

23rd February 1938

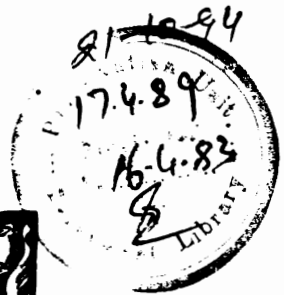
**THE  
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY DEBATES**

**(Official Report)**

**Volume II, 1938**

*(23rd February to 23rd March, 1938)*

**SEVENTH SESSION  
OF THE  
FIFTH LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY,  
1938**



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1938**

**M77LAD**

# Legislative Assembly.

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MR. N. M. JOSHI, M.L.A.

MR. L. C. BUSS, M.L.A.

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# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Wednesday, 23rd February, 1938.

The Assembly met in the Assembly Chamber of the Council House at Eleven of the Clock, Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim) in the Chair.

## STARRED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

### (a) ORAL ANSWERS.

#### RESIDENCE OF PERSONS GETTING EXEMPTION FROM SECTION 272 OF THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA ACT, 1935.

437. \***Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar**: Will the Honourable the Finance Member state:

- (a) how many of those who get exemption from section 272 of the Government of India Act, 1935, reside in England;
- (b) the number of such persons outside India and England; and
- (c) the number of such persons in India but outside British India?

**The Honourable Sir James Grigg**: (a) and (b). The information is not available.

(c) Such persons are not exempted under that section.

**Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar**: May I know whether they do not know as to where the pensions are paid?

**The Honourable Sir James Grigg**: I know individual cases, but to go through every individual case and examine it and work out the financial estimate would be an enormous task.

**Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar**: I only want the number of people. I am not asking for the amount of money paid.

**The Honourable Sir James Grigg**: There are other people besides covered in that exemption. The information has not been compiled and is not available.

**Mr. Ram Narayan Singh**: Will the Honourable Member collect the information?

**The Honourable Sir James Grigg**: No, Sir.

**Mr. Ram Narayan Singh**: Why not, Sir?

(No answer.)

## EXEMPTIONS FROM INCOME-TAX.

438. \***Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar:** Will the Honourable the Finance Member state:

- (a) whether exemptions from the Income-tax Act have been given under the Income-tax Act;
- (b) if so, to whom; and
- (c) what will be the probable loss of income-tax arising out of these exemptions?

**Mr. A. H. Lloyd:** (a) Yes.

(b) I would refer the Honourable Member to section 4 (3) of the Indian Income-tax Act, 1922, and to paragraphs 17 and 18 of Part III of the Income-tax Manual, Seventh Edition, a copy of which has been placed in the Library.

(c) It is not possible to make an estimate.

**Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar:** Why is it not possible?

**Mr. A. H. Lloyd:** If the Honourable Member will take my advice and refer to the paragraphs in the Income-tax Manual, he will see pretty clearly, why not.

**Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar:** On what basis are exemptions given?

**Mr. A. H. Lloyd:** If the Honourable Member will study the paragraphs in the Manual, which I referred to, he will find that out.

## EXEMPTION OF SALARIES AND LEAVE ALLOWANCES PAID ABROAD FROM INCOME-TAX.

439. \***Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar:** Will the Honourable the Finance Member state:

- (a) what is the basis on which salaries and leave allowances paid abroad are exempt from income-tax;
- (b) whether only Government servants come under this exemption, or servants of local bodies and private firms also come under this exemption; and
- (c) what will be the probable loss of income-tax to the Government of India arising from these exemptions?

**The Honourable Sir James Grigg:** (a) and (c). I would refer the Honourable Member to the reply given to starred question No. 924 on the 3rd March, 1936.

(b) Leave salaries or leave allowances, paid in the United Kingdom or in a colony, to officers of local authorities or to employees of companies, or of private employers on leave in the United Kingdom or in such colony, are also exempt from income-tax.

**TAKING OVER OF CONTROL OF THE ADMINISTRATION OF SALT MANUFACTURE AND SALT DEPOTS FROM PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENTS.**

440. \***Mr. Manu Subedar** (on behalf of Seth Govind Das): Will the Honourable the Finance Member please state:

- (a) whether Government are contemplating taking over control of the administration of salt manufacture and salt depots from Provincial Governments;
- (b) whether Government have invited opinion thereon from Provincial Governments; and
- (c) the reasons of Government for taking charge of the control?

**Mr. A. H. Lloyd:** (a) Not at present.

(b) Yes.

(c) Does not arise.

**EXEMPTION FROM INCOME-TAX OF INCOMES OF RULING CHIEF ACCRUING IN BRITISH INDIA.**

441. \***Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar:** Will the Honourable the Finance Member state:

- (a) whether the incomes of Ruling Chiefs accruing in British India are exempt from income-tax;
- (b) what was the loss of income resulting from this exemption during the last financial year; and
- (c) whether there is any *quid pro quo* for this concession to the Ruling Chiefs?

**The Honourable Sir James Grigg:** (a) The Ruling Chiefs in their personal capacity are liable to income-tax under section 3 of the Indian Income-tax Act, 1922, but by a notification under section 60 of the Act, the interest on Government securities held by, or on behalf of, Ruling Chiefs and Princes of India as their private property has been exempted from income-tax.

(b) It is not possible to estimate the amount of loss.

(c) No.

**Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar:** Why is this exemption given then?

**The Honourable Sir James Grigg:** I imagine that the exemption was given at a time when the Government of India were anxious to attract subscriptions to their loans?

**Mr. M. S. Aney:** Why is it not possible for the Government to answer part (b)?

**The Honourable Sir James Grigg:** It is not possible.

**Mr. M. S. Aney:** Do not the Government know how much interest is paid?

**The Honourable Sir James Grigg:** The Government of India do not know.



**Mr. M. S. Aney:** Do the Government not know the amount of interest paid?

**The Honourable Sir James Grigg:** The Government of India do not know the ownership of bearer bonds.

**Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar:** In view of the fact that money is available very cheap, will the Government buy up those securities?

**The Honourable Sir James Grigg:** That does not arise out of this question. The Honourable Member had better put down a question.

#### RECRUITMENT OF BENGALIS FOR MILITARY TRAINING.

442. \***Mr. Brojendra Narayan Chaudhury:** Will the Defence Secretary please state:

(a) if the attention of Government has been drawn to the following resolution passed by the Bengal Council:

"That this Council is of opinion that the Government of India be moved by the Government of Bengal to admit Bengalees for military training so as to form a permanent unit of the Indian army";

(b) if this resolution was strongly supported by European members of the Bengal Council;

(c) why the 49th Bengali Regiment raised during the Great War was disbanded;

(d) why a new Bengali Regiment was not raised to replace it on a permanent footing;

(e) how the 49th Bengalees acquitted themselves as a fighting force;

(f) if there were a large number of Bengali soldiers in the army of the East India Company in (i) mixed regiments, or (ii) as separate units; how these Bengalees acquitted themselves as soldiers;

(g) how many Bengalees there are now in the Indian Defence Force, section by section, officers and privates;

(h) the reasons and the circumstances under which the number of Bengalees dwindled in the army;

(i) if there is any bar to entrance of the Bengalees in sections of the army open to other Indians;

(j) if any recruiting propaganda has been made in Bengal since the close of the Great War; if not, why not;

(k) if any survey has been made about the general condition of physique of the Bengalees and its suitability for army conditions;

(l) if Government intends adopting additional measures of recruiting propaganda amongst Bengalees; and

(m) if the numbers of applicants for and entrants into cadetships from Bengal in relation to those from other provinces show that the Bengalees are less willing or less fit to enter the army?

**Mr. C. M. G. Ogilvie:** (a) Government have seen the press report.

(b) Government have no information beyond what is contained in the press report.

(c) On the adverse report and the recommendation of the General Officer Commanding concerned to that effect.

(d) Because of the experience gained of the 49th Bengalís.

(e) Unsatisfactorily.

(f) As far as can be ascertained from the available records, Bengalís were not generally enlisted in the army of the East India Company.

(g) Bengalís are not recruited in the combatant ranks of the Indian Army. They are, however, serving as officers, other ranks, and civilians in certain corps and departments, *e.g.*, Indian Medical Service, Military Engineer Services and Indian Army Corps of Clerks. Exact numbers are not readily available and their collection from various sources would involve time and labour which would not be justifiable.

(h) I refer the Honourable Member to my replies to parts (d) and (e) of this question.

(i) Bengalís are not one of the classes at present recruited to the Indian Army.

(j) No, because no recruiting propaganda has been carried out in any part of India since the close of the Great War.

(k) No.

(l) No.

(m) Yes. Out of the 191 cadets admitted to the Indian Military Academy since 1932, as a result of open competitive examinations, there is not a single Bengali.

#### DIVERSION OF TRADE THROUGH LAND FRONTIER AND FALL IN SEA CUSTOMS.

448. \***Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar:** Will the Honourable the Finance Member state:

(a) what is the estimate of the extent of the diversion of trade through the land frontier, which has made the establishment of land customs houses necessary;

(b) whether there is any appreciable fall in sea customs owing to this diversion; and

(c) what is the estimate of revenue that they expect to get out of these land customs?

**Mr. A. H. Lloyd:** (a) and (b). It is not possible to make any estimate that would have any pretence at accuracy.

(c) As the land customs line is primarily preventive in character, collections of customs duty on the land frontiers are not expected to be appreciable, while it will be impossible to determine to what extent, if any, collections at sea-ports will have improved as a result of its imposition.

WATER TAX CHARGED IN THE JUTOGH AND DAGSHAI CANTONMENTS.

444. \*Mr. Sham Lal: Will the Defence Secretary be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that the rate of water tax charged in Jutogh and Dagshai Cantonments is more than the rate of water tax in the neighbouring municipality of Simla; and
- (b) whether it is also a fact that the principle of charging the same rate as in the neighbouring municipality was accepted by Government at the time of the Cantonments Amendment Act?

Mr. C. M. G. Ogilvie: (a) Yes.

(b) No. Charges for water in cantonments are regulated by the proviso to sub-section (?) of section 234-A of the Cantonments Act.

Mr. Sham Lal: Is the Honourable Member aware that his predecessor gave assurance that in no case the water tax would be more than in the adjacent municipal area?

Mr. C. M. G. Ogilvie: I am not absolutely certain what my predecessor said, but I believe him to have said that the rates in the adjacent municipal area would be taken into consideration in assessing taxes in cantonments.

Mr. Sham Lal: Is the Honourable Member aware that some cantonments are far away from municipal areas, and, therefore, no statutory obligation was imposed, but a distinct understanding was given that in no case the water tax will be more than in the adjacent municipal area?

Mr. C. M. G. Ogilvie: I am not aware of that.

NON-DELEGATION OF EXECUTIVE POWERS BY OFFICIAL PRESIDENTS TO ELECTED VICE-PRESIDENTS IN CANTONMENT BOARDS.

445. \*Mr. Sham Lal: Will the Defence Secretary be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that no executive powers have so far been delegated by official President to any elected Vice-President of any Cantonment Board in India;
- (b) whether the attention of Government has been drawn to a "Note on Powers of Vice-Presidents" submitted to Government by the All-India Cantonments Association in September, 1937, and published in the *Cantonment Gazette* of September, 1937, page 113; and
- (c) whether in view of the creation of statutory bazar committees for the administration of civilian areas, Government are considering the advisability of vesting executive powers in the elected Vice-President, who is the Statutory Chairman of those committees and leader of the elected block?

Mr. C. M. G. Ogilvie: (a) Government have no information.

(b) Government have seen the article in the *Cantonment Gazette* of September, 1937.

(c) Attention of the Honourable Member is invited to the answer given to parts (c) and (d) of his starred question No. 378 on the 18th February, 1938.

**Mr. Sham Lal:** Will the Honourable Member make enquiry whether any executive powers have been given?

**Mr. C. M. G. Ogilvie:** I think it is hardly worth while.

**Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar:** In case of the absence of the President, to whom does he ordinarily delegate his powers?

**Mr. C. M. G. Ogilvie:** If the Honourable Member will refer to the question which I have just referred to, namely, starred question No. 378 of the 18th February, 1938, he will find it explained. The facts are that in the case of the President being temporarily absent on station leave, the Vice-President acts for him.

#### ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE POONA CANTONMENT BOARD.

446. **\*Mr. Sham Lal:** Will the Defence Secretary be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the attention of Government has been drawn to an article appearing in the *Cantonment Gazette* for May, 1937, under the caption "Unwanted Burden on Tax-Payers in Poona Cantonment", containing a note by Mr. Castilino, Member, Cantonment Board;
- (b) whether it is a fact that the Cantonment Board, Poona, is maintaining an Assistant Secretary at a heavy cost of Rs. 7,000 per annum;
- (c) whether that post was created when the Executive Officer had also to perform magisterial duties; and
- (d) whether Government propose to give relief to tax-payers in this matter?

**Mr. C. M. G. Ogilvie:** (a) Government have seen the article.

(b) Yes, but the total cost is Rs. 6,720 per annum.

(c) Government have no information.

(d) The matter is entirely within the discretion of the local Cantonment Board.

#### ALLEGATIONS AGAINST THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF THE NOWSHERA CANTONMENT BOARD.

447. **\*Mr. Sham Lal:** Will the Defence Secretary be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the attention of Government has been drawn to a letter published in the *Cantonment Gazette* for September, 1937, under the heading 'Grievance of Nowshera Cantonment', complaining about the rude and rough behaviour of the Executive Officer of that Cantonment towards the public;

- (b) whether it is a fact that he called the representatives of Merchants' Association, who interviewed him, as 'goondas' and 'pugriwalas'; and
- (c) what step Government propose to take to ensure courteous treatment of public at the hands of the Executive Officer, Nowshera?

**Mr. C. M. G. Ogilvie:** (a) Yes.

(b) and (c). Government have no information and are not prepared to take action or to make enquiries on the unsupported testimony of the *Cantonment Gazette*.

**Mr. Manu Subedar:** With regard to part (b), is it the attitude of the Army Department towards the merchants that any officials of the military or any officials under military rule in the cantonment can insult merchants by using these names?

**Mr. C. M. G. Ogilvie:** Certainly not.

**Mr. Sham Lal:** Even without accepting the statement made in the *Cantonment Gazette*, can not Government make an inquiry into these allegations?

**Mr. C. M. G. Ogilvie:** Government do not feel inclined to act on the unsupported testimony of the *Cantonment Gazette* which frequently makes the most irresponsible statements.

#### ALLEGED CORRUPTION AMONG THE CANTONMENT BOARD SERVANTS.

448. **\*Mr. Sham Lal:** Will the Defence Secretary be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government are aware of the fact that the Executive Officers of Cantonment Boards use chaprasis, garden coolies and sweepers of the Board, for work at their residences;
- (b) whether the Inspecting Officers of Government ever go into these matters;
- (c) whether the Inspecting Officers of Cantonments in their inspection also inquire into the nature and extent of corruption among Board servants prevailing in a cantonment; and
- (d) if the answer to part (c) be in the negative, whether Government are prepared to take steps to make such inquiries through inspections?

**Mr. C. M. G. Ogilvie:** (a) One or two cases have been reported to the Government of India.

(b) Yes.

(c) Yes.

(d) Does not arise.

**Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar:** With reference to part (a), what action have Government taken on the one or two cases reported to them?

**Mr. C. M. G. Ogilvie:** They have taken the necessary action.

**Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar:** What exactly is the action that they have taken?

**Mr. C. M. G. Ogilvie:** The action taken depends upon the circumstances of each particular case. If the Honourable Member will mention the particular case I will give him an answer.

**Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar:** What is the action that he has taken on one of the cases that he has mentioned?

**Mr. C. M. G. Ogilvie:** I shall require notice.

**Mr. K. Santhanam:** With reference to clauses (b) and (c), how many cases have the Inspecting Officers reported?

**Mr. C. M. G. Ogilvie:** I shall require notice of that question.

#### ASSESSMENT OF HIS HIGHNESS THE MAHARAJA OF BENARES TO INCOME-TAX.

449. **\*Mr. Sri Prakasa:** Will the Honourable the Finance Member state:

- (a) if the attention of Government has been drawn to the judgment of the Allahabad High Court in connection with a reference made to them regarding the assessment of His Highness the Maharaja of Benares to income-tax;
- (b) if it is a fact that the High Court has declared that His Highness cannot be directly assessed for properties belonging to him in British territory;
- (c) what steps, if any, Government propose to take to realise their taxes now;
- (d) if it is a fact that no differentiation is possible between the properties belonging to the State and the Ruler; and
- (e) if the tax is levied at the rates applicable to individuals or to corporations?

**Mr. A. H. Lloyd:** (a) and (b). Yes.

(c) The matter is receiving consideration.

(d) No.

(e) The Ruler is liable to income-tax on his income at the rates applicable to individuals.

**Mr. Sri Prakasa:** With reference to the reply to part (e) of the question, may I know if in fixing the rate of the tax, Government take into consideration the whole of the income of particular Indian Princes throughout British India?

**Mr. A. H. Lloyd:** The whole of his private income in British India,—yes.

#### ASSESSMENT OF THE VICEROY'S HOUSE, THE SECRETARIAT BUILDINGS AND THE COUNCIL HOUSE TO INCOME-TAX.

450. **\*Mr. Sri Prakasa:** Will the Honourable the Finance Member state:

- (a) if the Viceroy's House, the Secretariat Buildings and the Council House are assessable to income-tax;

- (b) what is their valuation and what is the tax levied on each; and  
 (c) how are the taxes realised and who pays them?

**Mr. A. H. Lloyd:** (a) No.

(b) and (c). Do not arise.

**Mr. Sri Prakasa:** With reference to the Honourable Member's reply to part (a), is it not a fact that according to the Income-tax Manual only the residence of the Commander-in-Chief is exempt from income-tax and not the Viceroy's residence?

**Mr. A. H. Lloyd:** I cannot say off-hand what is in the Income-tax Manual on that point, but it is a fact that a notification has been published in the Gazette under section 60 of the Income-tax Act exempting His Excellency the Viceroy from income-tax on the annual value of the Viceroy's House.

#### ASSESSMENT OF PALACES OF RULING PRINCES, ETC., IN NEW DELHI TO INCOME-TAX.

451. **\*Mr. Sri Prakasa:** Will the Honourable the Finance Member state:

- (a) if it is a fact that there are palaces in New Delhi belonging to the Ruling Princes and foreign powers;
- (b) if these are subject to income-tax;
- (c) how is the assessment made and to whom are notices sent;
- (d) if the taxes are levied at the rates applicable to individuals or to corporations; and
- (e) what is the total amount realised as income-tax from the palaces of Indian Princes and foreign powers in New Delhi?

**Mr. A. H. Lloyd:** (a) The palaces belong to the States and are not the private property of the Ruling Princes. As far as Government are aware, there are no palaces of foreign powers in New Delhi.

(b) No.

(c), (d) and (e). Do not arise.

**Mr. Sri Prakasa:** Am I to understand that the palaces of Indian States are exempt from income-tax? If so, under what section of the law?

**Mr. A. H. Lloyd:** Indian States, as opposed to the rulers in their personal capacity, are not liable to income-tax under the Income-tax Act. They are only liable to income-tax if the provisions of the Government Trading Taxation Act of 1926 are attracted.

**Seth Govind Das:** Is it a fact that inspite of their holding property in British India they are not liable to income-tax?

**Mr. A. H. Lloyd:** Yes, it is a fact.

**Mr. Sri Prakasa:** How are Government able to differentiate between the properties of Indian princes as such and properties belonging to their States? Are they required to make any statement to that effect?

**Mr. A. H. Lloyd:** The answer to that question depends entirely on the circumstances of each case. It is impossible to lay down any general rule, nor can I assert that there is no difficulty in making the distinction.

**Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar:** What is the basis on which this exemption is given?

**Mr. A. H. Lloyd:** There is no basis on which exemption is given. The fact is that the Income-tax Act does not apply to the Indian States.

**Mr. Sri Prakasa:** With regard to the palaces in New Delhi, have they made sure that they belong to the States as such and not to the rulers? In other words, are the subjects of those States in a position to make use of those palaces?

**Mr. A. H. Lloyd:** I shall require notice of that question.

**Prof. N. G. Ranga:** Do the properties held by the Government of India in Indian States enjoy the same immunity from income-tax in those areas?

**Mr. A. H. Lloyd:** To the best of my belief they do.

#### POLITICAL STATUS OF AJMER-MERWARA.

452. **\*Mr. C. N. Muthuranga Mudaliar:** Will the Honourable the Home Member please state:

- (a) whether he recently visited Ajmer-Merwara, and if so, the object of his visit;
- (b) whether one of the objects of his visit was to ascertain the opinion of the people of Ajmer-Merwara regarding the future of the Province;
- (c) who were the people consulted, and whether they represented anybody in Ajmer-Merwara;
- (d) what are the conclusions he has reached regarding the future of Ajmer-Merwara;
- (e) whether it is a fact that he contemplates such arrangements as would not secure for the people concerned any effective voice in the administration;
- (f) whether he is aware that there is a considerable section of opinion in Ajmer-Merwara who desire amalgamation with progressive United Provinces; and
- (g) whether he proposes to devise some means of ascertaining the will of the people regarding their own future?

