3rd February, 1925, to his question No. 657.

CONSTRUCTION OF THE BAUSI-NAYA DUMKA-SAINTHIA RAILWAY.

989. \***Raja Raghunandan Prasad Singh**: (a) Do the Government propose to connect Naya Dumka, the headquarters of the Santhal Parganas, with a railway line, from any station on the Loop line that may be found convenient?



(b) Are the Government aware that the want of such railway connection is very keenly felt by traders, passengers and Government servants as well as by the inhabitants of the Santhal Parganas?

**Mr. G. G. Sim:** (a) and (b). The Honourable Member is referred to the reply given to a similar question No. 658 on 3rd February, 1925. The Bausi-Naya Dumka-Sainthia project has been recommended by the Bengal and Bihar and Orissa Governments and the Agent, East Indian Railway, has been asked to carry out a fresh investigation and to bring the estimate of cost and traffic prospects up to date. If as a result of this investigation the project is considered financially justifiable its construction will be taken in hand.

INDIAN, ANGLO-INDIAN AND EUROPEAN APPRENTICES IN THE EAST  
INDIAN RAILWAY WORKSHOP AT JAMALPUR.

990. \***Raja Raghunandan Prasad Singh:** Has the attention of the Government been drawn to the great disparity in the pay, prospects, holidays and travelling passes of first class Indian apprentices and their Anglo-Indian and European brothers respectively in the East Indian State railway workshop, Jamalpur? Do they propose to take steps to equalise the pay, prospects, allowance, and leave, holiday and pass advantages of all the apprentices, before or after employment, irrespective of race, nationality or colour?

**Mr. G. G. Sim:** Government are making inquiries.

PREVENTION OF THE INDISCRIMINATE SLAUGHTER OF BOVINE CATTLE.

991. \***Raja Raghunandan Prasad Singh:** Do the Government propose to take effective and immediate measures to stop and prevent the indiscriminate slaughter of bovine cattle?

**Mr. J. W. Bhore:** The Government of India are not in a position under the Devolution Rules to interfere with the administration of a provincial and transferred subject in the manner desired by the Honourable Member, even if they agreed that such action was desirable.

BAN PLACED BY THE MADRAS GOVERNMENT ON THE TEACHING OF  
HINDI IN THE MADRAS PRESIDENCY AND THE ENROLMENT OF  
GOVERNMENT SERVANTS AS MEMBERS OF HINDU SABHAS.

992. \***Pandit Nilakantha Das:** 1. Has the attention of Government been drawn to the order and circular of the Madras Government, published on 14th February, 1926, in the *Hindustan Times*, regarding putting a ban on the teaching of Hindi and enlistment of members in the Hindu Sabha?

2. Do the Government propose to take steps to prevent similar actions on the part of Local Governments?

3. Are the Government aware that Indians are trying to make Hindi the national language in future?

**The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman:** 1. I have seen the newspaper article in question.

2. Government are not prepared to interfere with the discretion of Local Governments.

3. I am not in possession of any more information on the subject than is the Honourable Member himself.

PAYMENT TO THE WIDOW OF RAKHAL CHANDRA DAS, COPYHOLDER,  
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA PRESS, CALCUTTA, OF HIS SALARY AND  
PROVIDENT FUND DUES.

993. **\*Mr. N. M. Joshi:** Is it a fact that the salary and provident fund dues of the late Rakhal Chandra Das, copyholder, Government of India Press, Calcutta, have not yet been paid to his widow, though the said officer died two years ago? Will the Government be pleased to state why the matter is being delayed?

**The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra:** Rakhal Chandra Das died in October, 1924. His salary dues have been paid, but his provident fund dues have not been paid. The delay in payment is due partly to the fact that the relatives did not produce the necessary documents until October, 1925, and partly to other causes which are the subject of investigation.

DELAY IN THE PAYMENT OF PENSIONS TO THE PIECE-WORKERS OF THE  
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA PRESS, CALCUTTA.

994. **\*Mr. N. M. Joshi:** Are the Government aware that payment of pensions due to the piece-workers of the Government of India Press, Calcutta, is usually delayed? Have they received any complaints in the matter?

**The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra:** The pension payable to piece-workers is based on their earnings over a certain period and some time is necessarily occupied in the calculation of these earnings. Government understand that owing to an exceptional number of claims for pension having been received recently, the settlement of these claims has been attended by unusual delay, and they are inquiring into the matter with a view to remedying this state of affairs. No complaints were received by Government.

DELAY IN THE PAYMENT OF THE PENSION OF SASHI BHUSAN BOSE,  
COMPOSITOR, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA PRESS, CALCUTTA.

995. **\*Mr. N. M. Joshi:** (a) Is it a fact that one Sashi Bhusan Bose, compositor, Government of India Press, Calcutta, has not yet received the first instalment of his pension, though he had retired about nine months ago?

(b) If so, will Government be pleased to state the reason for such delay?

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

(b) The Honourable Member is referred to the answer given to his previous question.

INADEQUATE RECRUITMENT OF SINDHIS FOR THE LYALLPUR TRAINING  
SCHOOL, ETC.

996. **\*Mr. Harchandrai Vishindas:** 1. Will the Government be pleased to state the number of men recruited on the North Western Railway for the Lyallpur Training School separately for each department since the re-organization of divisions on 1st October, 1924, and the number in each department, of (i) Punjabis, (ii) Sindhis, and (iii) others separately in each head?

2. Will the Government be pleased to state separately under each head the number of men recruited from Karachi Division for various courses from the above date, of (i) Punjabis, (ii) Sindhis, and (iii) others?

3. (a) Is it a fact that proportionate to their strength and interest the Sindhis are very meagrely recruited?

(b) If so, will Government be pleased to state if there are any particular reasons for the disparity?

(c) If there are no such reasons will Government see to the removal of such disparity and give the Sindhis their fair share?

4. (a) Is it a fact that these candidates are in receipt of only Rs. 80 monthly stipend?

(b) Do Government propose to increase it?

5. (a) Is it a fact that this Training School was some time ago located at Kotri?

(b) Will Government be pleased to state the reasons for its removal from Kotri to Lyallpur?

(c) Do Government propose to open a school in Sindh, say at Sukkur or Kotri?

**Mr. G. G. Sim:** Government have no information about parts 1—3 of the question. They will communicate this question to the Agent who they are sure will see that Sindhis are given a fair chance. They have no reason to suppose that the stipend is inadequate. They will make inquiries about part 5 and will communicate the result to the Honourable Member in due course.

**Mr. Harchandrai Vishindas:** May I inquire, Sir, whether Sindhi candidates for employment in Sind are handicapped by virtue of their being obliged to go to Lyallpur for the probationary period whereas the Punjabi candidates get a benefit on that account?

**Mr. G. G. Sim:** I do not understand how they can be handicapped.

**Mr. Harchandrai Vishindas:** Are Government aware that it is a necessary qualification for a candidate first of all to pass the school final examination before he can be admitted into service?

**Mr. G. G. Sim:** But I presume he could pass the examination in Sind as well as in any other part of the country.

**Mr. Harchandrai Vishindas:** But is it true that Sindhis as well as Punjabis are required after passing that examination to go to the Lyallpur Training School for tuition?

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** Yes, at present.

**Mr. Harchandrai Vishindas:** In that case would it not be better that there should be equality of treatment and that Sindhis should have a school in Sind as was the case before?

**Mr. G. G. Sim:** The Government have left the matter to the Agent to decide as to the proper location of the school, having regard to all the circumstances of the case.

**Mr. Harchandrai Vishindas:** Will the Honourable Member kindly repeat his answer? I did not catch the last words.

**Mr. G. G. Sim:** The Government usually leave it to the Agent, Sir, to decide as to the most suitable location for his training schools.

**Mr. A. Rangaswami Iyengar:** Will not the Government consider the advisability of providing proper facilities for Sindhis as well as for Punjabis in this matter?

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** I do not think that we can undertake to provide training schools in every part of the country.

**Khan Bahadur W. M. Hussanally:** May I inquire, Sir, if any Sindhis are at all being sent to Lyallpur?

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** I do not know.

PAY AND PROSPECTS OF SUB-PERMANENT WAY INSPECTORS ON THE  
NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY.

997. **\*Mr. Harchandrai Vishindas:** Will Government be pleased to state:

- (a) If it is a fact that the cadre of Sub-Permanent Way Inspectors, Sub-Interlocking Inspectors, Sub-Clock Inspectors and Sub-Train Examiners on the North Western Railway is the same?
- (b) Is it a fact that the pay and prospects of the posts were the same before the last revision?
- (c) If so, will Government be pleased to state the circumstances under which the pay and prospects of the posts of Sub-Way Inspectors have been fixed lower than others of the same cadre by last revision?
- (d) Is it a fact that the duties of the post of Sub-Permanent Way Inspectors are more responsible and harder than those of the other posts mentioned above?
- (e) If so, do Government propose to raise the remuneration of Sub-Permanent Way Inspectors at least to the level of that of the others of an equal cadre?
- (f) Is it a fact that the Time-Keepers in the North Western Railway who are considered as clerks of the Permanent Way Inspectors draw Rs. 5 as annual increments while the Sub-Permanent Way Inspectors draw Rs. 2 and Rs. 2½ as annual increments?
- (g) If so, do Government propose to consider the advisability of removing this mark of undeserved inferiority of the Sub-Permanent Way Inspectors?

**Mr. G. G. Sim:** The Government have no knowledge of the facts alleged. They will send a copy of the question to the Agent, who will no doubt consider any representations made to him on the subject.

**Mr. Harchandrai Vishindas:** May I inquire whether the Agent's reply will be placed on the table for the benefit of the Members?

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** The Honourable Member can put down a question on the point.

CASE OF STATE PRISONER JYOTISH CHANDRA GHOSE.

998. **\*Mr. Amar Nath Dutt:** (a) Has the attention of the Government been drawn to a letter headed "No news of detenu", which appeared in *Forward Dak* edition, dated the 13th February, 1926?

(b) If so will the Government be pleased to state, where the state prisoner Srijut Jyotish Chandra Ghose is detained now and the condition of his health?

(c) Will the Government be further pleased to state, whether he is allowed to write letters to his mother? If so, at what intervals?

(d) Will the Government be pleased to state the number of times he was taken in custody by the Government and the length of his detention each time?

(e) Is it a fact that his brain became deranged and he almost became a lunatic, during the time of his previous detention?

(f) Was any new evidence produced after his release which led to his deportation again?

(g) Do the Government propose to release him?

**The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman:** (a) I have seen the article referred to.

(b) I am not prepared to disclose the place of detention of this or any other State prisoner. I have seen the monthly health reports on this prisoner for the last five months and they are satisfactory. Mr. Ghose was suffering from depression but the most recent report is that he is much better. His place of confinement was changed in the interests of his health.

(c) Yes; twice a week.

(d) Jyotish Ghose was previously detained under Regulation III of 1818 from January 17 to July, 1920.

(e) and (f). Yes.

(g) Government have no such intention at present.

CASE OF ANIL BARAN RAY, A DETENU UNDER THE BENGAL CRIMINAL LAW AMENDMENT ACT, 1925.

999. **\*Mr. Amar Nath Dutt:** (a) Will the Government be pleased to state, whether State prisoner Srijut Anil Baran Ray was ever found guilty of any violent crime or deed?

(b) Is he not intensely religious and meek?

(c) If so, do the Government propose to release him?

**The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman:** (a) I am not aware that this detenu has ever been convicted under the ordinary law.

(b) I have no information on this point.

(c) I have nothing to add to the reply which I gave on 26th August last to question No. 89.

FAMILY ALLOWANCE OF SANTOSH KUMAR DE, A DETENU UNDER  
THE BENGAL CRIMINAL LAW AMENDMENT ACT, 1925.

1000. **\*Mr. Amar Nath Dutt:** (a) Has the attention of the Government been drawn to a paragraph in page 4 of the Dak edition of *Forward* of the 13th February, about the petition of Srimati Sarada Sundari De, mother of Srijut Santosh Kumar De, an Ordinance prisoner?

(b) If so, do the Government propose to help the family of Srijut Santosh Kumar De?

**The Honourable Sir Alexander Muddiman:** (a) I have seen the paragraph referred to.

(b) As I said in reply to question No. 675 asked by Syed Majid Baksh on the 8th February, 1926, the question of a family allowance is a matter for the discretion of the local Government, and I have nothing to add to that statement.

GRANT OF CONCESSIONS TO THE CLERKS OF THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR  
GENERAL OF POSTS AND TELEGRAPHS ON THEIR TRANSFER TO DELHI.

1001. **\*Mr. Amar Nath Dutt:** Is it a fact:

(a) that the staff of the office of the Director General, Posts and Telegraphs, when transferred to Delhi with their office, will be deprived of their regular annual increments, which they are now drawing, for a number of years, one of the proposed concessions, *i.e.*, personal pay being absorbed in their future increments? If so, for how many years?

(b) that out of the proposed personal pay of Rs. 40 and Rs. 20 in respect of the clerks drawing pay above Rs. 100 and below Rs. 100 respectively, approximately Rs. 24 at least will perpetually be deducted monthly from the pay of each clerk as house rent, electric, water, sanitation and furniture taxes?

(c) that in that case, according to the estimate of the circumstances which they already stated in their petition to the Director General last year, they will have very little or no saving at all?

(d) do the Government propose to reconsider their decision and grant in favour of the staff of the Director General's office—

(1) the same scale of pay as was granted to the staff of other attached offices of the Imperial Secretariat in Delhi, and

(2) allow them to draw their regular annual increments over and above the personal pay proposed to be granted as remuneration?

**The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra:** (a) According to the proposal now under consideration the clerks would not be deprived of their annual increments, but the increments would gradually reduce the personal pay. The period required to absorb the personal pay would vary between four and eight years.

(b) Clerks at present on the stage next above the Rs. 100 stage of the time-scale whose pay with the proposed personal pay will be Rs. 144 a month will have to pay Rs. 20-4-0 for rent and other charges. In the case of clerks at present in the Rs. 100 stage or in any of the stages below

Rs. 100 in the time-scale, who with the proposed personal pay will draw Rs. 120 or less the amount for rent, etc., will vary between Rs. 12-12-0 and Rs. 17-12-0. These payments represent expenditure which the clerks would have to incur in any case on rent, lights, water, etc., whether they live in Delhi or Calcutta.

(c) Government have no information on the subject.

(d) The Government of India are not prepared to consider the grant to the clerks of the Director-General's office on transfer of concessions greater than those granted to others in similar circumstances, but they have no reason to believe that the cost of living in Delhi will be higher than that in Calcutta for this class of Government servants.

**GRANT OF SPECIAL PROMOTION TO BIBHASH CHANDRA GHOSH, A JUNIOR CLERK OF THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR GENERAL, POSTS AND TELEGRAPHS, FOR MERITORIOUS WAR SERVICES IN MESOPOTAMIA.**

**1002. \*Mr. Amar Nath Dutt:** 1. Will Government please state:

- (a) whether certain clerks of the office of the Director General, Posts and Telegraphs, were deputed to Mesopotamia during the War?
- (b) whether some of them were mentioned in the Despatch of the Commander-in-Chief of the Mesopotamia Expeditionary Force and if so, the names of those who were so mentioned?
- (c) whether the juniormost of the clerk so deputed while serving in Mesopotamia was assured of special promotion, in view of his meritorious service on the recommendation of his direct superior officer in the Field and was several times recommended by various officers under whom he worked and is working still since he returned from the Field for special promotion due to his special adaptability and efficiency in the work he is doing?
- (d) whether notwithstanding all these he has neither been given any special promotion nor any reward in the way of gratuity or anything else, as was given to some of his colleagues so deputed, and his claim for special promotion to the higher cadre is being repeatedly denied to him?

2. If so, will the Government be pleased to inquire and remedy the grievances of that particular official on the analogy of the undertaking given on a similar case in answer to (c) of question No. \*485 on the 2nd September, 1925, in the Assembly?

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

(b) Yes; (1) Mr. G. B. Buksi.

(2) Mr. B. N. Sinha.

(3) Mr. N. Ahmed.

(c) and (d) and 2. In the absence of more precise information as to which clerk is referred to in the Honourable Member's question, I am unable to give the information for which he asks.

**Mr. Amar Nath Dutt:** The junior man I refer to is Bibhash Chandra Ghosh.

**The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra:** His name is not in the list which was given to me by the Director General. I was also given to understand by the Director General that he made inquiries from the Honourable Member about the name of the particular clerk the Honourable Member had in mind and that the Honourable Member could not give him any information on the subject. If the Honourable Member has since received the information and if he will kindly put down a question on paper, the matter will be looked into.

REVISION OF THE PAY OF THE SUBORDINATE STAFF OF THE OFFICE  
OF THE DIRECTOR GENERAL, POSTS AND TELEGRAPHS.

1003. **\*Mr. Amar Nath Dutt:** Is it a fact:

- (a) that the subordinate staff of the office of the Director General, Posts and Telegraphs, memorialised H. E. the Viceroy in August, 1924, praying for the grant in their favour of an adequate increase in their scales of pay on the analogy of the attached offices of the like status?
- (b) if the answer to the above is in the affirmative, will the Government be pleased to say what action has been taken by them on that prayer of the officials within these past two years, and if not taken up till now, whether the Government propose to take favourable action at an early date?

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

(b) The matter is under the consideration of Government.

OFFICIATING AND PERMANENT APPOINTMENTS AS SUPERINTENDENTS OF  
POST OFFICES.

1004. **\*Mr. Amar Nath Dutt:** (a) Will Government be pleased to state the number of men in the waiting list of:

- (1) Probationary Superintendents of Post Offices,
- (2) Passed departmental officials for appointments as Superintendents of Post Offices?

(b) How is seniority fixed in case of (1) and (2) above in case of (a) officiating and (b) permanent appointments as Superintendents of Post Offices?

**The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra:** (a) (1) 15; (2) 44.

(b) For the purpose of permanent appointment to a Superintendent's post, seniority in the case of Probationary Superintendents is determined by the date of appointment as Probationary Superintendent. In the case of passed departmental officials seniority is reckoned by the date of passing the examination or by pay or length of service in respect of several officials passing the examination in the same year. These principles are followed also in the case of long officiating arrangements. In short officiating vacancies local arrangements are usually made.



OFFICIATING AND PERMANENT APPOINTMENTS AS SUPERINTENDENTS OF  
POST OFFICES.

1005. **\*Mr. Amar Nath Dutt:** (a) Is it a fact that in the case of Post Office departmental officials seniority in the waiting list is fixed in accordance with the year they have passed the examination and the pay drawn, whereas in the Telegraph Branch the seniority of telegraphists passing the Engineering Supervisors' examination is fixed according to the results obtained in the examination?

(b) Do Government propose to adopt the same principle in giving officiating and permanent appointments as Superintendents of Post Offices to passed officials as is done in the case of telegraphists passing the Engineering Supervisors' examination?

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

(b) No.

OFFICIATING AND PERMANENT APPOINTMENTS AS SUPERINTENDENTS OF  
POST OFFICES.

1006. **\*Mr. Amar Nath Dutt:** (a) How are the Director-General's office-clerks who have passed the departmental examination provided in officiating and permanent appointments of Superintendents of Post Offices?

(b) How many men of the Director-General's office are at present officiating as Superintendents of Post Offices?

(c) Is it a fact that men in the Circle offices, although junior to these men in the waiting list, are officiating in preference to some of the Director-General's men?

**The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra:** (a) In short vacancies local arrangements are ordinarily made by Heads of Circles. Passed officials of the Director-General's office are however sometimes appointed in such vacancies if there is no passed candidate in the Circle concerned.

In long vacancies and for permanent appointments passed officials of the Director-General's office are appointed according to the principles of seniority explained in my reply to question 1004 part (b).

(b) One.

(c) No.

NUMBER OF EUROPEANS AND INDIANS RECRUITED TO THE SUPERIOR  
SERVICES OF THE EAST INDIAN RAILWAY AND THE GREAT INDIAN  
PENINSULA RAILWAY ENTITLED TO THE LEE  
COMMISSION CONCESSIONS.

1007. **\*Mr. B. Das:** Will Government be pleased to give the number of (a) Europeans (b) Indians taken in 1924-25, 1925-26, in the East Indian Railway and the Great Indian Peninsula Railway in the superior services entitled to the Lee Commission concessions?

**Mr. G. G. Sim:** The East Indian Railway was taken over by the State on 1st January, 1925, and the Great Indian Peninsula Railway on 1st July, 1925. For the more important superior services of State Railways recruitment is based on the requirements of all the State Railways, and out of the total recruits certain numbers are allotted to the different Railways according to their requirements.

For the Indian Service of Engineers two, both Indians, were allotted to the East Indian Railway and none to the Great Indian Peninsula Railway as none were required for that line. In addition to the above, 4 short-term Engineers (all Indians) were posted to the East Indian Railway and 3 (all Indians) were posted to the Great Indian Peninsula Railway.

A European Bridge Engineer was also appointed in 1925 for the East Indian Railway.

For the Traffic Department—three probationers (all Indians) were appointed in 1925, and two of them were posted to the Great Indian Peninsula Railway.

For the East Indian Railway, two short-term Electrical Engineers—one Indian and one European—were appointed in 1925.

NUMBER OF INDIANS AND EUROPEANS RECRUITED BY EACH OF THE  
COMPANY-MANAGED RAILWAYS WHICH HAVE ACCEPTED THE LEE  
COMMISSION CONCESSIONS.

1008. **\*Mr. B. Das:** Will Government be pleased to state the number of Indians and Europeans recruited during 1924-25, 1925-26, by each of the Company-managed railways that have accepted Lee Commission concessions in the superior services?

**Mr. G. G. Sim:** Government have no information. But I would state for the information of the Honourable Member that the policy of Indianisation as recommended by the Lee Commission has only very recently been accepted by the Company-worked Railways.

COMPENSATION TO PERSONS DOMICILED IN INDIA IN RESPECT OF SUFFER-  
ING OR DAMAGE CAUSED BY ENEMY ACTION DURING THE LATE WAR.

1009. **\*Mr. B. Das:** (a) Will Government be pleased to state whether a grant of 25 lakhs for the purpose of compensating private individuals domiciled in India in respect of suffering or damage caused by enemy action during the late war have been distributed in any way?

(b) Will Government be pleased to state if the said sum is sufficient to meet the damages to be awarded to those suffering from enemy action?

(c) If the reply be in the negative, will Government be pleased to state if they intend to claim further sums from the Home Government to that effect?

**Mr. L. Graham:** (a) The awards have been made and are in the process of payment.

(b) The answer is in the affirmative.

(c) Does not arise.

REPARATION CLAIMS PAID IN INDIA.

1010. **\*Mr. B. Das:** (a) Will Government be pleased to lay a statement on the table of persons receiving reparation claims to Indians suffering from enemy action?

(b) How many of these have already been paid and how many are still left to be paid?

**Mr. L. Graham:** (a) The statement is in the course of preparation and will be laid on the table when all payments have been made.

(b) The preparations for actual payments have only recently been completed. Forms of receipt are being sent to the payees on return of which cheques will be issued.

**Lieutenant-Colonel H. A. J. Gidney:** Will the Honourable Member kindly say if these claims are only in respect of claims against countries other than Turkey or whether the Turkish reparation claims are also included?

**Mr. L. Graham:** I really cannot trust my memory on that point.

**The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett:** They are included.

**Lieutenant-Colonel H. A. J. Gidney:** Do I understand the Honourable the Finance Member to say that they are included?

**The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett:** Yes, in the total sum of 25 lakhs that has been provided by this House, provision has been made for payment of claims in respect of Turkey.

**Lieutenant-Colonel H. A. J. Gidney:** When I was in England last I visited the Officer in charge of this Department at the India Office and the International Reparation Commission in Paris, and I was informed that this was not so, that no such provision had been allotted, and I ask this question so that the matter may be clarified, because I understand that no allotment has been sanctioned.

**Mr. L. Graham:** In respect of which claims?

**Lieutenant-Colonel H. A. J. Gidney:** Turkish claims.

**Mr. L. Graham:** Turkish claims are still under investigation.

#### THE COOLIE NUISANCE AT HOWRAH STATION.

1011. **\*Mr. Ahmad Ali Khan:** (a) Has the attention of Government been drawn to the letter that appeared in the *Statesman* of the 7th February, 1926, regarding the coolie nuisance at Howrah station?

