

27th February 1946

# THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY DEBATES

Official Report

Volume II, 1946

( 12th February to 27th February, 1946 )

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FIRST SESSION  
OF THE  
SIXTH LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY,  
1946



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v  
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

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SARDAR MANGAL SINGH, M.L.A.

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# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Wednesday, 27th February, 1946

The Assembly met in the Assembly Chamber of the Council House at Eleven of the Clock, Mr. President (The Honourable Mr. G. V. Mayalankar) in the Chair.

## STARRED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS†.

### WRITTEN ANSWERS

#### YARN SUPPLIES TO HANDLOOM WEAVERS OF THE MADRAS PRESIDENCY

533. \*Prof. N. G. Ranga: Will the Honourable Member for Industries and Supplies be pleased to state:

(a) if it is a fact that yarn supplies to handloom weavers of the Madras Presidency have been cut down to nearly 50 per cent.;

(b) whether as a result there is a very great scarcity of cloth supply in South India;

(c) whether the prices of cloth have gone up to prohibitive heights both in the open and black markets; and

(d) what steps are being taken by Government to augment the supplies of yarn-Indian or imported to the weavers?

**The Honourable Mr. A. A. Waugh:** (a) No, Sir. The Honourable Member presumably refers to the reduction in the quota of yarn for Madras under the Yarn Distribution Scheme effected in October last. Other Provincial Governments had protested that Madras was receiving a higher quota of yarn than she was entitled to on the basis of her proportionate pre-war consumption. The yarn quota for Madras was therefore reduced in October to 21,574 bales a month. The average consumption by Madras during the preceding twelve months was 28,711 bales a month.

(b) No, Sir. The *per capita* cloth quota for Madras was raised in October last from 10 yards to 12 yards. So far as known, the cloth supply position in South India is no better and no worse than in other parts of India.

(c) Not in the open market. Government have no information about black market prices, but have no reason to think there is any widespread black marketing of cloth.

(d) Government have endeavoured to increase mill production of cotton yarn by securing essential requirements of millstores and coal. At the time they introduced their yarn distribution scheme, in April last, the average monthly availability of "free" yarn was 76,000 bales. The monthly average is now 83,000 bales. Exports of yarn, which in 1945, totalled 5,280 tons, have been reduced in the current half-year to 298 tons.

#### SUPPLY AND DISTRIBUTION OF KEROSENE OIL

534. \*Prof. N. G. Ranga: Will the Honourable Member for Industries and Supplies be pleased to state:

(a) the latest position regarding the supply of kerosene oil;

(b) when the present restrictions upon the supply and distribution of kerosene oil will be ended; and

(c) whether the ration of the oil for rural areas can be liberalised within the next month or two?

**The Honourable Mr. A. A. Waugh:** (a) Releases of Kerosene Oil to all supply areas have been increased during February 1946 from 50 per cent. to 65 per cent. of the level of consumption in 1941.

(b) As soon as the supply and tanker position permits,

(c) This is a matter for the Provincial and State Governments who are responsible for the internal distribution of Kerosene Oil.

†The question hour for the day having been dispensed with the answers were laid on the table of the House.—Ed. of D.

## INDIA'S REPRESENTATIVES IN UNITED NATIONS ASSEMBLY

535. \*Prof. N. G. Ranga: (a) Will the Foreign Secretary be pleased to state what exactly is the status allotted to, or obtained by, India in the United Nations Assembly as compared to Arjentina, Mexico, Brazil in Latin America or France or China?

(b) How many representatives and advisers is India entitled to?

(c) Are any general instructions issued by the Government of India to our delegation?

(d) Are the same given in consultation with, or independently of the British Government?

(e) Is it a fact that the Indian representative has declined to accept the Vice-presidentship? If so, why?

(f) What exactly was the position sought by India in the Assembly?

**Mr. H. Weightman:** The answers which follow are given in belief that the Honourable Member is referring to the General Assembly of the United Nations.

(a) The status of India in the General Assembly of the United Nations is the same as that of the countries mentioned by the Honourable Member and of all other member nations.

(b) India like all members of the General Assembly is entitled to five representatives. There is no limit to the number of Advisers.

(c) General instructions were given to the delegation.

(d) The general instructions were given independently of His Majesty's Government.

(e) No.

(f) No special position was sought.

## LICENCES UNDER DRUGS CONTROL ORDER

536. \*Prof. N. G. Ranga: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Industries and Supplies be pleased to state if it is a fact that the Government of India introduced a schedule "C" to the Drugs Control Order with a view to making a distinction between a whole time chemist and an oilman stores dealing in medicines?

(b) When was the order issued?

(c) How many oilman stores had been granted licences under schedule "C"?

(d) Did Government call for a report as to the principles observed in the issue of the licences?

(e) Is it not a fact that several oilman stores have been granted A. 1. licences by the Commercial Tax Officer?

(f) Is there any provision in the Drugs Control Order of 1945 holding that refusal to sell to anybody is an offence?

(g) Have Government exempted any one from the operation of this rule?

(h) Did Government receive any complaint against such exemptions?

**The Honourable Mr. A. A. Waugh:** (a) Yes, Sir. Under a Restricted Retailer's licence, general merchants may deal in certain patent household remedies in common use. They pay a licence fee ranging from Rs. 5 to Rs. 20 depending on the size of the town they are located in. They may, however, only sell articles covered by Schedule 'C' of the Drugs Control Order.

(b) Schedule 'C' was introduced on the 80th December 1944.

(c) The number of restricted licences issued in India, excluding Assam, is 2,178. Figures relating to Assam are awaited.

(d) No report was called for, as instructions relating to the issue of restricted licences had been issued to the Provincial Governments, who render monthly reports on the working of the Order.

(e) As no absolute distinction between an oilman's store and a chemist is practicable, discretion has been left to the local licensing authorities. The Commercial Tax Officers of the Provincial Government are the District Licensing Authorities in Madras.

(f) Yes. Clause 12 of the Order prohibits refusal to sell without reasonable cause.

(g) No. The rule applies to all licences.

(h) Does not arise.

#### FERTILIZER PLANT FROM UNITED KINGDOM IN PREFERENCE TO UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

**537. \*Mr. Manu Subedar:** (a) Why was it necessary for the Honourable Member for Industries and Supplies to place orders for the fertiliser plant for the Government Fertiliser Factory in Bihar with British manufacturers when American plant for the same purpose was available?

(b) Are Government aware that there are surplus plants with the Government of the United Kingdom which they could have acquired?

(c) Are Government aware that it is from America that the Travancore fertiliser plant is coming?

(d) If it was considered necessary to have Americans for designing and supervising, why was the manufacture diverted to the United Kingdom?

(e) Was it on the issue of price, or was it on the question of British preference, or was it some other reasons?

(f) Will all the papers in connection with the report of the Pitkeathly Mission and all papers in connection with the ordering of the machinery for the fertiliser plant be placed in the Library of the Central Legislature?

**The Honourable Mr. A. A. Waugh:** (a) Orders for the major portion of the fertilizer plant have not in fact, been placed on a consortium of British manufacturers. The British firm with whom a contract is being made will itself supply only a small proportion of the whole plant, representing their speciality. The rest of the plant will be obtained, by public tender, from a large number of manufacturers both in the U. K. and other countries, the British firm merely acting as agents for the Government of India and in association with a representative of the Government of India. The object of Government is to secure the most up-to-date and efficient plant, and for this purpose all available sources will be utilised.

An exhaustive examination of surplus plants available in America has shown that none is suitable for the Sindri Factory. The electrical equipment of American plants is unsuitable for the standard characteristics of Indian electricity supply, and if they were acquired, the whole electrical equipment would have to be replaced. Some other items of plant might have been suitable, but the purchase of such items would entail the purchase of entire plants of which they form part, and then disposing of what is not required. The utilisation of parts of second-hand American plants would therefore be more costly than the purchase of new plants.

(b) There are surplus plants in the U. K., but none is of the type suitable for the production of ammonia, which is one of the key operations of the factory.

(c) Yes, but it is understood that part of the plant for the Travancore Factory is to be purchased from the U. K.

(d) The reason why it has been determined that the design of the factory will be done by Americans, is that American practice is the most advanced for the production of ammonia. British practice, however, is more suitable for the conversion of ammonia. As explained in answer to part (a), the object is to secure maximum efficiency.

(e) The answer is furnished by (a) and (d) above.

(f) Yes. The relevant papers will be placed in the Library in due course.

## SUPPLY OF CONSUMER GOODS, ETC., UNDER HYDARI MISSION REPORT

338. **Mr. Manu Subedar:** (a) Will the Honourable Member for Industries and Supplies please circulate a copy of the Hydari Mission Report and full particulars of the arrangements effected by that Mission?

(b) What is the nature and class of goods which have come to India since the Hydari Mission went as the result of that Mission's labour?

(c) How much additional production was affected in India through the diversion of the supply of military requirements from the United Kingdom instead of locally?

(d) Have Government surveyed the position since the Hydari Mission went, what improvements if any, have taken place in the situation with regard to (i) consumer goods, and (ii) producer's equipment, machinery etc., required by India?

(e) What further measures have Government considered to ease the present situation?

**The Honourable Mr. A. A. Waugh:** (a) As was stated in reply to part (b) of Mr. Neogy's starred question No. 303, on the 19th February 1945, and the Honourable Member's starred question No. 474, on the 22nd February 1945, the Hydari Mission was merely an administrative instrument for dealing with very intricate and detailed subjects, and was sent on official business to the U. K. to save time and correspondence in handling many thousands of war demands. The report submitted by the Mission to Government formed part of official correspondence beginning before and continuing after the Mission's visit, and it was decided not to publish it. Government are therefore unable to circulate copies of the report. As to the arrangements effected by the Mission, I would refer the Honourable Member to the Press Communique issued on the evening of 6th April 1945 which was circulated to Honourable Members.

(b) A list of such goods is placed on the table.

(c) No additional production which had come into being in India was diminished by the diversion of military requirements from India.

(d) Yes; decided improvement has been noticed in regard to supplies of goods referred to.

(e) With a view to aiding the industrial effort of the country and reducing shortages of goods required to meet India's economy a revised notification has been issued relaxing the Import Trade Control regulations so as to permit importation from the U. K. and most of the Empire countries without import licence of various kinds of industrial requirements as well as goods of producer and consumer types. I may invite the attention of the Honourable Member to the Open General Licence No. VII as published in *Gazette of India Extraordinary* on the 22nd January and 4th February 1946 and also to the connected Press Notes issued on those dates. Copies of the Press Note are available in the Library.

The question of what further additions to the O. G. L. can be made is receiving the consideration of Government.

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*Statement*

Artificial silk fabrics.  
 Artificial silk yarn thread.  
 Chemicals household.  
 Chemicals industrial.  
 Cotton yarn & cotton piecegoods others.  
 Cotton sewing thread.  
 Crockery.  
 Cutlery including razor blades.  
 Cycle and parts.  
 Domestic sewing machines and parts.  
 Drugs, Medicines & Baby foods Dyestuffs.  
 Electric Lamps, table fans and household appliances of all kinds. °

Essential oils.  
 Glassware.  
 Grindery.  
 Handknitting wool.  
 Hardware.  
 Hosiery.  
 Hurricane lamps.  
 Kerosine oil.  
 Liquors.  
 Non-ferrous metals such as aluminium, brass sheets, zinc, etc.  
 Oil cloth and Floor cloth.  
 Optical instruments, apparatus and equipment.  
 Paints.  
 Paper of all kinds.  
 Pipe tobacco.  
 Photographic negative & Printing paper.  
 Polishes and compositions.  
 Professional and scientific instruments.  
 Radio & Radio parts.  
 Second hand clothing.  
 Stationery.  
 Toilet requisites.  
 Torches and components.  
 Umbrella ribs and components.  
 Woollen yarn and Fabrics.  
 Railway equipment and material.  
 Tele. communication's equipment :—  
     Auto Exchange Equipment.  
     Underground cables.  
 Workshop Stores.  
 Meteorological Equipment such as—  
     Milling Machine and accessories.  
     Hydrogen compressor with accessories.  
     Motor Generators for Hydrogen Factories  
     Barometers.  
     Naphoscopes.  
     Anemographs, etc.  
 Motor Vehicles.  
 Agricultural Equipment :—  
     Tractors.  
     Mouldboard Ploughs.  
     Subsoil Ploughs.  
     Cream Separators.  
 Chemical Fertilisers :—Sulphate of Ammonia.  
 Coal mining Equipment.  
 Ordnance Stores, and Munition, Transportation, and other military items.

**EFFORTS TO REDUCE PRICES OF MANUFACTURED ARTICLES**

539. \*Mr. Manu Subedar: (a) What steps, if any, does the Honourable Member for Industries and Supplies propose to take to reduce the prices of manufactured articles?

(b) Are Government aware that freight plays an important part in the movement of raw materials and other essential articles required as well as of fuel and of finished goods? If so, have Government considered the question of bringing down the surcharge of freight rates as a means of reducing prices?

(c) Do Government propose to indicate whether they have carefully examined the prices of matches, cement, paper, sugar and cloth in the interests of the consumer?

(d) What machinery has been provided for a constant re-examination with a view to bringing down prices for the civil population?

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** (a) No, Sir. There were formerly two articles being mainly due to shortage in supplies, it has so far been the Government's policy to bring about a reduction in the general level of prices by:

(i) increasing imports of consumer goods which are either not manufactured or else are manufactured in insufficient quantities in India;

(ii) assistance to Indian manufacturers by way of provision of raw materials and stores, if necessary by imports at controlled rates, and making available transport and other facilities to enable them to cut down costs of production;

(iii) so long as the war was on, to bring about reduction in the defence demands that were being met from the productive capacity of India; and

(iv) by controlling the prices of the various articles at a reasonable level and thereafter with the help of Advisory Committees and Panels reviewing them in view of the prevailing supply position.

It is Government's intention to pursue the same policy with a constant re-examination of prices with the help of Advisory Committees and Panels and of Provincial Governments.

(b) Under normal conditions railway freight does play an important part in the movement of raw materials and other essential goods, etc., but under the abnormal conditions created by the War, the demand for transport and goods has been so great that the supply of wagons has become of primary importance to consignors and freight rates were comparatively of minor consequence to them. Making allowance for exemptions from the increased charges of 12½ per cent., it is estimated that the general rise in railway freights on goods was approximately 9 per cent., which is small when compared with the rise in commodity prices. The latter part of the question, therefore, does not arise.

(c) Government have carefully examined the prices of the articles mentioned in the interests of the consumer.

(d) The Honourable Member is referred to the answer to part (a) of the question.

#### TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF SIR GIRJA SHANKER BAJPAI'S APPOINTMENT

540. \*Mr. Manu Subedar: (a) Will the Foreign Secretary please state the terms and conditions on which Sir Girja Shanker Bajpai was engaged when he was sent to the U.S.A.?

(b) Are Government aware that he is working under the British Embassy and that he was not recognized as an independent official, but was regarded as part of the entourage of the British Embassy?

(c) For how many years was he appointed in the first instance, and how many extensions have been given to him?

(d) Did Government direct Sir Girja Shanker Bajpai to intercede in the propaganda against India and her aspirations for freedom which was carried on in the U.S.A. by those interested? If so, when was this done and what were the results secured?

Mr. H. Weightman: (a) The terms attaching to the post of Agent-General for India in Washington are:

(i) Pay—£2,500 per annum.

(ii) Fairs de Representation—£3,000 per annum.

(iii) Sumptuary allowance—£7,000 per annum.

(iv) Free furnished house and motor car.

(b) The Agent-General is technically attached to His Majesty's Embassy.

(c) Sir Girja Shankar Bajpai was not appointed for any specific period.

(d) The Government of India are unaware that there was any propaganda of the type to which the Honourable Member refers. Consequently no instructions in the sense suggested were issued.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE GRADY COMMISSION REPORT

541. \*Mr. Manu Subedar: (a) Has the Honourable Member for Industries and Supplies seen in the *Blitz* of Bombay dated the 13th October, 1945 an outline of the principal recommendations of the Grady Report?

(b) Are these substantially correct?

(c) Why was the Grady Report not published during the war, and why is its publication still withheld?

(d) Is it a fact that the Grady Report recommended the production of many kinds of munitions in India instead of their importation in order to save shipping?

(e) What were the reasons for not accepting the Grady Report?

**The Honourable Mr. A. A. Waugh:** (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No, Sir. The outline is very wide of the mark.

(c) The Report was not published during the war for reasons of security. It is intended to publish the Report very shortly, omitting only essential strategic information, along with a memorandum indicating in detail the action taken by the Government of India to implement the recommendations made in the Report.

(d) Yes, Sir.

(e) The Grady Report was not only accepted but was implemented, as far as possible.

#### BLACK MARKETING IN ARMS AND AMMUNITION

**642. \*Prof. N. G. Ranga:** (a) Will the Honourable Member for Industries and Supplies be pleased to state whether the Controller General of Civil Supplies received a list of articles in the trade of arms and ammunition from the Secretary, All-India Arms and Ammunition Dealers' Association?

(b) Is it a fact that, consequent on the submission by him of a comprehensive list of articles which were being black marketed generally, the Secretary of the Association was removed from the Advisory Panel? If not, what were the reasons for his removal?

(c) Is it a fact that the Assistant Controller General of Civil Supplies in his communication No. S/3(30)/44-CG(CS), dated the 2nd September, 1944, to the Honorary Secretary, All-India Arms and Ammunition Dealers' Association, Delhi, wrote: "The question of fixation of prices of all items of arms and ammunition is engaging the active attention of this office"?

(d) For how long has the question engaged the active attention of the Controller General of Civil Supplies?

(e) What prices were fixed under section 3 of the Hoarding and Profiteering Prevention Ordinance? If none, why?

**The Honourable Mr. A. A. Waugh:** (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No, Sir. The Secretary of the Association was removed from the Panel because it was represented by members of the Association that it would be more appropriate if a dealer rather than a lawyer were appointed to the Panel.

(c) Yes.

(d) and (e). Specific prices for cartridges and profit margins for other articles dealt with by the trade were first fixed by a Notification dated the 22nd January, 1941. The question of fixation of specific prices for other items, as well as revision of prices and profit margins already notified, was investigated and was referred to the Advisory Panel on 9th November 1944, and again on 10th August 1945. The Panel came to the conclusion that it was impossible to fix prices for some 300 items imported only in very small quantities. Accordingly, on their advice, prices of cartridges only were revised and notified in a Notification dated 8th September 1945, while profit margins in respect of other items were notified in a second Notification issued the same day.

#### DUFFERIN RAILWAY BRIDGE AT BENARES

**543. \*Shri Sri Prakasa:** Will the Honourable the Railway Member be pleased to state:

(a) the present condition of the Dufferin Railway Bridge at Benares;

(b) the year in which the repairs of the Bridge were taken in hand;

- (c) the period of time during which the work of repairs was suspended;
- (d) the date on which the work was re-started;
- (e) the time that the operations are likely to take; and
- (f) if he is satisfied with the progress made?