**The Honourable Sir Henry Craik:** (a) and (b). I visited Ajmer-Merwara to acquaint myself with such departments of the administration of the area as have recently come under the control of the Home Department.

(c) Though my visit was not made with the purpose of consulting people about the constitutional future of the Province, the subject naturally arose in the course of conversation with a number of persons.

(d) and (e). I have arrived at no conclusions.

(f) and (g). I would refer the Honourable Member to my replies to Mr. Badri Dutt Pande's question No. 200 on the 10th February, and to the supplementary questions.



**Mr. M. S. Aney:** With reference to clause (c), the question is who were the people consulted. The Honourable Member did not say who those people were and whom they represented.

**The Honourable Sir Henry Craik:** I did not say I consulted anybody. I said that the subject arose in conversations with a number of persons.

**Mr. K. Santhanam:** With reference to part (c), did the Honourable Member have conversations with the popular representatives also or only with officials?

**The Honourable Sir Henry Craik:** I had conversations with a number of people living in that area.

**Mr. Badri Dutt Pande:** Did any deputation wait on the Honourable Member on that subject?

**The Honourable Sir Henry Craik:** No, Sir.

#### REORGANISATION OF THE PUBLIC INFORMATION BUREAU.

453. **\*Mr. C. N. Muthuranga Mudaliar:** Will the Honourable the Home Member please state:

- (a) whether proposals are under consideration for the re-organisation of the Office of the Director of Public Information in the Government of India; and if so, what they are;
- (b) whether these include activities in the provinces; and if so, what they are, and whether Provincial Governments have been consulted about them;
- (c) what the cost of these proposals is;
- (d) the reasons for these proposals;
- (e) when it is proposed to put them into effect; and
- (f) whether it is proposed to transfer a part of the activities to the Governor General's Secretariat, and if so, the reasons for it?

**The Honourable Sir Henry Craik:** (a) to (f). Proposals are under consideration; Government have, however, reached no conclusions on the proposals. and until a conclusion is reached, I am unable to disclose the nature of the proposals.

**Mr. C. N. Muthuranga Mudaliar:** With reference to part (b), have they consulted the Provincial Governments?

**The Honourable Sir Henry Craik:** I have said that I am not able to disclose the nature of the proposals.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE WHEELER AND MAXWELL COMMITTEES.

454. **\*Mr. C. N. Muthuranga Mudaliar:** Will the Honourable the Home Member please state:

- (a) the number and names of Secretariat Departments contemplated as a result of the Wheeler and Maxwell Committee reports;

- (b) the number of Indian Civil Service Officers which it is expected will be required in addition to those in existence on the 1st April, 1937;
- (c) how it is proposed to recruit them, and what their tenure will be;
- (d) if recruitment of these officers is to be from the provinces, what are the provinces which will be considered for the purpose, and in what order;
- (e) what the effect of the recruitment of these officers is or will be on the prospects of the subordinate staff; and
- (f) whether Government propose to consider the desirability of suitably compensating the members of that staff for any loss of prospects that there might be, or whether Government will be prepared to consider appointment to higher Secretariat posts solely with reference to merit, irrespective of the service to which a person belongs?

**The Honourable Sir Henry Craik:** (a) and (b). The consideration of these points has not advanced far enough to enable me to give the Honourable Member reliable information.

(c) I would refer the Honourable Member to paragraphs 5 and 6 of the Press Note, dated the 17th November, 1937.

(d) Recruitment of Indian Civil Service officers for service in the Secretariat will be made from all the Provinces. It is not possible to observe a fixed rotation in making demands for officers from the Provinces, but it will be one of the duties of the Establishment Officer to see that as far as possible each Province supplies its proportionate share of officers.

(e) and (f). I would refer the Honourable Member to paragraph 8 of the Press Note of the 17th November, 1937.

**Mr. M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar:** What is the number fixed for Madras?

**The Honourable Sir Henry Craik:** No number has been fixed for any province.

#### POLITICAL PRISONERS IN THE CENTRALLY ADMINISTERED AREAS.

455. **\*Mr. C. N. Muthuranga Mudaliar:** Will the Honourable the Home Member please state:

- (a) the number of political prisoners at present in the centrally administered areas;
- (b) to which provinces they belong;
- (c) whether the Provincial Governments concerned have expressed any desire in regard to them, and, if so, what;
- (d) whether any representations have been received from any of the prisoners for repatriation, and, if so, what action has been taken; and

- (e) how many of the prisoners have been convicted for violent and how many for non-violent offences, and whether Government are prepared to consider the desirability of releasing the latter, if there are any?

**The Honourable Sir Henry Craik:** (a) to (e). I am making inquiries and will lay the required information on the table of the House in due course.

**PRISONERS IN THE ANDAMANS AND MAINTENANCE OF THE ANDAMANS PENAL SETTLEMENT.**

456. **\*Mr. M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar:** (a) Will the Honourable the Home Member state how many prisoners are there still in the Andamans, and how many from each province?

(b) Are they kept there on the request of the several Provincial Governments or in spite of their wishes?

(c) Do any of the Provincial Governments contribute towards the expenses of the up-keep of the Andamans Penal Settlement? If so, what are the amounts, and if not, why not?

(d) What is the average cost per year to the Central Government for the maintenance of that penal settlement, and are the Government of India bound to maintain the same?

(e) Have not Government received representations to close down the penal settlement, and have they considered the desirability of abolishing that penal settlement?

**The Honourable Sir Henry Craik:** (a) There are about 6,000 volunteer convicts in the Andamans. I have no precise information as to the number belonging to each Province.

(b) They were sent to the Andamans, and are being kept there, with the consent of the Provincial Governments concerned.

(c) No contribution is levied from Provincial Governments as the volunteer convicts, after the first three months, either work in the settlement as paid labourers or support themselves by agriculture or other occupations.

(d) The net annual cost of the Convict Settlement is between 15 and 16 lakhs of rupees. For obvious reasons the Islands cannot be abandoned and the maintenance of the convict settlement is of great advantage to the administration of the Islands.

(e) I have received notice of a resolution on the subject. The policy of Government regarding the transfer of volunteer convicts to the Andamans was explained in the Home Department Resolution, dated the 27th February, 1926. Government have no intention of abolishing the Andamans convict settlement.

**Mr. K. Santhanam:** May I know if the Government of India consider the desirability of consulting the new Provincial Governments about the maintenance of this settlement?

**The Honourable Sir Henry Craik:** We have been in communication with some of the Provincial Governments on the matter.

**Mr. K. Santhanam:** May I know the reply of those Provincial Governments?

**The Honourable Sir Henry Craik:** They do not want the convicts sent back.

**Prof. N. G. Ranga:** What are those Provincial Governments?

**The Honourable Sir Henry Craik:** Two of them are certainly the United Provinces and Bombay; I think Madras also held the same view.

**Prof. N. G. Ranga:** Were other Provincial Governments also consulted?

**The Honourable Sir Henry Craik:** I do not think so.

**Mr. Sri Prakasa:** With reference to the Honourable Member's reply to part (c) of the question, may I know the principle on which the Central Government have to pay for the prisoners of Provincial Governments?

**The Honourable Sir Henry Craik:** That has always been the practice so far as I know since the Settlement started.

**Mr. M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar:** May I take it, Sir, that the object of retaining the convict settlement is primarily to improve the Andaman Islands?

**The Honourable Sir Henry Craik:** May I refer the Honourable Member to the Home Department Resolution of 1926: there are other objects as well.

#### REVISED SCALES OF SALARIES FOR OFFICERS OF THE COVENANTED CIVIL SERVICE AND THE ALL-INDIA SERVICES.

457. **\*Mr. M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar:** (a) Will the Honourable the Home Member state whether the Secretary of State considered the Government of India's proposal to introduce revised scales of salaries for officers of the covenanted Civil Service and the All-India Services and if so, with what result? If not, why not?

(b) Are Government aware that lower scales, cutting down higher salaries, even by thirty per cent., have been introduced by the Government of Madras regarding Provincial services with effect from the 1st April, 1937?

(c) Are Government prepared to adopt similar scales for both the subordinate and superior services?

**The Honourable Sir Henry Craik:** (a) Future recruitment to the All-India Services has ceased except in respect of the Indian Civil Service, the Indian Police and the Indian Medical Service. Revised rates of pay for the Indian Medical Service have been prescribed for new entrants.

As regards the Indian Civil Service and the Indian Police, I would refer the Honourable Member to the reply given by me on the 15th February, 1938, to part (a) of starred question No. 263 in this House.

(b) Yes.

(c) I would refer the Honourable Member to the reply given on the 12th March, 1936, to starred question No. 1141.

**Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar:** It is now seven years since this matter was brought up for consideration, and it has been postponed eternally all these years. May I know why Government refuse to take action in the matter?

**The Honourable Sir Henry Craik:** I do not understand the Honourable Member's question. He asked why the Government refuse to take action in this matter. They have not refused to take any action.

**Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar:** May I know if in his last answer he said that they had postponed action till the Federation came?

**The Honourable Sir Henry Craik:** The matter is one for the Secretary of State, not for the Government of India.

**Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar:** Will the Government of India impress upon the Secretary of State to take action soon?

**The Honourable Sir Henry Craik:** There is no present intention of addressing the Secretary of State again.

**Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar:** Why not?

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member cannot go on arguing.

**Mr. M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar:** Is it or is it not a fact that the Madras Government have written to the Government of India that for the future the salaries of Indian Civil Servants ought to be reduced?

**The Honourable Sir Henry Craik:** I have seen no such communication.

**Mr. M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar:** Has no communication been received from the Madras Government regarding reduction of salaries of all-India services other than Medical?

**The Honourable Sir Henry Craik:** As far as I am aware, no communication has been received from the Madras Government on the subject.

**Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar:** Since there has been a reduction in the salaries of other services, are Government aware that there is a greater disparity in pay between the I.C.S. and other services?

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member knows it.

**Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar:** It is for them to know.

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Order, order.

CREATION OF POSTS IN SUPERIOR SERVICE AND RETRENCHMENT IN THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.

458. **\*Mr. M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar:** (a) Will the Honourable the Home Member state how many new posts were created in the superior services of the Government of India carrying salaries over Rs. 500 a month since the inauguration of the Montague-Chelmsford Reforms? Will he please lay a list on the table?

(b) Are Government prepared to appoint a Committee to effect retrenchment of personnel, officers and salaries in the Government of India to reduce expenditure?

**The Honourable Sir Henry Craik:** (a) The collection of the information will involve labour out of proportion to the advantage likely to be gained, and Government regret that they cannot undertake to make the necessary inquiries.

(b) I have nothing to add to the reply which I gave to starred question No. 1141 in the Legislative Assembly on the 12th March, 1936.

**Mr. M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar:** May I know the approximate estimate of the amount by which salaries have increased since the Montague-Chelmsford reforms—total amount? May I know since 1928 what the increase in the salaries has been?

**The Honourable Sir Henry Craik:** That does not arise out of this question: I cannot possibly answer it without notice.

**Mr. M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar:** I want a list of officers who have been appointed on salaries over Rs. 500.

**The Honourable Sir Henry Craik:** I cannot undertake to collect the information.

**Mr. M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar:** Cannot the Honourable Member give me an approximate idea of the total increase involved?

**The Honourable Sir Henry Craik:** The number of services involved is so large that I cannot possibly give any estimate.

**Prof. N. G. Ranga:** Are we to understand that the Government of India do not think of further retrenchment in central expenditure on staff and salaries?

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): That does not arise.

**Prof. N. G. Ranga:** He has referred us to his answer in 1936. Are they not contemplating retrenchment now? That arises out of (b).

**The Honourable Sir Henry Craik:** My answer was that I have nothing to add to my reply to starred question No. 1141 on the 12th March, 1936.

**Prof. N. G. Ranga:** It is as old as two years. Have Government since then not found it necessary to go into the matter of retrenching expenditure on salaries of people employed by them?

**The Honourable Sir Henry Craik:** No, not since 12th March, 1936.

**Mr. Manu Subedar:** Can the Honourable Member give us an idea of the cost involved in securing this information?

**The Honourable Sir Henry Craik:** I have said it will be out of proportion to the advantage likely to be gained: I can give no closer idea than that.

**Sir Cowasji Jehangir:** The Honourable Member says that he cannot give information nor give the cost: Will the Honourable the Home Member compare the trouble taken by other Departments in answering hundreds of questions?

**The Honourable Sir Henry Craik:** The amount of trouble and cost is always taken into consideration.

**Sir Cowasji Jehangir:** So it comes to this: it is the Honourable Member's opinion that the trouble that will be involved in answering this question will be much more than the trouble taken by other Departments in answering hundreds of questions.

**The Honourable Sir Henry Craik:** That is purely an argument, and a wholly fallacious argument.

**Mr. M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar:** Is the Honourable Member aware that the Government of Madras along with their Budget in each year gave a list of new appointments made in that year and also all the appointments made for the past ten years?

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): That does not arise.

#### IMPORT DUTY ON OLD IRON GIRDERS CHARGED FROM ONE MR. R. LAKSHMANAN.

459. **\*Mr. C. N. Muthuranga Mudaliar:** (a) Will the Honourable the Finance Member please state if it is a fact that one Mr. R. Lakshmanan, a merchant of Kulasekharapatnam, Tinnevely district, recently imported old iron girders of British make from Colombo?

(b) Is it a fact that the Collector of Customs, Madras, assessed them at the normal rate of import duty instead of the preferential rate, on the ground that goods though of British manufacture, when they are imported from parts other than the United Kingdom ports were not eligible for the preferential tariff allowed by the Ottawa Trade Agreement?

(c) Is it a fact that the said Mr. Lakshmanan has sent in a memorial to the Central Board of Revenue? If so, what orders have been passed thereon?

**Mr. A. H. Lloyd:** The Central Board of Revenue have received a representation on the subject. Orders have been passed, rejecting the representation.

**Mr. C. N. Muthuranga Mudaliar:** Is it not a fact that these materials of British manufacture come under the Ottawa Agreement?

**Mr. A. H. Lloyd:** The girders were assessed to duty under one of the items in the tariff relating to protective rates of import duty and not under one relating to the preferential rates, and, therefore, the question of the Ottawa Trade Agreement does not arise.

#### DENIAL OF BENEFITS OF PENSION OR GRATUITY TO INDIAN CLERKS IN THE UNIVERSITY TRAINING CORPS AND AUXILIARY FORCE.

460. \***Mr. Lalchand Navalrai:** Will the Defence Secretary please state:

- (a) the number of University Training Corps and Auxiliary Force Units in India and the authorised clerical strength for the University Training Corps and Auxiliary Force Units;
- (b) the number of clerks, B. O. Rs., I. O. Rs., Indian civilians, in employment at present with their grades of pay;
- (c) whether it is a fact that the Indian civilian clerks employed in the University Training Corps and Auxiliary Force Units can only draw Rs. 90 per mensem as a maximum salary;
- (d) whether it is a fact that the clerks of similar status in other departments of the Defence Service can rise to a maximum of Rs. 375 per mensem by annual grades;
- (e) whether it is a fact that recently the scale of pay for the Army Remount Department has been revised and fixed at Rs. 50 to Rs. 325 per mensem by annual increment;
- (f) if the answers to parts (c), (d) and (e) be in the affirmative, do Government contemplate to raise the standard of the salaries in this department to correspond with that of the other departments of the Army; if not, why not;
- (g) whether it is a fact that Government servants in all departments of Government entitle themselves either to pension or gratuity on completion of the stipulated period of service;
- (h) whether it is a fact that the B. O. Rs. serving in the University Training Corps and Auxiliary Force Units are entitled to full pensions on their retirement;
- (i) whether Government are aware that no provision of pension or gratuity is made for the Indian clerks serving in the University Training Corps and Auxiliary Force Units; and



- (j) if the answer to part (i) be in the affirmative, whether Government propose to make provision for pension or gratuity for Indian civilian clerks of the University Training Corps and Auxiliary Force on the *similar scale as for other Departments*; if not, why not?

**Mr. C. M. G. Ogilvie:** (a) Auxiliary Force units 44 and University Training Corps Units 10.

One Indian civilian clerk is allowed for each University Training Corps Unit, but for Auxiliary Force Units no establishment is laid down. The number that may be required in any particular case and the pay that is paid is a matter for local arrangement and varies from time to time and from place to place. Both categories are temporary and not permanent Government servants.

(b) and (c). British other ranks and Indian other ranks are not employed as clerks in these units. In University Training Corps Units the grade of pay of Indian civilian clerks varies from Rs. 50 to Rs. 90 per mensem.

(d) No. The status of the clerks employed in University Training Corps or Auxiliary Force India units is comparable to that of clerks in military schools and establishments whose scales of pay vary from Rs. 37—54 to Rs. 46—70 apart from the fact that they are not permanent.

(e) Yes, except that the starting pay is Rs. 45 per mensem and not Rs. 50 per mensem.

(f) Does not arise.

(g) No.

(h) I refer the Honourable Member to the answer given in part (b) of this question.

(i) Yes.

(j) No, because the type of clerk required can be obtained on a temporary and non-pensionable basis. These clerks do, however, receive pay which is higher than they would normally obtain were they admitted to permanent Government service.

**Mr. Lalchand Navalrai:** With reference to clause (j), may I know whether there is any provision made for these men after they retire, if they have served for a long time?

**Mr. C. M. G. Ogilvie:** The only provision that can be said to have been made is that they are paid at a higher rate than their service would entitle them to were they made permanent, and, therefore, may be expected to save some money.

**Mr. Lalchand Navalrai:** Will there be any arrangement made to give them less pay with some provision after retirement?

**Mr. C. M. G. Ogilvie:** No.

**EXTENSIONS GRANTED TO CIVILIAN SUBORDINATES SERVING IN CERTAIN CORPS OF THE ARMY.**

461. \***Mr. Mohan Lal Saksena:** (a) Will the Defence Secretary lay on the table a statement showing the names of civilian subordinates serving in the various corps, viz., R.I.A.S.C., I.A.O.C., Farms, etc., who have been or are being granted extension of service beyond the age of 55 years by their respective Heads of Departments during 1937-38 and 1938-39 and the reasons which necessitated such grants?

(b) Are Government aware of the fact that such extensions lead to extra expenditure and do not reduce the unemployment of educated Indians?

(c) Are Government aware that such a policy is against the recommendations of the Sapru Committee referred to in His Excellency the Governor General's last address to the Central Legislature?

(d) Are Government aware of the widespread discontent amongst the junior staff of the services concerned on account of blockade in their further promotion?

(e) Is it a fact that Government are considering the question of retiring their employees after 25 years' service?

(f) How do they justify such extensions even after 30 years service or 55 years of age?

(g) Are Government prepared to issue instructions to those Heads of Departments to cancel such extensions as have been granted and have not yet been given effect to and of those who are already on extension by retiring them immediately?

**Mr. C. M. G. Ogilvie:** (a) In the case of civilian subordinates of the various corps mentioned by the Honourable Member, the normal retiring age is 60. No person has been granted an extension beyond that age.

(b) Extensions of service do not reduce unemployment, but the continuation of persons in service so long as they are fit is generally economical.

(c) Government are aware that as a palliative to the unemployment problem, the Sapru Committee have recommended that "no extensions should be granted to any public servant after he has completed the fifty-fifth year of his age".

(d) No.

(e) Government of India have at present under consideration the question of reducing the superannuation age limit.

(f) As I have explained in reply to part (a) above, the question of extension of service does not arise on completing 55 years of age in the case of subordinates. I may, add, however, that when an extension is granted, it is given only on public grounds.

(g) No.

**Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney:** With reference to part (e) of the question, will the Government of India kindly inform this House whether that consideration applies to all services or only to the two services under consideration in this question?

**Mr. C. M. G. Ogilvie:** I have no information.

**Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney:** Will the Honourable Member in charge give that information?

(No reply was given).

**Mr. Mohan Lal Saksena:** When are the Government likely to come to a decision in this matter?

**Mr. C. M. G. Ogilvie:** I am afraid I cannot say.

**Mr. Mohan Lal Saksena:** How long has this question been under consideration?

**Mr. C. M. G. Ogilvie:** At a guess, for a few months.

**Mr. M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar:** Will the Government now consider the desirability of fixing 55 as the age of retirement instead of 60, with respect to civilian subordinates?

**Mr. C. M. G. Ogilvie:** I cannot add anything to my answer to part (e) of the question.

#### NON-CONSTITUTION OF A BAZAR COMMITTEE IN THE AGRA CANTONMENT.

462. **\*Mr. Mohan Lal Saksena:** (a) Will the Defence Secretary be pleased to state if no Bazar Committee has been formed in Agra Cantonment uptill now as required under section 43A, Cantonment Act? If so, why?

(b) Is Tripolia Ward the most thickly populated and rich quarter in the Agra Cantonment? If so, why has it not been included in bazar area as required under section 43A, Cantonment Act?