(b) Do Government propose to inquire into the matter and take necessary action?

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** (a) Government have seen the letter referred to.

(b) The Honourable Member is referred to the answers given in this House on 8th February 1926 to Mr. Joshi's question No. 716 and supplementary questions.

**Mr. Chaman Lal:** What is this coolie nuisance mentioned in this question, may I know?

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** I really forget.

## PURCHASE OF FOREIGN RAILS BY COMPANY-MANAGED RAILWAYS.

1012. **\*Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta:** Is it a fact that the Indian Railways not under Government management are at present contemplating the purchase of foreign rails?

## IMPOSITION OF A DUTY ON FOREIGN RAILS SIMILAR TO THE DUTIES IMPOSED ON OTHER CLASSES OF STEEL.

1013. **\*Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta:** Do the Government propose to consider the advisability of immediately imposing a duty similar to the duties imposed on other classes of steel on foreign rails in order to protect the Indian manufacturer against such foreign imports? If not, why not?

## ORDERS ISSUED BY THE LONDON AND NORTH EASTERN RAILWAY IN ENGLAND REGARDING THE USE OF STEEL OF BRITISH MANUFACTURE.

1014. **\*Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta:** Are Government aware that recently the London and North Eastern Railway in England passed orders to the effect that no steel other than that of British manufacture was to be used for certain articles on their Railway and have Government brought this expression of policy on the part of this English Railway to the notice of the Indian Railways who contemplate ordering foreign steel?

## IMPORT BY COMPANY-MANAGED RAILWAYS OF A SUFFICIENT QUANTITY OF FOREIGN RAILS IN ORDER TO EVADE ANY FURTHER PROTECTIVE DUTIES THAT MAY BE IMPOSED ON STEEL.

1015. **\*Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta:** Is it a fact that the Indian Railways not under Government management are contemplating the order for immediate delivery of a sufficient quantity of foreign rails to meet their requirements for several years with the object of evading any protective duties that may be imposed as a result of the further inquiry into protection for steel promised by Government?

(b) If so, are Government taking any steps to prevent such evasion?

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** I propose to reply to questions Nos. 1012, 1013, 1014 and 1015 together.

(1012) No. The position is that certain of the Company-managed railways contemplate calling for tenders for the supply of rails for next year. In preparing their tenders Indian manufacturers of rails will have the advantage of the protection and bounties afforded to them by the Steel Industry (Protection) Act and by the recent Resolution passed in the Legislature.

(1013) The Indian manufacturer already receives in regard to rails by way of duty *plus* bounty the same assistance as he receives in regard to other articles he manufactures. It is not understood that the Honourable Member suggests that a greater degree of protection should be given to rails than to other steel articles manufactured in India.

(1014) Yes.

(1015) (a) The answer is in the negative.

(b) Does not arise.

## UNSTARRED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

### THE THALL PROJECT.

183. **Khan Bahadur Ghulam Bari:** Is it a fact that the Sind Sagar Doab Colonization Act I of 1902 (Punjab) was passed with the previous sanction of the then Secretary of State for India and the Government of India with a view to begin the construction of the Sind Sagar Canal, commonly known as the Thall Project, in the near future?

**Mr. J. W. Bhore:** The Act in question was passed with the object stated but received the previous sanction of the Governor General and not of the Secretary of State under section 5 of the Indian Councils Act, 1892.

### THE THALL PROJECT AND OWNERSHIP OF LANDS UNDER THAT PROJECT.

184. **Khan Bahadur Ghulam Bari:** Is it a fact that under section 5 of Act I of 1902, the Government of Punjab becomes the owner of three-fourths of the common lands in the Thall tract in the event of the construction of the Thall Canal?

**Mr. J. W. Bhore:** The Honourable Member is referred to the text of section 5 (b) of the Act cited by him.

### PARTITION OF LANDS BELONGING TO THE THALL PROPRIETORS.

185. **Khan Bahadur Ghulam Bari:** Are Government aware that because of Act I of 1902, the Thall proprietors are not allowed to partition their common lands and thus bring them under barani cultivation?

**Mr. J. W. Bhore:** The Government of India have no information on the subject.

### TOTAL AREA OF LAND TO BE SURRENDERED UNDER THE SIND SAGAR DOAB COLONIZATION ACT.

186. **Khan Bahadur Ghulam Bari:** Is it a fact that the total area of the common lands which is to be surrendered under section 5 of Act I of 1902, approximately comes to one and a half million acres?

**The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra:** Yes.

### THE THALL PROJECT.

187. **Khan Bahadur Ghulam Bari:** Is it a fact that in 1919 the Punjab Government had submitted the Thall Project in its entirety to the Government of India for sanction?

**The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra:** Yes. But in submitting the project the Punjab Government left two points of technical importance to be decided by the expert advisers of the Government of India.

### THE THALL PROJECT.

188. **Khan Bahadur Ghulam Bari:** Is it a fact that the Thall Project was sent back to the Punjab Government with the remarks that the project should be worked out in its details and submitted again to the Government of India as early as possible?

**The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra:** The project was returned to the Punjab Government with the remark that its consideration must be deferred until the Sukkur and Sutlej Projects had been submitted to the Secretary of State. Meanwhile a further report on certain technical details was asked for.

#### THE LESSER THALL PROJECT.

189. **Khan Bahadur Ghulam Bari:** Is it a fact that in October last, the Punjab Government strongly recommended the construction of the Lesser Thall Project and asked that it should be sanctioned immediately?

**The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra:** Yes. The Punjab Government recommended early sanction to the project.

#### THE BIGGER THALL PROJECT.

190. **Khan Bahadur Ghulam Bari:** Is it a fact that the Bigger Thall Project required the withdrawal of nearly 6,000 cusecs of water from the Indus at Kalabagh?

#### THE LESSER THALL PROJECT.

191. **Khan Bahadur Ghulam Bari:** Is it a fact that the Lesser Thall Project which is one half of the size of the Bigger Thall Project and which is now before the Government of India for sanction will require only 3,000 cusecs of water?

**The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra:** I propose to answer questions Nos. 190 and 191 together. The figures mentioned are the figures given by the Punjab Government for the *rabi* season.

#### SUFFICIENCY OF WATER IN THE INDUS FOR THE SUKKUR BARRAGE AND OTHER IRRIGATION SCHEMES IN THE PUNJAB.

192. **Khan Bahadur Ghulam Bari:** Is it a fact that some time ago the Government of India had expressed the opinion that there is sufficient water in the Indus for the Sukkur Barrage as well as for all the coming irrigation schemes in the Punjab?

**The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra:** The answer is in the negative.

#### DISPUTE BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY AND THE PUNJAB GOVERNMENT REGARDING APPORTIONMENT OF WATER IN THE INDUS.

193. **Khan Bahadur Ghulam Bari:** (a) Will the Government be pleased to state the exact nature of the dispute between the Government of Bombay and the Punjab Government with regard to the apportionment of water in the Indus?

(b) Will the Government be pleased to state when it is likely to decide this question?

**The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra:** (a) The dispute relates to the question whether on the completion of the Sutlej Valley Project there will be sufficient water in the Indus and its tributaries to allow of other large projects being undertaken without prejudice to the Sukkur Barrage Project.

(b) Government are not in a position to say when a settlement of the matter will be arrived at.

ARTICLE IN THE *TIMES* REGARDING WATER REQUIRED FOR THE SUKKUR BARRAGE.

194. **Khan Bahadur Ghulam Bari:** Has the attention of the Government of India been drawn to an article written by Mr. F. W. Woods, late Chief Engineer of the Punjab, in the Engineering Supplement of the *Times*, dated 5th April, 1924, in which he conclusively proves that the gauges and discharges at Sukkur remained unaffected during the last 50 years in spite of increasing withdrawal of water of over twenty-five thousand cusecs for the Punjab Irrigation Works and that a further withdrawal of 6,000 cusecs for the Thall Project will not reduce the discharge at Sukkur in winter?

**The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra:** The answer is in the affirmative.

SPEECH OF DR. SUMMERS, LATE CHIEF ENGINEER OF SIND, BEFORE THE EAST INDIA ASSOCIATION REGARDING THE AVERAGE LEVEL OF WATER AT SUKKUR.

195. **Khan Bahadur Ghulam Bari:** Has the attention of the Government of India been drawn to a speech which Dr. Summers, late Chief Engineer of Sind, had read before the East India Association in July, 1921, and in which he said that the average level of water at Sukkur during the last 60 years remained unaltered while the average withdrawal of water of the Punjab Irrigation Works increased up to 26 thousand cusecs?

**The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra:** The answer is in the affirmative.

REPEAL OF THE SIND SAGAR DOAB COLONIZATION ACT.

196. **Khan Bahadur Ghulam Bari:** Are the Government of India aware that the Thall proprietors and the local Legislature are passing for the repeal of Act I of 1902, in case the construction of the Thall Project is not begun in October, 1926?

**The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra:** The Government of India are aware that the Thall proprietors and the local Legislature may press for a repeal of Act I of 1902 in the event of the commencement of work on the construction of the Thall project being further delayed.

## MESSAGES FROM THE COUNCIL OF STATE.

**Secretary of the Assembly:** Sir, three Messages have been received from the Secretary of the Council of State. The first one runs as follows:

"I am directed to inform you that the Bill to provide for the registration of Trade Unions and in certain respects to define the law relating to registered Trade Unions in British India, which was passed by the Legislative Assembly at its meeting held on the 8th February 1926, was passed by the Council of State at its meeting on the 25th February 1926, with the following amendment:

In sub-clause (j) of clause 15 for the words beginning with 'provided such' and ending with 'at the time of such payment' the following was substituted, namely:

'Provided that the expenditure in respect of such contributions in any financial year shall not at any time during that year be in excess of one-fourth of the combined total of the gross income which has up to that time accrued to the general funds of the Trade Union during that year and of the balance at the credit of those funds at the commencement of that year.'

2. The Council of State requests the concurrence of the Legislative Assembly in the amendment."

Sir, I lay on the table the Bill as amended by the Council of State.

The second Message runs as follows:

"I am directed to inform you that the Bill further to amend the Legal Practitioners Act, 1879, which was passed by the Legislative Assembly at its meeting held on the 18th February 1926, was passed by the Council of State at its meeting on the 25th February 1926, with the following amendments:

In clause (a) of the definition proposed to be inserted in the Legal Practitioners Act, 1879, by clause 2 of the Bill:

(1) the words 'or from any persons interested in any legal business' were omitted, and

(2) for the words 'in such business', where they first occur, the words 'in any legal business' were substituted.

2. The Council of State requests the concurrence of the Legislative Assembly in the amendments."

Sir, I lay on the table the Bill as amended by the Council of State.

The third Message runs as follows:

"I am directed to inform you that the Council of State have, at their meeting held on the 25th February 1926, agreed without any amendment to the Bill to provide for the validation of certain promissory notes, which was passed by the Legislative Assembly on the 18th February 1926."

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

### SECOND STAGE—contd.

#### *Expenditure from Revenue—contd.*

#### DEMAND NO. 4—WORKING EXPENSES: ADMINISTRATION—contd.

**Mr. President:** The motion before the House is:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 12,69,00,000 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, 1927, in respect of 'Working Expenses: Administration'."

**Mr. M. K. Acharya** (South Arcot *cum* Chingleput: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I rise to move "that the Demand under the head 'Working Expenses: Administration' be reduced by Rs. 100" on account of the failure to investigate the grievances of railway subordinate employees. It is printed as No. 3 in the supplementary list.



**Mr. President:** Order, order. That means that Honourable Members who have motions in their names before this motion have no desire to move them? Honourable Members know that we have reached motion No. 81, and if the Honourable Member in whose name motion No. 82 stands does not get up, it means that he does not wish to move it.

**Lala Duni Chand** (Ambala Division: Non-Muhammadian): Sir, I desire to move all the motions that stand in my name.

**Mr. President:** If the Honourable Member desires to move the motions standing in his name, then he must rise when we reach them.

**Lala Duni Chand:** Mine is No. 89, Sir.

**Mr. A. Rangaswami Iyengar** (Tanjore *cum* Trichinopoly: Non-Muhammadian Rural): I rise to a point of order, Sir. I desire to know what the procedure is on this amendment. I take it that the position is that the original motion is before the House, and that those who have given notice of motions should move them when the time for them arrives. Am I to understand that the Chair will put every one of these motions item by item to the House so that a discussion may take place on them? What is the procedure, we want to know?

**Mr. President:** Motions will be taken in the order in which they stand on the agenda paper. If any Honourable Member in whose name any motion stands does not rise in his seat when it is reached, he will lose his chance of moving it. That is the procedure which we have followed so far and the Chair sees no reason to make any change.

**Mr. N. M. Joshi** (Nominated: Labour Interests): I want to know which No. is being moved?

**Mr. M. K. Acharya:** I do not move No. 82, Sir.

**Mr. K. Rama Aiyangar** (Madras and Ramnad *cum* Tinnevely: Non-Muhammadian Rural): Several of these motions repeat themselves and several have been disposed of. For instance, Indianization appears in five or six places. Some arrangement may perhaps be made to avoid repetition.

**Mr. President:** The Honourable Member will notice that No. 82 is not disposed of by No. 81, and therefore, if Mr. Acharya does not rise to move 82, he loses his chance. When Mr. Acharya rose, the Chair thought that he was moving 82. Instead, he read out No. 3 on the supplementary list. That made the confusion. The Honourable Member should have stated that he does not wish to move No. 82 and should then have sat down. But, instead, the Honourable Member began by moving No. 3 on the supplementary list. That created the whole difficulty.

**Mr. M. K. Acharya:** I do not move No. 82, Sir.

**Dr. K. G. Lohokare** (Bombay Central Division: Non-Muhammadian Rural): I have already included No. 83 in 81.

*Failure to deal adequately with Mela Traffic.*

**Colonel J. D. Crawford** (Bengal: European): Sir, I move:

“ That the Demand under the head ‘ Working Expenses : Administration ’ be reduced by Rs. 100.”

I am aware, Sir, of the special facilities which are made at certain big pilgrimage centres such as Puri, Juggernath, Hardwar, Allahabad, Benares and other places and of the special arrangements made in these places to deal with the pilgrim traffic. But my intention in moving this motion is to draw the attention of the Honourable the Commerce Member to a condition of affairs such as I saw with my own eyes on January, the 14th last, the date of the partial solar eclipse. I was travelling from Howrah by a passenger train which passes through Magra. At Magra the platform was one seething mass of humanity. There was an immediate rush on the part of individuals on the platform to get into such accommodation as was available on this passenger train; the men climbed in through the windows. The women with little children on their hips, the men with luggage on their heads, everybody having *gurraks* of Ganges water, fighting for accommodation in the train, putting into the shade the fight that goes on in the West End of London for seats on an omnibus during the autumn sales. I got out of the train and looked into the carriage next door to mine, which was a second class compartment, and found that it accommodated 60 persons, none of whom, by the way, had any tickets. (Laughter.)

**Pandit Shamlal Nehru** (Meerut Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Did you examine their tickets?

**Colonel J. D. Crawford**: I asked them, and they said “ No.” They had not an opportunity of buying tickets.

**Pandit Shamlal Nehru**: All the 60 of them?

**Colonel J. D. Crawford**: I asked if there was any other special train coming, and so far as I could get information there appeared to be none. That was the situation at Magra. I travelled on and reached Mokameh Ghat in the early hours of the morning of January 15th, and the mail train on the other side was exactly in the same position. There were 10 first class passengers including 3 ladies and with great difficulty we managed to find our way to one first class carriage into which we all got with whatever luggage we could get. The train was like a hairy caterpillar, the hairs being human beings sticking out from all parts of the train. Every place on the footboard was very carefully reserved by each individual. There was one railway guard to look after the whole crowd. There was no effort made to collect the tickets and even sell tickets.

**Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh** (Tirhut Division: Non-Muhammadan): That was the Bengal and North-Western Railway.

**Colonel J. D. Crawford**: At the next junction I found one ticket collector endeavouring to check tickets of passengers who were in a second class carriage and tried to charge everybody by that class. It seemed to me that it was not playing the game. The point I wish to make is that there did not appear to be adequate facilities for dealing with this traffic. Firstly, there was considerable danger to the safety of the travelling public. Secondly, there were many persons who were detained at stations, so far as I can see, for a considerable length of time. and even though some Honourable

Members on the opposite Benches object to people travelling in wagons. I think that many of these persons, on a public holiday like that, would have only been too glad to have been able to get a seat even in a wagon. One man informed me that he had to wait four days in the station waiting to get on to Darbhanga. It seems to me that greater facilities should be afforded and steps should be taken to deal with this traffic. As it is, not only is the public put to considerable inconvenience—the ordinary travelling public and the holiday travelling public—but the Railways also must be losing a very large amount of revenue through failure to deal with the traffic offering on these occasions. I therefore move, Sir,

“ That the Demand under the head ‘ Working Expenses : Administration ’ be reduced by Rs. 100.”

**Maulvi Mohammad Shafee** (Tirhut Division: Muhammadan): Sir, the real culprit in this respect is the Bengal and North-Western Railway which runs through the districts of the Tirhut and Bhagalpur Divisions. We find that on the Bengal and North-Western Railway no arrangements are made in regard to such traffic, although it is known to everybody who comes from that part of the country that on almost every occasion when there is either an eclipse of the moon or of the sun, or other Hindu festival a lot of people travel from one place to another. There are several places on the Ganges in the province of Bihar and Orissa to which thousands and thousands of people go to take their holy bath. We find, Sir, that such people are huddled together in wagons and in third class carriages. Where there should be 8 or 10 persons, I have seen with my own eyes more than three times that number put in. I have seen people going on to the roof of the carriages when they do not find any room on the footboards of the carriages. Not only during mela occasions but in ordinary seasons also we find coolies travelling from Chupra to Katihar on the footboards of the carriages, and sometimes these coolies have to travel on the roofs of the carriages. I have complained about this to the authorities concerned, but I do not see that they have got any consideration for our complaints. I think, Sir, that a very strong advisory committee should be appointed to advise the Bengal and North-Western Railway on this point very strongly and they should see that their advice is acted upon by the railway authorities. I submit, Sir, that the railway authorities will do a great deal of good to the people of Bihar if they take this matter into consideration, otherwise the thing will go from bad to worse.

**\*Maulvi Abul Kasem** (Bengal: Nominated Non-Official): Sir, mention has been made about the arrangements being deficient to deal with mela traffic. Sir, the railway companies have moved a little in the matter by building special carriages to deal with these occasions. But they are neither sufficient nor adequate and I hope the railway companies will take steps to improve matters. But I rise to speak about a particular matter. The station of Magra has been mentioned. It is a small station no doubt for ordinary traffic, but it has got a very large and huge traffic during Hindu festivals. Besides that, Magra happens to be the centre of a sacred Hindu place where lots of people, about a dozen or so almost every day, get down in order to carry either the dead bodies of their relatives or some portion of the dead (*An Honourable Member*: “ Ashes ”) to throw it into the Ganges. They have no third class waiting shed at Magra. I have seen that men and women alighting from the trains at midnight—unfortunately

\*Speech not corrected by the Honourable Member.

[Maulvi Abul Kasem.]

the down trains reach there by midnight because they have to reach Calcutta in the morning—have to wait in the open air even in the winter months. So, when the question of dealing with the mela traffic is taken up, I hope the question of providing waiting-sheds for third class passengers at Magra will be taken into consideration.

**Pandit Shamlal Nehru:** It is an offence under the Railways Act to travel on the footboards, but it is not only on the Bengal and North-Western Railway that passengers travel on the footboards. Many times I have seen a very large number of passengers travelling on the footboards on fast trains between Ludhiana and Lahore on the North Western Railway and, although it has been made an offence under the Railways Act, the recognised rule on the North Western Railway is that the passengers are allowed to travel on the left side of the train and not on the right side. I inquired about it and I was told that as there was no room they were allowed to travel on the footboards on the left side so that there might not be any accidents owing to any passing trains on the double lines. I think that it is an offence committed by the railway authorities and some severe action should be taken against them.

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

**Khan Bahadur W. M. Hussanally** (Sind: Muhammadan): I was under the impression that these complaints were confined to my province, but I am now surprised to find that there is complaint all over India. In Sind there are several shrines and *melas*, especially the shrine at Lalshahabaz Kalandar, where thousands of people attend during the yearly fairs, and I have myself seen hundreds of them travelling without tickets on the footboards and other places wherever they could get some space. I expect that we shall get some assurance from the Honourable the Railway Member that in future he will provide special trains on such occasions like these all over India.

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** (Member for Commerce and Railways): This question of *mela* traffic has, I am glad, assumed a somewhat different aspect. (*An Honourable Member:* "Not the *mela* traffic in Lahore.") Quite a short time ago the complaint against us was that we carried these pilgrims in goods wagons and I notice that nobody who has spoken on this subject to-day has made that charge against us. (*Mr. A. Rangaswami Iyengar:* "The charge does exist.") They have merely charged us that in one or two particular stations and on one or two railways in India the railways were overwhelmed with a rush of traffic and were not able to cope with that traffic. I say, and I do not think that anybody in this House will contradict me, that railways in all parts of the world have occasionally to meet with that charge, and the reason for it is perfectly obvious. If you have your rolling stock sufficient to cope with the maximum possible traffic which may occur on one day of the year it must obviously mean that you would have to have more rolling stock than is necessary for your ordinary normal traffic, and more rolling stock means more interest charges, which inevitably react on your fares. At the same time I would not like the House to believe that we do not recognise the importance of trying to make the best arrangements we can for these heavy rushes of traffic and I claim that we have attained very considerable success in that respect. I see my Honourable friend, Mr. Rangaswami Iyengar, shakes

his head. During the *mela* in Allahabad last January I believe we carried over a million passengers to Allahabad in a very short time. We not only carried them there but carried them back to their places, and was there any complaint in the Press or anywhere else about the arrangements that were made by the railways concerned? Take Hardwar. Enormous numbers of passengers go there and we have made the most complete arrangements so far as the carriage of those passengers is concerned, and I submit that we have attained a very considerable success. It has been suggested that the Bengal and North Western Railway is not up to the mark in this matter. The much abused Railway Board, it will surprise Honourable Members to know, have already been in correspondence with the Bengal and North Western Railway on this very point and we have had statistics from that railway as to what provision they have made for these heavy rushes of traffic. They have given us statistics of the additional carriages which they have put on during the last five years. They have increased their carriage accommodation in the last five years, I think I am correct in saying, by about 35 per cent. Unfortunately, the growth of traffic on that railway has been greater than 35 per cent. and that is why there appears to be no improvement. We have written to the Bengal and North Western Railway drawing very serious attention to the matter and telling them that they should increase their rolling stock accommodation in this matter. In these circumstances I hope that this motion will not be pressed.

**Colonel J. D. Crawford:** I beg to withdraw my motion.

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

*Non-stoppage of mail trains at several important railway stations.*

**Lala Duni Chand:** I beg to move:

"That the Demand under the head 'Working Expenses: Administration' be reduced by Rs. 100."

My object in moving this motion is to raise the question of the non-stoppage of mail trains at several important railway stations.