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** (a) The present condition of the Dufferin Bridge at Benares is such that early renewal of the girders is desirable.

(b) Work in connection with the Dufferin Bridge re-girding was taken in hand during the year 1941.

(c) and (d). The work was never actually suspended, but owing to more urgent and important demands which had to be met in connection with the prosecution of the war the progress was slow.

(e) According to the present programme the work should be completed by February 1949.

(f) I am satisfied that the progress of the work could not have been accelerated in the circumstances.

#### DUFFERIN RAILWAY BRIDGE AT BENARES

**544. \*Shri Sri Prakasa:** Will the Honourable the Railway Member be pleased to state:

(a) if the reconstruction of the Dufferin Railway Bridge at Benares, at present going on, is in accordance with the original plan, or if any changes have been made therein;

(b) if it is the intention to run double lines of Railways on the Bridge and to make arrangements for vehicular and pedestrian traffic on the roof; and

(c) the amount of money sanctioned for the reconstruction of the bridge, and the amount already spent so far?

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** (a) The present plan for the reconstruction of the Dufferin Bridge at Benares differs from the plan originally approved only in a few minor details designed to improve the roadway.

(b) Yes.

(c) The original estimate sanctioned in August 1939 amounted to Rs. 88 lakhs. This estimate will, however, require revision on account of the rise in the cost of labour and material.

Expenditure incurred up to the end of December 1945 amounts to Rs. 88,51,000.

#### DUFFERIN RAILWAY BRIDGE AT BENARES

**545. \*Shri Sri Prakasa:** Will the Honourable the Railway Member be pleased to state:

(a) if he has received complaints of the inconvenience caused to vehicular and pedestrian traffic on the Dufferin Railway Bridge at Benares during the monsoons when the Pontoon Bridge is dismantled;

(b) if it is possible to provide a wider passage for pedestrian traffic than at present given; and

(c) if he proposes to suggest to the East Indian Railway to set apart definite hours for vehicular traffic on the Bridge when the pontoon is not available?

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** (a) Yes.

(b) The footpath provided for pedestrian traffic has been closed from November 1945 and separate arrangements for this type of traffic will not be made until the regirding is completed.

(c) In view of the very heavy railway traffic, it is not practicable to provide the facility desired.



**BOARDING OF THROUGH BOGEYS AT BENARES AND LUCKNOW SIDINGS**

**546. \*Shri Sri Prakash:** Will the Honourable the Railway Member be pleased to state:

(a) if Government are aware that passengers are not allowed to board the through bogeys provided at various important stations like Benares and Lucknow on the East Indian Railway for attaching to various mail and express trains before the arrival of such trains;

(b) if Government are aware that this causes inconvenience to passengers wanting to travel in these bogeys; and

(c) if Government propose to suggest to the Railway Administration to keep these bogeys at convenient sidings and to permit passengers to board them before the arrival of the trains?

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** (a) This is not so. The E. I. Railway report that where there are suitable sidings, with or without platforms, and passengers are not open to undue risk, through service coaches are placed in such sidings and passengers are allowed to board them long before the arrival of the trains in question. At stations like Benares Cantt. and Lucknow, definite instructions have already been issued by the Railway Administration to the staff concerned to place through service carriages in suitable sidings for the entrainment of passengers.

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

**MUSLIMS IN GAZETTED POSTS IN CIVIL AVIATION DIRECTORATE**

**647. \*Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffer:** Will the Secretary for Posts and Air be pleased to state the number of Muslims holding gazetted posts in the Civil Aviation Directorate?

**Sir Gurunath Bewoor:** Four, Sir.

**PURCHASE AND DISTRIBUTION PROGRAMME OF LOCOMOTIVES**

**548. \*Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad:** (a) Will the Honourable the Railway Member please state how many locomotives the Indian Railways have acquired by purchases since April, 1945?

(b) In what manner were these engines distributed among the first class Railways?

(c) What was the share of the East Indian Railway?

(d) How many more engines are Government expecting in the calendar year 1946?

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** (a) No locomotives have been purchased since April 1945, but deliveries in India from the 1st April 1945 to the 1st February 1946 as a result of orders placed abroad prior that date total 894 (875 B. G. and 19 M. G.).

(b) The figures of locomotives distributed amongst Railways from the 1st April 1945 to the 1st February 1946 differ from the figures of locomotives received during the same period, due to the time lag between the receipt of a locomotive at port and its receipt on a Railway for service. I lay on the table a statement showing the number of new locomotives distributed over class I Government Railways and the net effect of such additions on the total number of locomotives on line on each Railway, after taking into account inter-railway transfers of locomotives already in service.

(c) The East Indian Railway received 128 new engines from the 1st April 1945 to the 1st February 1946.

(d) 160 locomotives, including 12 to be manufactured indigenously, are expected from the 1st February 1946 to the end of the calendar year.

Statement showing the number of new locomotives distributed over Government owned Railways and the net effect of these additions on the total number of engines on line

Railway	New locos on line on		New locos added from 1-4-1945 to 1-2-1946	Total number of locos on line on		Net increase from 1-4-1945 to 1-2-1946	Remark
	1-4-45	1-2-46		1-4-45	1-2-46		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<i>Broad gauge</i>							
B. A.	102	91	-11	416	386	-30	
B. N.	33	85	+52	683	742	+59	
B.B. & C.I.,	9	40	+31	361	386	+25	
E. I.	111	234	+123	1670	1782	+112	
G. I. P.	53	134	+81	725	787	+62	
M. S. M.	...	31	+31	311	346	+35	
N. W.	8	44	+36	1142	1208	+66	
S. I.	...	...	...	153	158	+5	
Total	316	659	+343	5461	5795	+334	
<i>Metre gauge</i>							
B. A.	368	338	-30	882	786	-96	
B.,B.&C.I.	2	2		403	436	+33	
M. S. M.		...		274	286	+12	
S. I.	...	...	...	327	334	+7	
O. T.	1	34	+33	452	496	+44	
Total	371	374	+3	2338	2338	...	

#### WORKSHOP FOR CONSTRUCTING BROAD GAUGE LOCOMOTIVES

549. \*Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: (a) Will the Honourable the Railway Member please state if Government are contemplating to construct a workshop for the manufacture of broad gauge locomotives?

(b) What steps have already been taken for the construction of the workshop?

(c) Where will these workshops be located?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) and (c). Government are proceeding with their plans to remodel the locomotive workshop at Kanchrapara for locomotive building. It is the Government's intention that locomotives should also be built by the Tata Locomotive and Engineering Company at Tatanagar. For this purpose the Singhbhum Workshops of the E. I. Railway were sold to this firm on the 1st June 1945 and the firm are at present proceeding with the manufacture of locomotive boilers required for replacement on existing locomotives.

(b) Certain machinery for installation at Kanchrapara has been ordered and some expenditure on other works has been authorised.

#### LACK OF LIGHTING ON BENGAL AND ASSAM RAILWAY

550. \*Sreejati Rohini Kumar Choudhuri: (a) Will the Honourable the Railway Member be pleased to state if it is a fact that no light is provided

in any of the Railway compartments in the A. B. Zone of the Bengal Assam Railway upto now?

(b) Is it a fact that there is no lighting arrangement in the third and inter classes and in the W. Cs of any compartment of any class in the Bengal zone of the Bengal Assam Railway? If the replies to (a) and (b) are in the affirmative, what steps are being taken to remove these grievances?

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** No. Important trains have lights in the compartments.

(b) The reply to the first part is in the negative. All compartments of passenger trains and W. Cs. of all classes on the more important trains, running on the Broad Gauge of B. A. Railway are provided with lights. With regard to the second part, active steps have been taken to improve the supply of train lighting lamps, and the position should now improve.

#### RAILWAY LINE BETWEEN BONGAINGAON AND PANDU

**551. \*Sreejot Rohini Kumar Choudhuri:** (a) Will the Honourable the Railway Member please state if it is a fact that arrangements are being made to connect Bongaingaon with Pandu by constructing a Railway line from Bongaingaon to Jogighopa, to Goalpara and then to Pandu by the south bank of the River Brahmaputra?

(b) When do Government expect to complete the construction thereof and carry traffic on this line?

(c) Do Government propose to construct a bridge over the Brahmaputra River in the Assam zone? If so, at what place?

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** (a) The possibility of constructing a railway line from Bongaingaon to Pandu via Jogighopa and Goalpara is under investigation.

(b) The decision to construct the line will depend on the results of the survey now being carried out and until this decision is taken, it is not possible to say when the line will be completed and opened to traffic.

(c) Yes, near Jogighopa as a part of the Bongaingaon-Goalpara Project under investigation.

#### MUSLIM COOLY CONTRACTORS ON EAST INDIAN RAILWAY

**552. \*Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad:** (a) Will the Honourable the Railway Member please lay on the table a statement showing the number of cooly contractors on the East Indian Railway stations?

(b) How many of these contractors are Muslims? If none, why?

(c) On what principle are the contracts given?

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** (a) It is not clear what exactly the Honourable Member has in mind in the use of the term "cooly contractors", but it is assumed that he is referring to contractors concerned with licensed coolies for the carrying of passengers' luggage. On this assumption, the number of cooly contractors on the East Indian Railway stations is 47.

(b) Four. The latter part of the question does not arise.

(c) These contracts are given by the Railway Administration to suitable applicants for such contracts with due regard to their experience and requisite qualifications for the recruitment and control of labour.

#### BOOKSTALLS AGENCIES ON CERTAIN RAILWAYS

**553. \*Pundit Thakur Das Bhargava:** (a) Will the Honourable the Railway Member be pleased to state the names of agencies conducting book stalls on the Railway Stations of the N.W.R., E.I.R. and G.I.P.R. as well as the number of years they have been functioning on each Railway?

(b) Are there any rules governing the appointment and conduct of these agencies?

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** (a) *N. W. Railway*:—Messrs. A. H. Wheeler and Company—About 58 years.

*E. I. Railway*:—Messrs. A. H. Wheeler and Company—About 60 years.

*G. I. P. Railway*:—Messrs. A. H. Wheeler and Company—About 47 years.

(b) Contracts are let out after calling for public tenders, and granted to the highest tenderer likely to render efficient service to the public.

#### TEACHING OF FIRST AID TO RAILWAYMEN

**554. \*Pundit Thakur Das Bhargava:** Will the Honourable the Railway Member kindly state if first aid lessons are given to any class of Railwaymen on the various Railway Administrations? If so, to which class, and to how many men?

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** The reply to the first part is in the affirmative. The instructions issued to railway administrations make First Aid training obligatory at least in the case of Running staff, other than those who are not required to be literate; and supervising staff in all workshops and running sheds. In addition, administrations are allowed to add, at their discretion, other categories of staff whom they consider should be trained in First Aid. As the Honourable Member has not specified the period in respect of which the information referred to in the concluding portion of the question is required, I regret I am unable to furnish it.

#### HINDI KNOWING POSTAL FUNCTIONARIES IN PUNJAB

**555. \*Pundit Thakur Das Bhargava:** Will the Secretary for Posts and Air please state:

(a) the present number of postal functionaries in the Punjab capable of reading the addresses in the Hindi script as compared to the total postal functionaries in that Province;

(b) the number of letters and postcards sent to the Dead Letter Office during the year 1945 owing to their bearing addresses in Hindi in the whole of India and in the Punjab; and

(c) whether Government have taken any steps to remove the grievance of the Hindi reading public in the matter?

**Sir Gurunath Bewoor:** (a) and (b). The information is not readily available and its collection would involve an undue expenditure of time and labour.

(c) Yes. So far as possible and where necessary, additional staff has been posted in the larger post offices for transcribing addresses into English.

#### PERSONS CONVICTED OF HOARDING AND PROFITEERING OFFENCES

**556. \*Pundit Thakur Das Bhargava:** Will the Honourable Member for Industries and Supplies kindly state:

(a) the number, separately, of persons convicted in the Centrally Administered Areas in connection with the Hoarding and profiteering offences during the last three years; and

(b) the number of officials (i) proceeded against and (ii) convicted for corruption during the last three years in connection with offences relating to hoarding and profiteering and for corruption generally?

**The Honourable Mr. A. A. Waugh:** The details required are being collected and will be placed on the table as soon as they are available.

#### PROMOTIONS IN RAILWAY BOARD

**557. \*Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar:** Will the Honourable the Railway Member be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that there is great discontent among the staff in the Railway Board's Office owing to the indiscriminate practice followed in that office in regard to promotions to posts of Superintendents and other supervisory posts;

(b) whether promotions in the Railway Board's Office are made in accordance with the general policy laid down by the Home Department that every senior man must be tried before he is condemned; if not, why not;

(c) the number of officiating promotions to posts of Superintendents and other supervisory staff made during the last two years, together with the number of senior men in each case whose claims were overlooked; and

(d) whether Government are prepared to review all the promotions made during the last two years be the temporary or officiating with a view to ensuring equitable treatment to all the members of the staff of the Railway Board's Office?

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** (a) No, Sir.

(b) Yes, though it has nowhere been laid down that men should be tried out in Supervisory posts because of their seniority, when their record of service shows them to be unfit for promotion.

(c) Twenty-nine officiating promotions to posts of Superintendents and other Supervisory posts have been made during the past two years. In no case were the claims of senior men overlooked.

(d) No, Sir.

#### PROMOTIONS IN RAILWAY BOARD

**558. \*Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar:** Will the Honourable the Railway Member be pleased to state:

(a) whether any posts of Assistants, Assistants-in-Charge, or Superintendents in the Railway Board's Office have been declared as technical and specialised or treated as such, with a view to confining appointments and promotions to such posts to a certain category of men;

(b) if so, whether this step was taken in consultation with the Home Department or the Federal Public Service Commission;

(c) whether Government are aware that the declaration or undeclared assumption of certain posts as technical or specialised has operated to the disadvantage of number of men in the Railway Board's Office especially those who were recruited through the Federal Public Service Commission, in view of the fact that similar disabilities do not exist in any other department of the Government of India; and

(d) if so, how Government propose to compensate the men who have been adversely affected for no fault of theirs?

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (d). Do not arise.

#### PROMOTIONS IN RAILWAY BOARD

**559. \*Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar:** Will the Honourable the Railway Member be pleased to state:

(a) whether the various Branches in the Railway Board's Office have been or are to be formed into a few groups with a view to confining the promotions of a man to the particular group in which he is placed;

(b) if so, whether the Home Department and/or the Federal Public Service Commission are aware of this scheme; if not, whether Government propose to consult them as the matter may have an adverse effect on the men who were recruited through them; and

(c) whether Government propose to redistribute the senior men in all groups so that they may have equal chances of promotions; if not, why not?

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** (a) No, Sir, there is at present no intention of altering the existing procedure.

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

**RECRUITMENT OF STAFF ON B. B. & C. I. RAILWAY**

**560. \*Pandit Mukut Bihari Lal Bhargava:** (a) Will the Honourable the Railway Member please state how recruitment is made for the staff of subordinate and higher grades in the B. B. and C. I. Railway (metre gauge)?

(b) Are there any Selection Boards for recruitment and promotion? If so, how many, and how are they constituted?

(c) Do there exist any rules to guide these Selection Boards? If so, will the Honourable Member place them on the table? If not, will such rules be framed now to avoid any chances of partiality in selection?

(d) Have there been any cases of appointments and promotions to the services without the consultation of the Selection Boards? If so, in how many cases and for what reasons?

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** (a) As regards recruitment of subordinate staff on the B. B. and C. I. Railway, the Honourable Member is referred to my reply to part (a) of Starred Question No. 110, asked in this House on 8th February, 1946. As regards gazetted officers, recruitment to railway services, Class I, is made in accordance with rules 124 and 131 of State Railway Establishment Code, Volume I, a copy of which is available in the Library of the House. Such recruitment is effected through the Federal Public Service Commission.

(b) Yes. They are constituted in accordance with the rules contained in Appendices II and II-A of the State Railway Establishment Code referred to in the reply to part (a). There is no fixed number as Selection Boards are appointed *ad hoc*. The selection of senior subordinates for officiating vacancies in gazetted posts is carried out in accordance with the instructions contained in Railway Board's letter No. E44PM12, dated 14th November, 1944, a copy of which was placed on the table of the House in reply to part (b) of Lala Sham Lal's Starred Question No. 1130, asked on 20th March, 1945. The permanent promotion of such staff is effected by the Railway Board in consultation with the Federal Public Service Commission.

As regards promotion of gazetted officers to administrative posts in permanent vacancies or vacancies of long duration, the selection is made by the Railway Board after examining the confidential reports and service records of the senior officers eligible for selection.

(c) The rules are those mentioned in the reply to parts (a) and (b). The reply to the last portion does not arise.

(d) Government are informed that the railway administration are not aware of any such case. The reply to the second portion does not arise.

**COMMUNAL PROPORTION IN RECRUITMENT AND PROMOTIONS ON RAILWAYS**

**561. \*Pandit Mukut Bihari Lal Bhargava:** (a) Will the Honourable the Railway Member please state what proportion, if any, is fixed for different communities, Europeans, Anglo-Indians, Hindus, Muslims, etc., for recruitment and promotion to higher and lower grade services?

(b) Is it a fact that Anglo-Indian subordinates have been promoted to the post of Signal Engineer without requisite technical qualifications in preference to the subordinates of other communities possessing necessary qualifications?

(c) Is it a fact that appeals preferred in such cases are pending for a considerable period without any decision thereon?

(d) What steps does the Honourable Member contemplate to take to avoid the repetition of such instances in future?

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** (a) Communal reservation of vacancies in the gazetted and non-gazetted services open to direct recruitment is made in accordance with the provisions of Government of India (Home Department) Resolutions No. 14/17-B/33, dated 4th July, 1934, No. 14/5/38 dated 1st May, 1939, and No. 28/5/42Est.(S), dated 11th August, 1943, copies of which are available in the Library of the House. Promotions, including those

from non-gazetted to gazetted posts, are not made on a communal basis. Vacancies in the superior services on railways to the extent of 20 per cent. are filled by promoting staff from the Lower Gazetted Service and non-gazetted rank. Such promotions are also not made on communal considerations.

(b) and (c). The reply is in the negative.

(d) Does not arise.

#### REVISED SCALE OF PAY ON B. B. & C. I. RAILWAY (METRE GAUGE)

**562. \*Pandit Mukut Bihari Lal Bhargava:** (a) Will the Honourable the Railway Member please state if Government are aware that the revised scale of pay for the staff of the B. B. and C. I. Railway (metre gauge) is comparatively much lower than that of the other State Railways like the E. I. Railway?

(b) If so, what is the reason for such discrimination? Do Government propose to take steps to revise the scale in order to bring it to level with other State Railways?

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** (a) While the revised scales of pay of some of the staff on the Metre Gauge sections of the B. B. and C. I. Railway may, in some instances, be lower as compared with those of corresponding categories on the E. I. Railway, Government do not consider that the disparity is either general or appreciable.

