

19th February, 1934

THE  
**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY DEBATES**  
(Official Report)

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Volume II, 1934

*(17th February to 10th March, 1934)*

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**SEVENTH SESSION**  
OF THE  
**FOURTH LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY,**  
**1934**



NEW DELHI  
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA PRESS  
1934.

# Legislative Assembly.

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## *Deputy President:*

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SIR HARI SINGH GOUR, KT., M.L.A.

MR. T. R. PHOOKUN, M.L.A.

MR. MUHAMMAD YAMIN KHAN, C.I.E., M.L.A.

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# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

*Monday, 19th February, 1934.*

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

## MEMBER SWORN.

Mr. Clement Preston Colvin, O.B.E., M.L.A. (Government of India: Nominated Official).

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

### EXCISE AND IMPORT DUTIES ON KEROSENE OIL.

158. **\*Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad:** (a) What is the excise and import duty on kerosene oil?

(b) Will Government be pleased to state the reasons for differentiation in the excise and import duties?

(c) In view of the contemplated separation of Burma from India, do Government propose to take immediate steps to equalise the excise and import duty on kerosene?

(d) Will Government be pleased to state the dividend which the companies, receiving the benefit in excise duty on petroleum, have paid during the last four years?

(e) What is the total reserve of these companies?

**The Honourable Sir George Schuster:** (a) The present rates of duty are: import duty three annas nine pies per gallon, excise duty two annas 9½ pies per gallon.

(b) A customs import duty of 1½ annas per gallon without any counter-vailing excise duty was originally imposed on imported kerosene for revenue purposes. In 1922 an all round tax of one anna per gallon was imposed as a further revenue measure, taking the form of an excise duty on Indian kerosene and an addition to the import duty on imported kerosene. The margin was reduced from 1½ annas to nine pies in 1930.

(c) I can see no relevance in the suggested connection between the proposal to separate Burma and any proposal to equalise the rates of import duty and excise duty.

(d) and (e). The Government are not in possession of the desired information.

**Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad:** In view of the fact that Government are giving protection to the home industries, is it not desirable to find out whether all of them really need it?

**The Honourable Sir George Schuster:** Government have given no protection to the home industry in this case any more than they have in the case of any industry which produces articles which are subject to a revenue duty.

#### INDO-JAPANESE TRADE AGREEMENT.

159. **\*Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad:** (a) Do Government propose to give an opportunity to this House to discuss the Indo-Japanese Agreement before it is signed?

(b) Are Government prepared to give an assurance that the Agreement arrived at between the Indian Government and the Japanese Government will not be modified in London?

**The Honourable Sir Joseph Bhow:** (a) The Honourable Member is referred to the Statement of Objects and Reasons relating to the Indian Tariff (Textile Protection) Amendment Bill introduced by me on the 5th February, 1934, from which it will be seen that the House will have an early opportunity of discussing the terms of the agreement in so far as it involves legislation.

(b) The Honourable Member is referred to my speech on the Adjournment Motion by Mr. B. Das on the 25th January.

#### FORMATION OF A PORT HAJ COMMITTEE AT CALCUTTA.

160. **\*Mr. Muhammad Anwar-ul-Azim:** (a) Will Government please state if the Port Haj Committee at Calcutta has been formed? When did the election take place for the constitution of that Committee?

(b) Will Government further state whether any rules under the Port Haj Act of 1933, were framed by the Local Government in that behalf?

(c) Is it a fact that the election under that Act was to take place according to the method generally known as "single transferable vote method"?

(d) Is it a fact that the Government of Bengal did not pay any attention to this statutory requirement?

(e) Will Government please state if it is a fact that the rules were published on the 4th of December, 1933, and applications for nomination were invited by the same publication of that date? If so, will Government kindly state whether the formation of that Committee has matured, or has got yet to be gazetted?

**Mr. G. S. Bajpai:** (a) Yes. The elections took place on the 19th December, 1933. }

(b) Yes.

(c) No.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) The reply to the first part is in the affirmative. The names of members of the Committee were published in the Calcutta Gazette Extraordinary of the 4th January, 1934.

**CIRCULAR ABOUT THE SICK REPORT OF THE TRAVELLING TICKET EXAMINERS.**

161. **\*Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad:** (a) Has the attention of Government been drawn to the circular issued by the Divisional Superintendent, East Indian Railway, Moradabad, about the sick report of the Travelling Ticket Examiners, in which they are asked to make a forecast of their sickness, and in which the principle that sickness seldom comes suddenly is laid down?

(b) Was the Chief Medical Officer consulted?

(c) Who is the author of that circular and under whose signature was it issued?

**Mr. P. B. Rau:** I have called for information and will lay a reply on the table in due course.

**CONSTRUCTION OF "B" TYPE QUARTERS ON THE LADY HARDINGE ROAD, NEW DELHI.**

162. **\*Pandit Satyendra Nath Sen:** (a) Are Government aware that there is a proposal for constructing "B" type Government quarters on the space between the Lady Hardinge Road and the Rajabazar Square in New Delhi, so that the back of the former and the front of the latter will face each other? If so, how much space will be left between the two rows?

(b) Are Government aware that the proposed buildings will have service latrines and drains at their back portion in front of existing "E" type Government quarters?

(c) Are Government aware that the proposed construction will produce a sentiment of disgust and discomfort in the mind of the occupiers of the existing Government quarters when the clearance of nightsoil and other dirt of the proposed new quarters will be clearly visible to the inmates of the existing quarters even from their rooms?

(d) Are Government aware that the vacant space at the back is generally utilised as a depository of refuse matters and that the front is utilised as a parlour for male members?

(e) Is there any other place in New Delhi where such construction has been allowed?

**The Honourable Sir Frank Noyce:** (a) and (b). Yes. A space of 60 feet will be left between the two blocks of quarters, and a road passes through this space. There will be a wall sufficiently high to conceal the back of the new quarters.

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

(e) Yes.

**Pandit Satyendra Nath Sen:** May I know what will be the height of the proposed wall?

**The Honourable Sir Frank Noyce:** I can only say that the height will be sufficient to conceal the back of the new quarters.

**Pandit Satyendra Nath Sen:** Will the wall be a continuous one or only in places simply to hide the view of the latrines, etc.?

**The Honourable Sir Frank Noyce:** I shall be glad to find out and to let the Honourable Member know.

PROMOTIONS IN THE READING BRANCH OF THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA PRESS,  
NEW DELHI.

163. \***Lala Rameshwar Prasad Bagla:** (a) Is it a fact that it has recently been decided by the Controller of Printing and Stationery, India, that promotion as reader, grade I and grade II, in the Government of India Press, New Delhi, shall be made on the basis of seniority consistent with efficiency and that the efficiency of a man shall be determined in a qualifying test? If so, will Government be pleased to state why the Manager of the Press did not follow the orders of the Controller of Printing in promoting two readers to the grade of Rs. 110—8—150?

(b) Is it a fact that the Manager of the Press held a qualifying test of the copyholders and the revisers for promotion as reader, grade I, whereat he allowed purely temporary men and officiating incumbents who held no lien on any appointment? If so, why? Is it not a common practice in other Government offices, where qualifying tests are held for departmental promotion, not to allow temporary men or an officiating incumbent to sit at such test unless the man has been made permanent and has put in certain years of specific service in that department? If so, will Government be pleased to state why similar procedure was not followed in the New Delhi Government Press?

(c) Is it a fact that two temporary readers, grade I, who were promoted to readership on the result of an examination have been transferred and appointed to the permanent establishment in preference to the senior men who have since qualified in the test? If so, have Government considered why appointments to the permanent establishment should not be made on the basis of seniority when senior men have since qualified?

(d) Will Government be pleased to state whether officiating incumbents were permitted to sit at a previous similar examination in the Reading Branch held in 1929? If not, why were they allowed this time?

(e) Is it a fact that the Controller of Printing in his recent orders regarding promotions in the Reading Branch has clearly stated that if a junior man qualified himself at a qualifying test and a senior man failed, the junior man should be appointed to the grade, but if the junior man was not confirmed by the time the senior man qualified himself at the next test, the senior man should be appointed and confirmed in the said post? If so, will Government be pleased to state why the Manager did not follow the orders of the Controller of Printing when he appointed a temporary reader to the permanent establishment?

(f) Will Government be pleased to lay on the table the result of the qualifying test and the average pass-mark prescribed for the test?

(g) Is it a fact that at the examination the copyholders were required to correct proof without the author's copy? Are Government aware that they are in the habit of reading proofs following author's copy in the Press?

(h) Is it a fact that the Manager prescribed pass-marks as below?

In the proof there were 80 corrections to be carried out:

"Those candidates who carried 54 corrections, i.e., 66 per cent., will be treated as qualified; in a dictation of 70 words those having committed five mistakes or less, will be treated as qualified; no percentage was adopted in allotting marks."

If so, will Government be pleased to state on what principle the pass-marks were prescribed and why the average pass marks were not prescribed and declared on or before the examination date?

(i) Will Government be pleased to state whether the dictation marks were taken to be a determining factor at the previous examination, on the result of which men were promoted to readership? If not, will men who have qualified in proof-reading, be declared as qualified for proof-reader's job, ignoring the dictation paper? If not, why not?

(j) Will Government be pleased to place on the table a statement showing the result of the last examination, held in 1929, on the basis of which men were promoted to reader's post in preference to senior copyholders and revisers, and also the names of successful candidates who were promoted to higher scales both in permanent and officiating capacities?

**The Honourable Sir Frank Noyce:** (a) and (e). The responsibility for these appointments rests with the Manager. I understand that he consulted the Controller, who gave certain advice, but that orders were not issued. The latter parts do not arise.

(b) I understand that such an examination was held and that both permanent and temporary copyholders and revisers were allowed to appear. I see no reason to suppose that the procedure was not calculated to secure the best candidates, and do not think it necessary to enquire into the practice in other offices.

(c) The answer to both parts is in the negative.

(d) Yes; the second part of the question does not arise.

(f) and (j). No.

(g) The answer to the first part is in the affirmative. I am not aware of the practice in the press, but presume that reference is made to the author's copy when necessary.

(h) Yes; the percentage of error permitted was based by the Manager on what he considered might be passable in a reader. The pass marks were not declared before the examination as the candidates were expected to complete the paper.

(i) I have no information on these matters for which the Manager is responsible.

#### PROMOTION OF CLERKS IN THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA PRESS, NEW DELHI.

164. **\*Lala Rameshwar Prasad Bagla:** (a) Will Government be pleased to state the number of clerks in the Government of India Press, New Delhi, promoted on probation to the posts of assistants and upper division clerks on higher scales of pay? Do not Government want to test the proficiency of the clerks in promoting them to the higher scales? If not, why not?

(b) Will Government be pleased to state whether they are prepared to consider the matter of prescribing a qualifying test for assistant's posts among the upper division clerks who have put in at least four years' service in that scale, to increase the efficiency of the clerical staff of the Government of India Press, New Delhi?

**The Honourable Sir Frank Noyce:** (a) and (b). The number of clerks so promoted is seven (one as an Assistant and six as Upper Scale clerks). The answer to the latter portion of part (a) and to part (b) is in the negative. There are rules governing promotions and appointments and Government are prepared to leave the application of the rules to the officers who are charged with the duty of making the appointments.



**DAMAGE TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA PRESS BUILDING, NEW DELHI.**

165. **\*Lala Rameshwar Prasad Bagla:** (a) Is it a fact that the building of the Government of India Press, New Delhi, has been damaged so soon in many places and some parts of the building are gradually sinking to the earth? If so, will Government be pleased to state what precautions have been taken by the authorities concerned?

(b) Will Government be pleased to state the total amount spent on the erection of the Press Building, and whether the projects were all done by the initiative of the Press Manager?

**The Honourable Sir Frank Noyce:** (a) There has been some damage to certain parts of the building due to settlement. Such repairs as are considered necessary are being carried out.

(b) The total amount spent on the construction of the Press building was Rs. 4,90,000.

The project, as constructed, was approved by the Government of India.

**SMOKE OF GAS FROM MONO-CASTING MACHINES IN THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA PRESS, NEW DELHI.**

166. **\*Lala Rameshwar Prasad Bagla:** Is it a fact that smoke of gas from mono-casting machines covers the whole hall of the Government of India Press, New Delhi? If so, why have such machines been installed just in the middle of the hall at the risk of lives of over 500 employees of the Press?

**The Honourable Sir Frank Noyce:** No: gas is not used in the press, and an exhaust arrangement approved by the Factory Inspector is installed for the extraction of fumes that may be emitted by the molten metal in the casting machines. The latter part of the question does not arise.

**ROYAL CALCUTTA TURF CLUB SWEEP.**

167. **\*Pandit Satyendra Nath Sen:** Are Government aware that numbers or tickets for the Royal Calcutta Turf Club Sweep on the Derby are widely sold by almost all the banks and business houses of Calcutta and other parts of India and available to the public?

**The Honourable Sir Harry Haig:** The tickets, I understand, are issued only to members of the Club.

**STOPPAGE OF THE SALE OF TICKETS OR NUMBERS FOR THE "CALCUTTA SWEEP" IN BRITAIN.**

168. **\*Pandit Satyendra Nath Sen:** Has the attention of Government been drawn to the notice sent round by the Home Secretary of Britain to the banks and business houses of England, stopping their sale of the tickets or numbers for the "Calcutta Sweep" in Britain, early in 1932?

**The Honourable Sir Harry Haig:** I have not seen the notice referred to by the Honourable Member.

**SWEEPS RUN BY THE ROYAL CALCUTTA TURF CLUB.**

169. **\*Pandit Satyendra Nath Sen:** With reference to their reply to my supplementary questions to question No. 908 on the 13th September, 1933, will Government please state why the sweeps run by the Royal Calcutta Turf Club do not come under the provisions of the Indian Penal Code?

**The Honourable Sir Harry Haig:** The question whether the organization of a sweepstake comes within the provisions of section 294A of the Indian Penal Code depends on the facts. I understand that for many years past the Government of Bengal have acted on the view that the sweepstakes of the Calcutta Turf Club do not come within the provisions of the section.

**Pandit Satyendra Nath Sen:** May I know if the Government of Bengal are justified in taking such a view?

**The Honourable Sir Harry Haig:** That, Sir, depends on the facts, with which I am not fully acquainted.

**Pandit Satyendra Nath Sen:** Is there any difference between a private sweepstake and a public sweepstake, so far as the application of this section is concerned?

**The Honourable Sir Harry Haig:** I am afraid I cannot undertake a disquisition on the state of the law. The question is whether the law applies to certain facts: and, as I have said, I am not fully acquainted with the facts.

**Mr. N. M. Joshi:** May I ask whether this law in question is a Central law or a Provincial law?

**The Honourable Sir Harry Haig:** It is a law which is provincially administered.

**Pandit Satyendra Nath Sen:** Are Government aware that the view taken by the Calcutta High Court is that these lotteries are authorised by the Governor General in Council?

**The Honourable Sir Harry Haig:** No, Sir, I do not think that can be the view of the Calcutta High Court—for in fact it is not accurate.

**Mr. N. M. Joshi:** May I ask whether the Government of India have got any views of their own on the question of the applicability of this Central legislation, which is provincially administered, to the sweep?

**The Honourable Sir Harry Haig:** The Government of India are content in this matter to trust the judgment of the Government of Bengal.

**Mr. S. C. Mitra:** May we take it that the Government of Bengal consulted their legal officers or the Advocate General of Bengal before coming to their conclusion that it was legally allowed?

**The Honourable Sir Harry Haig:** I am not aware of that, Sir.

**Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh:** Is it not a fact that as regards the Calcutta Turf Club, there are many high European officials who are interested in that institution?

**The Honourable Sir Harry Haig:** I do not think, Sir, the Member in charge of the Home Department is responsible for the Calcutta Turf Club. (Laughter).

#### SWEEPS RUN BY THE ROYAL CALCUTTA TURF CLUB.

170. **\*Pandit Satyendra Nath Sen:** Is it not a fact that the Royal Calcutta Turf Club is a public limited concern registered under the Companies Act and not a private body as stated by the Home Member in this House on the 13th September 1933, and carries on its sweep business under the designation of "The Royal Calcutta Turf Club Ltd."?

**The Honourable Sir Harry Haig:** I understand that the Royal Calcutta Turf Club is not a limited concern registered under the Indian Companies Act.

#### NON-PROSECUTION OF THE STATESMAN FOR GIVING PUBLICITY TO THE IRISH SWEEP.

171. **\*Pandit Satyendra Nath Sen:** Will Government be pleased to state that while they sanctioned the prosecution of Messrs. Dhar and Sen for causing publication by selling Irish Hospitals Sweep tickets, why they have not prosecuted the *Statesman* which has given the widest publicity to the "Irish Sweep" by publishing every detail of it?

**The Honourable Sir Harry Haig:** The Government of India have no information of the prosecution referred to. They did not themselves sanction it, nor is their sanction to such a prosecution necessary.

**Mr. N. M. Joshi:** May I ask whether there is dominion preference in this matter, or empire preference?

**The Honourable Sir Harry Haig:** That is an interesting suggestion, but it has not previously come under my notice.

**Pandit Satyendra Nath Sen:** Is the Honourable Member aware that two gentlemen, Messrs. R. N. Dhar and G. C. Sen, were prosecuted for selling tickets of the Irish Sweep?

**The Honourable Sir Harry Haig:** As I have said, I have no information as regards the prosecution referred to.

#### STATEMENT MADE IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS BY SIR HERBERT SAMUEL.

172. **\*Pandit Satyendra Nath Sen:** Has the attention of the Government been drawn to a lengthy statement made in the House of Commons in May or June, 1932 by Sir Herbert Samuel, the then Home Secretary in Britain?

**The Honourable Sir Harry Haig:** I regret I have not been able to trace the statement referred to by the Honourable Member.

# ORGANISATION OF LOTTERIES IN INDIA.

173. \***Pandit Satyendra Nath Sen:** Are Government aware that lotteries are organised in different parts of India, particularly in Calcutta, where various sweepstakes, raffles and lotteries are being run for years by European clubs and other European organisations such as Churches, etc., the most prominent among which is the Royal Calcutta Turf Club Sweep on the Derby well-known throughout the world as the "Calcutta Sweep"?

**The Honourable Sir Harry Haig:** It is probable that there are a certain number of lotteries which do not come within the provisions of section 294A of the Indian Penal Code.

## PROTECTION TO THE WINDOW GLASS INDUSTRY.

174. \***Lala Rameshwar Prasad Bagla:** (a) Are Government aware that the United Provinces Glass Works, Limited, Bahjoi, is the only concern which manufactures window glass in India?

(b) Are Government aware that the factory has been running at a loss being unable to meet foreign competition, particularly from Japan?

(c) If so, will Government be pleased to state whether steps have been taken by them to save this industry from a continuous loss and possible ruin? If so, what?

**The Honourable Sir Joseph Bhore:** (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Government have received representation to that effect.

(c) The case was considered in connection with the enquiry into safeguarding and the conclusion was arrived at that action under the Tariff Act recently passed was not justified.

## ACTION TAKEN ON THE TARIFF BOARD'S REPORT ON GLASS INDUSTRY.

175. \***Lala Rameshwar Prasad Bagla:** (a) Was the Tariff Board asked to make an investigation and to report on the desirability of giving protection to the glass industry in general and window glass in particular?

(b) Was any report submitted by the Tariff Board? If so, will Government be pleased to place a copy of the same on the table?

(c) When was the report of the Tariff Board received by Government? Did Government take any action on the report?

(d) If no action has been taken, will Government be pleased to state the reasons for not taking any action?

(e) Do Government propose to take immediate steps to afford adequate protection to the industry?

**The Honourable Sir Joseph Bhore:** (a) The attention of the Honourable Member is invited to the Resolution of the Government of India in the Commerce Department, No. 458-T. (2), dated the 20th October, 1931, which was published in the Gazette of India of the 24th October, 1931, of which a copy is in the Library of the House.

(b) to (e). Yes, a report was submitted by the Tariff Board towards the end of March, 1932, and it is under examination by the Government of India. It is not usual to lay copies of the Tariff Board's reports on the

table, but on publication a copy is sent to each Member of the Legislature. No action can be taken by Government on the Report until its examination is completed, and this cannot be done until certain ancillary and connected matters are settled.

## UNSTARRED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

### DEDUCTION OF PROVIDENT FUND FROM THE SALARIES OF THE CARRIAGE AND WAGON STAFF OF THE NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY.

**66. Mr. Muhammad Anwar-ul-Azim:** (a) Is it a fact that the Carriage and Wagon staff of the North Western Railway submitted a petition to the Agent on the 20th August, 1933, praying for the deduction of provident fund from their salaries?

(b) If so, at what decision have Government arrived?

(c) If no decision has yet been arrived at, when is the matter likely to be decided?

**Mr. P. B. Rau:** (a) I am informed that the Carriage and Wagon staff of two divisions of the North Western Railway submitted a memorial to the Agent in August, 1933, praying for admission to the privilege of subscribing to the State Railway Provident Fund.

(b) As I explained in reply to starred question No. 140 by Mr. Joshi on the 16th instant, Government have had to postpone consideration of the general question of admitting inferior servants to the Provident Fund benefits on account of the expenditure involved.

### DEMOLITION OF ALLEGED ENCROACHMENTS OR UNAUTHORISED CONSTRUCTIONS BY THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER, AMBALA CANTONMENT BOARD.

**67. Khan Bahadur Haji Wajihuddin:** (a) Are Government aware that the G. O. C.-in-Chief, Northern Command in his letter No. 51651/XX (L. C. 2), dated the 18th December, 1933, wrote as follows to the Cantonment Authority, Ambala?

"The proposal (that the Executive Officer should carry out demolitions under Section 25 Cantts. Act) is an abuse of section 25. This section authorises the Executive Officer to act in emergent cases only and not to perform the normal duties and responsibilities of the Board."

(b) Is it a fact that even after receiving the above order, the Executive Officer resorted to section 25 in several cases to demolish alleged encroachments or unauthorised constructions?

(c) What action do Government propose to take against the Executive Officer to force him to apply the law rightly and not to disregard the directions of the Northern Command in this connection in future?

**Mr. G. R. F. Tottenham:** Information has been called for and a reply will be laid on the table in due course.

### DELAY IN COMMUNICATING THE SANCTION FOR CONSTRUCTION OF BUILDINGS IN CANTONMENTS.

**68. Khan Bahadur Haji Wajihuddin:** (a) Is it a fact that in their letter No. 398/R (A.D.-4), dated the 19th October, 1933, Government issued a ruling that the sanction of a building application commenced, for

purposes of section 188 of the Cantonments Act, 1924, from the date of the Cantonment authorities' sanction of that building and became operative from that date?

(b) Is it a fact that in their letter No. 484/R (A.D.-4), dated the 18th December, 1933, Government cancelled the above ruling and issued a fresh ruling to the effect that the sanction of a building application became operative from the date it was conveyed by the Cantonment Authority to the persons concerned?

(c) Are Government aware that the conveying of such a sanction is a matter entirely in the hands of the Executive Officer and that there have been instances in Ambala and other Cantonments, where the Executive Officer has failed to convey such sanctions for days and months after they were passed by the Cantonment authorities?

(d) Are Government aware that the effect of the new ruling will be the virtual nullification of such sanctions of the Cantonment Authority as are not agreed to by the Executive Officer and which he would delay in transmission?

(e) Is there any time fixed for the transmission of such sanctions by the Executive Officer? If not, do Government propose to fix it?

(f) Will Government please state the circumstances which led them to change their previous ruling of the 19th October, 1933? How are these rulings issued? Do Government consult their legal advisers before issuing the same? Were they consulted at the time of issuing the above rulings of the 19th October, 1933 and the 19th December, 1933?

(g) Are Government aware that the ruling of the 19th December, 1933, has caused great uneasiness among the people of the Cantonments?

**Mr. G. R. F. Tottenham:** (a) and (b). The answer is in the affirmative.

(c) The answer to the first part is in the affirmative. The Government have no reason to believe that the allegation in the second part of the question is correct.

(d) Government do not share this view.

(e) Attention is invited to sub-section (3) of section 181 of the Cantonments Act, 1924.

(f) Government always consult their legal advisers before issuing rulings on disputed points and on this point the decision was varied after reconsideration.

(g) Government have received a representation from the All-India Cantonments Association, Ambala, on the subject.