There was a time not long ago when the mail trains used to stop at a larger number of railway stations than they stop now. They used to stop at almost every second or third station. Sometime later the number of stations where the mail trains stopped was considerably reduced, and recently the number has been still further reduced. I am afraid the time may not be far off when the mail trains may not stop anywhere except at the starting stations and the terminus stations. It appears that the mail trains almost avoid taking in passengers. I would like to give the House a few figures regarding some of the mail trains. The Bombay-Punjab Mail, Great Indian Peninsula line, stops between Delhi and Lahore, a distance of over 300 miles, at 11 stations only out of 66 stations. Out of these 11 stations four are cantonments that are situated at a distance of one or two miles from the towns where also the mail trains stop. So, practically out of 66 stations the mail trains stop only at 7 stations. Take the case of the Calcutta-Punjab Mail. It stops at 8 stations out of 49 and out of them 3 are cantonments. So, practically the Calcutta-Punjab mail between Saharanpur and Lahore stops only at 5 stations. The Punjab Mail between Kalka and Delhi, a distance of over 160 miles, stops only at 5 stations out of 23 stations. I know the arguments that will be used by

[Lala Duni Chand.]

the Honourable the Railway Member or the Honourable Mr. Sim in support of this. I want to meet them in anticipation. It will be said that it is in order to speed up the trains that the number of halting stations has been reduced. It is all right. I say that the mail trains may be speeded up but they should not be speeded up at the cost of the passengers. The convenience of the passengers is a very important factor to be taken into consideration by the railway administration. It may also be said that in addition to mail trains express trains and fast passenger trains are being run. But I say that this will not do. The fast passenger trains or express trains cannot serve the same purpose that the mail trains do. They do not suit a good many passengers. It may also be said that at certain stations very few first and second class passengers get into the train. This practice of not stopping the mail trains at almost every station has come into vogue only recently. The mail trains have been running in this country for over 50 or 60 years. I cannot possibly see any reason, if the trains were stopping at some important stations during the last 50 or 60 years, why all of a sudden all those stations should be denied the privilege of having the mail trains stopping at those stations. Perhaps it will be said by my Honourable friend Mr. Sim that in moving this motion I am actuated by personal and, he might say, almost selfish considerations. I do want to plead guilty to that charge but my pleading guilty to that charge adds to the force of the motion that I am placing before the House. The place to which I belong, namely, Ambala City, has enjoyed the privilege of the stoppage of mail trains for the last 50 or 60 years. The North Western Railway was started sometime in 1855 or 1860. Ever since then Ambala has had the advantage of the stoppage of mail trains. All of a sudden my place has been robbed of this privilege since September 1923. If Ambala were an insignificant place I would not have raised any complaint. Ambala is the headquarters not only of a civil division but also of a revenue division. It is one of the most important places in the Punjab, if not in India. It is true that the mail trains stop at Ambala Cantonment but Ambala Cantonment is not like other cantonments. There is a distance of five miles between the city and Ambala Cantonment. So the stopping of the mail train at Ambala does not in any way help those passengers who have to get into the mail trains from Ambala City. The City has got a very good Station. We have a fairly large number of European officers and others who very much want to travel by the mail trains. I hope Honourable Members will listen to me with patience as I think there is a good deal of feeling on my side on this question. I was pointing out the importance of my place. It is one of the most important centres. It has got one of the greatest cotton markets in India. We have three flour mills. I say there is no reason why a station which is very important from every point of view should be robbed of the privilege of the stoppage of the mail trains there. I have represented this matter in the form of interpellations for the last two years. The authorities will not listen and it is for that reason that I have raised this question. Ambala does not stand by itself. There are several other stations similarly treated. Ambala will not be the only place that will get the benefit if the Government arrange to stop the mail trains there. There are several other stations where the stopping of mail trains is badly needed. I represent not only the view of the public of Ambala but I also represent the official opinion there. The

authorities have been representing from time to time the urgent necessity, the imperative necessity of stopping mail trains at Ambala City and I therefore say there are no reasons why the mail trains should not stop there. I have submitted before you that the convenience of the passengers is the most important factor to be taken into consideration. If the case of Ambala stood alone I would not have raised it. There are in all parts of India several important railway stations which are being treated in the same way. Perhaps it may be said that if you stop the mail trains at small stations, we cannot speed up the trains. I would point out a remedy for this. I know there are several comparatively less important stations between Bombay and Delhi and Calcutta and Delhi where the trains stop at present. You can save time by reducing the time of the stoppage of the mail trains at some of these places, without running the risk of reducing the speed and you can give the advantage of this to places where the trains do not stop now. I therefore desire to put this question very strongly before the railway authorities, and I hope they will listen to the request that has been repeatedly made. With these words I move my motion.

**Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan** (Patna and Chota Nagpur *cum* Orissa : Muhammadan): Now, that this question has been raised I wish to say a few words. I put some questions regarding the non-stoppage of mail trains at an important place like Patna City. I asked some questions in this House, but Government would not listen to me. It was said in reply that Patna City railway station was in close proximity to the Patna Junction station. Sir, the down mail does not stop but the up mail stops at Patna City Station. Merchants and mercantile people have to travel to Calcutta by the down trains. If they go by the express instead of by the mail, they may be two or three hours late. This delay may mean nothing to laymen but to merchants who have several thousands worth of merchandise to send, it is a serious matter. A delay of three or four hours may mean to them a loss of hundreds and thousands of rupees. I think this is a question which the railway authorities should seriously consider. If the up mail train stops at Patna City Station, there is no reason whatever why the down mail train should not also stop there. If the Railway authorities cannot find time they can stop the down mail train at Patna City instead of the up mail train, and as there seems to be no reason whatsoever regarding the non-stoppage of down mail trains at Patna City station it must be stopped there. The ground that the Patna Junction station is very close to Patna City applies equally to the down and up mail trains. Hence in the interest chiefly of the mercantile people of Patna City, down mail trains should stop at the Patna City station, instead of the up mail, if the choice is to be made between the two. With these words I support the motion. The railway authorities must go into the matter, and, as the motion is to draw their attention to the matter, I support it wholeheartedly.

**Syed Majid Baksh:** I just want one little explanation. I remember that last time when I went to Simla the mail stopped at Ambala and  
 12 Noon. I had a hearty meal there. I wish to know since when this has been discontinued.

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** Sir, I must congratulate my friend Lala Duni Chand on his extreme frankness. He brings up a general question but he had not gone very far when he came back to his old King Charles's head about the stopping of the mail train at Ambala City station. Well.

[Sir Charles Innes.]

Sir, I should like to make it perfectly clear that we did not discontinue the stoppage of the mail train at that city station because we wished in any way to show our contempt for Ambala or to put the passengers at Ambala to inconvenience. The fact of the matter was that in 1922 we were faced with the question of cutting down expenses, and secondly we were very anxious to accelerate our mail trains. We had to accelerate our mail train on the section between Lahore and Saharanpur, and we found that if we cut out certain stations we were able to avoid changing engines at Rajpura Junction; and so we cut out certain stations of which Ambala City was one. Now, I do not think that the Honourable Member can really complain that we do Ambala City badly in the matter of rail communication. I have the time-table here and I find there are no less than 9 trains that stop at Ambala City during the day. I am afraid, Sir, we cannot undertake to stop trains, especially our mail trains, at all stations, and though I am sorry for Ambala City, this is a case where the interests of one particular city must give way to the general interest. As regards Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan's complaint, I should like to explain to him that the down mail stops at Patna to take fresh fruit and vegetables for Calcutta, but for the up train there is no traffic of that kind to stop for.

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

“That the Demand under the head ‘Working Expenses : Administration’ be reduced by Rs. 100.”

The motion was negatived.

1. *Loss of Articles while in charge of the Railway Administration.*
2. *Inefficiency and Negligence of the Railway Police.*

**Lala Dui Chand:** Sir, I beg your permission to move my motion\* Nos. 90 and 93 together. By means of motion No. 90 I want to raise the question of loss of articles while in charge of the railway administration, and by means of motion No. 93 I want to raise the question of the inefficiency and negligence of the Railway Police. As the two motions are connected in a way I would move them together with your permission. Also in this way I shall save the time of the House and instead of speaking twice I will speak only once.

**Mr. President:** The Honourable Member may speak on both motions, but only one motion for a cut of Rs. 100 will be finally put to the House.

**Lala Duni Chand:** Sir, in 1920-21 a Committee was appointed by the Governor General in Council to inquire into the existing organization and working of the Railway Police administration in India. It was presided over by Mr. Thompson, Chief Secretary to the Government of the Punjab. The object of that was to overhaul the whole Railway Police administration throughout India. In the course of the inquiry it was admitted that the Railway Police administration required a good deal of reform. I will not

\*90. That the Demand under the head “Working Expenses : Administration” be reduced by Rs. 100.

93. That the Demand under the head “Working Expenses : Administration” be reduced by Rs. 100.



read much of the Report. I will only read one or two passages of the Report. At page 2 we find the case stated thus:

"The case as represented to us is that theft and pilferage from goods in transit are on the increase; that they have attained a magnitude which reflects serious discredit on the police and railway administrations; that in regard to a large portion of the goods traffic the railways are so completely protected under the different forms of risk-note that they are careless of the interests of the public, and that conditions exist and are allowed to continue which make theft and pilferage both easy and safe. As to the nature of these conditions, we mention briefly those in regard to which we have heard complaints in practically every part of India.

Much of the thieving, it is alleged, is done by the railway staff. There is no effective supervision, and the misdeeds of those below are winked at by those who are supposed to control them."

They go on to state:

"And in face of all this, it is claimed that the railways and the police do nothing. Dishonesty on the part of railway subordinates is said to be encouraged by superficial inquiries and inadequate punishments; they are allowed to protect and screen themselves by insisting unreasonably on risk-notes and clear receipts, and to burke complaints by a refusal of open delivery where theft is suspected. As for the police, their work is marred by a desire to shirk responsibility, difficult investigations are not pressed home, and culprits are rarely brought to book.

Some of the witnesses we have heard have given us rough estimates of the extent of their losses. The representative of the Tata Iron and Steel Company said that of the consignments of fruit, fish and vegetables to the industrial colony at Jamshedpur, scarcely one per cent. reached their destination in tact. The Mysore Chamber of Commerce stated that one-half of every consignment of coal was pilfered by women who carry their spoil away openly in baskets. A firm of provision merchants in Bombay estimated that 10 per cent. of their consignments suffered."

So we have got here the testimony of the members of this Committee that thieving and pilferage is going on on a large scale and that a goodly portion of consignments is stolen. I also want to show, Sir, that it was admitted by this Committee that in the course of 10 years the railway administration had to pay 70·27 lakhs for compensation on account of goods lost or damaged. That sum has gone out of the pocket of the tax-payer. At pages 4 and 5 of this Report you will find that there has been . . . . .

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** May I ask the Honourable Member what Report he is referring to?

**Lala Duni Chand:** The Railway Police Report of 1921. On page 2, paragraph 15, you will find that the police figures for crime show that thefts from running goods trains increased from 6,898 in 1915 to 11,227 in 1919. The number of reported thefts from goods sheds and transshipment stations was 4,479 in 1915 and 7,476 in 1919. Convictions in the former were 336 in 1915 and 598 in 1919; and in the latter 969 and 1,778, respectively. The Report says:

"The odds therefore taking India as a whole, are nearly twenty to one in favour of the man who robs a running train, and it is not surprising that the occupation is growing in popularity.

The railways themselves suffer as much as the public. Six hundred maunds of coal are said to be stolen every day at Asansol at the present time, and last year on the East Indian Railway alone thefts of mineral oil belonging to the Company amounted to nearly a quarter of a million gallons.

We think the evidence justified the conclusion that the total value of the property stolen on railways in India does not fall short of a crore of rupees per annum. The number of offences, if all the petty pilferages are included, must run into millions. Of these in 1919, only 33,555 were reported to the police and of the reported cases less than 16 per cent. resulted in conviction."

[Lala Duni Chand.]

These are not irresponsible statements of a man like myself. These are statements, supported by facts and figures, of the Committee that was appointed by the Government themselves to go into this question. It is true that certain recommendations were made by this Committee in order to improve the Railway Police administration and those recommendations are given at page 43 of this Report. I have tried to see whether, since these recommendations were made, any real improvement has been effected in the Railway Police administration. Except in the case of compensation paid on account of things lost or damaged, I have not been able to find any other improvement. But even with regard to the compensation paid on account of goods lost or damaged, the railway administration has been paying sometimes as much as 56 lakhs. That is an enormous sum and the Government should see that the tax-payer is saved from these ravages. I therefore say, Sir, that the state of things as disclosed in this Report is very appalling and the Government should take very stringent steps to stop this state of things. In 1924-25, Rs. 56,70,499 were paid on account of goods lost or damaged on 14 railway lines. It is true that a certain amount of improvement has been effected as compared with the year 1924-25, but still the figure is very alarming. Had I been satisfied that the Railway Police administration since 1921 has been appreciably reformed, I would not have raised this question. I have gone in vain through the pages of these various reports and I do not find any proof of any kind of improvement. Sometimes murders are committed in the trains, sometimes cases of rape take place. It was only a short time ago, Sir, that a young man and his young wife were travelling together in a female compartment. Some railway official ordered the husband to get out of the train.

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** On a point of order, Sir, has this got anything to do with the loss of articles while in charge of the railway administration?

**Mr. President:** The Honourable Member is referring to motion No. 93 which deals with inefficiency and negligence of the Railway Police.

**Lala Duni Chand:** The young husband was ordered by some railway official to get out of the compartment in which he was travelling with his wife. At some station further on, the railway official entered that compartment and committed an outrage upon that helpless young woman.

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** May I ask what is the authority for this?

**Lala Duni Chand:** My personal authority. The case was started against some railway official, but it resulted in the acquittal of the man. Efforts were made by the railway people to spoil the proof in that case. Actually there was a case in a Court of Ambala City only a few months ago. That is a fact.

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** What? That the man was acquitted?

**Lala Duni Chand:** There are other kinds of crimes also that are committed fairly often and it is high time that the Government should try to remove this state of things. My object in raising this motion is that the attention of the Government should be drawn to this state of things and

that the Government should take real and earnest steps to remove this grievance of the public. My object is not in any way to spite the police or the railway administration. My object is simply to tell the truth fearlessly and frankly and to emphasise upon the attention of the Government Members the gravity of the situation and the importance of the question. I may tell you that the popularity or otherwise of the railway administration depends upon those things with which the public are concerned. It is a matter with which the public is very much concerned, and I hope Government will take note of it. I know the Government sometimes promise to take steps. I will not be satisfied with mere assurance on the side of the Government. I would like to have an assurance that the Government will take real and earnest steps to remove the complaints that underlie these two motions of mine. By doing so, Government will be improving the railway administration; at the same time Government will be doing good to the public and inspire confidence in the public. I hope that before the Honourable the Railway Member lays down the reins of his office he will do something in this direction and in other directions with which the public is greatly concerned. I hope the Government will carry out the objects of the two motions of mine. With these few words, Sir, I move my motion No. 90. I shall move my next motion without making any speech. I move motion No. 90 that stands in my name:

“ That the Demand under the head ‘ Working Expenses : Administration ’ be reduced by Rs. 100.”

**Mr. President:** The Honourable Member must understand that he has raised and discussed both questions on one motion. He will not be allowed to discuss either question over again on any other motion.

**Lala Duni Chand:** With your kind permission, Sir, I shall move the motion No. 93:

“ That the Demand under the head ‘ Working Expenses : Administration ’ be reduced by Rs. 100.”

**Mr. President:** The Honourable Member may move either motion No. 90 or No. 93. Only one motion, that the Demand under the head ‘ Working Expenses : Administration ’ be reduced by Rs. 100, will be put to the House.

**Lala Duni Chand:** Sir, I move No. 93:

“ That the Demand under the head ‘ Working Expenses : Administration ’ be reduced by Rs. 100.”

**Mr. C. Duraiswami Aiyangar** (Madras ceded districts and Chittoor: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, it is not without a sense of shyness that I refer to a personal question which I stated the other day when the Chair put a stop to it. Sir, it is a matter connected immediately with the Railway Police in the Delhi station, and I am narrating two incidents, one relating to myself and another relating to another Honourable Member, Pandit Shambhu Dayal Misra. Within a space of two days both of us were robbed by railway servants, two train cleaners who entered the compartment. His case was on the 16th August 1925 and mine was on the 18th August 1925. When we were travelling from our place to Simla and when the train was standing at the platform here, the thefts were committed. Both the thefts were duly reported to the authorities there. And, so far as my theft was concerned—not theft committed by me but the theft of my property—

[Mr. C. Duraiswami Aiyangar.]

I must state that it was a very valuable property that was lost. It was a cash box containing cash and valuable documents to the extent of Rs. 13,000 and a number of other papers amongst which were also mingled some of the raffle tickets of my friend Mr. K. Rama Aiyangar. Sir, the theft was committed on the night of the 18th August when the train was stopping at the platform and when I got down to ask my servant to get into the compartment to put my things right. He thought that the two other persons who had entered in the compartment were railway cleaners—in fact, they were train cleaners—and they got into the compartment in the usual way in the course of their duty and my servant was thrown off his guard. The next morning when we reached Kalka I discovered that my cash box was stolen and I immediately sent a wire to the railway station here. What was done was that two or three days after the incident a Railway Sub-Inspector of Police assisted by some other person came to me in Simla and asked me to give some further particulars. I thought that he was taking prompt steps in the matter because he came up to Simla only two or three days after my complaint. But I was disappointed to see him in Simla itself even two or three days after he had taken the particulars from me. So I inferred that it was not for investigation that he had come to Simla, but it was more for a pleasure trip under the pretext of my complaint. Then, Sir, I again reported to the Superintendent of Railway Police and I was asked to send my servant to the station here in order to identify the persons who were employed at the railway platform. A number of persons were arranged for identification parade and my servant said that not one of them was the person concerned. Then he was sent back, and I came here from Simla and stayed here for two or three days along with my friend Mr. Shambhu Dayal Misra in order to see whether we could do anything. Again, the identification parade was arranged at the railway station and the man concerned was not there. Then the police authorities naturally said: We have had an identification parade of all these persons and you have not been able to identify any one of them. Then we decided to make our investigation. My friend Pandit Shambhu Dayal Misra remembered the names of the two railway cleaners who had committed theft of his property and we inquired after them. These people had been hiding themselves from their duty as soon as they heard that I had lodged my complaint. So, we inquired their whereabouts and then we reported the matter to the police saying that such and such a man has been off duty for the last 15 days and has taken leave on the pretence of illness. Will you kindly take my man to his house and see whether my man can identify him? As soon as my man saw him, he identified him. In spite of all that, till this day not a pice has been recovered. I may also tell you, Sir, that this case was a very simple case and detection must have been easy. We identified the person and the box that was stolen was a box made of mica layers, the like of which you cannot find anywhere in Northern India. It is made only in the Nellore district in Southern India.

**Mr. K. C. Neogy** (Dacca Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural): I rise to a point of order, Sir. The motion here relates to loss of articles while in charge of the railway administration.

**Mr. President:** The Honourable Member was not present when motion No. 93 was also taken up with motion No. 90.

**Mr. B. Das** (Orissa Division: Non-Muhammadan): May I suggest, Sir, that these personal grievances can be lodged before the Honourable the Commerce Member privately?

**Mr. President:** These references are quite pertinent to the motion that we are discussing.

**Mr. C. Duraiswami Aiyangar:** Sir, when Mr. Neogy got up with his point of order, I thought that he was the counsel for the accused engaged in a court of law, raising the question of relevancy. I never thought that he was not interested in these matters which I am bringing to the notice of the Assembly.

**Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta** (Bombay Northern Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Crores are stolen by the Railway Board by the delay in going through the Budget, and your property is not going to be recovered by causing this delay.

**Mr. C. Duraiswami Aiyangar:** What I am mentioning to the railway authorities is that they must take particular care at the Delhi station. They must put up notices there warning people to beware of even the railway servants and to take care of their property even when these railway servants are in the compartment. I want you to give them warning, take further precautions, arrange for better police and ask them to be more careful with all these things. That is all my request. I do not want a single pie of my lost property either from the Government or from the Honourable Members of this House.

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** Sir, my Honourable friend Mr. Duraiswami Aiyangar comes from that land of innocence, Southern India, where there are no thieves.

**Mr. C. Duraiswami Aiyangar:** May I remind my Honourable friend that even at the railway stations in the Madras Presidency thefts are committed but notices are put up which say: "Beware of thieves". I had thought that Delhi was the heavenly place but there I was mistaken. There ought to be a bigger board here.

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** Perhaps the Honourable Member does not realise that the people in this part of the country are so sophisticated that they do not require notices of this kind. I must say, however, that I listened with the greatest interest to Mr. Duraiswami Aiyangar's personal experiences and I do not for one moment deny that these personal experiences do raise a question of great public importance. The only point I have to make is that I am afraid it is not a matter which concerns the Railway Board nor the railway administration. I do not think either Mr. Duraiswami Aiyangar or Lala Duni Chand realise that the Railway Police are not in the railway service. We are not responsible for them. We do our best to assist them, but they are the servants of the Local Governments. Thefts are committed on the railways and the Local Governments employ the Railway Police to detect those thefts; but they are the servants of the Local Governments.

**Mr. C. Duraiswami Aiyangar:** I did not bring the motion. I spoke because the motion was taken to be in order.

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** The really important question raised by Lala Duni Chand's motion is the question of the loss of property on railways. But before I come to that point, I do wish to say that I heard with the greatest regret what Lala Duni Chand said about some alleged outrage on the part of some railway official. I understand that somebody was run in for assault on a woman and he was acquitted. Lala

[Sir Charles Innes.]

Duni Chand is not content to accept the verdict of the acquittal and stands up in this House and says: "Yes, he was acquitted because the railway authorities manufactured evidence to prevent the case." I submit that every right thinking person in this House ought to object to statements of that kind.

**Lala Duni Chand:** I mentioned it only by the way; I have raised a wider question.

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** My point was that the Honourable Member should not have mentioned it at all whether by the way or any other way. I also want to challenge another statement made by Lala Duni Chand. He said that he had been through the Railway Budget papers and he found nothing to show what has been done to stop murders. Of course, he did not. The Railway Budget is not a police report. I do not complain that the Honourable Member has raised the question of loss of property because it is a point which is of very great importance to the public and in which we, who are responsible for the Railways, do take a very great interest. The question is: What can we do to stop losses by pilferage on the Railways? Lala Duni Chand read out an extract from the Railway Police Report of 1921. But I do not think, Sir, the Honourable Member has made any real effort to see what we have been doing in the matter for the last five years. I think I gave figures the other day when replying to Mr. Cocks. In 1922-23 our compensation payments on account of claims amounted to an enormous sum of 120 lakhs of rupees. In 1923-24 we reduced it to 56 lakhs, and last year we got the payments for compensation claims down to 46 lakhs of rupees. Now, 46 lakhs of rupees represents about one half per cent. of our gross railway earnings and what it represent on the value of the goods carried, I do not know, but it must be a very very small fraction of 1 per cent. Sir, I do not think that our record is so bad.

The fact of the matter is that we have been paying very special attention to the matter. We have quarterly statements showing the exact amount of claims made, claims pending, how much paid, how much under disposal. Not only that but acting on the suggestion made by Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas we have arranged that those quarterly statements should be placed before the local Advisory Councils in order that they may satisfy themselves not so much about the claims against us, but whether our railways are prompt in dealing with those claims. That is really the point which the general public take the greatest interest in.

I should like to give the House, since we have been attacked about this matter, an extract from one of the meetings of the local Advisory Council of the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway. We put these statements before the local Advisory Council of which Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas was a member, at his suggestion and this is what he said:

"The statement which had been prepared seemed quite satisfactory. He said that the Chairman's account of the manner in which claims were being settled on the Railway by the Railway Company had cleared the air and was most satisfactory, and on behalf of the other Members of the Committee he thanked the Chairman and the General Traffic Manager for the trouble they had taken to supply the information."

Now one of the reasons why we made this great improvement in the last three years is that we have been devoting a great deal of attention to what really does concern the Railways. The Railway Police work under the Local Governments. The staff that we ourselves employ for the purpose of keeping down this pilfering is what we call our Watch and Ward staff. I have here information about what we are doing on the different railways. On the East Indian Railway we placed a special officer on special duty. He worked out a scheme of reorganisation of the Watch and Ward staffs, costing something like 5 lakhs of rupees a year. It was sanctioned in August 1924 and is now in working order. The Bengal Nagpur Railway organised a special staff at a cost of 2½ lakhs. The Great Indian Peninsula Railway have organised a staff since 1921 at a cost of nearly 4 lakhs. The Madras and Southern India Railway have organised a staff from March 1923 at a cost of one lakh and twenty thousand rupees. The Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway have also organised a staff.

Now, Sir, I think that I have shown that despite what my friend Lala Duni Chand has said we have devoted a great deal of time and trouble and money to the solution of this difficult question in the last three years. The actual results are there plain for all people to see. We have reduced payments on account of compensation claims from 120 lakhs to 40 lakhs in three years. Those claims now represent less than ¼ per cent. of our gross traffic earnings and a very small percentage of the goods we carry. This ¼ per cent. of our gross traffic earnings is about the same as it stood before the war. That is we have got back to our pre-war standard. In these circumstances I hope the House will not support my Honourable friend, Lala Duni Chand.