(c) Is it a fact that the elected members have refused to form a Bazar Committee in Agra Cantonment owing to the Tripolia Ward not being included in the bazar area?

(d) Is it a fact that the Government of India does not want its inclusion in the bazar area because of its land revenue?

(e) What is the final decision of Government in this matter in view of the unanimous resolution of the Agra Cantonment Board?

(f) What action, if any, do Government propose to take, if no Bazar Committee is constituted, as is the case so far?

**Mr. C. M. G. Ogilvie:** (a) No, because the elected members refuse to serve on it.

(b) Yes, because it is situated in the Defence Zone and has not been under the management of the Board for the past ten years.

(c) Yes.

(d) No.

(e) An application from the Board asking for the area in question to be declared a bazar area is under consideration by the Government of India.

(f) None at present.

**Mr. T. S. Avinashlingam Chettiar:** What are the reasons for the refusal?

**Mr. C. M. G. Ogilvie:** I gave them in answer to part (b).

**Mr. Mohan Lal Saksena:** When are Government likely to come to a decision in this matter?

**Mr. C. M. G. Ogilvie:** I should say about the end of next month.

**Mr. Lalchand Navalrai:** May I know why they refused to serve on the Board?

**Mr. C. M. G. Ogilvie:** The reason is because of the facts stated in part (c) of the question.

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member (Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar) has exhausted his quota of five questions so the answer to the next question will be laid on the table.

#### GRANTS OR LOANS APPLIED FOR BY THE GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS FOR BUILDING HOUSES FOR INDUSTRIAL LABOURERS.

†463. **\*Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar:** Will the Honourable the Finance Member state:

- (a) whether the Government of Madras have applied to the Government of India for grants or loans for the purpose of building houses for industrial labourers; and
- (b) whether they have agreed to give any amount; if so, what amount, and when it is proposed to be given?

**The Honourable Sir James Grigg:** (a) No.

(b) Does not arise.

#### INCOME STATISTICS.

464. **\*Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta:** (a) Will the Honourable the Finance Member be pleased to state whether Government have statistics regarding the average annual income of an Indian in British India and if so, state the same?

(b) What is the average annual income of an Indian, taking into account only those Indians whose income does not exceed Rs. 1,000?

(c) What percentage of the Indians in British India have annual income up to Rs. 50, Rs. 100, Rs. 200, Rs. 300, Rs. 400 and Rs. 500?

**The Honourable Sir James Grigg:** As I stated in reply to Mr. Abdur Rasheed Choudhury's question No. 283 on 2nd September, 1937, Government have no official statistics on this subject.

**Prof. N. G. Ranga:** Have not Government taken any steps to collect this information after they have appointed their Economic Adviser?

**The Honourable Sir James Grigg:** He has been here only about a month, and he would have to get very busy if he was to collect all these statistics in a month.

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† Answer to this question laid on the table, the questioner having exhausted his quota.

**FOREIGNERS APPOINTED UNDER THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.**

465. \***Mr. Mohan Lal Saksena:** (a) Will the Honourable the Home Member be pleased to state how many foreigners have been appointed under the Government of India besides those recruited in the Indian Civil Service and Indian Police Service as experts and in other capacities during the last three years?

(b) Will he lay on the table a statement giving the names of such persons, their qualifications and emoluments and the reasons for such appointment?

(c) Are Government prepared to consider the desirability of issuing instructions that no person should be appointed from outside the country unless persons with suitable qualifications were not available in the country?

**The Honourable Sir Henry Craik:** (a) and (b). I am collecting the necessary information and will lay a statement on the table of the House.

(c) Instructions have already been issued to this effect.

**UNSTARRED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.**

**BAN ON INDEPENDENCE PLEDGE IN THE LANSDOWNE BAZAR.**

34. **Mr. Badri Dutt Pande:** Will the Defence Secretary be pleased to state the reasons when the independence pledge and the meeting thereof was banned in the Lansdowne Bazar when it was recited and celebrated all over India?

**Mr. C. M. G. Ogilvie:** I refer the Honourable Member to the answer given by me to Mr. Mohan Lal Saksena's starred question No. 258 of the 15th February, 1938.

**DISCUSSION ON THE SALES TAX IN THE FINANCE MINISTERS' CONFERENCE.**

35. **Mr. Manu Subedar:** Will the Honourable the Finance Member be pleased to state whether the question of the sales tax was discussed at the Finance Ministers' Conference recently held?

**The Honourable Sir James Grigg:** I have nothing to add to the reply which I gave to question No. 371 asked by the Honourable Member on the 18th instant.

**STATEMENTS LAID ON THE TABLE.**

*Information promised in reply to starred question No. 25, asked by Mr. Lalchand Navalrai on the 31st January, 1938.*

**SENIORITY OF STAFF PROMOTED AS GRADE V ASSISTANT STATION MASTERS ON THE NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY.**

Government are informed as follows :

(a) The seniority of staff, such as Assistant Station Masters, Guards, Enquiry Clerks, etc., promoted as Assistant Station Masters, Grade V, is reckoned on their substantive pay. In the case of Guards, however, their substantive pay for such promotions is fixed on their pay plus 75 per cent. of their mileage allowance.

(b) and (c). It is not practicable to have one system of reckoning seniority. The different methods stated by the Honourable Member in part (c) of the question are considered necessary to meet the different circumstances of each case.

(d) Yes, as explained in the reply to part (a) above.

(e) The method of reckoning seniority is as stated in my reply to part (a) above. It is regretted that the information given in the letter referred to by the Honourable Member was not complete in so far that it did not mention that a Guard on promotion to a stationary post is given credit for mileage allowance in fixing his pay.

(f) No final chart of promotions has yet been adopted, therefore, the points raised in this part of the question do not arise.

(g) No.

(h) Does not arise. The attention of the Honourable Member is, however, drawn to the information laid on the table of the House on the 15th February, 1938, in connection with parts (b) and (c) of his starred question No. 24 asked on the 31st January, 1938.

(i) In view of the replies to parts (a) to (h) above this does not arise.

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*Information promised in reply to starred question No. 304, asked by Mr. H. M. Abdullah on the 16th February 1938.*

#### STATIONS ON THE NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY WITH PUBLIC AND RAILWAY POWER HOUSES.

“(a) and (f). Government are not in possession of this information and do not consider that its value is commensurate with the cost and labour involved in obtaining it.

(b) No, the Railway is not operating out-of-date machinery at any electric generating station where local supply authorities are able to offer an economic and reliable supply of electric energy.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) and (e). The policy is to purchase electric energy from local supply companies where the supply is adequate, reliable and economic; each case, however, requires separate consideration as to its financial justification.”

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

##### DEMAND NO. 6-E—WORKING EXPENSES—EXPENSES OF TRAFFIC DEPARTMENT—*contd.*

##### *Economy—concl'd.*

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Discussion will now be resumed of the motion\* moved by Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali—No. 159 on the List.

**Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad** (United Provinces Southern Divisions: Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I was rather surprised to see the cut to reduce the general traffic expenses of the Railways by 33 per cent. I always thought that the retrenchment which was started in 1931 had already gone too far in the Traffic Department, in fact it has already gone so far that it has now reached a somewhat dangerous point. Sir, in most

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\*“That the demand under the head ‘Working Expenses—Expenses of Traffic Department’ be reduced by 33 per cent.”

[Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad.]

of the small stations only two persons are working, and every one of them has to work for 12 hours. They get no relief whatever during the whole month, and they have to work 12 hours every day practically throughout the whole year. In these circumstances, I do not think that the expenses of the Traffic Department can be reduced by 33 per cent. How can we further reduce the expenses of the Traffic Department? Are we to ask these people to work for more than 12 hours? Should we reduce their salaries further which are already on an uneconomic basis, or on what lines can we think of reducing the expenditure in order to effect economy by 33 per cent.? Sir, there is a fallacy in the minds of some of my friends on this side of the House, because whenever they press the question of economy, they have always the question of the salaries of the higher officials in mind, but the salaries of the higher officers form a very small percentage of the salaries paid to the subordinate and menial staff. If economy is to be effected by 33 per cent., then I fear that the major portion of the reduction will fall mainly upon the subordinate and menial staff who are already very low paid. May I inform my friends that the Railway Board, I think under pressure from this House or for other reasons, have already effected economy to a dangerous point. They have reduced the scales to the absolute minimum of Rs. 25 and Rs. 30. They are not recruiting anybody in the upper subordinate grades in the interest of economy, and they have also reduced the staff to the absolute minimum at every railway station. I, therefore, fear that if the salaries of the staff are further reduced or the strength of the staff is diminished, the whole traffic, which has already reached a dangerous point, will become much more dangerous. Therefore, I should very much like some one to point out exactly in what direction economy can be effected and not merely to suggest as a general principle that the whole of the expenditure of the Traffic Department should be reduced by 33 per cent. By no stretch of imagination can I think of any means of further cutting down the expenditure of the Traffic Department. Sir, we are here to criticise the Government, but at the same time we ought to be reasonable in our criticism. When we say that we should reduce the expenditure, we should also tell them how the reduction can be made, and in this particular case, as I have already said, it will be impossible to effect a further reduction.

The second point I should like to press is that our working ratio is very small compared with the working ratio of other countries. There are two difficulties with which we are faced. We have to pay 29½ crores every year, and my friend does not suggest any particular reduction in this particular item, because this is a fixed liability. Then there are also the questions of Depreciation Fund, and our obligations to the general revenues, and nobody from this side can touch on it because it would mean taxation in other directions. Now, as I have repeatedly pointed out, there is room for retrenchment in regard to the question of depreciation, but there is no room whatever for any further reduction in the case of traffic. There may be minor expenditure here and there which may be reduced, but the economy will be insignificant. Sir, leaving out the fixed charges, our working ratio is perhaps the third in the whole world,—from bottom. It is not the lowest, because there are two other countries where the working expenses are lower than ours. Sir, two years ago I quoted figures to show that the working ratio at that time of German Railways was 104, of the British Railways was in the neighbourhood of cent. per cent. and the

working ratio at that time of our railways was below 60 per cent.,—it was 56 per cent. I am speaking from memory. Even at that time when our railways were hard pressed, our working ratio was very reasonable, and even today compared to the working ratio of other countries, it is really a very small one, and, therefore, a further reduction of the working ratio is not possible. If economy is to be achieved, it ought to be achieved by the re-organisation of our general finance, and it cannot be done by means of retrenchment of the lower paid staff, whose number has already been reduced, and whose salaries have also been cut down to a very dangerous point. If anything, I think a definite improvement is necessary to give the employees greater relief by giving them larger increments and by recruiting them to the upper subordinate grades which will tend to increase their efficiency and it will not diminish the expenditure by 33 per cent.

Sir, recently we have been hearing a good deal about these accidents. When we reach that question, we shall discuss it in greater detail, but I am convinced that one of the reasons for the large number of accidents is the retrenchment policy of the Railway Board. They have already reduced the staff to such an extent that the lives of the travelling public are exposed to grave danger while travelling by train. In the morning hours on cold and foggy days, people do not like to come out, they quietly sleep in their own stations, with the result that the underpaid and over worked staff at these small stations leave the trains to follow their own course, and accidents frequently happen. The employment of unintelligent and inefficient people on an unremunerative basis is also largely responsible for these accidents. How can you expect a railway servant, who has been recruited to service, who is fresh from a high school, and is employed on Rs. 30 a month, with only a few months' experience, to work at night without relief, when he has already been at work in the day? How can you expect such people to be vigilant at night? If we accept the motion of my friend, Mr. Azhar Ali, I think the number of accidents will increase. As I said before, the salaries of the higher paid staff is a very small proportion compared to the total salaries we have to pay to the subordinate and menial staff, and therefore if my friend can point out that a certain officer or a number of officers can be reduced, then we can consider the question, but to suggest as a general principle that there should be a reduction by 33 per cent. in the Traffic Department is not correct because as I said we have already cut down the expenditure to a very dangerous point, and any further reduction will certainly affect the efficiency of the railways.

**Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney** (Nominated Non-Official): Sir, I rise to oppose this motion, and I do so for the following reasons. The Mover of this motion,—I would call it an omnibus motion,—has not stated specifically in what special traffic departments economy can be effected. My friend, the last speaker, was perfectly right when he said that we should concentrate on the pay of the higher officers. It has just now been said that the pay of the higher paid officers forms a very small part of the total cost of the Traffic Department and so if economy is to be effected, it will have to be effected on the subordinate staff, but my friend, Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad, has rightly pointed out, as I tried to point out yesterday in connection with another motion, that the staff on the railways is understaffed to such an extent that it has undermined the health of the staff, it has prevented them from getting leave and consequently endangers the safety of the travelling public. Now, Sir, no truer words were said in this:



[Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney.]

House than those which were just uttered by Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad. In my opinion to request the Government to reduce expenses in the Traffic Department by 33 per cent. is to ask for the impossible. Moreover, if accepted, it would add to the troubles and difficulties of the under-paid, under-fed and over-worked staff and render their existence a tragedy. Had he confined his motion to certain specific items, such as the Lee Commission or the reducing of the salaries of all officers coming to the railways from any part of the Empire, I should have supported him. but to ask for this 33 and  $\frac{1}{3}$  reduction and not state where it is to be applied and how it is to be practised, is to ask for the moon. I, therefore, ask the House to reject this motion as being both impracticable and impossible.

**Mr. Badri Dutt Pande** (Rohilkund and Kumaon Divisions: Non-Muhammadan Rural): We have been speaking of economy for the best part of a century but economy on that side means expenditure. When we talk of economy, they speak of expenditure. In this one big Viceroy's village, what sort of economy they have. 24 crores have been spent on this one Viceroy's village, while seven lakhs of villages are starving.

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member must confine himself to the railways.

**Mr. Badri Dutt Pande:** Sir, I am referring to the railways but was only giving an instance of bad economy. My first grievance is about the economy they are practising in tours of officers. When a Viceroy or a Governor or a Commander-in-Chief or a big official goes on tour flower pots are laid, a red carpet is spread, then rose water is sprinkled and perfumes and essences are thrown. All these things mean money. I think we could save 2 or 3 lakhs yearly from this item alone, which is an unnecessary expenditure.

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): We are discussing the expenses of the Traffic Department. The Honourable Member must confine himself to that motion. Otherwise, he is irrelevant.

**Mr. Badri Dutt Pande:** Sir, I am showing how economy could be practised in the Traffic Department.

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): If the Honourable Member is referring to the Traffic Department, that is another matter. Otherwise he is not relevant.

**Mr. Badri Dutt Pande:** Sir, it is the Traffic Department that really squanders public money like this. Then there are the saloons in the Traffic Department. We had a list of the saloons. There are 804 saloons costing 2 crores of rupees. These saloons are travelling houses, complete with all luxuries. A villager cannot dream of travelling in them even in his seventh dream. I don't know how much extra is being spent on their maintenance and repairs. The third class passengers have not sufficient carriages even to carry them from one place to another and here they have got saloons. They drink, dance and make merry in these saloons and spend nights and days in shooting and *shikar* and all that sort of things. All this means expenditure of public money. Besides saloons, they have the motor cars—Rolls Royces, 1937 model and 1938 model,

fitted with all the luxuries and niceties of life. That is double expenditure. On one side the saloon is rotting and on the other side you have these motor cars. Why don't you travel in ordinary carriages just as the President of America or other Presidents like De Vélera do. Why should special trains be run for one single officer. Why is all this money spent on one officer.

It is the third class passenger on whom every economy is practised. There is my railway, the R. K. Railway about which I have the greatest fury. There is also the B. and N. W. R. They don't have even latrines in the third class carriages. The report says that only 68 per cent. of the railway carriages are provided with latrines and 32 per cent. are not yet provided with latrines, I think the figures are wrong. It is only in the Lucknow-Bareilly section and from Bareilly to Kathgodam where the Governor and other officials travel that there are some amenities. On the other branch railways in the R. K. R. and B. and N. W. R. there are no amenities.

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member is not explaining how retrenchment can be effected.

**Mr. Badri Dutt Pande:** I want that there should be economies in the case of the bigger officials. Their standard of living should be economised. All these saloons should be thrown open to the third class passengers. They should be fitted as third class compartments and the saloons that are rotting in the way-side stations should be re-fitted. Why do you want air-conditioned, water-conditioned, ice-conditioned and heaven-conditioned coaches for yourself? These things should be stopped and there should be economy all round.

*"Ae Sahibe Khawal Jara Gurtwidher ni."*

"You reserve all the sugar for yourself, may give us (the poor) some Gur even."

Now, Sir, I want to refer to conditions in Japan. What is the condition there:

"Japan pays the most moderate salaries to high officials; even the prime minister receives only about Rs. 1,000 a month and his whole luggage consisted of only one suit-case when he recently went to occupy his official residence."

Here the Railway Board Officials are getting Rs. 5,000 and they have got big bank balances. We are not providing for one generation only for these Treasury Benches but for 30 generations, while there is no provision even for one generation on this side of the House. This is our complaint. Huge sums are wasted. Let us see what is done in Japan:

"Huge sums are not wasted in raising half mile long platform as in India and by using steel telegraph poles. The forest wood is used for telegraph poles."

Now, why do you use these costly steel poles, while you say "our wood is good and cheap". We had nice pamphlets from the Dehra Dun Research Institute showing how strong our wood is. Why do you import these steel poles when you can use wood instead of them. Then the article says:

"Foreigners drawing fabulous salaries are not forced on Railways as it is done in India. Japanese run the whole show, though the first Japanese train was started fifty years later than India and yet the Japanese railways have the highest reputation for strictness of time to a second. All the railway trains and other requirements are manufactured in Japan as far as possible and billions are saved from going to foreign countries which is not the case in India."

[Mr. Badri Dutt Pande.]

This is the sort of economy we want; then, Sir:

"Service to the public is the motto of the Railway organisation. The third class passengers are not treated as sheep and goat. Third class compartments are furnished with velvet seats, pure drinking water, washing soap, paper towels, train scavengers, etc. These scavengers who are known as 'Boy' also help passengers in keeping in and removing out baggages."

There the third class passengers also enjoy the same amenities as the first class passengers. About food also, they do not practise the dirty economy that we see here. While they have nice and big restaurant cars, the third class passengers' food has flies attaching to it, which even a dog refuses to eat. Then the parcels rates are ridiculously cheap compared with India. That is economy of the right type which they have in Japan and which we press on the Members on the Treasury Benches here. Then, over there, all classes of passengers dine in the same hall in the train, and the rates are four to five annas cheaper than in India, and the service is run by properly trained girls who distribute the menus four or five times a day. The officials are trained in the art of obliging passengers . . . . .

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member is really not relevant at all. He must confine himself to the question of "how economy is to be effected".

**Mr. Badri Dutt Pande:** Sir, I am showing that . . . .

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member is really arguing for more expenditure, not economy.

**Mr. Badri Dutt Pande:** What I am pressing for is "reduce at the top" . . . . .

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The question is—how reduction is to be made. That is the only question now.

**Mr. Badri Dutt Pande:** That is what I am showing. Sir, Lord Krishna said to Arjun:

*"Dardran Var Kaunteya"* :

"Take from the bigger person and give it to the poor".

That is what I am pressing for. In the third class on the R. K. R. and the B. and N. W. R. the worst sort of economy is practised. There are no latrines, and the carriages are not lighted at night. That is bad economy. Those railways today are in the same stage when James Watt and Stephenson invented the railways. The licences of these railways ought to be forfeited and they should be punished because they are producing the worst sort of economy over third class passengers. Had they had to work under Mussolini or Hitler, their licences would have been forfeited by now. The R. K. Railway is the worst offender. The R. K. R. is called in Hindustani, *Kura Karkata Railway* and the B. and N. W. Railway, *Bebaqoof, Nahayatt, Wollu Railway*. What I want is that these superfluous luxuries in the case of the higher class should be reduced so as to make way for improvements in amenities in the case of the lower class. There should be only two classes, the first and the second. That is how we are going to distribute the wealth. Otherwise,

there is going to be a "crisis" everywhere, Sir, these are days of "crisis" everywhere. The railway crisis will also come, there will be a strike and there will be trouble. Of course, you travel first class and second class but I travel third class with those persons and it is only when I come here on duty that I travel first or second class, otherwise by the third class. So these saloons ought to be abolished and all should travel together. If they travel with us, they will know the difficulties of third class passengers, whom the Honourable the Railway Member described very nicely as "my best customer". Treat the third class passenger politely and considerately, treat him well by giving him proper amenities, after all, he is your best customer, and you will reap the benefit. With these few remarks, I support the cut of economy.

**Mr. Amarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya** (Burdwan Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, it is very difficult for one exactly to support this cut motion, because my Honourable friend the Mover of the motion is definitely trying to come to a certain fixed percentage, thirty-three per cent. Economy is required, no doubt, but as I could not study the whole of the railway finance report, I am really unable to say that it should be reduced by 33 per cent, but I must support the proposition that some reduction is necessary. Sir, it must be reduced from the top and not from the bottom. Sir, in the matter of our Insurance Bill we had fixed up almost a particular percentage of ratio for expenses. Why should we not try to introduce here in this railway system a particular expense ratio to be fixed, beyond which for ordinary purposes no expenses should run? It might be possible, if a particular Committee could be set up to go into this matter of expenses, to fix up what percentage of reduction can be made in respect of the railways.