(b) The extent to which uniformity of scales on all railways is practicable is being examined as part of the general question of postwar scales, though it is doubtful if entire uniformity is called for having regard to different conditions in different parts of the country.

**563\* and 564\*.** [Withdrawn.]

#### PROMOTION OF NON-INDIANS TO POSTS OF CHIEF COMMISSIONER AND GENERAL MANAGER OF RAILWAYS

**565. \*Srijut Dharendra Kanta Lahiri Choudhury:** Will the Honourable the Railway Member please state:

(a) if it is a fact that the posts of Chief Commissioner for Railways and General Managers of Railways are exclusively intended for non-Indians; if not, what the fact is;

(b) if it is a fact that during the preceding two years senior most Indians have been superseded by junior most non-Indians for those posts; if not what the fact is;

(c) how these appointments are made and who selects them; and

(d) whether the Federal Public Service Commission has any say in the selection?

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** (a) No. The claims of all senior officers possessing the requisite qualifications, irrespective of race or nationality, are considered when selecting officers to fill these posts.

(b) As the posts are selection posts and seniority is not therefore the sole factor in making selections, senior officers, both Indian and non-Indian, have, on occasion, not received promotion.

(c) The Honourable Member is referred to my reply to part (d) of Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar's Starred Question No. 111, asked on 8th February, 1946.

(d) The reply is in the negative.

#### TICKETLESS TRAVEL

**566. \*Srijut Dharendra Kanta Lahiri Choudhury:** (a) Has the attention of the Honourable the Railway Member been drawn to the news item by the A. P. I. published in column 3 of page 4 of the Delhi Edition of the *Hindustan Times*, dated February 7, 1946, under the caption "Ticketless Travellers Arrested"? If so, will he please state whether the figure 2,000 (Two thousands) is correct?

(b) Does the said figure relate to one train at one station or more?

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** (a) and (b). I have seen the news item referred to. Information as to the correctness of the number of ticketless travellers arrested quoted in the news item as well as on the points mentioned in part (b) of the question has been called for and will be laid on table of the House in due course.

#### DUTIES AND FUNCTIONS OF GOVERNMENT RAILWAY POLICE, DELHI JUNCTION

**567. \*Srijut Dhirendra Kanta Lahiri Choudhury:** (a) Has the attention of the Honourable the Railway Member been drawn to a letter published in column 7 of page 5 of the Delhi Edition of the *Hindustan Times*, dated February 7, 1946, under the caption "At Delhi Junction"? If so, will he please state if it is a fact that at Railway Stations law and order are maintained by the Government Railway Police Force?

(b) Is guarding, watching and patrolling platforms, buildings and Railways the duty and function of the Police Force at Railway Stations?

(c) Under what circumstances do the beggars get access to platforms which are guarded and patrolled by the Police Force?

(d) Is it a fact that a Railway servant has no power vested by the Indian Railways Act to eject the beggars from platforms which are guarded and patrolled by the Police Force? If not what is the fact?

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** (a) Yes.

(b) Such portion of the work of guarding, watching, and patrolling platforms, buildings and Railways as comes within the meaning of maintenance of Law and Order forms one of the duties and functions of the Police Force at railway stations.

(c) Keeping the station premises clear of beggars is only one of the multifarious duties of the Police Staff, and the beggars get access to platforms by unauthorised routes while the Staff are engaged otherwise.

(d) Railway servants have adequate powers to eject or prosecute beggars.

#### SUB-DIVIDING OF CIGARETTE CONTRACT AT AMRITSAR ON COMMUNAL BASES

**568. \*Srijut Dhirendra Kanta Lahiri Choudhury:** Will the Honourable the Railway Member please refer to the reply given to starred question No. 219 asked on the 16th November, 1943, regarding sub-division of contracts on communal basis on Railways, viz:—"I have no reason to suppose that this policy has not been followed by the North Western Railway ever since the issue of the letter referred to", and state:

(a) if it is a fact that the General Manager, North Western Railway has recently sub-divided the Cigarette Contract at Amritsar on communal basis against the declared policy enunciated in that reply; if not, what the fact is; and

(b) whether Government now propose to adopt that policy by cancelling the said sub-division of the said contract; if not; why not?

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** (a) No, Sir. There were formerly two contractors for the sale of cigarettes at Amritsar. The contract of one was terminated some time ago on account of bad work and this has now been revived and given to another contractor.

(b) Does not arise.

#### NON-SUPPLY OF SURPLUS WAGONS TO PUBLIC

**569. \*Khan Bahadur Hafez M. Ghazanfarulla:** (a) Will the Honourable Member for War Transport kindly state why there is shortage of wagons now on all the Railways when the war is over?

(b) Is it not a fact that a large number of wagons are surplus in all the Railways and yet they are not supplied to the public on demand?

(c) When do Government expect to supply these wagons to the public without any control?



**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** (a) I would refer the Honourable Member to para. 2 of my Budget speech on the 18th instant, where I explained that despite decrease in Military traffic, a high rate of transport activity continues, although, of course, the distribution of traffic has altered. As evidence of this I might add that we have loaded in January 1946 over 3 per cent more wagons on the Broad Gauge than in January 1945. Despite this the transport demands continued to exceed the available supply.

(b) No.

(c) As I said in para. 2 of my Budget speech, it is necessary for the time being to maintain in operation, in decreasing degree a system of priority movement control. Present indications are that this will have to continue at least until the end of August 1946.

#### RAILWAY ENGINES PURCHASED FROM AMERICA AND CANADA

**570. \*Khan Bahadur Hafiz M. Ghazanfarulla:** (a) Will the Honourable the Railway Member please state the number of Railway engines which have been purchased during the period 1943-45 from America and Canada?

(b) How many of these are now on the Railway lines in working order?

(c) How many of these are in workshops requiring repairs?

(d) Do these engines come up in performance and efficiency to the standard that was expected of engines of a similar design?

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** (a) From 1st January 1943 to 31st December 1945, 349 locomotives were ordered from the U.S.A. and 292 were ordered from Canada for use in India. Of this total of 641, 450 had been put into service up to the end of 1945.

(b) and (c) Figures are not available to show separately the number of these locomotives which are working or are temporarily under repair; but it is known that the number under repair, considering the operating conditions which prevailed during the war, is not abnormal.

(d) Yes.

#### LATE RUNNING OF TRAINS ON EAST INDIAN AND OUDH AND TIRHUT RAILWAYS

**571. \*Khan Bahadur Hafiz M. Ghazanfarulla:** (a) Is the Honourable the Railway Member aware that almost all the trains are now running late on the East Indian Railway and Oudh and Tirhut Railway?

(b) What steps are being taken to stop the late runnings?

(c) Is it a fact that sometimes trains leave from the starting stations about an hour late? Who is responsible for the late startings?

(d) Is any action being taken against the officers and men who are responsible for the late arrivals and departures?

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** (a) There has been a considerable degree of unpunctuality in the running of trains on the E.I. and O.T. Railways, but it is an overstatement to say that almost all the trains are now running late.

(b) All necessary measures are taken to improve punctuality. Officers and inspecting staff have been instructed to travel more frequently with the trains to see that time is not lost at stations or on the line, for other than unavoidable reasons such as engine failure due to bad coal, and all avoidable detentions are taken up. The loads of passenger trains have been reduced to enable drivers to maintain the booked speed and to make up time in the event of trains being detained from unavoidable causes. The running of trains is very carefully watched both by Divisional Superintendents and Headquarters Offices.

(c) Yes, this sometimes happens, but late starts may arise from a combination of unavoidable causes, and are not necessarily attributable to any particular official.

(d) Yes, detentions are checked very carefully and whenever the staff are found at fault, suitable action is taken to prevent a recurrence of such detentions.

**NON-RECOGNITION OF OUDH AND TIRHUT RAILWAYMEN'S UNION**

**572. \*Shri Satya Narayan Sinha:** (a) Is the Honourable the Railway Member aware that in spite of the condition precedent to official recognition of the Union as provided in Appendix 13 of the Railway Establishment Code having been fulfilled repeatedly, the Oudh and Tirhut Railwaymen's Union has not been accorded recognition by the management yet, and that the question is pending before the General Manager for the last three years?

(b) If the reply to (a) be in the affirmative, will the Honourable Member please give the reasons for non-compliance?

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** (a) The actual position does not appear to be as stated in the Honourable Member's question. Government are informed that in spite of the assurance held out by the General Manager to consider the question of the Union's recognition, the latter has, even after repeated references, failed to produce certain current records to satisfy him regarding its status.

(b) Does not arise.

**SCALES OF PAY OF OFFICERS AND SUBORDINATE STAFF ON OUDH AND TIRHUT RAILWAY**

**573. \*Shri Satya Narayan Sinha:** (a) Will the Honourable the Railway Member please state (a) if it is a fact that the scales of pay of the General Manager of the Oudh and Tirhut Railway and other big officers of the Railway have been raised to the level of the respective scales of other State Railways?

(b) Is it a fact that the scales and grades of pay of the subordinate employees are still very much below the respective scales in other State Railways?

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** (a) and (b). The General Manager of the O. T. Railway has been given the State Railway scale of pay. As regards other gazetted staff and non-gazetted staff, the Honourable Member is referred to my reply to Mr. B. B. Varma's Starred Question No. 115 asked on 8th February, 1946.

**FOODGRAINS SUPPLIED TO STAFF OF OUDH AND TIRHUT RAILWAY**

**574. \*Shri Satya Narayan Sinha:** Will the Honourable the Railway Member please state if Government are aware that foodgrains that are supplied to the staff of the Oudh and Tirhut Railway are not fit for ordinary human consumption?

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** Government have received no complaint and have no reason to believe that the foodgrains supplied to the staff on the O.T. Railway are not fit for ordinary human consumption.

**EXCHANGE FACILITIES AND SECURITY OF PROPERTIES OF INDIAN NATIONALS IN INDO-CHINA**

**575. \*Sree Satya Priya Banerjee:** Will the Foreign Secretary be pleased to state:

(a) whether he is aware of the difficulties experienced by the Indian Nationals in Indo-China in the matter of sending money to their families and dependants in India even after the French re-occupation of Indo-China;

(b) whether any steps have been taken to remove these difficulties; if so, what those steps are;

(c) whether any representation has reached the Government of India regarding the safety and security of the properties of the Indian Nationals in Indo-China; if so, what action has been taken thereon;

(d) whether facilities for repatriation of the Indian Nationals in Indo-China have been given and *vice-versa*, whether facilities for passage of Indians owning properties in Indo-China have been provided to enable them to go and look after their properties in Indo-China;

(e) whether Mr. Aney, the representative of the Government of India in Ceylon was asked to visit Indo-China and to report about the conditions of Indians there; if so, what his recommendations are; and

(f) whether his attention has been drawn to the statement of Sree V. Nadimuthee Pillai regarding the position of Indians in Indo-China which appeared in the *Hindu* of the 20th December, 1945 and the *Indian Express* of the 25th December, 1945?

**Mr. H. Weightman:** (a) to (d). I would refer the Honourable Member to the replies given by me on the 22nd February 1946 to questions Nos. 440 and 441.

(e) Yes, Mr. Aney was deputed by the Government of India to enquire into the condition of Indians in French Indo-China and S'am. The most important of his recommendations in respect of Indians in Indo-China are for the provision of facilities for travel between that territory and India and for the remittance of funds. He also suggested consideration of the possibility of appointing an Indian Vice-Consul to the staff of His Majesty's Consulate-General at Saigon.

(f) Yes, Sir.

#### NILAMBUR-SHORANUR RAILWAY LINE

**576. \*Sri A. Karunakara Menon:** (a) Will the Honourable the Railway Member be pleased to state when the Nilambur-Shoranur Line was constructed and what its mileage is?

(b) What was the total expenditure incurred on its construction inclusive of the value of lands acquired for the purpose?

(c) What will be the cost of its restoration?

(d) Are the lands still owned by Government?

(e) Is the policy of restoration of the lines based on public utility, or profits that could be made by running the line?

(f) Are Government aware of the possibility of starting paper-mills and other mills in the area on account of the facility of obtaining large quantities of bamboo and timber at the place and its neighbourhood?

(g) Are Government aware that Nilambur is a great fuel exporting centre?

(h) Are Government aware that the Phykara scheme is proposed to be introduced in Nilambur?

(i) Why do not Government consider the advisability of restoring the line?

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** (a) The Shoranur-Nilambur line was opened for traffic in 1927 and its mileage was 41.37.

(b) The capital outlay on the construction of this line was Rs. 80,29,134.

(c) The cost of restoration cannot be stated accurately without an engineering survey, but it is roughly estimated to be about Rs. 20 lakhs.

(d) Yes.

(e) As mentioned by me in the discussions in the Council of State on the 22nd of February, 1943, the restoration of each line dismantled during the war is being considered on its own merits. Due weight is, therefore, given, *inter alia*, to the remunerativeness of the project and to its value as a public utility.

(f), (g) and (h). These considerations would affect the remunerativeness of the project. But taking all factors into consideration, the line, if restored, is expected to be unremunerative.

(i) The restoration has been considered in conjunction with the Madras Government and it has been decided not to relay the line.

#### MANUFACTURE OF AMMONIUM SULPHATE AT SINDRI

**577. \*Mr. K. C. Neogy:** (a) With reference to his answer to starred question No. 292 of the 13th February, 1946, will the Honourable Member for Industries and Supplies be pleased to make a statement as to whether Government obtained a comprehensive idea about the financial implications of the scheme for the manufacture of ammonium sulphate at Sindri, before sanctioning the negotiation of agreements for the supply of plant and machinery, particularly in regard to capital, expenditure, estimated recurring cost, the estimated cost of production of ammonium sulphate and bye-products and the probable selling price thereof as well as the probable profit or loss arising from the entire transaction?

(b) What is the method of production to be adopted in this behalf, and, if there was any choice between different methods, what are the reasons for the adoption of any particular method in preference to any other? Were the advantages and disadvantages of different alternative processes fully explored by Government and are Government satisfied that the process decided upon is the cheapest one and suited to the resources of the country?

**The Honourable Mr. A. A. Waugh:** (a) Yes, Sir. Information on this subject is contained in the published Report of the Technical Mission appointed to advise on the production of Artificial Fertilisers in India. The present consultants have confirmed the general findings of the Mission, and the information in regard to the capital cost of the project and the production cost of fertilizers, as set out in the Mission Report.

(b) The method of production is explained in the Technical Mission Report, also the reasons for adopting the method to be employed in the Sindri Factory. Government is satisfied that the process decided upon is the cheapest, having regard to the availability of raw materials and the resources of the country.

#### MANUFACTURE OF AMMONIUM SULPHATE AT SINDEI

578. **\*Mr. K. C. Neogy:** (a) Will the Honourable Member for Industries and Supplies please state: what is the estimated approximate total quantity of gypsum available in India, and what steps have Government taken to conserve the same and reserve its use for suitable purposes? Are the ascertained reserves adequate to meet the present and future requirements of the country for the manufacture of sulphate of ammonia, as also other essential commodities?

(b) Have Government any definite idea as yet as regards the extent to which machinery, other equipment and plant needed for the factory may be manufactured in India? What is the approximate value of such machinery, other equipment and plant that are proposed to be manufactured in India?

(c) Is the Honourable Member in a position to make a statement giving an approximate idea as regards the organisation of the higher personnel to be engaged in running the factory, and what proportion of such personnel will be Indian?

(d) What is the approximate quantity of coke that will be required for running the factory, and what arrangements do Government propose to make for the manufacture or purchase of such coke? Has any definite scheme been considered in this connection? If so, will the Honourable Member give full particulars of such scheme?

**The Honourable Mr. A. A. Waugh:** (a) The information is given in the Report of the Technical Mission appointed to advise on the production of Artificial Fertilizers in India: Deposits mentioned in this report are known deposits; there may be others yet to be explored. Government is taking full steps to control and conserve reserves of gypsum.

(b) The information is given in the Technical Mission's report. The approximate figures estimated for plant and building structures which can be manufactured in India is Rs. 1.89 crores roundly. Other works to be executed in India amount to Rs. 4.75 crores. The cost of imported plant and services will be Rs. 4.12 crores roundly.

(c) The organization is being worked out. It is hoped that at least 75 per cent of the higher personnel will be Indian.

(d) Approximately 600 tons of coke per day will be required. Government is taking steps to ensure that this supply will be available. A definite scheme is being worked out for this purpose. Details, however, have not yet been settled.

#### RE-ENTRY INTO MANIPUR STATE OF INDIAN BUSINESSMEN

579. **\*Mr. K. C. Neogy:** Will the Secretary for External Affairs Department be pleased to state whether any representation has been received by Government in regard to re-entry, into Manipur State, of certain Indian businessmen who evacuated therefrom during the war emergency period? If so, will he be pleased to indicate the nature of the grievances represented, and the action, if any, that has been taken on behalf of Government for the removal thereof?

**Mr. H. Weightman:** The question should have been addressed to the Honourable the Leader of the House. It has accordingly been transferred to the Final List of questions for the 6th March, 1946, when it will be answered by the Honourable the Leader of the House.

**EXPENDITURE INCURRED ON LITIGATION UNDER PAYMENT OF WAGES ACT RE  
ILLEGAL DEDUCTIONS ON NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY**

**580. \*Sri T. V. Satakopachari:** Will the Honourable the Railway Member please state:

- (a) the expenditure so far incurred by the North Western Railway for:
- (i) refund of the amount illegally deducted from the wages of employed persons during the preceding three years;
  - (ii) payment of the delayed wages of employed persons during that period;
  - (iii) compensation awarded by the authority appointed under the Payment of Wages Act against the Divisional Superintendents persons responsible for the payment of wages to employed persons; and
  - (iv) costs in the proceedings under the Payment of Wages Act, showing the (1) travelling allowances of the staff engaged in the proceedings, (2) pay of the staff for the days remained engaged in those proceedings; and (3) costs awarded to the applicants;
- (b) the head of account to which the said expenditure was debited; and
- (c) the justification of the said expenditure from public money against the spirit and provisions of the Payment of Wages Act?

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** (a) Information is being collected in respect of items (i), (ii) and (iii) and will be laid on the table of the House in due course. As regards item (iv), I regret I cannot undertake to collect the information, as it would involve an expenditure of time and labour incommensurate with the results.

(b) The refunds referred to in part (a) (i) of this question were debited to the same head of Account to which the deductions were originally credited. The payment of delayed wages referred to in part (a) (ii) were debited to the same head of Account to which the wages of the person concerned are debitable. As regards the compensation awards and the costs referred to in parts (a) (iii) and (iv), the debits were made against Abstract E-1200 or E-1100 as the case required.

(c) The proceedings under the Payment of Wages Act are against the Administration in the person of the Paymaster. The Administration therefore defends itself by defending the Paymaster who acts in his official capacity in circumstances connected with his duty. Government do not consider that such expenditure is against the spirit and provisions of the Payment of Wages Act.