#### APPEALS DETAINED BY THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER, AMBALA CANTONMENT BOARD.

**69. Khan Bahadur Haji Wajihuddin:** (a) Is it a fact that the Executive Officer, Ambala, stated in the meeting of the Cantonment Board held on the 31st January, 1934, that the original appeal submitted by Messrs. Bansi Lal Behari Lal to the Northern Command through the Ambala Cantonment Authority would be detained in the office and a copy thereof would be sent to the Northern Command with a copy of the Board's replies to the appeal?

(b) Will Government be pleased to state under what section of the Cantonments Act, the original appeal can be detained in the office of the Cantonment Authority whose order has been appealed against?

(c) If there is no rule to warrant such a procedure, do Government propose to issue necessary instructions to stop it in the future and to direct that the appeal detained by the Executive Officer, Ambala, be sent to the Northern Command?

**Mr. G. R. F. Tottenham:** Information has been called for and a reply will be laid on the table in due course.

**ALLEGED INFLUENCE OF THE NORTHERN COMMAND ON THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF THE AMBALA CANTONMENT BOARD.**

**70. Khan Bahadur Haji Wajihuddin:** (a) Are Government aware that in the replies sent to the Northern Command on the appeal of Messrs. Bansi Lal Behari Lal of Ambala, by the Cantonment Board, approved by the majority of the members, it is stated that the Executive Officer is under the influence of the Command and that he must carry out the Command's orders?

(b) Is it a fact that the implication of such a statement is taken to be that when an order is received from the Command, the Executive Officer has to carry it out, without laying it before the Board, irrespective of its attitude towards that order?

(c) Is it a fact that in several instances, the Executive Officer, Ambala, has carried out orders of the Northern Command addressed to the Cantonment Authority without laying the same before the Board?

(d) Are Government aware that such an action on the part of the Executive Officer is considered by the people to be in opposition to the provisions of section 24 of the Cantonments Act?

(e) Is it a fact that such an attitude is interpreted to mean that the Executive Officer is responsible to the Command and not to the Board? If so, do Government propose to issue instructions to clear the point in public interest?

**Mr. G. R. F. Tottenham:** Information has been called for and a reply will be laid on the table in due course.

**DAMAGE DONE BY THE TANGRI FLOOD TO THE HOUSES OF THE SADDAR BAZAR, AMBALA.**

**71. Khan Bahadur Haji Wajihuddin:** (a) Is it a fact that considerable damage, estimated at about four lakhs, has been done by the Tangri Flood of September, 1933, to the majority of the houses of the Saddar Bazar Ambala?

(b) Are Government aware that most of this loss has been sustained by poor people and that almost the whole of Mochi Mandi has been wiped off?

(c) What relief, if any, have Government or the Cantonment Authority, Ambala, given to the poor people who have been rendered homeless and who have lost their all in the flood?

(d) What steps have Government taken to protect the Saddar Bazar from flood in the future?

(e) Is it a fact that the only remedy that Government have thought of is to separate the Saddar Bazar from the Cantonment?

(f) Is it a fact that in spite of urgent communications from the Cantonment Authority, neither the Government of India nor the Local Government have taken any preventive measure so far?

(g) Are Government aware that the next rainy season commences in June, and that if no measure is taken to stop the Tangri flood from devastating the Saddar Bazar, more serious consequences might follow?

(h) Do Government propose to take some immediate and effective measure to stop this calamity in future?

**Mr. G. R. F. Tottenham:** (a) Government have no information as regards the exact extent of the loss incurred by the inhabitants, but they understand that it is less than rupees one lakh.

(b) The reply to the first part is in the affirmative. As regards the second part, Government have no information.

(c) No representation has been made to Government by the people affected. They were first apprised of the position in connection with a proposal to construct a bund to divert the course of the river. The Cantonment Authority is, I believe, prepared to bear a portion of the cost of the bund.

(d) The question of erecting a protective bund has been referred to the Local Government who are mainly concerned and to whom a copy of this question and answer will also be sent. Intimation has just been received from the Punjab Government that the Financial Commissioner, Revenue, has visited Ambala and finds that a scheme for training works has been prepared and will be submitted for the scrutiny of the Superintending Engineer, Drainage Circle of the Public Works Department, Irrigation Branch.

(e) The reply is in the negative.

(f) No. As already stated in the reply to part (d), the matter has been referred to the Local Government who are taking action.

(g) and (h). Do not arise.

#### WATER-WORKS FOR THE SUPPLY OF WATER TO THE CIVIL POPULATION OF AMBALA.

**72. Khan Bahadur Haji Wajihuddin:** (a) Is it a fact that at the pressing request of Government, the Ambala Cantonment Board have taken steps to arrange their own water-works for the supply of water to the whole or most part of the civil population residing in Ambala?

(b) Are Government aware that the Board have already sunk two tube wells, carried the electric line to the wells and constructed a large storage tank and have spent the whole of their reserve on these items?

(c) Are Government aware that the yield of water from the two wells sunk, will not exceed 15,000 gallons per hour and that if continually pumped to give adequate supply of water to the Saddar Bazar alone, the wells are likely to fail at no distant time and that this calculation is based on the past experience of wells in Ambala?



(d) Is it a fact that the Cantonment Authority of Ambala is advised to sink two more wells to make its water supply reliable and that the Cantonment Authority, having no funds for this purpose, has applied to Government for a grant of Rs. 50,000 (fifty thousand rupees)?

(e) Have Government received this application, or has it been detained at the Northern Command?

(f) Are Government aware that the Ambala case is one of great urgency and importance from the point of view of the future of the Cantonment?

(g) Is it a fact that if the Cantonment Authority's water-works succeed, the military will have a large additional supply of water amounting to about three lakhs gallons a day available for military use?

(h) Do Government propose to get the application from the Command, if not forwarded, and to give the grant applied for by Ambala Cantonment Authority, to enable that Authority to complete its water-works?

**Mr. G. R. F. Tottenham:** (a) Yes.

(e) No application has so far been received by Government.

As regards parts (b), (c), (d), (f), (g) and (h), I am making inquiries and a reply will be laid on the table in due course.

#### NOTICES SERVED UNDER CERTAIN SECTIONS OF THE CANTONMENTS ACT BY THE EXECUTIVE OFFICERS.

**73. Khan Bahadur Haji Wajihuddin:** (a) Has the attention of Government been drawn to an article headed 'Abuse of section 25' in the *Cantonment Advocate* for the month of December, 1933?

(b) Are the facts stated therein correct? If not, what is the Government version of the case?

(c) Is it a fact that Government have already issued instructions that section 25 of the Cantonments Act is not to be used for ordinary municipal work?

(d) Has the All-India Cantonments Association represented to Government that the use of that section for issuing notices under sections 185, 187 and 256 of the Cantonments Act, is improper and has led to the virtual supersession of the Cantonment Board by the Executive Officer?

(e) Do Government propose to take any action on the representation of the Association? If so, what?

(f) What steps do Government propose to take to stop in an effective manner the abuse of section 25 of the Cantonment Act?

**Mr. G. R. F. Tottenham:** (a) I have seen the article.

(b), (e) and (f). Enquiries are being made and a reply will be laid on the table in due course.

(c) and (d). The answer is in the affirmative.

#### ALLEGED DEFIANCE BY THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF THE DECISIONS MADE BY THE AMBALA CANTONMENT BOARD.

**74. Khan Bahadur Haji Wajihuddin:** (a) Is it a fact that in several cases the Executive Officer, Ambala, has acted against the resolutions passed by the Board, without getting these resolutions rescinded by it?

(b) Are Government aware that while the Board ordered the tarring of certain roads in the Saddar Bazar and the material for doing the same was collected at the site, the Executive Officer stopped the work?

(c) Is it a fact that while by a specific resolution, the Board directed building plans to be sent to the Ward Members, the Executive Officer issued an Office Order not to send the plans to the Ward Members, without getting the previous resolution rescinded by the Board?

(d) Are Government aware that these acts of the Executive Officer are resented by the Board?

(e) Has all this been done under the instructions of Government? If not, what action do Government propose to take against the party concerned?

**Mr. G. R. F. Tottenham:** Information has been called for and a reply will be laid on the table in due course.

#### ACTION TAKEN BY THE AGENTS OF RAILWAYS ON CERTAIN QUESTIONS ASKED IN THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

75. **Mr. S. G. Jog:** Will Government please state the nature of action taken by the Agents of Railways on the following questions, copies of which were stated to have been sent to them? :

Starred questions Nos. 902, 903 and 909, dated the 18th September 1933, 965 of the 15th September 1933, 972, 992, 993 and 994 of the 16th September 1933, 1000, 1011, 1013, 1014, 1015, 1016, 1018 and 1019 of the 18th September 1933, 1050 of the 20th September 1933, 1183 of the 27th November 1933, 1184, 1185, 1186, 1187, 1188 and 1189 of the 28th November 1933, and unstarred questions Nos. 70, 71, 74 and 75 of the 18th September 1933, 113 of the 18th September 1933, 133, 134, 135, 136, 161 and 162 of the 20th September 1933, and 200 of the 21st November 1933.

**Mr. P. R. Rau:** I regret that my pre-occupations with the railway budget have not left me sufficient time to examine all these 36 questions in order to see which of them come within the terms of the ruling given by the Honourable the President on the 28th of November, 1933. As soon as I have time, I shall go through this list and shall obtain the necessary information to enable me to lay a reply on the table to such questions as come within the scope of the ruling.

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#### STATEMENTS LAID ON THE TABLE.

**The Honourable Sir Frank Noyce** (Member for Industries and Labour): Sir, I lay on the table the information promised in reply to part (c) of starred question No. 8, asked by Mr. M. Maswood Ahmad on the 24th January, 1934.

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ARTISTS FOR THE MURAL DECORATION IN THE INDIA HOUSE, LONDON.

\*8. (c) £619-7-6.

**Mr. P. R. Rau** (Financial Commissioner, Railways): Sir, I lay on the table:

- (i) the information promised in reply to starred questions Nos. 227, 228 and 229, asked by Khan Bahadur Haji Wajihuddin on the 31st August, 1933;
- (ii) the information promised in reply to starred question No. 1842, asked by Pandit Satyendra Nath Sen on the 11th December, 1933;
- (iii) the information promised in reply to unstarred questions Nos. 39, 40, 42, 44 and 45, asked by Seth Haji Abdoola Haroon on the 11th September, 1933;
- (iv) the information promised in reply to starred question No. 1463, asked by Mr. A. Das on the 20th December, 1933;
- (v) the information promised in reply to starred question No. 91, asked by Rai Bahadur Lala Brij Kishore on the 6th February, 1934;
- (vi) the information promised in reply to starred questions Nos. 92 and 95, asked by Rai Bahadur Lala Brij Kishore on the 6th February, 1934; and
- (vii) the information promised in reply to starred question No. 99, asked by Rai Bahadur Lala Brij Kishore on the 6th February, 1934.

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**EXPERIMENTAL CHECK OVER THE TRAVELLING TICKET EXAMINERS' WORK ON THE EAST INDIAN RAILWAY.**

\*227. (a) The Railway Administration report that it was not the intention to introduce a system of super-check under the control of the Watch and Ward Department, but that, as a temporary measure, extending over a period of three months, auxiliary travelling gangs working under the supervision of the Watch and Ward Department were appointed to assist in preventing illicit travelling on the East Indian Railway.

(b) and (g). No, certain staff who were available owing to slack traffic conditions and were considered most suitable for the proposed check, were selected for the purpose.

(c) The men selected underwent a course of instruction in the duties required of them, and qualified in the same.

(d) Yes.

(e) To ensure that they are cognisant of, and efficient in, their current duties.

(f) Because a check by staff unconnected with the travelling ticket examiners was considered desirable as a temporary measure.

(h) Approximately Rs. 7,000 for the whole period.

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**EXPERIMENTAL CHECK OVER THE TRAVELLING TICKET EXAMINERS' WORK ON THE EAST INDIAN RAILWAY.**

\*228. (a) As explained in the reply to starred question No. 227, the arrangement was a temporary one, and for that purpose the Railway decided as an experimental measure to see whether the services of the Watch and Ward Department could be utilized with advantage.

(b) and (e). The general responsibility of the Watch and Ward Department extends to the safeguarding of the financial interests of the Railway.

(c) and (d). No.

### EXPERIMENTAL CHECK OVER THE TRAVELLING TICKET EXAMINERS' WORK ON THE EAST INDIAN RAILWAY.

\*229. (a) and (b). For the purposes of the temporary measure, the Railway Administration considered it desirable as an experimental measure to entrust the supervision to the Watch and Ward Department, who had better facilities than the Accounts Department in the matter of staff and organisation to conduct the experiment.

(c) Government do not consider that the temporary measures adopted were inconsistent with the recommendations in the Moody Ward Report, as during the period of the experiment, the Operating Department continued to retain control of the ticket checking arrangements on the Railway.

(d) The experiment was not conducted on any other State-managed Railway.

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### WATCH AND WARD SQUADS ON THE EAST INDIAN RAILWAY FOR CHECKING TICKETS.

\*1342. (a) The Railway Administration report that, judging from the figures of passenger traffic and earnings during the period the Watch and Ward squads were operating, the experiment of putting these squads into operation had the effect of checking illicit travel on the Railway.

(b), (c) and (d). The Railway Administration report that the records maintained by the two temporary squads were not sufficient to furnish replies to the questions.

(e) and (f). The Railway Administration report that no such report has so far been submitted by the Watch and Ward Department.

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### GRANT OF ENHANCED SALARIES TO HINDU ASSISTANT SURGEONS WITH ENGLISH QUALIFICATIONS.

39. (a) Between August 1929 and December 1932, twelve Assistant Surgeons were appointed on the North Western Railway, of whom only two were given an initial pay of more than Rs. 200. The higher pay was given in consideration of the special qualifications obtained abroad and previous experience. I understand that one Muslim refused an offer of appointment on the ground that he was unable to accept the offer on account of his future prospects. The appointment was then offered to another Muslim, who accepted it.

(b) Does not arise.

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### REPRESENTATION OF MUSLIMS IN THE ESTABLISHMENT BRANCH OF THE OFFICE OF THE CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER, NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY.

40. The Agent, North Western Railway, reports as follows :

"No Muslim Clerk from the establishment section of the Chief Medical and Health Officer's office has been dismissed or transferred to other departments altogether. For the convenience of the Administration and not on account of any policy of weeding out Mussalmans from the Establishment Section of the Chief Medical and Health Officer's office, two Muslim Clerks were recently transferred from that section, one to a District Office in the Medical Department and the other to the Stores Section of the Chief Medical and Health Officer's office".

No fresh appointments were made on account of these transfers.

### VICTIMISATION OF MUSLIMS IN THE OFFICE OF THE CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER, NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY.

42. (a) The Agent, North Western Railway, reports as follows :—

Promotions have been given to those fitted for them irrespective of community. Muslims have equal chances of promotions with other communities. Orders are passed in each case by the Chief Medical and Health Officer personally.

(b) Disciplinary action for irregularities and unsatisfactory working has had to be taken against Non-Muslims as well as Muslims.

(c) No.

(d) Pandit Ram Narain was returned to the Commercial Branch from the Chief Medical and Health Officer's office early in 1929. No clerk in the latter office was subsequently chastised as a result of any allegations made by him.

(e) No. All promotions and punishments of the clerical establishment of his office are dealt with by the Chief Medical and Health Officer personally.

### DEPUTATION OF A MEDICAL MAN FOR A CLERICAL JOB IN THE OFFICE OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER, LAHORE.

44. The Agent, North Western Railway, reports as follows :

"(a) No. The Medical Officer, Lahore, has two Sub-Assistant Surgeons under him and neither of them works merely as a clerk. Each has definite medical duties to perform.

(b) The conveyance allowance granted to one of these Sub-Assistant Surgeons is for his journeys to attend to the Railway staff, Classes III and IV, living in scattered areas in Lahore. Class IV includes the servants of Railway employees. His visits are not confined to Mayo Gardens but extend all over Lahore area. His journeys amount to an average of 200 miles per mensem."

(c) Government are sure that if the facts are stated, the Agent, North Western Railway will take suitable action.

### MISUSE OF PRIVILEGE PASSES BY CERTAIN EMPLOYEES OF THE NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY.

45. (a) In the case referred to, which took place in 1929, the Agent considered that the official in question had committed a serious error of judgment and that recovery of the cost of the fares and the recording of a warning would meet the case.

(b) The offences committed by Mr. B. K. Sood and Mr. Ashwood were not identical with that referred to in part (a) of the question. Mr. B. K. Sood was discharged with 3 months' pay in lieu of notice. Mr. Ashwood was dismissed from the service.

(c) Each offence against the pass rules is dealt with on its merits.

### CONCESSION IN RAILWAY FREIGHT GIVEN TO THE PIONEER PRESS ON ITS REMOVAL FROM ALLAHABAD TO LUCKNOW.

\*1463. The Railway Administration report as follows :

(a) The reply is in the negative.

(b) The whole of the machinery and fittings of the Pioneer Press were booked as goods rates and despatched by mixed train to which goods wagons are attached.

(c) The difference in the freight charges on the various consignments at coaching and at goods rates would amount to Rs. 4,934-4-0.

(d) The United Provinces Government did not ask the railway to allow any concession nor was any concession in rates granted in this case.

## USE OF THE BUILDINGS OF THE OLD CAWNPORE RAILWAY STATION.

\*91. (a) (i). Yes.

(ii) No.

(b) The question is already under consideration by the Railway Administration.

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## PROVISION OF STREET LIGHTS NEAR RAILWAY QUARTERS IN CAWNPORE.

\*92. (a) (i) Yes.

(ii) Yes.

(iii) In October, 1933, the Area Welfare Committee recommended the provision of a few street lights in the clerical colony, and this is under consideration by the Railway Administration.

(iv) Yes.

(b) The delay in providing street lights in this part of Cawnpore Station is due to financial stringency, and not to discrimination.

(c) As already stated in reply to part (a) (iii), the provision of street lights is at present under consideration.

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## INSANITARY DRAINS NEAR RAILWAY QUARTERS IN THE GOODS MARSHALLING YARD, CAWNPORE.

\*95 (a) The drains empty into a pit, 600 feet away from the quarters, which discharges through pucca drains into low-lying land half a mile away. The pit has not been found to be a breeding place of malaria.

(b) The question of a better drainage scheme is under consideration by the Railway Administration.

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## DISCRIMINATION IN THE GRANT OF PASSES TO THE OLD OUDH AND ROHILKUND RAILWAY STAFF.

\*99. (a) The reply to the first part is in the affirmative. The curtailment is, in accordance with the Railway Board's orders, dated the 31st March, 1933, limiting the number of passes of all grades of employees on State-managed Railways.

The reply to the second part is also in the affirmative.

(b) The discrimination is due to the difference in the two sets of pass rules and to the Oudh and Rohilkund staff remaining after amalgamation under their own pass rules.

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## THE RAILWAY BUDGET—GENERAL DISCUSSION.

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Shanmukham Chetty): The House will now proceed to consider the Railway Budget. As only one day is allotted for the general discussion, the Chair has decided to fix a time-limit of 15 minutes for each speech, subject, however, to the discretion of the Chair to be exercised in very exceptional cases.

**Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad** (United Provinces Southern Divisions: Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I first congratulate the Honourable Member for Railways in presenting in a very fine manner the case of a losing concern,

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over the causes of which he himself had no control. The railway till 1930 had been the paying concern in every country. They were the milch cow, and every country and every Government wanted to take possession of them for the benefit of their revenues. The position changed since 1930, and every country is now trying to get rid of them like kicking cows and asking various bodies to take over the administration of the railways. It is not peculiar to India alone, but really it is a common thing which we find in almost all the countries.

Sir, I may say at the outset that I have one difficulty in understanding the figures given in various books that have been supplied to us. I have taken great pains to go through them, and I find that nowhere these figures tally. For example, the income of the accounts of 1932-33, which is already over, is given on page 10 in the Administration Report as 84.43 lakhs. In the Explanatory Memorandum (page 5), it is put as 84.17 lakhs, on page 50, it is 90.59 lakhs. Then, in the memorandum which is presented on behalf of the Government and which is called the Budget, the income is shown as 84.34 (page 2) lakhs and Sir Guthrie Russell, in his speech, the other day, mentioned it as 85.62 lakhs. Fortunately, the sixth figure did not exist in the speech of the Honourable the Railway Member, because he did not mention the figure.

Now, coming to the estimates of 1934-35, I notice the same confusion. On page 5 of the Explanatory Memorandum, the income is shown as 89 lakhs, while on page 50, it is 90.59. In the Budget (page 3), it is 94.31, and in the speech of the Honourable the Railway Member it is mentioned as 91.25 lakhs, and there is no mention of it in the speech of the Honourable the Chief Commissioner for Railways. I daresay they have been calculated in a different manner, but no explanatory note of any kind is given. Had there been explanatory notes, then we would have been able to reconcile the different figures that are given in six different places. I will probably be right if I were to ask the Financial Commissioner for Railways, Mr. P. R. Rau, to deliver a special lecture explaining how these various figures which are given to us in five or six different ways have been arrived at, and he will perhaps require the assistance of his Secretary and clerks to prepare this lecture for the benefit of the Members of the Assembly.

**Mr. P. R. Rau** (Financial Commissioner, Railways): Not at all.

**Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad:** Then, Sir, there are one or two small points which I would like to deal with first. We find, in the List of Demands, on page 14, the salary of the Chief Controller is put down as Rs. 24,000 and there is a foot-note saying that half of his pay is charged to the Railway Board, Demand No. 1. But I do not find any provision there. Perhaps it is an omission. The point might be explained.

Then, I would like to draw the attention of the House to one other important fact. The rule is that in the case of an expenditure, which is over two lakhs, it is necessary to have the regular sanction, but for an expenditure which is under two lakhs the railway itself can sanction it, and, if the expenditure is under one lakh, the minor officer can sanction it. Now, we find that there is an item, Kothri Bridge on the North Western Railway, for which 4.27 lakhs have been budgeted (Pink book,

page 21, North Western Railway). Now, it has been split up into two smaller items in order to avoid the sanction. This practice of avoiding the sanction by dividing a particular item into smaller groups ought to be avoided. I wonder why the Auditor General and the Finance Committee did not censure it.

Coming to the general arrangements of the Budget, we require these figures for two purposes. In the first place, we require these figures in order to compare them with the rest of the world. Here I have got the statistics of the world, compiled by *Union Internationale des chemins de fers*, in which they have given the figures of all the countries in the world but we find that the figures for India are left blank, because, from the data supplied by our report, they could not be calculated. We can find from these figures given for other countries the percentage of expenditure under various heads—administration, coal, pay of staff, etc., but it is impossible to find it for India. We don't know which portion is more economical. The second consideration on account of which these statistics are useful is how far the budgetary conditions will affect the tax-payers. These are the two important points in connection with these figures, but we find that these points of view have been omitted in the preparation of statistics that are supplied to us.

Then, coming to the Budget itself. Here I have got an official report prepared under the signature of the Financial Commissioner, Railways. On page 7, it is explicitly mentioned that the deficit is 15.43 lakhs. But I notice at the same time that the income has been over-estimated. The receipts under traffic have been over-estimated by 59 lakhs and the receipts under goods by about two crores. This is a very doubtful item and even Sir Guthrie Russell, in his speech, the other day, said that the decrease of our forecast was entirely due to taking too optimistic a view of our traffic receipts. The same optimistic view is taken in the preparation of figures in the current year, and unless certain conditions change, it is impossible to increase our revenue. In the first place, the price of agricultural products ought to be raised, so that the agriculturists may have more money to travel in the railways. Secondly, the volume of trade should increase, so that people may send more goods. I notice that the volume of trade has gone down from 520 crores to 271 crores, and unless steps are taken to increase the volume of trade and to increase the price level of agricultural products, there is very little chance of increasing our revenues. As regards internal traffic, our principle ought to be to remit as much as can be done without loss to the railways, and the principle of charging as much as the trade can bear is not a correct principle in these days of depression. In days of bounty, it may be a good principle, but we must try to be as helpful to the trade as possible and, by this arrangement, it is possible to encourage the trade within the country itself, by charging lower freight.