Sir, the railway system is extremely beneficial to the nation, and particularly a railway managed by the State. A nation can reap a good deal of benefit to its industry and commerce, by a proper management of the railways. If this management is found to have gone beyond a certain fixed limit of expenses, then it must be said that that management is bad. This cut motion implies that there is something wrong in the management of the railways and it must be mended. Sir, in all State railways, the nations concerned really reap the benefit, but here we do not.

Here those Indians who are serving on the railways at the bottom are not only hard-worked but are badly paid. I have heard complaints from innumerable persons who are working at the bottom, and without whose devoted and assiduous work the railways cannot work for a day. They are retired after twenty-five years on Rs. 60 per month. I mean the first-grade and the second-grade clerks in the railway staff suffer from a special grievance; and I hope the Honourable Member will take into consideration the point as to how their position both financially and with regard to their conditions of labour may be improved.

With regard to economy, of course it is a general complaint that the saloons and other amenities of the higher class passengers can be reduced a great deal while the amenities of the lower class passengers can be raised, so, I think, there is scope for a middle course between the two.

[Mr. Anarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya.]

Also, the system of the improvement and the expansion of railways can be controlled if those who are in authority can take into consideration the real usefulness of such improvements and control and see whether it is commensurate with the possibility of expansion of trade and commerce. Sir, traffic has increased no doubt and facilities have also been increased but we do not think that it is commensurate with the necessities and usefulness to our people. Because it is not commensurate with that, we are feeling all the more the usefulness and necessity of road traffic. The railway traffic howsoever much it might have increased cannot brush aside the fact that the road traffic has come to stay and if the railway authorities cannot find their way to come to terms or make a compromise with the road competition, I do not think any real economy can be effected.

With regard to the staff and the traffic expenses, we have been hearing of the duplication of functions, excessive salaries at the top and a great deal of waste of money in various amenities which are not necessary. I hope the Honourable Member will try to find out ways and means to bring this down and to bring it to a certain figure which will be really helpful to the economics of the railways.

Rates and fares are going up. I do not see any reason why the rates and fares should go up if there is any attempt to make these railways really useful to the nation. In all countries the State railways always provide facilities for the carriage of goods and communications at the most modest rate. The expense in our country for railway transport is much larger than in any other independent country. This aspect of the question should also receive the consideration of the Honourable Member, and we hope that in the next budget we shall be able to see that economy has been observed. It is very difficult without going into the details to say exactly what sort of economy we should like to have and what items of expenditure should be cut down. But in a country where people can hardly live from day to day with two meals a day and in a country where poverty has become almost chronic, any institution of public utility that we may have under the Government should always be conducive to the health and the betterment of the financial condition of the people. Sir, economics will have to play the largest part in the construction and the management of the railways and to this subject I hope the Honourable Member will give his greatest consideration when we hear him at the time of presenting his next budget.

**Mr. Lalchand Navalrai** (Sind: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I have always found that the Honourable the Mover of this cut has good feelings for the subordinate class of employees working on the railways and I was sorry to miss that feeling in him on this occasion. He is not well advised to have suggested a general cut for economy in the sense of curtailment and retrenchment of the salaries of all the employees of the railways. Sir, I think that I would not have done my duty if I did not speak on this motion, which is absolutely suicidal to the move that I made in this House, namely, that the subordinates who get a pay of Rs. 60 and retire upon that pay should not be touched at all. That would be also in consonance with the view of my Honourable friend on the Congress Benches when he said that you should take away from the rich and give it to the poor. Well, that can be justified in this case. If this motion, instead of being a general motion for the curtailment

of pay of all the officers and the subordinates, were restricted to a certain class of officers at the top, then it would have had my whole-hearted support. It would have effected economy and at the same time the poorly paid staff, which is so much overworked at present, would have had its due and contentment. There are officers whose pay ought to be reduced to the extent of, say, 33 per cent. If this cut is made applicable to those officers who are drawing Rs. 500 and more, I do not think it will cause any hardship. My Honourable friend, Dr. Ziauddin, said that in that case the economy will be a limited one because the number will be less. My reply to that is that the salaries of the officers are fat and even if a small economy is to be made by cutting their pay it should be made. You cannot say that because the pay of a peon is not going to be reduced, therefore the pay of the officers who are drawing Rs. 5,000 or Rs. 2,000 should not be reduced. That is not reasonable.

**Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad:** May I just tell my Honourable friend that persons who are drawing salaries of Rs. 2,000 or more will come to only 2 per cent. and in that case how can you have an economy of 33 per cent.

**Mr. Lalchand Navalrai:** Sir, mathematics many a time misguide people. If my Honourable friend is advocating that there should be no economy in the sense of retrenchment or curtailment in the higher grades of appointments, then I think he will have to reflect over it and next time when he comes before the House he will find that by his own mathematics he will be able to save so much. I do not wish to detain the House any longer but I will stick to the point that you should not touch the lower class of people who draw small salaries and who work the hardest. Therefore, I submit that this cut is not well advised and I would advise my Honourable friend to withdraw it.

**Mr. B. Das** (Orissa Division: Non-Muhammadan): Sir, I should like to make a few general observations on the general question of economy which my Honourable friend, Mr. Azhar Ali, has in mind and which I also have in mind though our figures of economy cut do not tally. The idea of economy which Mr. Azhar Ali has in mind—as was insinuated by my Honourable friend, Mr. Lalchand Navalrai,—is not the cutting down of salaries of low paid staffs but to touch the salaries of higher paid staff in the Traffic Department. If we turn to page 43, Demand No. 6-E, the expenditure of the Traffic Department is given as nine crores and eighty nine lakhs odd. My Honourable friend wants to cut that down by 33 per cent. I have another motion which I do not want to move because I am not permitted to move it. I only wanted to reduce it by 3 per cent. According to my calculation, the Honourable Member has overbudgeted and I submit the expenditure can easily be cut down in the various departments, particularly under heads 6-B, 6-C, 6-D and 6-E.

**The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart** (Member for Railways and Communications): I rise to a point of order. Is the Honourable Member relevant?

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member is straying. This is not a general discussion. The Honourable Member had an opportunity during the general discussion. He must confine himself now strictly to the motion before the House, that is, to effect economy.

**Mr. B. Das:** Sir, I am confining myself to economy in the Traffic Department under the head 6-E. Apart from the expenditure on staff, there are expenditures on other heads. My Honourable friend, Mr. Lalchand Navalrai, ought to have seen why is it in the sub-head, General Administration, as given on page 47 there is such a heavy expenditure as one crore, 26 lakhs. Why should certain railways like E. I. R. and N. W. R. incur such heavy expenditure? There can be a certain amount of retrenchment, if only the Railway Board is imbued with the mind of economy. As regards the reduction of salaries of staff, this point was gone into in the Public Accounts Committee in 1937. Mr. P. R. Rau gave a list of salary cuts, if it was decided upon by Government to bring in wholesale cuts. I will quote Mr. Rau's statement:

"If we go on the figures supplied to the Retrenchment Committee in 1931-32, the wages of people getting 30 and under amounted to eight crores, people getting between Rs. 31 and Rs. 50, it amounted to six crores, between Rs. 51 and Rs. 100 it amounted to eight crores, between Rs. 101 and Rs. 500, it amounted to seven crores, between Rs. 501 and Rs. 1,000, it amounted to 1½ crores."

Well, Sir, nobody wants to cut down the salaries of Rs. 30 and below. As applied to higher grades, Mr. Rau gave figures that Government can save two crores per annum. I do say, that part of the economy cut which my Honourable friend, Mr. Azhar Ali, has suggested can be given effect to by the railways. It is for the Honourable the Railway Member to give effect to economies. It has been suggested that there should be retrenchment not only in the salary of staff but also in other sub-heads. But unfortunately this department has got very little extra expenditure except clothing and other expenditure which can be cut down a little.

**Mr. M. S. Aney** (Berar: Non-Muhammadan): How?

**Mr. B. Das:** My Honourable friend, Mr. Aney, knows that the railway expenditure has been going up in this Traffic Department. Clothing alone comes to 39 lakhs. I think it can be cut down. It is no use of people talking of more privileges to the railway staff and so on at the cost of the taxpayers. So, Sir, I submit that one should not think of economy light-heartedly as did my Honourable friend, Col. Gidney. He wants more and more increment in the salaries and more and more privileges to the railway employees. He does not understand who will foot the bill. We know that the taxpayer has to foot the bill which means again so much loss to the provinces. If there is economy in the railways, there will be more surplus available and instead of 283 lakhs as now, there will be five crores surplus available for distribution to the Provinces. So, Sir, though I cannot exactly support the idea of a three crore cut in this particular motion, I think there is ample ground of economy not only in this demand but in some other demands.

**The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart:** In the first place, I should like to emphasize that the cut motion which has been moved by Mr. Azhar Ali is not a token cut. That is a fact which appears to have escaped the attention of certain Honourable Members who have spoken, in particular Mr. B. Das and Mr. Badri Dutt Pande. At the same time, I should like to congratulate Mr. Badri Dutt Pande on the very practical example of economy which he has given us this morning. He no doubt noticed that his friends on the Independent Benches proposed to move cut motions (a)

on economy and (b) on the grievances of third class passengers. Therefore he delivered a speech which would do equally well for both the motions. But, Sir, this is not a token cut. This is a business cut and in giving notice of the motion which stood in his name, Mr. Azhar Ali committed himself to the task of demonstrating to the House that a cut of 33 per cent. was possible, and that, I claim, he has entirely failed to do. There have been a few practical suggestions made, or what are intended to be practical suggestions, as to how economy could be attained. Mr. Azhar Ali, I think, under a misapprehension referred to the duplication of work in the railway administration, in particular to the existence of personnel officers. He thought that because there was a personnel officer at the Agent's headquarters and also a personnel officer at the Divisional headquarters, there must necessarily be duplication of work. That, of course, is entirely wrong. If there are personnel questions arising at the lower stage of the organisation, they must, at least to a certain degree, go on to the higher stage for ultimate disposal. Mr. Badri Dutt Pande had another practical suggestion, and that was to abolish saloons. I do not say that that would not be an economy, but the suggestion is entirely irrelevant to the present discussion which refers to Demand 6-E. The cost in relation to saloons is contained in an entirely different grant. The suggestion was also made that we might emulate the insurance business and fix an expense ratio. Now, I think the Honourable Member who made that suggestion was under the impression that there is any such thing as a fixed expense ratio in insurance business. It is certainly not a statutory obligation to work to a fixed ratio, and I feel, therefore, that so much of his argument as is based on that assumption must fall to the ground.

Let me come to what I think was the last of the practical proposals, and that was to cut down pay; and I do the Honourable Mover the credit of believing that it was not in his mind to suggest a cut in the pay of anybody but the more highly paid officers. But I think he himself will admit that the 33 per cent. cut which he proposes could not possibly be attained in that way. It will be remembered that in the course of the debates on the railway budget last year, my predecessor, on the basis of the figures that have been quoted today by Mr. Das, made an analysis of the employees of the railway systems by salary, and he found that of the 32 crores of our total pay bill, 29 crores was paid to railway servants earning Rs. 500 and under, and that 3 crores were payable to those earning more than Rs. 500 a month. That is to say, roughly 10 per cent. of the pay bill went to people earning Rs. 500 and over. Now, if I might ask Honourable Members to look to the terms of the actual demand which will be found on page 45, they will find that the two main items contributing towards working expenses are General Administration, 1 crore and 11 lakhs, and Staff, 7 crores and 18 lakhs. Now, General Administration is practically all staff. So you may take it that something over 8 crores out of 10 of the whole of this demand is for staff,—that is to say, roughly 80 per cent. of the demand. Now, if we abolished,—I do not say reduced the pay of but abolished,—every officer who is getting more than Rs. 500 a month, what you will do is to reduce that demand by 10 per cent. Ten per cent. of 80 per cent. gives you 8 per cent. of your total demand as what is going to be achieved by abolishing all officers drawing Rs. 500 or more. I take it as agreed.—I do not even suggest that it should be considered,—that after the retrenchments of 1931 and the reduction in scales of pay proposed since then, nobody in this House is going to suggest that



[Sir Thomas Stewart.]

there should be retrenchments and economy in respect of the lower paid staff. So we have only a possible 8 per cent. on staff. The items that I have not so far mentioned, excluding staff, make up 20 per cent. of the demand. So if you abolish the rest of the activities of the Traffic Department and add up the whole saving, you get 28 per cent.; and my Honourable friend is still 5 per cent. short on his proposal!

Now, Sir, I do not pretend for a moment that economy is not desirable. I claim that we are doing our best, and I believe that the record we can show is in our favour. I would refer Honourable Members to the explanatory memorandum which accompanied the budget papers and I would refer them to the very first table that occurs in the book which gives a bird's-eye view, as it were, of the workings of the railways over a period of years. For those who like pictures there is a very illustrative graph that accompanies it; and if they will refer to Appendix IV their task in examining the figures will be lightened because there the effects of-Burma have been eliminated. But let me quote just a few examples which support my proposition that we are not unmindful of the need for economy. In 1930-31,—I choose that year because our realisations in that year were practically on the same level as those last year,—in those days it cost us 52 crores to operate. In the interval we have reduced our operating expenses to 48. In those days our operating ratio was 70·9; our latest figure is 60·9. But I do not ask you to believe me or my figures alone. We have, I think, the evidence of an impartial judge. Whatever may be said of the composition of the Wedgwood Committee, I do not think anybody can deny that the particular individuals who composed it had some knowledge of railways and railway working. They undertook a review of our working expenses, of our comparative efficiency, and the results are set out in their report. I shall only refer to the table given on page 32, in which they show that in a period of some five years we had achieved economies to the extent of 9 per cent. in our Traffic Department.

**Mr. Sami Venkatachalam Chetty** (Madras: Indian Commerce): In which part of the service was this economy effected?

**The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart:** This is all over the traffic branch.

**Mr. Sami Venkatachalam Chetty:** I know that, but was it among the higher section or the lower services?

**The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart:** It is an all-over figure. I am not in a position to give details as to where any particular economy was effected.

**Mr. K. Santhanam** (Tanjore *cum* Trichinopoly: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Is it not a fact that there was no reduction in the higher offices at all?

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Order, order. The Honourable Member is in possession of the House.

**The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart:** Sir, I was saying that we have that testimony to the economies that have been effected. As regards the future we also have this opinion recorded by that same Committee:

“We are unable to point to any economies of first-class magnitude at present realisable. Such economies as can be made following on steps already taken or recommended in this report will be small in amount and will only suffice to mitigate the increase in expenditure which inevitably follows on a substantial increase in the volume of business.”

Our Traffic Department was subject to detailed examination as a result of which recommendations have been made and these recommendations, as the House knows, we are in process of following up. But there is one aspect of the case that I should like to bring to the notice of Honourable Members. Mere sterile economy by itself is going to avail us nothing. What we are looking for is an expansion of revenue; and in order to get that expansion of revenue, the truest economy may not be to cut down expenses but rather to undertake profitable expenditure. I hold, Sir, that the Honourable the Mover and those who have supported him have entirely failed to prove the case they set out to prove, and that unless this Honourable House is of the opinion that a 33 per cent. economy cut can be carried out without detriment to railways, the Honourable the Mover's motion should be rejected.

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The question is:

“That the demand under the head ‘Working Expenses—Expenses of Traffic Department’ be reduced by 33 per cent.”

The motion was negatived.

#### DEMAND NO. 1—RAILWAY BOARD.

*Non-issuing of fortnightly, monthly and 45-days Return Tickets on the Assam Bengal Railway.*

**Maulvi Abdur Rasheed Chaudhury** (Assam: Muhammadan): I beg to move:

“That the demand under the head ‘Railway Board’ be reduced by Rs. 100.”

This is a very simple motion and does not require a long speech to explain it to the House. In the last September Session I put a number of questions regarding the non-issue of these return tickets on the Assam Bengal Railway. The then Railway Member assured me that he would forward my questions with his reply to the Railway Agent for his consideration. Sir, I waited these months anticipating that the Agent of the Assam Bengal Railway would take some steps to redress this grievance of the vast tract over which the Assam Bengal Railway passes. But as no steps were taken I was compelled to put this cut motion in order that the question might be discussed on the floor of the House and the grievance brought to the notice of the Railway Department. Sir, in bringing the cut motion I have no ulterior motive: I do not like so much to censure Government as to have the grievance removed.

If we look into the pages of the time table of the Assam Bengal Railway we find that there are only a few classes of return tickets on that railway as compared with other railways in this country. There are only one day return tickets, traders' tickets, week-end return tickets, but these are only for third class and inter-class passengers, and so far as these tickets are concerned we have no grievance. In comparison we find that the Eastern Bengal Railway gives better facilities for travel to the people of the area

[Maulvi Abdur Rasheed Chaudhury.]

over which it runs than the Assam Bengal Railway gives to the people of those parts over which it runs. In addition to the classes of return tickets mentioned by me there is an ordinary return ticket on the Eastern Bengal Railway: it is given from any station to any station irrespective of any class travelled, that is the ordinary return ticket system for first, second, inter and third class passengers. We have a grievance that on the Assam Bengal Railway we have not got this class of return tickets. Sir, week-end return tickets have got their utility, but it has a limited utility. It is issued on Friday and terminates on Monday. People who want to travel from one end of the railway to the other are not at all benefited by these weekly return tickets. I am sorry, Sir, I could not find any literature to show the basis on which the return ticket system has been introduced, but I think, as railways are a semi-business institution, it has not been introduced on an uneconomic basis. The return ticket system gives concession in fares which gives better facilities for railway travel than ordinary tickets: if that is so, I do not see any reason why Assam Bengal Railway should not issue these ordinary return tickets for the benefit of passengers on that railway.

If you look at the map you see what a vast country this railway traverses. The population of the tracts in Assam over which this railway passes is nine millions, and if Chittagong and Dacca Divisions through which also this railway passes are taken into consideration, the population of the area over which the Assam Bengal Railway runs will be something like 18 millions. Sir, the absence of ordinary return tickets on the Assam Bengal Railway is a real grievance for the people of this vast area. Several times it has been brought to the notice of the authorities, but with no effect. I do not see any reason why there should not be uniformity in all the railways so far as the return ticket system is concerned. If this ordinary ticket system is there in the E. B. R., I do not see why there should not be uniformity and why this should not be introduced in the A. B. R. as a large number of people are interested in it. In the E. B. R. there is a system called the fortnightly return tickets; this also is not issued on the A. B. R. As I have said, for the sake of uniformity, I insist that the A. B. R. should issue, in addition to the return tickets they are issuing now, these ordinary and fortnightly return tickets. Our grievances are not imaginary; certainly, the return ticket system gives an impetus to the railway travel and I do not see why the inhabitants peopling so vast a country should be debarred from the utilities of this return ticket system. I think the Honourable the Railway Member will make a note and see that these ordinary and fortnightly return tickets are introduced in the A. B. R. as soon as possible. If, as is usual in this House, he assures me that he would issue instructions to the Agent of the A. B. R. to introduce this return ticket system, I will, as is usual, ask the permission of the House to withdraw my motion.

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): What does the Honourable Member want? Does he wish to withdraw his motion now after speaking on it for so long before it has been debated?

**Maulvi Abdur Rasheed Chaudhury**: Only if the Honourable Member assures me that he will accept my suggestion; not otherwise.

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Cut motion moved:

"That the demand under the head 'Railway Board' be reduced by Rs. 100."

**Mr. Kuladhar Chaliha** (Assam Valley: Non-Muhammadan): Sir . . .

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member must remember that the Government Member has to reply, and he has to finish his reply by quarter past one.

**Mr. Kuladhar Chaliha:** Yes, Sir. The A. B. R. being situated away from the centre of politics in the eastern part of India enjoys a certain amount of immunity from criticism and that is why the needs and requirements of the people have never been brought properly before this House. We are grateful to Mr. Abdul Rasheed Chaudhury for bringing forward this little matter before the House of issuing return tickets. This is the only practical way of bringing our railway grievances to the notice of the other parts of the great country. In our part of the country, we have got return tickets for a day only for *melas* and for bazaars and for short distances; but if we have to travel longer distances, say from Jorhat to Gauhati or from Jorhat to Chittagong, we are not allowed to get any return tickets. In other railways we find that such tickets are issued for long distances; but here if we want a return ticket from a place in Assam to Chittagong, they will not issue probably they are afraid that terrorists may take advantage of these tickets; they will not allow us the ordinary concessions which are allowed on other railways. Perhaps it has some connection with the armoury raid cases—I do not know. The other day I wanted to go from Jorhat to Chittagong and I wanted an upper class return ticket. I could not get it. In addition they have raised the second class rates and lowered the rates for the higher class a great deal. The first class has been lowered from 36 pies to 18 pies whereas the second class has been abolished altogether. As I say, they not only do not issue return tickets but they are managing in such a way as to hit the middle classes most by raising the second class rates and favour the rich people by reducing the first class rates. This is very unfortunate. It is also unfortunate that the A. B. R. has not received the same amount of attention and criticism as they ought to have and as the other railways already have. Other defects also have to be brought to the notice of the Assembly; but at present I think the Railway Member will do well to advise them straightaway to offer facilities for long distance travel and to have return tickets: their traffic earnings will be enhanced. With these remarks I commend the motion for the acceptance of the House. I hope that the Honourable the Railway Member will see that instructions are issued to the Agent of the A. B. R. that return tickets are issued for long distances and not merely for short distances as they are doing now, and not only for third class passengers for very short distances but for all classes and for all distances. (Interruption.) I am glad to hear that the E. I. R. has been issuing return tickets for all classes. Maulvi Abdul Rasheed has demanded that the A. B. R. should also issue such return tickets and I ask the House to accept the motion and censure the Government for having continued this wrong which we want to get redressed.