**REMOVAL OF CALCUTTA TELEGRAPHS WORKSHOP AND STOREYARD TO JUBBULPORE**

**581. \*Sree Satya Priya Banerjee:** Will the Secretary for Posts and Air be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of India have finally decided upon the removal of the 75 year old fully equipped Telegraph Workshop and stores from Alipore, Calcutta to Jubbulpur;

(b) whether the Telegraph Workshop at Jubbulpur was planned as a security measure, to be a duplicate workshop for war time production; and

(c) the reasons for this decision, if any, of removal after 75 years of continued existence of the Telegraph Workshop and stores at Alipur?

**Sir Gurunath Bewoor:** (a) No.

(b) The Workshop at Jubbulpore was planned as a means of increasing production during the War. It was also intended to provide an alternative means of production in the event of air raid damage at Calcutta.

(c) Does not arise in view of the reply to part (a).

## REMOVAL OF CALCUTTA TELEGRAPHS WORKSHOP AND STOREYARD TO JUBBULPORE

**582. \*Sree Satya Priya Banerjee:** Will the Secretary for Posts and Air be pleased to state:

(a) whether he has received representation from the service organisations such as Indian Telegraph Association, India, Posts and Telegraphs Union and the All-India Telegraph Union protesting against the removal of the Telegraph Workshop and Storeyard from Calcutta to Jubbulpur;

(b) whether his attention has been drawn to the main editorial of the *Morning News*, Calcutta, dated January 16, as also to the editorial comments in the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, Calcutta Edition, dated January 25, 1946;

(c) the expenses so far incurred by the Government of India to establish the duplicate Telegraph Workshop at Jubbulpur and for opening training classes there and the expenses likely to be incurred to materialise the whole scheme of transfer; and

(d) whether, in view of the prevailing dissatisfaction among the employees and the public opinion against the transfer, he proposes to consider the desirability of appointing a predominantly non-official Committee to go into the whole question in all its bearings before giving effect to the decision of the transfer?

**Sir Gurunath Bewoor:**

(a) and (b). Yes.

(c) The expenditure on buildings and Apparatus and Plant at Jubbulpore is of the order of Rs. 65 lakhs, including the Departmental Training Centre buildings. Information is not available on the expense likely to be incurred.

(d) The matter is still under departmental examination and Government do not consider it necessary to appoint any Committee at this stage.

## STOPPAGE OF SUPPLIES OF UMBRELLA MATERIALS TO ASSAM

**583. \*Sreejut Rohini Kumar Choudhuri:** (a) Will the Honourable Member for Industries and Supplies be pleased to state if it is a fact that the supplies of umbrella cloth and other materials necessary for the manufacture of umbrellas for the Province of Assam has been recently stopped and that the Province has been directed to take its requirements in ready made umbrellas from the Calcutta Merchants through the Calcutta Umbrella Association?

(b) Has this arrangement been brought into force in any other Province excepting Assam?

(c) If the answers to parts (a) and (b) are in the affirmative, why and when was this action taken?

(d) What is the number of umbrellas which has been allotted for import to Assam for the year 1946?

(e) Are Government aware that due to this order the umbrella factories in Assam will have to be closed down and a large number of employees will go out of employment?

**The Honourable Mr. A. A. Waugh:** (a), (b) and (c). It is a fact that an allocation of umbrella making materials was not made to Assam when allocations were made to other provinces. The reason was that no report of umbrella-making capacity was received from Assam when asked for although such information was furnished by other Provinces. The information has now been received from Assam, and materials have now been allocated.

(d) 9,000 dozens.

(e) Materials have now been allocated to Assam.

## STOPPAGE OF SUPPLIES OF UMBRELLA MATERIALS TO ASSAM

**584. \*Sreejut Rohini Kumar Choudhuri:** (a) Will the Honourable Member for Industries and Supplies be pleased to state if Government are aware that due to irregularities and insufficiency of transport the Province of Assam had suffered in the past for inadequate supplies of the necessaries of life?

(b) Is it a fact that a large quantity of rods used for umbrellas is available in Assam, and that the Province can easily manufacture large quantities of umbrellas if supplies of cloth and steel materials are given?

(c) In view of the hardship which the present arrangement is likely to cause to the umbrella industry as well as to the general public, and, in view of the fact that the rains will set in soon in Assam, do Government propose to release immediately a reasonable quantity of cloth and other necessaries for the manufacture of umbrellas?

**The Honourable Mr. A. A. Waugh:** (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Government have not got detailed information, but no doubt the Honourable Member is right.

(c) I would refer the Honourable Member to the answer given to (a), (b) and (c) of question No. 588. I am grateful to him for having brought this case to notice.

## UNSTARRED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

### IMPROVEMENT IN OLD BENARES ROAD FROM CHANDITALA TO SHEAKHALA

**48. Mr. Nagendranath Mukhopadhyay:** (a) Will the Honourable Member for War Transport be pleased to state what reply if any the Government of India have received from the Government of Bengal in respect of their letter No. R 5(3)/45, dated Simla, the 7th December, 1945, on the subject of the Improvement in the *Old Benares Road from Chanditala to Sheakhala*?

(b) How many representations were received by the Government of India in the matter of the said Road, and what action was taken on them?

(c) Was any money, and, if so, how much, sanctioned for the said purpose, and has any money been spent on it? If so, how much? If not, why not?

(d) How does the matter now stand?

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** (a) No reply was asked for and none has been received.

(b) Four. The first representation was received in 1938 and after discussion with the Provincial Government the Government of India decided to approve of the work being undertaken at the expense of the Provincial Road Fund Allocation. This decision was communicated to the petitioners in May 1939. The three subsequent representations, which contained enquires regarding the progress of the work, were forwarded to the Bengal Government for disposal.

(c) In 1939 an estimate was approved for Rs. 3½ lakhs. Later in pursuance of the general policy of stopping all avoidable civil works expenditure during the War, it was decided to suspend work temporarily: Up to the 30th September 1945 approximately Rs. 71,500 had been spent.

(d) The matter is under discussion with the Government of Bengal.

### LICENCES FOR SALE OF BOOKS, NEWSPAPERS, ETC., ON NORTH WESTERN AND GREAT INDIAN PENINSULA RAILWAY STATION PLATFORMS

**49. Shri Sri Prakasa:** Will the Honourable the Railway Member be pleased to state:

(a) if the North Western Railway and the Great Indian Peninsula Railway have any principles in the matter of inviting tenders and granting licences for the sale of books, newspapers, etc., on the station platforms of those Railways;

(b) when the last tenders were invited, and what was the method followed in granting licences; and

(c) whose tenders were finally chosen, and the reasons for the choice?

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** (a) Contracts are let out after calling for public tenders and are usually for a period of 5 years.

(b) *N. W. Railway.*—December 1945.

*G. I. P. Railway.*—March 1945.

The contract was granted to the highest tenderer likely to render efficient service to the public.

(c) *N. W. Railway*.—Messrs. Rai Sahib M. Gulab Singh and Sons of Lahore.

*G.I.P. Railway*.—Messrs. A. H. Wheeler and Company. The above were chosen for reasons enumerated in reply to (b).

#### LICENCES FOR SALE OF ICE AND AERATED WATER ON CERTAIN RAILWAYS

**50. Shri Sri Prakasa:** Will the Honourable the Railway Member be pleased to state:

(a) the system according to which licences were granted for the sale of ice and aerated water on the North Western Railway, Great Indian Peninsula Railway, East Indian Railway and Bengal Nagpur Railway;

(b) the number of free passes permitted to the licencees to travel on the Railways concerned; and

(c) the class in which the licencees can travel on the various Railways; and if any discrimination is made among the different licencees?

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** (a) *N. W. Railway*.—For the purposes of sale of Ice and Aerated Waters in trains as well as at stations, the N. W. Railway System has been divided into four Sections, *viz.*, Northern, Southern, Eastern and Central. In 1945, contracts for the above Sections were let out for a period of 3 years after inviting applications through the press from manufacturers of Aerated Waters running suitable Aerated Water factories.

*G.I.P. Railway*.—The licence for the sale of Ice and Aerated Water on trains was given to the contractor who held the contract for the Dining Cars, this being considered the most satisfactory arrangement. The Refreshment Room Contractors at stations are also permitted to sell Ice and Aerated Waters. The Food Stall contractors at stations can also sell Aerated waters.

*E. I. Railway*.—The contract for the sale of Ice, Aerated Water, and Cordials over the entire system is held, since 1924, by Messrs. Carlsbad Mineral Water Manufacturing Co., who were found to possess the best and most up-to-date plant.

*B. N. Railway*.—The licence for sale of Ice and Aerated Waters in trains is granted to one contractor for the entire Railway. The licences for sale in station premises are granted to the Indian Catering Contractors of the sections concerned.

(b) and (c). *N. W. Railway*.—4 second class, 4 inter class, and 11 third class season passes for the whole contract section. 35 third class season passes for specific beats within the contract section.

In addition to the above, occasional second class cheque passes were allowed to licenseees of Northern and Eastern Sections, and first class cheque passes to licenseees of Southern and Central Sections for supervision work.

*G. I. P. Railway*.—Free third class passes are allowed to vendors in charge of the sales on trains. Information as to exact number of passes is not available.

*E. I. Railway*.—One first class, 5 second class, 5 inter class, and 4 third class, season passes.

*B. N. Railway*.—The train vending contractor has been granted 5 second class, 7 inter class and 4 third class season passes.

Except on the N. W. Railway, the question of discrimination with regard to the class of passes does not arise. On the N. W. Railway, there is a difference in class in the matter of occasional cheque passes allowed to licenseees of the various sections as mentioned above, and the Railway Board are enquiring into the necessity of continuing this practice.



**SCHEME FOR LAYING CERTAIN NEW RAILWAY LINES CONNECTING MYMENSINGH TO GAUHATI, ETC.**

**51. Mr. K. O. Neogy:** (a) Will the Honourable the Railway Member be pleased to state whether it is proposed to construct a Railway line from Gauripur (Mymensingh) Junction to Gauhati, and a line from Singhjani Junction to a proposed junction station on the former line at Paikura *via* the Sherpur town? If so, what stage has been reached in the consideration of the scheme, and when is the construction likely to be taken in hand?

(b) What will be the alignment of the Singhjani to Paikura line, particularly in the neighbourhood of the Sherpur town? Is it a fact that a particular alignment was adopted by the District Traffic Superintendent (Survey) in accordance with the recommendation of the District Magistrate of Mymensingh, and in conformity with the opinion of the local public as represented by the Sherpur Peoples' Association and the Sherpur Merchants' Association; but that at a later stage another Railway officer advised some persons at the Sherpur town to ask for a different alignment?

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** (a) The project of a railway line from Gauripore (Mymensingh) to Pandu near Gauhati, is under investigation. A line from Singhjani *via* Sherpur to Bangaon or some other point on the projected Gauripore-Pandu line, is also under investigation. The decision whether to construct these lines or not will depend on the results of the surveys now being carried out and until this decision is taken, it is not possible to say when the construction of the lines will be taken in hand.

(b) The alignment between Singhjani and Bangaon will be fixed in accordance with the result of the survey now in hand. Government have no information about the change of alignment referred to in the latter part of the question.

**RAILWAY RECEIPTS ON ACCOUNT OF CIVIL AND MILITARY TRAFFIC**

**52. Mr. K. O. Neogy:** Will the Honourable the Railway Member please state:

(a) the extent of military passenger traffic, in passenger mileage, carried by the Indian Railways during the years 1938-39 to 1945-46, separately, for each year;

(b) the rate at which military passengers are charged as compared to the rate at which civilian passengers are charged;

(c) the Railway traffic receipts in regard to (a), separately, for each year;

(d) the number of military special trains run by Railways in the above years, separately, for each year;

(e) the Railway receipts in respect of (d), separately, for each year;

(f) the amount of other coaching earnings from military traffic for the above years;

(g) the rate at which the coaching traffic for the military has been charged by Railways;

(h) the extent of military goods traffic carried by Railways in ton mileage in the above years, separately, for each year;

(i) the rate at which this goods traffic has been carried as compared to the rate at which the civilian goods traffic is charged; and

(j) the total goods traffic receipt of Railways in respect of military goods traffic in all these years, separately, for each year?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) Passenger-mile figures are not separately available for Military passengers carried by ordinary passenger trains. The total passenger mileage civil and Military however was as follows:—

Financial year	Total Passenger Miles (All Railways) (Figure in thousands)
1938-39 . . . . .	18,742,793
1939-40 . . . . .	18,522,052
1940-41 . . . . .	19,928,619
1941-42 . . . . .	22,020,108
1942-43 . . . . .	24,352,756
1943-44 . . . . .	32,506,067
1944-45 . . . . .	37,590,722
1945-*(From 1-4-45 to 31-10-45 . . . . .)	23,489,611

(\* Figures only for Class I Railways.)

Military Special Train Miles (Personnel including prisoners of war) are however available for 1943-44 and 1944-45 and are as follows:—

All Class I Railway (BG & MG) (Figures in Units)		
1943-44	1944-45	1945-(Form 1-4-45 to 31-10-45)
3,226,172	4,985,093	4,626,966

(b), (g) and (i). The Honourable Member is referred to Rules 22 and 30, and Schedule at page 49, of I. R. C. A. Military Tariff (No. 1) Appendix K/1 to I. R. C. A. Coaching Tariff (No. 14) and Chapter VII of I. R. C. A. Goods Tariff (No. 266), Copies of which are in the Library of this house.

(In thousands of rupees)

(c), (e) and (j)	1938-39	1939-40	1940-41	1941-42	1942-43	1943-44	1944-45	1st April 1945 to Nov. 1945
(e) Military, Passengers.	33,98	36,58	81,05	1,84,93	4,71,03	8,03,33	9,66,37	5,94,39
(e) Special trains and Reserved Carriages Military.	19,79	36,24	86,17	1,63,75	4,28,82	5,51,24	13,14,87	10,38,88
(j) Goods Traffic Earning—Military.	30,52	43,62	1,49,79	4,24,19	9,89,54	14,12,45	20,78,52	13,25,26

(d)	Financial year	Number of Military specials run during the year, including military mail trains
	1938-39 . . . . .	348
	1939-40 . . . . .	780
	1940-41 . . . . .	1,985
	1941-42 . . . . .	3,630
	1942-43 . . . . .	4,824
	1943-44 . . . . .	9,036
	1944-45 . . . . .	11,696
	1945-46 (1st April 1945 to 31 December 1945)	11,522

(f) It is regretted, the information is not separately available.

(h) The information asked for is not available in exactly the form required, but the following relevant information is given:

Military goods tonnage originating carried by ordinary goods trains was as follows:

Financial year	Tons originating	
1938-39 . . . . .	324,5	} Excludes Bikaner State Railway.
1939-40 . . . . .	434,2	
1940-41 . . . . .	1,477,6	
1941-42 . . . . .	3,837,6	} Includes Bikaner State Railway.
1942-43 . . . . .	9,373,3	
1943-44 . . . . .	11,630,7	
1944-45 . . . . .	16,295,1	
1945 (From 1-4-45 to 31-10-45) .	9,030,7	

Net ton Miles of freight carried in Military Stores Specials is available for 1943-44 and 1944-45. The figures are (in units).

*All Class I Railways (BG & MG.)*

1943-44	1944-45	1945 (From 1-4-45 to 31-10-45)
*772,764,378	2,467,845,660	1,025,119,522

\*Information for full year of B. A., G. I. P., Bikaner State, Mysore State and O. T. Railways is not available.

**TANGI-TANGAIL-SINGJANI RAILWAY PROJECT**

53. **Mr. K. O. Neogy:** (a) Will the Honourable the Railway Member be pleased to state the present position of the Tangi-Tangail-Singjani Railway Project in the Districts of Dacca and Mymensingh in Bengal?

(b) In view of the acute traffic difficulties obtaining in the Tangail Sub-Division of the Mymensingh District do Government propose to give early effect to the project, making at the same time adequate provision for safeguarding public health and natural drainage?

(c) Are Government also considering the advisability of opening a feeder Railway line from Pingna on the river Jumna to Gopalpur on the proposed Tangi-Tangail-Singjani Railway, and thus affording the shortest possible alternative route between Calcutta and Dacca via Sirajganj Ghat, Pingna, Gopalpur, Tangail, Tangi, etc.?

(d) Have Government got any other alignments under consideration to remove the traffic difficulties of the Tangail Sub-Division?

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** (a) The project is not included in the list of lines approved for investigation.

(b) On grounds of irrigation and public health, the Bengal Government are opposed to the consideration of the project.

(c) The answer is in the negative.

(d) The answer is in the negative.

**SHORT NOTICE QUESTION AND ANSWER**

**INDIA'S STERLING BALANCES**

**Mr. Manu Subedar:** (a) Has the attention of the Honourable the Finance Member been drawn in a London message to a declaration of British officials that the sterling "balance is frozen in Britain where it must be held to prevent a possible catastrophe to Britain and world economies";

"India and Britain will negotiate on an agreement to scale down the debt seeking a settlement similar to that in the loan agreement under which the

United States agreed to scratch off the major portion of Britain's obligations for lend-lease";

"If the United States Congress does not approve of the loan, India may have to wait 'two hundred years' for the repayment of sterling balances"?

(b) Have Government protested to his Majesty's Government against this attempt to make comparisons between what is owing to India and the lease-lend facilities provided by America?

(c) Have Government conveyed that India resents any officials of His Majesty's Government countenancing such mischievous and hostile propaganda?

(d) Will they now do so?

(e) Will the Honourable Member give to the A.P.A. representative in India for being sent to London as well as to U.S.A. a statement conveying the Indian feeling on the subject of sterling balances, and indicate the solid resistance which any attempt to scale down sterling balances will meet from all parties and all quarters in India?

(f) Will the statement also contain the fact that the mobilisation of British assets in India has been suggested?

**The Honourable Sir Archibald Rowlands:** (a), (b), (c) and (d). Long experience has taught me not to pay too much attention to newspaper reports of interviews with particular individuals. I have, however, telegraphed to London in an attempt to establish the authenticity of the reported interview.

(e) and (f). No, Sir.

**Mr. Manu Subedar:** May I know whether the British officials in this case were the Treasury officials of the United Kingdom and whether they spoke with the authority of His Majesty's Government, who have recently refused to start immediate negotiations with India?

**The Honourable Sir Archibald Rowlands:** That is precisely the kind of point I am trying to elucidate.

**Mr. Manu Subedar:** With regard to parts (e) and (f) may I know why the Honourable Member will not issue a public statement giving India's position on this subject, in view of the fact that even Mr. Amery deprecated comparisons between the lease-lend of America and the debt owing to India, and also in view of the fact that on this subject there is no difference whatever among different sections of the House?

**The Honourable Sir Archibald Rowlands:** Because, Sir, I regard it as inappropriate, and indeed unseemly, for one Government to define its attitude to another Government through the medium of a press interview. If the A.P.A. representative knows his job—and I am sure he does, otherwise he would not keep his job—he is fully acquainted with the feeling of India on the subject.

**Mr. Manu Subedar:** How can this Government permit propaganda hostile to Indian interests to be carried on in the U.S.A. without counteracting it? And may I know what steps the Honourable Finance Member will take on the subject?