According to the convention of 1924, the Railway Department had to pay to the general revenues one per cent. of the capital at charge. Nothing has been done about this. This has not been paid for the last four years and the amount standing at their credit is about 21 crores. According to the convention of 1924, this should be considered a kind of loan without interest, and it should be paid as soon as the revenues permit. We ought to know from year to year what is the amount still due. We should not forget that the Railway Department, whenever they are in a



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more prosperous position, should give back to the general revenues a sum of 21 crores, which is due to the general revenues. This sum is arrived at after deducting the losses in strategic lines, as follows:

1931-32	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	5,36 lakhs.
1932-33	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	5,22 „
1933-34	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	5,21 „
1934-35	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	5,14 „

Then, I take up the Depreciation Fund, and this could more appropriately be called the "Deficit Fund". I appeal to my Honourable friends of the European Group, who are all businessmen, to see whether it is a sound business proposition to borrow money without interest from the Depreciation Fund. I do not know where this Depreciation Fund is kept, no detailed accounts are given in any of the report, whether the money has been invested in the Government securities and at what rate of interest. The point is raised year after year. We have already taken from this Depreciation Fund about 14½ crores, including the amount taken this year, it may be a little more. I think the probable deficit of the present year according to my estimate will be about 18 crores including the one per cent. of the capital at charge which the railways have to pay to the general revenues.

The next point I should like to deal with is the working ratio. The working ratio in India is much less than the working ratio in other countries. If I had the time, I would have quoted from this book which I have in my hand—the Statistics of International Railways of the World. We find that the working ratio of the Indian railways is much less than the working ratio in many other countries, and this is due to the fact that we are paying very low salaries to the subordinate staff. In these days of unemployment, you can get a graduate at any price, but it is exceedingly difficult to keep him honest. If you would not pay an economic salary to the subordinate staff, they will try to increase their income in a manner on which no income-tax will be paid.

The next point is Interest on Capital. Sir George Rainy drew the attention of the House, three years ago, that we ought to convert our loan in the form of debentures. But this suggestion has not been worked out. The Honourable Sir Guthrie Russell echoed the same spirit when he said that if the railways had been Company-managed Railways, we would have been able to pay three per cent. dividend which is really good in these days of depression. We have a loan of 802 crores which we have to pay and on which we pay an interest of about 32 crores. This is a very high rate of interest. We remember that in the Ackworth Committee Report, Sir Henry Burt, and Sir Rajendra Mukerjee, both advocated that we ought to have a special loan for railways and that we would be able to get it at one per cent. lower than the market rate. If we can borrow at 2½ per cent. guaranteed interest with participation in profits, then the interest charges will greatly diminish and thereby we can easily have a balanced budget even in the years of depression.

Now, I come to Capital Expenditure. Since Railway Finance was separated from general revenues, we have spent 272 crores as Capital Expenditure. Out of this, 94 crores were drawn from the Depreciation Fund and 178 crores were obtained by means of new loans. Out of these

177 crores, a sum of 111 crores was spent in a manner on which no revenue could be obtained. Each year we are going to add a certain amount to the business which is already in existence and on that account we go on increasing our interest charges and our Depreciation Fund. This reminds me of the example of a country in which the income-tax was charged on the price of the shoes which a person wears. Say, a shoe is worth Rs. 10. He pays income-tax on Rs. 10. The person resoled it ten times, each time paying about one rupee eight annas, and thus the price of the shoe rises to rupees thirty five, and the income-tax is levied on rupees thirty five. This is practically what the Railway Department is doing. They are putting more and more capital on a particular undertaking and charging more and more interest, and more and more Depreciation Fund, and so on, all these are unnecessary expenditure. We know that the Financial Commissioner for Railways was appointed to watch the expenditure on behalf of the Government, the Legislature and the tax-payers. He was expected to be the real supervisor of railway expenditure. He is watch-dog of the Finance Department. Instead of defending the interests of the tax-payers, he has been captured by the Railway Department. He has become the advocate of railway interests, and he is fighting with us on behalf of the railways, instead of safeguarding our interests in the Railway Department which he was expected to do. He is the other way round, safeguarding the interest of railways and trying to fight with us.

The Honourable the Finance Member appealed to us that we should have co-ordination between railways and roads. I think it is desirable to have co-ordination in his own Department first. Let us create a Board of Communication or Transport in the Government of India, so that all the efforts may be united in one place here and the next step will be to unite all the Indian railways into one or two concerns just as the British Government did in 1921 by combining 121 companies into four. We have got 53 undertakings and they ought to be combined into a few, and after passing through this stage, the next step will be to have co-ordination between roads and railways. Before taking that final step, these preliminary steps should be undertaken. As regards the Railway Administration, it is a three-wheeled carriage, the Divisional Superintendent, the Agent and the Railway Board. We organised the divisional system on the lines of the German Railways, but forgot that Germany abolished her agencies and amalgamated all provincial railways into one Central organisation. I think they should follow the whole and not part of the German system, and we should administer with a Central Railway Board and Divisional Superintendents. The agencies which only duplicate the work should be abolished.

Now, I come to the Railway Rates Advisory Committee. There is no meaning in having such a body. We ought to have an *ad hoc* Rates Tribunal created for a particular purpose. To have a permanent committee to decide about five cases each year is, after all, a waste of public funds. Moreover, the function of the Railway Rates Advisory Committee is merely advisory. In fact, the decision of the Tribunal should be final. The tribunal should consist of a nominee of the Railway Department, a nominee of the aggrieved party and a Judge of the High Court.

I do not like to raise the point about this Statutory Railway Board, because I have no time now, but I hope I will have some other occasion to discuss the same.

**Mr. Nabakumar Sing Dudhoria** (Calcutta Suburbs: Non-Muhammadan Urban): Sir, just a day intervening between the presentation and the discussion, it is not humanly possible to do justice to the Railway Budget within so short a time. Bristling with dark spots as it is, a good deal of its gloomy features has been sought to be screened from the public gaze through the effect of a highly effective terse literary speech of which the Honourable the Railway Member is so skilled a master. Sir, notwithstanding the ingenious way in which our two Railway Chiefs in the two Houses have been pleased to present the picture, the picture is very gloomy indeed. The outstanding feature of that picture is a huge deficit, deficit upon deficit, continued deficit from 1931 onwards. But it is incumbent upon us to find out, if we can, how this continuous decline of our railway revenues has come about.

The first cause, to my mind, is this: with the rapid change of times, railways are no longer monopolist carriers. Not only has the motor become a popular and convenient mode of transport, but air transport is also fast coming into the field. Water transport also still holds its way in its own sphere owing to its extreme cheapness. But our railways, no less than those of elsewhere, are anxious to see that other means of transport should go out of the field altogether, because their revenues are being greatly prejudiced by their presence. But they seem to forget that no means of transport can afford to stand by itself in the future economy of the world. Therefore, a re-orientation of their policy is needed to bring them relief at the present juncture. Co-ordination and not competition should be their watchword for the future. I cannot but, therefore, congratulate the railway authorities on the proposed change of attitude that they mean to adopt generally towards road transport services. But my idea is that the present Railway Board should be replaced by a Ministry of Transport so that the Department may take under its charge all existing modes of transport in the country and carry them on to the goodwill and harmony of all concerned.

I shall now try to make out the second cause for our declining revenues. It is the want of improvement of the quality of Indian railway management. It will be pertinent to repeat here how in the West railways are managed. The net operating income of a first class rail-road in America in August last was almost double the figure for the corresponding period for the preceding year. Thus reveals a recent report of the Bureau of Railway Economics in America. It is no wonder that such should be the case when we remember in what a business-like way the rail-roads are managed in America. Their latest action is that passenger rates have been further reduced from 3½ cents to three cents a mile for one way trip and two cents a mile for a return trip. This means that one can run six miles for only a penny. There the Pullman surcharge has of late been eliminated and improved sleeping cars have been provided for the third class. Permission has also been given to individual rail-road concerns to reduce their mileage charges to two cents a mile for round trip tickets with a ten-day limit. So it is not the removal of any political influence or the project of a Statutory Railway Board that accounts for that improvement in the income of the American railways. It is only due to better, more judicious, more sensible, more capable, and quite patriotic management of the business.

Thus, if the railway revenues in India are to be improved, the remedy lies in improving the quality of our railway management on the lines of

the West on the most up-to-date and scientific lines. We have been told by one of the Railway Chiefs that, by comparison with British, Continental and American railways, our railway income does not suffer much. But how can I accept his *obiter dictum* without being told about the track mileage, freight and passenger charges, scale of wages, conditions of labour, amenities for passengers, speed of locomotives and the like in case of each individual railway?

The third cause for the deterioration of our railway income lies in the absolute lack of foresight and unwisdom on the one hand and thoughtless extravagance on the other on the part of our railways. Our railways will spend out in capital expenditure crores of rupees on the slightest increase of their income. Our railway outlook is more or less anti-national and, therefore, whenever funds become available, they are sent abroad on some plea or other. Our Railway Chiefs do not look to the future or to the economy of this country. As an instance in point, I may say that, whereas our capital programme for the last year amounted to rupees ten crores, the American rail-roads bought only one new locomotive and only 1888 new freight cars during the first eight months of 1939 which was such a lean year all round.

I shall now come to some points which I want to mention while speaking on this subject. The railway policy as regards Indianisation of the topmost appointments still leaves a great scope for modification. The highest posts in the operating, commercial, engineering, accounts and audit, locomotive and wagon, stores and medical services of the different Indian railways are all, 99·9 per cent. of them, being still monopolised by non-Indians. Next, I do not object to the rehabilitation of the Hardinge Bridge if the costs therefor are kept strictly within the figure put forward. I only hope the newly constructed Willingdon Bridge will not come up for a similar treatment through some misadventure in the near future; because from what has transpired with the Hardinge Bridge and, from recent reports, to the Willingdon Bridge, I have come to entertain little regard for the engineering skill and outlook of our State Railway engineering staff. I cannot accept the proposal for the remodelling of the workshops in Jamalpur. The existing workshops at Lillooah, Lucknow and Kanchrapara should be made to absorb all the work that has hitherto been done in Jamalpur. The cost of remodelling and repairs are placed at such a figure that a new workshop on the most up-to-date lines may be established either at Mughalsarai or at Asansol with that amount. Besides, it will not be advisable to rear up again the Jamalpur workshop when, by reason of its closest contiguity to Munghyr, the area is not considered safe geologically. Again, why should more money be spent on the railway workshops when more and more articles, that formerly used to be manufactured there, are being given away on contracts outside and hands are being sent away in the name of retrenchment from all the workshops?

Another point which I cannot forbear mentioning is the grievance of a large number of men, Hindus, Mussalmans and Christians, working in the combined Railway Press of the town I come from, I mean the Railway Press at Fairlie Place in Calcutta. Due to the whims and caprices of the Superintendent of that establishment, the service conditions of a large number of hands there have undergone most unheard-of changes. The men there, Hindus, Mussalmans and Christians, are groaning under the existing conditions. They are trying to ventilate their grievances through

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mass and individual memorials to the Agent as well as by taking recourse to their ventilation through the medium of their Union; but, hitherto, without any result. It is necessary that the Railway Chiefs here should take the matter up and hold an inquiry immediately, in the interests of a loyal, faithful and most hard-working lot of people.

**Mr. Amar Nath Dutt** (Burdwan Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, probably this is going to be the last occasion on which this House will have an opportunity of discussing the Railway Budget, and my Honourable friend, the Commerce Member, will heave a sigh of relief when he finds that there is no Neogy to oppose his Railway Budget or his lineal successor, Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad. (Interruption.) I do not know whether the Railway Member will call him genial, and so I used the word "lineal". In a general discussion like this, I do not think I will be justified in going in detail through all the figures that have been placed before us, so skilfully manipulated, and to which I had, as member of the Standing Finance Committee, given my approval. So, without going through the figures, which is not at all a very pleasant task for many of us here, I shall deal with some of the general grievances of the public as regards railways and ask for their redress.

The first question that occurs to me is the question of reduction of third class fares. (Hear, hear.) The next is the re-introduction of eight-monthly return tickets. After that comes the question of passengers' amenities.

It is probably not known to the higher authorities that the food generally supplied in railway stations is not only not good, but unhealthy. The system of giving contracts is at the root of all these things. I will not try to probe into the causes of this bad food supply to the Indian passengers, but I wish to bring to the notice of the authorities that there should be better means of catering of food to Indian passengers. Again, I would request the authorities to see to the introduction of Indian restaurant cars in the railways. It has been my experience and I think it is the experience of many of us here to see that in the long restaurant car, which runs in the mail train, there are no passengers—sometimes two or three at most—who take even one meal there. I have found that, considering the number of passengers that enjoy these amenities, there are a much larger number of people who are compelled to take from those hawkers on station platforms food which a human being can hardly take. If a restaurant car for Indians is run along with these restaurant cars, I think much of the grievances of the people will go.

In this connection, I have to invite the attention of the Honourable Member to the freight on agricultural produce, which matter, I think, will shortly be brought to his notice by that young and enthusiastic worker from Utkal who has just got up an Agriculturist Group in this very House whose numbers outweigh the numbers of any other Party. . . .

**Mr. N. M. Joshi** (Nominated Non-Official): Is it a twin of the Film Group?

**Mr. Amar Nath Dutt**: I do not know whether it is a twin of the Film Group; but if a film-picture was taken of this group, I think my friend, Mr. Joshi, will be seen more in the lime light than anybody else, because he is more interested in labour than any of us; and that being so,

the agricultural labourers ought to get more attention from him than the industrial labourers who are infinitesimally small in number as compared with the agriculturists.

There is one other minor matter about which also I would like to draw the attention of railway authorities, that is, the introduction of platform tickets in stations where there were no platform tickets before and which hardly brings in the income required to keep a man at the door of these platforms. I can cite an instance of a place where I asked the man who was dealing with platform tickets "How much have you got today?" and he gave me the figure of Rs. 2-12. I asked him what his pay was, and he said, it was something between 70 and 80 rupees. I do not see any necessity, therefore, of having these platform tickets at such a high cost: it does not pay at all. In fact, in smaller stations, these platforms are the places where the people go just for an evening stroll or just to meet some passengers who may come, and they will not go there if a charge of one anna is made. I can well understand the necessity of platform tickets in big stations like Delhi or Howrah, but for smaller stations like Burdwan and other places, I do not see any necessity.

There is one other important matter—I do not know whether I should enter into it at length—but I shall just mention briefly what has been mentioned more than once in this House—about the strategic railways. These railways, as every one knows, are not paying. The trains run on some of these railways twice a week and at times not even that. They are hardly considered necessary for passenger or goods transport: they are solely for military transport; if that be so, I think these strategic lines should be given over to His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief for administration, and the Indian taxpayer relieved to that extent.

Something has been said about the Jamalpur workshops and workshops in other places by the previous speaker, and I shall not say anything more about it, save and except this, that if these workshops are to be reconstructed, they should be reconstructed at Asansol, if possible. . . .

**Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh** (Muzaffarpur *cum* Champaran: Non-Muhammadan): In Bengal, and not in Bihar?

**Mr. Amar Nath Dutt:** My friend says "In Bengal, and not in Bihar". Provincialism is rampant. I remember the days when my friend was with us in the same Province. I am tempted to say: "We taught them the language, and they know how to curse". I know the feeling of the Biharis against the Bengalees. I know that they are very provincial in their outlook; but they ought to remember that still, in order to keep the moral tone of the services and of the professions in that province, a percentage of my own province men are required with a view to bringing them up to the moral standard which is required. Of course, I am prepared for the invectives and abuses which will shortly come from my friend, and so I shall not go further than that.

One other point I wish to mention is about retrenchment of railway employees. When the retrenchment committees were first constituted, I said from the beginning that you might retrench their pay, but not a single individual. In these hard days, to throw men to unemployment is a very dire thing for the safety and good government of the country. Salary and pay has been increased to an inordinate extent in every department of the Government. It was necessary to do so owing to the rise in prices after the war. But, Sir, prices have gone much below the

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pre-war rates, and, if that is so, I think by retrenching the salaries and not by retrenching even a single individual greater economy can be effected than by resorting to retrenchment of a few poor people in various departments, and I am sorry to say that the axe of retrenchment has fallen heavily on the poorer classes only. This should be remedied as much as possible and retrenched men should be provided for as early as possible in the railways.

There are two other things which have been mentioned in the speeches of the Honourable the Commerce Member and the Honourable Sir Guthrie Russell. From the speech of Sir Guthrie Russell, I find he makes a reference there to the Publicity Bureaus in New York and London, and that no less than sixty lakhs of rupees have been spent by foreign tourists in India, but I would like to know really if there has been any appreciable increase in the number of tourists in India after those Publicity Bureaus have been constituted in New York and London compared to the cost that has been incurred on these Bureaus. That has not been stated, and so we are not in a position to make a fair comparison. Sir, I believe these Publicity Bureaus have not been very useful in bringing in increased revenues to our Railways.

Then, the other thing is in regard to the Hardinge Bridge. Sir, older men like ourselves remember very well the days when we had to go to Darjeeling in boats by crossing the ferry, and I feel that, as a result of the construction of this Hardinge Bridge, not much convenience has been afforded to the travelling public. I remember having gone to Darjeeling by crossing the river in boats, and I found the experience more pleasant than by going there over this bridge. Whatever that may be, the Hardinge Bridge has a small history behind it. It was constructed by Sir Robert Gales some years ago. Before that there was a talk about the construction of this bridge for about 20 or 25 years. It appears several sites were selected, and one was selected by a great Indian Engineer also, and at last the present site was decided upon. People who know about engineering were of opinion that other sites than the one now fixed upon were very much better than the present site. In spite of all that, this site was taken up, and what has been the result? We had to budget for nearly two crores of rupees. I do not know how much more money will be needed afterwards, and, even after spending all that money, there is no assurance from the Honourable the Railway Member that this bridge will remain. That being so, I beg to submit that the bridge should remain where it is, and, if it is washed away, we should revert to the old method of conveyance by ferry boats which was not so inconvenient as some people seem to think.

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Shanmukham Chetty): The Honourable Member has got two minutes more.

**Mr. Amar Nath Dutt:** Very well, Sir. There is only one other item to which reference has been made by my friend, Mr. Nabakumar Sing Cudhoria, and that is about the Willingdon Bridge. He has expressed an apprehension that this bridge will also share the same fate as the Hardinge Bridge. I brought to the notice of the Honourable the Financial Commissioner that the trains were not being run on this bridge and that people were making adverse comments to the effect that the bridge was

unsafe and so trains were not being taken over this bridge. We were assured,—and we accept the assurance of experts in these matters,—that the bridge was quite safe, but there was no traffic for it and hence it was not working. I hope, Sir, that this Willingdon Bridge will not require more money in the future. With these words, I congratulate the Honourable the Railway Member that in this year of depression he has been able to show us some rise in earnings, and I hope, that his optimistic forecast will be fulfilled.

**Haji Chaudhury Muhammad Ismail Khan** (Bakarganj *cum* Faridpur: Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I must congratulate my friend, the Honourable Sir Joseph Bhore, on his being able to prove by actuals the realisation of the hopes of his optimism expressed by him last year during the presentation of the Budget. Members on this side of the House accused the Honourable Member of over-budgeting the income and underestimating the expenses. Even Members of the European Group accused him of undue optimism. But facts, as disclosed in the present Budget, show that he based his optimism on certain data on which he could rely. Though, Sir, I admit that my friend has realised more or less his expectation of income during the current year, yet I cannot admit that the railway finances have materially improved. The deficit is increasing year after year and the loans which are being taken from the Depreciation Fund are gradually increasing with the consequent rise in the interest charges. I am glad that in his Budget speech, this year, the Honourable Member has shown a bit of saving in the interest charges, but that I should say, is a windfall. There is a world-wide depression and, consequently, the money market has become cheaper and the market rate of interest has come down. But, Sir, there is no knowing that it will remain like this for ever. It may go up tomorrow or the day after, and consequently the interest charges for these loans from the depreciation fund will go up immediately.

In coming to the question of the consideration of all forms of transport as agreed to by the Conference in Simla, and to which the Honourable the Railway Member has particularly referred, I am sorry to say that in this respect he did not enlighten us as to the steps taken and the progress made by the Governments concerned and the action taken on such proposals with a view to increasing the railway earnings. As regards the rates and fares, it is an old grievance on this side of the House that fares of all classes of passengers have been unduly raised to such a level that the law of diminishing returns has begun to influence the railway earning. The result is that today, owing to the enormous increase in fares, the first class passengers are travelling second, second class passengers are travelling inter or third, and inter and third class passengers are travelling by buses wherever available. I would even now request the Honourable the Railway Member to take immediate steps to reduce third class fares, and I am positive that this step will be more than compensated for by a larger volume of traffic in spite of the fact that there is road bus competition. I would further suggest that reduction of fares should be brought into effect for smaller distances and especially for places where there is bus competition, and the train service in such places accelerated and comforts and conveniences of such passengers increased. Though I would like the railways to take all these steps to divert the traffic to the railways from the buses, yet I for one would never like the idea of the railways plying their buses in order to kill the smaller concerns.



[Haji Chaudhury Muhammad Ismail Khan.]

Then, Sir, I come to the question of comforts and conveniences of third class passengers. In previous years, all the predecessors of the Honourable the Commerce Member used to give us some idea as to what steps had been taken during the year and what steps were proposed to be taken during the next year about the increase in the comforts and conveniences of third class passengers. Sir, I do not see any reason why the passengers, from whom the bulk of the railway earnings is derived, should be made to pay for the increase in the comforts and conveniences of higher class passengers who are not at all paying. If any one of us has the fortune or misfortune to enter a third class compartment in the night, he will see that the system of lighting has been changed in such a way that the scanty lights provided in large third class compartments are not sufficient even to allow the recognition of faces. Probably, thanks are due to the railway officials for this diversion of electrical energy for the extra powerful lights and fans required in higher class compartments. Here, in the hot climate of India, we can easily imagine the lot of third class passengers being scorched inside the compartment with iron sheet roofs above their heads. Sir, I do not see any reason why third class passengers cannot be provided with a few fans. It is an every day knowledge of ours that third class passenger sheds are open on all sides and are built only providing a tinned roof. I think every Honourable Member must have noticed some time or other how such passengers are put to inconveniences during winter nights or rains and stormy days. The railway authorities think that Indian third class passengers are worse than cattle, because the horses, ponies and dogs of Europeans require more care, but not the masses of India. I wonder whenever necessary, these European masters of ours, still come out with crocodile tears for the Indian masses. It is only on questions of constitutional advancement that the interest of the Britishers overflows to the brim, because they want these masses to fight the educated and the advanced sections of India. Lastly, before I conclude, I would like to bring to the notice of the Honourable Member that, in spite of the fact that the money market is cheap, they have not been able to find out remunerative projects. Sir, I come from Barisal, and the communication of that place both from Calcutta and Dacca is very defective. I would request the Honourable Member to make a thorough survey as to whether any better communication can not be planned for Barisal, which is one of the largest rice growing districts, and any railway project, either feeder or main line, will, I think, be remunerative there.

Finally, I take this opportunity of thanking the Honourable the Railway Member and also the Financial Commissioner of Railways for providing funds for the erection of a new station building and platform at Faridpur which will certainly increase the conveniences of the travelling public in and around the place.

**Sardar Sant Singh** (West Punjab: Sikh): When a partner at the bridge table turns out an unusually bad hand, the etiquette of the 12 Noon table requires that he should be thanked with the trenchant remark "It might have been worse". The Honourable the Railway Member entertained the House in a similar fashion. At page 6 of his Budget speech, he says:

"That completes the financial picture which I have to present to the House. If it is not as bright as we might have wished, it might easily have been much darker."

We have seen, since the Railway Budget was separated from the General Budget, surpluses were shown for the first six years, but since 1930-31 there have been continuously deficit Budgets. In this year, there is a deficit of Rs. 7.78 crores, and for the next year the budget estimate is Rs. 5.30 crores. If the retrenchments that have been carried out in the railway staff for the last two years have not been able to put the working expenses and the income on a par, it may be asked whether there is not a further necessity to look into and examine the system of administration. It has been the complaint on this side of the House that the retrenchments that have been carried on have mostly fallen on the lower staff while the system of top heavy administration still continues. It is still a grievance that in this retrenchment campaign most of the high paid officials have not been touched, or, if touched at all, they have not been touched to that extent to which this House had been insisting. At the time of the presentation of the Railway Budget, the public expect that some relief will be given in the shape of reduction in third class fares or provision of more amenities to the travelling public, but year after year the public have been disappointed. When there is a surplus budget, at once comes the demand for the emergency measures to be adopted with the surplus earned, but when there is a deficit, the same story is repeated in the other form that nothing can be done so long as the deficit lasts. If, owing to good fortune, in a year or two the budget has a surplus, we will at once be told that during the deficit period urgent works had to wait. So in surplus years the Railway Department must look to new works and not provide any relief to the travelling public. In this manner, the public remain unaffected by any relief in fares or by provision of further amenities. I come to the next point. Sir Guthrie Russell is the Chief Commissioner of Railways and this House is vested with power to criticise the various administrative acts of the Railway. It is strange to find that Sir Guthrie Russell does not find his place in this House, but enjoys the calm atmosphere of the Upper House.