**Mr. F. D'Souza** (Government of India: Nominated Official): Sir, a debate on return tickets is a recurring feature of most railway budget debates. But the one practical question that arises on the motion is whether the Assam Bengal Railway Administration recognise the advantages of issuing such tickets. If they do, the extent to which they should issue these tickets must be a matter for investigation, namely, to ascertain whether their issue will bring more revenue than they would otherwise

[Mr. F. D'Souza.]

get. From the Assam Bengal Railway time table, it would appear that return tickets are now being issued to a greater extent than on several other railways. Comparisons on this point may be somewhat invidious, as conditions vary considerably. What might be suitable or rather what the nature of the concession may be on one railway might prove entirely unsuitable on another. On the Assam Bengal Railway intermediate and third class return tickets are issued every month for one *mela* or another except during the month of August.

The charge for these tickets for the shorter distances is  $1\frac{1}{2}$  fares, and for the longer distances works out to something like  $1\frac{1}{3}$ rd fare. **P.M.** The Assam Bengal Railway also issue bazar tickets, a point to which my Honourable friend, Mr. Rasheed Chaudhury, referred, in many cases at a single fare for the return journey. These tickets are a special feature of the Assam Bengal Railway, as they are issued for almost every important bazar held at stations on that line. In addition to the *mela* and bazar tickets, the Assam Bengal Railway issue day-return tickets to the more important stations, such as Chittagong, Mymensingh, Jorhat, Silchar, etc.

**Mr. Kuladhar Chaliha:** May I know the distances?

**Mr. F. D'Souza:** The distances vary. Tickets are issued to Chittagong from Feni and other stations. I can give the Honourable Member the names of other stations if he wants them, such as Ishwarganj to Mymensingh, Lalabazar to Silchar and several others. The distances may be anything from five to sixty miles. Apart from these tickets which are issued for what might be considered special conditions on the Assam Bengal Railway, there are also week-end return tickets at a fare and a half. My Honourable friend, Mr. Rasheed Chaudhury, suggested that the limitation in regard to the days on which these tickets are issued, viz., Fridays and Saturdays militated against their popularity, but I would suggest, Sir, that the term "week-end" is already liberally interpreted to include Friday, particularly as the period of availability does not end till three days later. As the issue of these tickets is intended to serve a specific purpose, that is the convenience of people availing themselves of the opportunity of getting out during a week-end, it would be going beyond the intention underlying the issue of these return tickets to extend either the period during which they are issued or the period up to which they are available.

Having explained the position in regard to intermediate and third class tickets, I might now refer to the upper class. First class return tickets are issued at a single fare in certain cases and at a fare and a half in others, but they are somewhat limited in their application to certain sections and stations on the system. Viewed broadly, the position is that such distinction as is made on the Assam Bengal Railway between one class and another, favours the intermediate and third classes, and not the upper class. I do not suggest that there is no scope for a further extension of the return ticket arrangement, but whether these should be a 45-day or quarterly returns is a matter on which opinions may vary. The experience of railways in regard to return tickets available for long periods has not been a happy one. Cases of such tickets being used for several journeys between intermediate points over the section of the line on which the tickets were available are not unknown; but in the nature of the case it is difficult to

prove such mis-use. But it is questionable whether there is justification for railways issuing return tickets for long periods, as it does not bring them any additional revenue. That is the test to be applied in considering whether or not return tickets should be issued . . . .

**Sir Cowasji Jehangir** (Bombay City: Non-Muhammadan Urban): The convenience of the public is nothing at all?

**Mr. F. D'Souza:** The public convenience is served by the issue of single journey tickets. There is no suggestion of tickets being refused. The point is whether a concession should be given, and the main justification for giving it would be that it would result in a larger number of people travelling and in bringing additional revenue to the Railways.

Having explained, Sir, the position as it exists on the Assam Bengal Railway, I suggest that it would meet the Honourable Member's point of view if he is given an assurance that his suggestions in today's debate will be forwarded to the Agent of the Assam Bengal Railway for consideration and discussion with his local Advisory Committee, a Committee which has been constituted, as the House knows, to keep the Agent in touch with current public opinion on these and other matters. Having thus accepted the Honourable Member's suggestion, I hope the Honourable Member will withdraw his motion.

**Mr. Abdur Rasheed Chaudhury:** Sir, I wanted the Honourable the Member in charge of the Railways to give me an assurance that this matter will be considered, but as no such assurance has been forthcoming, I do not like to withdraw my motion.

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The question is:

"That the demand under the head 'Railway Board' be reduced by Rs. 100."

The Assembly divided:

AYES 55.

Abdul Ghani, Maulvi Muhammad.  
Abdul Qaiyum, Mr.  
Abdullah, Mr. H. M.  
Abdur Rasheed Chaudhury, Maulvi.  
Aney, Mr. M. S.  
Asaf Ali, Mr. M.  
Ayyangar, Mr. M. Ananthasayanam.  
Azhar Ali, Mr. Muhammad.  
Banerjea, Dr. P. N.  
Chaliha, Mr. Kuladhar.  
Chattopadhyaya, Mr. Amarendra Nath.  
Chaudhury, Mr. Brojendra Narayan.  
Chettiar, Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam.  
Chetty, Mr. Sami Vencatachelam.  
Das, Mr. B.  
Datta, Mr. Akhil Chandra.  
Deshmukh, Dr. G. V.  
Essak Sait, Mr. H. A. Sathar H.  
Gadgil, Mr. N. V.  
Ghiasuddin, Mr. M.  
Ghulam Bhik Nairang, Syed.  
Govind Das, Seth.  
Gupta, Mr. K. S.  
Jehangir, Sir Cowasji.  
Jorendra Singh, Sirdar.  
Kailash Behari Lal, Babu.  
Lahiri Chaudhury, Mr. D. K.

Lalchand Navalrai, Mr.  
Malaviya, Pandit Krishna Kant.  
Mangal Singh, Sardar.  
Misra, Pandit Shambhu Dayal.  
Mudaliar, Mr. C. N. Muthuranga.  
Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi Qazi.  
Murtuza Sahib Bahadur, Maulvi Syed.  
Paliwal, Pandit Sri Krishna Dutta.  
Pande, Mr. Badri Dutt.  
Raghubir Narayan Singh, Choudhri.  
Ramayan Prasad, Mr.  
Ranga, Prof. N. G.  
Rao Mr. Thirumala.  
Saksena, Mr. Mohan Lal.  
Sant Singh, Sardar.  
Santhanam, Mr. K.  
Sham Lal, Mr.  
Shaukat Ali, Maulana.  
Sheodass Daga, Seth.  
Sikandar Ali Choudhury, Maulvi.  
Singh, Mr. Gauri Shankar.  
Singh, Mr. Ram Narayan.  
Sinha, Mr. Satya Narayan.  
Som Mr. Surya Kumar.  
Sri Prakasa, Mr.  
Umar Aly Shah, Mr.  
Varma, Mr. B. B.  
Zafar Ali Khan, Maulana.

## NOES 38.

Abdul Hamid. Khan Bahadur Sir.  
 Ahmad Nawaz Khan, Major Nawab Sir.  
 Ayyar, Mr. N. M.  
 Bajpai, Sir Girja Shankar.  
 Bewoor, Mr. G. V.  
 Chanda, Mr. A. K.  
 Clow, Mr. A. G.  
 Craik, The Honourable Sir Henry.  
 Dalal, Dr. R. D.  
 Dalpat Singh, Sardar Bahadur Captain.  
 Dow, Mr. H.  
 D'Souza, Mr. F.  
 Fazl-i-Ilahi, Khan Sahib Shaikh.  
 Ghuznavi, Sir Abdul Halim.  
 Gidney, Lieut.-Col. Sir Henry.  
 Grigg, The Honourable Sir James.  
 Jawahar Singh, Sardar Bahadur Sardar Sir.  
 Kamaluddin Ahmed, Shamsul-Ulema.  
 Kushalpal Singh, Raja Bahadur.

Lloyd, Mr. A. H.  
 Mackeown, Mr. J. A.  
 Mani, Mr. R. S.  
 Mehr Shah, Nawab Sahibzada Sir Sayad Muhammad.  
 Menon, Mr. P. A.  
 Metcalfe, Sir Aubrey.  
 Ogilvie, Mr. C. M. G.  
 Rahman, Lieut.-Col. M. A.  
 Sen, Rai Bahadur N. C.  
 Shahban, Mr. Ghulam Kadil.  
 Sher Muhammad Khan, Captain Sardar Sir.  
 Slade, Mr. M.  
 Spence, Mr. G. H.  
 Staig, Mr. B. M.  
 Stewart, The Honourable Sir Thomas.  
 Sundaram, Mr. V. S.  
 Thorne, Mr. J. A.  
 Tylden-Pattenson, Mr. A. E.  
 Walker, Mr. G. D.

The motion was adopted.

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

The Assembly re-assembled after Lunch at Half Past Two of the Clock. Mr. Deputy President (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta) in the Chair.

**Mr. Deputy President** (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta): The Democratic Party will now begin the motion No. 177.

**Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan** (Agra Division: Muhammadan Rural): Sir, may I request you to allow us to move cut No. 5 on Demand No. 1, on the Supplementary List, which cut motion is exactly the same as we had under No. 57. I have spoken to the Honourable the Member in charge and I understand he will not have any objection if we are given this opportunity to discuss that motion also. I should be glad if you will allow us to do so; in that case this will be the same thing which stands in our name under No. 57, which had been passed over on the first day on account of our not having come to an agreement. A similar cut is further up which has not been disposed of, in Late List No. 1, standing in the name of Mr. Nauman.—to discuss railway accidents.

**Mr. Deputy President** (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta): I want to know if the Honourable the Member in charge of Communications has any objection.

**The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart**: I have no objection, Sir.

**Mr. Deputy President** (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta): The difficulty is that Mr. Nauman is not here.

**Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan**: Then I would ask that Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi may be allowed?

**Mr. Deputy President** (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta): That cannot be done under the rules.

**Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan:** If it can be allowed, we may say we have got also the same thing signed together by Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi and others. If there is no objection, that may be taken to be in our name.

**The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart:** Sir, with every wish in the world to accommodate the Leader of the Democratic Party, I do feel that to accept notice across the floor of the House in these circumstances would create a precedent that would be extremely embarrassing and which, if it were not followed, would be manifestly unfair to others who wish to adopt a similar course. With all the sympathy in the world, I do not think I can agree to that course, and I hope Honourable Members will understand the difficulty of my position.

**Mr. Deputy President (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta):** This will certainly be creating a very bad precedent; in view of the objection taken, that cannot be allowed.

**Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan:** We will then have cut No. 177—to discuss catering arrangements under the control of Agents.

DEMAND NO. 6-E —WORKING EXPENSES—EXPENSES OF TRAFFIC DEPARTMENT.

*Catering Arrangements under the Control of Agents.*

**Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi (Dacca cum Mymensingh: Muhammadan Rural):** Sir, I beg to move:

“That the demand under the head ‘Working Expenses—Expenses of Traffic Department’ be reduced by Rs. 100.”

There are several grievances, Mr. Deputy President, about these catering arrangements on the various railways. The first grievance which the public feels is that the contract is given to a particular individual, but he does not carry out the catering himself, and what he does is to give a sub-contract to another person, and the latter, in order not to lose money, does all he possibly can to give bad food and charge high prices. That system of sub-contracts must be abolished in this sense that the contractor must be told that no sub-contracts will be allowed.

Furthermore there is another difficulty which the public feels and that is this. Take, for instance, the East Indian Railway. Formerly the catering contracts for passengers used to be given to the local people. Mr. Deputy President, you are aware that Burdwan is famous for its sweetmeats and formerly those sweetmeat sellers used to get the catering for the Burdwan Division. Now the railway called for tenders and people other than the local tenderers got the contract and they thus deprived the local men of their legitimate business: and today we find that all those who used to be provided with these catering contracts are no longer on the railways now. The up-country men are catering for the East Indian Railway right up to the end of Asansol or even further up. Year before last my Honourable friend, Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad, took up this question of catering and pointed out the difficulties that the travelling public experienced. He also pointed out why the sub-contract system makes it difficult for the sub-contractor to provide decent food for the price charged. The food supplied is not so good as it would have been in the absence of the sub-contract.

Sir, I move.



**Mr. Deputy President** (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta): Cut motion moved:

"That the demand under the head 'Working Expenses—Expenses of Traffic Department' be reduced by Rs. 100."

**Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad:** Sir, I would like to press this cut motion from several points of view. In the first place, I take it from the point of view of the amenities to third class passengers. It is not sufficient that we should provide good accommodation to the third class passengers but we should also provide for them good food at a reasonable cost and I think the provision of good food at a reasonable cost is really one of the most important points for the convenience of the third class passengers. Secondly, I press this question from the point of view of the road and rail competition. Now, if the railways desire to enter into a fair competition with the road, then they should provide the same facilities to the passengers which the road travel does. In the case of a third class passenger in a bus he goes to the market where the bus starts from and he gets his food very cheap. The cost of his food is not much. Now, when he travels by train, he will have to pay or rather be forced to pay a price which is much larger than the actual price of the article of food. Now, this compulsory and forcible extortion from the passenger leads him on to a third difficulty, namely, whether he cannot sue the railway under the Criminal Procedure Code. If you force a person to pay a price which is much higher than the market price and you do it by means of your rules and regulations, in that case, can he not sue the railway under the Criminal Procedure Code? I am not a lawyer but those who are lawyers will be able to say whether this form of extortion is or is not permissible under the existing laws. If it is permissible, I think that law should be repealed.

Now, Sir, I just mentioned one or two fundamental points. I maintain that the price of various food articles which the railway authorities demand or authorise their contractors to demand from the passengers is enormously high. Throughout my discussion I will leave out altogether the supply of food to Europeans or to those who want to live in that style, because those travellers can pay the price. My remarks will be confined only to those who are not anxious to have the European food. Now, in the first place, I will take the tray of tea. We are given two toasts, half an ounce of better tea, sugar and milk for a price of 8 annas. This I consider to be enormously high. I myself gave a similar contract at Aligarh for the same kind of tea at 1½ annas. I tried to find out the actual price, which came to one anna and half a pice, and so I thought that a price of 1½ annas was sufficient. Now, I am paying 1½ annas for the same articles of food for which I am charged 8 annas by the railway authorities. Is it not civilised form of robbery and dacoity? Then, take aerated waters. On the East Indian Railway we have to pay 2 annas per bottle and we know it very well that the cost price of one bottle is less than a pice. If the cost price is one pice, then you ought to be able to get it anywhere for 2 pice, whereas the railway authorities charge 2 annas. Then, take the price of ice. We are compelled to pay as much as 2 annas for one seer of ice and on some railways are required to pay even 3 annas per seer. My Honourable friends on the other side will argue that so much ice is melted away and that we can be supplied ice at a cheap rate only at those places where there are factories. This is absolutely wrong. Even at those places where there are no factories, the price of ice is not more than 2 pice per seer. Here, again, I will give a personal

example. We have given a contract at Aligarh to sell ice during all the 24 hours at half an anna per seer and the ice is imported from Agra. So when we can sell at Aligarh ice at the rate of half an anna per seer, I see no reason why the railway authorities should extort from their passengers as much as 2 annas per seer. Even when you come to other articles of food, the position is equally hopeless. Now, they have prescribed that one plate of meat will cost so much, but they never say how much that plate will contain. I will give you my own experience. When I ordered a plate of meat, I was given about one tola of meat altogether.

**Sir Cowasji Jehangir:** Was not that enough for you?

**Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad:** It may or may not be enough for me, but it is not enough for the money which I paid for it. I made a complaint about this to the D. S. and never got any reply. Although I am an M.L.A., he did not take any notice of my complaint. So, you can imagine what will happen to the complaint of the poor passengers who have got no access to these officers. Sir, these are matters which require serious consideration.

The other thing about which I wish to make a complaint is that the railway authorities give a contract to one person and he gives the sub-contract to other persons. When the railway authorities say that sub-contracts are not allowed, then they give a kind of commission to various sub-agents to sell things at any price they like. The contractor really deals with one officer of the railway and afterwards he gives sub-contracts. He then sits at home and makes large sums of money for the simple reason that he was fortunate enough to get the contract and to please one railway officer. I think it is very necessary that we should look into this matter. I drew the attention of the House in 1931 to this matter when I moved my Resolution about this contract system and I was given an assurance by the then Railway Member that he will attend to it. Now, seven solid years have elapsed and the position today is the same as it was in 1931. No change has been made. The matter was referred to several Advisory Committees but nothing was done. The reports are there, the literature is there and the speeches are there, but the work is not there. It is very desirable that some definite action should be taken in this matter. The suggestions that I wish to make are these. In the first place the contract should be given as far as possible to local vendors. It ought not to be given to a person who does not reside in the locality.

**An Honourable Member:** Do not the railway officials pay 50 per cent. less?

**Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad:** Yes, I know that. Sometimes they pay nothing. They have got a certain rule that a person in the railway service gets a concession of 50 per cent. in the same manner as a police officer is allowed free into the cinema. The railway officials are allowed free in some restaurants and, in some others, they have to pay 50 per cent. less. I had an opportunity to talk with one of these contractors. He said, "I have to feed so many orphans". At first I could not understand what he meant by orphans. When I cross-examined him he said that he meant the railway officials whom he had to feed without charge. I, therefore, submit that the contracts should as far as possible be given to local men and these vendors should be strictly enjoined to sell the stuff at bazaar rates. If the railway authorities do not see their way to compel

[Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad.]

the contractors to sell at bazaar rates, then I am afraid the railway cannot attract passengers from roads who are now conveyed in buses. The point is this. If a passenger takes the bus, he could purchase his food-stuff in the bazaars on the way at cheaper rates than what he would have had to pay at the railway station restaurant stalls. I submit that besides giving contracts to local men, the railway should also insist that no sub-contracts should be given. The system of selling things on a sub-contract basis through servants should also be stopped.

The next point that I wish to put before the House is that this contract should not be considered a source of income to the railway authorities. In some places, the railway authorities actually auction tea stalls at fanciful prices. These contractors extract a large sum of money from the passengers and the railway wants to share in the loot. This is absolutely unfair. I submit that the railway authorities should regulate the vending of things by licensing fees and they should not consider this a source of income. (Interruption). I know the Advisory Committee proposed it but it has not been put into practice. I would urge once again that the licensing fees which the railway authorities levy should be only nominal fees justifiable for administrative purposes. For example, in places like Delhi or Kalka, they take into consideration the actual sales and on this basis they charge fees, just like income-tax. They do not consider the other side of the problem, that is, what has been the expenditure. They put a tax on the gross income and not on the net income.

The next point which I wish to bring to the notice of the Government is that the prices which the contractors fix should be the same as that prevalent in the market. Some persons say, it ought to be higher, while I say it ought to be lower, because we have got no credit system at the railway restaurant stalls. Everything is hard cash and money is realised immediately and, in a large number of cases, the passengers, because they are in great hurry to catch the train, do not get the required quantity of food for the money they pay

Another point which I wish to stress is that there should be some supervision over the sale of aerated waters and ice, and the prices ought to be regulated not only by railway officials but by a small committee of officials and non-officials. It is also not advisable that you should give contract to the same individual over the whole line, say, from Bombay to Calcutta or from Delhi to Calcutta. You will find that if the same contractor has jurisdiction over a whole line, he often misuses the privileges.

**Mr. Deputy President** (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta): The Honourable Member has one minute more.

**Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad:** Is there time limit also? I thought there was no time limit. I shall conclude soon.

The next point is that we should not give contracts of several restaurants to one and the same big contractor. No person should have contract of more than one stall. The contracts should be given as far as possible to local individuals. If you give contract of several restaurants to one and the same individual, then, I am afraid, the efficiency would suffer.

I am sorry that my time is up. With these few points, I support the motion.