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

“ That the Demand under the head ‘ Working Expenses : Administration ’ be reduced by Rs. 100.”

The motion was negatived.

*Fees paid by Indian Food Stall Vendors.*

**Dr. K. G. Lohokare:** Sir, I move:

“ That the Demand under the head ‘ Working Expenses : Administration ’ be reduced by Rs. 100.”

I wish to bring to the notice of the House the question of the fees paid by the Indian food stall vendors. I put a question two years ago, asking whether Government know that railway companies in India give licenses to the highest bidders for the right of selling articles, etc. The reply given to me was that the railways do not put these contracts up to auction and therefore Government do not propose to collect the figures. That was the reply given to me. The two expressions “ Highest bidder ” and “ auction ”, were connected together. I know for certain, and I repeat that statement, I know for certain that the railway Traffic officers ask prospective vendors what amount they would pay and the one who agreed to pay the highest is selected. You may deny the fact, but it is a kind of auction. The only thing I want to point out is that Government officials anyhow escape out of the questions in giving replies to questions in the House. My main purpose was to find out how much was being paid by these vendors as Indian food stall fees and to ascertain whether the railway officials spent this money on the purpose for which they collected it. They collect

[Dr. K. G. Lohokare.]

these fees out of the price of food of poor people. I wanted to know whether they spent it for any benefit to these passengers. But the figures were very cleverly shelved away out of my hands by this reply. It is money taken from the public, and I do not know—why Government officials should fight shy of giving an account of that money. Railway companies have been collecting no small sum but lakhs and lakhs of rupees. Why should they fight shy of giving an account of this revenue? Why should they not say how the money is spent? That was my motive in putting this amendment. I expect to get a satisfactory reply, and, if I do not get one, I leave it to the vote of the House.

**Mr. Narain Dass** (Agra Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I do not know if I will be in order if I submit that the way in which these stalls are licensed or auctioned, or by whatever term you may call the process, is simply disgraceful. The prices at which ordinary Indian food is sold at the railway stations are exorbitant. There is at least a difference of 50 to 100 per cent. on ordinary articles. They sell there at prices higher by one hundred per cent., and the only reason that we can give for such high prices is that they pay fabulous fees for the right to enter the platform. Sir, the sale is a sort of railway monopoly so to say. Although certain vendors are provided on railway stations, because of the exorbitant prices they charge for their food it becomes almost a monopoly of the railway authorities.

Then I do not know if there are certain schedules prescribed for the sale of articles. Sometimes even the commonest articles, say ordinary gram, which is selling at 9 seers or 10 seers in the bazar, sells there at 2 seers and 3 seers per rupee. Well, it might be urged that third class passengers have not to travel long distances at a stretch, but there are awkward hours when even a short distance traveller has to take his meals. We were talking the other day of so many conveniences and comforts, gas lights, electric lights, and so forth. Well we may not aspire to those ideal things, at least for third class passengers, but so far as hunger and thirst are concerned, I think it is up to the railway authorities to see that the passengers do not starve on the way, that they do not die of thirst. I do not know whether I shall again be in order if I couple drink and food together, but it is a common knowledge that for stations and stations together there is not a drop of water . . . . .

**Sir Clement Hindley** (Chief Commissioner, Railways): What stations?

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** Has water supply to stations got anything to do with this motion?

**Mr. President:** The Honourable Member is entirely irrelevant.

**Mr. Narain Dass:** I will confine my attention to food only. The way in which they lease out their contracts or give away the right to sell articles, to certain persons, is simply disgraceful. I am not alone in stating that certain junctions are sold for Rs. 2,000, Rs. 3,000 and Rs. 5,000 a year, taking all the vendors of Indian food together.

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** Will the Honourable Member tell me his authority for that statement?



**Mr. Narain Dass:** I have inquired of those contractors; the best authority is my own experience; I have been moving in many stations and I have inquired of those people . . . . .

**Sir Clement Hindley:** What stations?

**Mr. Narain Dass:** Agra Cantonment station which is now known as Agra Road.

**Sir Clement Hindley:** Rs. 5,000 for each station?

**Mr. Narain Dass:** It might be Rs. 2,000.

**Sir Clement Hindley:** I thought the Honourable Member was giving us information.

**Mr. Narain Dass:** Am I to understand that there is no single junction station from which the railway authorities realise Rs. 5,000?

**Sir Clement Hindley:** It is quite open to the Honourable Member to state the station if he knows it.

**Mr. Narain Dass:** I again submit they charge as much as Rs. 1,000, Rs. 2,000, Rs. 3,000 at some stations. But, Sir, my submission is, are the Railways entitled to charge anything more for the mere accommodation that they provide for these men? I am quite prepared to admit that they cannot allow anybody and everybody to have admittance to the platform to sell their wares. Of course that sale must be regulated to some extent, but what I submit is, having charged an exorbitant fare, having deprived the passengers of ordinary conveniences and comforts of which we have been speaking for so many days, and for which I at least do not care much, are they entitled to charge anything in excess of what the accommodation would entitle them to? If I am told that they regulate their charges by the accommodation that they give to certain vendors, all that I can submit is that I do not believe that statement.

**Khan Bahadur W. M. Hussanally:** Sir, I raised this question only two days ago, and what I say and maintain is that these vendors at different stations on different lines are charged certain license fees whereas the keepers of restaurant cars are charged nothing. Not only are they charged nothing, but the railways also pay, I am told, on certain lines, the cost of the establishment they maintain. Now the question I would like to ask the Government Benches to answer is, why should there be any prices charged from these vendors whose stalls are kept for the benefit of the third class passengers, while restaurant car keepers for the benefit of the first and second class passenger pay nothing to the railway authorities? That is my first point. In the second place, my information is that the contracts for ice and aerated waters are also given away as a matter of favouritism to different firms without charging them anything, and these contractors make very huge profits. My information is that one contractor on the North Western Railway, who lives in England, comes here once in a way, takes up a contract, sub-lets that contract to smaller men, and pockets a very huge profit extending sometimes to about thirty or forty thousand rupees, for which he has not to work, has not to invest, or do anything. Then again these sub-contractors sometimes have no factories of their own in which to manufacture these aerated waters. They buy them from the bazaar and what they buy for eight or nine annas a dozen, they

[Khan Bahadur W. M. Hussanally.]

sell on the railways for thirteen or fourteen annas a dozen. Thus the poor passengers, whether first, second or third class, are mulcted in very heavy charges. The result of these stall keepers on various stations having to pay large license fees, plus blackmail to the station staff, is to make them sell these articles to the poor passengers at a much higher rate than what these articles can be purchased for in the bazaar. Not only that, but generally and frequently, the stuff that is sold to the passengers is stale and uneatable, as I said the other day. What are the railway authorities doing in this matter to see, in the first place, that low license fees are charged, that foodstuffs are eatable and not stale, and that reasonable prices are levied from poor passengers on the other hand? These are matters which require carefully going into by the railway authorities and a satisfactory explanation given to the House.

**The Reverend Dr. E. M. Macphail** (Madras: European): Sir, I just want to make one or two remarks in view of what the last speaker has said. He evidently urges that every person who chooses should be allowed to come into the stations and sell whatever he pleases, and yet at the same time he calls upon the railway authorities to see that the stuff provided is good and that it is sold at proper prices. It seems to me that you cannot have it both ways. I may say that in listening to the discussion in this House for the last two days, I have been reminded of the couplet which Canning wrote in his famous rhyming despatch:

"In matters of commerce the fault of the Dutch  
Is giving too little and asking too much."

It seems to me that all through the discussion we have had, we have had people demanding that the railway charges shall be reduced to a very small amount, and at the same time that the railway expenditure shall be increased to a maximum . . . . .

**Khan Bahadur W. M. Hussanally**: Why do they not give restaurant cars to third class passengers?

**The Reverend Dr. E. M. Macphail**: The restaurant cars also have a monopoly and charge a great deal I regret to say.

**Khan Bahadur W. M. Hussanally**: They pay no license fees.

**The Reverend Dr. E. M. Macphail**: I have nothing to do with that; what I have to do with is what I have to pay as a passenger.

**Dr. K. G. Lohokare**: That comes out of the pocket of the third class passenger.

**The Reverend Dr. E. M. Macphail**: It does not at all, it comes out of my pocket. With reference to what the Honourable Member said, he brought forward the point that the vendors on the railway platforms charged high prices. The Honourable Member behind me has just pointed out that when you have a sub-contractor selling aerated waters, he charges exorbitant prices. He does not charge the bazaar prices; he charges whatever he can get. I understand that is his grievance. Now what is there to prevent these vendors who come into the railway stations selling food at the highest prices they can get? I know perfectly well when I buy oranges at the railway station I pay considerably more than bazaar rates. What the vendor does is he charges what he can get, and I do not see

how the railway authorities can prevent that from happening. I know that my friend opposite there does not like the law of supply and demand, but as a matter of fact, that is what happens. If you are going to have a mob of vendors on the station platform, what will happen? You will have the confusion which has already been described to-day made worse confounded. On the other hand, even if you limit the people who come in, you certainly will find that the price at which they will sell their goods will be the price they think they can get, whatever may be the fee charged. If there is no fee charged, do you think that any concession is going to be made to the railway passenger? My experience of the itinerant hawker is that he asks as much as ever he can get and what he thinks people are willing to pay. In this connection why is it people travelling short distances do not carry their own food? When I do short distances, in order to avoid the expense of dining in the restaurant-car, I take food with me and in the old days many of my Indian friends did the same. I know my friend Mr. M. K. Acharya when he travels would be anxious to take food with him and not to have it in the railway restaurant-car. In the old days in Southern India nobody dreamt of going and eating at the station stalls; people would not touch the food provided there.

**Sardar V. N. Mutalik** (Gujarat and Deccan Sardars and Inamdars: Landholders): Because it was so bad.

**The Reverend Dr. E. M. Macphail**: Not because the food was bad but because they had conscientious scruples. The railway authorities are very largely responsible for breaking down caste scruples. It may be good or it may be bad, but it is a fact, and it is right that the railways should recognise the changes that are taking place in India. In Madras, for instance, there are already a few restaurants come into existence such as Brahmin coffee shops; and it is desirable that the changed conditions taking place here should be recognised and as many conveniences should be introduced as possible in this matter of food supply. But I do not believe that is going to be brought about by allowing a hoard of vendors to come on to the platform, jostling each other and increasing the confusion that already exists.

**Maulvi Abul Kasem**: May I request, Sir, that you adjourn the House now as some of us have to say our prayers.

**Mr. President**: The Chair has that consideration in mind and the Honourable Member need not be impatient.

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes**: Sir, if my friend Dr. Macphail had been as long in the House as I have he would not have been surprised at the course of the Railway debate. Generally about the fourth day of the Railway debate the Railway Member finds himself in the position of wondering whether he is not the greatest villain unhung. This year I had hoped for better things. Only last Monday I congratulated the House on having co-operated with me in commercial matters. The very next day they threw out the Railway Board vote. I am afraid, Sir, that I must revise that remark about co-operation. Only to-day one Honourable Member, Mr. Narain Dass, has used such phrases of the Railway Board as "perfectly disgraceful" and statements of that kind. But, Sir, I do not propose to go into that matter further. Indeed what I have just said is more by way of an aside example.

[Sir Charles Innes.]

This question of food stall vendors is, as Dr. Macphail pointed out, a very difficult question. Are we going to let anybody come into our railway stations and sell food? Or are we going to bring that system in any way under control? We have decided that we must have the system under control. The next question arises—how are you going to do it? Are you going to select the vendors who are to have stalls or are you going to have a system of auction? We have definitely set our face against a system of auction. The Honourable Dr. Lohokare suggests there might be private auction; but, as I say, the Railway Board have definitely set their face against any system of auction. The usual practice is to impose a more or less light fee, but it is quite impossible for us at Delhi or at Simla to prescribe what the fee should be, and what we have done is we have written round to all the Agents of State Railways. We put the question to them and we asked them to discuss it with their local Advisory Councils; and we do find that these Agents have discussed with their local Advisory Councils what kind of fee they should charge for vendors of stores. For instance here the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway have discussed the matter and certain fees have been fixed. For the benefit of Mr. Narain Dass I may say that the stall-keeper's fee in all Bombay districts except Bombay itself varies from Rs. 60 to Rs. 100 per annum. In the Bombay district it is from Rs. 200 to Rs. 750 per annum, except in Bandra where the annual fee is Rs. 1,000. The Great Indian Peninsula Railway has similarly discussed the matter with its local Advisory Council; the Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway has just fixed the fees in consultation with its Advisory Council, and the South Indian Railway likewise. I think that the House will agree with me that that is the only wise way of doing it.

**Dr. K. G. Lohokare:** Is the Railway Board sure that they are not sub-letting these licenses?

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** We do our best to prevent all kinds of malpractices I can assure my Honourable friend, Dr. Lohokare. Dr. Lohokare asks what we did with the fees that we get from this source. It is quite impossible for us to say that these fees should be earmarked for any particular purpose. It is quite impossible for us to say that, but what we do, as the Honourable Member knows, is this. One reason for keeping this system under regulation is that we may control these vendors. We maintain on most railways a catering department with its staff of inspectors; they inspect the food that is sold by these vendors to see that it is good and healthy and we also try to see that the prices charged do not generally exceed bazaar prices. We do maintain most of our catering departments particularly for that purpose of supervising the vendors. That is all that I have to say.

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

“That the Demand under the head ‘Working Expenses: Administration’ be reduced by Rs. 100.”

The motion was negatived.

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

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

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** Sir, I venture to submit for your consideration that it would be for the convenience of Honourable Members of this House if you will be good enough to allow the election of the Members to the Standing Finance Committee to take place a few days before the election of Members to the Central Advisory Council. After the election of Members to the Standing Finance Committee, Honourable Members could arrange their nominations for election to the Central Advisory Council.

**Mr. President:** Why should the Chair make any change in the dates fixed?

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** The reason, Sir, is that the members of the Standing Finance Committee for Railways are *ex-officio* members of the Central Advisory Council, and that when the members of the Railway Standing Finance Committee have been elected, Honourable Members of this House will know whom to elect as members of the Central Advisory Council. That is the only point in this.

**Mr. President:** This fact was brought to the notice of the Honourable Member yesterday when he made his motions.

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** Yes, Sir, I must apologise.

**Mr. President:** In view of the mistake made by the Honourable Member the Chair modifies its previous order and postpones the elections for the Central Advisory Committee and also the nominations for that purpose.

*Heavy Demurrage and Wharfage Charges at Nasik, Poona and other Stations.*

**Dr. K. G. Lohokare:** Sir, I move:

“That the Demand under the head ‘Working Expenses: Administration’ be reduced by Rs. 100,”

the subject being the Heavy demurrage and wharfage charges at Nasik, Poona and other stations. Sir, there are three stations and some more on the Great Indian Peninsula Railway where demurrage is charged at the rate of one anna per maund immediately within 24 hours of the arrival of the goods at those stations. There are no arrangements by which the receivers of the goods are informed that their goods have arrived. Secondly, Sir, the amount that is collected is not, in the case of Nasik, less than Rs. 25,000 per annum, and in the case of Poona it is something more. For the many years past money has been collected unreasonably by way of demurrage charges and the total amount every year comes to about a lakh. In this connection I should like to point out that very great inconvenience is caused to the traders by these unduly high demurrage charges. Suppose a man books his goods from Bombay for Nasik and posts the railway receipt on a certain date, but before that reaches the hands of the consignee in the mofussil station, say at Sinnar or some other town nearer Nasik for example, the goods actually reach the destination, and the consignee has to pay heavy demurrage charges on these goods for

[Dr. K. G. Lohokare.]

no fault of his at the rate of one anna per maund per day, though he is not informed of the arrival of the goods at the station. Applications were made by merchants from all these places to the Agent of the Great Indian Peninsula Railway, and also to the Railway Advisory Council, and I have also asked questions here in the last Session on the subject, but yet no action has so far been taken in the matter. It appears that the Railway Board as well as the authorities of the Great Indian Peninsula Railway have been maintaining their action in spite of the representations of the merchants, and I therefore wish to draw the attention of the House to the fact that the rates are unduly high, they cause extreme inconvenience, and that the traders are put to such a heavy loss that they demand that the rates should be modified.

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** Sir, the speech of the Honourable Dr. Lohokare illustrates one of the difficulties of the Railway Administration. He says that the rates at these particular stations, which are very few in number, at the most about six, are particularly high, and he demands that they should be reduced. The reason why he states that the rates should be revised at these particular stations is that the rates at those particular stations are higher than at other stations on the Great Indian Peninsula Railway. The real fact of the matter is that the Great Indian Peninsula Railway demurrage rates at most of the stations are particularly low, but on those six specified stations they charge the same rates as are in force on State Railways generally. The proper way of meeting my Honourable friend's request would be not to lower the rates at these stations, which are busy stations, where the goods sheds ought to be cleared as quickly as possible, but to level up the rates at all the other stations. Does my Honourable friend want me to do that? I submit, Sir, there is nothing in this complaint, and I hope the House will not support this motion.

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

“That the Demand under the head ‘Working Expenses : Administration’ be reduced by Rs. 100.”

The motion was negatived.

*Grievances of the Public against the Railway Administration.*

**Lala Duni Chand:** Sir, I beg to move:

“That the Demand under the head ‘Working Expenses : Administration’ be reduced by Rs. 100.”

In moving this motion my object is to raise the question of the grievances of the public against the Railway Administration. The public come in contact with the railway administration mostly in two ways, firstly, in connection with the traffic of passengers and secondly in connection with the traffic of goods. I will not try to repeat any of those things which have been said by other Honourable Members of this House, and in spite of the importance of the question raised by me, I shall not take much of the time of this Honourable House. With regard to the grievances of the public in connection with the passenger traffic, I desire to impress upon the Government the great importance of the railway servants treating the public better than they do.

**Mr. A. Rangaswami Iyengar:** That comes under a later motion, I think.

**Lala Duni Chand:** So far as the general public are concerned, it is a fact that at the hands of the railway servants who are, in the real sense of the word, servants of the public, they do not receive the treatment that they are entitled to receive. Everybody who has a chance of going to the railway stations sees that even the pettiest railway official thinks that he is the master and every member of the public is his servant. There is a great necessity for reform in this direction.

The other point that I would like to make is that though there has been recently a certain amount of improvement in the direction of the removal of racial discrimination, still it is there. Ordinarily, an Indian member of the public receives treatment quite different from the treatment that a European or even an Anglo-Indian receives. The Government should take steps to remove this general complaint of the public. This is so far as the connection of the public with the passenger traffic is concerned.

Now, I am going to touch one of the plague spots of the railway administration. Before I place my case before the House I should like to say a few words of explanation in view of what happened last year. The Honourable Sir Charles Innes, last year—I should say not rightly—tried to create an atmosphere of prejudice against what I said. He wanted to try and drown the voice of truth by raising some kind of storm against a certain statement that I had made. I desire to say that throughout my life my attitude has been one of great respect towards the public servants—even the humblest and meanest servants—who discharge their duties honestly. At the same time my attitude has been one of extreme intolerance towards those public servants, howsoever highly placed they may be, who do not discharge their duties honestly. I have been all my life waging war against corruption and dishonesty. In whatever sphere of life it has been my lot to raise my voice against rampant corruption I have not failed to do so. After making these few remarks I want to say two things in connection with the goods traffic. In every town which is connected with a railway there is a general grievance of the trading public that they find many difficulties before they can send any consignment or receive any consignment through the railway administration. Last year, the Honourable Sir Charles Innes wanted proof from me. I want to give him facts and figures. If he is really anxious as I am anxious to root out corruption or at least to minimise corruption in the railway administration I give him an opportunity to do so. Let him appoint a small committee or even one man who should go to important towns and important cities to see how much the trading public are required to pay to certain railway servants on account of the consignment of their goods. The only thing that will be necessary for this committee or for his nominee to do will be to go into the books of the traders and it or he will find ample material in support of the complaint that I am making now. The second thing that I will say is that just as there is a classification of the railway stations from the point of view of service, such as, first class, second class and third class stations, for another purpose there is a classification of the railway stations. Let him make an inquiry into this and he will find that I am perfectly in the right. So far as the grievances of the public against the railway

[Lala Duni Chand.]

administration are concerned, I can say that I am living in the world of realities, in the world of truths, in the world of facts. I do not say that the Honourable Sir Charles Innes or the Honourable Mr. Sim is not living in the world of realities as I do. The answer depends upon the attitude that they adopt with reference to this motion. If the Honourable Sir Charles Innes has got the same passion, the same desire to reform the railway administration by rooting out corruption as I have, he should agree with me and do something in that direction. Instead of agreeing with me if he takes me to task for raising this motion, then I will say that he has been all his life, so far as this question is concerned, living in a house of glasses. He should leave that house and come into the world of reality. I may state that it is far from my mind to say anything that is not true. Corruption is rampant in the railway administration, and the sooner the railway administration gets rid of this plague spot the better it is for it and for all of us. Last year when I raised this question with regard to the corruption prevailing among the subordinate railway employees, that valiant defender of the public rights, Mr. Joshi, came to my aid and said that corruption is not confined only to the subordinate employees but is also to be found in other quarters which I need not mention. Only the other day in connection with the debate on the general discussion of the Railway Budget my Honourable friend Mr. Raju said that there is any amount of corruption and that crores of rupees of the public money are being taken away. I say, Sir, that really this is the situation which I wish the Honourable the Railway Member to face. I have already given expression to my view and I again repeat it. If Sir Charles Innes before leaving office does some good in this direction, he will earn my gratitude. I raised this question last year and I have raised it again this year. I am not unmindful of the great work which the large body of railway servants are doing. In fact I am prepared to pay every tribute to the railway servants who have built up and are maintaining the splendid organisation of the railway administration. I can see both the dark and the bright side of the thing. I would like the temptation that is necessarily placed in the way of the subordinate employees to be removed. They are very much underpaid while other people are overpaid. On the one hand I would like to advocate the cause of the railway employees who are getting too little. On the other hand I would also like to protect the general public against the maladministration of the railways. I want to make it quite clear that I will press this motion to a division unless I am convinced that there is a better future before the public so far as the removal of these grievances are concerned. With these words I place this motion before the House for acceptance.

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** There was a considerable difference of opinion between Lala Duni Chand and myself last year on this subject. In my view and I think, in the view of the House generally, he branded the whole body of railway employees, to use a classic phrase so well known to Members of this House, as thieves and robbers. I objected, on behalf of about 700,000 Indians, to that stigma being applied to the whole Department and I challenged my Honourable friend to come in the open and make his charges against any particular person outside this House.

**Lala Duni Chand:** I have disclosed my case to you.



**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** I said that if Lala Duni Chand would make any charges to me against any particular officer on these railways, I would have those charges properly investigated. That happened a year ago, and, as far as I know, Lala Duni Chand has not taken up the challenge.

**Lala Duni Chand:** I offer my services for this work without getting a pice from Government.

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** The Honourable Member has asked me to come out of my house of glass, at which he has thrown so many stones, and to come into the world of realities. He tells me that the way for me to get into this world of realities is to appoint a committee of which he is to be a member. That committee is to go round to all the towns in India and examine the books of traders. My Honourable friend informs me that we will there find evidence of the bribes given to railway servants. If those traders have bribed the railway servants they are equally guilty with the people they have bribed and does any one mean to suggest to me that that committee will get any trader to produce his books, when he has himself committed an offence against the laws of the country? Sir, I oppose this motion.

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

“That the Demand under the head ‘Working Expenses: Administration’ be reduced by Rs. 100.”

The motion was negatived.

**Sir P. S. Sivaswamy Aiyer** (Madras: Nominated Non-Official): As regards the next motion (No. 95) may I point out, Sir, that the decision of the House on Indianisation has been given.

**Mr. President** (to Mr. B. Das): Perhaps the Honourable Member will not move motion No. 95 and the Chair, therefore, need not give its ruling.