**An Honourable Member:** The Member in charge of the Department is here.

**Sardar Sant Singh:** I am just coming to that. During the year 1932-33; out of 3,788 questions that were asked in this House, 926 related to the railway administration. The heavy task of answering these questions fell on the shoulders of the Financial Commissioner. No doubt we are thankful to him for the calm and smiling manner in which he has been replying to the volley of questions put from this side, but still, not being in charge of the Department, he is not expected to answer those questions in the manner in which the Chief Commissioner of Railways is expected to do. I will state my position a little more clearly. Certain questions have been put during the last two years about the scandal regarding the special ticket examiners who were previously known as travelling ticket examiners. Time after time, information was given to the House that this staff had ceased to perform running duties entirely, and that they perform station duties only. I have collected a large material on the points, and this file in my possession contains the official programmes which are handed over to each ticket examiner about his duty. I find from these official programmes that the ticket collector is required to check tickets in the running trains in the same manner as he used to do in 1922, 1923, 1924 and 1925. On the plea that he is not required to do running duty, his

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emoluments have been cut down. When I showed these papers to the Financial Commissioner of Railways, he was surprised to find how the information supplied to him differed from this, but being not an expert he promised an enquiry into the matter again. My submission is that, if the Chief Commissioner had been here, he would certainly have been asked why there is this discrepancy between the information supplied and the actual facts in regard to the working of the railways. The position is that the employees in the railways are suffering hardship and are victimised by right information not being furnished to this House. This brings me to another point and that is about the recommendation of the Labour Commission. The Labour Commission recommended in their report that staff councils should be appointed on each railway to look into the grievances of the railway employees. So far, those recommendations have not been given effect to. We find that, in the *Roy's Weekly* of the 29th January, this question was raised in the Editorial and, with your permission, I will read a paragraph out of it:

"The question time in the Assembly is monopolised with queries about the personnel of railway services. They are mostly on matters which are within the competence of the divisional superintendent or the agent of the railway concerned. But the Financial Commissioner for Railways tries his best to give all available information. The member raising the question is still not satisfied; there is a volley of supplementaries; the President cannot check it, nor can the Financial Commissioner for Railways give further enlightenment.

The Railway Board, though facing the wrath of the Assembly has allowed matters to drift; the Indian Railway Conference Association which meets annually in Simla does not appear to have discussed it; the all-India Railwaymen's Federation which meets the Railway Board every six months has not approached the Government specifically in the matter. Meanwhile, the Assembly which should be a serious legislative body discussing matters of policy is almost daily the scene associated with second class magistrate's court, with plaints like licenses to sweet meat vendors, discharge of a pointaman, the suspension of a clerk, etc.

The Royal Commission on Labour recommended in 1931 a scheme for the establishment of better industrial relations between the railways and their employees. The appointment of what was called 'Staff Council' on each railway was a specific recommendation of that body which expressed the opinion that these councils should consist of representatives of employees and that they should work in conjunction with divisional or district committee, wherever they exist. These staff councils or committees, it was further pointed out, were to be assisted by trade unions, if any, in their attempts to ventilate the grievances of employees before the divisional superintendents. The Commission further suggested the appointment of a Joint Standing Central Board, consisting of elected representatives of agents and workers in equal proportions to consider and effect settlement of general questions common to all railways and matters where it has not been found possible to reach agreement in railway councils of individual systems.

The recommendations of this report have not so far been attended to by the Government of India. I will respectfully ask them to do something in the matter.

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Shanmukham Chetty): The Honourable Member has got two minutes more.

**Sardar Sant Singh:** The next point I want to touch is the prevalence of racial discrimination in the services on the railways. Last year, there was a complaint about the appointment and supersession by Mr. B. L. Cameron over the heads of several Indians. This year too the same complaint comes about the supersession of Indians, Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs, by two Europeans, Mr. Moody and Mr. Raino. Instead of removing the

complaint that was pointed out last year, I find that the same complaint continues. I cannot go into details of these cases for want of time.

The other question which I want to bring to the notice of Government is the system of appeals. Here, again the person who punishes the employee becomes the judge in deciding not only his case, but also his appeal. When a subordinate prefers an appeal to the Agent, when the rules provide an appeal to the Agent, the appeal is generally sent down to the Divisional Superintendent for disposal. It appears that there is a seal prepared with inscribed orders "the papers may be filed". This seal is put on every appeal. In this way injustice is done.

The last point I want to bring to the notice of the House in this short time is about the loss to the railway by thefts at the Mughalpur workshops. I am sorry I cannot give the details of that, but, in the case of three articles, big quantities have been recently stolen. One is teakwood. It is generally stolen from that place. Recently 20 pounds of silver was stolen and also 80 maunds of brass have found their way outside the workshop, and this, in spite of the fact that the thieves gave notice to the authorities that they would steal brass on a particular night. The thieves were true to their notice. The foreman of the shop is a European and the gate keepers are Europeans, and yet these things are going on unchecked. What is the punishment meted out to these guardians of Railway property? In one case, the foreman was reduced by one grade for six months and, in another case, mere warning was considered sufficient for the negligence. The complaint here is very genuine and I hope the Honourable the Commerce Member will make inquiries into these matters.

One word more, and I conclude. Last time, in his speech on Demands, Sir Joseph Bhore gave us several assurances that the grievances of particular employees would be inquired into. I respectfully ask him to tell us what has been done during the year to go into the grievances of those who were referred to by several Members during the discussion of the various demands, and what steps the Railway Board have taken to remedy those grievances.

**Mr. N. M. Joshi:** Within the few minutes which are at my disposal, I propose to place before this House a sort of preface to the speeches which I may deliver during the next few days if I am permitted to do so. Every one here fully realises the difficult times with which we are faced and, in these difficult times, I think every one of us will expect the Government of India to follow a policy by which these difficult times may be overcome. Unfortunately if we watch the policy, which the Government of India are following, I for one come to the conclusion that, instead of following a policy of meeting the depression, they are merely following a policy of drift. To me the Government of India appear like a man who lies on the surface of the water on his back, with his hands and feet stretched and holding his breath. It is true that he does not sink, but he does not swim too. He is carried up and down the current by the force of the wind. He has no motion of his own. We would all expect the Government of India to take prompt and effective measures to meet the depression. Unfortunately we find no indication of that vigour and of that promptness. I would like to examine the principles and the policy which the Government of India are following in their railway administration.

Railways are built and administered by the country, firstly, in order that the country should be provided with a means of transport, and,

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incidentally, the railways also provide employment to a large number of our countrymen. Now, in doing this two-fold work, what are the principles and what is the policy that the Government of India are following? The policy and the principle which I would recommend the Government of India to follow is that they should make this social service available to the people according to their needs, and, in order that this social service should be maintained, they should take from the people according to their ability. Unfortunately, the principles and the policy which the Government of India follow are exactly the reverse. The railways are expected to supply means of transport to all the citizens in this country, but the policy which the Government of India follow is to try and give as much comfort and as much facility to those people who already have got comfort, and to try and give less to those who hardly get any comfort. Mr. President, I do not wish to go into the question of the grievances of third class passengers today. But last year I only gave a few figures to show that the Government of India have in their stock one first class seat for 12 first class passengers, one second class seat for 90 second class passengers, and only one third class seat for 400 third class passengers. Mr. President, it seems to most of us that on the whole we have more first class seats than we need. We have also more second class seats than we need. But what do the Government do? Mr. President, I find from the last annual report that the Government of India have added 189 first class seats and 473 second class seats and have destroyed or taken out of use 820 third class seats. Is this the principle and policy which the Government of India should follow? I do not wish to go into the details of this question, but I consider that the Government of India are guilty, not only from the moral point of view, but even from the commercial point of view, in neglecting their duty. Sir, it is the third class passenger traffic which pays the Government of India the largest portion of their passenger traffic. If they want to follow the right commercial policy, they should try to develop the third class traffic, and they can only do that by giving the third class passenger better comfort and greater facilities. Instead of doing that, they concern themselves chiefly in finding comfort for the first class and the second class passengers. I hope, Sir, the Government will revise their course. If you take the first class traffic, my own feeling is that, in a poor country like India, there is absolutely no need for first class traffic. The country will never be able to pay for it, and if you maintain the first class traffic, you can only maintain it at the cost of the third class passenger. The volume of first class traffic available is indeed very small and, therefore, you are bound to make losses on that traffic. Why should you neglect the traffic that is likely to pay?

I shall now take up another aspect of the question. Take the treatment the Government of India give to their employees. It is the same thing there. They give more to those who already have much, and they give less to those who hardly have anything. They give large salaries to their European servants and to their superior services. Take the other amenities given to their superior servants, take the privilege of leave with pay. It is the poorest of servants who require such leave with pay. They cannot save anything out of their salary. Now, these get nothing or very little. On the other hand, they give large amount of leave to those people who are paid very large salaries. Now, this is only an indication of the policy which the Government of India are following. What are they doing in

order to provide employment to those people who are unemployed? Instead of following the right policy of providing work, they only follow the policy of retrenching men, with the result that that swells the volume of unemployment and deepens depression. I feel that the policy which the Government of India are following is one of favouring one class of people, namely, the upper classes, at the cost of the middle and lower classes of people in this country. Sir, that policy will never succeed. It is true that you may be able to make profits after some years, but at what cost and at whose cost? You are only creating discontent in the country, and that discontent will some day have to be reckoned with. Mr. President, I would, therefore, like the Government to revise their policy. They should follow the policy of doing justice to all classes of people, treating all subjects equally, instead of trying to favour the policy of benefiting one class at the cost of another section of the people. I would like the Government of India to consider this question also that when they, either in their treatment of third class passengers or in their treatment of the subordinate inferior employees, follow this policy of benefiting one class, such a policy influences the minds of all their employees. They know that the Government of India favour the upper classes of people, and the employees are affected by that very spirit, the spirit of partiality, I may call it the spirit of corruption. Such a spirit will then run through the whole of the railway services and, if that is so, it is not the fault of the employees, but it is the fault of the Government of India. The Government of India set a wrong example, and that example is followed by their employees. Mr. President, I would suggest that the Government of India should at least run their administration in a manner responsible to this Legislature. The railways have been making losses; these losses have to be borne by the poorest sections of the people who are also the most numerous; and, if the country as a whole has to bear these losses, is it not right that the policy and the principles on which we should carry on the administration of our railways should be adopted on the advice of the Legislature? But what does the Government of India do? It is true we spend a week of our time in discussing the Budget. But that is not enough.

Mr. President, I was privileged to take part in the discussion that took place when the separation of Indian railways was made. I was one of those people who supported the scheme and supported it, simply because there were some features which I felt could be developed in such a way that there would be popular control over the administration of our railways. One of those features was the establishment of the Central Advisory Board. I felt that although the Legislature would not find time to go into the details of the railway administration, the Central Advisory Board would find time. Unfortunately, the Central Advisory Board was formed in vain. The Government of India did not follow the policy which they should have followed of taking the advice of that Central Advisory Board. I do not know what is the present position of that Board. Last year I heard some Members complaining that the Board did not meet even once. I went through the report of the railway administration and I did not see any account of the meeting of the Central Advisory Board. Now, Mr. President, I want to know why did not the Government of India honestly tell the Legislature that they do not believe in the establishment of the Central Advisory Board and they have no need for it. They should have been honest and they should not have taken the trouble of getting the Board elected. But they are content with the mere election of the Board.

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Perhaps the Members are satisfied that they are elected on the Board, but the Board does not work. The Board that was expected to go into the details of our railway administration, the Board, which I once thought might develop into our Railway Parliament, does not function at all. Is that the policy which the Government of India are going to follow in the matter of their responsibility towards this Legislature? If the Government of India follow this policy, then I feel that whatever measures they may take and whatever may be the results of their policy, they will not deserve to succeed. I hope the Government of India will change their policy. They should be imbued with a better spirit, with a spirit of impartiality and with a spirit of justice, and they should also be ready to be responsible to this Legislature.

**Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney** (Nominated Non-official): Sir, I would be failing in my duty if I did not join other Honourable Members in offering my tribute of congratulations to the Honourable Member; but in doing so I have also to offer him my sympathy. My congratulations are due to the very excellent, in fact, heroic, manner in which he has administered the railways during the past year, and my sympathies are offered, because of the fact that, while administering his Department and preparing his Budget, he continued to be faced with the world trade depression that unfortunately exists today. Indeed, his Budget was evidently written and prepared under the shadow of the great earthquake. When one is faced with acts of God, it almost impels one to remain silent and to offer to the Honourable Member his sympathy and congratulations. Sir, if it is any consolation, I do that with the greatest pleasure and in a very wholehearted manner. Sir Joseph Bhore has done his best—no man can do more.

Now, let me examine the Railway Budget as a whole. I quite agree with the Honourable Member that here and there one sees patches of sunshine and in other places one can almost see the thick clouds dissipating showing their silver lining to the gaze of those who are hopeful of better times ahead. One can truly say that the Budget might have been more dismal than it is today and that nothing is so bad that it might not have been worse. I shall not adopt the role of an amateur financier and criticise the figures given by the Honourable Member, but I shall offer a few remarks on the anticipated Budget Estimates for 1934-35. The Honourable Member quite correctly states that the interest charges will be less, but he hopes that the total expenditure will also be less. Indeed, expenses will be less to a great extent if we exclude the cost projected for re-building the Sara Bridge and to meet other expenses in connection with the ravages of the earthquake on the East Indian and Bengal and North Western Railway. One cannot estimate what would be the probable cost of repairs owing to the earthquake destruction, and so I think his prognostication is rather rosier than it should be. I believe that when a final estimate is made, he will find that the total cost of repairs due to the earthquake will be almost double the amount the Honourable Member has stated.

The next question to which I wish to refer is the Depreciation Fund and which finds a very prominent place in the Honourable Member's Budget speech and is being used as the means to many ends. I have no desire to "depreciate" the value of this Depreciation Fund or to doubt

its total residue after deducting the demands that have been made on it. But I should like the Honourable Member to inform this House in what shape this Fund exists today? Is it in a fluid or a solid state or would I be right if I compare it with the position of the Civil and Military Pension and other Funds from which officers of the Governments in India have for years and years been paid their pension. We were told in England at the Joint Parliamentary Committee that this Fund was not in a solid state, but that there was no fear about the payment of pensions, for the first liability on the revenues of the Government would be and must be the payment of pensions. I should like to know in what form this Fund exists.

Sir, the next question which interests many people is the restoration of this five per cent. cut. The Honourable the Finance Member, a few days ago, made a statement in which he said that it was not the intention of Government to restore this cut and that until circumstances permitted it, he could not do so. I opine, there are two sides to this picture. Personally, I think the circumstances have not only arisen, but have past, and I do think that it is high time for the Honourable Member to realise that the cut could only be continued when faced with very serious circumstances, and it is no use continuing financial profligacy on the one hand in the case of Lee Concessions, and turning round to low-paid servants and telling them that you cannot restore the five per cent. cut. Even if the restoration of the cut is not universally possible, might I bring to the sympathetic consideration of the Honourable the Railway Member the present terrible plight of those of his employees who have been rendered homeless in the present earthquake? I refer to those employed on the East Indian Railway, particularly at Jamalpore, Munghyr and parts of Bihar and Orissa. Those employees are today homeless and deprived of all their comforts. I do not know what efforts the East Indian Railway has made to ameliorate these sufferings, but I would ask the Honourable Member whether he would be prepared to restore the five per cent. cut even with retrospective effect or make advances and loans without interest to the employees of that particular part of the East Indian Railway and also the Bengal and North Western Railway, or, at least, ask the Agent of the East Indian Railway to supply adequate funds from his Staff Benefit Fund which is in a healthy condition and to which, the Government of India, I understand, give an annual contribution of about 49 to 50 thousand of rupees.

My next point refers to the portfolio that is at present so ably held and administered by the Honourable Member. It was but a few days ago that my Honourable friend, Diwan Bahadur Ramaswami Mudaliar, expressed the feelings of the whole House when he congratulated the Honourable the Commerce Member on the able way in which had negotiated the recent trade treaties with other countries. For the first time in the history of our country, India has assumed a position of independence in international trade treaties and has entered into negotiation with England and Japan. Now, Sir, this Department of the Honourable Member's portfolio needs a whole time Member and I would not be surprised if the Honourable Member himself said that it was today quite impossible for one Member to administer these two big Departments, Commerce and Railways, out of many included in his big portfolio. My suggestion for the consideration of Government, and the Joint Parliamentary Committee, is this: The time has come, especially in view of the fact



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that the Statutory Railway Board Report has hinted at a Federal Minister of Transport and Communications, that this portfolio should be divided into two, one to be exclusively engaged in the administration of Commerce of this country and the other in the administration of Transport and Communications. Sir, I go further and say, I consider that the future Federal Government will require two separate portfolios, and here I think I have the agreement of the entire House and also of the Honourable Member.

Another point which I think merits the consideration of the Government of India is the lamentable absence—although, I am glad that the Publicity Department has recently been given a new lease of life—of any effort on the part of the Government of India Railway Board to further their business relationship and to co-ordinate the views of the public together with the heads of their Departments on the Railway Administrations of this country. Sir, we all realise the great and valuable part the Press has in the past played in the world and is playing today. Might I suggest to the Honourable Member that he should set about and see that at least once or twice a year the Press of this country is brought into collaboration with the Railway Department with a view not only to helping the Railway Department in its administration, but particularly to improving railway freights, passenger traffic and, incidentally, Posts and Telegraphs, and also in the matter of marketing the produce of this country. Sir, I desire to stress this urgency of collaboration, not only regarding new industries and new parties and policies, but the potential economic and industrial greatness that is facing the New India in which aeroplanes, radios, motors and newspapers have had such a magic effect, and also the interests of commerce, trade and industries of this country.

Now, Sir, let me offer a few criticisms on the general administration of the railways. Sir, I do not desire to play the role of a carping critic, nor do I desire to indulge in destructive criticism, for criticisms are of no use unless they are supplemented with matters of a constructive nature. But, my object is to let the Railway Board see itself as others see it. There are certain points in the Railway Administration which have become a "hardy annual" of this House. On the floor of this House, we have frequently presented our views to the Railway Board; we have gone so far as to defeat them in Divisions, but our appeals have fallen on deaf ears. Let me here remark that there is one thing that merits repetition even to an *ad nauseum* extent, and it is "truth". Therefore, let me try and indulge in one or two home truths.

There can be no two opinions on this point that there is no department in the administration of the Government of India where there is such deep and sullen discontent as one witnesses today in the Railway Department in all ranks, even officials. I ask, why should such a state of affairs exist in this Department alone? I could go further and say that, in the administration of certain Railways in India, things are so bad that it only requires a match to blaze the gun-powder that is lying, awaiting explosion. I am not trying to draw an ugly or a dark picture, and I think the Railway Board will acquit me of any desire to feed these flames of unrest and discontent, for I have at all times, by word or deed, discouraged unconstitutional measures for the redress of grievances. But, Sir, I must frankly admit that my patience at times has been sorely taxed, indeed

it is today very sorely taxed. I admit also that many grievances have been magnified by political wire-pullers to suit their own ends. But even then there is never a smoke without a fire, and the Railway Board, I believe, is fully aware of the causes of this discontent and resentment and, yet, we see in certain aspects of railway administration the old "as-it-were" John Company's system of administration being continued. The settlement of all railway disputes is placed in the hands of officers who, though possessed of high technical experience and skill, are utterly devoid of any logical experience. For years this Honourable House has passed cuts calling upon the railways to form a Complaints Department either in each railway or to relegate that duty to a separate Department of the Railway Board, but to each of these demands, the Railway Administration has turned a deaf ear, although I must admit that things are better today than they were five years ago.

Let me, however, for the edification of this House and for refreshing the memory of the Member in charge of Railways, turn to one aspect of the question of appeals by the subordinate staff. The procedure governing appeals against discharge is officially dealt with in the following paragraph:

"Appeals are finally dealt with by a Divisional Superintendent or a Deputy Chief Mechanical Engineer, if the order of discharge is issued by a senior scale officer attached to the Division or workshop as the case may be",

in other words, the Head of the Department of that Division has the right to decide finally on the appeal of a man discharged by the officer next junior to him. Now, Sir, this is a Chinese puzzle in logic for, it is, to my mind, one which is every day defeating the ends of justice on State-managed Railways. I hesitate to state whether this rule has been incorporated in the appeal rules by accident or by design, but the perversity and tenacity with which the Railway Administration cling to this illogical and unjust—might I say Zoological—procedure in dealing with appeals from subordinate staff leads me to the belief that it is part of the creed of the railway officers and an unholy canon of the State Railway Administration. Sir, what does this rule signify? It limits the appeals against discharge to the next higher officer and it denies any further appeal from that higher officer. Does the Railway Board realise that that very officer, who decides finally on this appeal, was originally consulted by his junior officer and that he had already agreed to the man's discharge. I ask, what on earth is the use of appealing to that Divisional Officer, etc., when he himself has already agreed to discharging or getting rid of the man? Why cannot the appeal go to an officer higher than that? To my mind, this connotes that the Railway Board is suffering from an acute feeling of infallibility, in regard to the judgments, opinions and competence of their Agents and, the Agents, in turn, look upon the Heads of their Departments and other officers as being equally infallible. But what happens when an appeal is made? I have myself made many appeals. In some cases, through the kindness of the Railway Board or railway officers I have obtained redress, more as a personal favour, but invariably I get the reply that "the matter is within the competence of the Agent" and yet the Agent is the officer who has already discharged the man and decided on the case and refused any repeal of the original order. Sir, surely the Agent will not go against his own opinion, and, so, what is the use of the Railway Board's stereotyped reply that "the matter is within the competence of the Agent"? Sir, to my mind, in all railway matters there are three sides to every picture.

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Shanmukham Chetty): The Honourable Member's time is up.

**Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney**: The three sides of this picture are, (1) the subordinates' side, (2) the officials' side, and (3) the correct or right side. All that I want the Railway Board to do is to get at the correct or right side, no matter what the official side is and irrespective of all consequences.

Sir, I desire to deal with many other matters, but time presses and there are just one or two important points to which I should like to refer before I sit down. We have in the Railway Board a Labour Member. We have also a Director of Establishments and a large staff which costs a lot of money. Now, what is the duty of this Member? He will not—he refuses to—interfere with subordinate's grievances. He does not appoint any railway officials,—the Public Service Commission does this. He does not appoint railway subordinates,—the Agent and his Divisional Officers do that. The rules of appeal and the rules of punishments, discharges and dismissals are in the hands of the competence (save the word) of the Agent. Then, ask, what is left as the duty of the Labour Member of the Railway Board? Is it only to look after the interests of, and to secure justice for, officials? If that is so, then I think it is a very costly Department and must be retrenched. Not only that, but even between officials, the Railway Board makes a marked distinction among its officers. Let me explain: There is a service called the "Lower Gazetted Service". I have been told on the floor of this House, that this lower gazetted service is an "official" service, and yet when I brought up this very matter before the Railway Board last year and pointed out the injustices meted out to certain lower gazetted officers, I was told by the Railway Board that it was a matter within the competence of the Agent to decide. Sir, could iniquity and discriminatory justice sink to deeper depths, I don't think so. Sir, I am convinced that these appeal rules must be radically altered, and the Railway Board must realise that there is some justice and some substance in the demand made for years by this House for a proper court of inquiry into complaints being established either on every railway or as one Department attached to the Railway Board.