**Mr. N. V. Gadgil** (Bombay Central Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I rise to support this cut motion. Sir, the food that we get from these caterers is not good in quality and it is also very high priced. I have got certain instances to show that the prices charged are exorbitantly high. Here is a receipt which I possess which shows that for one Hindu meal it is 12 annas. I think this rate was fixed when Adam was born. For the last six years there has been no change in the tariff schedule. If you go just outside the railway compound you can have a good meal from anything commencing from six annas to eight annas. There is another receipt which I have in my possession of another caterer whose motto is "absolute satisfaction". I think anybody who has had something to do with the meal given by this contractor will say that this motto was not at all carried out one way or the other. Then, I have another receipt from Ballabdas who charged three rupees for 3 meals; whereas if one had simply stepped out of the railway compound, one could have had three meals for much less from 6 annas to eight annas. Then again there is Messrs. Spencers who charge 10 annas for a cup of coffee. My Honourable friend, Mr. Vencatachelam Chetty, who is very rich can afford to pay at that high rate, but my poor friend, Prof. Ranga, can't afford to pay at such high rate. I do not know if the remedies proposed by my Honourable friend, Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad, would remove these evils.

**Mr. M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar** (Madras ceded Districts and Chittoor: Non-Muhammadan Rural): What did we pay the other day for 11 people?

**Mr. N. V. Gadgil:** My friend reminds me of what took place day before yesterday. We ordered Hindu vegetarian meals at Surat for 11 people. We gave special instructions that it must be Hindu cooking. The caterer took us to be big M.L.A.'s and so he arranged vegetarian meals all the same in English fashion. Although only seven of us attended the dinner, he was good enough to charge for all the 11, a sum of Rs. 33. My Honourable friend, Mr. Ayyangar, the most orthodox member of our party, happened to be bracketted with my esteemed friend, Mr. Aney, and nobody had any satisfaction out of the meals served; and at midnight, we went into our compartments without any satisfaction. We had to pay for the food we did not take and for those who did not participate in the dinner also. If the Honourable Member in charge of the Department were to accompany us and see actually what is happening, he will find out the real cost of one meal for which such exorbitant charge is demanded. I am sure we are charged 50 per cent. more for each meal. The Honourable Member is aware that prices have gone down and it is time that he should revise the tariff schedule. It may be that some of these evils are due to sub-contracts. But that can be checked if the price schedule is fixed by the railway authorities.

I have got an instance of how the contract system works. It may  
3 P.M.

I seek your indulgence because it is a very instructive instance. At the Victoria Terminus station on the G. I. P. Railway the coolie contractor charges four annas from each coolie for simply allowing him to work there, and as there are more than 200 coolies, the contractor gets

[Mr. N. V. Gadgil.]

every day more than Rs. 50 for nothing and the railway loses it. If the railway were to engage coolies directly either on monthly wages or at fixed rates, I think nearly Rs. 10,000 will be the net income earned for the railway. But these contractors have their own way. In spite of the complaints that may be made from time to time, they are so influential people that they never lose in the end but gain more; and I am certain that in spite of all the discussions here there will be more sub-contracts and the price schedule will not be reduced. I do not think the remedy suggested by Sir Ziauddin Ahmad will go to solve the problem. But if the Honourable Member in charge were to consult his own statistician, he will find that the prices have gone down and the time has now arrived when the price schedule should be revised, so that at least some of us who are not capitalists and also kisans like Prof. Ranga will have better food at a cheaper price and on the next occasion we will thank him all the more.

**Mr. K. Santhanam:** Sir, I rise to support this cut but I wish to put my argument on a rather higher plane. The first thing to be remembered in this connection is the magnitude of the thing. Annually over 50 crores of passengers travel over the railway system, and if each passenger spends two annas it amounts to more than six crores of rupees. The amount involved is so huge that it is a matter which has to be properly investigated, organised and arranged. If you take the railway budget you will find that there are not so many items which involve six crores of rupees. I do not see why there should not be a special department of the Railway Board with proper statistical and research officers to investigate this. It is their business to find out how much each passenger eats in the way of food, and what is the quantity and quality of the food he is supplied. I think they could give very good food and a small fraction of the money spent by the passengers will pay the cost of this research and this organisation. The South Indian Railway, for instance, has organised an experiment which has been found eminently successful. In their own refreshment rooms they are preparing packets of *sambhar* and rice and curd and rice with vegetables and with pickles; and they sell those packets for 2 annas each, and it has been found that the third class passengers are better served in this way than in any other way. Just calculate the seats in your refreshment rooms; calculate the number of people whom the attendants in the refreshment rooms can attend to and also calculate how many passengers the stall-holders can attend to. You will find that these arrangements are not adequate to cater even to a small fraction of the passengers. Is it not the business of the railway system to cater to every one of the passengers? As a result of the faulty catering I think a large proportion of our passengers are going without any food at all, others are going with insufficient food. The deterioration in health consequent upon these insufficient catering arrangements will be something very large if only we could have proper statistics. Fortunately for the Government of India they do not have any kind of statistics; they do not know how much illness results from these bad catering arrangements. In fact, they have no calculation; they calculate the rate per passenger mile and so on, but why do they not calculate a passenger's food? They can have a packet or something, evolve some unit food for each passenger for the number of hours he travels. In fact, there are nutrition tables and caloric tables; you must be able to calculate how many calories are necessary for each passenger. If a passenger travels

for 12 hours he will require more food owing to the shaking of the train; and they must be able to evolve a system by which these units of food are supplied to the passengers and in the most available form. If such a thing can be arranged I am sure railway travel will become pleasant. Specially in the case of the holiday traffic during Christmas and other holidays when you give cheap return tickets, I find the trains are overloaded and they could not get any food. They came by train loads to Madras last December but they all came starving. They rushed to the Madras hotels and there also they could not get provisions, and they then bought insanitary things in the streets. This is a matter which requires further investigation. I think the Railway Board will be well advised to depute an officer to evolve tables and to make methodical inquiries into this matter.

I also wish to point out that it is no use saying that there are dining cars provided. After all an Indian may be a first class passenger but it is very unfair on the part of the railway administration to force him to take some kind of food which he cannot digest. For instance, take the Frontier Mail. For Madrasis who have to come to Simla the Frontier Mail is the only train. You provide dining cars but there are no Hindu refreshment rooms anywhere. Either you have to pay and starve or not pay and starve. Those are the only alternatives. Therefore, wherever you have got a dining car you must insist on those people who are running these cars providing food which is eaten by Indians. When these dining cars were introduced, they thought that only Europeans would travel in the first and second class and therefore they provided these cars with food which Europeans are accustomed to eat. Now, the bulk of passengers even in the first and second class are Indians and therefore these cars should be made to serve Indian food. It may be that they will have to charge a little more than the usual rates outside, but the food supplied must be what the passenger eats.

Then I have got another complaint here. These people who run the Hindu and Muslim refreshment stalls are asked to pay special fees or taxes to the railway administration while European caterers do not pay anything. Even after so many years there is everywhere this racial discrimination. It runs through and through this department; and where Indians are finding it difficult to get these catering contracts, the European contractors are perpetually given fresh leases of their contracts. Recently we had some inquiries during the question hour as to why a particular contractor or a particular company is allowed to continue the contract indefinitely. The contracts are not even put up to auction. These contracts must be made terminable. My own solution is that you ought not to have contracts at all. Every railway administration with a certain minimum mileage must itself run these catering arrangements according to the needs of the passengers and they should see that the adequate quantity and quality of food is supplied to each passenger. I suggest that this matter should be taken in hand in a scientific fashion and put on a scientific basis. The amount involved is of the order of six to ten crores and it is a matter which will repay the railway administration and the public all the money that may be spent on it.

**Mr. N. M. Joshi** (Nominated Non-official): I would also like to support this motion regarding catering arrangements on Indian railways both on behalf of labour and on behalf of myself too. I will first take the arrangements in the restaurant cars and the European refreshment rooms. I

[Mr. N. M. Joshi.]

feel, Sir, that when the railway fixed the prices, they did not think of the number of people who are likely to use these restaurant cars and refreshment rooms in India. The number of people who can afford to spend Rs. 3 for a meal is extremely small—the rate for a dinner in the refreshment rooms and restaurant cars is Rs. 3. I, therefore, would like the Indian railway authorities to fix a menu and a rate for dinner, lunch and breakfast which can be paid by the average class of people who travel in first, second and other classes entitled to refreshment rooms and restaurant cars. The refreshment rooms are many times empty—they are not used even half for the simple reason that even people who travel first and second class are not willing to spend Rs. 3 for a meal: there are very few people—an extremely small number—who are willing to pay Rs. 3 for a meal. We would, therefore, like the railway authorities to consider whether the price for a meal—breakfast, lunch or dinner—cannot be reduced. Let them reduce the menu if they like: there are very few people who take at home five or six courses for dinner, lunch or breakfast. I made a complaint to the Chief Commissioner of Railways, and he told me that I could get *à la carte*: this *à la carte* price is very much high although you take only two courses for lunch. This is my first point.

My second point is as regards third class passengers. We provide for the first and second class passengers by providing a restaurant car: why should we not have a separate car for third class passengers. There is no explanation for it except that the Government of India want to please those people who travel first and second class. If they go into the financial aspect of providing refreshment rooms and restaurant cars for the first and second classes, they are sure to find that they lose money: it is true that they can avoid showing a loss, as my Honourable friend, Mr. Santhanam, has pointed out, by not charging the caterer the cost of running the restaurant car. As regards third class passengers, if the Government of India will run a restaurant car for them that car will pay itself, and passengers will get good food and more passengers will travel by third class. Similarly, Sir, we provide refreshment rooms for first and second class passengers, for say, one, two, three or at the most half a dozen passengers. But there are hundreds of third class passengers: we do not think of giving them a separate refreshment room. There are hardly six stations in the whole of India which have separate refreshment rooms for third class passengers. I would suggest to the Government of India that if third class passengers are to be looked after, even as we provide separate refreshment rooms for first and second class passengers, we should provide separate refreshment rooms for third class passengers. If third class passengers are cared for, your railway revenues will go up. We waste our time, attention, energy and money in looking after the convenience of first and second class passengers, but we refuse to give the same attention to the comforts of third class passengers as if we were not anxious to make our railways pay. I would like, Sir, the Government of India to change its policy. Take more care to make the third class passengers more comfortable by providing them with separate refreshment rooms at all the stations and not compel them to take their food in waiting halls.

**Sir Cowasji Jehangir:** Waiting halls?

**Mr. N. M. Joshi:** Waiting halls you may call them. They are not halls: Government of India calls any vacant place near the railway station a waiting hall. I am sure you have not seen a waiting hall.

**Sir Cowasji Jehangir:** Is that a technical term?

**Mr. N. M. Joshi:** Serious attention should be paid to this question: it is an important question from the point of view not only of the comfort of third class passengers, but from the point of view of the revenues of Indian railways.

**Mr. M. S. Aney:** This is a question relating to food, and being a Brahmin I think I ought not to allow this question of food go without speaking on it. Well, Sir, it is really a matter of regret that we have to discuss this question of catering arrangements after the railway system has been working in the country for 50 years and more. But, since the time the railways have begun to work in India, those who were responsible for working them were under the impression that in India they had to carry men who could live without food, men who had no natural calls to answer, men in fact who were devoid of any of those requirements which were expected to be provided for mankind elsewhere on the face of the earth. We had railway carriages without latrines for a number of years, and now they have come to realise that some such arrangement is necessary. It would take some ten, twelve years more before they will realise that a man requires food if he has to live, when he goes from one place to another. So far as the higher classes of passengers were concerned, they realised that they were men and provided for some kind of arrangement for them, although there are complaints even with regard to these arrangements. These were voiced by some of my friends here. As regards third class passengers it has never occurred to them that it is incumbent on them to make some arrangements of a really satisfactory nature for catering to their requirements. In India people have to undertake very long journeys for the sake of pilgrimages and for other reasons, and it is not a rare phenomenon to find persons journeying from Madras upto Benares, and yet not taking any food because they do not get what they can relish and consider food. They must either be satisfied to take whatever is served to them in the restaurant car for which they have got serious objection, or they must go without food: that is the difficulty.

Those who have been making crores of rupees as revenue from these persons have a moral obligation towards these passengers whom they carry, not because they are their customers, but because they are dealing with human beings and the minimum requirements of human comfort should be provided for them. There is no requirement which is more urgent than that of making some arrangement for them to get food whenever they want it and to get clean food which is also within their means. It is no use telling, "Here you are, here is the restaurant car where you can pay Rs. 3 and get a meal". Apart from other objections, as my Honourable friend, Mr. Joshi, pointed out, it is not within his means to spend Rs 3 for a meal, and he does not and can not spend rupees three for food even for the period of a whole month;—that is his condition. The third class passenger is the largest customer from whom railways derive most of their revenues: therefore, they must know what is the minimum capacity of the man, and how he should get the most nutritive food he requires within the means available to him. That is the problem which the railways have to solve.

My friend, Mr. Santhanam, has rightly pointed out the magnitude of the whole question. If 50 crores of people travel and if it is taken at two



[Mr. M. S. Aney.]

annas each, it comes to six crores or more: but whether it is six crores or ten crores, at any rate it indicates the extent and magnitude of the problem which railways have to solve. Some of my friends were rather laughing when my friend, Mr. Santhanam, was working up these mathematical calculations. But, in the case of railways, I believe they have to consider that they have to deal with so many human beings: whenever there is a Kumbh mela or any such big show we think it necessary to make certain kinds of arrangements for the sake of those who go there. Now, the railways have to carry crores of passengers every day and they must help them in their human requirements. They are the only authorities who can make some kind of arrangement; otherwise the passengers are considerably inconvenienced. If the argument of my Honourable friend, Mr. Santhanam, is carried to its logical conclusion, as a result of these men not getting proper food, they fall sick and they have not only to pay the railway fare but also the doctor's bills later on. That is the extra charge he has to pay for the sake of having travelled on the railway: and he has no other means of travelling: he has to go by the railway. Therefore, I think that this question requires to be more carefully considered. I admit during the last ten or twelve years some attention is being given to this question. The stalls at the stations today are much better than they were before: I know the conditions before and I know how we were making some little effort at the meetings of the Railway Finance Committee and Railway Advisory Committees in order to improve these arrangements a little bit better. But, now the time has come when the question should be handled in a more business-like and scientific manner, and that is the only object, I believe, of the Honourable Member who has moved this motion. I am in entire sympathy with that object and I, therefore, strongly support the motion.

**Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani** (Tirhut Division: Muhammadan): Sir\*, I agree with Dr. Sir Ziauddin that the catering arrangement is very defective and sub-letting is allowed. I have personal knowledge that contracts of catering are given more often to one man to manage sometimes the whole railway and sometimes a division. Undoubtedly, it was very difficult for one contractor to make proper and suitable arrangements for hundreds of stations through hired or paid servants, and besides why a man will take unnecessary troubles if there is no gain. Although the Company-managed and other railways do not charge anything for the contracts, but no useful purpose is served by their not charging the contractor, as the travelling public has to pay unbearably high prices for food. These contractors sub-let shops at every station to different persons and realise enormous sums from sub-lessees who add something more as their profits to the sums they pay to the contractor. The prices of food are thus raised very high and go beyond paying capacity. I have ever seen these systems of sub-letting at several stations over the B. & N. W. Railway. It is the lower class passengers who are most hit. It is said by Government that they are their best customers. Most often these best customers prefer starving than to pay exorbitant prices of ordinary food. The total income of all railways from passenger traffic is Rs. 29,33,05,000 of which the third class passengers pay Rs. 26,09,90,000 which comes up to 80.9 per cent. of

\*Translation supplied by the Honourable Member of his speech delivered in vernacular.

the total. If you will look to the amount paid by the third class passengers over the B. & N. W. Railway, about which I have just spoken, you will know that it is Rs. 1,35,00,000. The fares paid by the upper class passengers is Rs. 8,00,000 only. There is better arrangement for upper class passengers although they have to pay much higher rates. Sometimes these poor third class passengers are so much afraid of being dislodged by other fellow passengers when they come out of their seats for food. Overcrowding has most often been found by me as I am ever on tour. I have raised several times the question for the abolition of sub-letting system in the Bihar branch of the B. & N. W. Railway, but each time we are not believed. I assure you, Sir, that these Railway Advisory Committees are only toys. They are never consulted in matter of catering as in many other ones. I strongly support the Mover and urge that sub-letting should be stopped at all costs. I request the Honourable the Railway Member to make confidential enquiries about what I have said about the sub-letting over the B. & N. W. Railway and I am sure, he will surely support me. Over the B. & N. W. Railway Company ice is sold three annas a seer. Why so, when ice is manufactured at Patna, Muzaffarpur and Gorakhpur that is to say, in almost all the important headquarters of the B. & N. W. Railway? The contractor has not to pay anything to the Company. Aerated water is also sold at an exorbitantly high price. All these things should be put an end to. The poor third class passengers prefer to remain thirsty to paying such high price for the ice and aerated waters although it is they who require cold drink more than upper class passengers, as they get suffocation and become much thirsty owing to overcrowding in trains which I have already made a mention of.

There is one thing, Sir, and it is this that contractors of different communities are given catering contract for different communities, say, for instance, a man is Hindu and he is given contract for a Muhammadan refreshment and catering. It is highly resented by Muslims as they know that their Hindu contractor has seldom regard to the religious sentiments of Muslims. There are sections of Muslims who never touch things prepared by men of other communities as they are afraid that Hindus may give them *jhatka* and other meats which is strictly prohibited for Muslims. I have innumerable instances in which caterers are Hindus of all castes. The food is prepared by them but served to Muslims through Muslim attendants. Why so, because a Muslim will not purchase. Well, is it fair to deceive the Muslim passengers this way? I may narrate one or two more instances to bring to the notice of the authorities legitimate grievances of the Muslim travelling public. I have seen most often that a few Muslim caterers who are fortunate enough to get some shop either as sub-lessee or direct from company, are never allowed to supply betels and sweetmeats prepared by them to Muslim passengers. Why such *zulum* is perpetrated over the Muslim caterers and why the Muslim travelling public are thus forced to purchase betels, sweetmeats and often times food prepared by Hindus and Christians? I assure the House that Asia is a religious Continent of which India is a part. The religious sentiments of people of India have remained and will remain in future and it is not proper to discard such ideas. The authorities, therefore, should provide facilities for such religious and orthodox Muslims and Hindus.

With these words, I support the cut motion moved by my learned friend, Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad.

**Prof. N. G. Ranga** (Guntur *cum* Nellore: Non-Muhammadian Rural): Sir, this is one of the things on which the third class passengers feel very strongly and sorely disappointed. We find that though there are several thousands of stations in this country, there are only 1,400 stalls which have been established or licensed by the railways, I do not know at how many stations, but I daresay there are very many stations at which there are more than two or three stalls. So if we take that into consideration, we find that for many thousands of stations there are no stalls at all. I would like to know, since that information is not vouchsafed to us, what is the total number of railway stations in this country, and at how many stations there is not even one stall to cater to the needs of the third class passengers. If we again take into consideration the question of restaurant cars, we find that this Government cares more for the comfort of Europeans or those who live in European style than for the comfort of those who live in Indian style. For all the stations we have in this country,—and there are thousands and thousands of them—we find that as many as 55 restaurant cars are run on European style and only 44 restaurant cars are run on Indian style. If this is not racialism, I would like to know what else can it be. I find there are very many railways on which there are no restaurant cars running at all. I was told just now by one of my friends that on the train that runs from Lahore to Karachi and back there is no restaurant car at all, and I do not know what Government expects the passengers to do as far their food is concerned.

**An Honourable Member:** Sind produces only dust and nothing more.

**Mr. Lalchand Navalrai:** It is very fertile now.

**Prof. N. G. Ranga:** Sir, I want the Government to take a lesson from the Indian National Congress held at Haripura. At Haripura we found hotels where they were charging only six annas for a 1st class meal, and there rich people were, supposed to take their food, whereas for poor people there were stalls which were charging only six pice for food. Why should not the Government take a lesson from the Congress experience, where they have tried to show some consideration for the poor man and to give him the food he is usually accustomed to. Why should not the Government introduce the same system and try to sell food in the railway station stalls in such a way that the poor man will get the food he is capable of paying for and the rich man is supplied with specialities at special rates if need be.

I am not at all satisfied with the suggestion made by my friend, Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad, in regard to licensing. I do not want this licensing system at all. It must be abolished forthwith. I want in its place the railways themselves to undertake the work of catering. (*An Honourable Member:* "Soviet system.") Whether it is the soviet system or whether it is nationalisation, call it by whatever name you like, I want to tell the Honourable Member in charge that it is a very paying system. The M. & S. M. Railway and the S. I. Railway in the South have found it to be a very profitable proposition. They have given much more satisfaction there than all the caterers in the rest of India where the licensing system prevails. Therefore, Sir, I want that the Government themselves should undertake catering so that there can be more satisfaction. I can also

tell the Government that the M. & S. M. and S. I. Railways have found this system so profitable that they have found it possible to reduce the rates from six annas to four annas a meal. If it was possible for them to reduce the rates by 33 1/3 per cent., I do not know why such unconscionable rates should be allowed to prevail on the trains that run between Delhi and Bombay. I can also refer to the abominable rates which prevail on the Grand Trunk Express for so-called Hindu meals; and they charge as much as 12 annas for one meal.