**The Honourable Sir Archibald Rowlands:** The Government of India do not consider that the United States Government have any locus, and indeed I do not think they have claimed any locus, in a matter which affects bilaterally India and the United Kingdom alone.

**Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar:** May I know if the Ministers who are coming here will discuss the matter of sterling balances here?

**The Honourable Sir Archibald Rowlands:** I have not yet been placed in the confidence of the three Ministers in question.

**Mr. Manu Subedar:** Have this Government considered that it will be a very bad augury for the three Ministers and the distinguished delegation, which is coming here if on this subject the attitude of the British Government is not very clearly expressed and is misrepresented, as the Honourable Member claims, in the A. P. A. interview?

**The Honourable Sir Archibald Rowlands:** This Government is well aware of the feeling of India on this subject and I have taken steps about it.

**Mr. Manu Subedar:** Will the Government of India make an attempt, in the interests of any understanding, which it is everyone's hope may be reached when this delegation arrives, to induce the British Government to make their position clear and not to leave it as in this very mischievous interview?

**The Honourable Sir Archibald Rowlands:** I think the Honourable Member may be satisfied that the three Ministers in question will do all they can to create the necessary atmosphere in order to achieve the solution for which we all hope.

**Prof. N. G. Ranga:** Will the Government of India take the opportunity of their visit to India and present to them the point of view of India in regard to this particular problem and also give an opportunity to the members of the Committee to meet them in regard to this particular matter?

**The Honourable Sir Archibald Rowlands:** That is going a little too far ahead; but my Honourable friend may be satisfied that I have not omitted any opportunity of making it plain to His Majesty's Government what the view of India on this matter is.

**Mr. Manu Subedar:** May I know whether the Government of India will publish in the form of a white paper or a statement the position of India as represented by them with regard to these sterling outstandings?

**The Honourable Sir Archibald Rowlands:** I am not very clear as to what the Honourable Member has in mind. If he wants me to publish the correspondence between the Government of India and His Majesty's Government, I am afraid I must decline.

**Mr. Manu Subedar:** No, it is not correspondence. My point is, let the world know what the position of the Government of India is with regard to the sterling balances, and let the A.P.A. representative in India know it, in order that he may send it down to America.

**The Honourable Sir Archibald Rowlands:** The duty of the Government of India is, *inter alia*, to represent to His Majesty's Government the feeling in India generally, and in this House in particular, on important subjects and that has been done.

**Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar:** As the officials of His Majesty's Government have taken the press into confidence and issued a statement with reference to this subject, why do not the officials of this Government issue a similar statement?

**The Honourable Sir Archibald Rowlands:** I have answered that.

**Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar:** I am not satisfied with that answer; it is dubious, and that is why I ask this.

**The Honourable Sir Archibald Rowlands:** It is very difficult to satisfy the Honourable Member.

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

### SECOND STAGE—*contd*.

#### DEMAND No. 1—RAILWAY BOARD—*contd*.

##### *Pilferage and delays in settling claims*

**Mr. President:** The House will now take up the cut motions on the Railway Budget demands. The European group will move their cuts today.

**Mr. O. P. Lawson (Bengal: European):** Sir, we should first like to move cut No. 18 which deals with pilferage. In the previous debates the unsatisfactory conditions of travel have been fairly dealt with, and so we shall confine our remarks on this cut to the question of pilferage and delays in settling claims without touching on the unsatisfactory conditions in lower class travel which have already been covered. Then, if I may go just a little further, we would

[Mr. C. P. Lawson]

like when that cut is completed to take up cut No. 12 under which we wish to discuss the financial position of the Indian Railways with particular reference to the ways and means whereby the increased operating costs are to be met. We realise that the financial position of the railways *per se* has been rather fully discussed, but the means whereby the increased operating costs are to be met have not fully been discussed; and that is a point that we would particularly like to cover. Probably these two items will cover the whole of our time which is up to 4 P.M., but if any time remains we may ask your permission and the permission of the other parties in the House to move cut No. 1 on Supplementary List No. 2 under which we seek to discuss the need for a careful review of the assets of the Indian railways as an essential preliminary to a revision of the existing Convention.

I hope, Sir, that will have your assent and the assent of the House.

**Mr. President:** The position appears to be clear in respect of the first two cuts. The order will be, Cut No. 13 will be taken up first and after that is disposed of, No. 12 will be taken up. As parts of these two Cuts have already been discussed on other Cut Motions, the discussions in respect of these will be restricted only to such items as have not been covered in previous discussion in this House on other Cuts.

Under Cut No. 13, the only questions to be discussed will be questions of "pilferage and delays in settling of claims". The other point made out in the Cut—"unsatisfactory conditions of travel generally"—will not be touched because it has already been covered by Cut No. 5.

As regards Cut No. 12, the only question to be discussed will be . . .

**Mr. Sasanka Sekhar Sanyal** (Presidency Division: Non-Muhammadian Rural)  
On a point of order . . .

**Mr. President:** I have not yet finished. The Honourable Member will first hear me.

As regards Cut No. 12, the only question to be discussed will be 'the ways and means whereby the increased operating costs are to be met,' and the "general financial position of the Indian Railways" will not be discussed under this Cut.

So the scope of discussion under these two cuts will be a restricted one.

As regards Cut No. 14, it is clear that it is barred by the discussion on Cut No. 7. The Honourable Member wishes to move some other cut motion which is included in one of the supplementary lists. In case his group has time enough to move a third one. We will consider that position when the time comes, but I may make one thing clear that, the arrangement having been arrived at by agreement of all parties, I would not like to have a change made unless all parties agree to another cut being taken up.

Now, what has the Honourable Member got to say?

**Mr. Sasanka Sekhar Sanyal:** So far as Cut No. 13 is concerned, you have been pleased to observe that the last portion—namely, unsatisfactory conditions of travel generally—will not be included in the debate. May I know, Sir, if any points which were not touched upon by Members during the previous debate in this connection cannot be raised now. In the previous debate some general points were discussed, but 'unsatisfactory conditions of travel' may raise absolutely new points and I hope that you will give your ruling on that.

**Mr. President:** Discussion of a subject includes covering all the points that can possibly be raised in a discussion. Therefore it appears to me clear that if certain points were not made out then, they cannot be made out now. It is something like the principle of *res judicata*.

**Mr. H. G. Stokes** (Bombay: European): Sir, I move:  
"That the demand under the head 'Railway Board' be reduced by Rs. 100."

The object of this motion is to discuss pilferage and delays in settling of claims.

**Prof. N. G. Ranga** (Guntur *cum* Nellore: Non-Muhammadian Rural): Will the Honourable Member speak up: we cannot hear him.

**Shri Sri Prakasa** (Benares and Gorakhpur Divisions: Non-Muhammadian Rural): Even your language can be distinct!

**Mr. H. G. Stokes**: Pilferage falls under two heads—pilferage of luggage and pilferage of goods. I do not altogether like the word 'pilferage' because I feel that it is probably better described as 'organized banditry'. There is, I think, a wave of crime sweeping the world. Some Members may have seen from the papers what is happening in London and the special measures taken to deal with organised raid and there is every evidence that in India too it is highly organized. It is probably a legacy of the war and of the economic situation which makes theft now-a-days a very paying profession. It is certainly not peculiar to India, and I would like here to quote figures which I have found in the Report of the Standing Finance Committee for Railways (No. 8) for their meeting on the 26th, 27th and 30th of January last. The Committee says this:

"The Committee view with alarm the estimated expenditure of Rs. 1,51,45,000 in the year 1945-46 on account of compensation for goods lost or damaged and the provision of Rs. 1,16,92,000 for the same purpose in 1946-47."

I think those figures show the extent to which the evil has spread.

In speaking of it, I would like to speak with particular reference to conditions that are prevailing on the Bengal and Assam Railway. The evil appears to start and have its headquarters at Jagannathganj . . .

**Prof. N. G. Ranga**: That is an American-managed Railway.

**Mr. H. G. Stokes**: Not now. Jagannathganj, as Honourable Members know, is the point where you leave the river steamer and start your journey up into Assam. There seems to be quite a usual procedure there: When a person arrives, if he has any heavy luggage at all, he is told that there is not room enough on his train for it to go with him; it must follow by a later train. And that, Sir, is probably the last he ever sees of his luggage. If it is eventually delivered to him, he nearly always finds that it has been broken open and there has been considered pilferage. I would like here to quote two actual cases for the information of the House. The first, Sir, is the case of a lady who was a passenger from Kashmir to Silchar. From Rawalpindi to Calcutta everything went well. She had to change at Lahore and there, her four pieces of heavy luggage were put into the brake van without any trouble and it arrived perfectly safely at Calcutta. All the way down she testifies that she received every consideration from the Railway staff who were most efficient. She left Calcutta and went up on her way to Silchar and there at Jagannathganj conditions were very different. First of all, there was trouble with the ticket-collecting staff who wished to put extra people into her carriage though all the seats were fully booked and then, Sir, happened what I have just said: She was told that her luggage could not go with her and though she had paid excess on it and had a receipt, it must come by a later train. Of course when that train arrived at Silchar the luggage was missing. It was delivered a long time afterwards on-trunk had been broken open and a lot of articles had been stolen.

Here is another and I think more serious case. It concerns a passenger from Taliapara (Sylhet) to Silchar, not a very long journey. He lost altogether one steel trunk, one suit case, one case of guns, and one case of radio batteries. Probably I suppose because guns were in question the police in this case bestirred themselves and they recovered the guns and the batteries. They ran a case against a railway employee who was convicted and sentenced to 18 months R.I. But, Sir, there is still no sign whatever of the trunk or the suit-case and I do not suppose they will ever turn up.

Now, Sir, those are two typical cases of banditry of luggage. I would now like to say a few words about the position in regard to goods. I speak again particularly in regard to Assam and I leave it to Honourable Members who speak after me to speak of their districts or their various provinces.

[Mr. H. G. Stokes]

The position is very bad indeed. The pilferage or the banditry is chiefly confined to foodstuffs which is very natural, I suppose, and particularly to mustard oil which is of course in great use for the tea garden labourer. Pilferage in that case has assumed really very alarming proportions and it is very rarely that a consignment comes through without very heavy loss indeed. The railway staff when complaints are made blame bad shunting and rough track but I do not think that that can possibly be held responsible for drums which are found with the bungs removed and with large nail holes through the bottom through which the contents have been extracted. Again, Sir, I have a certain amount of information about theft or loss of carriage fittings. In November last, on one section of the Bengal Assam Railway, the loss of carriage fittings, such as cushions, looking-glasses, hat hooks and that sort of thing amounted to no less than Rs. 15,237. Well, Sir, who is responsible? We cannot blame the soldiers because there are no soldiers now and I really do not think that the average upper class passenger seeks to recoup himself for the fare which he has paid by going off with say a carriage cushion or a hat hook or a looking-glass or something like that? The thefts must, I think, occur in the yards or in the station somewhere and I do suggest that there must be something very wrong indeed with the Watch and Ward if there is not only this cannibalisation, as I think it is called, but also the very serious position in regard to luggage and in regard to goods of which I have already spoken.

Now, Sir, I pass to delays in claims. Here I have many complaints from Assam, but I have also got many complaints from all over the country. I quoted just now to the House a case of a passenger who had lost his guns. Well, Sir, the guns were recovered but the luggage, as I said, was not, and a claim for compensation was put in. It is now twenty months since that luggage was lost and it is 13½ months since the railway employee in that case was convicted for theft, but there is no compensation whatever so far from the railway.

**Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffer** (Bombay Southern Division: Muhamnadan Rural): The National Government will pay!

**Mr. H. G. Stokes:** I am very glad to hear it.

I have here a circular letter from the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to its members, and I do not think anybody will hold for a moment that the Bengal Chamber of Commerce is not a sober body or is, at any rate, given to any sort of hysteria. At the end of 1944 the Chamber wrote to the Railway Board and they summarised the various headings under which they had complaints in respect of gross delays in the payment of claims. I would like to give the House those headings. I think they are very informative:

(a) failure, for months on end, to extract from the railways anything more than a stereotyped acknowledgment (if any is forthcoming) of an enquiry or claim, stating that the matter is under investigation;

(b) relays up to a year and more between the submission of the claim and its disposal, even in quite clear cases;

(c) prolonged delays said to be due to accounts certification (I am afraid I do not know what that is) in actual payment after admission of the claim;

(d) failure of the Railways to take adequate steps to trace consignments lost or misdelivered;

(e) even in cases where loss of or damage to goods has been the subject of prolonged correspondence, an increasing tendency on the part of the railways to repudiate the claims months afterwards on technical grounds under Section 77 of the Indian Railways Act.

(f) non-receipt or loss by the Railway Claims Section of the papers;

(g) lack of co-ordination between the State Railways in following up goods reported to be lost in transit.

That was sent towards the end of 1944 and the Railway Board sent a very sympathetic reply, a reply that possibly they hoped would turn away the wrath,



in which they said that they were taking steps to reduce the incidence of theft, they were strengthening and reorganising their Claims Department to speed up disposal, and that they were issuing instructions to all railways that Section 77 should not be so rigidly adhered to. I do not mind telling the Railway Board that the Bengai Chamber do not find the position in any way improved and they are at this moment collecting further ammunition to shoot.

I think we must all admit that the railways must exercise every care in investigation of claims, but I do submit that there is such a thing as undue care. After all it is not good business for a Railway to get the reputation of haggling and of delaying the settlement of claims. My honourable friend, Mr. Siddiqi, is not here, I am sorry to say, but I am sure that as an insurance magnate, he would agree with me that prompt settlement of claims is one of the very best assets that an insurance company can possibly have. Now, Sir, the railways for some years have been in the happy position of not having to worry about freight or passengers. They have had offered to them all and far more than they could carry. But I submit, Sir, that that time will come to an end and when it does, the railways will, I feel, be only too anxious to get the freight and at that time if they have a lot of dissatisfied customers it is not going to do them any good. In their own interest, surely, they should see that they do everything possible to expedite these claims, the delay in which is causing intense irritation amongst the general travelling public and the commercial community.

Now, Sir, before I conclude, I want to refer to two matters which have been specially raised by Assam. The first is that my friends up there want a restoration of the Goalundo Chandpur Service. That service was in the past a tremendous boon, particularly to Sylhet. My friends have pressed for it to be reopened on numerous occasions but have got no satisfaction out of the railway. The railway says that the river transport there is much longer than it is by the Jagannathgunj route and that therefore they will lose revenue. There is an old adage about casting bread upon the waters, that it will come back to you after many days and I would suggest that the railways might go in for casting a little bread in this particular respect.

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall** (Member for Railways and War Transport): Food shortage!

**Mr. H. G. Stokes:** There is certainly food shortage but the bread will come back all the same.

My last point is that our friends in Assam feel that with the passing of the A. B. Railway and the transfer of the General Manager's Office to Calcutta their needs are overlooked. Out of sight, they say, out of mind. I can understand that rather well, because I used to have plenty of dealings with Assam in the old days when the A. B. line was in existence, when the General Manager was located in Chittagong. I was always very struck by the evident desire of the General Manager and of the commercial staff to maintain a very close touch with the area which this railway served and by the General Manager's readiness to investigate and to rectify as far as possible all complaints. Assam has been called the Cinderella Province and, if I remember rightly, Cinderella had only one asset and that was her beauty. Assam is a very beautiful province all over but Assam has other assets too. She has got her own freight and there is a lot of freight going out and coming in. As I said, the railway will want freight and I submit it is to the interest of the B. & A. Railway to maintain the closest touch with customers who are going to be of great use to them in the future and I hope that this view will find acceptance with the General Manager of the B. & A. Railway.

Sir, I have nothing more to say. I commend this cut motion to the House and I move.

**Mr. President:** Cut motion moved:

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

**Khan Bahadur Zafar Hossain Khan** (Government of India: Nominated Official): Sir, my Honourable friend Mr. Stokes has referred to pilferages and delays in the settlement of claims. Railways have had their own difficulties. They have had operational difficulties due to the war resulting in misdespatches and increase in thefts, which my Honourable friend has called attention to. There has been heavy increase in traffic with the resultant congestion in goods shed and parcels offices leading to damage through delays and lack of adequate storage. Then there has been the inevitable dilution of staff and their replacement by untrained and partially trained personnel (many on a temporary basis of employment). Poor quality of new entrants to fill new posts created to deal with the greatly increased traffic and difficulty in recruitment. Last of all there has been a great number of thefts and pilferages due to the heavy rise in commodity prices rendering thefts more profitable, black market operations, famine and food shortage conditions resulting in bleeding of wagons through crevices and running train thefts, blackout conditions facilitating robbery and disturbances and breaches over certain railways.

The phenomenal rise in the number and amount of claims paid by Railways has been for sometime a matter of considerable concern to the Railway Board who after personal discussion with the General Managers of Railways issued instructions from time to time impressing on them the necessity of strengthening their claims investigating and settling organisations, improving their Watch and Ward arrangements; adopting other necessary preventive measures and initiating periodical discussions with the police so as to review from time to time the measures in force for the safeguarding of the Railways property and goods in transit. The Railway Administrations on their side were not slow in implementing the instructions issued to them but there is necessarily a considerable time lag before results can become apparent on account of the serious handicaps under which they are still working. They have adopted a number of remedial measures, some of them are: appointment of additional Watch and Ward staff, enforcement of the instructions for loading of foodgrains, flour, sugar, etc., away from the flap doors of wagons and closing the opening between the flap doors and floors of wagons with various types of packing material, improving the fitting of flap doors so as to prevent extraction through crevices of flap doors of wagons carrying foodgrains and greater care in handling goods at loading, transhipment and terminal stations.

The matter was also discussed with the General Managers at their meeting with the Board in June 1945 when an analysis of the payments made on various counts revealed that there had been a tremendous rise in the payments made on account of claims in respect of goods lost or stolen. The Railway Administrations were again asked to review their Watch and Ward organisations and take all the necessary steps to carry out the strengthening of their watch and ward staff.

My Honourable friend has referred to the delays in the settlement of claims. The necessity of speeding up of the settlement of claims has been impressed upon the railways from time to time and as a result claims investigating and settling organisations of railways have been considerably strengthened to cope with the heavy increase in the number of claims preferred. Another step taken to speed up settlement of claims (my Honourable friend referred to accounts certificate and lack of co-ordination between Railway Administrations) was a convention agreed upon among the principal Railways in order to eliminate unnecessary correspondence in regard to questions of inter-railway liability. Under this convention which came into force in November 1943, claims up to Rs. 25 are borne entirely by the paying Railways and claims exceeding Rs. 25 but below Rs. 1,000 are debited to a common pool, the total debit to the pool being divided monthly among the Railways in proportion to the amounts paid by them as compensation during the past three years. This convention has considerably reduced the time for the payment of claims.

We have certain figures also from railways showing the improvement made in this respect and I will only quote one or two instances.