Sir, there is just one more point on which I wish to touch before I sit down. It refers to a very important matter which has been exposed on the floor of this Honourable House by a series of questions, asked by Mr. Maswood Ahmad. It refers to the lower gazetted service. This lower gazetted service was formed in 1930 and began to operate in 1931. It was meant almost entirely for the benefit of subordinates. Indeed I am right when I add that the birth of this service sounded the death knell of other services called the "Local Traffic Service" and "Provincial Railway Services". That the lower gazetted service was meant almost exclusively—(the word used by the Railway Board Member last year being "generally"),—for the promotion of able and experienced subordinates is indisputable; but to this service selection is left to the Agents who submit their nominees to the Railway Board for final decision. Sir, what is the position of this lower gazetted service today? *En passant!* I challenge the Railway Board to institute an inquiry with a view to find out how many appeals submitted against the orders of lower officers have been upheld by higher officers. Also let them inform the House how many subordinates have up to today been recruited in the lower

gazetted service of State and Company-managed railways. Is it not a fact that about 15 out of 16 lower gazetted service appointments in the Engineering Department of the Great Indian Peninsula Railway are occupied by officers who were once temporary engineers and surplus to the staff and who, instead of being retrenched, as has been done with surplus subordinates, have been sheltered in the lower gazetted service, thus depriving a body of worthy and efficient subordinates who awaited promotion as their reward for long years of service? Sir, I consider this pre-eminently a case of absolutely studied jobbery. These are hard words, I know, but they are words that are pregnant with truth; and this is only one instance to prove to this House that subordinates have been studiously kept out of this service and that it has been filled by officers who should have been retrenched, but who are kept there till such time as vacancies occur in the official grade when they will be promoted. I know this is a matter which the Honourable Member will take up, because he has always given clear evidence that such injustice will not escape his vigilant eye and his acute sense of justice if brought to his notice. But I think Agents should not be given independent power of selection if this is the prejudiced way they are accustomed to use it. It is not a proper use of the power of selection. Another point is the continuance of officers writing demi-official confidential reports against subordinates. The Railway Board may say that the practice is dead, but I challenge them to prove it. I say it is still alive and it is being practised all over the railway system. I can cite instances on the floor of this House, but I will not weary the House though I am prepared to do so at any future opportunity.

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Shanmukham Chetty): The Honourable Member must conclude now.

**Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney**: All right, Sir, I thank you. There is one point into which I want the Railway Board to be kind enough to enquire, and that is the continuance of a very unjust distinction which is being made between the old Oudh and Rohilkund Railway and the East Indian Railway employees. The highest appointments in the Oudh and Rohilkund Railway (now amalgamated) are held by the East Indian Railway officers and it is rarely that the Oudh and Rohilkund Railway subordinates and officers get any appointments or promotions under the present regime. They are denied a square and honest deal.

Sir I will conclude my remarks with one appeal to the Railway Board, and it is this. The time has come when India must be prepared to take over the entire control of her railways, and, as the time has come when the closed book of the army must be opened to the eyes of the Members of the House, even if it be the preface, so must a beginning be made with the railways. We cannot control our railways unless we have the manufacturing and the building of all the wagons and carriages and engines in this country. Today we have to spend hundreds of thousands of pounds in indenting on foreign countries, including Germany, for the supply of locomotives. Surely the Government of India have got the imagination and the political foresight to realise that a beginning in this direction must be made now. I submit we should train our men in this country by bringing out the best of skilled British and other engineers from England, so as to erect up-to-date machinery and have not only repair shops, but shops to produce engines and everything that our railways

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demand. When that is done, India can think of administering her railways and nationalism and Dominion Status; otherwise she will ever remain dependent on other countries for her vital needs.

**Mr. M. Maswood Ahmad** (Patna and Chota Nagpur *cum* Orissa Muhammadan) Sir, I dare not congratulate the Railway Member and the two representatives of the Railway Board on the financial results, but I will certainly congratulate the Railway Member and the two representatives on their attempts to make the best of a bad job.

Sir, I do not want to go into the figures at this time, because, as a member of the Standing Finance Committee, I myself feel that I am a party to the passing of many of the figures which I find in this book; and I want to inform the House and Members on this side that there is nothing new in this Budget. Everything which is in the Budget is the same as in previous years. The pen is the same, the man, who has written this speech, is the same, the brain is the same which dictated the speech last time, and the facts are the same as in the last year's report.

**Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad:** The figures are not the same.

**Mr. M. Maswood Ahmad:** Though the figures are not the same, the results are the same. What do you find in this? You find that the income is less than the estimate. That was the case last year also and the year before last as well. Every year you find that the income is less than the estimate, and it is not a new thing this year. Then you find that the expenditure is more than the estimate. This is also not a new thing, because every year you find the expenditure is more than the estimate. Then you find here some pious hopes that in future years there will be some more income. That is also not a new thing, because every year you will find these pious hopes in Budget speeches. There are explanations which are nothing more than to lull children to sleep. That is also not a new thing for this year only. These are things which you always find in the speech on the Railway Budget and in the Budget speech of my Honourable friend, Sir George Schuster. Now, I want to remind the Treasury Benches that the criticism and these opposition speeches also are not new things. But I really want to know from the Honourable the Railway Member and his two lieutenants, whether they have ever examined the causes of this deficit Budget. Have they examined what are the real causes for the income being always less, and the expenditure always more, than the estimate?

In page 50 of the Explanatory Memorandum, you will find that the total passenger earning in 1929-30 was 35 crores and 75 lakhs,   
 1 r.m. in the year 1930-31, it came down to 31 crores and 68 lakhs, it further came down in the year 1931-32 to 28 crores and 96 lakhs, again it came down in 1932-33 to 28 crores and 94 lakhs; and, in the revised estimate, it came down to 27 crores and 80 lakhs. So, Sir, it is clear that year by year the number of passengers travelling in the railways is decreasing. It has been admitted by my Honourable friend in his speech, that our passenger earnings are now expected to be about a crore or nearly four per cent, below what we earned in 1932-33. This question should be considered by the Railway Board, as to why our travelling public are not using the railways in the same way as they used to do in

previous years. The main cause is not depression, because we find this year that the goods traffic earnings have increased from Rs. 53·75 crores to Rs. 57·29 crores, while the number of passengers and earnings from passenger traffic have decreased. The reason is this: the timings on the railways are not good and the comforts which the third class travelling public get are not sufficient: the railway servants do not consider themselves to be public servants; rather they think that they are the rulers and masters of the travelling public. You find that the treatment meted out by the station staff at railway stations is not sympathetic to the travelling public, and the comforts which they get in the trains are not as much as they get in the motor services. That is the main cause why the number of passengers is decreasing every year, as I have shown from a chart for six years.

Another point is that whenever any suggestion is made on the floor of this House that a certain thing should be done, my Honourable friends on the other side are ashamed of accepting any suggestions from us: they think it is a disgrace for them to accept any suggestion from the representatives of the public. I do not want to waste the time of the House in quoting instances of replies sent to me—always typed out in this form—I myself have got about 10 or 12 such replies—"It is unworkable", "It will involve expenditure", "It will increase the mileage of the train", etc.—these are the three or four typical sentences which are always quoted by the Railway Department and by the Agent in reply to suggestions sent to them by the public. That is the main reason why the travelling public is practically boycotting the railways year after year and preferring to travel in motors.

In this connection I wish also to mention another point: Members in charge of the different Departments have got some tenure of office—they work for a certain period of years. The Government of India have realised the need for this principle in other Departments as well: they have now made it a rule that the Director General of Posts and Telegraphs will hold office only for a certain number of years, and they have appointed a new Director General now; but you will find that there is no tenure of office in the Railway Board. Once a man becomes a Financial Commissioner or a Chief Commissioner, he can go on working for any number of years. (Interruption.) My friend says that there is some limitation of time—five years perhaps: I am glad to hear if that is so: then I leave this point and will make further enquiry. My information was that it was not so—it may be a wrong information. My Honourable friend should also enquire into the matter.

Reference has been made by one or two speakers to the fact that there are so many questions on these railway subjects that most of the time of the Financial Commissioner is taken up in replying to these questions. On this point I want to inform the Honourable Member through you, Sir, that we have got no other alternative but to put these questions here. I have got about half a dozen letters with me—I can show them to my Honourable friend if he wants to see them—whenever I wanted to get any information from any Divisional Superintendent, he says he is not in a position to supply me that information. I put that question in a supplementary form one day to my Honourable friend, and he said, he was not aware of it: but I have got half a dozen letters from District Superintendents to say that they are not in a position to let me have any information unless they get some instructions from the higher officers: then I wrote to the Agent—I have three letters from the

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Agents as well—and the reply was that I am not entitled to ask these questions unless I put them on the floor of this House. If that is so, what is the alternative for the Members? This is the way in which things go on: we have no other alternative but to put these questions, and we cannot, therefore, be blamed for doing so. It is the Railway Board and the Agents who are responsible for wasting the time of the House. . . . .

**Mr. N. M. Joshi:** Why do you not write to the Honourable Member?

**Mr. M. Maswood Ahmad:** I have written to the Honourable Member about six months ago, and Mr. Hassan, who is sitting there, has not sent me an information wanted uptill now. A week ago, I received a letter from my friend, Mr. Colvin, to the effect that he had been pleased to inform me that I might see him in his office: that is what happens.

Next comes the question of supersession. My Honourable friend, Sardar Sant Singh, mentioned something about it. I want to say that this is not a new thing in this Department. All the communities supersede each other: the Europeans have superseded the Hindus; the Hindus have superseded the Europeans as well: it is only the Muhammadans who have never superseded any one. . . . .

**An Honourable Member:** What about the Sikhs?

**Mr. M. Maswood Ahmad:** They have also superseded other communities.

As regards the appeal rules, I want to say something. It is a very important question. What happens at present is that whenever an appeal is made to the District Superintendent or Agent, practically the same officer, who decided the case originally, decides the appeal as well: whenever an appeal goes to the Agent, the Agent sends that appeal to the District Superintendent and the District Superintendent asks for information and explanation from the officer who passed the order; and all the officers, one by one, endorse the idea and agree with the subordinate's view. The result is that practically the same officer, who first passed the order, hears the appeal and decides the appeal. (Interruption.) My Honourable friend says that the same clerk writes the note. That is true and there should be some change in that system. In this connection I would suggest that there should be a different body constituted like the Public Services Commission which should hear all appeals of Government servants. After all, these Agents and District Traffic Superintendents and other officers sometimes feel that, if they decide the appeals against the order of their subordinates, they will mar the discipline, their decisions will go against the prestige and create a bad impression upon the subordinate officers. Therefore, I suggest that a new body like the Public Services Commission should be created to hear all appeals of Government servants, because the members of that body will not be under any influence and they will not care to attach any importance to the prestige and things of that kind, and in this way the appeals will be heard impartially and the employees will get better justice than at present.

Then, there is another thing, Sir. Nowadays I find that small stations are erected on branch lines and are called halting stations. It is

certainly a very good thing to have halting stations, because these halting stations are a great help to the poor villagers who are able to take better advantage of these stations being in closer proximity to their villages, and I think this idea of opening halting stations will increase the railway earnings. But, in this connection, I want to point out one thing. If you are going to increase the halting stations, there must be express trains also on those lines. You should not ignore the interest of those who are travelling on longer journeys, because, after having these halting stations every two or three miles, the real benefits of the train, i.e., the quick means of transport disappear. The passengers who wish to go from one station to another find great difficulty, because every five or six minutes the train stops at these halting stations, and, therefore, I suggest that on lines where there are four or five trains running, there must be an express train also. For instance, I may cite one instance of the Patna-Gaya line. The distance is only 57 miles, and it takes three hours to go from Patna to Gaya. I addressed a communication about this matter to the authorities concerned, and the reply I got from the Railway Department said that, as the distance was 57 miles only, it did not justify to have an express train. These are the words contained in the reply which I got from the Railway Board, and I am not at all convinced about this argument. Sir, the distance between Cawnpore and Lucknow is only 45 miles, but there are two mail trains and three express trains running between these two stations. If my friend is pleased to create halting stations, every two or three miles, on the Patna-Gaya branch, it will take, I think, more than three hours to reach Gaya from Patna and *vice versa*. Sir, this is a very important line, and it deserves to have an express train. I hope the authority concerned will consider this point sympathetically.

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Shanmukham Chetty): The Honourable Member has got only one minute more.

**Mr. M. Maswood Ahmad:** Very well, Sir. One suggestion has been made regarding the transfer of the Jamalpur Workshops from Jamalpur to Calcutta. Sir, I would suggest that in these hard times, when Bihar has been afflicted with an earthquake, if the Jamalpur workshops are removed to some other Province, it will mean another hardship to the inhabitants of my Province, because it will throw out of employment thousands and thousands of people. They have already lost most of their houses, and most of them are now living under the shades of big trees, and if these workshops are also removed from Jamalpur, it will create very great hardship to the poor people. The workshops should not, therefore, be removed from Jamalpur.

Then the last point to which I desire to draw the attention of my friend, the Honourable the Railway Member, is about the consolidated allowance that is given to the Travelling Ticket Examiners. They are paid Rs. 15 only a month and, in some cases, Rs. 20. I would really ask my friend sitting over there, what sort of menu would he suggest for eight annas a day. Even coolies of District Traffic Superintendents get nine annas a day, while these very poorly paid Travelling Ticket Examiners are paid only eight annas a day. Even *puries* are sold at eight annas a seer, and Honourable Members know that eight annas will be sufficient for only one meal. No menu can be prepared for that sum. These people are very poorly paid, and if their travelling allowance is also paid on such a poor scale, the authorities will not be able to remove



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their needs, and these people will have no other alternative but to supplement their income by some other means, and if these people are compelled to resort to such means, those means will be far more injurious to the Department, and the Department will eventually find that to give these people sufficient travelling allowance would be much better than allowing these people to resort to such unfair means. I hope my Honourable friend will consider these points carefully.

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Shanmukham Chetty): The House now stands adjourned till a quarter past two.

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

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The Assembly re-assembled after Lunch at a Quarter Past Two of the Clock, Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Shanmukham Chetty) in the Chair.

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**Raja Bahadur G. Krishnamachariar** (Tanjore *cum* Trichinopoly: Non-Muhammadan Rural): I must congratulate the Honourable the Railway Member for the extremely lucid manner in which he has presented this Budget. Want of lucidity is not one of his faults, whatever other faults he may have, but at the same time there is a great sense of humour in his speech, and it is that which invariably enlivens the whole thing. For instance, he first refers to the changes in the forms that have been made and referring to the inclusion into the accounts from 1934-35 of the worked system or working system, that is to say, where the railways work for a system belonging to other persons. He says, I am perfectly sure with a very very high sense of humour, that the Legislature, when these accounts are amalgamated, will have a right to vote—to vote on what? On the amount that you have got to pay to the owners of those systems who allowed you to work, and not only on that, but also on the amount that under agreement you have got to pay for the actual work that they do. I wonder what Sir Arthur Dickinson thought when he said that he was going to give us the right to vote an expenditure which we have no alternative but to vote. In that way the whole speech is occasionally interspersed with flashes of humour, and were it not for the somewhat tragic story that the Honourable Member has got to state, due to circumstances beyond his control, it would have been a piece of workmanship worthy of the occasion and worthy of the author. But as it is, there are a few points which I would respectfully submit for his consideration. The most important thing is the cause that led to the falling below his estimate of the amount of income. He has placed in the forefront the fall in the income from passenger traffic. Is he really surprised that there is a fall in the passenger traffic? As my Honourable friend, Mr. Maswood Ahmad, has said, the timing of these railways are so framed as if with a malicious intent, that a passenger who starts from one place in order to reach his destination, say 300 miles away and has got the misfortune to change from one railway to another—I say the timings are so adjusted

that by the time one train arrives at the outer signal the other train is off, and the passenger has got to wait two hours or three hours before he catches the next train. Is the passenger quite satisfied? I do not know if any Honourable Members are aware that years and years ago, when the late Sir John Gorst was the Under Secretary of State for India, a question was put in the House of Commons regarding the late arrival of trains in India. Sir John Gorst said that for a nation which goes to the station and sleeps there to catch the early morning train, a few hours' delay would not much matter. That is what he told them. Now, we have progressed a good deal from that mentality, and the most important difficulty that we experience is that the time tables are not arranged to suit the convenience of the passengers, with the result that if there is a man who has got a bus service from the place where you stop this passenger, the passenger looking to his own interest gets down and gets into the bus and goes off. What is the good of complaining about the competition that the running of the bus enters into with the railway? The most important thing is to remember that the passengers do not exist for the railways, but that the railways do exist for the passengers. Another difficulty is this. If anybody has gone to Bezwada, and I invite my Honourable friend, the Railway Member, to do, not by travelling in his saloon, but just to travel as if he were shorn of all the glory and paraphernalia of his office—let him go by some train from Hyderabad and get down at Bezwada, and, if he wants to take the train to Madras, he has got to walk a quarter of a mile from one end of the platform to another, and if there are women and children, at 10-30 P.M., when the Calcutta Mail comes there, to pass from one end of the platform to another with the sort of lighting that some of my Honourable friends have described regarding the inside of the third class passenger trains, then he can understand the difficulty, and if you find passengers from the other side of Bezwada getting into the bus and going off to this side, say to Tenali and other places, what is their fault? The fact of the matter is—I do not care whether it is the first class passenger, or second class passenger or third class passenger,—excepting when the staff know that there is a man with some authority—he is invariably—I say that without fear of contradiction—he is invariably treated in such a way as if he were not a human thing. Of course, if the staff knows who the man is or if the staff comes to know that the man would stand up and fight, then everything is quiet. That sort of treatment must be abandoned. Fares must be lessened, and I am very glad that they have been trying this experiment in the East Indian Railway, and I would suggest, if I may, that the same experiment may be tried in Southern India on the South Indian Railway system. There you have got the most congested third class traffic from one end of the South Indian Railway to another. There is scope for any number of trains and they did run them, but nowadays they have stopped it. You ought to see the way the passengers are treated. That, Sir, reminds me of a little incident where a man applied in London for the conductor's place on a tube railway. He was asked: "Have you had any experience of conductorships on tube railways?" He said: "No, but I have packed sardines". That is the way these persons are crowded in and, I think, if my friend makes that experiment down south, he would find that there has been such a large number of passengers as would enable him to run more trains, with greater regard to the convenience of the passengers which would ensure that enlargement of the passenger traffic which existed, as my friend Mr. Maswood Ahmad pointed out, up to 1930.

[Raja Bahadur G. Krishnamachariar.]

The next point is about goods traffic. I am glad the goods traffic is recovering but there is only one little suggestion I would like to make, if it is possible to give effect to it, to the Railway Department. I sent a rice bag from Hyderabad to Delhi and it took 32 days to arrive in Delhi. If you are going to convey your goods traffic in that manner, I do not think there is much chance of your increasing your goods traffic. The public are put to a great deal of difficulty, because there is no other way by which these commodities could be transported. What I would suggest is that at least once a week there should be one through goods traffic service from one end to another, in which only those commodities should be transported which are intended for very long destinations, so that there may not be any necessity to telegraph from junction to junction in order to find out where the bag is. If you ask the goods staff, they start telegraphing in order to find out where the consignment is. Therefore, I submit that there should be at least once a week one goods traffic service for consignments intended for very long destinations, the other local traffic being served by what they call the mixed trains, in which goods wagons are attached to passenger trains. That will not be any difficulty to the passengers at all. The goods can be easily loaded and unloaded. If my Honourable friend would accept my suggestion, in spite of the objections that might be made that it is not possible to adjust the time table, and sees that a passenger who travels a long distance is not put to the trouble of waiting at intermediate stations, in order to catch another train, which probably leaves a few minutes in advance, I assure him that, in spite of the depression, he will get a better return on his passenger traffic. The depression might continue, but the men have got to travel from one place to another. They have been accustomed to railway travelling and it is not possible to abandon that habit now. In that way, there might be a deficit of five or ten per cent., but not in this huge manner—10 crores out of 85. I would ask that these things should be taken into consideration.

There is one matter to which my friend, Mr. Amar Nath Dutt, referred which I could not understand. Why in calculating the profit and loss account for the railways these strategic railways should be added to the Railway Budget. We have been protesting here that the expenditure on the army has increased a great deal, and why should such an arrangement be made that the two crores loss on the strategic railways is shown against the Railway Budget, instead of against the Army Budget? It is true that they are railways, but they are not intended for the public. They are not commercial lines. They are intended for strategic purposes in order to serve the military and I am told that the railways do not even run every day. What I submit is that the accounts relating to strategic railways should not form a part of the Railway Budget and that they should be separated from it entirely in order to show where we stand and how we can improve.

There is one point which I do not know if it has pointedly drawn the attention of the Railway Member in Mr. Amar Nath Dutt's speech and that is about a certain bridge on the way to Darjeeling. I suppose it is the same bridge which is now going to be repaired at a cost of a crore and a quarter, but whether his pointed attention was drawn to it or not, there is a highly philosophical and moving sentence in the Honourable Member's speech which ought not to be allowed to go unnoticed.

He says: Once again have the unchained forces of nature proved the limitations of human skill, attainments and experience. Now, it is not a question of any human skill or experience. The fact of the matter is that they do not select the very best men in order to fix up these things. You know very well the dispute that arose over the fixing of the site for the Mettur project. I hope that the present site that they have selected would not give way. I have nothing to say against engineers. They are clever men. I do not like to be understood as referring to any particular individual. My point is that sufficient attention is not paid to the selection of the expert staff in order to deal with these extraordinary forces. You have got to select the proper men for this work. You have got to be very careful in the execution of the work, and then, of course, if an earthquake comes, no one can help it. The whole question is, whether due attention was paid at the time, when this bridge was erected, to the suitability of the local conditions and to the experience of the vagaries of the Ganges. I happen to know certain incidents which I would much rather not tell this House where big engineers did things, but unfortunately they all went wrong and yet people in the locality told them that the scheme would not work. These people, simple villagers, were brushed aside. I should like to narrate this incident briefly, but I do not know how much time I have got.

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Shanmukham Chetty): One minute more.

**Raja Bahadur K. Krishnamachariar**: One thing I would say. In the cantonment of Secunderabad, very big engineers came in order to fix up a water supply project, and they went to acquire land for which the Nizam's Government is still paying Rs. 50,000 a year as compensation and they encircled a huge big tank called the Jeadmatta tank. The villagers there said: "This is a thing which will never work." Of course the villagers did not know anything, because the engineers had their levels and all their other paraphernalia. They started the tank. It worked for one year, but, from the second year, it became a failure, and were it not for the fact that there was another big work of water supply in another place, this thing would have come to grief. Sir, I hope there will be other opportunities of referring to other things which I would like to refer to, but I would only say this now that when you launch upon big things, select your men, do it properly, and leave it to the forces of nature to have their way. With these words, I would respectfully commend to the Honourable the Railway Member the few suggestions that I have made and would ask him to give us relief in the matter of long travel.

**Diwan Bahadur A. Ramaswami Mudaliar** (Madras City: Non-Muhammadian Urban): Sir, I should like to offer my congratulations to the Honourable the Railway Member and to his Department on the way they have managed this huge Department in a very difficult year. I also hope along with the Honourable the Commerce Member that we have reached the peak of what he called the crescendo of deficits and that the current year, and, more particularly, the next financial year, will mark the disappearance of all these deficits which have been creating such a havoc in the railway finances of our country. If I offer a few suggestions at this stage, it is not so much by way of criticism, as to try and understand better the Railway Budget and be helpful to the Commerce Member and his Department.

[Diwan Bahadur A. Ramaswami Mudaliar.]

I am sorry I miss my Honourable friend, Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad, because it so happens that the subjects on which I am going to touch are those on which he dwelt this morning and my views differ somewhat radically from the views that he expressed this morning. I shall take up, first of all, the question of the operating ratio or the working expenses on which the Honourable the Chief Commissioner dwelt in his speech in the Council of State. The Chief Commissioner pointed out that the operating ratio in this country is much less than that in foreign countries. He pointed out that in the year 1932-33 the operating ratio was only 57.3 per cent. if we do not include the appropriation to the Depreciation Fund and 73.4 per cent. if we include it, and he compared it with the very high figures—84 per cent. for the Canadian National Railways, 85½ for the British railways, 96 for the United States of America Railways, and so on. Sir, it would have been much fairer if the Honourable the Railway Member had traced the development of the operating expenses in this country and had shown how they have steadily increased during the last ten years. In the excellent memorandum that has been supplied to us explaining the Railway Budget, you will find at page 49 that the operating ratio, including depreciation, has gone up steadily from the year 1924-25. While it was 61 per cent. in 1924-25, it went up to 64 per cent. in 1925-26 it jumped up to 66 per cent in 1929-30, 70 per cent in 1930-31, 72 per cent in 1931-32, and 73 per cent in 1932-33. I should like to have an explanation of these increases. It may be that this is due to a revision of salaries, it may be that this is due to the larger employment of personnel, but a more interesting question I should like to suggest to the Honourable the Commerce Member is this. The operating ratio shows a remarkable divergence from one railway system to another. If you take the figures of the various railways, you will find that this operating ratio varies to a considerable degree. Take the Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway, for instance, and I am now taking the operating ratio including the Depreciation Fund. On the M. and S. M. Railway, in 1932-33, the operating ratio was 60.9 per cent, in 1933-34, 60 per cent, and, in 1934-35, it is hoped it will be 59.8 per cent. On the South Indian Railway, it was 64.4 per cent in 1932-33, 65 per cent in 1933-34, and is expected to be 65.6 per cent in 1934-35. On the East Indian Railway, the figures were 65.3, 63.8 and 62.6 for those years, respectively. Now, take the North Western Railway, whose figures are used so largely in all these discussions. You will find that the operating ratio there is exactly what the Honourable the Chief Commissioner deprecated with reference to foreign railways. It was 81.6 per cent in 1932-33, 81.8 per cent in 1933-34, and is expected to be 81.3 per cent in 1934-35. Surely there ought to be some explanation why the operating ratio in one set of railways is so heavy and it is so much less in another set of railways. I am aware that the addition of the Depreciation Fund makes a very large difference in these matters.