**Mr. B. Das:** No, Sir, I wanted only to speak for a minute. (*Cries of* “No, no.”) All right I will not move it.

**Mr. President:** The Honourable Member must now go to No. 98, unless Sardar Mutalik desires to move No. 97.

**Sardar V. N. Mutalik:** I will give way to Mr. B. Das.

**Mr. President:** Mr. Das.

*Stores Purchase Policy and Management of the Stores Department, East Indian Railway.*

**Mr. B. Das:** Sir, I move:

“That the Demand under the head ‘Working Expenses: Administration’ be reduced by Rs. 100.”

The other day I observed on the floor of this House that Sir Charles Innes' administrative policy has been to bring out very outstanding landmarks in the policy of the Government of India. One is the protection of industries; the other is that he has declared that Indian Railways shall be State Railways. And only yesterday through the intrigue of my friend Mr. Neogy he gave us an inkling of what he has in his mind regarding the Indianization policy of the Railways. I welcome all these landmarks of

[Mr. B. Das.]

administrative policy which my Honourable friend Sir Charles Innes has introduced during his period of office in the Government of India. But Sir Charles Innes himself, when he was Mr. C. A. Innes, introduced in the former Assembly the stores purchase policy of the Government of India and he advocated the establishment of an Indian Stores Department in India and laid down the policy that all the stores required for the Government Railways and for all Government Departments should be purchased by the Indian Stores Department. Sir, I will just quote one line from his speech. He said :

*"If this Indian Stores Department is established it will purchase for the State railways all railway materials which can be procured in India. Then the Stores Department will be mainly occupied in buying railway materials, not only for State railways but for company railways also."*

Since then my friends Messrs. Willson and Neogy and also Sir Hari Singh Gour have asked a series of questions on this subject. The replies that have been given to those questions have not gone to show that Government have any definite policy as to the purchase of railway stores through the Indian Stores Department.

Sir, in this House I have spoken before against the decentralization policy of the Railway Board. The Honourable Sir Charles Innes once twitted me that the Government of India are for decentralization. Decentralization will come when there is power in the people of India, when this House has complete power over the Railway Budget. But by the way in which Agents have been given full power to do anything, the way in which delegation has been made to the Agents, this very policy in the matter of purchase of stores of the Central Government of India has been set at naught by the Railway Board and by the different Agents. In the Report of 1924-25, Volume I, it has been said that :

*"Delegation had been made to Agents in matters relating to establishment, and during the year under report a further delegation has been made to Agents in connection with works with a view to empower Agents to settle numerous details, which under the previous rules had to be referred to higher authority."*

Sir, I object to this, because thereby you give power to these Agents who have vested interests and who go against the established principle of the Central Government; they do not allow us to purchase stores in India. Sir, in the High Commissioner's Report on the India Stores Department, London—I wish it were called the London Stores Department of India so that it may not be confused with the Indian Stores Department of India—the Director General of Stores deprecates the idea of purchase of . . . .

**Mr. President:** Order, order. The Honourable Member has not so far said one word about the East Indian Railway. His motion is restricted to the Stores purchase policy and mismanagement of the Stores Department in so far as it applies to the East Indian Railway. He cannot raise a general debate.

**Mr. B. Das:** I want to raise two issues, the stores purchase policy of the Railways and mismanagement of the Stores Department of the East Indian Railway.

**Mr. President:** That is not the subject matter of his motion. His motion is in regard to stores purchase policy and mismanagement of the Stores Department, East Indian Railway.

**Mr. B. Das:** May I point out, Sir, that (a) and (b) have dropped. Sir, I meant the stores purchase policy and (b) which was a specific thing, the scandal of the East Indian Railway stores purchase policy.

**Mr. President:** The notice is quite clear. It has been printed as it was given. The policy so far as it applies to the East Indian Railway is open to discussion.

**Mr. B. Das:** May I submit, Sir, that there has been a mistake. Had it been otherwise, Sir, my friend Mr. Mutalik would not have dropped his motion. He waived it because we on this side . . . .

**Mr. President:** The Chair has got nothing to do with Sardar Mutalik's motion now. That has been dropped. The Honourable Member must confine himself to the motion of which he has given notice.

**Mr. B. Das:** May I take it as your ruling, Sir, that I can only talk about the East Indian Railway?

**Mr. President:** That is the Honourable Member's motion, and he cannot go outside it.

**Mr. B. Venkatapatiraju** (Ganjam *cum* Vizagapatam: Non-Muhammadan Rural): May I know, Sir, whether you have already given your ruling? My friend has mentioned in the notice stores purchase policy, and mismanagement of the Stores Department, East Indian Railway. It means that both things will be discussed under that motion.

**Mr. President:** If the words "the East Indian Railway" were not added.

**Mr. B. Venkatapatiraju:** Mismanagement with reference to the East Indian Railway and stores purchase policy.

**Mr. President:** That is not the meaning.

**Sardar V. N. Mutalik:** It was solely on the understanding . . . .

**Mr. President:** Whatever may be the understanding of the Honourable Member he has already dropped his motion. The Chair cannot go back on it. I have to read the present motion as it is.

**Mr. B. Das:** I bow to your ruling, Sir, and I will now try to argue from the East Indian Railway view point. Sir, recently the Calcutta papers were full of news that there had been a scandal in the management of the stores of the East Indian Railway: and two European officials have been dismissed. The same thing also happened on the Oudh and Rohilkhand Railway. A high official of the Stores Department of that Railway was punished. They are matters of common knowledge and there have been numerous questions put on the floor of this House on that subject. Sir, I contend that if the stores purchase policy was planned by the Central Government that all stores should be purchased through the Indian Stores Department, which body has been doing its work very honestly, there would have been no scandals. Sir, we know that the vested interests are there and the stores are mismanaged. Sir, only two or three cases have come before the notice of the public but there are other cases also. There are other grievances. In fact, when the Indian Stores Purchase Committee wrote their Report they had all these things in their mind and they wanted to abolish the Stores Departments of different Railways entirely. The extract that I read out from the speech of my Honourable friend Sir

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Charles Innes in the previous Assembly also showed that this was the intention of the Honourable Member for Commerce. Sir, these scandals are growing numerous. I know departmental punishments have been given, but do they satisfy us? Why do you leave any ground for these scandals? Why don't you purchase your stores through the Indian Stores Department so that these scandals would not recur? Why do you allow these vested interests to be created? Is it the Railway Board that is against the purchase of the stores through the Indian Stores Department and is it not a fact that the East Indian Railway is now a State Railway?

**Khan Bahadur W. M. Hussanally:** In view of the fact that the guillotine is expected at 5 o'clock and also because there are many important matters to be discussed, may I suggest that each speech be now limited to 5 minutes to-day?

**Mr. B. Das:** Sir, the stores purchase policy, in view of these glaring cases of scandals in different railways, should now be brought into line with the policy that was laid down by the Government of India. Is the Railway Board going to defy my Honourable friend Sir Charles Innes and have its own stores purchase policy and recurring scandals and mismanagements? . . . .

**Mr. President:** Order, order. I have not heard a single word about the East Indian Railway. The Honourable Member must remember what his motion is.

**Mr. B. Das:** Sir, it is the usual policy of bribery which I do not want to mention in this House because it has been mentioned so often. I say there have been glaring cases of scandals in the Press. I do not want to divulge the names of the gentlemen which are known to everybody in the Press and also to all of us. Sir, these scandals for which the Railway Stores Department officials are responsible are due to the fact that the Railways are managed by vested interests and they do not want to yield any power to the corrective authorities that have been created. And what are those corrective authorities? It is the Indian Stores Department which was created to do away with the scandals relating to the mismanagement of the Stores Departments of the Railways. But, Sir, it is the Railway Board and the Agents of different railways, whether Company-managed or State-managed, that are holding tight to their old policy. They are not parting even with one inch of their vested interests. Sir, what is the corrective, then, to prevent these scandals relating to the mismanagement of the Railway stores?

**Mr. President:** I am sorry to have to interrupt the Honourable Member but he cannot generalize on this particular motion.

**Mr. B. Das:** These scandalous incidents which I have quoted will convince the House that there is something very wrong in the policy of the Railway Board in not giving effect to the purchase of stores through the Indian Stores Department. It also shows that the Railway Board is partial to the Stores Purchasing Departments of the Railways and do not want to transfer these rights to the Indian Stores Department, and on account of these scandals I place my motion before the House that the Railway Administration should be cut by the sum of Rs. 100.

**Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta:** Sir, I will confine myself not to scandals but to facts and will refer to page 17 of the East Indian Railway Budget. There you find that under "Rolling Stock, Locomotives", you have budgetted for the sum of 9 lakhs and 18 thousand. I take it that the question of stores also includes the purchase of locomotives.

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** There is another motion on the question of manufacture of locomotives and railway appliances in India, which is coming on later, and which arises on the stores policy of the East Indian Railway.

**Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta:** It might be coming on later, but the question of stores purchase includes the purchase of locomotives. The word "Stores" is generally misleading and we think it includes nuts and bolts only, but it is not so. It includes locomotives and rails. I say, Sir, that the East Indian Railway should not have been allowed to purchase 9 lakhs and 18 thousand rupees worth of locomotives when Government themselves are not willing to allow any one to tender for them in this country. Sir, the treatment by Government of the question of the purchase of locomotives in India is really most painful. Years ago they notified that they would purchase 400 locomotives every year, and on the strength of that a company was established, but at the last moment Government informed the company through Sir Clement Hindley that Government wanted only a small number of locomotives and therefore these could not be purchased in India. Now we are being called upon to agree to the purchase of these locomotives in foreign countries. What is the result? I have in my hands a paper which is from a copy of the *Statist*, dated May 23rd, 1925. What is the condition about purchase?

**Mr. President** (to the Honourable Sir Charles Innes): Does the Honourable Member admit that stores include locomotives?

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** Technically they are ordered through the Controller of Stores.

**Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta:** What do we find with regard to the prices of locomotives as stated in the *Statist*? The lowest English tender was £4,920 and the highest English tender was £6,160. As against that the Continental quotations were from German and other companies. This was, in respect to tenders for the purchase of locomotives for Egypt. I am showing what were the relative prices of locomotives purchased from England and from Continental countries. The tender from Germany was £2,000, the lowest quotation, England £4,900, Italy £2,800, Belgium £2,900, Austria £3,100, Dutch £4,120, and a Swiss company £4,300. That shows that the British article is the dearest of all and I am arguing that you are still purchasing locomotives from England. You can say "no" if you like, but I am here to prove that in May, 1925, the lowest British tender for the purchase of locomotives for Egypt was £4,920 as against a Continental tender of £2,050, so that the lowest British tender was 150 per cent. higher than the lowest foreign tender; and yet we are waiting to know how many of these locomotives, which have been purchased since then and are going to be purchased, are purchased from the Continent and not from England. We had Mr. Chase deputed to England to make a report on locomotives to be manufactured in India. Mr. Chase made a report at the express request of this House two years ago and it has not yet seen the light of day.

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** I am sorry to interrupt the Honourable Member, but I must really take another point of order. If these locomotives are purchased in England, they are purchased through the London Stores Department with which the Railway Department has nothing to do, and I suggest if the Honourable Member has anything to complain of in that matter he should attack my friend the Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra of the Industries and Labour Department.

**Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta:** With your machinery for purchase I have nothing to do, but the Railways are paying two and a half times more for their locomotives than they should pay.

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** My point is that as regards the State Railways purchasing locomotives in England they purchase through the London Stores Department which is not under the control of the Railway Department.

**Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta:** Why should you do that? What are the reasons for paying Rs. 250 when you can get the article for Rs. 100?

**An Honourable Member:** Quality.

**Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta:** Quality, where is the proof of that? In your tenders there are conditions;—"it shall be of such and such a trade mark", and "such and such a patent", so that, although you profess to buy in the cheapest market, you are limited by conditions which make it impossible for you to purchase out of England.

**Mr. President:** The Honourable Member will agree that I have given him sufficient latitude to bring out this point.

**Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta:** I was arguing that the East Indian Railway buy an article for Rs. 250 when they can buy it for Rs. 100, and we want to be assured that that will not be the case in future. And, secondly, when purchasing locomotives the East Indian Railway should try and find out whether an Indian manufacturer is willing to supply them. I had asked for information and was told that even tenders are not to be invited in India. Even if an Indian manufacturer is willing to manufacture, he cannot because tenders are not invited in India. The Indian manufacturer is not being given an opportunity even to tender. That is the kind of thing which is being done in the purchase of stores on the East Indian Railway along with other railway companies. I wanted to refer to other things but I do not do so because the question I intended to deal with is wider, and I am limited by your ruling, but one last thing I shall say and it is this that on account of the conditions laid down for the purchase of articles, which are wholly artificial, it becomes obligatory on this Indian Stores Purchase Department to purchase things which cost Rs. 250 where they ought to spend Rs. 100.

**Sir Clement Hindley:** Sir, with your permission I should just like to clear up a misapprehension regarding the purchase of locomotives. Does Mr. Jamnadas Mehta really accuse us of paying 250 times the right value of a locomotive?

**Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta:** 250 per cent. more when you purchase in England.

**Sir Clement Hindley:** I absolutely deny that. These prices which he has quoted give us no information about the size of the engines, the type of the engines, or how they were made, or anything about them. He simply says for the Egyptian Railways the Continental tenders were £2,000 and the English tenders were £4,921. Supposing that is so, how does it affect our business? When we purchase locomotives through the London Stores Department, tenders are called for, and this House knows perfectly well that the Indian Stores Department accepts the lowest satisfactory tender. That has been said over and over again in this House.

**Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta:** What is the meaning of satisfactory; the real trouble is there.

**Sir Clement Hindley:** That is practically accusing the London Stores Department of bad faith and I do not propose to enter into that. We have bought many engines on the Continent, and I assure this House that there is no reason on earth why locomotives should not be bought for the Indian Railways on the Continent, and it is not correct to say that we have been paying two and a half times what we should pay for locomotives. I could give the Honourable Member figures to prove this but I have been taken rather by surprise because I thought the subject was coming up later. The motion moved did not say anything about locomotives and I naturally was not prepared, but it is not correct to say that we have been paying two and half times the proper amount for our locomotives. Mr. Jamnadas Mehta says "Why don't you give the Indian manufacturer a chance of tendering". I am perfectly sure that Mr. Jamnadas Mehta has read the report of the Tariff Board about protection for locomotives. Now, let us examine this matter a little more closely. What has happened? He accuses me of not calling for tenders in India for locomotives. Is there any manufacturer in India who can make a locomotive? Is there anyone who does or is there anyone who is in a position to submit a tender? I say there is not. The history of this matter is rather interesting. It has been explained clearly in the Report of the Tariff Board but I want to give my version of it because I think it will interest the House and it will clear up certain misapprehensions. A certain company was formed in Great Britain with British capital and British directors, and the managing director came to this country and he said to the Railway Board: "I will build locomotives for you without any guarantee of price, without any guarantee of orders. Allow me to put up this locomotive factory in India and I will sell locomotives to you at the current price. I will submit competitive tenders and I will take the risk myself." He said this to the Railway Board,—to my predecessors. He said he did not want any guarantee of orders or any guarantee of price; and the Railway Board said "Go on and prosper!" And with his English capital, his English directors, he built that factory; he built the shell of it and he brought out his machines in packing cases and a great many of them were put down at the site of the works; and he came to the Railway Board and he said "Where are the guarantees you promised me? I cannot build locomotives unless you give me 5 years orders and unless you pay me cost price plus profits, and, unless you take a certain number of engines every year, I cannot start building locomotives." At that moment we were expecting tenders for locomotives.

[Sir Clement Hindley.]

We were expecting them in a few days and I said to this gentleman "Submit your tender as you promised to do and let us see if you can compete with the foreign locomotive builders". He went away and he submitted a tender; and I suppose I ought not to disclose the secrecy of tenders, but I would like to tell this House that he actually asked me to pay him 3 lakhs of rupees per engine and he wanted a guarantee of a minimum number of 50 engines a year in order to start his factory. I ask the House to consider whether that is a business proposition. Is that protection or what is it? 3 lakhs per engine or £20,000 sterling, and 50 engines a year for 5 years. Is any business man going to take up a proposition of that sort? I told him to go away and think again; and since that day there is no one in India who has been in a position to put in a tender. The Peninsula Locomotive Company has had an order from us to make wagons and they are making wagons; but they have not yet expressed their ability to put in a tender for locomotives which is anything like competitive with foreign tenders. That is all I have to say and I need only assure the House that those figures of Mr. Jamnadas Mehta do not lead to the conclusion that we have paid or ever shall pay two and a half times the proper amount for our locomotives.

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

**Mr. Devaki Prasad Sinha** (Chota Nagpur Division: Non-Muhammadan): Sir, I want to say only a few words. My Honourable friend Sir Clement Hindley has not made one or two points clear to us. In the first place, we would like to know why the Railway Department adopts this agency of the London Stores Department for the purpose of purchasing locomotives. So long as you accept that as your agency for purchasing locomotives I submit that naturally there will be some inclination to purchase British engines even though the cost is a little more.

The other point, also, that my Honourable friend Mr. Jamnadas Mehta has raised has not been sufficiently answered by the speech of my Honourable friend Sir Clement Hindley. Mr. Jamnadas Mehta pointed out that when tenders for certain Egyptian Railways were invited it was observed that the prices of British engines were 150 per cent. higher than the prices of German or Belgian engines. I do not know, Sir, whether these figures are correct or not; but I remember myself to have read that, when the last order was placed by the London Stores Purchase Department for engines in London, there was an appreciable difference in the price of a British locomotive and that of a continental one, both being of the same size, of the same type and of the same power. I would ask my Honourable friend Sir Charles Innes or Sir Clement Hindley to tell us whether that is so or not. I remember to have read that in an English paper and I would have made over the cutting from the paper to my Honourable friend,—I shall do so on some future occasion, if he requires it. But I would like him to satisfy this House whether or not it is true, that British engines are purchased although there is an appreciable difference between the price of a British engine and the price of a Continental engine both being of the same size, of the same type and of the same power. I do not suggest, Sir, that you must purchase locomotives manufactured in India though they may be of an inferior type. I have never held that view. When you are purchasing locomotives for the use of a railway company, you must have absolutely the best thing, and the most economical



thing, whether you get it from London or from Germany or Belgium or Italy. That is my view to which I shall always stick. But I must protest, as strongly as my friend Mr. Jamnadas Mehta has done, against undue preference for a British article, although we find that by purchasing British articles we have to pay 150 per cent higher than we would pay if we purchase the same article from Germany or Belgium or Italy. I am informed, Sir, that in many countries in Asia they get their locomotives from Germany or Belgium; and I want to know whether that is true or not. Many other countries in Asia do purchase their locomotives elsewhere—I read some time back that for China a lot of locomotives are purchased in Germany . . . . .

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** I wonder.

**Mr. Devaki Prasad Sinha:** I cannot vouch for the information, but I am sure Chinese Railways do not purchase all their locomotives in England. They get locomotives manufactured in other countries; and how is it that when we are concerned we are always told that we must purchase our locomotives in England?

**Sir Clement Hindley:** You have never been told that; that is never the position that we have adopted.

**Mr. Devaki Prasad Sinha:** Then I would like to know the total number of locomotives which you have purchased so far. How many of these were purchased in Great Britain and how many purchased from any other foreign country? Can you give us any satisfactory answer to that?

**Mr. N. M. Joshi:** I want to ask one question. Sir, before Sir Charles Innes replies. I want to ask why the East Indian Railway does not build its own engines and locomotives when the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway is able to build locomotives at the workshop at Ajmer? That is my question.

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** Sir, like my Honourable friend, Sir Clement Hindley, I have been taken entirely by surprise by this sudden attack of my friend Mr. Jamnadas Mehta. Mr. Jamnadas Mehta has, I am afraid, fallen right into a very big mare's nest. This question which he has raised is a very very old question in the Indian Legislative Assembly: My friend, Mr. Neogy, might tell Mr. Jamnadas Mehta that we had a very heated discussion on this very same question in September, 1921. That discussion arose out of the fact that Sir William Meyer who used to be High Commissioner for India in his evidence before the Indian Railway Committee admitted that for a year or two after the war he had given not more than 10 per cent. preference to British manufacturers in buying in England in the London Stores Department. That matter was brought up in the Legislative Assembly by the late Sir Vithaldas Thackersey and in the Council of State by the Honourable Mr. Phiroze Sethna, and as a result of the debate, we sent home a letter to Sir William Meyer, a letter which I may say I drafted myself, and so I happen to know a good deal about this particular subject. I should like to read one or two extracts from this letter which is published in the proceedings of this Assembly:

“I am next to refer to the policy which has been laid down in regard to the acceptance of tenders. The Government of India fully realise that the cheapest tender is not always the most satisfactory”,

[Sir Charles Innes.]

—this is an answer to Mr. Jamnadas Mehta's query as to what the lowest satisfactory tender means,—

“and that it is not infrequently economical to accept a higher tender on account of greater reliability, earlier delivery, smaller cost of inspection or other similar reasons. The principle which has been prescribed for the permanent guidance of the Department by Sir William Meyer is that the lowest ‘satisfactory’ tender should be accepted. This principle is obviously correct, and indeed differs in no way from that advocated by Sir Vithaldas Thackersey, the Honourable Mr. Lalubhai Samaldas and the Honourable Mr. Sethna in the Legislative Assembly and the Council of State. Where a British and a foreign tender are equally satisfactory and equally cheap, the Government of India cordially agree that preference should be given to the former.”

Now, that is the only preference that we allowed. In addition to that, Sir, we ordered the High Commissioner to see that tenders were invited not only in England and Great Britain but all the Continent over, and we told him that in no way must his tenders be restricted to English firms, and further, in order to satisfy my Honourable friends opposite, we ordered the High Commissioner to send us out half-yearly statements showing each and every case in which the lowest satisfactory tender had not been accepted, and if any Honourable Member wishes to know cases in which the lowest tender has not been accepted, he has merely got to look up the records of this House, and he will find half-yearly statements published in the official Reports.

Then my friend Mr. Devaki Prasad Sinha wants me to say whether I could assure him that we were not buying British locomotives even though the cost was about 150 per cent. greater. Sir, I can only refer my Honourable friend to what Sir Atul Chatterjee has said himself on this point, and here again is another extract which I will read :

“In the case of large classes of stores the British manufacturer is still able to quote lower prices for satisfactory quality than his foreign competitors and the combined operation of these factors is responsible for the very high proportion which purchases in Great Britain bear to the total. It may be stated categorically that the British manufacturer receives no preference of any kind in the allocation of orders. The sole considerations which are allowed to weigh are price, quality and delivery, and every attempt is made to encourage competition and so enlarge the list of suppliers . . .

**Mr. H. G. Cocke** (Bombay: European): What is the date of that please?

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes**: This report is for the year 1924-25. It was received here in August last. The Report goes on to say :

“In this work the Department has to acknowledge the whole-hearted co-operation and assistance of the Consulting Engineers.”

It then goes on to give a few outstanding instances of foreign purchases made during the year. He mentions having purchased 3 locomotive boilers, the accepted tender being £3,520 the lowest British tender being £4,760; 7 locomotive boilers, accepted tender being £10,770, the lowest British tender being £13,225 . . . .

**Mr. K. C. Neogy**: Will the Honourable Member please read paragraph 2 of the 1st page of that report as to what Sir Atul Chatterjee thinks about the orders for urgent delivery?

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:**

"It is realised that in many instances speedy delivery of the stores in India is required for important reasons, but Sir Atul Chatterjee thinks that it will be useful if consuming Departments in India would give earnest and continued attention to the possibility of forecasting their requirements in good time in order that the Stores Department in London might secure the placing of orders at a favourable time both for price and delivery."

Sir, we do not order locomotives with any kind of urgency. I claim that I have shown that there is not the slightest foundation for what Mr. Jamnadas Mehta has said. He has raised a hare which I thought we had scotched and killed in 1921, and, if we have not scotched and killed it, it is not our fault. It lies in the suspicious mind of my Honourable friend opposite. I defy the Honourable Mr. Jamnadas Mehta to get up now and say that any business concern—even the Bombay Corporation—would apply in their purchase of stores any other principle, than that of accepting the lowest satisfactory tender. There is no business firm in the whole world which will bind itself to accept the lowest tender. For carrying out this policy we have a most distinguished Indian. The most elaborate instructions have been laid down for his guidance and I submit that there is no reason whatsoever why this House should, on what Mr. Jamnadas Mehta has said, come to the conclusion that Sir Atul Chatterjee is not carrying out our instructions.

**Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta:** He is bound by rules.

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** Has the Honourable Member read the letter which we issued in 1921? If not, I will hand it over to him and ask him to read it.

**Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta:** That is five years old. What are the rules? They make it difficult for anybody to buy at a cheaper rate.

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** The rules are the rules which are laid down in this letter and those are the instructions which have been issued to Sir Atul Chatterjee. As I was going to say, Sir, the question has turned so largely on locomotives that I almost forgot what Mr. Das said about the East Indian Railway stores purchase policy. The only point that I wish to make about the policy of the East Indian Railway as well as of any other railway is that it is laid down by the Government of India that they should purchase as much as they can in India, and, in order to see that that policy is being carried out, we have prescribed that every single tender that goes home should be sent to the Indian Stores Department for scrutiny. It is the business of the Indian Stores Department to bring to our notice cases in which orders are placed at home for goods which can be purchased here. Every such case which is brought to our notice is taken up and the Agent brought to book. Sir, I think that is all that I need say.

**Mr. N. M. Joshi:** What about my question as to why the East Indian Railway does not build its own engines and locomotives?

(No reply.)

**Mr. President:** The Honourable Member is not disposed to answer the question of the Honourable Member (Mr. Joshi).

The question is:

"That the Demand under the head 'Working Expenses: Administration' be reduced by Rs. 100."

The motion was negatived.

**Mr. N. M. Joshi:** I suggest, Sir, that Mr. Acharya's motion on the supplementary list should now be taken up.

**Mr. President:** The next in order are three motions standing in the name of Mr. Neogy. Nos. 3 to 11 on the supplementary list will then follow as a logical order.

**Mr. K. C. Neogy:** I do not desire to move Nos. 99 to 101.

**Mr. President:** Mr. Acharya, No. 3 on the supplementary list.

*Failure to redress the Grievances of Railway Subordinate Employees.*

**Mr. M. K. Acharya:** I move:

"That the Demand under the head 'Working Expenses : Administration' be reduced by Rs. 100."

Sir, I am very thankful on behalf of several hundred thousands of my hard working countrymen that at last this motion has come up before this House. My case is very simple, and I propose to be very brief. The case is this. The subordinate employees on Indian Railways have got very many, very grievous, and very genuine grievances. Consequently this House wanted, by a Resolution passed last year, those grievances to be inquired into by a committee of the Central Advisory Council for Railways. That inquiry has not taken place, and no redress has come to the men up to date on account of the failure of the Government to carry out the recommendation of this House, and on account of the failure on the part of the Government to carry out that recommendation of this House it is now proposed to reduce this Demand by Rs. 100. Sir, I shall not insult the intelligence of this House by repeating what has been said or trying to prove what has been amply proved on the floor of this House. Last year this House took one whole morning and one whole afternoon over this question of the grievances of the railway subordinate employees, and the need to have them inquired into by a competent committee. Last year the Honourable Sir Charles Innes opposed the Resolution, very vigorously he opposed it. He began by saying, "This is a very dangerous Resolution", and he brought against that Resolution all his talents, all his eloquence and all the weight of his figures; and yet this House, after having carefully listened to him not once but twice, came to the conclusion that there was a very good case, that the railway subordinate employees had very many genuine grievances, and adopted on the 5th February, 1925, a Resolution that these grievances should be inquired into. The Honourable Sir Charles Innes, I repeat, began by saying, "I may say at once that I regard this as a thoroughly dangerous Resolution." He said also that there were no real grievances. He said, "I claim that the railway servants are as well off and perhaps better off than any other large labour force in this country" and all that. Later on, in the closing portion of his speech on the second day, he said again:

"There are no general grievances in regard to pay and allowances. That there may be other grievances, I do not deny. What is the proper way to deal with those other grievances? It is not by entrusting the matter to a Committee of your Central Advisory Council. . . . The proper way to deal with grievances of this kind is to put pressure upon me. We have split up the Railway Budget this year into no less than 16 Grants. We have allotted 4 days for the discussion of those grants. During the discussion on those grants every single aspect of the railway administration can be brought under review by this House. That is the proper way to deal with a matter of this kind."

Sir, we have adopted that device. I am thankful on behalf of the very large number of Indian employees in the railways who are very badly treated, that this opportunity has been afforded to discuss the matter. I have heard numberless accounts and I have very good reason to believe the majority of the tales that I have heard; and I know that the men have got very genuine grievances. We have taken "the proper course" which the Honourable Sir Charles Innes has pointed out to us. Again, I put a question last September in regard to this Resolution. We have heard how many sleepless nights Members on the other side spend upon motions passed by this House which are inconvenient to them; and I wonder how many sleepless nights Sir Charles Innes spent on this Resolution when it was passed by the House. I asked him on the 1st September, 1925, the following question:

"Will the Government be pleased to state what action they have taken or propose to take on the Resolution adopted by the Legislative Assembly without a division on the 5th February 1925, recommending an inquiry into the grievances of subordinate railway employees by the Central Advisory Committee for Railways?"

The Honourable Sir Charles Innes replied:

"The Government of India are not in agreement with the Resolution referred to by the Honourable Member and do not propose to initiate the inquiry suggested in that Resolution."

He went on however to add very graciously:

"They have drawn the attention of Railway Administrations to the debates not only on the Resolution, but also on the Budget, and they have no doubt that any genuine grievances which exist will be remedied by the Railway Administrations concerned."

Then, Sir, in my ignorance of official methods I put a supplementary question:

"In the case of Resolutions adopted without a division, is there no understanding that action will be taken upon them?"

In my ignorance of official mentality, I thought that there would be some response. When the Honourable Member on behalf of Government did not dare even to divide the House on this Resolution, when in spite of all the influence he has, in spite of the very large number of votes he could command, he did not ask for a division, and when the Resolution was accordingly passed without a division, I thought some action would be taken upon that Resolution by the Government, and that the vote of this House would not be trampled under foot. But the fact is the Government do not care for our vote. And Sir Charles Innes, I shall repeat what my Honourable friend Lala Duni Chand said a little while ago, lives in a glass house of his own, so that wherever he turns round he sees his own image, the happy image of the man who has risen to the top of the ladder and he thinks that like him the railway employees are all happy beings. Therefore he does not feel the pinch of their suffering, the woe and the misery to which these very many hundreds of thousands of my countrymen are put. The other day when my friend Mr. Chaman Lal put the very simple, straight, honest question to the other side—the other side was trying to make out that the good of the railway administration, as everything else, depended upon the contentment of 1,500 of their highly paid senior European officers—when he put the question whether it did not depend on the contentment of the lower ranks also, no answer came from that side. I do ask in all seriousness: does the

[Mr. M. K. Acharya.]

good of the railways depend entirely on the contentment of 1,500 foreigners, does it not depend upon the barest contentment of 700,000 of our countrymen? That is a question which I have got a right to ask. It pains me greatly to hear the empty words that the opposite side are so very anxious to be responsive, though they are not responsible. The Honourable the Home Member said it, the Honourable the Commerce Member said it and the Finance Member said it. Even my non-official friend Colonel Crawford said that the Government are very responsive. Have the Government really been responsive in the matter of this inquiry? If a committee of inquiry had been appointed, would the Heavens have tumbled down? Would the Indian Ocean have swelled and swallowed up the whole of this continent and submerged it? I cannot understand their mind. The Honourable Member says it is dangerous to have an inquiry; dangerous to whom? Now, are there genuine grievances or not? I say most emphatically that there are genuine grievances. This House decided in my favour on the last occasion, when my Resolution was passed without a division. I referred the Honourable Member to this fact. He replied that both in his first speech and in his last he opposed the Resolution. There, I suppose we get the last word of the Testament. He says there are no grievances; I maintain that there are genuine grievances. The question is now very simple. Is this House going to take his answer? I do not propose to go now into details over this question of grievances. It is absolutely unnecessary for me to do so. It is undesirable that there are grievances. During the last few days we have received so many printed communications and so many statements about them; and I shall not insult the intelligence of the House by labouring the point. It is now beyond all range of discussion.

When it is a question of the superior men, the Lee Commission's recommendations are given effect to at once; but when it is a case of the poor hard working Indians, the other side say: "Oh, there are no grievances and the appointment of a committee will bring about strikes." But even without a Committee of inquiry, did not a strike take place last year on a sufficiently large scale on the North Western Railway? And in spite of the pledges given here, are there not thousands of men thrown out of work, still denied re-employment? In fact some of us have tried to table a Resolution that they should all be taken back. Far from bringing about strikes, a proper inquiry will remove discontent, will remove the causes of any strikes whatever. Of course Agents dislike inquiries; they do not want the outside world to know what is happening. Here is one small point that I should like to bring out. The Honourable Sir Charles Innes said that this question has been referred to the Agents. When the sheep complain against the wolves, you refer them back to the wolves. The Honourable Member says that the Agents will do all that is needful,—that these angelic Agents will do everything to remove the grievances. I think that the way in which this whole question has been treated by the Government and the replies given, are an insult to this House. And I think that every self-respecting Indian who knows that the Indian employees of the railways are very badly treated owes it to himself to see that the Government do take this matter up seriously and accept the advice of this House. That advice may not be exactly binding under the Act, but I should like to get established the convention or procedure that motions passed in this House should be given effect to; and when they are not

given effect to a detailed statement must be made on the other side as to why they have not been given effect to. And secondly, on the merits, there is a very good case for an inquiry in this matter. And if after an inquiry a committee says there are no grievances, then I for one am prepared to surrender my point. But until that is said by an independent, impartial committee of inquiry, I am not prepared to take the word of Sir Charles Innes. Perhaps Sir Charles Innes is only reading to us what the Agents say in this connection. The British rulers of this land never admit that the Indian people have any grievances. They always maintain that Indians are blissfully contented and happy. And in the same way the Agents say that the men on their railways are very happy; that they have no grievances; that the grievances are the creations of mischief-mongers who desire to create unrest with their imaginary grievances. And how do the Agents make their reports? On what evidence? We all know that. And therefore it will not do to say that the Agents have reported that there are no grievances, and so the Government do not propose to take any steps in the matter. I attach no value to such reports, and I therefore move, Sir, that this reduction be made.

**Lieutenant-Colonel H. A. J. Gidney** (Nominated: Anglo-Indians): Sir, I rise to offer a few remarks on this motion with the intention of supporting my Honourable friend the Mover who has just spoken. One of the few occasions on which I have voted on the opposite side was last year on this very subject matter when this House by a large majority resolved that a committee should be appointed to inquire into the grievances of railway subordinates. This Resolution the Government refused to accept. Sir, to say that no grievances exist in the Railways is absurd and possibly an itinerating committee would be as unwieldy as it is unnecessary. But Sir Charles Innes in his reply last year forcibly denounced it inasmuch as it would lead to discontent, strikes and all sorts of possible dangers. I am not prepared to concede to the Honourable Member that such a committee would foment disaffection in the ranks or affect the discipline that is so necessary in all big administrations such as are some of our railways. Nor am I prepared to concede that such a committee of inquiry would result in such dire results. Sir, we have had various committees of inquiry sitting on most of the Departments of Government. We have had a Telegraph Committee, a Postal Committee; we have recently had the most famous Committee of them all, *i.e.*, the Lee Commission, which was nothing else than an I. C. S. Committee. Well, Sir, these Committees have sat. Have they led to strikes or increased disaffection in these Departments? Has the administration suffered? With all respect to the Honourable the Commerce Member, Sir, I cannot consider this excuse seriously. I readily admit the Agent is the proper person to decide as to an employee's fitness and desirability or otherwise, and I am also prepared to concede that an itinerating committee would certainly in a large measure interfere with the powers of administration of an Agent and the discipline in his Railway. And, therefore, Sir, I would ask the Mover of this motion, if he would accept a modified . . . (An Honourable Member: "The motion is only for a cut of Rs. 100.") (The Honourable Sir Charles Innes: "Make it 99.") Will the Honourable the Commerce Member be prepared to accept as an alternative a committee of inquiry attached to every railway . . .

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** No

**Lieutenant-Colonel H. A. J. Gidney:** The Honourable the Commerce Member has not heard what I got to say and he says, "no."

**The Honourable-Sir Charles Innes:** You said it the other day.

**Lieutenant-Colonel H. A. J. Gidney:** I repeat, would he accept a committee attached to every railway with power to inquire into cases of dismissals only. Now, Sir, I submit that no Railway Agent acting alone as such should have the power to dismiss a man from the service especially when the man who orders the dismissal is the judge and accuser at one and the same time, an unheard of condition in the administration of justice in any civilised country. In the railways when a man is dismissed he is doubly punished, first departmentally then he is deprived of his gratuity and bonus and possibly then handed over to the Police and put into Jail. I know the rules of the Provident Fund state that a man can get his provident fund only if he has done good service. For example a man is charged and punished by one of the junior officials. It is very seldom that the Agent of a railway overrules the finding of his junior officer; and it is still more seldom that the Railway Board goes against the Agent's order of dismissal. In how many cases, I ask, has the Railway Board gone against the Agent's orders of dismissal? Then, Sir, it often happens that an Agent says "We cannot bring a clear case or charge against a man, but he is nevertheless an undesirable servant" and he is not discharged but dismissed summarily without even a charge-sheet being prepared or the man given a ghost of a chance of defence.

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** No.

**Lieutenant-Colonel H. A. J. Gidney:** I say "Yes". Sir, this happened in the East Indian Railway. A man was dismissed without any trial or defence and he was deprived of his gratuity and provident fund amounting to many thousands of rupees and is to-day so deprived.

**Sir Clement Hindley:** It is not true.

**Lieutenant-Colonel H. A. J. Gidney:** I say it is true. Sir, I will give you that case—a man who lost his bonus and gratuity: a Mr. M. D'Cruz of the East Indian Railway Stores Department. If he were guilty of the charges he should have been tried before a criminal court or given a fair and honest departmental inquiry with a charge-sheet as is required by Rules. He was denied this and was summarily dismissed. I represented his case before the Secretary of State for India and the Viceroy. What happened? The head of that Department (Stores) was, I am told, censured and ordered by the Agent to keep his mouth shut about this case. (*An Honourable Member:* "Shame.") He wrote this in a letter to Mr. D'Cruz. That letter came to me and I sent it to His Excellency the Viceroy for action. If this is the way in which Railway Agents are disposed to treat their subordinates, then, Sir, I submit we have every reason to press for a committee to inquire into such acts of injustice. (Hear, hear.) I do not care who says "Hear, hear." It is crass injustice. This House yesterday expressed its opinion in no uncertain terms on the Mulvany Jail exposure. Is a similar exposure necessary to protect railway subordinates from the autocratic and unjust actions of some of the railway officials? I do not



say all, I say some—a few, I am sure. Most railway officials, I know, have a keen sense of justice and are desirous that justice should be done to their subordinates; but there are some who excel in the maladministration of justice. We had one—the exposure of a jail official yesterday. Does the Railway Board desire and require a somewhat similar exposure to force their hands to give this House a committee to inquire into the grievances of its subordinates? I put it to you, Sir, the time has come when the Railway Board must come off its perch; the railway subordinate has every claim to be protected and he must be protected from injustice. I therefore submit that the Railway Board should seriously consider this matter. I believe, Sir, that when this House last year discussed an amendment on the Provident Fund, Government gave an assurance—I was not in the House then—that the Central Advisory Railway Committee would be consulted in as far as the treatment of those cases of dismissal entailing forfeiture of bonus and gratuity. If I am right and if any action is to be taken on that matter, Sir, I submit that the Central Railway Advisory Committee, when it deals with it, should appoint a sub-committee, one of the representatives of which should be a railway employee. That would be something, Sir, and something is better than nothing. I do appeal to the Commerce Member to take this matter up very seriously. I do not say that Agents wilfully miscarry justice or misuse their powers, but I do submit, Sir, as the truism *humane est errare* shows that we are all liable to err. The Railway Board, I know, is understaffed. It therefore cannot look carefully into these cases. I know the Railway Board is overstuffed.

**Sir Clement Hindley:** Understaffed.

**Lieutenant-Colonel H. A. J. Gidney:** Yes, I mean understaffed. I beg your pardon. They cannot look into these matters and when a memorial goes to His Excellency the Viceroy he necessarily sends it back to the Railway Board and the Railway Board repeats its original opinion with the result that the employee is absolutely broke. Remember once a railway man, always a railway man, and the man's career is ruined for life for he is denied employment in any other railway. He has been denied a dog's chance to defend himself before a criminal court and he is deprived of his bonus and gratuity. If this is the treatment meted out on some railways, it is not justice. It is a travesty of justice and it is for such cases and for these reasons that I press for a Complaints Department on each Railway to inquire into all such cases. I therefore support the motion.

**Mr. N. M. Joshi:** Sir, I crave your indulgence in placing before this House the grievances of the railway employees and the failure of the Railway Board to do justice to them. Sir, my friend, Mr. Acharya, has already told this House that the Railway Board did not give effect to the Resolution passed by this House, and therefore the Railway Board deserve to be censured by passing the motion. Sir, the grievances of the railway men are many. I shall deal with them very briefly. The first grievance is that there is racial discrimination in the appointment and treatment of the subordinate staff on the Railways, especially on Company-managed Railways. I will give an instance of the Bengal Nagpur Railway. On the Bengal Nagpur Railway the drivers of mail trains are invariably Europeans and never Indians. In the same way the chief guards of mail trains are always Europeans and never Indians. The yard masters are Europeans . . .

**Mr. President:** Order, order. The Honourable Member will not be entitled to move his motion No. 102 if he discusses the question of racial distinctions on this motion.

**Mr. N. M. Joshi:** I will not move that motion, Sir. With your indulgence I wish to put forward all the grievances of the railway employees on this motion. I think it will suit the convenience of the House also. Sir, the station masters of Classes I, II and III on the Bengal Nagpur Railway are also Europeans and these posts are not given to Indians. In the same way in the workshops Indians are not allowed the positions of assistant fitters and chief boilermakers. Mechanics of these classes are exclusively Europeans and Anglo-Indians on salaries of Rs. 300, Rs. 420 and Rs. 550. Indians are also not appointed to these posts in other Company-managed Railways. Sir, the Company-managed Railways as well as the State-managed Railways make a difference in the pay of Indians, Anglo-Indians and Europeans when they perform the same duties. Let us see what happens. Indian drivers are started on Rs. 42 a month and go up to Rs. 52 after 5 years, whereas Europeans and Anglo-Indians begin on Rs. 156 and go up to Rs. 210 in 4 years. Sir, I can go on reading extracts about these distinctions which are made between Indians and Anglo-Indians and Europeans as regards their salaries. Sir, I do not want the Railway Board to reduce the salaries of the Anglo-Indians and Europeans but they should raise the level of the salaries of Indians and bring them on the same level as those of Anglo-Indians and Europeans. I shall be quite satisfied and, I shall be very happy if they can do so. But, Sir, this racial discrimination must be stopped. Then, Sir, there is racial distinction not only as regards salaries but even as regards leave given on Company-managed Railways. I have asked questions several times as to whether the leave rules on Company-managed Railways have been changed so that racial distinctions will be removed from them. On some of these Railways long leave, such as furlough, is given only to Anglo-Indians and Europeans and never to Indians. How long is this distinction going to be made? Then, Sir, as regards accommodation. A European servant of the same status gets better and more accommodation and an Indian gets less accommodation. Why should this distinction be made? Do you think Indians do not want to enjoy the comforts of bigger houses? I would like to have a reply from the Railway Board. Then, take the question of the Fines Fund. Generally it is the Indians who are fined and it is on very rare occasions that Anglo-Indians and Europeans are fined. If you take the whole Fines Fund you will find that at least nine-tenths of it consists of fines levied on Indians. Yet most of the money of this Fund is spent for the benefit of the Anglo-Indian and European employees of the Company. Last year I asked the Honourable Sir Charles Innes to make inquiries and he said he would do so. I would like to know, Sir, what is the result of his inquiries. Last year I stated that the Fines Fund does not belong to the Railways. In fact, you are doing a wrong thing when you fine your employees. But if you want to fine your employees and if you want that the Fines Fund should be employed for the benefit of the employees, appoint a committee of the employees themselves and ask it to manage that fund, so that there should be no bitterness about its use.

Then, Sir, I would like to place before this House certain other grievances which we had asked this House to redress. Take the question of the Unions which I had placed before this House several times.

There are many Agents who refuse to recognize these Railway Unions, and whenever they do recognise them they lay down most unreasonable conditions. One of the Agents says that there should be no outsiders in the Union. If there are no outsiders then only he will recognise the Union. Another man says individual grievances must not be taken up by the Unions. If the Union is not to represent individual grievances why does it exist? If you do not allow Unions to represent individual grievances then that Union will have to ask for more wages and reduction of hours of work every day, because there is nothing else to be redressed. I want the Railway Board to see that all railway managers recognise the Unions which are formed on those lines.

Then there is the question of dismissal. Colonel Gidney has placed before this House how the railway dismisses its employees in large numbers. They have no appeal, no redress. I suggest that the Honourable Sir Charles Innes should appoint a joint committee on each line so that when a man is dismissed the case of his dismissal may go to the committee and the man will at least feel that his case has been heard. On some railways a man when dismissed is supplied with a charge-sheet. Many railways do not supply charge sheets. Let the Honourable Sir Charles Innes insist upon every railway supplying a man with a charge-sheet before he is dismissed.

There is a serious grievance which I have brought to notice about porters on the Howrah station, porters on that station are made to pay Rs. 7 a head to a man named Mr. Love who simply supervises their work. He was a retired station master who had no job, and the Company wanted to see that he got an easy job.

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** I ask, Sir, whether the Honourable Member is in order in discussing these points. It is quite impossible for me to answer all these questions in one speech. I suggest that the Honourable Member might reserve that point for his own amendment.

**Mr. President:** The Honourable Member is at liberty to bring in under his motion all the grievances of railway employees. He is quite in order.

**Mr. N. M. Joshi:** Thank you, Sir. As I was saying every porter is charged a fee of Rs. 7 a month, and the man who is asked to supervise gets an income of Rs. 3,000 from these fees. That man used to get Rs. 500, and from Rs. 500 he has jumped to Rs. 3,000.

**Mr. President:** Order, order. The Honourable Member must understand that he will not be allowed to move any other motion dealing with the grievances of railway employees.

**Mr. N. M. Joshi:** Yes, Sir. That man gets Rs. 3,000. He spends Rs. 1,000 in appointing some other supervisors. He is now getting Rs. 3,000. A similar state of things exists even in Delhi.

Then as regards the Great Indian Peninsula Railway. At Wari Bandar the goods clerks have to pay a certain amount of money whenever any mistakes are made about risk notes and these poor fellows get about Rs. 30, 40 or 50. They are asked to pay sometimes very large sums simply because the merchants refuse to pay. Then take another instance. On the Great Indian Peninsula Railway the poor workmen in the workshops are made to do even private work by the foremen. Recently there

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was a case in the Police Court in Bombay where a foreman was charged with assault because the subordinate under him refused to do some private work which the foreman asked him to do in connection with the repairs to a motor car or some such thing.

Sir, there are many such grievances. I do not wish to go into them all. One word more about the East Indian Railway. The East Indian Railway has now been taken over by the Government, but before taking the Company under their management Government made the subordinate employees sign a bond that they would remain under the rules of Company-managed Railways and not under the rules of State-managed Railways. Is it fair, when Government take a railway company under their management, that they should apply the rules of the Company-managed Railways to a railway which has been taken over by the State? It was because in certain respects the rules of Company-managed Railways are stricter and less advantageous that they made them sign a bond that they would be content to remain under the rules of a Company-managed railways. These poor railway employees had to sign a bond because they could not give up their jobs. I want this House to pass this vote of censure because the Railway Board have not given effect to the wishes of this House. It has not only not given effect to the wishes of this House, but it has shown a want of confidence in the Central Advisory Committee. The House passed a Resolution that the grievances of the railway employees should be placed before the Central Advisory Committee. After all we are not asking you to place their grievances before any committee of outsiders; we asked you to place their grievances before your own Committee, and you refused to place their grievances before it. You are not only insulting this House, but you are also insulting the Central Advisory Committee. I ask the House to insist on a division on this motion and record a vote of censure on the Railway Board.