The B. A. Railway, to which my honourable friend has referred, in 1944-45 took about 82 days to pay the claims on an average. This time has now come down to 72 days, and of course we hope that this time will be further improved. On the East Indian Railway from 32 days in 1944 it has come down to 22. On the N. W. R. it has come down from 40 to 29 days.

**Shri Sri Prakasa:** Mr. President, it always gives me a unique type of pleasure when I find myself in agreement with non-Congress non-official organisations in our country. I have always felt that the problem of India was not a racial one but entirely a political one, and I have always tried to impress upon my non-official European friends that they should make common cause with us to attack the Government, whether the members of Government are Indian or English. The colour of their skin makes very little difference; and my thesis has been amply proved by the fact that a non-official European is criticising the administration and an official Indian is found to defend this government.

But my chief purpose in rising this morning is to save my friend Mr. Stokes from a possible charge that might be levelled against him. For no doubt he and his group are the direct descendants of the East India Company and we also know that the first managing agent of that company, Robert Clive, was a great pilferer in his own time. It is reported that when he was arraigned before a competent body for not only his pilfering but also his brigandage, he said: "My lords, I am amazed at my own moderation." Lest the railway officials turn round and remind Mr. Stokes of this and also repeat to him the story of Alexander and the robber and tell him that they have pilfered him very much less than he has pilfered them, I feel that as an honest man who has pilfered nobody, I might make a legitimate complaint against being pilfered myself by Government and its great railway department. . . .

**Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffer:** Is the Honourable Member speaking on the cut motion?

**Shri Sri Prakasa:** Yes. My only sorrow is that Mr. Stokes is only trying to pilfer the Government of a petty sum of Rs. 100. He should have followed our example of yesterday and pilfered the whole lot.

Mr. Stokes has given many examples of how luggage is lost on Indian railways. In England no receipts are taken of luggage that is booked and you invariably find that luggage safely at the termination of your journey. But here, despite railway receipts we are often in danger of losing our whole luggage; and that is the reason why, despite rules on the subject, passengers insist on carrying all their luggage with them in the compartments. They inconvenience each other, and still for fear lest the luggage be lost if they book it and leave it to the tender mercies of the guard and other officials, they carry all their luggage with themselves in their own compartments. If there should be an assurance that our luggage will be safe in the custody of the railway, most of us would be glad to remove all that encumbrance from our own compartment and entrust our goods to the guard. That not being so, we inconvenience each other and carry all our luggage with ourselves. I have little doubt that Mr. Stokes would also be doing the same.

It is little consolation to be told by Government that the men are inefficient, that they are having troubles because of the war and that we should be generous and considerate. It is little comfort to me to be told that the railway officials are not what they ought to be when I have lost my luggage. I do not think that I am prepared to excuse the railway administration because they tried to help in a war not of our seeking. In any case this excuse cannot hold much water, and I want my luggage as I have entrusted it to the person who has taken charge of it; and I am not going to excuse him simply because he can trot out some reasons for the loss of my goods.

My own experience of railway pilferage is not so extensive as that of Mr. Stokes and his lady friends. It is more or less confined to my attempts at sending out Benares mangoes that are famous, to my friends who live in other

[Shri Sri Prakasa]

parts of the country. Last year I had the unique experience of having almost all my parcels completely pilfered; and when I complained of it to the relevant authorities, they took long weeks to acknowledge my complaints and still longer months to make good the loss. . .

**Sir Cowasjee Jehangir** (Nominated Non-Official): We have never had the pleasure of receiving any mangoes from you!

**Shri Sri Prakasa:** My honourable friend lives in Bombay and I am quite prepared to exchange *alphonsos* for *langras*. Sir, when I had lost these mangoes and I complained of it to the Chief Commercial Manager's office, E.I.R., I got them to listen to my complaints with some difficulty, and after long delays. In the case of one parcel that I sent to Agra, I was pontifically informed that I should go to the Great Indian Peninsula Railway officers in Bombay. I believe the railway is only what is called in law 'a common carrier', and when I have entrusted my goods to this common carrier, it is from him that I have every legitimate reason to call for an explanation and not to pursue another common carrier to whom this common carrier had entrusted my goods. I gave up chasing my mangoes, writing to this company, the E.I.R., that I could not possibly go on corresponding to the end of my life for the loss of a parcel of mangoes and being shunted from one company to another till I was blue in the face. I had thought that after a letter like that, the company would attend to the matter, apologise to me and accept their responsibility, and find either the mangoes or their adequate price. But I believe they were very glad that they were free from my attentions and I never heard from them again.

I can assure you, Sir, and also those who are in charge of these Railways that I had very carefully packed those mangoes in a wooden box, had put steel bands all round; but as an old saying in my language goes, 'the stronger the lock, the cleverer the thief'. And despite all this careful packing I lost all my mangoes. I should not say all. Three were left out of 120 that I had sent; and in Benares luckily in the case of mangoes 100 means 120. The gentleman to whom I had sent it, wrote back to say that he sent the railway receipt to the railway station but his servant found that the box was absolutely smashed and there were just three mangoes lying about. In disgust the servant left the three mangoes also for the railway officials to utilise and came away. In the hope of recovering the remaining 97 I wrote up to the railway in vain. In fact I sent all the correspondence on the subject in original to the railway authorities and they kept the correspondence. So, it was not much good my trying to pursue the G. I. P. authorities in the city of my Honourable friend Sir Cowasji Jehangir, as all my evidence too was thus lost.

Now, Sir, one of the things I might suggest to the railway authorities, if they would listen to me, is that they should have their claims offices at more places than one. At the present moment, the East India Co. happens to have an office of the Chief Commercial Manager at Benares also. It is possible that claims may be attended to with greater promptness if there were more offices than one. I have reason to believe that the railway authorities are thinking of taking back the Benares office to Calcutta because they have no more any danger from the Japanese. I understand, Sir, that Benares became a particularly favourite place of Government in the days when they were in danger from Japan because of its vicinity of Sarnath, a place sacred to the Japanese as well, and one high official of Government actually said in a Town Hall meeting in Benares that though we may all feel very safe from the Japanese because we have Sarnath there which is their sacred place as well, still we should not feel absolutely secure because there is the Dufferin Bridge to bring them across. In any case the Railway authorities felt fairly safe in Benares and they conveniently made that a centre of operations for their Commercial Manager's Office.

**Mr. President:** The Honourable Member may now remember his time limit.

**Shri Sri Prakasa:** Sir, I hope to live long. (Laughter.) I cannot understand why my Honourable friends are laughing. I hope that the experience of the Benares office has been satisfactory and if it has been satisfactory, I hope that other railways will follow suit and have more offices than one. Then I think that claims should be attended to quickly; and I also hope that instead of defending their officials in the way my Honourable friend opposite has done this morning, he would send a strong warning to his subordinates on all railways and tell them that any pilferage or brigandage will be seriously dealt with. Attempts to shield their officials in this manner is the cause of much trouble. When they feel certain that they will be defended from the top even when they carry on brigandage on a large scale like this, they feel that they can snap their fingers at mere passengers and customers like ourselves; but if they also know that the persons at the top are going to sit tight on them they would not behave half as badly as they do.

**Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffer:** I rise to wholeheartedly support the cut motion moved by my Honourable friend Mr. Stokes and I sincerely sympathise with him in his tale of woe.

I shall first deal with pilfering, and deal with settling of claims later. I should first like to refer to the despatch of fruit parcels. Our friend Sri Prakasa has referred to his parcel of mangoes. Speaking from my own experience I can say that I sent a fruit parcel from Poona to Sirsi in North Canara and although three months have elapsed, the parcel has not reached its destination. I made inquiries, and my friend in Sirsi has made inquiries too, but God knows where the fruit parcel has disappeared. They still say that inquiries are being made. I hope the Railway Board will try to replace that parcel. Then again I had the misfortune to receive a fruit parcel which was opened on the way and the contents were stolen and they were replaced by stones. This is a very good idea on the part of the railway officials concerned, and I am told by another friend of mine here Mr. Nauman, received bricks. Once my firm in Poona imported for the Christmas turkeys and chickens. Of course they were not missing but before the delivery could be taken the station authorities had to be given a couple of turkeys and chickens. I hope the Watch and Ward Department proposed by my Honourable friend will keep an eye on this and see that such things do not happen. They can at least tell the officials that they should not adopt such means. We are prepared to give them Christmas presents but not to forcibly part with turkeys and chickens.

As regards luggage, I differ from my friend Mr. Sri Prakasa when he says that luggage left with the guard is always broken into. My experience is different I have never found any luggage broken into or opened. I understand that the Railway Board a few months ago passed orders to the railway authorities that the extra luggage should not go by the same train. In this connection I would remind the War Transport Member of the correspondence that took place in the *Times of India* of several unfortunate travellers who lost their luggage. The luggage was opened. Many European ladies lost their trunks, specially those who have been travelling long distances from South India to Northern India. I would not agree that heavy luggage should travel by the same compartment with the passengers, because that causes great inconvenience but I suggest that the luggage should be allowed to go by the same train as the passenger is travelling. My experience has been that I have not had the misfortune to lose my luggage but several passengers whose luggage did not travel by the same train lost their luggage. Some of it was broken into or damaged.

Now, I come to the question of settling the claims. I would go a step further than my friend Mr. Stokes and say that this is an organised theft on the part of railway officials. About six months ago I travelled from Bombay to Bagaskot and from Hotgi Junction to Bijapur, I could not get accommodation in the first class, and so I had to travel by second class. My claim of refund for the difference is still pending and the last postcard which I received is from the G. I. P. Railway asking me wherefrom I bought the ticket. I gave them

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this information. Then, they sent another postcard and asked me who bought the ticket. I said that I had bought it and I asked them to settle the claim. I made it clear to them that I was not asking for Rs. 10 and I sent to them a declaration that that amount will definitely go to charity, but it will go to charity by my own hands and not by theirs. I am sorry to say that those Rs. 10 are still not forthcoming.

**Shri Sri Prakasa:** They are gone to charity.

**Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffer:** I should like to give charity by my own hands. They say the claims Inspector will come and look into your claims and there the matter ends. When my friend Mr. Stocks, here referred to the question of Insurance Companies, he said they are the most prompt people to settle their claim. It is by settling claims promptly that you earn your reputation. I feel that the railways have made so much money that they do not care to make more money and do not care to earn the same reputation as is earned by the Insurance Companies.

Now, our friend the Railway Member has referred to the question of extra Watch and Ward officials. I would suggest that the first duty of the Watch and Ward officials should be to send bogus customers with marked notes to the booking clerks and those who make reservations and those who allow wagons to be booked, and those who book fruit parcels. It is scandalous that they are making thousands of rupees. We cannot get reservations unless we pay Rs. 10 for I Class Berth. I am told that the public should co-operate but the man who is travelling has not got the time to go to the police. So, it is much better that the Watch and Ward officials should be instructed to send bogus customers from time to time so that such things may not happen again. I can assure you that every day in Bombay and Poona we come across at least 20 such cases. Once they know that the Watch and Ward officials and the Police are after them this robbery will stop forthwith.

Lastly, Sir, there is a great trade of fruit parcels and vegetables, especially the vegetables which are so badly needed. The difficulty is they are not booked promptly and for every such parcel the booking clerk charges 8 annas to one rupee. This should be stopped. I am sure if the Railway Member issues instructions to the Railway Companies, the position will improve and we shall have better times ahead of us.

**Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar** (Madras Ceded Districts and Chittoor: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, the magnitude of the leakage, damage and wastage has not been understood or appreciated by the Assembly. I would like the Honourable Members to note that whereas they earned 114 crores from the carriage of goods in 1945-46 only 1½ crores were paid as compensation for the loss of goods in transit. So, nearly 1½ per cent. of the earnings from this source is being wasted. There is no good trying to find the thieves elsewhere than in the Department itself. There are two-legged rats in the Department itself who either commit pilfering or waste articles or take them away. Let us take an ordinary instance. The luggage or parcels or goods are sent by trains and the luggage and parcels are carried much earlier than goods. It is easy to locate who was responsible for these. At the booking station the Stationmaster is responsible for it, the Guard is responsible in the running train and at the other station the goods clerk or the Stationmaster is responsible for it. These are the only persons who can be responsible. With respect to goods, longer time is spent in the goods shed before the article is put in the wagon. It is only the railway officials who have got access to these articles or their peons and none others. If there is a theft in the compound of a railway station and if the thieves are brought before the Magistrate, they are punished severely. Therefore, thefts by strangers of articles inside the railway administration have become very few. The persons who commit these thefts are inside the railway administration and they do not take any steps against them.

Details have been given both in the Administration Report and also under Demand 6—Compensation for loss or damage under the various administrations. No statistics have been given of the railway officials who have been punished for pilfering or waste or damage caused in transit. I would ask a categorical statement to be laid on the table of the House by the Honourable Member regarding the manner in which attempts have been made to secure the lost articles or the compensation that has been paid by the Railways. I wanted that information in the Standing Finance Committee for Railways but it has not yet been supplied to me. I expect the Honourable Member will give me that information here. I need not give the details as to where I myself suffered with regard to mangoes, but it is common knowledge that we do suffer that way. We are forced to get into railway trains and we are also forced to send fruits by railway trains. If it were possible to send them otherwise, a man would gladly refrain from sending his articles by trains. At present there is absolutely no chance of any of these articles at the other end.

As to how the railway administration is lax is clear from this. In the case of the G. I. P. Railway the number of cases pending in 1943-44 was 6,819 and the new claims were 41,265. The average duration for settling a claim was only 46 days. In the case of the Bengal Assam Railway 38,000 claims were made during the years 1943-44 and 1944-45 and the average duration was 82 days. The most lax railway was the Bengal Nagpur Railway where for a lesser number of claims the average duration was 182 days with respect to each claim. Now, a man who loses his article and puts in a claim for it must know at the station at which the article is delivered to him whether the article is intact or not. He immediately puts in the claim and the station master is the person who has to justify whether the article is good or not. There is no need to drive him to the court. All the railway administrations have been purchased by the Government and there is no inter-railway administration difficulty now. Therefore, as soon as the claim is made, it must be satisfied. There is absolutely no justification for not satisfying the claim. The claim arises on account of the loss or wastage. I have seen it myself and I am sure the same is the experience of others that these porters who are asked to remove the luggage throw it out mercilessly. No doubt it is chattel, but he does not care to know that it is written on the top, 'remove with care', or 'handle with care' and so on and so forth. Even in the case of these articles there is so much of indifference. What is the fate of articles on which such caution is not written. Even with regard to articles which are handled with care, how are they placed in the wagon or how are they thrown on the platforms? There is so much of wastage going on. This is all due to this system of employing coolies. The contractors are appointed and they engage these coolies. These coolies are not permanently paid men. The contractors bring in all sorts of miscellaneous people as coolies. They are not paid regularly by the contractors, the railway administration has no control over them. The coolies are made to do this work of removing luggage from platforms free. What money they make is all from the passengers. The removal of the luggage etc., for the railway administration is all done as extra work for which the coolies are paid nothing by the railway administration. In return for this free work, the coolies are given licenses. Even if a cooly works for 15 or 20 years at a station, there is no guarantee that he will become a paid porter, if any such vacancy should arise. That is the way in which the railway administration is run. The Railway administration seems to be under the impression, let us pay very little, it does not matter, let the coolies make as much as they can from the travelling public. Let the porters and other officials make as much money as possible but so far as we are concerned, let us pay them only such an amount which is below the normal living wage, say Rs. 15 or Rs. 20 a month. This sort of mentality on the part of the Railway administration leads to corruption and wastage. A graduate once came to me and asked to get him a job. I told him that I was in the Opposition in the Assembly and how could I secure him

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a job. He said, I do not mind working without pay, but please do put me in the Supply Department of the Government of India where I can make some money for my living. Such is the impression created in the public mind about your Government administration. Similarly, a man may be appointed even without salary in the Railway Department, he will get money without any difficulty. It is only exactly with a view to remove this evil that I have joined hands with my friend Mr. Guruswami to get the salaries of low paid officials raised and to secure to them a permanency of tenure. Out of one crore and fifty lakhs paid last year and out of one crore and 16 lakhs budgeted for next year, what portion of these sums really come from railway officials who are responsible for such rough handling of the goods. If my Honourable friend is able to give me the figures immediately, I shall sit down. I am not very particular about the time limit to my speech. I am prepared to forego a portion of the 15 minutes allotted to me. I am not getting any answer. It will be carrying coals to Newcastle if I tell them in what ways the administration is corrupt. Every railway official knows it. Once my Honourable friend Mr. Sri Prakasa sent me some Benares mangoes—two baskets. One basket did not reach my station, Chittoor, in the other basket, there were only three mangoes left. I am really surprised that there should be kinship between one station and another, for in the case of a similar parcel sent by me to Benares, my friend got only three mangoes and all the others disappeared. Possibly those mangoes were in fresh condition, and mine was rotten. They must have tasted them and allowed them. My Honourable friend, the Railway Member, who is constantly travelling on the railways can easily find out these evils. It may be that he is willing to travel in lower class, but one swallow does not make a summer. His subordinates, the Traffic Superintendents and other officials won't travel in anything less than saloons. Possibly, there is a secret understanding between the Honourable the Railway Member and his subordinate officials, possibly he is telling them 'I am travelling in lower class, but don't commit that mistake yourselves, you travel in saloons. The District Traffic Superintendent of Railways comes along, he has to be provided with all sorts of comforts and conveniences in his tour. Sir, I shall refer to an allied department of the Government of India, namely the Postal Department. Do these complaints arise there? The post offices handle large sums of money, very valuable parcels pass through the post offices and whenever any claims for compensation are made against the postal department, they are promptly settled. Even if a single post card misses and if a complaint is made to the higher authorities, the Postal Inspector comes and stands at the door of the complainant the next to enquire into the complaint, to seek information and he settles it immediately. Why not the railways take a leaf from the postal department? My Honourable friend the Railway Member will only threaten us with one remedy, and that is raising rates and fares and he will say, by all means let pilfering go on. If that is your attitude, then not a single man will get into your train. Is that the way in which the railway administration should be conducted? The only remedy that I can think of is to appoint local *ad hoc* tribunals who will settle the claims without any difficulty. For the purpose of settling claims, you may recover the loss from the parties concerned, namely the station master and luggage clerk at the despatching station, and also the station master and the luggage clerk at the destination station. In this way the loss to the railways shall be apportioned. Enforce this rule for some time, and you will see whether any pilfering occurs at all. In conclusion I should like to submit that greater attention should be bestowed on the subject. I fear that though one crore and 16 lakhs have been budgeted for next year by way of compensation, yet in practice the major portion will be swallowed by the railway officials and a paltry sum of no more than 16 lakhs would be paid to the aggrieved parties by way of compensation.

**Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad** (United Provinces: Southern Divisions: Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I did not want to intervene in this debate, but for a few



remarks made by my Honourable friend Mr. Ayyangar. He suggested a solution, but did not draw the conclusion himself that the postal officials and the railway officials should be interchanged. That is his practical suggestion, because once the railway administration takes its lessons from the postal department, then everything will be all right. I think my Honourable friend is not very far from truth. His suggestions really deserve consideration.