**Mr. F. E. James** (Madras: European): Does that exclude strategic railways?

**Diwan Bahadur A. Ramaswami Mudaliar**: Yes. I am aware that the inclusion of this Depreciation Fund does make a difference. The way in which the Depreciation Fund is calculated is so curious that, without any fault of the railway system, it can affect the operating expenditure a

great deal. Deducting the Depreciation Fund, you will find almost the same result arrived at. For the Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway, the proportion is given excluding the Depreciation Fund. You will find the operating ratio excluding the Depreciation Fund to be 48·8 in 1932-33, 48·3 in 1933-34, and 48·3 in 1934-35. For the North Western Railway, excluding depreciation—and here I believe is a fairer test of the way in which the two systems are worked—the figures are: 61·8 per cent for 1932-33, 62·4 per cent for 1933-34, and 62·9 per cent for 1934-35, or nearly 20 per cent more than on the Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway. I should like to have an explanation from the Honourable the Railway Member as to why there are these vast divergences between the operating ratio on one system of railways and that on another system of railways.

Let me next refer to another point which was referred to by my Honourable friend, Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad, and that is relating to the Depreciation Fund. I do not know what the position of this fund is, but if I understood my Honourable friend, Dr. Ziauddin, or my Honourable friend, Sir Henry Gidney, it would seem as if this fund was conveniently pocketed by the Honourable the Railway Member and that the Railway Department have walked away with this Fund and nobody knows where it is. Some political capital was sought to be made with reference to another fund—the Pension Fund—by the diehard section in England and we all know that that fund is quite safe. The Secretary of State assured them that that was quite safe, and I am perfectly certain that the Depreciation Fund similarly is as safe as the Pensions Fund is safe. But that is not the point. The Honourable the Commerce Member in his speech suggested—and I was sorry he suggested it—that the question of the re-examination of the basis on which the Depreciation Fund should be allocated or arrived at should be held over for a future date. Last year we made a suggestion that we should examine the question of the Depreciation Fund and find out whether the rules under which that fund is being credited are applicable to this day or they require revision. The Honourable the Commerce Member suggested that the time for inquiring into this will be concurrently with other important financial questions which must be settled in connection with the future changes in the administration of the Indian railways. I should like to have a more clear exposition of the reason why he came to this conclusion, but I would venture to point out the immediate disadvantages of postponing a decision on this question. My submission is that the Depreciation Fund is out of all proportion to the real needs of the situation. If you only go through the Explanatory Budget Memorandum, you will find that while the Depreciation Fund has been credited in various years with 10 crores, 11 crores, 12 crores and 13 crores, the amount that has been used during the year out of this Depreciation Fund has been very much less. In fact, for the current year or the coming financial year, the Honourable the Commerce Member has agreed that there would be a large amount to the credit of the Depreciation Fund. What are we doing now? We are juggling with figures and making paper transaction in order to put into the Depreciation Fund 13 crores and we only draw out, during the next financial year, even if you include the earthquake disaster and the Hardinge Bridge, about 8½ crores. Now, you turn round and say that you want a loan of five crores from the Depreciation Fund. Why not have a straightforward transaction and revise the rules relating to the

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Depreciation Fund, so that you credit only eight crores which the revised rules may compel you to do. Then, there will be no necessity of this fiction of borrowing from the Depreciation Fund which my Honourable friend, Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad, deprecated. What is necessary is not to stop the borrowing from the Depreciation Fund, but what is fundamentally necessary is to revise the method of arriving at the figure that is required for the Depreciation Fund and only put into the Depreciation Fund that amount which is required according to the new rules that we frame for the calculation of these things. It seems to me that there is something radically wrong with these rules which were framed in those early days when the Depreciation Fund was first started. Those were the days when the railways were earning enormous surpluses; we were able to pay all our interest charges; we were able to put a large amount for reserve fund; we were able to give a large amount to the general revenues, and still they found a large amount at their disposal. Therefore, I suggest that the rules framed for the Depreciation Fund were on a generous scale and they wanted to put back as much amount in the Depreciation Fund as they possibly could. In those days, they put in more either in the Reserve Fund or they gave more to the Depreciation Fund. That situation does not arise now. If you examine the manner in which the Depreciation Fund has gone up, you will find the utter absurdity of it. The Depreciation Fund has some relation to the capital employed in the railways. What happened was that, in 1925 or 1926, there was a large increase in the capital expenditure and the Depreciation Fund immediately jumped up from 10 to 12 crores and went up even to 13 crores. It is well known that, where there is a large capital expenditure involved, the necessity for a Depreciation Fund with that new capital is very little at least in the starting years. The necessity may become greater later, so that the amount that has been put into the Depreciation Fund has no relation at all to the necessities of the case, but is merely a mathematical calculation rather than a calculation based on the necessities of railway renewals or whatever other things there may be for which a Depreciation Fund is meant. It seems to me, therefore, that this policy of putting up the Depreciation Fund and putting aside 13 crores or 14 crores a year is not the correct policy, but that the time has come when the whole thing should be reviewed. For this reason, you will find from the Budget Memorandum and also in the speech of the Honourable the Commerce Member that the Depreciation Fund has given a loan of 39 crores or we have taken a loan of 39 crores. What is the effect of it? When the time comes for the Railway Board to contribute its legitimate share to the general revenues, and we hope that time will come when we have turned the corner and are making profits, what will happen? This loan of 39 crores must first be paid to the last pie before the general revenues can get any benefit at all. It seems to me that it is unfair to the general revenues that this fictitious loan to the Depreciation Fund should be kept up with the result that at a time, when we are making surplus profits from the revenues, the Depreciation Fund will claim all the money that we can make and the general revenues will have to wait at least for a period of ten years before they are able to get a pie out of railway earnings. I venture to submit that by artificially keeping up this Depreciation Fund at this high figure, you are not fair to the railways. You are not showing the correct position of the Railway Budget and you are not fair to the general tax-payer. And if the time should ever come, apart from

the contributions to the general revenues, when you can reduce the passenger traffic or do anything in that direction, there again these 39 crores, which you have put into the Depreciation Fund, will block your way from carrying out any such reform. On these grounds, I think the Honourable the Commerce Member will be well advised to revise his decision with reference to the Depreciation Fund and bring about an immediate settlement on this question. In fact, I would go so far as to suggest that retrospective effect at least for the last five years should be given to the new rules which will be framed with reference to the Depreciation Fund, so that this fictitious loan from the Depreciation Fund may disappear as early as possible.

Now, Sir, let me touch on another question, the question of the railway and bus competition. I am one of those who feel that when we are having the railways as a monopolistic concern of the State, we should take every care to see that the earnings of these railways, the profits from these railways, are protected. I venture to go so far as to suggest that if the bus traffic or any other traffic, which has not established itself and has not got vested interests, comes into competition with the railway traffic, it is the bus traffic that should go and not the railway traffic. I find a note of apology in the course of the speech of the Honourable the Commerce Member. That may be justified by the difficulty that he felt in inducing Local Governments and other interests concerned to come to an agreement at the Railway and Bus Conference which was held at Simla. But I do venture to think that when this is a State concern and when the benefit of it goes to the whole of the State, that is, for the benefit of the entire public, then it ought to be the duty of all of us to support every proposal that is brought forward by the Government to safeguard the interests of the railways and to safeguard the earning capacity of the railways as against those vested interests which have come into existence. It is our experience, travelling from Kalka to Simla every time, when we go to Simla, to see that cut-throat competition exists with reference to motor cars. You can get a motor car for Rs. 12 or Rs. 14 at any time even in the busiest season when the Legislative Assembly and the Council of State Members go. These cars carry four people and the fare comes to Rs. 3 or Rs. 3-8-0 per head and the passengers travel more comfortably than even those who travel by rail motor. Government some time back took the opportunity of delaying the process of this travel and they fixed the time of 4 hours or  $3\frac{1}{2}$  hours between one Police *chowki* and another Police *chowki*. Neither from the point of view of safety of traffic, nor from the point of view of reducing the motor traffic has it been of any use. What happens is this. The motor car man dashes off at a speed of about 40 miles and then waits for 20 minutes or so at some intervening station, so that he may enter his destination according to the regulation. Something more radical must be attempted if this cut-throat competition is to cease.

Lastly, I wish to say a few words about the passenger receipts. I do not know why the experiment of reducing third class fares is made only on the N. W. Railway, and why not in the case of the Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway. In the case of the N. W. R., we have already seen that the operating ratio is much more than in the case of the Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway. We get very few of these concessions. I am sure, my Honourable friend, Mr. James, will agree with me that barring return tickets to Bangalore and perhaps to the Hill station



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of Ootacamund, there are no return tickets whatsoever except during the Christmas holidays, either of the higher classes or of the lower class. But in the case of the B., B. and C. I. Railway, the East Indian Railway and the North Western Railway, these return tickets are issued. Why are the Government not in a position to regulate these things with reference to the Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway, when the South Indian Railway does give some sort of concessions in these matters on its metre gauge section? How can passenger traffic be promoted if the railway system is so antediluvian and so wooden that it does not even follow the example of its own sister companies and continues its own old ways unhampered by any criticism of the Railway Board and unchecked by any control of the Honourable the Commerce Member or of the Railway Board. I am not making any complaint against the Agent of the Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway or against any of its officers, but I venture to think that just because they are Company-owned railways and more perhaps because they are so far away from the seat of the Government, namely, Delhi, the Railway Board and the Commerce Member should not close their eyes to what is happening in the Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway, and confine all their attention to the North Western Railway. It is a matter which requires serious attention. The whole policy of concessions should be re-examined and made uniform on all the railway systems. If it is given in one place, it ought to be given in another place. If railway passenger traffic is promoted by these concessions on the North Western Railway, it stands to reason that it will be equally promoted and facilitated by concession on the Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway. I venture to put forward both from the point of view of traffic earnings and from the point of view of convenience of passengers that these concessions ought to be extended by the M. and S. M. Railway which is half a generation or more than a decade behind in this matter.

One last thing that I should like to refer to is the Publicity Bureau and the Publicity Office. I am very glad, indeed I am not one of those who feel that it is not the right place, that a publicity office has been established in London and New York. I have seen both these bureaux, I have been to both of them; my only complaint is that because there is no sufficient imagination shown or perhaps there is not sufficient money put forward, the Publicity Bureau in both places suffers from want of adequate publicity. I had the opportunity of walking into the Publicity Bureau in the Hay-Market on more than one occasion. Two years ago, all that I could see at the windows were the donkeys of Simla and the asses of Delhi in procession. (Laughter.) I am not using this in a figurative sense. (Renewed laughter.) That was literally the poster placed there; now it has slightly improved. We have at least got a sectional view of some of these railway carriages in India. Here let me say from my wide experience of railway travelling all over Europe and many parts of America that railway travelling in India is the most luxurious of all forms of railway travel prevailing all over the world. There is nothing which can beat railway travelling in India. I am now speaking only of the upper class—the first and second class—and not of the third class passengers. So far as the upper class travelling is concerned, railway travelling in India is more luxurious than anywhere else. My Honourable friend, Mr. Dudhoria, wanted sleeping cars for third class passengers on the analogy which he said is prevailing in America. If my Honourable friend had only visited

America, he would have found that there is no such thing there, and where there are sleeping carriages for third class passengers, you have to pay a very heavy supplemental fee which is far in excess of the original third class fare. Here, in India, if you purchase a first or second class ticket, you are entitled to a sleeping berth. In no other country in the world do you get sleeping accommodation without paying a supplemental and, may I add, a very heavy fee for the sleeping accommodation. What I wanted to suggest was that these Publicity Departments should do their work more adequately. In fact, it is common experience that a Tourist Agency like Cooks has got more information at their disposal, more photographs, more views and more attractive books published and placed at their disposal than these bureaux. I venture to think that it would be a very good thing if this publicity work is improved. I agree with the Chief Commissioner when he said and I hope that that fact will be borne in mind by many people in this country that the tourist traffic should be welcomed as far as possible in this country, that it adds to the wealth of the country, that it is one of the things on which a country like Switzerland depends for its existence. The whole of the Reveira coast from Geneva to Marseilles depends, lives and thrives on tourist traffic. Here, in India, we neglect the tourists, they have to find their own accommodation, they have to look after themselves or get the things they can and they all get on by any means possible without any scientific methods by which either by Government or through any other agency the tourist traffic which is fundamentally necessary is regulated. Sir, my time is up and, therefore, I conclude, with the hope that the Railway Board will consider these suggestions. (Applause.)

**Rai Bahadur Kunwar Raghubir Singh** (Agra Division: Non-Muham-

3 P.M. madan Rural): Sir, at the outset, I should like to congratulate the Honourable the Railway Member for the care and thought he has bestowed in preparing the Budget. I wish to express my sympathy for the loss which the railways, especially the State Railways of Northern Bihar, have suffered on account of the earthquake.

Sir, the Budget speech shows that although the parcel traffic has been beneficial, the passenger traffic has fallen to a considerable degree. The reason for this is chiefly the bad time-tables. The time-tables are so bad that people generally like to travel by bus rather than by trains. I am told that the bad time-tables are due to the fact—I am speaking of the E. I. R.—that they are framed in Calcutta and they cannot see the requirements of this part of the country. They have introduced sectional trains. Formerly, we have had through passenger trains from Calcutta to Kalka. Now, this section from Ghaziabad to Kalka has been given over to the N. W. R., and, therefore, there are no through direct passenger trains from Calcutta to Kalka. In fact, there are no through passenger trains from Calcutta to Delhi, although there are mail trains and express trains.

Another point that I should like to mention is that there are no return tickets on the G. I. P. or on the B., B. and C. I. I admit, as my Honourable friend, Diwan Bahadur Mudaliar, has said, that some stations have been selected between which return tickets are allowed on the B., B. and C. I., but, on most of the lines, it is not the case, and in the G. I. P. and the B., B. and C. I. there are no return tickets. I wish to discuss the Budget from the point of view of the villager.\* This country, being an agricultural country, the requirements of the villagers and those living

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in the countryside should be the first consideration of this Department. When I was just now telling the House about the grievances of those people who travel generally by the passenger trains, I was thinking of the villagers. There are so many express trains that those people living in or near small stations cannot benefit by them. Formerly, when the management of the E. I. R. was under Company management, there were so many trains and the comforts of passengers were looked after very well. But, after the management has been taken over by the State, there are no trains. As an example, if I want to go to my place which is a small station, because I live in my village, there is only one passenger train which goes from Delhi to my place. But if I want to go in the evening, I have no train. The other difficulty from which the villagers suffer is the question of lowering of freights. In the Punjab, the railway administration have lowered the freight for wheat and other articles, but the freight has not been lowered in other places, such as Agra, Aligarh and Hathras which are all business centres. Therefore, the village people cannot benefit to any extent by the concession given by the railway in other Provinces.

When speaking on the general discussion the year before last, I stressed the necessity of inculcating good manners on the staff, but there is no difference whatsoever in the behaviour of the staff. It has been said that there is a deficit of 5½ crores in the Budget which is solely due to want of amenities to passengers, especially to the lower class passengers. There is a provision in the Budget papers for the temporary staff to deal with retrenchment proposals. I say, Sir, that when Mr. Pope has enquired into the retrenchment proposals or, to use the exact words of the speech, Job Analysis, there is no necessity for keeping another temporary staff for doing the same work of retrenchment which Mr. Pope has already done. So, Sir, it is my considered opinion that the railway should be run for the benefit of the rural population, the real winners of profit for the railways. The more the railways earn, the less they spend. In this connection, I will give the example of the B., B. and C. I. which is said to be a rich company, but they spend nothing on the amenities of the passengers and, in fact, there are very few amenities, there are no wires even to protect the cattle and human beings from danger.

Reading the speech of the Honourable Sir Guthrie Russell, I find that praise has been bestowed on the Agents of railways, but, from the Questions put by Mr. Maswood Ahmad and other Honourable Members, it appears that the Agents care very little for the orders issued by the Government of India, and I think this praise is not deserved, as we find from the answers given here.

Then, Sir, in the speech increase of traffic is forecasted, but I think this is too optimistic. Unless you change your time-tables and give more facilities to the passengers, the passenger traffic cannot increase. Then, the depreciation fund ought not to have been lightly touched, as has been already pointed out by several speakers. Then, Sir, the estimate of the ordinary operating expenses is too high, by about two lakhs, and the total working expenses increased by 35 lakhs is too much. I find also that the ordinary working expenses have also been increased for the current year by 45 lakhs. The capital expenditure is the highest on the East Indian Railway. It is 197 crores and 42 lakhs which is the highest on all these

State Railways. But the amenities proposed for the betterment of the lower class carriages are not given for the East Indian Railway. If the expenditure on this railway is the highest, there is no reason why amenities should not be provided for lower class carriages. Then, there is another point,—that the Indianisation of superior services has not increased in spite of the fact that an Indian is at the head.

In view of these considerations, I request Government to look more to the good of the general public by giving more trains, and by starting more passenger trains for the benefit of the rural population.

**Maulvi Sayyid Murtuza Saheb Bahadur** (South Madras: Muham-madan): Sir, when I rise to take part in the general discussion, I do not propose to level any charge against the Railway Member. We are fully convinced of the fact, that, but for general depression and other circumstances beyond the control of Government, he would have been in a position to present to the House a better Budget. But so far as the administration of the State and Company-managed railways is concerned, I fully endorse the views of the previous speakers. The Company-managed railways particularly do not care for the amenities of the passengers, and particularly the third class passengers.

As regards the treatment of the minority communities, I invite the attention of the House and of Government in particular. It is said in the report of the Railway Board, that a special officer was deputed by Government to look into this question about three years ago. Now, three years have rolled on and yet no decision has been arrived at by Government. So far as the Railway Board is concerned, we learn from this report that they have submitted their proposals to Government but I do not see any justification why this question is being put off from time to time. Sir, you know I come from a place which happens to be the headquarters of the South Indian Railway and the City of Madras is also in my constituency. So I am interested in both the M. & S. M. and the South Indian Railways. In the South Indian Railway at least there is one Muslim in the officers' grade. In this connection I give credit to the present Agent of that railway as he has issued a circular to the effect that, out of 12 appointments, at least two should go to Muslims and two to Indian Christians, both of whom are inadequately represented. And recently, having in view the fact that the audit department is being monopolised by only one community, he has been kind enough to invite applications from Muslim graduates for the audit section where there is neither a single Muslim nor a single Indian Christian. But as regards the M. & S. M. Railway, the whole House will be astonished to learn that there is not a single Muslim throughout that railway who holds an officers' grade. This point was brought to the notice of Government even last year. I hope they have done the needful in the matter, but even their recommendation has not been heeded by that railway. I request the Honourable Member in charge to see to this.

Sir, I thank the Honourable Member for the kindness he has shown towards the unfortunate sufferers in Bihar. He has undoubtedly made one great concession in their favour, namely, the half-rate concession, but I would request him and also other Members of Government to make no charges for freight so that the poor or unfortunate sufferers, whose calamities cannot be at all conceived by us, may benefit by getting supplies free of charge, just as the Postal Department has allowed money orders to be sent free.

[Maulvi Sayyid Murtuza Saheb Bahadur.]

Sir, I am very keen on one point and that is that there is no justification whatsoever in the expenditure on strategic lines being charged to this head. The legitimate charge is on the Military Department. This point is being urged on Government from year to year and nothing is being done in this respect. Sir, so far as the Army Department is concerned, they are spending crores and crores, and could not they attend to the upkeep of the strategic railways out of so many crores of rupees? Why should that amount be charged to this Budget? It is only a question of two crores and when a sum of 55 crores is being spent as military expenditure, this thing could also be very easily done. I hope the Honourable Member will see to this and do something in the matter in consultation with the Finance Member and H. E. the Commander-in-Chief. The attention of these Members and that of the other Members of Government is being invited from year to year to this matter, but nothing is being done. I hope at least this time this question will be given proper attention, and the needful will be done in the matter. With these few remarks, I conclude my speech.

**Mr. A. Das** (Benares and Gorakhpur Divisions: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I am obliged to you for allowing me an opportunity to say a few words on the general discussion, as I regret I will not be present to take part in the discussion on cut motions which are to follow the day after and the following days.

So far as the general discussion is concerned, I wish to congratulate the Honourable the Commerce Member, who has, without doubt, taken up a great task in preparing the Budget under such difficult circumstances. The congratulations are not from me alone, but they are sincerely given by the whole House from all quarters: we are very much obliged to him for all the trouble he has taken in the preparation of this Budget. So far as the general principles are concerned, I quite agree with what my friend, Diwan Bahadur Ramaswami Mudaliar, has said as regards the Depreciation Fund: it ought to be kept separate and no more money should be added to it than what is actually required: it should also be shown how the money in that fund is invested. We do not know whether it is invested in Government paper or whether it is lent out to various Departments or whether it is kept somewhere. I think a statement of the Depreciation Fund should accompany giving the particulars I have indicated and should form part of the scheme when the Budget is put forward.

Another point about the General Budget, as my friend, the last speaker, has said, is that there is absolutely no reason, if the railways are to be run on commercial lines, why for those lines which cannot be run commercially on sound lines our Railway Budget should be responsible for their depreciation. If a certain Department wants to have a certain line, or if strategic lines are necessary in the interests of the safety of the country, there is no reason why the other commercial lines should suffer for the loss on these lines; and I fully agree that, so far as the strategic lines are concerned, they should not form part of the Railway Budget, but should go to the Army Department.

The third point is about the Company and the State-managed railways. I am one of those—perhaps the majority of the public may not agree with me—who think that a commercial scheme is managed much better by a private company than by the State. Even in Europe, where there are so many State Railways, experiment has shown that those railways are being

leased out to private companies whose operations are checked: but it is the private company that looks after the management of the railways, because there is one advantage: they examine their budget from week to week, and they see what portion of the line is paying and what portion is not paying, and they at once take steps to restrict expenditure on the latter portion: here we have got in the State Railways many high salaried officers: the Budget is passed by the Assembly—I suppose it cannot be cut down—whether it pays or does not pay, they have to keep up the same establishment, with the result that every year a deficit budget has to be shown. If, on the other hand, those State managed railways which are so badly managed cannot be run on commercial lines, it would be much better to hand them over to certain private companies who would run them on a financial basis. It is a different matter if you want to run it as a charitable show. But, on the one hand, you call it a commercial department, while on the other, you manage it so badly, or rather you cannot manage it so effectively, that there is always a deficit budget. So I am one of those who advocate Company management as against State management for the simple reason that the Company management is always more effective and more economical than State management . . .

**Diwan Bahadur A. Ramaswami Mudaliar:** Is there any difference in India between Company management and State management either in economy or in comfort?

**Mr. A. Das:** Yes: I can point to the Bengal and North-Western Railway as an instance . . .

**An Honourable Member:** It gives 16 per cent.

**Mr. A. Das:** It might be worse in certain respects, but they manage without a deficit. You travel at almost the same speed; the second and first class carriages are better as compared with first and second class carriages on the other lines, their fares are the *lowest* of any railway in India—first, second or third class, and they can afford to pay high dividends. Their management might perhaps not be so effective; but they manage a big line extending over several thousand miles effectively. I know there are certain defects: the staff is not properly paid (Laughter), but other things have to be looked after. What is the primary concern of a business? Either make it a public purpose in which case do not look into the business side of it, or make it a purely business concern. I submit that, so far as the business side is concerned, the State managed railways are working under certain difficulties which Company managed railways have not.