**Mr. Chaman Lall** (West Punjab: Non-Muhammadian): I feel very sorry for the Honourable Sir Charles Innes. I sympathise with him, and all that I have to say is that it is his own fault, and that he deserves everything he has got this afternoon. If he had only agreed to the demand that was made by us for a committee of inquiry, he would have saved himself all this trouble. The other day a friend of mine painted before me a vision that he had had of the Railway Board, the chief figure being Sir Charles, Innes, who he dreamed was in prison grinding corn, doing hard labour, and Mr. Sim expostulating on the woes of mankind in a solitary cell, and he said the real reason he was prompted to dream like that probably was this. The Railway Board are determined apostles of racial discrimination on the railways.

**Sir Clement Hindley:** We deny it.

**Mr. Chaman Lall:** They deny it, but their actions belie their denial. Sir, there is in an ancient book, to some people rather a sacred book, a section, which says:

"Whoever by words, either spoken or written, or by signs, or by visible representations, or otherwise, promotes or attempts to promote feelings of enmity or hatred between different classes of Her Majesty's subjects, shall be punished with imprisonment which may extend to two years, or with fine, or with both."

I think, Sir, my friend must have dreamt that the Members of the Railway Board, including the Honourable Sir Charles Innes, must have been prosecuted under section 153A for countenancing racial discrimination on the railways. I notice my friend, Sir Clement Hindley, says he denies this statement of mine. Now will he turn to his own classified list of the railways, and taking the North Western Railway, what will he find? He will find that amongst the Station Superintendents getting Rs. 600 to Rs. 650, there are two and both those are Europeans; among Station Masters of the special class there are 11 and all 11 are Europeans. Of Station Masters of the lower class there are 15 and all of them are Indians. Of Assistant Station Masters out of 86 only 4 are Indians, and right through the list he will find the same story. In the local mechanics department, out of 215 appointments, three only go to Indians. In the carriage mechanics departments out of 105 appointments, three go to Indians. He will find, if he turns again to the Agents, all the Agents are Europeans, all the Deputy Agents are Europeans . . . . .

**Mr. President:** What is the Honourable Member driving at? The question of Indianisation has already been disposed of by this House. He may in a general way refer to that as one of the grievances, but he cannot go into the details of that question.

**Mr. Chaman Lall:** Very well, Sir, I do not want to go into the details because there is not much need. But what I want to draw the attention of the House to is this, that the Railway Board not only countenance this policy of racial discrimination but that they actually go beyond this and try to hush up matters and prevent people from getting information which they ought to get. Now we here as the representatives of the people have every right to ventilate the grievances of the subordinate employees of the railways. But what do we find? When I write to the Agent of the North Western Railway I get a polite reminder from him "*I do not think I shall be in order to enter into correspondence with you in these matters*". When I refer these matters to the Honourable Member in charge he refers me to the Agent of the North Western Railway. So in between the devil and the deep sea I get absolutely no satisfaction. (Laughter.) On the other hand, some time ago I brought to the notice of the Honourable Member that a circular had been issued actually preventing members of the services from bringing their grievances to the notice of Honourable Members of this House. The reading of this circular by railway officials is that no subordinate has any right to go to any Member of this House and bring his grievances to his notice. The circular I refer to is Staff Office Order, dated 1st December 1896.

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** That is a Home Department circular.

**Mr. Chaman Lall:** I do not care whether it is the Home Department or any other Department. I want to know whether that circular also applies to the Railways.

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** Yes.

**Mr. Chaman Lall:** It is being construed by various officials on the railways to mean that no subordinate has any business to come to Honourable Members of this House and lay his grievances before them. Now

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this policy which has been adopted by the Railway Department is a policy which to my mind needs immediate and radical alteration. Honourable Members over there say there are no grievances. The grievances from which subordinates suffer on the railways have been pointed out time and again in this House. What have Honourable Members on the other side done? The alleged grievances of the superior services were seldom brought to the notice of this Government by any member of the superior services, and yet what did Honourable Members do? They appointed a Commission and the Commission went round the country and the result is that you are now giving effect to the Lee Commission's recommendations on the railways as well and you are giving retrospective effect to them on Company-owned railways which you have no business to do. That in spite of the fact that there was no consensus of opinion among the superior services demanding relief . . . . .

**Mr. B. Das:** Is the Honourable Member aware . . . . .

**Mr. Chaman Lall:** If the Honourable Member will only restrain himself he will get plenty of opportunities to make speeches on the floor of the House. The question I want to draw attention to is that the subordinate services have also their grievances but you will not consider them, or devise remedies for them. You go out of your way in order to give effect to the recommendations of the Lee Commission in regard to the superior services which will put more money into their pockets. Now, Sir, this state of affairs is to my mind a most scandalous state of affairs. You have time and again been told by Members of this House that the Railway Board are absolutely autocratic, that we can get no redress from them; and I want to bring to the notice of the Honourable Member opposite just one instance. In 1923 I think 12 Indian graduates were appointed on the North Western Railway on a definite promise given by the Commerce Member that these people would be taken on after preliminary training. It is 4 years or more than 3 years ago that these people were appointed.

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** Did I give the promise?

**Mr. Chaman Lall:** Yes, Sir, I will read out to the Honourable Member what he actually said on the floor of this House—the question was raised by me:

“With reference to the reply given on 2nd February 1925 by the Honourable the Commerce Member to the Honourable Sardar Gulab Singh's unstarred question 65 part (b), namely, that on the North Western Railway an attempt has been made to provide special facilities for educated Indians which will fit them for the post of Traffic Inspectors and that for this purpose 12 men have been taken on in the Traffic Manager's office as clerks in the first instance with a view to training and eventual qualification for promotion to higher subordinates' ranks . . . . .”

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** Did I promise that they would be promoted in one year as the Honourable Member said?

**Mr. Chaman Lall:** Is the Honourable Member aware that this was in 1923.

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** Well, two years ago.

**Mr. Chaman Lal:** The Honourable Member's arithmetic is wrong. We are now in 1926 and these men have been there over three years and nothing whatsoever has been done. No opportunities to train them or fit them for higher service have been afforded to them. What has the Honourable Member to say in reply to that? I submit, Sir, that there is a deliberate policy which is being fostered by the Railway Board to keep educated Indians from qualifying themselves for these superior posts.

Is that a policy which this House ought to countenance? I congratulate my Honourable friend Mr. Acharya on the eloquent and able speech that he made. He was wise in leaving it at the general issue and not going into details; I do not intend to go into any further details myself. I will but repeat the words of Sir Edward Coke when he said that never yet were general words sufficient satisfaction for general grievances; and I submit that the subordinate services on the railways have general grievances of a very vital nature and that it is up to the Railway Board and the officials who sit over there to see and examine those grievances with a view to redressing them.

**Khan Bahadur W. M. Hussainally:** Sir, this is a very old subject. To-day the time is very valuable and I do not propose to take more than three or four minutes upon this point, as I spoke upon this very matter only two or three days ago. I only want to bring two or three small matters to the notice of the House. One small matter is the Sunday allowances. Questions were put in this House on two or three different occasions why Sunday allowances were given to European and Anglo-Indian employees and not to Indians; the reply was that the question was under consideration. That consideration has taken more than twelve months and the Railway Board have not come to a decision yet; and I do not know when they intend to come to a decision in a small matter like this whether Indians are entitled to the same allowances for Sunday working or not.

But I would bring to the notice of the House a much more important point than that. And that is the education of the sons of the employees of the railways. Last year I put a question in this House as to what was the amount of money spent upon the education of the sons of European and Anglo-Indian employees and what was the amount spent upon the education of the sons of Indian employees on the North Western Railway. The reply that I got was that the amount of money spent upon the education of the sons of European and Anglo-Indian employees was Rs. 1,60,333, whereas the sum spent upon the education of the sons of Indian employees was Rs. 15,418 only. Now, I quite admit that the railway is not bound to educate the sons of any of their employees at all; but if they do spend any money upon the education of the sons of their employees, I think that amount is well spent provided no favouritism is shown to any particular class or community from among their employees. I do not see why a handful of Europeans and Anglo-Indians should have such a large amount of money as Rs. 1,60,333, whereas a small amount of Rs. 15,418 only should be spent upon the sons of Indian employees, who are perhaps a hundred times or even a thousand times more numerous than the European and Anglo-Indian employees. My information is that so far as the North Western Railway alone is concerned they even send the sons of their European and Anglo-Indian employees to the hill stations; they are given railway passes for holidays and vacations and other purposes, whereas they support only one or two small vernacular schools for the benefit of the

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Indian employees. Why should there be this discrimination and this distinction? Why not spend a larger amount upon the education of the sons of these Indian employees as well, so as to fit them in future for railway work? I think, Sir, that in itself is a point which the House should take into consideration while passing this motion. I think it is a very important question, whether the railways should do anything for the education of the sons of their employees. If so, why should there be racial discrimination of this kind? I hope the Honourable the Commerce-Member will give us some information on this point. I was told, Sir, that this question was under consideration and only a few days ago the question was repeated by one of my Honourable friends here and the same reply was given, that the matter is still under consideration. I think it is a very important point, that if the railway is going to spend any money at all it should spend equally for the benefit of all employees without distinction of caste or creed.

**\*Maulvi Abul Kasem:** Sir, for the convenience of the House you have allowed the discussion on this motion of matters which are not directly relevant. (Mr. N. M. Joshi: "Why not relevant?") The question has been discussed by men who have better authority and justification to discuss it. I want to confine myself to one small point, about the arrangements for porters at all big stations on Indian Railways, not only at Howrah or Delhi but over the whole railway system.

**Mr. A. Rangaswami Iyengar:** Is that a grievance of the employees?

**Maulvi Abul Kasem:** It was discussed . . . .

**Mr. President:** Will the Honourable Member satisfy the Chair that that is a grievance of the railway employees?

**Maulvi Abul Kasem:** They are railway employees, because they serve on the railway platforms and they are under the orders of the railway authorities; but whether they are employed by railway authorities and paid by them or whether they get wages for the work they do I do not know . . . . .

**Mr. N. M. Joshi:** They are railway employees.

**Maulvi Abul Kasem:** I have no particular reason to ask why a particular man gets Rs. 3,000 or Rs. 4,000 a month. But what I say is this that the proper course for the railway administration will be to keep these people under the direct and immediate control of the railway officers instead of engaging them on a contract system. That has been a matter of comment, and if I may say so, it has been a public scandal . . . . .

**Mr. President:** It may be a matter of public scandal, but have the porters themselves complained about it? The Chair must be satisfied that it is one of the grievances of the railway employees.

**Maulvi Abul Kasem:** Sir, the porters have sent a petition, and their Union have also sent a memorial to the Railway Board. What I want the Railway Board to take note of is that these porters should be managed departmentally by their own servants, and they should not be engaged.

\*Speech not corrected by the Honourable Member.



on a contract system, they should not be employed through a contractor, whether he is a retired railway official or an outsider, it is immaterial: these porters should be employed directly by the railway authorities and they must be under the direct control of their own officials. And I say, Sir, there is some justification for saying that the grievances of the subordinate staff should be inquired into by a small committee, because it is not only in the case of railways but in all departments of Government, the higher authorities do not like to go against the orders of the man on the spot; if one official has committed a wrong it is very very difficult to get it redressed unless it is a case of a very grave nature; but ordinarily a man does not get any redress. Therefore, it will be for the satisfaction of the subordinates if an independent tribunal were constituted to inquire into their grievances. I do not like the idea that every time the discipline of the subordinate staff should be disturbed by going over the heads of the railway officials. and while I support this proposition, I desire to dissociate myself from the remarks which fell from my friend Mr. Chaman Lall to the effect that the circular of the Government of India about public servants approaching Members of the Legislature should be withdrawn. I think it is a salutary measure that individual members in the employment of the Government should not be allowed to come to individual Members of the Legislature and to ventilate their grievances through them. It may be quite profitable to me to get information and at the same time to ventilate the grievances and advertise myself; but I think it demoralises the services. If they have any grievances, let them ventilate them through their Unions or through public bodies or in the Press; and individual Members of the Legislature are at liberty to take note of published documents and published facts and bring them to the notice of the Government through the Legislature.

**Mr. B. Venkatapatiraju** (Ganjam *cum* Vizagapatam: Non-Muhammadian Rural): Sir, I confine my remarks to only one aspect of the case, namely, racial discrimination. I understand Sir Clement Hindley denies that there is racial discrimination.

**Sir Clement Hindley**: On a point of personal explanation, Sir. I was charged with being in favour of racial discrimination and I denied it.

**Mr. B. Venkatapatiraju**: That is exactly what I am saying.

**Sir Clement Hindley**: That is very different.

**Mr. B. Venkatapatiraju**: Sir Clement Hindley denies that there is any racial inequality . . . .

**Mr. President**: Order, order. The Honourable Member did not follow Sir Clement Hindley. Sir Clement Hindley said that he himself was charged with being in favour of racial discrimination and he had denied that charge. He has neither admitted or denied that racial discrimination exists.

**Mr. B. Venkatapatiraju**: Then I would not trouble myself about Sir Clement Hindley. I ask Sir Charles Innes, who the other day asked us to treat his word about Indianization as a solemn pledge on the floor of this House, to say whether there is any racial inequality either in the matter of appointments or promotions or not. That is the main question. If there be inequality, I ask whether the Government are justified in showing to the sons of the soil any inequality, any humiliation, by suggesting that

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because he is an Indian, a person has got certain disqualifications in the matter of appointment on Indian Railways paid for by the Indian taxpayer. I may mention one or two circumstances. Is it not a fact, Sir, that whatever may be the rule, as a matter of practice, the higher class station masters are reserved to certain stations and given to Europeans or Anglo-Indians and Indians are relegated to the lowest class of station masters? Is it not a fact, Sir, that Indians have to pass a telegraph examination whereas others need not pass any examination for appointment as a station master? Is it not a fact, Sir, that the treatment of Indians is quite different in the matter of promotion? If there be such inequality, could it be tolerated? If they say they do not show any inequality, I can understand it. But, as a matter of fact, we notice, whether it is a State-managed railway or a Company-managed railway, that Indians are appointed only to the lowest grades and that the higher grades go to Europeans and Anglo-Indians. The other day Colonel Gidney drew attention to the removal of 150 Anglo-Indians. It is because they did not want to give those posts to Indians. Therefore, what they have done is to dismiss 150 Anglo-Indians and then after a few months they have taken Anglo-Indians of a lower rank by giving them promotion and they have appointed fresh Indian recruits in those of lower grade appointments.

**Lieutenant-Colonel H. A. J. Gidney:** I do not admit that. I challenge the Honourable Member to produce figures supporting that statement.

**Mr. B. Venkatapatiraju:** Is it not a fact that all lower posts only are given to Indians? I will just read what was said by His Excellency Lord Reading and I ask you whether you are following that course. He said, speaking at the Chelmsford Club in May 1921 that "the fundamental principle of British rule in India is that there can be no trace and must be no trace of racial inequality. Consequently, there cannot be and must never be humiliation under the British rule of any Indian because he is an Indian." And lastly, he says, the essence to His Excellency's mind of the co-operation which is sought for between the British and Indian is that the former, *i.e.*, the Britishers, should convince the latter, *i.e.*, the Indians, by their action which will grow with thoughts and intentions that they honestly and sincerely mean what they have said with regard to these things. If the Members on the Treasury Benches can as a matter of fact say that in letter and in spirit they are not showing any inequality merely on the ground that one is an Indian and the other is of a different complexion, I will be satisfied. Otherwise, Sir, it is intolerable, and I hope the House will not at all excuse the administration if they show any inequality to the sons of the soil.

**Mr. Devaki Prasad Sinha:** Sir, I assure this impatient House that I shall be very brief. I am not at all referring to the question of racial discrimination because I believe that we can serve the cause of the workers on the railways much more by not referring to any racial discrimination. There are certain grievances that are common to all classes of workers whether they are Indians, Anglo-Indians or Europeans; and the most intolerable of those is that when any employee is sacked, or dismissed, or is punished or fined he is virtually denied the right of appeal. If he by any chance happens to incur the displeasure of one of the officers immediately superior to him, he is left without the right of getting his case examined by any other higher authority. Under the rules as they stand on paper there

are provisions for appeals, but we know that whenever any aggrieved person goes to a higher officer and appeals to him the higher officer refers him back to the decision of his own subordinate officer. As an instance of this I shall cite the case of certain railway officials who belong to the ticket collecting staff of the Patna Junction railway station. Something happened between the station master of that place and some of the ticket collectors of that station and on some excuse, I shall not say whether it was justifiable or not justifiable, those men were penalised. Suddenly they were asked to go on transfer to a different station and a new set of ticket collectors had to work there for 7 or 8 days with the help of about 18 Gurkha police guards and with the help of the police guards they showed a little more work than the permanent staff. But on that flimsy pretext this honest band of ticket collectors at the Patna Junction station was penalised. When they appealed to the higher authority they were told that the man who had dealt with their case had made a full inquiry into their grievances and nothing could be done. They appealed to another higher authority and he gave the same reply. And later on, the Honourable Mr. Sim may remember that I represented to him their case and the same reply that those men had received from the officers of the railway company was received by me, namely, that the officer immediately superior to them had made full inquiry into their case.

**Mr. G. G. Sim** (Financial Commissioner: Railways): Will the Honourable Member kindly read out my reply?

**Mr. Devaki Prasad Sinha**: I am afraid I have not got a copy of the reply.

**Mr. G. G. Sim**: On a point of personal explanation, Sir. I informed the Honourable Member that I knew nothing about the facts of the case, but that if the facts were as stated by him I considered that these men had been far too lightly punished and that if I were the Agent I should have dismissed them.

**Mr. Devaki Prasad Sinha**: The Honourable Mr. Sim wholly misread and misunderstood my letter. I had stated to him the facts as alleged by the prosecution, to employ the language which we lawyers use in the courts. If he thought that it was the men's version of the case he entirely misread and misunderstood the contents of my letter. I suppose he has forgotten whatever experience of judicial work he has had, otherwise he would have known that what I had stated to him was the case as made out against those persons by those who had dealt with their case.

**Mr. G. G. Sim**: I am sorry to interrupt the Honourable Member. He also stated the case of the men and he gave me their version of the case and I told him that if that account was correct, if I had been the Agent of the line, I should have sacked the lot.

**Mr. Devaki Prasad Sinha**: I do not see very great use in pursuing this interpretation of letters, because neither the Honourable Member has got my letter nor have I got his reply. I said that that was the charge against them and that I knew nothing of their case. I suppose Mr. Sim will bear me out when I say that, as I did not know anything about their case and I could not say anything either for or against them without any evidence before me, I requested him to make an independent inquiry into their case. But as he has himself confessed to-day he did not make an inquiry. Therefore, my point is established that once any subordinate official of a railway company is dealt with by an officer immediately superior to him, all right of appeal is practically denied to him.

[Mr. Devaki Prasad Sinha.]

That is a state of things which, to use a phrase frequently employed this morning, is absolutely scandalous. Whether a man is getting only Rs. 30 or whether he is getting Rs. 3,000 a month, his own job is equally important to him.

I believe, Sir, that we have made out a case for an inquiry. I do not know why my Honourable friend has always been shirking an inquiry. We have had, as my friend Colonel Gidney pointed out, an inquiry into the grievances of subordinate officials in other departments of the State. Why do you avoid making an inquiry into the grievances of the railway employees? You have inquired into the grievances of the postal workers, the subordinate officials in other departments of the Provincial Governments. Why do you want to avoid an inquiry into the grievances of the railway employees? You say that it will injure the discipline of the Railway Department. I suppose the discipline of the Police Department is more important than the discipline of the railway officers. Yet you have made inquiries into the grievances of the police officers. The Provincial Governments have done that and that inquiry has not brought about any revolution in the ranks of those workers. Why do you suppose that the railway officials are the most combustible material that you have got under your Government? I therefore feel that a case for inquiry has been made out. In spite of that, no steps have been taken by Government although the House unanimously adopted the Resolution of Mr. Acharya.

**Mr. E. F. Sykes** (Bombay : European): Sir, I do not often address the House; in fact I do not think I have done so since the debates last year on a somewhat similar subject. There was then a motion for the appointment of a committee to inquire into the grievances of railway subordinates. Now the proposal appears to be to set up a number of small committees. The subject has not been brought up by a Regular Resolution and we do not know what these small committees are going to do. My reason for rising to speak on this motion is to defend the railway subordinates against misrepresentation. It has been represented in certain parts of the House that these railway men are an unhappy lot of people, that they are miserable creatures unable to protect themselves. I can assure the House that that is not the case at all.

**Mr. Devaki Prasad Sinha:** What is your experience?

**Mr. E. F. Sykes:** My experience is very considerable as a railway subordinate. It has extended over a considerable number of years.

**Mr. N. M. Joshi:** You are a European. That is our trouble. You have got all you wanted.

**Mr. E. F. Sykes:** I can assure you that it is not so. In particular I have a very old grievance against the Railway Department in the matter of house rent, in regard to which I never got any satisfaction at all. Now, you cannot have a large number of employees in a very big show like the Railways without having some hard cases. I will repeat what I said on a former occasion. The very fact that these grievances exist point to the popularity of the service because if the service were not as popular as it is, people would not remain under the conditions that exist. I admit that they are poorly paid. I observed on the previous debate that there must be a certain number of grievances when there are people who serve

for long periods on small pay and small increments. If the services were less popular, it would be necessary to give more pay and more increments, but that is not the case. The gallant Colonel says "Once a railway man, always a railway man" meaning that railway men are such incapable people that they cannot get a living elsewhere. I can assure the gallant Colonel that this is not so. I travel about India quite as much as my Honourable friend and wherever I have gone, I have found railway men doing well in other occupations where the discipline and training that they received on the railway are extremely highly valued. I therefore do not think it is a proper thing to say, "Once a railway man, always a railway man". I may say for myself that I have been twice a railway man and am not now a railway man. (*An Honourable Member*: "You gave it up because you did not get all you wanted.") Quite so, Sir. The question apparently at issue is whether employees dismissed for faults—which may be offences merely against local rules, or more serious matters—are to have a further right of appeal. Well, Sir, I think it very likely that we shall differ about this. But unfortunately very few Members of this House have had the opportunity of seeing the other side of the shield. I share with one other Member of this House the privilege of having been an officer on a company's railway, and in a company's railway I suppose people are liable to be more easy about dismissing employees than on a State railway. But I can assure the House that even when you got a useless man, even a bad character, it is only with the greatest difficulty that you can ever get him moved. For some reason or the other the House has a lot of sympathy with people of that kind. I would like to touch on another point. We are always hearing that our railways are going to be run on commercial lines. Now as I understand commercialization, one of the first principles is what the American calls "hire and fire". When you want a man you take him on, and when you don't want him you get rid of him. Undoubtedly, Sir, I think no one in a large commercial concern when he had a man for whom he had no particular use would hesitate to tell him to go down to the office and get his money. I admit that a principle like this cannot be carried out in a big institution like a railway, whether it is a State railway or a Company railway. It cannot be done. But the idea which some Members of this House seem to hold is that a man has to be proved to be incompetent, or to be criminal or something of that kind in a legal manner. (*Lieutenant-Colonel H. A. J. Gidney*: "Not incompetence.") The Colonel here seems to think that I have not a good case. He says that a man should be dismissed for incompetence. I would ask the Colonel where he would produce the tribunal which would say whether a man was competent or not. Who can say so except those under whom he immediately works? And does anybody imagine that this small Company Committee is going to decide a question of the competence of men? (*An Honourable Member*: "But you don't lose your provident fund.") This question has been discussed over and over again by this House. What are the number of cases in which people have forfeited the company's part of the provident fund? I forget how many it is, but about a dozen in two years. (*An Honourable Member*: "Then what is your objection to giving it?") The objection was gone into very thoroughly when we had the debate on the big committee. The objection is that the moment you set up a committee you set the whole thing in a ferment. (*Cries of "No, no."*) (*An Honourable Member*: "That can apply to any service.") It certainly does. I quite admit that from the time the Lee Commission began to sit the services were in a state of ferment and it

[Mr. E. F. Sykes.]

was only allayed by the announcement of the concessions made by that Commission. Well now, Sir, this motion that we are dealing with is really on the grievances of railway subordinates and everything else has been dragged into it. I would like to say one word on this matter about racial discrimination. I would like to assure the House that no one who has to choose between an Indian subordinate and a European subordinate will willingly choose a European provided he is satisfied that he will get equally satisfactory work out of the other. (*An Honourable Member: "Question."*) It is a question. I may say that I speak with a very large experience in very many grades and in very many administrations among a very large number of people. I do not want to go into the reasons in detail, but I can assure you that there is no officer who would not just as soon have an Indian as a European and this prejudice that was ascribed to the Railway Board and to the other people, I want Honourable Members of the House to note, has, in my opinion, no foundation whatever. Well, Sir, I think I have dealt with the things that I have most knowledge of, and I will leave the debate to be carried on by somebody else.