**Sir M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar:** I accept the Honourable Member's amendment.

**Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad:** You place the facts, I draw the conclusion. My friend also referred to cooly contractors and that is the only point on which I should like to speak. This is a novel system which has been introduced in this country and it is quite different from the systems prevailing in other parts of the world. My Honourable friend the Railway Member has got experience of porters in Europe and America. It is on account of the wrong system of employing porters in this country that all evils we are complaining against are rampant. The railway administration entrusts this task to one contractor who is given this patronage. As was said several times on the floor of this House, the cooly contractor in Lahore station earns as much as Rs. 3,000 a day, and this is greater than the income of any official of the Government of India. Yet, it is true. He earns this money in all sorts of ways. He first charges every cooly a fixed sum of Rs. 2 a day. He also charges something else for giving the porter the clothing and the belt etc. The Government also pays these contractors money for handling the luggage and goods. The contractors in their turn pocket all the money they get from the railway administration, and extract work from the coolies free. Nothing is paid to the coolies for handling the goods. The entire money which is contributed by the Railway administration for handling the goods is swallowed by the contractors. This further increases the earnings of the contractors. Whenever we raise this question of appointment of contractors, the railway administration never cares for our complaints but go on appointing the same person for obvious reasons. Sometimes, the railway administration appoints ex-railway servants as contractors to give them patronage. In the case of E. I. Railway, they have given the contract to one Salig Ram, although he is dead and gone long ago, yet his children and grand children go on paying visible and invisible licence fees and secure the contract without any break. This system of appointing contractors and asking them to employ porters is thoroughly bad. My Honourable friend the Railway Member who has widely travelled on the Continent of Europe and America must know that this system does not exist anywhere in the world. Where does all this money for the contractors come from? It all comes from the travelling public. Whenever we prepare our budget for travelling we have to provide not only for the cost of railway tickets but we have to budget for several other items. We have to set apart some money to pay the booking clerk for purchase of the ticket. A large number of third class passengers has got to give this tip, otherwise, they cannot easily get the ticket. Sometimes, the poor third class passenger has to pay several times more than the scheduled price of a ticket. The next item is the cooly hire. The cooly is not satisfied with his scheduled rate. He always says, 'well, Sir, whatever you give me goes to the contractor, nothing is left for me'. In this way, we have to put down a large additional amount for incidental expenses, like tips, cooly hire, etc., before we begin to travel on the railway. Another item of expenditure for a traveller is the high cost and low quality of the refreshment. The price of refreshment is so high and the articles supplied are so bad that it really costs much inconvenience to the travelling public. I submit that all these things require looking into. They all add to the discomforts of the traveller. It does not go to the budget of the railway administration, but it adds to the budget of the travelling public. I am sure this is considered a great nuisance. All these also require careful consideration. I really thank my

[Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad]

Honourable friend Mr. Stokes for drawing attention of the Assembly to these difficulties which must be remedied by the railway administration.

**Pandit Govind Malaviya** (Allahabad and Jhansi Divisions: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I should like to draw the attention of the Honourable the Railway Member to some of the difficulties that people experience. Pilferage and delay in the settlement of claims have been dealt with by some of my Honourable friends and I need not devote any time to those points.

**Mr. President:** Order, order. That is the only scope of the motion.

**Pandit Govind Malaviya:** The motion also relates to unsatisfactory conditions of travel.

**Mr. President:** The Honourable Member unfortunately was not present in the House when the motion was put to the House. The only part put was about 'pilferage and delay in settlement of claims'. The other part which the Honourable Member wants to discuss has already been discussed on other cut motions.

**Pandit Govind Malaviya:** Then, Sir, I shall not take any time of the House.

**Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan** (Agra Division: Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I will give three illustrations from my own experience with regard to this subject. Last year a parcel of mangoes was sent to me at Simla and while taking delivery I found only a basket but no mangoes. Again, only about four or five days ago a parcel of guavas was sent to me from my garden and it was sent from Etah district, and when my servant went to the station to take delivery he found that instead of 20 seers there were only about ten guavas. He refused to take delivery and also to hand over the railway receipt. The third case is this. A friend of mine had lost some clothes in transit and put in a claim of something like Rs. 100. After two years he was asked by the East Indian Railway to send them the original tailor's bills so that the administration might assess the amount to be paid. He replied that the clothes had been made about ten years back and he had no idea that they would be lost in transit, otherwise he would have kept those bills in order to prove his case. You can see what kind of administration this is when no action was taken in the course of two years. When I came to know of this case I raised it in the Advisory Committee of the railway and after six months the poor fellow got his money. These are the things that happen. My guavas were perhaps stolen at Delhi junction, and what kind of thieves does the railway employ? I am writing to the Divisional Superintendent about this; but this is not the first time that the attention of the railway administration has been drawn to these thefts. Probably there is some one responsible who allows these thefts to be committed. In any case, I wanted to bring to the Honourable Member's notice these cases which are within my personal knowledge.

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** Sir, I very much welcome the fact that this debate should have taken place because it is a subject which needs ventilating. I fully appreciate the inconvenience and exasperation which the public have suffered, particularly during the course of the war. And if I can parody my Honourable friends opposite, I am amazed at the moderation not of those who usually leave three mangoes but the moderation of the speakers today, because, I do appreciate how very exasperating it is to every individual who suffers from loss of luggage or of goods or from delays in getting claims settled; and I have full sympathy there. The other day I came across a case of one Government official who was so exasperated at losing his trunk and getting no compensation for it, about 25 years ago, that he would not give us any assistance in the road-rail co-operation scheme. That shows the depths to which it bites into people.

At the same time while welcoming this debate I must take exception to the accusation that it is only the railwaymen who are guilty. My Honourable friends opposite take the line that whatever goes wrong it is the railwaymen and not the public who are at fault. That is why when I stand up here I

find myself in a position of defending the railwaymen against accusations that are unjust. That does not mean that we do not take action against delinquent railwaymen, and I can assure my Honourable friends that we are being most stringent in this matter. In the case of the Teliapara incident that my Honourable friend mentioned, the railway servant was convicted and got 18 months' rigorous imprisonment.

**Shri Sri Prakasa:** Is not the railway servant responsible for my goods when he has taken charge of it even if some thief from outside should come and steal them from him?

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** Yes, I will deal with that in a minute. But as regards the procedure against railway servants, one of our difficulties is the extremely elaborate procedure which my Honourable friend Mr. Anthony is always bringing to the notice of the House; and if my Honourable friend Mr. Ayyangar and his friends would not insist on such an elaborate procedure in these cases it would be more easy to deal with disciplinary cases of this sort. Sir, it is not always the railwaymen; very frequently it is, as the Honourable Mover said, organised banditry. The two-legged rats to which my Honourable friend referred are not only railway rats, but there are rats among the public as well. We had a case not long ago of organised coal thefts in the Calcutta area. The open coal wagons making their way down to the docks were systematically pilfered, in the way of organised banditry, by certain coal merchants who, when the trains had to slow up at certain crossings, used to have a gang of men throwing off all they could and had carts ready to remove it. This of course was done in the night. When we discovered it we took proper steps; but that is a very good example of a case where the public was concerned in organised banditry and it is not a case where railwaymen were concerned.

**Mr. Muhammad Nauman** (Patna and Chota Nagpur *cum* Orissa: Muhammadan): May I know if there is any responsibility on railwaymen to find out the culprits?

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** Yes, but when you have organised thefts of that nature in the middle of the night it is not necessarily found out immediately. The delinquents were caught and of course the thefts were stopped. But I was explaining how these things are sometimes organised. I will mention another case, a case with which one must have great sympathy. In the times of famine in Bengal there was organised theft of grain wagons, and special instruments were made and sold in the bazar to enable people to probe into the wagons and slit the sacks so that all the grain trickled out. One can sympathise with people who actually steal grain for food; but there again there was organised banditry because the iron merchants in the bazar were making instruments for this purpose. Then I will give another case, which is rather an interesting one. I was talking to an officer about this question and he said that not so many years ago he was standing at some station (say Jullundur) in the middle of summer when one of the station officials came to him and said, "Sir, there is a *bhut* in a box." He said, "dont be silly." 'But there is' was the reply. He went along to the box and, sure enough, there was a knocking in the box. He opened it and found inside a man in the last stages of exhaustion, and extracted the facts from him. The facts were that every day or every other day this man used to be inserted by a gang of thieves at, say, Ambala into this box. It was put in the van, in the course of the journey, the sliding door was removed, the gentlemen inside got out, pilfered all the most valuable things, got inside again and was unloaded regularly at Ludhiana where his friends would come with a bullock cart and the loot was disposed of. Unfortunately on this occasion he was not put out at Ludhiana but went through to Jullundur and the scheme was disclosed. That was an organized banditry.

**Mr. Manu Sufedar** (Indian Merchants' Chamber and Bureau: Indian Commerce): Did you send him to jail?

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** I cannot tell you what happened.

**Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar:** These are all exceptional cases!

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** I have mentioned the sort of thing which does happen. It is sometimes also the passenger's fault. I should say that the customer can do no wrong, but occasionally they do. I do not know whether many Honourable Members went to the railway exhibition last year. If they did, they must have seen a very interesting stall in the south-west corner illustrating how passengers should do up and label their luggage. Very often packages are insufficiently labelled, the label is stuck on rather loosely, the gum comes off, there is no label left on the package and it is extremely difficult in those circumstances to trace the package and return it to the owner.

One Honourable Member mentioned the case of railway cushions being stolen. That was a very frequent occurrence particularly in East Bengal and Assam in the course of the war. The troops found railway cushions more comfortable to sleep on than the hard ground and we had frequent occasions to apply to camps round about railway stations to return the cushions which they had stolen. We got very little out of it, but on one occasion we did get a reply. There were two railway cushions 14 miles from the railway station and if we could send for them we could have them back, but generally speaking we got very little response.

It will interest my Honourable friend the mover who referred to section 77 of the Railway Act to know that the provisions of this Act have not escaped our attention and that we do think that there may possibly be a case for amending them in the present circumstances. Section 73 of the Act, for instance, lays down a maximum valuation for certain goods: In the case of elephants or horses Rs. 500, in the case of donkeys, sheep, goats and so on Rs. 10 per head, which is the maximum compensation payable. In section 75 it lays down that value is not to be paid in excess of Rs. 100 on any package unless that value is declared. It is recognized now that in view of the rise in prices there may be a case for revising those limits, but, I think, generally speaking, the railway Administrations, in view of the heavy losses which have occurred, have interpreted these rules rather less stringently, recognizing the difficulties of the passengers.

My Honourable friend, the mover, dwelt particularly on the difficulties on the B. A. Railway. I think he must recognize that the B. A. Railway has had particular difficulties as a result of war pressure, first of all in the extremely heavy increase in the traffic over that railway and, secondly, from the fact that it has had of course the largest number of new, temporary and inexperienced staff. I am not saying that as an excuse for—yes, I am saying it as an excuse for the B. A. Railway, but I don't necessarily accept that it was necessary to the degree in which pilferage has taken place there. I can certainly assure him that throughout the Railways, as my Honourable friend the Director of Establishments has said, the Railway Board are giving their personal attention in every way to seeing what can be done to improve both the reduction of pilferage and the expeditious dealing with claims.

**Mr. Muhammad Nauman:** They are doing that for the last 25 years, but there is no improvement whatsoever.

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** Sir, it got worse during the war. I don't think that my Honourable friend Mr. Sri Prakasa's suggestion of having more claims offices round the country is really going to help. In the case of the Benares office of the E. I. R. many of the files have to be sent up from the Central Office in Calcutta and they are returned again to Calcutta so that in many cases it is the most inefficient way of dealing with claims. It certainly would lead to greater efficiency if the whole of the office of the railway could be centralized.

My Honourable friend, the Director of Establishments, pointed out that claims are now dealt with more expeditiously; the time required for dealing

with it has been speeded up considerably and, I believe, the railways have been taking a more liberal view, but I maintain that the proper way to resolve the problem is to try to stop the pilferage. My Honourable friend, the Director of Establishments, has mentioned the different steps that have been taken to try to decrease the pilferage, but I think, Sir, both this war and the last have shown that during the war time there is a general decline of morality in these matters among all classes and I don't say in any way that railwaymen are exempt. It is not confined to this country. Some Honourable Member opposite mentioned that in the United Kingdom you could send your package without taking a receipt for it. That is so. But I was reading the report of the Parliamentary Economy Committee not long ago. The Parliamentary Committee, sitting on railway economies, drew particular attention to the extent of pilferage which had, during war time enormously increased, for the reasons which my friend the Director of Establishments mentioned. So this country is not the only one suffering from these difficulties. At the same time I can assure the House that this will have the continued attention of the Railway Board. I must confess that when I came to study the figures in the papers circulated to the House it came to me rather as a shock to see the extent of the increase of claims. It was not a shock to the Board because they had already taken action but this was the first time that it was very visibly brought to my notice and I am exceedingly glad this debate has taken place. I can assure the House that the result will be that the Board and I and the Railway Administrations will do all we can to tighten up on this and give better service to the public. I hope in view of the assurance my Honourable friend will withdraw his cut motion.

**Mr. Muhammad Nauman:** You do not at all say whether you had ever prosecuted employees for such pilferages. Nor do you say anything about the handling of the damages to stock due on account of your contract system of coolies.

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** As regards the contract system of coolies, I mentioned in the House as a result of a question that I was looking into it very thoroughly. The investigation has started. As regards prosecution of staff, that does take place, and as the Honourable the mover pointed out one railway man did get 18 months.

**Mr. Muhammad Nauman:** Do you trace complaints from booking office to destination?

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** It is extraordinarily difficult. As the Honourable Member knows when there is extremely heavy traffic, the stations are very often blocked with parcels and it is extremely difficult to trace who is the author of the theft. It is probably done at night, it may be an outside cooly who has had access to the station or it may be a railway cooly. It is extremely difficult to run people to earth.

**Shri Sri Prakasa:** Does not the Benares office itself settle claims?  
(Interruptions)

**Mr. President:** Order, order. Mr. Ghulam Bhik Nairang wished to put a question.

**Syed Ghulam Bhik Nairang** (East Punjab: Muhammadan): What does the Honourable Member propose to do with regard to fruit parcels which are subject to pilferage most extensively?

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** What I said applies to everything, not only to fruit parcels, though fruit parcels are particularly attractive to thieves. That is recognised. But I do not see that you can concentrate on that.

**Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar:** Of the one and a half crores paid by way of compensation during last year for loss and damages, was a rupee collected or obtained from the railway staff?

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** I am afraid I should have to get notice of that.

**Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar:** Can you say approximately?

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** No. I have not gone into that.

**Shri Sri Prakasa:** Does not the Benares office settle claims directly?

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** But very frequently cases have to be referred to Calcutta to the Commercial Manager.

**Mr. E. O. Morris (Madras: European):** Are not the railways responsible for the bad opening and closing of certain consignments in transit by excise officials between Madras and Mysore—so inviting pilferage by railway employees?

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** I should require notice of that. They are opened by the Mysore Government officials.

**Mr. President:** The only question that remains is whether the Honourable Member wishes to withdraw his motion.

The question is:

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

The motion was adopted.

#### *Ways and Means for Meeting the increased operating costs*

**Mr. M. A. F. Hirtzel (Bengal: European):** Sir, I move:

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

My purpose in moving this motion is to concentrate on the latter portion of it.

**Mr. President:** Order, order. Would the Honourable Member mind coming a little further up?

**Mr. M. A. F. Hirtzel:** In previous debates we have concentrated rather on the capital position of the railways and I do not propose to discuss that further to-day except to say that we certainly share the anxieties which have been expressed in some quarters of the House on the subject and we feel that the whole question of the railways' operating position cannot be fully covered until the questions of the Depreciation Fund, the Betterment Fund, the General Reserve and also the question of amortisation of capital have been fully investigated and dealt with. That, we feel, should be taken up at once and certainly could not be taken up by a committee of the type which the Honourable Member was disposed to accept in principle on Mr. Neogy's cut motion. The whole question of the capital side of the railways is, as I have said, an essential preliminary to dealing with their profit and loss position. They must first be put on a sound capital basis. But, Sir, as I have said, that is not my purpose today. I want to deal with the day to day position, or the year to year position, of the Railways about which we are feeling great anxiety in the light of the budget for the coming year. The railways, as the House is aware, or for that matter any transport concern, are a very accurate barometer of the state of trade in the country. They are also a very sensitive barometer. As economic conditions slacken traffic falls and falls much before the cost of transportation falls. Similarly as the economic pulse quickens, earnings rise more rapidly than cost of transportation rises. As the House knows the most accurate way of measuring the efficiency of transportation is by the operating ratio, that is to say, the ratio of working expenses to gross traffic receipts. Now, if we take the history of the railways from the period when railway revenues were separated from General Revenues, we shall see much more accurately what the position is.

From the year 1924-25 to 1929-30 the Railways enjoyed six years of prosperity. During those years they made an average annual profit of 8½ crores. The operating ratio on the annual basis ranged between a maximum of 54.1 per cent. and a minimum of 51.3 per cent. I am quoting these figures from the Wedgwood Committee Report. In the succeeding years of depression,

1931—36, the railways made an average annual loss of practically 7 crores. The exact figure is 6·94 crores. During that period the operating ratio showed a very considerable rise ranging between 54·7 per cent. and 57·2 per cent. in 1930-31, the first year of depression. During 1936-37 to 1939-40, the four post-depression years the railways made an average annual profit of 2·42 crores and during that period the operating ratio again fell from 54·2 to 52·3 per cent. The point I am seeking to make is that in the years before the war the operating ratio showed a maximum range of only 5·9 per cent. In the period 1930-31 to 1945-46 (the current year) there is an increase in the operating ratio of 9·4 per cent. On the other hand comparing the years 1927-28 and 1945-46 the lowest was 51·3 per cent. and the highest 66·6 per cent. in the current year. There is thus an increase in the operating ratio in the current year of 15·3 per cent. I am sorry that these figures are rather intricate. The point I would emphasise is that in the prewar years the maximum increase was 5·9 per cent. and in the period of the war the increase in the operating ratio has been 15·8 per cent.

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** May I ask the Honourable Member whether he has adjusted in his figures the special charges for writing down the rolling stock?

**Mr. M. A. F. Hirtzel:** No, Sir. I would rely on the Honourable Member to make the adjustments in his own defence. But in any case the point will be established that there has been a very serious and very substantial increase in the operating ratio which represents a position which is certainly a very grave warning.

Now, Sir, the position is that we are faced with this very grave increase in operating costs and the question is how are you going to meet it. The Wedgwood Committee went into the question whether the Railways should make a contribution to general revenues and they sought to assess traffic prospects in the years immediately following the year 1937. It is interesting to study in their report the conclusions they came to and the reasons why they felt that the Railways were not on a sufficiently economic basis to justify a contribution to general revenues. Honourable Members will find the reasons on page 128 of the Report and they are set out as follows:

“(a) Whilst the next few years are likely to show improving trade, this is due to conditions which are partly artificial and to that extent precarious in character.”