Coming now to particular points, I would invite attention of the Treasury Benches to the purchase of Diesel oil engines. That experiment has cost about four or five lakhs: these engines are being purchased in order to compete with the motor bus traffic. It is a very doubtful experiment. At other places, where these engines were purchased, the experiment proved a failure; but the Railway Board now wants to invest three lakhs on these engines again and it has been passed by the Railway Finance Committee. But I submit that the experiment which has been tried in other places should be looked into. (*An Honourable Member:* "What other places?") The North Western Railway, I think; I speak subject to correction, but I think on some railways it was purchased and it failed.

The last point to which I wish to draw attention—this is not really concerning the general discussion, but only refers to a particular city within my constituency—is the platform in the Benares cantonment station. I

[Mr. A. Das.]

am obliged to the Honourable Mr. Rau for kindly providing, when a question was put about it, a shed on the second platform in that station. But either due to paucity of funds or, I do not know what, the shed is as good as no shed at all. During the last few eclipses, there have been hundreds and thousands of passengers, and the shed is about half the size of this House and can hardly accommodate more than 200 or 300 passengers. Benares is a place of great pilgrimage: whether people go there for spiritual or worldly benefit is not the concern of this House; but as a large number of persons and old men and women and children flock there, it is certainly the duty of the railway to provide sufficiently good accommodation to shelter them both from rain and the sun; therefore, I would appeal to the Honourable Member in charge to give suitable facilities to the pilgrims that go to Benares. Their number is increasing every year, and the shed which has been erected on platform No. 2 should be enlarged and that too very soon.

**Sir Leslie Hudson** (Bombay: European): Mr. President, the very few remarks I have to make I should like to commence by expressing with the other Members of this House our appreciation of the efforts of the railway companies and the Railway Board which have enabled the Honourable the Commerce Member to make the very excellent statement of affairs which he presented to us on Saturday morning.

[At this stage, Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Shanmukham Chetty) vacated the Chair which was then occupied by Mr. Deputy President (Mr. Abdul Matin Chaudhury).]

We can only hope that he has not expressed his views as to the future with too much optimism. He himself qualified his optimistic outlook with the hope that things would be better next year. What struck me in the course of the debate today has been the almost general statement by Members of the alteration of their views in regard to State *versus* Company managed railways.

**An Honourable Member:** No, no: only one Member.

**Sir Leslie Hudson:** I think I am correct in saying, at least four Members have eulogised Company managed railways as against State managed railways. I do not wish to press the point, but we all remember the long and heated discussions when the change took place some years ago.

Sir, the Honourable the Commerce Member mentioned in the course of his speech that, of the few new works which were projected for the coming year, one is still under investigation, and that is the Bombay Sind connection. Ten years ago, when this was first mooted,—I think it was in 1922,—there was a certain amount of enthusiasm for it in the Province from which I come, but I think there is quite a change of opinion there now in many quarters. The arguments then were partly an improved mail service. That has been largely altered now by the aeroplane service between Bombay and Karachi. Then there was the argument of the discomfort to passengers having to tranship, but even that I do not think is quite so marked now, and in any case very shortly a number of passengers will also travel by air, and generally speaking, I think that we are of the opinion in the Bombay Presidency that, unless a very good case for this connection being a remunerative one is made out, Government should not undertake it.

Then, my friend, Mr. A. Das, has just been speaking about the experiment of Diesel oil engines. I have understood, Sir, that in this country in certain parts of the very dry districts of Sind and the Punjab, these Diesel oil engines will overcome the difficulties which are at present experienced in the matter of fuel and also in the matter of water supply. I further understand that certain Diesel oil engines, which have been running, have turned out to be at any rate a moderate success, and the inauguration of the services which are to come in Southern India should certainly give us a very good line by which to decide as to whether or not these Diesel oil engines should be encouraged elsewhere on the Indian railways.

**Mr. A. Das:** They have proved a failure in Northern India.

**Sir Leslie Hudson:** They have proved a success.

**Mr. A. Das:** My information is that they have proved a failure in Northern India.

**Sir Leslie Hudson:** I believe there are Diesel oil engines running in this country which have proved a success.

Then, my friend, Sir Henry Gidney, referred to the manufacture of locomotives in this country. We are looking forward to the time when India will be able to manufacture most things for herself. There seems to be no very strong reason why skilled mechanics should not be brought out from England to teach our artisans out here how to construct locomotives in this country.

My Honourable friend, the Commerce Member, will remember that there has been some discussion in regard to Railway Receipts being given the status of Negotiable Instruments. It would greatly please a large number of commercial interests in this country if the Honourable Member would be able to assure us that Government are still looking into the possibility of this being done. Sir, I have nothing more to say.

**Mr. Muhammad Anwar-ul-Azim** (Chittagong Division: Muhammadan Rural): Mr. Deputy President, I am extremely grateful for being able to catch your eye at the sixteenth attempt. The misfortune, Mr. Deputy President, is this, that we are unattached to any Party, and as such your gaze does not penetrate so far. The constituency I represent here in this House is certainly a very important one. It stands to the south of the banks of the Bay of Bengal and to the north of the Mainpur Hills. It is quite a large area, and as such it is my incumbent duty to say something on the general aspects of this Railway Budget.

To start with, I had the idea to follow the precedent of some of the Honourable Members who have preceded me to resort to manuscript oratory, but I find, Sir, that if I take to reading the short notes that I have jotted down, it will take more time than if I followed the usual course of speaking *ex tempore*.

At the outset, it must be said to the credit of the Railway Administration that they have been surely kind enough not to put any deficit figure above the tune of 5½ crores. It is certainly no consolation to the taxpayers of this country that it will be taken off from the Depreciation Fund and that that amount will be spread over a period of ten years. There may be some justification for not realising the Actuals and the expectations they had formed on the returns, but if I may be permitted to mention one or two



[Mr. Muhammad Anwar-ul-Azim.]

matters, in that connection, I think it will be interesting to the House. You will remember, Sir, that Sir George Rainy, delivering his budget speech for 1980-81, mentioned very pertinently for the consideration of the railway authorities that, so far as railway earnings on the traffic side were concerned, they were being eaten away by oozings and filtrations. My submission to the Railway Board is that they should first of all stop all these oozings and filtrations, because once they are stopped, I can assure you, they will be able to find lots of reserves to be set apart, and the deficits will not have to come out of the Depreciation Fund, and this action has been very rightly adversely commented upon from all parts of the House.

The Honourable the Commerce Member has mentioned what are the ills responsible for bringing down the income of the railways, and, in that connection, I should very much like to submit one thing, and it is this, that no amount of lowering your third class fare will be of any use,—you can take it from me—no amount of giving facilities to the tourists from America and Europe will bring in larger revenues, and no amount of raising the platforms at wayside places, where you do not find sometimes even two passengers, is likely to bring in any larger returns. My advice to the Railway Administration is—look round and try to stop the oozings and filterings, and then I can assure you that you shall not have to come to this House with the old tale of a deficit budget.

Mr. Deputy President, certainly one needs some time in order to deal with these matters fully, but still I think I may be permitted to mention one or two facts for the consideration of the Treasury Benches. My esteemed friend, the Commerce Member, has invited the attention of this Assembly to paragraph 11 of his speech wherein he has asked for suggestions with regard to the formation of the coming Statutory Railway Board. You will realise that that practically connotes the separation of the Railway Budget from the purview of this Legislative Assembly. Nobody knows what will be the kind of constitution that will come under the caption of a Federal Assembly, but if it be the idea of the Government—I do not know what is their idea—that it will be a separate body absolutely independent of the Legislature, I am afraid I could not be a party to such an arrangement. Further, if the Government are anxious to take away the Railway Administration or the Railway Board from the so-called political influence, my suggestion to them would be to try the experiments which have been tried elsewhere. I think, though not as a permanent measure, they might try to have a sort of body just like the Port Trusts that we have here in this country, but on one and one condition alone, that that body will be a sort of subordinate agency under a Ministry of Transport and that Ministry will be responsible to the Federal Legislature. If that is done, I think perhaps a fairly large section of this House might not have any grouse with the Government on that score.

Coming, again, to paragraph 6 of his Budget speech, I see that the Commerce Member thinks that if certain of the suggestions that he has mentioned in his speech are carried out, perhaps the railway income might go up. In that connection I might say that that would not be sufficient, because there are lots of areas in this country which are still untapped. If a proper policy is followed, and say, in my part of the country, if the Assam Bengal Railway thinks it wise enough to extend our railway lines up to the borders of Burma, that is likely to bring in a large amount of

revenue. If the E. B. Railway, instead of shifting the Goulundo Ghat from place to place and year after year, only pitched upon a permanent site, it would also bring in a certain amount of revenue. These are one or two matters which the Railway Board ought to see whether they are not worthy of consideration.

Mr. Deputy President, there is a certain passage in the Budget speech of the Honourable the Commerce Member with regard to what Mr. Pope has done. In that connection, you may remember that this enquiry is not the first of its kind. There have been a number of enquiries of that nature, one by the Acworth Committee, later on there is also that enquiry by the Dickinson Committee, and, if their recommendations had been carried out, I am sure that there would have been no necessity for a gloomy tale.

Lastly, as I think I have come to the end of my time, I should like to say one or two words with regard to the much maligned subject of minority representation in the services of the railways. Mr. Deputy President, I hope that Sir Cowasji Jehangir and other Nationalists and Independents, who feel sore at the mere mention of minorities in this House, will excuse me if I, representing as I do, a separate constituency, ask for a just and equitable treatment of my people. It is not my intention to suggest to the Railway Board that they should do everything at once, but in that connection you will remember that, as a result of our importunities, if I may say so, the administration of Sir George Rainy was very kind to depute a special officer to make enquiries with regard to our position in the railway services, especially in the State Railway services. I am told that that report is awaiting the decision of the Government of India on the railway side. Our complaint is still this that there has not been any enquiry so far as the Company managed railways are concerned, and unless and until the Railway Board bring into line the Company managed lines also, our grievance will still continue. Maulvi Saiyyid Murtuza Saheb Bahadur has asked pertinently, how is it that it has taken such an inordinately long time for the Government to hit on a formula regarding the representation of minorities in the services which would be just and equitable to them. I do not know whether the Government have got something else up in their sleeves; probably they are contemplating another enquiry. But to put my submission succinctly and broadly in a word, the minorities have given a very long rope to the Government of India on the railway side and it is high time that the railway administration came to a quick decision with regard to this important matter.

**Mr. Deputy President** (Mr. Abdul Matin Chaudhury): The Honourable Member's time is up.

**Mr. Bhuput Singh** (Bihar and Orissa: Landholders): I congratulate the Honourable the Railway Member on the retrenchment campaign that he has adopted in the field of printing and stationery. Last year he introduced the retrenchment of these statements of different railways from foolscap to octavo size, and this year following the last year's precedent, I believe, he has curtailed the cost of printing his Budget speech by making his speech as small as he could. I wish that it would have been better had he not adopted this retrenchment in the printing of his speech. Sir, in the speech of the Honourable Member he has not given us anything except a few figures. If he thinks that the Budget speech should consist of simply a statement of expected income and disbursements,

[Mr. Bhuput Sing.]

then I think he has failed in his retrenchment as it could have been given to us in the form of a statement of figures printed in a page or two.

Now, Sir, I have got another complaint to make against him. In his last year's speech, in winding up the general discussion, he referred to several points and promised to look into them; and, Sir, I thought he would come forward with some sort of statement as to the results of such inquiries and investigations. In particular, I would like to quote the two statements made by him, one in regard to the calling of public tenders for coal contracts and the other regarding investigation into the causes of the fall in revenue. He said:

"We have issued a circular to the effect that in future in every such case, where possible, tenders should be called for . . . ."

And the other statement is:

"My friend, Mr. Yamin Khan, made certain suggestions. He suggested that we should examine and ascertain the causes which have led to this fall in our revenues. Well, Sir, that, I think, is a very reasonable suggestion to make and something on those lines has been in my own mind. I can assure him that I shall follow it up and see how far it will lead us."

But nowhere has he told us about these inquiries. Certainly this House would like to be told whether such calling of public tenders has given the railways any saving or not, as otherwise it is not possible for the House to judge whether the criticism levelled by Mr. Ghuznavi was right or whether the attitude taken in 1932 by the predecessor of the Honourable Member in regard to this question was right. I would say that if the Honourable Member would have made a serious effort to find out the cause of the fall in revenue, I am positive he would have found that the two main causes in the fall in revenue from passenger fares are firstly the Railway Board's apathy towards the comforts and conveniences of third class passengers and, secondly, due to the increase in railway fares of all classes. Taking the first point, that is the comforts and conveniences of the third class passengers, I say that Government have not done anything in the matter. Sir, opening of a refreshment stall here and appointing a few watermen there are not what is wanted. Whenever we bring this charge, we are told that so many raised platforms have been made and so many watermen have been appointed for supply of drinking water for passengers. Sir, it is not long ago, a Member of this House had the fortune or the misfortune of meeting the Director of Traffic in connection with the reservations of third class carriages on the North Western Railway. In the course of the conversation, the officer in question stated that it was not possible to reserve compartments as the present programme of third class construction has been changed. The railways are now constructing only bigger third class compartments of 40 to 60 seats, or even more. The idea underlying must be twofold. One is that if bigger compartments are made, third class passengers will not be able to ask for reservation. The second idea is that the space required for the provision of latrine in the case of smaller third class compartments can be utilized for seating more passengers. I ask you, Sir, to imagine the picture of 40 or 60 passengers in a compartment with children and women huddled together, having one small latrine to use during their journey over long distances. I think it is worse than hell. Is this the way the Railway Board is doing their duty by the country? The officers do not care for the comforts or discomforts. Because by the

time they become Directors of Traffic or hold some equal rank, they become pretty senior and have earned their pension, and they know that in a few years' time they would be going back to England. You can never expect sympathy from such officers for our countrymen. I would seriously ask my friend, the Railway Member, to take into serious consideration whether they should not revert to the old system of small third class compartments or 8 or 12 seats or 16 seats at the most with one latrine each for such compartments. Especially the rakes which are expected to run over more than 100 miles must not be allowed to have such bigger third class compartments.

Coming to the question of fans, India being a tropical country, the condition of third class passengers can better be imagined than described as to their miseries due to the absence of fans in the summer. Sir, a small second class compartment of one-fourth the size of a big third class compartment is provided with two fans for a very few passengers, but the railways cannot find money to provide even two fans in each of the big third class compartments where 60 passengers or more are crowded. In this connection, I would also invite the attention of the House to the fact that in the other railways the issue of week end tickets to all classes is permitted, but in the B.B. and C.I. metre gauge, week end tickets are only issued to first and second class passengers, and not to the poor third class passengers, for reasons best known to the authorities.

In coming to the fall in revenue due to the rail-road competition, I would draw the attention of the Members to the fact that it is the third class passengers who have boycotted the railways wherever they could owing to the maltreatment of the railway officials as well. I can state on facts reported to me that in the Saharanpur, Hardwar and Dehra Dun section and the Kalka-Simla section, most of the passengers avail themselves of the motor service. In the Hardwar station, hundreds of third class passengers are locked out of the platform and they are not allowed to come to the platform till the trains actually arrive at the platform. After the train arrives, a small wicket gate is opened and passengers are allowed to fight their passage in as the train stops only for a few minutes. These passengers are treated like cattle. After all, they are men. They have got their sense of revenge as well. As soon as the bus services have come into existence, they have availed of them. In this House, the Honourable the Railway Member was asked last year to move about *incognito* to see how the railway officials treated illiterate third class passengers, not to speak of third class passengers, but how they treat even higher class Indian passengers, with due deference to the Station Superintendents of the Delhi Station, whom we have always found to be of the type that is desired.

In coming to the question of retrenchment, I am very sorry to tell my friend that in the railways best men are not recruited for the posts vacant, but on the contrary, posts are created for the men. Here, Sir, I hold in my hand the Standing Finance Committee report sent to us with the Budget papers in which I find the sanction of as many as 16 temporary posts of officers ranging from a pay of Rs. 300 to Rs. 1,500 being made permanent. At first, temporary posts are created, and, after keeping them as such for a few years, these posts are shown to be a necessity and the hands of the Standing Finance Committee are forced to make them permanent. I ask, Sir, is the present time proper for making new permanent posts when the railways are still passing through bad times and when they are being run by loans from Depreciation Funds

[Mr. Bhuput Sing.]

year after year? These new additions to present posts reminds me of a story. Sir, once a Nawab wanted a favourite of his to be employed, and he asked his Wazir to find out some post for him. The Wazir found that there were no posts vacant and no officer was required for the State, but as the Nawab's desire was to be met, the Wazir created a post for the man and that was for catching rats in the record room of the State. In India, we always find such posts being created for men and not find men for the posts vacant.

Before closing, I should like to make a remark, in regard to what was said by the Honourable Member on my left, I mean Mr. Dudhoria. He suggested that the Jamalpur workshops should be closed and transferred to some other place. I was very much surprised to hear that from him. Jamalpur and other parts have been seriously affected by the recent earthquake and it is important that more employment should be given to those helpless labourers. It is the duty of the railways and of every man to support those labourers from starvation. I would suggest to the Honourable Member that he should not pay any heed to this suggestion.

**Bhai Parma Nand** (Ambala Division: Non-Muhammadan): Before I begin my speech on the Railway Budget, I must also join in the chorus of congratulations that have been offered to the Honourable Member for Railways. I think every one of us recognises the value of the work that the Honourable Member has done during the last few months, not only as Member for the Railways, but as Member for Commerce in settling the Indo-Japanese commercial relations. I quite agree with my Honourable friend, Sir Henry Gidney, in his view that taking into consideration the industrial development in this country and that of the trade and industries throughout the whole world, along with the hard competition with which our industries are confronted, it would be quite appropriate that the Honourable Member's portfolio should be divided into two. One cannot think that it is now possible for one man to discharge his duties in respect of both these Departments very faithfully. Then, again, supporting Sir Henry Gidney, I have to point out one more thing and that is that the railway officers—the Agents and their subordinates—act very autocratically. They are in a way autocrats in their own branch, whom it is very difficult to approach even for the railway employees, and to have their grievances redressed.

I have to refer to one particular case which has been going on for the last three years about the Travelling Ticket Examiners on the North Western Railway, and myself and Sir Henry Gidney and some other Members of this House had to approach the late Financial Commissioner, Mr. Parsons, and also our Honourable friend, Mr. P. R. Rau, about their grievances. Part of their grievances has no doubt been considered. They were all on a sudden in a way transferred from their cadre to another cadre and their allowances were practically reduced to nothing. Well, gradually, after repeated representations, we find that they have been made an offer of their accepting a substitute of their old pay without an assurance being given that they would get the old allowance which they could get as Travelling Ticket Examiners in their old service. We should not lose sight of the fact that the position of the Travelling Ticket Examiners is a very difficult one. They are unpopular with the public, and they have to do very hard duties and have to run some kind of risks

by travelling in the running train. It was said that it was for the purpose of economy that the whole cadre was in a way practically abolished and the men were transferred to another cadre. I would repeat here their request that the question of their allowance should be considered again and I would request the Financial Commissioner of Railways to give sympathetic consideration to this, their last grievance.

**Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney:** Their old allowances were part of their pay.

**Bhai Parma Nand:** As my Honourable friend, Sir Henry Gidney, has suggested, their old allowances were part of their pay, and it is  
 4 P.M. very very unreasonable and strange that they are being deprived of the allowances which were being paid to them as part of their pay. Some of them had learnt to live in a very comfortable style on account of their salaries, naturally their condition now is very hard.

There is another case of autocracy in the Department to which I want to make a reference. Only a few days ago, some eight candidates, as apprentice Permanent Way Inspectors were discharged. They had been given regular pay by the Department. They passed the first examination, they passed also the second examination, but, in the third year, eight of them were not able to come out successful, and so they were discharged. They are not now fit for anything. The Railway Department did incur quite a lot of expenditure on paying every one of them, say, on an average Rs. 100 per month during their apprenticeship, and now they are discharged, and fresh men are being taken in their places. The Department will thus have to incur a similar expenditure on these new men. They submitted a petition. It was in the discretion of the Chief Engineer, North Western Railway, to give them another chance. They have been to him, but he has refused point blank to consider their case and they are now wandering about not knowing what to do. They have naturally submitted a representation to the Financial Commissioner and I would just appeal to him to consider their case on the grounds of justice and equity and also to save the Railway Department another big expenditure. What they want only is that they should be given another chance and they would have the benefit of training at their own cost. They do not want any guarantee for getting job on this line. They are prepared to try their luck on some other line. They would be quite content to try their chance on other railways in this country.

Sir, after pointing out the above typical cases, I just want to say that I had no wish, even for the sake of these grievances, to intervene in this debate. I have risen to clear up one thing. I heard my Honourable friend, Sayyid Murtuza Saheb, speaking about the rights of the minorities. I was prepared not to take notice of what Sayyid Murtuza Saheb said, thinking that he might not have been present throughout the Session, and perhaps he was not aware of the full facts of the case. But when I found my Honourable friend, Mr. Anwar-ul-Azim, getting up and repeating the same claim again which had been repeated in this House for years past, I thought it was my duty to explain another point of view. Sir, my position, as well as that of some of those Honourable Members who think with me, is that it is quite wrong in this House to raise this question of the services on communal grounds. These services should all be filled on the sole consideration of merit and efficiency; and those people who want to have their claims recognized in the various services, be they

[Bhai Parma Nand.]

public services, or railway or postal services, should try to qualify themselves for that service and try to stand in fair competition with other communities. But as this claim was very often pressed upon the Government and our Honourable Muslim friends were stressing this point off and on, the Government had to yield, and a special officer was appointed by the Railway Department to make an investigation into the claims of the minorities. Sir, that officer presented his report. That report was discussed by us and I had also to say quite a good deal about Mr. Hassan's report on the railway services. As I could gather then, the point was made clear that the Mussalman element in the railway services, taking all the subordinates and higher services together, averaged about one-fourth of the services throughout India, I mean, that was so taking an average of the whole of the services throughout the whole of India. My argument then was that if the services are to be given on the basis of population, the Muslims had already got their proper share and they had no right to demand any increase; but, as in the Constitution, that was being framed for us, the principle of weightage was recognised, we thought, they were claiming a similar weightage in railway services. I think this fact was recognised by the Department and we were told by the Honourable Member for the Railways that decisions on that report were being formulated, and would be announced in this House. I do not know exactly the terms of the decision, but, talking as a Hindu, we believed that they were not fair to us. All the same, we thought that the preference, given by that decision to the recruitment of the minority communities in various services, should have quite satisfied our Muslim friends in this House. It is quite a surprise for me to see that the same old question, the same old cry, is being repeated in this House. The decision has already been arrived at and announced.

The question is, who are the minorities? It is not only the Muslims who form the minority, but there are also the Anglo-Indians and the Christians. Now, taking all these minority communities together, there was a minority pact made in London by the members of these communities. It is for them now to decide amongst themselves as to what ought to be the share of these minority communities in the railway services. So far as I can judge from the figures which were given by Mr. Hassan, the Hindus have not even got their due share in all the services. Which of the minorities had an unusual advantage, I do not care. That will be seen from the figures that are published in the book. But taking all the minorities together as one body, as they have framed one separate pact for themselves, I think Honourable Members, belonging to the Muslim community, should go to their friends, other minorities, and get their share from them who have probably got much more in the railway services. They are sadly mistaken if they think that the Hindus have got more than their share. I can only tell them that the Hindus have not got their proper share on the population ratio basis. That is the point that I want to make clear.

In the first place, I and other persons of my way of thinking protest against this very principle of giving services on communal basis. Unfortunately it has been accepted by the Government in the case of railways. We all deplore that its introduction is being attempted in higher public services as well. It is like introducing poison not only in the constitution, but in the whole body politic of India by dividing the various communities throughout the services in various departments. I may, again,

assure my Muslim friends that the Hindus have not got any more share in the railway services than they deserve. It may be that other people, who have done greater service in the Railway Department in early days, are given more posts, because they have been serving the Department for a long time. In fact, I admit that it is they who have brought this Department to this level and, therefore, they deserve some concession to be made to them. I warn my friends of the Muslim community that, if they again press forward their claim for more appointments, we shall also have the same right to press our claims on the Honourable the Commerce Member, namely, that by giving any kind of undue preference to others in these services, the claims of the Hindus, who have devotedly served the railways all this time, should not be ignored.