**An Honourable Member:** I move that the question may now be put.

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** Sir, I must confess that when Mr. Acharya brought this motion of his up, I did not expect that the debate would cover so many topics. As regards Mr. Acharya's speech, there was only one thing in it with which I agree and that was his remark, which I believe he quoted from me, that the Budget is the time to bring up questions of this kind. With that remark I entirely agree, and I think the debate which we have had this afternoon is exactly the sort of debate we ought to have on Demands for Grants. Mr. Acharya complained that the Government had insulted the House. It seems rather an odd charge to make. Apparently the ground for it was that the House passed a certain Resolution and the Government took no action upon it. Mr. Acharya knows as well as I do that under the constitution Resolutions passed by this House *are not binding upon the Government*.

**Mr. A. Rangaswami Iyengar:** Scrap the constitution then.

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** We have no intention of scrapping the constitution.

**Mr. A. Rangaswami Iyengar:** If you complain of it, scrap it.

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** I do not know whether I am making a speech or my Honourable friend Mr. Rangaswami Iyengar. Being a practical man I prefer to deal with the constitution as it is. I say that under the constitution it rests with the Government to decide whether or not they wish to take action upon a Resolution passed by this House. In this case the Resolution passed by the House was submitted to the Government of India and the Government of India decided that they would not take action upon it. There was no question of insulting the House there at all. The one other remark that I wish to refer to in Mr. Acharya's speech is this. I object very strongly to his statement that referring the grievances of railway subordinates to the Agents was throwing the sheep to the wolves. I have no doubt that Mr. Acharya, like most people in this House, is anxious to promote the growth of trade unions and generally to improve the relations between employers and employees in

India; and I put it to the House that when an Honourable Member of this House deliberately makes a statement of that kind on the floor of this House he is doing a very real disservice to the cause that he has at heart. If Honourable Members refer to relations between employers and employees, between masters and servants, in India as being the same relations as exist between wolves and sheep, all I can say is that remarks of that kind do not encourage employers of labour to have anything to do with trade unions or those who promote them, and I hope, Sir, that the Honourable Member in future will remember that.

Now, Sir, I do wish to show that we did not altogether neglect the wishes expressed by the House in this matter. I have here a circular which we addressed to railway administrations. In addressing them, we explained very briefly the reasons why we did not wish to take action upon the Resolution; and before I go on with that matter, I should like very briefly to take up a point which was raised both by Colonel Gidney and by Mr. Chaman Lall. They both said that you appointed the Lee Commission. You were not afraid of an inquiry into the grievances of your superior officers. Why, therefore, are you afraid of instituting an inquiry into the grievances of your subordinate officers? Now, Sir, the first point I have to make is this. As regards the grievances of the superior officers Mr. Chaman Lall and Colonel Gidney have to remember that the main reason why the Royal Commission was appointed for the superior services was the fact that in England they had found it almost impossible for two or three years to get any recruits for these services. Now, very many people hold that it is a matter of vital importance to India that Englishmen should continue, though in decreasing numbers, to come out and serve in the public services in India and that fact caused the authorities at home so much anxiety that they appointed that Commission. It was not in response to any petitions or agitation or anything of the kind out here that it was appointed. It was appointed because recruitment in England had dried up. The second point is this. There is a world of difference between a commission of inquiry into the conditions of a service of well-educated and intelligent men and a commission of inquiry into the grievances of 700,000 railway employees all over India, the vast majority of whom are easily excitable and easily led. They are illiterate and ignorant men. I see my friend Mr. Joshi shakes his head. Now just let me remind Mr. Joshi of the origin of the Jhajha strike on the East Indian Railway. I will just give you an example of the inflammable material that we have got to deal with. On the East Indian Railway—I think it was in 1922—a train was passing under an overbridge. A fireman was shovelling coal from the tender and his head crashed against the overbridge. He got a severe wound in the head, and when the train arrived at the station they found him lying in the tender dead. It was proved beyond doubt that what had happened was that he had hit his head against the overbridge as the tender was passing under it but it was spread all over that part of the railway that he had been murdered by his driver. Nothing could be done to stop the rumour and that section of the line went on strike. That shows the difficulty of dealing with ignorant and illiterate men. What we felt strongly was that if we had appointed this commission of inquiry we might have created serious trouble. I do make this point that we had no evidence before us that there was any demand on the part of our railway employees for a commission of inquiry. As far as we know the demand for that inquiry came from Mr. Joshi himself and not from the railway employees.

**Mr. N. M. Joshi:** Certainly not. I deny that charge.

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** Mr. Joshi and I have had many tussles over this point. I can say, however, that we have done our best in some ways to meet the House in this matter. As I said, we issued a circular to all Agents on the subject. The first point we took up was the question of racial discrimination and the Indianisation of the subordinate services. As regards racial discrimination we said:

"We are aware that all railway administrations are alive to the desirability of removing all legitimate causes of complaint on this score and we are confident that constant attention will be paid to the subject."

We then went on to the question of Indianisation of the subordinate services. We said:

"The question is not so much one of Indianisation as of the alleged preponderance of the Anglo-Indian community in the higher posts of certain branches of the subordinate railway service."

I wish to emphasize this because it is a statement of policy.

"Agents have already been informed that for the purposes of Indianisation Anglo-Indians are Statutory Indians,"

(*Lieut.-Colonel H. A. J. Gidney:* Hear, hear.)

"and the Government of India desire it to be clearly understood that they do not suggest, and never have suggested, that Anglo-Indians should be discharged merely in order that they may be replaced by Indians. Also they recognise to the full the aptitude of the Anglo-Indians for certain branches of railway work and they are not in favour of any policy which would oust the Anglo-Indians from those branches.

"They consider, however, that Indians should also be recruited for those branches (particularly the subordinate traffic service) and should be given equal opportunities of showing their aptitude and capacity for the higher and better paid posts. As between the Indian and Anglo-Indian, promotion should, of course, be regulated solely by merit."

Mr. Joshi referred particularly to the question of fine funds and to their utilisation.

"The complaint in respect of fine funds is that, though the money comes probably mainly out of the pockets of the Indian staff, the funds are utilised mainly for the benefit of European and Anglo-Indian employees. From the figures which have been obtained from Railway Administrations, it appears that in the case of some lines, the statement is correct. The explanation of course is that it has been customary to devote the major portion of the funds to the encouragement of Institutes, Social and Athletic Clubs, Reading Rooms and similar institutions, many of them of old standing, and that the Indian staff hitherto has not shown much inclination to participate in activities of this kind, or to start similar institutions of their own. But the Government of India believe that recently there has been a change in this respect. They have no doubt that Agents will welcome and encourage the growth of institutions definitely connected with the welfare of the Indian staff, for the maintenance of which they can suitably make contributions from the fine funds, and they hope that Agents will make it their aim to ensure that a due proportion of the expenditure from the fine funds is devoted to objects in which the Indian staff has a direct interest."

Then there was the question of provident fund bonuses. This letter was written on the 25th August, 1925, before the debate in connection with the Provident Funds Bill. We referred to that as follows:

"In the meantime I am to express the hope that all Agents will recognise that the forfeiture of the provident fund bonuses is a very severe and drastic penalty which should be applied only in cases where it is necessary to dismiss employees for serious offences, and I am to ask that each case in which it is proposed that a provident fund should be withheld should be examined personally by the Agent in accordance with the above principles."



We went on to say that we had only referred to some of the more prominent of the complaints and requested that they would examine carefully the debates on the subject of these grievances.

**Mr. Chaman Lall:** I do not want to interrupt the Honourable Member but is it not a fact that these Institutes are for Europeans only?

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** That was what I said. Most of these Institutes date twenty years back and it is only now that the literate Indian is beginning to go in for these things.

**Mr. A. Rangaswami Iyengar:** May I know whether this circular to the Agents in regard to the action to be taken on the complaints made was available to the Honourable the Commerce Member when Mr. Acharya put his question about it last September?

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** I do not know. Let me pass on to what Mr. Joshi said about the attitude of Railway Agents towards Trade Unions. It is very difficult to say anything new about that particular point. We discussed it this time last year in connection with the budget debate and I expressed my views on the subject. I have very little to add to what I said then. What I said was that the difficulty in this matter was that we wanted a policy and that we had decided in the Railway Department to wait until the Trade Union Bill was passed by the Government of India into law. We hoped that it would facilitate the growth of proper, sound, healthy trade unions in all parts of India. In all respects the situation as it was last year is the same this year. I do wish to make some remarks on this point because Mr. Joshi, Mr. Devaki Prasad Sinha, Mr. Chaman Lall and Mr. Acharya have always seemed to think that it was a peculiarity of the Railway Board to do all they can to suppress trade unions, and they seemed to think that our railway administrations are in some particular way enemies to the trade union movement. I deny that absolutely, and I want to point out that, if there is a certain suspicion of the trade union movement on the part of employers of labour in India, it is very largely the fault of the movement itself. Now, Sir, my friend Mr. Chaman Lall is a person who fears nobody and nothing, and the only thing that I have observed Mr. Chaman Lall have any reverence for at all is labour legislation in England and English Labour M. Ps. I would not have dared to make this statement myself, but I have culled rather an interesting extract from the report of a speech of a distinguished Labour M. P., Mr. Johnson, upon the jute mills. What Mr. Johnson said—and mind you he is a distinguished expert in this matter—talking about trade unions in the jute mills, is this:

“There are on paper some three or four unions among the jute workers, but with one exception, they are quite useless. They have no paying membership and they serve no purpose unless to advertise some politician as Honorary President.”

I commend that to my Honourable friend, Mr. Acharya. Now, Sir, that is just the trouble. Many of our employers of labour do regard trade unions with distrust because they doubt whether they are a genuine growth on the part of the workers, or whether they have been fomented by what Mr. Johnson calls politicians, for their own purpose . . . . .

**Mr. Chaman Lall:** Does the Honourable Member subscribe to that doctrine?

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** I want also to say that, if my friends Mr. Chaman Lall and Mr. Joshi wish to encourage the healthy growth of trade unions in India, there are occasions when my Honourable friends should speak out very clearly indeed. Only the other day, in fact only in this week's batch of the *Times*, I came upon a statement that there had been a strike in the London General Omnibus Company at Camberwell or Peckham or some other suburb of London and there was a laconic paragraph that the strike was averted because the official of the particular transport union to which this one was affiliated came down to Peckham or Camberwell, or wherever it was, and warned these people, that if they struck, they would not get the support of the union and that they had no sympathy with the alleged grievances, and stopped the strike altogether. Now, Sir, I wonder whether Mr. Chaman Lall or Mr. Joshi could tell me of any instance in India where a strike has been averted by the trade unions. I know of one case where a Welfare Committee, which Mr. Chaman Lall holds in such contempt, stopped a strike. But what I wanted to say was this. Only last year on the North Western Railway we had what I consider a very disgraceful strike, and I do think that responsible leaders in India ought to have risen in their places and ought to have condemned that strike at once.

**Mr. Chaman Lall:** Is it not a fact that I offered my intervention in that matter?

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** I am quite aware that my friend Mr. Chaman Lall offered mediation, but I do not think anybody in this House would cite Mr. Chaman Lall as entirely impartial and dispassionate . . . .

**Mr. A. Rangaswami Iyengar:** And though you appeal to him to avert a strike you do not consider him impartial.

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** I am quite prepared to admit that the attitude of the Trade Union Congress was strictly correct in that matter. They sent an emissary to me and they said, "We do not know anything about the facts of this case, and we will not interfere at all." But if the Trade Union Congress wanted to strike a great blow for the trade union movement at that time in India, they would have published a message to say they disapproved utterly and entirely of strikes started in the way that strike was started, and I do say, and I am sure Mr. Chaman Lall will agree with me, that a strike of that kind does more harm to the growth of the trade union movement than anything else could do. But as I say the position in regard to the railways is exactly what it was at this time last year. Perhaps now that the Trade Union Bill has been passed, we shall be able to arrive at a satisfactory solution of this question on the Railways.

Now, Sir, the next question that Mr. Joshi raised was the question of the Howrah porters, what is known as the Howrah porters' case. I am not quite sure what the exact case of Mr. Joshi was. The only new point that has been brought to my notice in that matter was that I understood from Mr. Joshi that certain of these porters at Howrah are required to do work for the railway without pay. If that is correct—is that correct?

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

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** I am told that the porters themselves earn very large sums; but I understand Mr. Joshi's point is that although they earn these considerable sums they are required to do work for the railway without pay. If that is so, I will certainly have that point taken up with the Agent. I do not know if Mr. Joshi objects to the porters system in principle.

**Mr. N. M. Joshi:** In principle.

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** I am not an expert but I am told the system to which Mr. Joshi refers is not inconsistent with the convention passed on the subject. I agree I do not altogether like the system myself; but it is a system which is very commonly employed in Calcutta, not only on the Railways but at the ghats and by many other employers of labour.

**Mr. N. M. Joshi:** It is one of the greatest evils in Calcutta.

**Lieutenant-Colonel H. A. J. Gidney:** It is used all over Calcutta.

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** At any rate, on the Railways we are merely carrying out a system which is in common use in Calcutta.

Then, again, Mr. Joshi complained that the East Indian Railway subordinate employees have been taken on on the East Indian Railway terms. Well, I do not know that the subordinate employees have any particular grievance over that. They were servants of the East Indian Railway. When we took over the East Indian Railway on the 1st January last year, we decided that in order to have no friction whatsoever in taking over that railway we would give to all officers of the railway, to all employees of the railway, whether superior or subordinate, precisely the same terms as they got under the old Company. The officers accepted those terms and it seems to me that was a perfectly fair offer. I dare say that in some points State railway service is more generous than Company railway service. At any rate these men were Company railway servants, and I do not think they can complain when they are taken on precisely the same terms as they were on before.

Then, Sir, let me refer to the question of the literate apprentices. It is a fact that 12 educated Indians were taken on as clerks with the object of training them for senior subordinate traffic posts. The reason why we took them on as clerks was that we have not yet been able to get educated Indians to come forward to fill those posts by the ordinary channels. Those posts are usually filled by promotion from guards. The guard has to go through a long period of training. There are different grades of guards and usually it takes a man from 10 to 15 years to pass through all the ordinary steps of a guard's life until he gets promoted to one of these posts. These men were taken on only 2 or 3 years ago. I can only say that they were taken on with the object of seeing whether they could not be trained for these posts, and as vacancies occur in those posts, it certainly be that if they are fit they will have their chance of promotion.

[Sir Charles Innes.]

I do not think Mr. Chaman Lall need have any fear on that point. I suppose that the men are becoming impatient. I can promise that if they are fit they will get suitable promotion.

Then, Sir, Mr. Hussanally raised the extremely difficult question of education. Here we have inherited a system by which we make grants mostly to schools up in the hills for the education of European and Anglo-Indian employees. It is a very old system and the question we are faced with now is whether we are to extend our system of education not only to the children of European and Anglo-Indian employees but also to the children of our Indian employees. Hitherto we have always taken the view that the Indian employee has no difficulty in getting schools for his children in places where he is employed. For the Anglo-Indian and European employee it is not so easy, and that is why the Railways have come to his assistance. I think Mr. Hussanally himself said it—we should feel very loath—in fact we could not possibly do it—we should feel very reluctant to embark on any policy by which we undertook to make ourselves responsible for providing for the education of the children of all classes of our employees. Mr. Hussanally will see that that is quite impossible; and therefore we are now faced with the question, whether, in view of the objections that have been taken, we ought to withdraw what we are now doing from our Anglo-Indian and European employees. It is possible that a solution might be found in giving exactly the same facilities for education in the hills for the children of our Indian employees as we have given to the children of our European and Anglo-Indian employees. That is a suggestion that has been put forward. I hope I have said enough to show that it is a matter of very great difficulty. We have collected a large number of papers on the subject, and we have got the whole matter under consideration. Mr. Hussanally is quite correct when he says that the consideration has been going on for a very long time. I quite admit it, but I think Mr. Hussanally will agree that it is a very difficult question, and all I can say at the moment is that the difficulties are considerable and I hope he will realise that it would be a very serious step if we withdrew these concessions from the classes which now receive it.

**Khan Bahadur W. M. Hussanally:** Treat all alike.

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** Mr. Hussanally says “Treat all alike.”

**Mr. President:** The Honourable Member has taken nearly half an hour. Perhaps he will leave these few minutes for the division.

**The Honourable Sir Charles Innes:** I just wish to say, Sir, that I am sorry that there is no hope of our being able to accept the suggestion of Colonel Gidney of associating committees with the Agents for the purpose of hearing appeals.

**Mr. President:** Order, order. The question is:

“That the Demand under the head ‘Working Expenses : Administration’ be reduced: 5 p.m. by Rs. 100.”

The Assembly divided :

**AYES—53.**

Abhyankar, Mr. M. V.  
 Acharya, Mr. M. K.  
 Ahmad Ali Khan, Mr.  
 Ahmed, Mr. K.  
 Aiyangar, Mr. C. Duraiswami.  
 Aiyangar, Mr. K. Rama.  
 Ariff, Mr. Yacoob C.  
 Badi-uz-Zaman, Maulvi.  
 Chaman Lall, Mr.  
 Chetty, Mr. R. K. Shanmukham.  
 Das, Mr. B.  
 Das, Pandit Nilakantha.  
 Deshmukh, Mr. R. M.  
 Duni Chand, Lala.  
 Dutt, Mr. Amar Nath.  
 Ghazanfar Ali Khan, Raja.  
 Ghose, Mr. S. C.  
 Gidney, Lieut.-Colonel H. A. J.  
 Goswami, Mr. T. C.  
 Hussanally, Khan Bahadur W. M.  
 Ismail Khan, Mr.  
 Ivengar, Mr. A. Rangaswami.  
 Jinnah, Mr. M. A.  
 Joshi, Mr. N. M.  
 Kasturbhai Lalbhai, Mr.  
 Kidwai, Sha'kh Mushir Hosain.  
 Lajpat Rai, Lala.

Lohokare, Dr. K. G.  
 Majid Baksh, Syed.  
 Malaviya, Pandit Krishna Kant.  
 Mehta, Mr. Jamnadas M.  
 Misra, Pandit Shambhu Dayal.  
 Murtuza Sahib Bahadur, Maulvi  
 Sayad.  
 Mutalik, Sardar V. N.  
 Nehru, Dr. Kishenlal.  
 Nehru, Pandit Shamlal.  
 Neogy, Mr. K. C.  
 Pal, Mr. Bipin Chandra.  
 Ramachandra Rao, Diwan Bahadur M.  
 Ray, Mr. Kumar Sankar.  
 Samiullah Khan, Mr. M.  
 Sarfaraz Hussain Khan, Khan  
 Bahadur.  
 Shafee, Maulvi Mohammad.  
 Singh, Mr. Gaya Prasad.  
 Sinha, Mr. Ambika Prasad.  
 Sinha, Mr. Devaki Prasad.  
 Sinha, Kumar Ganganand.  
 Talatuley, Mr. S. D.  
 Tok Kyi, U.  
 Venkatapatiraju, Mr. B.  
 Vishindas, Mr. Harchandrai.  
 Yakub, Maulvi Muhammad.  
 Yusuf Imam, Mr. M.

**NOES—40.**

Abdul Qaiyum, Nawab Sir Sahibzada.  
 Aiyer, Sir P. S. Sivaswamy.  
 Akram Hussain, Prince A. M. M.  
 Bajpai, Mr. R. S.  
 Bhere, Mr. J. W.  
 Blackett, The Honourable Sir Basil.  
 Bray, Sir Denys.  
 Calvert, Mr. H.  
 Cocke, Mr. H. G.  
 Donovan, Mr. J. T.  
 Gordon, Mr. R. G.  
 Graham, Mr. L.  
 Hayman, Mr. A. M.  
 Hezlett, Mr. J.  
 Hindley, Sir Clement.  
 Hira Singh Brar, Sardar Bahadur  
 Captain.  
 Hudson, Mr. W. F.  
 Innes, The Honourable Sir Charles.  
 Jatar, Mr. K. S.  
 Lindsay, Sir Darcy.  
 Macphail, The Rev. Dr. E. M.  
 Makan, Khan Sahib M. E.

Mitra, The Honourable Sir Bhupendra  
 Nath.  
 Muddiman, The Honourable Sir  
 Alexander.  
 Muhammad Ismail, Khan Bahadur  
 Saiyid.  
 Naidu, Rao Bahadur M. C.  
 Neave, Mr. E. R.  
 Owens, Lieut.-Col. F. C.  
 Rahman, Khan Bahadur A.  
 Reddi, Mr. K. Venkataramana.  
 Roffey, Mr. E. S.  
 Sim, Mr. G. G.  
 Singh, Rai Bahadur S. N.  
 Sykes, Mr. E. F.  
 Tonkinson, Mr. H.  
 Vernon, Mr. H. A. B.  
 Vijayaraghavacharyar, Sir  
 Tiruvalangadi.  
 Wajihuddin, Haji.  
 Willson, Mr. W. S. J.  
 Young, Mr. G. M.

The motion was adopted.

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

“ That a reduced sum not exceeding Rs. 12,48,98,800 be granted to the Governor General in Council to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1927, in respect of ‘ Working Expenses : Administration ’.”

The motion was adopted.

DEMAND NO. 5.—WORKING EXPENSES: REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE AND OPERATION.

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

“That a sum not exceeding Rs. 41,44,40,000 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, 1927, in respect of ‘Working Expenses: Repairs and Maintenance and Operation’.”

The motion was adopted.

DEMAND NO. 6.—COMPANIES’ AND INDIAN STATES’ SHARE OF SURPLUS PROFITS AND, NET EARNINGS.

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

“That a sum not exceeding Rs. 1,51,00,000 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, 1927, in respect of ‘Companies’ and Indian States’ share of surplus profits and net earnings’.”

The motion was adopted.

DEMAND NO. 9.—APPROPRIATION TO THE DEPRECIATION FUND.

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

“That a sum not exceeding Rs. 11,05,00,000 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, 1927, in respect of ‘Appropriation to the Depreciation Fund’.”

The motion was adopted.

DEMAND NO. 10.—APPROPRIATION FROM THE DEPRECIATION FUND.

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

“That a sum not exceeding Rs. 8,50,00,000 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, 1927, in respect of ‘Appropriation from the Depreciation Fund’.”

The motion was adopted.

DEMAND NO. 11.—MISCELLANEOUS.

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

“That a sum not exceeding Rs. 43,60,000 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, 1927, in respect of ‘Miscellaneous’.”

The motion was adopted.

DEMAND NO. 12.—APPROPRIATION TO THE RESERVE FUND.

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

“That a sum not exceeding Rs. 2,70,06,000 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, 1927, in respect of ‘Appropriation to the Reserve Fund’.”

The motion was adopted.

## DEMAND No. 14.—STRATEGIC LINES.

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

“ That a sum not exceeding Rs. 1,70,13,000 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, 1927, in respect of ‘ Strategic Lines ’.”

The motion was adopted.

*Expenditure charged to Capital.*

## DEMAND No. 7.—NEW CONSTRUCTION.

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

“ That a sum not exceeding Rs. 6,45,07,000 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, 1927, in respect of ‘ New Construction ’.”

The motion was adopted.

## DEMAND No. 8.—OPEN LINE WORKS.

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

“ That a sum not exceeding Rs. 18,91,00,000 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, 1927, in respect of ‘ Open Line Works ’.”

The motion was adopted.

## DEMAND No. 15.—STRATEGIC LINES.

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

“ That a sum not exceeding Rs. 58,00,000 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, 1927, in respect of ‘ Strategic Lines ’.”

The motion was adopted.

The Assembly then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Monday, the 1st March, 1926.

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