Then, Sir, coming to the question of cleanliness, if you want an example to be set in for cleanliness for anybody, you had better go to the south, and especially it is so in the railway catering stalls and refreshment rooms. They are very clean, and yet they give you very good food for four annas. Why should not the Government try to introduce a speck of their cleanliness into their stalls in Northern India, especially the Kapoor Stalls where there is more dizziness than cleanliness.

Why do the Government want to make any profits at all out of this catering? Are they not satisfied with the profits they are making from the passenger rates and freight rates? Why should they try to cheat the passengers even in regard to this and try to make some more money from them? Why not give the passengers satisfaction . . . .

**The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart:** On a point of information. Is the Honourable Member under the impression that Government sell food to third class passengers?

**Prof. N. G. Ranga:** It is under the authority of the Government that these licenses are issued, and it is because of these licenses the licencees obtain a monopoly and, therefore, they are able to practise *zuloom*. I have found it at very many stations. There are crowds and crowds of passengers begging for food with money in hand, but the man in charge of the stall was not prepared to take the money and serve the food, because he had only two hands and not more. Sir, this system has got to be improved. There must be more people to serve; there must be more caterers and more stalls, and I can assure you, as my friend, Mr. Santhanam, has put it, it will be a very profitable concern for the Government if they were to take up this question seriously into their head and follow it up as the M. & S. M. and S. I. Railways have done in the South, and get rid of the licensing system altogether.

At very many stations, Sir, I find two refreshment rooms, one for 1st class passengers and another for second class. Why do you want to have these two refreshment rooms? Just as you have got to abolish two separate classes, 1st and 2nd and amalgamate them into one class, call it first or second, similarly you have got to abolish the separate rooms and have only one room and set apart the other room for the third class passengers.

Then, I find that in many of these restaurant cars there are no kitchens, with the result that they take some food at some station and carry it for 300 or 200 miles and by the time the food is served it becomes stale and that is being doled out to the passengers at abominable rates. If Government were to be so affectionate towards these contractors at all, let them follow up some of the suggestions thrown out by my Honourable friend, Sir Ziauddin Ahmad. Let them abolish this sub-contractor system.

[Prof. N. G. Ranga.]

reduce the licensing fees and let them try to renew these licenses from time to time. Let them call for separate tenders on every occasion, so that it would be possible for Government not only to get a little more money from these people if they wish to, but also extract better terms as regards the prices to be charged. There is now too much favouritism. The same man is given the license for decades together and I want this system to go. There is much to be said in favour of giving the licenses to local people if the licensing system were to be preferred but I am absolutely in favour of the introduction or generalisation of the system that we have in Southern India where our passengers get very much better satisfaction than those in Northern India.

In Northern India, I find the stalls not only not clean but positively dirty. I do not know how it is possible to take any food there. We don't have any leaves or plates. The food is served out in dirty paper taken from anywhere and everywhere. We take the food simply because we are obliged to. This system must go and the sooner Government tries to appoint some special department in order to look into the whole affair and investigate the manner in which the catering is done the better. The sooner this mismanagement and misuse is put an end to, the better for the third class passenger and the railways.

**Mr. Lalchand Navalrai:** There are two complaints in regard to this matter. One is the bad and unclean food given by the stall keepers and the restaurant people and the second is the high price that they charge. How are these defects to be removed? This is an old complaint that has been going on for a very very long time and as a member of the Central Advisory Committee I know something of this matter. The causes lie in the policy of the railways to give contracts for these stalls to the highest bidder and the second is that there is no regular schedule for these stall people. Before 1936 no fees were charged to the license holders and the rent of the rooms given to them was also very very nominal. What happened was that these stall holders were under the influence of the officials and the stall holders were being charged some other fee which was not legal. The result was that the stall holders had to make both ends meet and they raised the prices and also they did not care whether they gave good food or bad food. This thing came to the notice of the Central Advisory Committee and on the 3rd and 8th October, 1936, the Central Advisory Committee considered certain suggestions. The suggestion was that this illegal way of pilfering the stall holders and making them give bad food should stop. After further consideration, the members of the Advisory Council were of opinion that the rents charged to these men should be very nominal and no illegal gratification should be taken. The second remedy that was suggested was that the licensing fee should be very reasonable. These were the two resolutions passed. Under the cloak of these two resolutions, the Railway Department thought of making profit. They said that they will charge them nominal rent and charge them reasonable fees for stall licences but they so manipulated that they make money out of this. Therefore, they introduced a system called the contract system by which the stalls will be sold by public auction and money realised from the sales.

The consequences of this system have been described several times in this House. As a typical instance, I will take the case of the Delhi station. Formerly there was only some small license fee. Some rent was

also being charged, but all of a sudden under the pretence of this resolution which never meant that there should be revenue made out of this, a change was introduced. This resolution never meant that these people should be charged so much that they may prove to be a scourge upon the third class and other passengers. They wanted to give out a contract, say, for Delhi, the local people would not come forward to have it on any exorbitant terms; what the railway did was to manage to send for some people from Bihar or some other place, who took the contract for four thousand rupees or so; the exact figure must be known to the railway officials. Now, is this fair? It was not only for the Delhi station but the Agents got orders to act similarly elsewhere. I received information the last time when the Central Advisory Council was meeting at Simla that at many other stations, stall keepers were charged a few thousand rupees. In fact, it varied from three hundred or four hundred rupees and onwards, even on stalls of small dimensions. I considered that was not right nor just at all, and that, that was not the intention of the Advisory Council. Therefore, I sent in my resolution. At that time Sir Sultan Ahmed was in charge of the railways. I pointed out that this question was exercising the minds of the people when a stall keeper had to pay a sum of something like Rs. 4,000, it necessarily followed that he had to make good that amount out of the passengers' pockets. Therefore, I asked that this question should be re-opened or some arrangements should be made in such a manner that this heavy charge should not be levied from these stall keepers so that they may not give us bad food for such high price. But what happened was that Sir Sultan Ahmed had not then any time to look into this matter as he had to attend the Assembly, and this matter was not on the agenda paper. He, however, very kindly said that on the next day he would meet in conference with some members of the Council, in which were included Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad, myself and some Members of the Council of State. Sir Guthrie Russell also was present. Then we placed all these materials. Sir Sultan Ahmed gave out a good gesture and hoped that the matter would be decided very soon and something done in that direction. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad actually placed a memorandum of suggestions in his hands asking that "charge for rent should be nominal in fact", which should mean only a rupee or two; and not, Rs. 50 or Rs. 100. Then we also asked that there should be no racial discrimination in the matter of charging Indian and European restaurants. What the Council had utmost decided was that stall-holders should be charged a reasonable licensing fee. Now, is that a reasonable licensing fee, when Rs. 4,000 are realized from one station's catering? We said we could not give a blank cheque to the Agents on this question but that you should have a small committee and with the help of that committee and in consultation with the Agents and others, you should see what should the reasonable charge be. It will not be a reasonable licensing fee if you sell stalls by auction. Thereby you will be making a profit out of it and it is more or less a tax, something like an income-tax or worse than that. At that time we suggested that a small committee should be constituted. What happened? Up to this time nothing has been done as regards that; on the contrary the Agents have been doing it in their own way and auctioning away these stalls at high prices. There is no supervision over them also; and when we say that the local advisory committees should be allowed to have some supervision over that, the Agents restrict us to do it in our residential place only . . . .

**Mr. Deputy President** (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta): The Honourable Member has got two minutes more.

**Mr. Lalchand Navalrai:** Sir, the Advisory Committee asked that the members should be given certain passes sometimes to go and examine these things on different stations but that was also not done. On the B. N. R. the system of departmental working has again proved to be a very great hardship upon the Indian licensed holders. There, the upper class catering is in the hands of the company and the lower class catering on the stations is given away by license and a heavy license fee is charged. The result is—and I have reliable information—that while there is a loss of about a lakh of rupees in the case of the catering for the upper class people, the company makes up that loss of a lakh of rupees by illegal means, by very unjustly charging very exorbitant license fees from these stall holders. Is this fair? Is this just? Sir, the railway officials take no notice of this glaring injustice. I submit that these are things which operate very harshly upon the lower class passengers. Look at it from that point of view and not from the point of view of your revenue. Your revenue is coming to you from several other sources. Have your attention concentrated upon giving good food to the people and also not charging these stall holders so much that they be forced to raise their prices. With these words, Sir, I support the motion.

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

**Mr. Deputy President** (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta): The question is:

“That the question be now put.”

The motion was adopted.

**The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart:** Sir, the Government of India and the Railway Board are in the fullest sympathy with the motives which led to the moving of this motion. They agree with the proposition that the catering arrangements on Indian railways should be such as to provide the maximum convenience and benefit to passengers at a reasonable cost. This subject has been engaging their attention for some time and since the Resolution moved by Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad was adopted in 1934—not in 1931—the railway authorities have been carrying out a very exhaustive examination of the systems in force on the various railways.

In pursuance of the assurance given by Sir Joseph Blore there were  
 4 P.M. issued to all railways requisitions that they should prepare memoranda as to the catering systems in force on their railways, that they should take steps to consult the local Advisory Committees and that they should report to the Railway Board the result of their investigations. As a result of that action, there was accumulated in the Railway Board office a very large mass of documentary evidence which was duly digested and a memorandum was placed before the Central Advisory Committee. The Central Advisory Committee deliberated on that memorandum and they came to certain conclusions,—rather more, I think, than were given us by Mr. Lalchand Navalrai. Their tentative conclusions were these: that stall holders should be charged reasonable licensing fees, and that the rental charge for the use of refreshment rooms should be on the same principle both in regard to first and second class refreshment rooms and to Indian refreshment rooms; secondly, that a contractor shopkeeper



or stall holder might be charged a reasonable sum to cover the actual cost of supplying electricity and water to him. Where there was a municipal or other charge payable on premises occupied by the contractor, he should be liable for this: that price lists of goods sold should be fixed in consultation with the civil authorities. Contracts for vending and refreshment rooms should be given only to those people who were *bona fide* traders, that is to say, who themselves were engaged in the catering profession. Contracts should, if possible, be given to local men though it might be necessary to give one contract covering a large area if it were impossible to get a man of sufficient substance to serve the smaller and less remunerative stations. Contracts in regard to ice and aerated waters should be for a limited period, one year at a time, though there was considerable volume of opinion to the effect that longer contracts should be given. It was recommended that the railway medical officers should make a point of inspecting foodstuffs on stalls and that the local public health authorities should be given access to the railway stations for purposes of inspection.

**Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad:** What was the price fixed?

**The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart:** The Committee were of opinion that the price for the sale of aerated waters and ice should be especially looked into and that there should be as little difference between the prices charged at stations and outside the stations as possible. In pursuance of the first of these recommendations, without taking any final decision as to the policy that was to be followed, the Railway Board suggested to the Administrations that as an experimental measure they should try the system of levying reasonable fees. I am quite prepared to admit that the interpretation of the word "reasonable" is a debatable matter. What might be a reasonable fee for one station may not be so for another. In any case, that question was taken up.

In the meantime, a few months ago, as Mr. Lalchand Navalrai has told us, a deputation of Members of both the Houses of the Legislature met my predecessor, Sir Sultan Ahmad, and they put forward certain representations to him. These representations, it will be recognised, do not quite agree with the recommendations of the Central Advisory Committee and they were as follows: That the prices for soda and aerated waters, ice and tea should be standardized for the whole of India at a low rate and the price of other articles should be fixed at the market rates of the town; that stalls and refreshment rooms should be supplied to contractors without rental charge or fee; that the person to whom the contract is given should supervise the stall or refreshment room himself and should not let out his contract to anybody else; that he should also be a resident in the town; no contractor should be given a contract for more than one refreshment room; that no one should have a contract for more than one group of allied articles; that any appeal against high prices or bad quality should be made to a Traffic Inspector; that the contracts should be given for periods not exceeding two years.

Honourable Members, I think, will realise that the recommendations of those Honourable Members who saw my predecessor do differ in some quite important respects from what was decided in the Central Advisory Committee, and it has now been necessary for the Railway Board to reconsider the position. That process of consideration is now going on. It is, therefore, perhaps appropriate that this discussion should have taken place at this time and I shall arrange that the speeches that have been:



[Sir Thomas Stewart.]

delivered on the floor of this House today should also be before the Railway Board and myself before any decision is taken as to the ultimate policy to be followed.

**Mr. Lalchand Navalrai:** Will this question be taken up in the Central Advisory Committee that is to meet day after tomorrow for which I have sent a resolution on this point?

**The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart:** No, Sir. That subject was not on the agenda for the Central Advisory Committee. We are already seized of the views of the Central Advisory Committee as a Committee.

**Prof. N. G. Ranga:** Will the Railway Board also consider the advisability of introducing the South Indian Railway catering system?

**The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart:** I have given my assurance on that point. It was an issue that was raised by the Honourable Member and I have said that the speeches delivered today would be brought to the notice of the Railway Board when they are considering this matter further.

**Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi:** Sir, in view of the statement that has been made by the Honourable Member for Communications I ask the leave of the House to withdraw my motion.

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

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#### DEMAND NO. 3—MISCELLANEOUS EXPENDITURE.

**The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart:** Sir, I move:

“That a sum not exceeding Rs. 18,08,000, 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, 1939, in respect of ‘Miscellaneous Expenditure.’”

**Mr. Deputy President (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta):** Motion moved:

“That a sum not exceeding Rs. 18,08,000, 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, 1939, in respect of ‘Miscellaneous Expenditure.’”

*Conditions of Labour and the System of supplying Coolies.*

**Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad:** Sir, I beg to move:

“That the demand under the head ‘Miscellaneous Expenditure’ be reduced by Rs. 100.”

Sir, the question of the supply of coolies at the different railway stations has been receiving the attention of this House for the last several years. A number of questions have been put and Resolutions have been tabled and the attention of the Government has been repeatedly drawn to this particular matter.

[At this stage, Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim) resumed the Chair.]

The present system is that one man is given the contract to supply coolies and he is called the cooly contractor. This contract is sometimes

given to a railway official, sometimes it is given to a firm, sometimes it is given to a retired railway officer, and sometimes to any person who is in the good books of the Divisional Superintendent. These cooly contractors charge a definite fee from each and every cooly. I have got a tabular statement before me in which it is mentioned that at one railway station alone every cooly has to pay Rs. 11-12-0. This is officially mentioned in this statement. This is not a private document. In this particular station there are 350 coolies. Therefore, this cooly contractor at this particular railway station gets an income which is equivalent to the income of a Member of the Railway Board. There is one difference. A Member of the Railway Board has to pay income-tax on his salary, whereas this cooly contractor has to pocket the entire money he gets from the coolies without paying a single pie in the shape of income-tax. This thing is usually done.

**Mr. Sri Prakasa** (Allahabad and Jhansi Divisions: Non-Muhammadan Rural): The contractor gets no saloon.

**Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad:** I know a number of stations on the E. I. R. line where similar arrangements exist and the cooly contractor gets his income from different sources. The first source is that he charges so much from each cooly for giving license and in this way he gets a fairly big amount. Then, the same cooly contractor is given the contract to load and unload at the stations and for this work he is paid by the railway administration, while he gets this loading and unloading done free by the coolies. No payment is made to the coolies and the contractor pockets the entire sum paid to him by the railway administration for this work. This is his second source of income. In bigger stations, this would come to a substantial amount. We do not mind if there is only a particular man receiving income in this manner, but unfortunately the whole thing falls upon the back of the poor passengers. It must be the sad experience of all of us on this side of the House that whenever we pay any cooly his licensed fee, he always argues, sometimes he uses the logic to such an extent that a nervous man breaks down. I have repeatedly seen that as soon as a cooly lodges the luggage into the compartment, he begins to argue and a nervous man always loses his balance of mind on account of the higgling of the cooly. I have sometimes asked these coolies as to why they were demanding more than the licensed fee. The invariable reply that they gave me was that what they got practically went to the contractors and whatever they were able to get over and above the licensed fees, that was really their income. This is the sort of logic which the coolies employ in order to get more amount than what is really their authorised fee for taking a load. This is becoming exceedingly troublesome to passengers. If the passengers give a tip to the porter or to the cooly, it is all right, but it is not a tip, it is not given voluntarily by the passengers, it is extracted by force, by arguments and sometimes by threats. If all these things are practised it is really very annoying to the passengers. I think it is very desirable that we should have some regular system by which the fee should be fixed and the entire amount ought to go to the poor cooly himself and the profit which the intermediate man, like the cooly contractor, might get must be avoided as far as possible. What is really the income of the cooly contractor? I gave an instance of a cooly contractor who gets Rs. 4,000 a month.

**An Honourable Member:** Does he pay anything to the Railway Board?

**Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad:** Not only does he not pay anything to the Railway Board, but in addition he gets something from the railways for loading and unloading things.

The other point that I want to raise on this cut motion is the condition of labour at the railway stations. Their condition is also very pitiable because they have not got sufficient time and leisure for recreation and even for sleep. I drew attention to this particular problem when I was talking about railway accidents and I pointed out that one of the reasons for these accidents was that these labourers did not get sufficient time even for sleep, and when they were overworked, they were careless in their duties. I think it is desirable that there ought to be some definite rules regulating the hours of work. They should not be called upon to work for more than eight or ten hours a day. It is not fair to put them on duty for 12 hours and more, and I submit there ought to be some kind of regulation and I hope that the new department that the Government of India have now established under Labour would look into the problem and I trust they will enter into the question of labour conditions in the railways.

It is not only the question of menials that has to be considered but the question of subordinate staff also should be considered. At the present time the subordinate staff of the railways who get Rs. 30 or Rs. 40 a month get no better treatment than menials and I submit their case also should be considered. You should not put them to work continuously for more than eight hours at a time. Of course, in exceptional cases, you can call upon them to work for more hours. But here we find that they are regularly put on 12 hours duty and no leisure is allowed to them for recreation. They work for seven days in the week and for 30 days in the month and, even on days of festivals, they are obliged to be on duty for 12 hours. Not only this, but as was pointed out by my Honourable friend, Col. Gidney, the other day they do not even get leave which is due to them. In the first place their leave rules are very stringent and even the leave which is due to them is seldom granted by the higher officials on the plea that there is no one there to do their work and that there is no relieving staff. Therefore, it is very desirable that we ought to provide some kind of relieving staff in all these railways in order to relieve subordinate staff and allow them some leisure for recreation. I am perfectly certain that if you give them some leisure, the efficiency of their work will also increase. A person who is overworked and does not get sufficient leisure may do work all right, but his efficiency will suffer. Therefore, in the interest of efficiency and in order to avoid cruelty to human beings, I press this motion and I hope that the railway administration will look into this matter.

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Cut motion moved:

"That the demand under the head 'Miscellaneous Expenditure' be reduced by Rs. 100."

**Prof. N. G. Ranga:** Sir, the so-called menial servants of the railways are the worst exploited class of people in the employ of the State and also the railways. They form the largest number of the labour employed on the railways, as much as 80 per cent. and yet they are not given even

the benefit of a provident fund. Only the other day the motion of my Honourable friend, Mr. Joshi, could not be pressed because the Honourable Member in charge of Railways was not prepared to give a satisfactory answer and the sense of the House somehow obliged him to withdraw it. But it is a fact that these people are not given any kind of consideration by the railways. The Royal Commission on Labour had made a pertinent remark that these people deserved the best consideration of the Railway Board, and yet I do not know what steps have been taken since then to improve their lot. Their wages have not been raised and no benefit fund or any other fund has been created for their benefit, nor has there even been an increase in the number of uniforms with which they are supplied. Even the housing accommodation that they are given has not been increased and many of them are obliged to live in bad houses without any protection whatsoever either from sun or from rain.

Then, coming to the question of leisure, only the other day the Honourable Member in charge of the Railways admitted in reply to a question put by Mr. Lalchand Navalrai that it was a fact that the Railway Agents had it in their discretion to keep these people at work for more than 12 hours on several occasions merely because exigencies of work demanded such a thing. But he did not say whether they were being paid sufficient compensation or not. Even if they were paid sufficient compensation, to make the workers work for very much longer than what was considered good for them and in their own interest by the framers of the Factories Act is really unjust, to say the least.

The vexed question of giving these people some free passes to travel in third class on some occasions at least during the year is still hanging fire and nothing has been done; and in fact, if I am not wrong, in the recent past a number of passes that were granted to some of these people has even been brought down.

Then, Sir, coming to the subordinate staff, their position is only a little better if not just as bad. They do not enjoy a sufficient number of holidays and they have to work for very long hours for days together on several occasions. I do not think they are given any overtime pay at all, and I do not know what excuse the railways have for exploiting these people so much without paying them adequately. It is true that there is a cry in the country, and I think rightly, for more and more economy in the railways; but that does not mean that this economy should be effected by trying to shorten the number of holidays for these people or cutting down the privileges that had been granted to these people. Specially have they come to feel very bitterly about the reduction in the number of free passes that were being given to these people for enjoying some holiday from their place of work to their own villages or other places.