**Mr. C. S. Ranga Iyer** (Rohilkund and Kumaon Divisions: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I shall be very brief at this fag-end of the day when I find non-official colleagues of mine are still rising. Sir, I quite agree with the Honourable and gallant Member, Colonel Sir Henry Gidney, that the time has come when all the machinery required for the railways, locomotives and everything, should be made in this country. I am very pleased that such a suggestion should have come from Colonel Sir Henry Gidney, for he has always maintained that the statutory Indians must look upon India as their motherland. I am glad that that suggestion has the approval of the Leader of the European Group, Sir Leslie Hudson. I hope that we will soon have Indian railways being run with Indian machinery, made in India, so that Mr. Joshi will be satisfied that Indian labour will have expanded opportunities.

**Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney:** Better third class carriages.

**Mr. C. S. Ranga Iyer:** As Colonel Sir Henry Gidney says, better third class carriages, because the claims of third class passengers cannot be ignored. Mr. Joshi has already referred to them, and I shall take the opportunity of speaking on them on a cut motion. I would only say this that I do not see any reason why the Government should not introduce third class monthly return tickets for long journeys and thus giving them the same facility that they have in certain places weekly return tickets for first and second class passengers, for, as Mr. Joshi has truly said, the third class passengers are the mainstay of railways. I am glad to notice in the speech of the Honourable the Commerce Member that he proposes to honour the Resolution of my friend, Mr. Gopika Romon Roy, by building low platforms. While I wish Assam every success in that matter, there is a railway called the Rohilkund and Kumaon Railway which is as backward as the Assam Railway and notorious for low platforms and I hope that the Honourable the Commerce Member will also take that railway into his consideration. There is also another railway, Polachi Palghat Railway, and that too is known for low platforms.

I should certainly make a reference to the speech of my Honourable friend from Calcutta, Mr. Anwar-ul-Azim.

**Mr. Amar Nath Dutt:** He comes from Chittagong.

**Mr. C. S. Ranga Iyer:** He comes from the neighbourhood of Calcutta. Chittagong is certainly nearer than Delhi is to Calcutta.



**Mr. Amar Nath Dutt:** I do not think so.

**Mr. C. S. Ranga Iyer:** However, my time is short. As the Honourable Member for Chittagong speaks very clearly, he brings matters to a head as he certainly brought in regard to the communal question. But I admire him as he is working for his community and I have the same admiration for Bhai Parma Nand, the President of the Hindu Mahasabha, working for his community. Mr. Anwar-ul-Azim strongly protested against the formation of the new railway authority to which I have agreed. My friend, Mr. Joshi, has also agreed and there is no more radical Member in this House than Mr. Joshi. If he (Mr. Anwar-ul-Azim) reads the report, he will understand our opinions. I shall tell you straightaway why we want this new railway authority, for I shall speak fully on this subject when the cut motion of Dr. Ziauddin, himself an honoured Member, or of Sardar Sant Singh, or of Mr. K. C. Neogy comes up. This much I may say straightaway. We had Bhai Parma Nand's eloquent speech and we also had Mr. Anwar-ul-Azim's sincere and eloquent speech. Bhai Parma Nand was equally sincere. We have had so many sincere speeches on the place of communities. There is our gallant friend who came before our Railway Committee in London and valiantly fought the case for his community. Well, the time has come to transfer all these communal discussions from the floor of the House to an authority created by a Minister responsible to this House. (Hear, hear.) That is our recommendation so far as the Railway Authority is concerned, and Whitehall has not agreed with our recommendations. I may say here in this place that this is not only the recommendation of the representatives of one community, but it is the recommendation of the representatives of the other community which includes my Honourable friend, Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad.

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

Sir, we came first to a Hindu-Muslim Pact and turned the tables on Whitehall. If my Honourable friend reads the Statutory Railway Board Committee Report, he will find that we have not constituted what, in his abysmal ignorance, he was prepared to call a "Port Trust". No, Sir, not even a Railway Trust! But we have certainly agreed to the creation of a new railway authority when these stinking communal discussions will no longer be heard. We have our differences with Whitehall in that matter, and because, we Hindus and Muslims united in the Committee, and we, Hindus and Muslims, did not agree with the representatives of His Majesty's Government and because we took into consideration the feelings of this House, therefore what happened? Sir Samuel Hoare has been obliged to write a memorandum deploring certain of our suggestions and I hope my Honourable friend, Mr. Anwar-ul-Azim, will read that memorandum before he appears on the floor of the House for a full-dress debate.

**Mr. Muhammad Anwar-ul-Azim:** I have read it.

**Mr. C. S. Ranga Iyer:** My Honourable friend says he has read it, and I am glad he has done so, but he has not benefited by the wisdom of our report.

**Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney:** It is a confidential report.

**Mr. O. S. Ranga Iyer:** The Honourable Member will excuse me. It is a public document which can be purchased for six pence at His Majesty's Stationery Office. In England it appeared in all the newspapers.

**Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney:** It did not appear in India.

**Mr. O. S. Ranga Iyer:** It did appear in India also, at least a very good summary. I am very careful when I discuss facts on the floor of the House.

**Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney:** It was a confidential document. How did it appear in the Indian Press?

**Raja Bahadur G. Krishnamachariar:** I hold a copy in my hand.

**Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh:** I also have it.

**Mr. O. S. Ranga Iyer:** My Honourable friends, the Raja Bahadur and Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh, both not Members of the Committee, have got the memorandum and this was also given by the Government to the Press. When the Government gave it, it could not be a confidential memorandum. All that I need say is this. Two or three years ago, on the floor of the House, I moved a Resolution for the formation of the Statutory Railway Board. I was condemned by a certain section of the newspapers and representatives of the Associated Press masquerading as special correspondents spreading lies in the newspapers. I was condemned by certain Honourable Members on the floor of the House, they disapproved, not condemned, they certainly had the right of disapproval when such a drastic change was made. We took their disapproval seriously into consideration and every representation of this House was also considered and we made the recommendation that we did. There is a difference between us and Whitehall in the matter and I will say "do not draw a red-herring of a communal kind across the path, but transfer this curse of communalism from the floor of the House to the new authority".

**Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali** (Lucknow and Fyzabad Divisions: Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I never thought that this Budget will drag us in communal question. Undoubtedly we are here to tell to the Government whatever our grievances are. But today, as we are examining the budgetary position of the Commerce Department of the Government of India, I shall appeal to my Honourable friends in the House that, just as they had sunk their difference in London, they should do the same here in India. Sir, we have for a long time worked on a Committee which was styled the Committee for the purchase of B. N. W. R. and R. K. R. and others, and for a long time the discussions went on, and ultimately the Committee came to a decision that as soon as the funds and favourable times permitted, the Government must purchase those railways. This is not the time that I should develop any argument for the purchase of railways from Companies and for Company railways to become State railways. That matter has been long settled and I think it is now the policy of the Government of India and there is no need to develop the argument in favour of State railways. Knowing that these Company-managed railways are paying very high dividends to their shareholders, knowing also that they extend to very long distances, I am at variance with the views of my Honourable friend, Mr. Das, who said on the floor of the House that the Company-managed railways look after the comforts of the passengers better, and that they are better managed than the State railways. I also have some experience of the B. and N. W. R. and the R. K. R. management,

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because I come from Lucknow which is practically the headquarters of both the railways, and as I do not want to say anything against them, I wish only to point out that the State-managed railways are in no way inferior to the Company-managed railways. As regards the State-managed railways, we have at least the satisfaction of approaching here the Honourable Member for Railways and the Railway Board, whereas, in the case of Company-managed railways, our complaints, our representations, our views and our solicitations are absolutely unheard, and nobody cares for them. Every one knows what is the state of their affairs and what is the condition of their management, not to say of the third class passengers alone, but even first and second class passengers. My sole contention today before the House is that a Committee having decided long ago that these two railways should be purchased, yet we do not find any mention in the Budget for the purchase of these railways which will undoubtedly be paying in the long run.

**Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh:** Where is the money?

**Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali:** My Honourable friend, Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh, asks, where is the money. If we see to the speech of the Honourable Member for Railways which he made on the floor of the House the other day, if we turn to page 6, it says:

"If we find that these projects are likely to be remunerative under present conditions of cheap money and low prices of material and desire to start construction during the next working season, we shall take steps to place our proposals before the Standing Finance Committee for Railways and ask the Assembly for the requisite additional grant."

This was said in connection with another matter, though. But the same argument would apply to the purchase of these two big railways, and I am sure nobody here will deny that, just as the other State railways have been paying, these two railways also will be paying. Why should they not be paying to the State especially when the Companies are paying huge dividends as much as 18 per cent. to the shareholders. I do not see, therefore, any reason why they should not be paying concerns when taken over by the State? In this sentence, which I have read before the House, there are only two points, that the business should be remunerative, and the other point is that you should have cheap money and low prices. With these three items satisfied, you can purchase the railways and the materials for the railways very cheap. You can also get money very cheap now, even at the rate of one or two per cent. I do not see any reason why Government should not take the necessary steps to purchase these two concerns now at once. My principal argument in favour of purchasing these railways is the inconvenience and inefficient management, and as I know that the State railways are better managed, and hence there is no reason why we should not purchase these two railways.

Then, Sir, I have read in the speech of the Railway Member that there has been reduction in the number of passengers, and several speakers today have also referred to it. Why should it not be so when we see that no attention is paid to the convenience of third class passengers? The third class passengers are really the people who pay, and not the upper class people. The railway staff is always allowed to travel on free passes in first and second class compartments. How can you make money when passes are carelessly issued and without any idea as to how many members of the families of these railway servants can be taken to travel? I have

invariably found some families at least travelling free in the second or first class every time that I am on the train. If you reduce the rates and freights, the principle of diminishing returns will apply, and I am sure more passengers will travel on the railways and more goods sent. There is a vicious circle. You now reduce the number of passenger trains on the State railways. Mail and Express trains are for the convenience of the upper class passengers, and the passenger trains which are mostly for the convenience of the poorer classes have been stopped by you. If you reduce the number of trains, you certainly reduce the number of passengers and then you come here and say that, as the passengers are less in number, you have to reduce the number of trains. This is a vicious circle round which every time we find the arguments of Government Members revolving.

As regards return tickets and reduced fares, I remember, Sir, several Members last year and the year before last signed an application to the Railway Department to issue return tickets or to reduce fares for the Ajmere Fair on the Ajmere Urs. But no heed was paid to it, and the reply was given that they could not do it. It is on the occasion of these festivals and *melas* that return tickets or reduced fares should be introduced just as they are allowed during the Christmas holidays. It is an advertisement. You want to advertise in foreign countries, but you do not really advertise, with that sincerity which is expected of you, in your own country.

Sir, I remember to have put a question in this House sometime ago to the effect that there was a station in my constituency which is known as Rahmatnagar station. The people of the neighbouring places and the place where the station is situated put in a memorial to the effect that the station should be named Amethi-Bandigi Mian. But the Railway Department did not care for the wishes of the people and they threw away the application. In my question I suggested that owing to the name of the station not being changed, the income of that station was going down. The reason is that the people have boycotted the station and have taken to the buses and motor lorries and motor cars and even to *ekkas* although it involves trouble, rather than go to the station. Not only passengers have boycotted it, but even, goods are not sent from that station. When I put the question, the reply was given that the local authorities should be approached, but how can that be done? This is a Central subject and how can this thing be brought up before the Local Government and the Local Council? This is how the people are disappointed and the railways become unpopular, and when people submit prayers and memorials, no heed is paid to them.

Then, Sir, in my part of the country pipes have been laid in the inter class lavatories. They have been so placed that they drizzle at every place in the whole compartment, and when the people approached the railway authorities, they were told that the pipes were so made. The result is that bodies and clothes of passengers get spoiled and thus they prefer to travel in motor cars or motor lorries.

Sir, there is one more point that I have to lay before this House, and that is about the strategic railways. Members of the House, who have preceded me, have referred to it, and I join in that chorus in asking Government that if this matter is to be discussed and if this money is to be had, the Government can very easily have it in their Army Budget

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or in the General Budget rather than in the Railway Budget. If these two crores are taken away, then the deficit will not be there as high as it appears to be.

**The Honourable Sir Joseph Bore** (Member for Commerce and Railways): Sir, may I begin by expressing my appreciation of what has fallen from Honourable Members in respect of myself and for the manner in which they have received this Budget? I think I merit and can claim the sympathy of this House because my charge of the Railway Department has happened to synchronise with a period of unparalleled world depression which has made it essential for us to adopt a policy of caution, of retrenchment and economy, which has postponed many schemes of importance and which has compelled us to play for safety and all that that implies. It has also happened to synchronise with a period of exceptional stress and activity in the sister department, the Commerce Department, which is linked with it in a single portfolio and which has rendered impossible the bestowal by me personally of an adequate amount of attention on the Railway Department's multitudinous and complicated problems. I hope that these considerations will be borne in mind and that they will temper the hypercritical judgment which is so often visible in this House when the Railway Department comes before its bar to present the annual statement of its stewardship. I have often attempted to analyse and tried to account for the attitude, almost of hostility, towards the Railway Department which has so often been exhibited in this House and which is prepared to take for granted the guilt of the Railway Department and throw upon it the onus of proving its innocence. It seems to me that no organisation, public or private, is brought into such close, such intimate and such continuing contact with the public as the Railway Department. It is so to speak continually and ceaselessly on its trial, literally every minute of the day and every day of the year. Under these circumstances, it is not surprising that occasions should arise for legitimate criticism. The only wonder is that those occasions do not arise more often. If I may use a Baconian sentence "Men mark where they hit and not where they miss". A single instance of discourtesy or rudeness on the part of an employee, a single instance of negligence or inconvenience that may be experienced will very often warp the whole outlook of the person so affected towards the Railway Department. No one, for instance, cares to remember that there are something like 8,00,000 employees in the railways and that there must be some black sheep among them. I would ask this House most respectfully and, through the House, I would ask the public sometimes to glance at the other side of the picture, at the organisation, the forethought, the unremitting care, the technical skill, the devotion to duty on the part of the lowest to the highest official, which are essential if the railways of India are to serve effectively and efficiently the administrative and economic needs of the country.

Now, I do not ask that criticism should be withheld. Criticism is absolutely essential, and, so far as we are concerned, we welcome that criticism; but I think I have a right to ask that the acerbity which so often characterises speeches in the House may be tempered by the thought that if the railways have many defects to admit, they can also point to a splendid record of work often under the most difficult and adverse circumstances, a record of work of which any railway in the world may well be proud. I would only ask Honourable Members that they should keep a proper perspective in their judgment on matters which come up before them.

The question of rates and fares is one of perennial interest, and, whenever it is raised, it is always certain of exciting criticism and comment in this House. There are two schools of thought; one school contends that the infallible remedy for falling revenues is a reduction in rates and fares. The other school contends that, in order to meet such a situation, the proper course is a judicious and reasonable rise in rates and fares. We eventually decided to make a practical experiment and we hope that, as the result of this experiment, data will be available, they may not be conclusive data, but they will still be very valuable to enable us to decide what our future policy should be in this matter. I have already referred to the matter in my Budget speech: we have revised rates on the North Western Railway since the beginning of December for a period of six months. My Honourable friend, Diwan Bahadur Ramaswami Mudaliar, asked why we did not extend that experiment to certain other railways in Southern India. My reply to that is this: we are merely making an experiment and its extension must depend upon the results that we obtain.

Then suggestions have been made that the railways should reduce their rates in order to give assistance to agriculture and industries. Now, the position of the Railway Department has always been this: if we are expected to operate as a commercial concern, then obviously we must charge rates which are fully economic, that if Governments decide that assistance should be given to agriculture and industries, that assistance should not be indirect, concealed and vicarious as it would be if railway rates were reduced for the carriage of their products, but that it should be given directly and openly, so that the principle of giving assistance and the measure of assistance to be given may from time to time be capable of being examined and controlled by the Governments and the Legislatures concerned. From that position the Railway Department has never resiled. Yet, notwithstanding that, they have, during this period of stress and strain, come to the assistance of agriculture in the peculiar circumstances of the day. Many railways have, as Honourable Members are aware, reduced their freights for the carriage of rice and wheat. I can also say that in certain cases railways do, as a matter of fact, quote special rates for the products of certain industries, but that, of course, is for the purpose of increasing and stimulating traffic.

Certain large questions concerning railway finance and organisation have been referred to from time to time, and they certainly require most careful examination. They are such questions as the revision of the convention of 1924, the desirability or otherwise of a contribution from railway revenues in aid of the general revenues, the amount to be paid towards depreciation and amortisation, and the allocation of expenditure between revenue and capital. I had hoped, Sir, that it would have been possible for us to embark, during the current year, upon an examination of the question of the Depreciation Fund and the annual payments to it, but, after a very careful preliminary examination, we came to the conclusion that all these large outstanding financial questions had better be made the subject of a simultaneous comprehensive examination. That a definite policy in regard to these and connected matters should be arrived at, if the Statutory Railway Authority is to be in a position to function satisfactorily, goes without saying. The House may rest assured that the matter has not escaped our attention, in fact it is under our very active consideration.

Then, Sir, I think it was my friend, Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad, who suggested,—and the suggestions have been put forward on more occasions than one in the interests of economy,—that a policy of amalgamation should be

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followed in respect of railway organizations and administrations. We realise the necessity for searching every avenue in order to secure economy, and we realise that one of the few remaining directions in which economy may still be possible is amalgamation where it can be given effect to without loss of efficiency. Honourable Members who have read the Report of Mr. Pope will remember that this is one of the matters to which he has referred. I can assure Honourable Members that it is constantly before us. I would, however, point out that the opportunities for amalgamation will be greater when more of the Companies' administrations come under Government. It will, I think, readily be realised that to amalgamate two systems into a single administration may be beset with difficulties, whereas it may be easier to amalgamate three systems and turn them into two administrations. Now, that of course, as I have said, will become easier when more of the Companies' administrations come under Government.

Sir, it is somewhat difficult, in the course of a reply like this, to touch on all matters which have been raised during the debate, and if, therefore, I fail to make my survey complete, I can only ask Honourable Members to forgive me and to attribute my omission to the proper cause.

I would like to begin with my friend, Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad. I think that two at least of the figures quoted by him were correct. As for the rest, they were like the curate's egg right in parts. If my friend has any difficulty in following the figures to which he referred, I would suggest that he should spend half an hour with my Honourable friend, Mr. Rau, and I hope that his difficulties may be resolved.

**An Honourable Member:** He is a wrangler.

**Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad:** May I explain, Sir. I thought the explanation which Mr. Rau would give me would be put down in the footnote.

**The Honourable Sir Joseph Bhore:** I am quite sure that Mr. Rau will be prepared to give an explanation whenever my friend asks for it.

Then, my friend suggested that he preferred that the three-wheeled carriage which was, I think, the description that he applied to the railway administration, to be turned into a two-wheeled vehicle. May I suggest to him in reply that, provided the three wheels are properly arranged, a three-wheeled vehicle may be much more stable than a two-wheeled one.

My Honourable friend also was evidently filled with deep anxiety as to what had become of the Depreciation Fund. I am sure deep down his mind he suspects when I, Mr. Rau and the present Members of the Railway Board leave their posts, and when the chest is opened, as happened in a famous case in Paris, that the millions will be found to have vanished. Sir, I can assure him that the Depreciation Fund is perfectly safe. He put the question to me last year during the course of the general debate, and I gave him an answer, and I should have hoped that that answer would have satisfied him. May I repeat what I said then? "He", that is Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad, "wished to know where the Depreciation Fund of ours is kept. It is merged in general balances, and we get on our balances the same rate of interest as is charged on our capital outlay". I trust, Sir, that if my friend raises the same question next year, he will rest satisfied with the assurance that I will then give him that I have already replied to his question.

My friend, Mr. Joshi, referred to the Central Advisory Committee and suggested that last year it had not met even once. I think I expressed my regret that last year that had been the case, and, as a matter of fact, since that time the Central Advisory Committee has met twice, and we have introduced what, I think, is a very important innovation in that the members of the Central Advisory Committee are now able to themselves suggest questions for discussion by the Committee.

Then, my friend, Raja Bahadur Krishnamachariar, made certain complaints in regard to the slowness of goods trains. In that matter I have a certain amount of sympathy with him. I can assure him that through goods trains are now being run much more frequently than previously, and the matter will receive the attention of the Railway Board.

He asked why, when we were building big bridges, we did not avail ourselves of the best technical and engineering skill. I can assure him, Sir, that any suggestion to the contrary is quite unfounded when applied to the case of the bridge to which we are referring, namely, the Sara Bridge. We took the best technical advice we could, but as I have said in my speech in introducing the Budget, engineering skill and foresight cannot always cope with the forces of nature when they are uncontrolled.

**Raja Bahadur G. Krishnamachariar:** Unchained.

**The Honourable Sir Joseph Bhole:** Unchained.

My friend, Diwan Bahadur Ramaswami Mudaliar, asked, why the operating ratio on the North Western Railway was so much higher than that on certain other lines. May I point out to him that the answer is simple so far as the North Western Railway is concerned, because it includes strategic lines. So far as other railways are concerned, I think that the rise in the operating ratio is very largely due to the fall in receipts.

I must express my gratitude to my friend, Diwan Bahadur Ramaswami Mudaliar, for what he said in regard to the Publicity Bureau. I myself think that it is a most useful and valuable institution, and the suggestions that he has made being based on his practical experience will, I am sure, be very warmly welcomed and carefully considered by the Railway Board.

Then, my friend, Sir Henry Gidney, made a very interesting suggestion. He asked why locomotives could not be built in this country. That suggestion was taken up by more than one Member of this House, and I believe that my friend, Mr. Thampan, has already tabled a Resolution in regard to that matter. I can tell my Honourable friend that the question has already been taken up, it was taken up some months ago, and I can assure the House that the possibilities will be most carefully examined. Sir Henry Gidney wished to know what was being done for the railway staff at Jamalpur in the matter of housing, loans, etc. I would like to assure him that the question has received attention, a temporary post of a special officer has been created in connection with the housing, foodstuffs, financial assistance and general assistance for the staff that has suffered at Jamalpur, and I can assure my Honourable friend that if the East Indian Railway Administration makes any further suggestions in the matter, they will be most sympathetically considered by the Railway Board and the Government.

Sir Leslie Hudson asked, what was being done in the matter of giving railway receipts the status of negotiable instruments. The matter has been referred to various authorities for their views, and we are not yet



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in receipt of final opinions in regard to this question. I may say that there is a very great diversity of opinion in the views received from the various authorities referred to, who have replied. I can assure him, however, that the matter will be dealt with at the earliest possible opportunity.

My Honourable friend, Mr. Bhuput Sing, made certain complaints, so far as I was concerned. I am not going to spoon-feed my Honourable friend and I am not going to supply him with cut and dried summaries of what is contained in the papers that have been given him to read. I may tell him that if I did so, his mental faculties might soon suffer atrophy. (Laughter.) However, I would like to set his anxiety at rest on certain matters by telling him that, so far as the question of coal contracts is concerned, we have, as a matter of fact, called for tenders, those tenders are now before us and we are not yet in a position to say what the result will be. In regard to his other question, as to the fall in receipts, I need only point out that one of the first fruits of the examination of that question is the experiment which we are now making on the North Western Railway in regard to the general reduction of third class fares.

I think that I have dealt with most of the points which have been raised in this debate. There is only one matter on which in conclusion I should like to touch. Last year we had a Rail-Road Conference in Simla, and as a result of that Conference, the hope was engendered that there would be real co-operation in the future between the Railway Administrations on the one hand and Local and Provincial Administrations on the other in this most important matter of public communications. We for our part have already made it perfectly clear that we will not rush into any new extensions without the fullest consultation and discussion with the Local Governments and we hope that they in their turn will take into consideration the point of view of the railways in the interests of their own people before they embark on any policy of road construction which may affect the railways. Indeed, it is not so much a matter of the point of view of the railways as the interests of the community at large. Speaking quite generally, I think that the limited resources available can be most fruitfully and most economically spent in opening up new areas which are untapped and unserved rather than in duplicating facilities which already exist.

I would close with one final remark in regard to the attitude of the Railway Department towards the competition which they will  
5 P.M. be called upon more and more to face from many quarters in the future. Whatever may have been their attitude in the past, my close contact with the Railway Administrations during the past eighteen months has left this much perfectly clear in my mind, namely, that the railways are alive to the fact that it is only by endeavouring to give better service, by endeavouring to give better value for money than their competitors, that they will be able to keep and to increase their clientele in the face of competition. That, Sir, is the spirit which animates the Railway Administrations today and, I hope, will continue to animate them in the future. (Applause.)

The Assembly then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Wednesday, the 21st February, 1934.