Then, Sir, coming to these coolies who are being engaged by contractors, I have only to remind my Honourable friend, Sir Thomas Stewart, of the European contractor at Calcutta who is making tons of money out of these poor coolies. I do not know why the railways are so very particular about the system of contractors at all. I do not know why the railways do not think of engaging these people directly by themselves. They may say it is all casual work. But there is casual work on the Docks too. Yet they keep what is known as a waiting list and they try to bring about decasualisation of labour. They certainly can keep a waiting list of people who desire to work as coolies on the railway and give permission

[Prof. N. G. Ranga.]

to a certain number of people for any particular day or for any particular week to work on the platforms as coolies and fix the rates which they have to charge either for the various kinds of luggages that are to be carried by them for passengers or any sort of luggage that has to be transported from place to place. If they were to follow this particular system they would be able to free these coolies from the exploitation of these contractors. Here is a long paper which has been placed before us. I cannot say I can vouch for the facts presented here, but I am sure my Honourable friend, Sir Thomas Stewart, will find it very useful and interesting reading, if only he would bestow a few minutes to it and see what he can possibly do.

**The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart:** I have already read it.

**Prof. N. G. Ranga:** Then I hope he will see what a vicious system it is to allow these contractors to go on exploiting these coolies and also to go on exploiting the railways themselves and try to corrupt many of the railway officials themselves in order to increase their own profits. I want this system to be replaced by the one that obtains on the M. & S. M. Railway where in some stations the railways themselves employ these coolies directly. If railways were to employ these coolies directly it would be possible for them to give better satisfaction to passengers and also to provide better earnings for their own coolies. I want really that these coolies should be engaged not on daily wages but on monthly wages. It will not be impossible for the railways to do this; it will not be an unprofitable thing to do this, specially at big junctions, because they can always have a minimum number of people on monthly salary and a few people more on the reserve list, so that whenever there is a rush of passengers or traffic they can call upon these people to come and assist, as in England, and take payment according to the rates fixed by the railways themselves.

Then, Sir, even in regard to the schools and other social amenities that are provided by the railways, I find an invidious distinction made between the subordinates and others employed by the railways who are supposed to be educated people, and the coolies employed by them. The coolies somehow or other are not treated as human beings and therefore they are not expected to derive as much advantage from the schools and other social amenities provided by the railways as the others. This is a great grievance and I hope Government will take the necessary steps to redress this. But the most important grievance of these people is their very low salary. This salary has got to be increased, and if it is not increased it does neither credit to the railways nor does it bring any profits to them. After all it is on the work of these people that the safety of the whole railway depends. It is these gang workers who have to keep the railway lines absolutely safe. If anything goes wrong with gang workers, then it will not be possible for us to reach this place and play our useful part as representatives of the electorates of this country; and it is these people who are being neglected by the Railway Board. I want them to pay more attention to the needs of these people, especially in the way of increasing their wages.

Then, Sir, it is these people who are being very badly treated, ill-treated by the railway officials, sometimes they are even beaten, often

they are abused, and almost always they are obliged to work like slaves at the bidding of these railway officials from the gangmaster to the traffic inspector, not to speak of the D. T. S. who is a *barah sahib* for them, Now, there must be some system of inspection by which it would be possible for Government to ensure that these people are treated as human beings, that they are not overworked, and that they are made to work only for the requisite number of hours for which they are supposed to work either according to railway rules or according to the Factory Act. I do not know whether there is any Indian at all in charge of railway labour problems: it may be that on the Railway Board an Englishman is obliged to look into these labour problems. Well, if it is an Englishman I would like to remind him through the Railway Board and through my Honourable friend here representing Communications, that he should remember the much better and more humane conditions obtaining in his own country, that is, in England, for these so-called menial railway servants. I would expect him and the Government to try to provide for him better facilities, higher wages, and better treatment than obtaining at present. I hope Government will try to pay such attention to these people as they have paid to other sections of railway labour. Sir, I shall say in conclusion that till very recently very little attention has been paid to the welfare of these people, whereas more and more attention was bestowed to the needs of the highly paid and also subordinate officials both by Government and labour leaders in this country. It is time, I think, that labour leaders, trade unions, as well as the Honourable Members in charge of Communications and Labour pay sufficient attention to the needs of these people, and if necessary a special officer should be appointed to go into their needs and present to this House a report of what Government proposes to do and has done for their welfare and for the improvement of their conditions.

**Mr. H. M. Abdullah** (West Central Punjab: Muhammadan): Sir, I rise to support the cut motion moved by my Honourable friend, Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad. I am glad that he has championed the cause of the poor coolies. I myself had tabled a cut motion (No. 108 on the main list) to ventilate the grievances of the coolies at the Lahore station, but unfortunately according to the arrangement made by the various Parties of the House, it will not now be possible for me to move it. I have, therefore, decide to speak on this cut motion which is more comprehensive than that of mine. I will confine my speech to cooly system prevailing at some of the big stations on the North Western Railway. First, I shall take up the case of the coolies employed at the Lahore station, the headquarters of the North Western Railway, and will presently show how under the very nose of the Agent, N. W. Railway, the poor coolies are being maltreated by the contractor and their grievances are not attended to by anybody. The contract for supplying coolies at this station has been given to one Mr. Mohammad Ismail *alias* Isa. He has enjoyed this monopoly for the last 18 years. On recruitment each cooly has to pay a security of Rs. 30 to be returned on discharge. Actually, when a cooly is discharged this security is not refunded to him, but is retained by the contractor *in toto*. In addition, every cooly has to pay Rs. 6-2-0 as the cost for uniform which consists of only a turban and a shirt whose worth hardly exceeds Rs. 2. When a cooly is dismissed this uniform is taken away from him, but its cost is not returned to him. Over and above all, the contractor charges a

[Mr. H. M. Abdullah.]

monthly levy of Rs. 11-10-0 in various forms from each cooly. In order to give a first-hand knowledge I will read out to you a copy of the memorial addressed to the Agent by the coolies on the 29th November, 1937, which is as follows:

“To”

The Agent, North Western Railway, Lahore.

Respected Sir,

With due deference and great humility we beg to lay the following few lines and hope that it shall receive your Honour's due and sympathetic consideration.

That Mr. Mohamed Ismail *alias* Isa, Railway Cooly Contractor, Lahore, took from the undersigned, Rs. 30 each as security while giving us numbers, and he promised to return the said amount when the numbers are taken back from us. He told us that this amount was being taken from the undersigned as per railway rules and regulations and we therefore gave him Rs. 30 each, as security.

That when the numbers were delivered back by the undersigned to the said contractor and demanded Rs. 30 each. the contractor refused to remit us the said amount.

That in addition to the above amount he usually takes Rs. 6-2-0 for the uniform which contains one turban and a shirt, and it is general custom with the contractor that whenever he takes the number back, he also takes back the said uniform, i.e., turban and shirt, but in compensation thereto never returns the amount of Rs. 6-2-0.

That we have been given to understand that all the said amounts realised by the said contractor had been illegally extracted from the undersigned, we intend to lodge a criminal case of fraud and misappropriation and have therefore submitted applications to the high railway officials and Police, but nothing has been done in this case but instead the said contractor has been informed of our having submitted the applications against him. On this the said contractor told us that Mr. C. J. Hamil, the Station Superintendent, Railway Station, Lahore, is on friendly terms with him, and moreover Mr. Isar, Additional District Magistrate, is also a friend of him and he will therefore get the undersigned punished through him.

That it will not be out of place to mention that Mr. Isar was seen going in company with the said Contractor towards the Rawalpindi side. In Hyderabad, Sind, the cooly contractor and others have been punished for doing such illegal acts and similar nuisance was noticed by the authorities in Hyderabad. The worthy Hon'ble Judge of the High Court then got the poor coolies relieved of this cruelty done to them. A case was started and the cooly contractor was convicted and punished according to law.

Your Honour is well-known throughout the Punjab for justice and equity and the undersigned therefore approach Your Honour, through the medium of this application, with prayers that after due investigation into the case, justice be done to us and we are ready to give solid proof of the allegations stated above.

For this act of kindness and mercy, the prayers of the undersigned and their young ones will wing their way to Heaven for Your Honour's long life and for the welfare and prosperity of the Railway Administration. We beg to remain, Sir, Your most obedient servants.

(Thumb impressions of the coolies (applicants) are enclosed herewith for your kind perusal.)”

Dated 29th November, 1937.

Sir, the coolies have also printed a statement of their grievances and circulated to Honourable Members of this House. I was approached

by the coolies at Lahore in December last and I, therefore, represented their case both to the Agent and to the Divisional Superintendent, Lahore Division. But it is really very sad that no action has so far been taken by the railway administration to remove the complaints of the poor coolies. The contractor is getting the backing of the Station Superintendent who has been there for the last 16 years. Sir, the other day during the general discussion of the Railway Budget, the Honourable the Railway Member invited Members of this House to quote concrete cases of corruption among the railway staff. If he will hold an impartial and independent inquiry in this matter he will be satisfied that the allegations are not baseless. I hope and trust that he will take immediate action and remove the contractor and transfer the Station Superintendent immediately.

I understand that similar conditions prevail at the Delhi station. The House will be surprised to know that the contractor in charge of 700 coolies at the Delhi station earns about Rs. 11,900 per mensem. Such a pernicious system deserves the condemnation of this august House. The proper course is that the recruitment of coolies on all railways should not be made by an outside agency, but should be entrusted to some railway officer in charge of labour. If this suggestion is acted upon, it will put an end to all the troubles. I will end my speech with a Persian verse whose moral I would ask the Government to note carefully. It runs as follows:

*"Batars az ahe mazluman keh hangame dua kardan,  
Ijabat az dare haq behre istiqbal me ayad."*

Rendered into English it means:

"Beware of the cries of the oppressed because their prayers are sure to be granted by the Almighty."

With these words, Sir, I commend my suggestion for favourable consideration by the Government.

**Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney:** Sir, . . . . .

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I take it the Honourable Member will allow time for the Honourable the Government Member to reply after he has finished.

**Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney:** I will, Sir. I join in this debate for one reason and one reason only. I have myself been approached by coolies at certain stations to bring this matter to the notice of the House, and I desire to associate myself with the principle underlying this motion. But I should like to inform the House that according to my knowledge these coolies are not under the control of railways. They are servants of the contractor and as such the railway administrative have no real power to jurisdiction over them . . . .

**An Honourable Member:** Abolish the contractual system.

**Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney:** I am coming to that, if you will allow me to develop my argument. I intend to say something about that. My point is this. If what we have heard is true about the state of affairs at Lahore and the amount of money made by the contractor,



[Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney.]

I marvel at the delay and hesitation on the part of the Financial Commissioner in Railway Board in not seizing this golden opportunity with both hands as it would give him some more money for his Budget. I would, therefore, advise the Railway Board seriously to consider what the last speaker has said as to the existence of this corruption and this profiteering. It certainly amounts to an act of actual dishonesty; a very severe form of trafficking on an ignorant class of employees. As far as I know, the practice that obtains in the railways today regarding coolies varies in different places. I believe in bigger stations special contractors are appointed to supply coolie labour. In smaller stations it is the railway subordinate in charge of the station who is in charge and it is called "handling charges". If this is true, it means that the handling of labour is in two hands—railway hands by private arrangement with the staff, and contractors. I have now heard—I hope it is not correct—that the labour contract in the Howrah station is to be given to a big firm in Calcutta. I only hope that this is not true. I think this House should voice a note of protest if that is so. I submit that the coolie problem is a serious matter and I know it will engage the attention of the Honourable the Communications Member. In my opinion this corruption, this *Zoolum*, is no fault of the railway administration: it is certainly the fault of the contractor extracting this money and it should, if possible, be checked. I would suggest to the Honourable Member the advisability of the railway administration taking over this cooly system at all stations or not to leave it so much in the hands of contractors who apparently bleed the coolies white. I think the Railway Department will be able to effect this and who will be the gainers? It will be the poor labourers who today are being bled white by a lot of profiteers, the contractors who are fattening on these poor people. I know the Delhi station affords an ideal opportunity to get rich quick, and if the Railway Board want to increase their surplus budget for the next year, I again suggest to the Financial Commissioner to accept this opportunity with both hands.

**The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart:** Sir, to start with I should ask that the general question of cooly labour on the Indian railways should not be prejudiced by the petition which was read out by Mr. Hafiz Abdullah. It is an entirely *ex-parte* statement of the coolies case and taken by itself it might be held to dam the whole administration of cooly labour throughout India. But if one were to read with some attention, not this petition, but the later representation to which reference was made by Prof. Ranga, I think the general deduction from that later representation is that the coolies had no complaint at all against the railway administration, but that what was wrong was that a case having been filed the witnesses were suborned and the course of justice in the criminal Courts was somehow diverted.

Now, Sir, I think that probably some of the Honourable Member have been arguing from the particular to the general, and it may be of interest if I tell the House what are the various systems in regard to the employment of coolies throughout India. On the Assam Bengal Railway, the coolies pay no license fees, but are required to equip themselves with a brass armlet, a uniform jumper,—a short shirt—at an approximate cost of Rs. 2-6-0. That cannot be regarded as an iniquitous requirement. On

the Bengal Nagpur Railway, the administration charge no license fees; at the larger stations the contractor system is in force; at the smaller stations the station masters themselves arrange for the services of coolies. In mentioning this contractor system, I think it necessary to give some indication of what that system is. According to what I have heard this afternoon, it is apparently a case of the contractor producing a coolie, who for the privilege of working pays the contractor a certain sum. There has been no mention of the consideration for which that sum has been paid, but the contractor has got expenses to meet. He provides the labour force; he has got to provide for its discipline and organization,—(An Honourable Member: "Oh, oh!"), and he is also liable for the misdemeanours of his employees, the coolies. At smaller stations on the B., B. and C. I. Railway no charges are made from the coolies; at the larger stations there is what is called the Jamadar system. Honourable Members who have spoken this afternoon have not distinguished between the Jamadar system and the contractor system. It has been taken as certain that the contractor system is in operation at Lahore and Delhi. Well, the contractor system is not in operation there. It is the Jamadar system which is in operation, and the difference between the Jamadar and the contractor systems is that though the duties and function of the jamadar and the contractor are very much the same, the jamadar is chosen by the general body of the coolies themselves. On the Bengal and North Western Railway, coolies pay no license fees. They are asked to pay only for the cost of their badge. On the Eastern Bengal Railway, coolies are charged no license fees. On the E. I. Railway, coolies are charged no license fees, but they are asked to pay for their badge and uniform. At stations where there are contractors, their contribution to the contractor varies from 6 pies to 2½ annas a day. On the G. I. P. Railway, coolies are charged no license fee. At stations where contractors are employed, they pay the contractor 4 annas a day to cover, among other things, the cost of their uniform and their badge. On the M. & S. M. Railway the coolies pay no license fee, but they are required to pay for the cost of the badge supplied by the administration amounting to 10 annas. On the N. W. Railway, the coolies pay no license fee. At the larger stations where jamadars are employed, elected as I said, from amongst themselves, each coolie pays the jamadar Rs. 2 a month. On the R. & K. Railway coolies pay no license fee, but pay for the cost of their badge, approximately Re. 1. On the S. I. Railway they pay no license fee, but they have to pay for their badge . . . .

**Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad:** We never introduced the question of license fee. They pay an unusually large amount of fee to the contractors.

**The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart:** It is perfectly certain that the coolies do not pay to the railway administrations, but what I have endeavoured to show from reciting this list of the conditions at various places is that the contractor system is an exception and by no means the rule, and that the Railway Administrations as a whole cannot be condemned for the existence of a widespread and insidious contract system . . .

**Prof. N. G. Ranga:** Why don't you abolish the jamadar system as well?

**The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart:** What are the alternatives to the systems that I have suggested? Would the Honourable Member opposite suggest that the coolies should become wholetime servants of the railway administration, that they should be taken on our pay rolls? Then, Sir, I suggest that the third class passenger would have a very much more unhappy time than he has at present, if he had those coolies safely entrenched against him their price would immediately go up when it came to tackling the third class passenger. The same degree of corruption would undoubtedly come in if we adopted the alternative which has been suggested, *viz.*, that the railways themselves while getting the coolies from outside and paying them nothing should maintain their own supervisory staff. Well, I can conceive of no happier job than being on that supervisory staff, and the imposition on the coolie would very soon be transferred to the third class passenger for whom we are all going to be so considerate tomorrow.

**Mr. Sri Prakasa:** The third class passenger carries his own luggage.

**The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart:** I am prepared to admit that the system is far from perfect. It must inevitably have drawbacks, and at times serious drawbacks, but we are prepared to help, and the evidence of it is the recognition by those Lahore coolies of what the railway administration have done to assist them. If they have not received justice, the fault lies not with the railway, but outside.

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The question is:

“That the demand under the head ‘Miscellaneous Expenditure’ be reduced by Rs. 100.”

The Assembly divided:

AYES 52.

Abdoola Haroon. Seth Haji Sir.  
Abdul Ghani, Maulvi Muhammad.  
Abdul Qaiyum, Mr.  
Abdul Wajid, Maulvi.  
Abdullah, Mr. H. M.  
Abdur Rasheed Chaudhury, Maulvi.  
Aney, Mr. M. S.  
Asaf, Ali, Mr. M.  
Avyangar, Mr. M. Ananthasayanam.  
Bhagavan Das. Dr.  
Chattopadhyaya, Mr. Amarendra Nath.  
Chaudhury, Mr. Brojendra Narayan.  
Chetty, Mr. Sami Vencatachelam.  
Chunder, Mr. N. C.  
Das, Mr. B.  
Datta, Mr. Akhil Chandra.  
Deshmukh, Dr. G. V.  
Essak Sait, Mr. H. A. Sathar H.  
Ghuznavi, Sir Abdul Halim.  
Gidney, Lieut.-Col. Sir Henry.  
Govind Das, Seth.  
Gupta, Mr. K. S.  
Jehangir, Sir Cowasji.  
Jogendra Singh. Sirdar.  
Kailash Behari Lal, Babu.  
Lohiri Chaudhury, Mr. D. K.

Lalchand Navalrai, Mr.  
Mangal Singh, Sardar.  
Mehr Shah, Nawab Sahibzada Sir Sayad Muhammad.  
Misra, Pandit Shambhu Dayal.  
Mudaliar, Mr. C. N. Muthuranga.  
Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi, Qazi.  
Murtuza Sahib Bahadur. Maulvi Syed.  
Pande, Mr. Badri Dutt.  
Parma Nand, Bhai.  
Raghubir Narayan Singh, Choudhri.  
Ramayan Prasad, Mr.  
Ranga, Prof. N. G.  
Rao, Mr. Thirumala.  
Saksena, Mr. Mohan Lal.  
Sant Singh, Sardar.  
Santhanam, Mr. K.  
Sheodass Daga, Seth.  
Singh, Mr. Gauri Shankar.  
Singh, Mr. Ram Narayan.  
Sinha, Mr. Satiya Narayan.  
Som Mr. Suryya Kumar.  
Sri Prakasa, Mr.  
Subedar, Mr. Manu.  
Varma, Mr. B. B.  
Yamin Khan, Sir Muhammad.  
Ziauddin Ahmad, Dr. Sir.

## NOES 43.

Abdul Hamid, Khan Bahadur Sir.  
Ahmad Nawaz Khan, Major Nawab  
Sir.

Aikman, Mr. A.  
Ayyar, Mr. N. M.  
Bajpai, Sir Girja Shankar.  
Bewoor, Mr. G. V.  
Boyle, Mr. J. D.  
Buss, Mr. L. C.  
Chanda, Mr. A. K.  
Chapman-Mortimer, Mr. T.  
Clow, Mr. A. G.  
Craik, The Honourable Sir Henry.  
Dalal, Dr. R. D.  
Dalpat Singh, Sardar Bahadur  
Captain.  
Dow, Mr. H.  
D'Souza, Mr. F.  
Fazl-i-Ilahi, Khan Sahib Shaikh.  
Grigg, The Honourable Sir James.  
James, Mr. F. E.  
Jawahar Singh, Sardar Bahadur  
Sardar Sir.  
Kamaluddin Ahmed, Shamsul-Ulema.

The motion was adopted.

Kushalpal Singh, Raja Bahadur.  
Lloyd, Mr. A. H.  
Mackeown, Mr. J. A.  
Mani, Mr. R. S.  
Menon, Mr. P. A.  
Metcalf, Sir Aubrey.  
Miller, Mr. C. C.  
Ogilvie, Mr. C. M. G.  
Rahman, Lieut.-Col. M. A.  
Sen, Rai Bahadur N. C.  
Shahban, Mr. Ghulam Kadir Muham-  
mad.  
Sher Muhammad Khan, Captain  
Sardar Sir.  
Sircar, The Honourable Sir  
Nripendra.  
Slade, Mr. M.  
Smith, Lieut.-Colonel H. C.  
Spence, Mr. G. H.  
Staig, Mr. B. M.  
Stewart, The Honourable Sir Thomas.  
Sundaram, Mr. V. S.  
Thorne, Mr. J. A.  
Tylden-Pattenson, Mr. A. E.  
Walker, Mr. G. D.

The Assembly then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Thursday, the 24th February, 1938.