I suggest that today the position is just as uncertain.

“(b) Some of the burdens which were assumed by the railways during the period of prosperity will remain as a permanent additional charge for the future. Rates of wages were liberally increased and it has proved impossible to reduce them substantially during the times of depression. Capital expenditure was freely undertaken, much of which has not yet fructified and some of which owing to motor competition is never likely to fructify.”

That, Sir, I suggest substantially applies also today.

Item (c) refers to road competition. It is rather a lengthy one and I will not read it out. But, having regard to the circumstances of yesterday, I submit that that also applies.

“(d) On the other side of the account comes the question of economies. We are unable to point to any economies of first class magnitude at present realisable. . . .” and so on.

That, Sir, is the question before us now and is the purpose of my cut motion.

Item (e) refers to recommendations of the report bearing upon possibility of increasing revenue. I suggest that the position today is substantially the same as it was in 1937. We are facing a period of economic uncertainty and I think that the Wedgwood Committee's comments are a guide to us today.

We come then to the question of how this position is to be met. First of all there is the question of a contribution from the Railways to general revenues. If no contributions are made to general revenues, then I would point out that that in fact means that the railways should be run on a strictly commercial basis. • That is to say, if the railways do not make profit for *general distribution*, so to speak, then the profits go back into the business in some form or other either in amenities for the public or

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Improved service and so on. On the other hand, if the Railways make a contribution to general revenues, then they are in a position in times of stress to rely on the general revenues to assist them. This is a matter which is open for enquiry and we certainly do not propose to commit ourselves to a final view on the subject but we are inclined to the view that the direct distribution of costs to the users, that is to say that the railways should not be burdened with a heavy fixed contribution to the general revenues, is preferable. But in that case the users would naturally claim a much higher standard of service than they yet receive. It is quite clear, particularly from what has just passed under the previous cut motion, that a much higher standard of service is required. We have just discussed the question of claims. Then there was the serious question of demurrage charges which were remitted in an unjustifiable manner during the war. Then the question of ticketless travel. All these indicate a standard of administration which doubtless for unavoidable reasons during the war, is yet not satisfactory.

Then there are longer range subjects on the scientific side, for example fuel research, electrification and no one in these debates has yet mentioned atomic power which may have a very vital effect in the years to come in Railway operation.

But when all is said and done, I think we must come to the conclusion that retrenchment is essential and must play a part. The grand total of working expenses in the coming budget is 169 crores against only 100 crores in 1939-40. That represents an over-all increase of 69 crores; and we were told the other day that current labour demands would mean another 75 crores of rupees. The question, therefore, we ask is that if all those demands are to be met, where is that 144 crores or 150 crores going to come from? As against that gap, traffic rates and fares have only been increased by 8 per cent. over-all, during the war. The results of 1946-47 may justify the budget which has been

placed before us, but the results for 1947-48 are certainly likely to be much more discouraging. We shall then be in a full deflationary period, a period when to increase rates may have a very serious and depressing effect on an already slackening economy.

In the light of all these considerations, we feel that measures are necessary in every direction both to clear the position on the capital side and to devise all possible means of improving revenue. Sir, I move.

**Mr. President:** Cut motion moved:

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

**Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar:** Sir, when I come to this cut motion I am doubtful as to how the railways may be able to pull through in the years to come. War earnings ought not to be taken as the criterion for the earnings for future years. War is no doubt a boom—it has exhausted our resources and has also got us a lot of money, and the assets have been over-worked. Therefore the earnings in the pre-war year 1938-39 and the expenditure ratio then will give us an idea as to how we should cut our coat during the coming years.

In the year 1938-39 the total earnings were to the tune of 107 crores; the total working expenses were 71 crores—the operating ratio being 66·4. From the earnings, first of all the operating expenses have to be met, which includes depreciation also. Then there are certain unavoidable expenses by way of interest charges which come to 27 crores and in addition if some contribution has to be made to the general revenues it comes to nearly 7 or 8 crores; altogether about 34 crores. The balance after deducting depreciation of about 12 crores comes to about 61 crores and that is just the sum that was found necessary for the working expenses during the year 1938-39. Now, the income hereafter may go down, but the operating expenses may not go down at the same rate as the income goes down. During the war the income from the goods traffic did not appreciate very much, not in the same proportion as the passenger traffic income. Though the number of trains that were run was smaller, a larger amount was earned from the passenger traffic because of over-



crowding. The increase was due not to the growth of industries in this country, but to inflation that went on during the war period: from nearly 200 crores before the war, the currency notes have gone up to nearly 1,300 crores. Everybody got into the 1st and 2nd class because there was no accommodation in the third class and that way reduced the overcrowding in the third class—in fact the third class booking was closed in various stations. Now it cannot be expected hereafter, now that the war is over, that there will be such circulation of money; there may not also be further flow of money into this country, and there is no prospect of their being increased or augmented. All that is referred to in the administration report of the railways. Therefore, having regard to this appalling state of affairs in the coming years one has to be careful. I do not know what to suggest because though three or four days have been spent over this railway budget, up to this date the Honourable Member has not come out with any particular methods by which he can curtail the expenditure and adjust the operating ratio to the income that may fall below normal in the coming years. However, it is my duty to suggest to him how this can be done and how he has not been able to do it till now or undertaken any measures.

First of all, now that most of the important railways have come under Government administration, the railways may be regarded as one for administrative purposes: a number of head offices and some workshops also may be fused together and I expect some saving under that head. It is true that I may not be able to point my finger to any one particular item which alone will make up all the deficit in the years to come. The axe can and has to be applied in almost every detail; and even if a rupee can be saved in a particular department it is worth while saving. It will not be open to my Honourable friend to rise up and say that any one of these savings is so small that none of them can be undertaken in the years to come.

Next as regards retrenchment, I would suggest that besides amalgamation, which would reduce expenditure to some extent, there should be retrenchment of offices and officers and reduction of salaries and abolition of allowances. First of all, about offices I will give only one or two instances. There is the Railway Clearing Accounts Office. That has been in existence for a long time. It has got a lot of establishment. When the railway administrations were in the hands of various companies, it was necessary to adjust every item and apportion the money from time to time and to have a central office for that purpose. Now it does not matter so much. If a man starts in the M. & S. M. Railway and passes through the Nizam's State Railway and into the G. I. P. Railway, the only break is the Nizam's State Railway: the two other railways can always adjust their share in a certain ratio that may be adopted. Formerly it was not so. The M. & S. M. and the G. I. P. were out to get their last pie and they had to keep such accounts. Therefore, I suggest that the Railway Clearing Accounts Office may be abolished, and decentralised so far as small adjustments are concerned. Similarly a number of other offices can also be abolished with advantage.

As regards officers, I have found a tendency to exhaust all words in the dictionary in finding out denominations for officers. For instance, there is the chief manager, the deputy chief manager, deputy manager, assistant deputy manager, sub-deputy manager, assistant sub-deputy manager, and I do not know how many more will be coined . . .

**Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad:** Sub-assistant manager!

**Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar:** My Honourable friend is a Vice-Chancellor and well in touch with all the words in the vocabulary. The House must note one or two circumstances which have happened. The Oudh and Tirhut Railway was taken over very recently from the company. The company was managing it for nearly 50 years. Since the management was handed over there was a suggestion by the Railway Board that for every chief there must be a deputy. They wanted five deputies. They wanted once, twice and thrice and our patience was exhausted and we had to yield with great regret. We hope that what we did will be corrected by this House. We were obliged

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to yield because they wanted to bring the O. & T. Railway into line with the other Railway Administrations. What is the need of this, when the company was carried on for fifty years without deputies. Their salary was Rs. 1,500 each with corresponding establishment etc. Immediately this company was handed over to my Honourable friend, he wanted to appoint deputies, because there were deputies in the M. & S. M. and other railways. Is that the way to do it. Instead of applying the axe, you want to go on multiplying offices.

As regards salaries my own feeling is that salaries in the lower classes must be raised the salaries of the higher posts should be reduced. It should not be a question of purchasing honesty by paying more. Even if you pay Rs. 220 crores a month or a year, still if a person is dishonest, he can make money by black market methods. Of course a man ought to have his essential needs. He ought not to be deprived of the necessaries of life. 1,500 should be the maximum for any man. I belong to a school which is bent on reducing the salaries of high officials. I am not jealous of persons drawing Rs. 4,000 and Rs. 5,000 in this country but we feel that for any individual however highly placed Rs. 1,500 is more than enough. The other day an Indian Sub-Collector also travelled with me. He thought that Rs. 1,500 was too low, because he had insured for Rs 50,000. He had only one child whom he wanted to send to England and America for studies. That is the way in which the minds of these people are working in a poor country like India. So far as lower salaries are concerned, Rs. 12 is the starting salary of a menial gangman!

You think that for a man who is working on the line with shovel and spade Rs. 12 is enough. This was fixed in 1931 because of the then current index prices. Prices went down. Speaking subject to correction, ever since then it has not been increased. Rs. 18 is the maximum a man gets in the 25th year. Many people die before reaching that limit. I do want that the lowest menial, the gangman, to be started on not less than Rs. 25. My friend will give figures and say that it will work out to astronomical figures but I will give an answer.

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** The man who is normally drawing Rs. 12 today would be drawing an additional Rs. 13 in grain allowance and also a minimum of Rs. 12 or Rs. 14 in dearness allowance which bring the total emoluments to Rs. 36. Your proposal will reduce it to Rs. 25.

**Mr. President:** This is a convenient point to stop. I have an announcement to make.

#### ELECTION OF ADDITIONAL MEMBERS TO THE DEFENCE CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE.

**Mr. President:** I have to inform the Assembly that upto 1 p.m. to-day, the time fixed for receiving nominations for the election of two additional members to the Defence Consultative Committee, two nominations were received. As the number of the candidates is equal to the number of vacancies, I declare the following members to be duly elected to the Committee for the unexpired portion of the financial year 1945-46 and for the financial year 1946-47; (1) Mr. C. P. Lawson, and (2) Squadron Leader Sardar Surjit Singh Majithia.

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

The Assembly re-assembled after Lunch at Half Past Two of the Clock. Mr. President (The Honourable Mr. G. V. Mavalankar) in the Chair.

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

##### DEMAND NO. 1—RAILWAY BOARD—contd.

##### Ways and Means for Meeting the increased operating costs—contd.

**Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar:** Sir, I do not find the Honourable Member in his seat nor anybody else on his behalf. Whom am I to address?

**Mr. President:** Mr. Khan is coming.

**Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar:** I see Mr. Turner is also coming.

I was on the question of raising the salary when the Honourable Member said that they are already paying them more than Rs. 25 inclusive of dearness allowance and, stores concessions. I was referring to Rs. 25 as the basic salary inclusive of all allowances. The war is now over and if prices come to normal, the allowances might be withdrawn. Even then I want that the basic salary for a gangman or any of these subordinates must be Rs. 25. The salary of the clerical staff should be Rs. 50 going up to Rs. 100 within a period of ten years and the highest maximum must not be more than Rs. 1,500. That is my point.

I would also like to say in this connection one word to the services and the staff. We hear of strikes which they are going to have for the purpose of raising their salaries and allowances. The proper working of the railway administration depends to a very large degree upon the staff. Therefore, they must be well-contented and they must be paid properly. The pilfering and other things that have gone on are mostly due to them. So far as the amenities are concerned, whatever inconveniences there may be for want of sufficient number of coaches, they may show a good face to the passengers. It is in their hands to give the tickets in time, to give the change and to allow the trains to stay sufficiently at the platform so that people may get in. The acquisition of the earnings by the Railway Department is largely due not to the men at the top but to the people who are running the administration day in, day out. They must feel an equal responsibility in the proper administration of the railways. They ought not to feel that they are mere mercenaries and to avoid this feeling you must make it worth their while to live decently. Therefore, a start of Rs. 25 must be made for the lowest man and the minimum for the clerical staff should be Rs. 50. That is with respect to the staff. I wish at a very early date a non-official Committee consisting of Members of this House might be appointed to suggest the ways and means of retrenching or of amalgamating the various railways. The retrenchment should take place in the manner I have suggested. A similar thing was done in 1932.

Then, I come to the operating charges. I would suggest that wherever hydro-electric power is available, trains should be run with the aid of electricity. This is being done on the M. & S. M. Railway and some other railways. The reason why I am suggesting this is that we find that coal during the war and even hereafter has become a greater and greater problem. We are not having sufficient coal and it is not a productive concern. We are not having coal at remunerative prices. As regards the way in which coal collieries have been worked, I have to make three observations which have come to my notice. I would request the Honourable Member to take note of them.

I am told that during the war the coal collieries belonging to the railwaymen were handed over to the Supply Department. Three or four machines were brought in for operations in the coal-fields at a cost of 3 to 4 crores. Within less than a month half the machines became rotten and the others are not working properly. It is worthwhile making an investigation into this matter. If I am wrong, I shall be glad to know it. I have also found one thing. The Honourable Member himself also seems to be interested in this affair. I find from the pink book that was circulated to us that even the State-owned collieries are being given over to the contractors. That may be done departmentally. The contractors are bringing a number of labourers and the dearness allowance is paid into their hands. What is the guarantee that this dearness allowance is paid to the workmen? You are not seeing to it that these people are paid. There is another thing also which I would like to mention. A number of contractors give an undertaking to supply coal at a particular price. They tender. I find with respect to coal some 8 annas odd. In the previous year that was the amount that was paid. Somebody tendered for As. 8-10 per unit. Later on with this As. 8-10 he could not satisfy. What the tenderers generally do is this. If I want the ultimate tender, I ask my son-in-law to tender for 3 annas, so that he may be the least tenderer. I deposit Rs. 100 to have the last tender declared and thus I drive the other people out because it is impossible for me to supply at 8 annas. I forego

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and the amount of deposit that my son-in-law has paid is not forfeited at all. I allow him to go scot free. That is what I find in the pink book. I have found 3 annas as the original tender and subsequently 8 annas has been paid. Whenever there is a dishonest man at the top, he makes it easy to make money for himself.

**Shri Sri Prakasa:** All sons-in-law are dishonest!

**Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar:** Thirdly, the Railway-owned collieries are to pay to persons who have collieries themselves. In that case the colliery owner can take away 30,000 tons from the railway colliery if he has got to supply 50,000 tons. All these things have come to my notice. I am getting letters about this matter and I have tabled interpellations. I am glad to know that a Committee has been appointed and one of our Members, Mr. Neogy, is one of the Members of the Committee. This Committee has to investigate into the possibility of some more coal being produced at economic prices. But I have heard from Mr. Neogy that the terms of reference are so rigid and so inelastic that they won't admit of a report regarding the present working of these collieries. I would request the Government to enlarge the scope of this inquiry with a view to give a fuller and proper report to the House as to how the railways may be made self-sufficient in the matter of coal because it is a big item on which the running of the railways depend.

So far as the stores are concerned only 20 lakhs of rupees worth of stores are there. They have been there for a long time. Some measures might be adopted to see that large quantities of stores are not kept and a sufficient percentage of them may be reduced.

As regards interest my submission is that 8.8 per cent. is the rate of interest that is being paid on the capital at charge. Debentures might be floated particularly for the railways and we could get cheap money now at 8 per cent. or even less. There can be economy in that direction also.

Then as regards the classes, the first and second classes should be abolished and the third and intermediate classes only might be there. The first class passengers give only 4 crores and the second class passengers give 7 crores, whereas the third class passengers give 56 crores a year and the intermediate class passengers give about 7 or 8 crores. Therefore there should be only two classes, by whatever name you may call them. From one class you will get 10 or 11 crores. The present first and second class coaches will be made available for third class passengers. They are not very meticulous as to the number that get in and they pay four or five times or many times more than the first class passengers pay. In many mail trains you find that if there are ten carriages, eight of them are perhaps first and second class carriages and there are probably only two third class carriages in which numbers of people are huddled together. And you will find that the people who got into these two third class carriages perhaps pay as much as, if not more than, what the people in the eight upper class carriages pay. Therefore this is a waste.

Then I come to refreshment rooms. Formerly when the gentlemen in the railways were of the class of our rulers these refreshment rooms were big banqueting halls, but now why do you not give them to third class passengers? Instead of continuing them as European refreshment rooms they should be converted into Hindu tiffin rooms where Indian passengers can go and take their food.

As regards buildings I find that they want to establish the Moghul rule again. Why did they spend 20 lakhs on the huge buildings for Lucknow station? That building really is too big and is not necessary. We have got these gubernatorial palaces but do not waste money on these palatial station buildings hereafter if you want really to make it an economic concern.

Lastly I come to rates and fares. I should like the rates and fares to be so adjusted as to increase the industry in this country. Let there be flat rates,

Let there be zonal rates, let there be telescopic rates, now that a number of administrations has come under our charge. When I come from Madras to Delhi, which is a distance of 1,300 miles, I do not get any benefit. The M. & S. M. runs only 250 miles for which there is one rate; then there is the Nizam's State Railway on which there is another rate; then there is the G.I.P. which has its own rate. If there are telescopic rates you will induce a larger number of people to come in. Also if you adjust your train services and other facilities in order to induce a larger portion of trade, even if your rates and fares are not increased you will get the same amount of money if not more.

I have suggested a number of methods by which we can augment the resources of the railways and in each of them we will get sufficient money to make up the deficit that is sure to arise now that the war is over.

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** Sir, I think I had better deal first with a few of my Honourable friend Mr. Ayyangar's points. He said at the beginning that as a measure of retrenchment he would suggest regrouping of railways. Now, Sir, regrouping of railways has been under careful consideration for some time from the point of view of securing greater efficiency on the railways. But I am not sure that the measures he suggests would be wise. His suggestion was to put two or three systems under one General Manager. For instance, in Calcutta I gather that he would have one General Manager for the B.A. Railway, the B.N. Railway and the E.I. Railway. The tendency of thought at the present time in regard to regrouping is that for efficiency you probably want rather smaller systems than you have got today. That is to say, where you have got a very big system like the East Indian Railway, it may lead to greater efficiency if you divide it up into two; and I do not myself feel that you will get a great deal of economy in administration by regrouping the railways. But that is in no sense a dictum; we are going into this and in due course our proposals will be put before the appropriate body.

Then, Sir, he suggested that there should be retrenchment of officers.

**Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar:** I referred to retrenchment of offices as opposed to officers.

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** The officers hold the offices, and it comes to much the same thing. He suggested retrenchment of offices, and I think he would give what was retrenched to the rest of the staff. If he will look at the figures in the Administration Report and work it out he will find that if we retrench the whole of our officers—the whole gazetted staff including the lower gazetted staff—and distribute it among the rest of the staff, on a rough calculation the rest of the staff would get only Rs. 2/12/- per month.

His next suggestion was reduction of salaries and he was in favour of a maximum salary of one thousand five hundred rupees. If you reduce the salaries of all officers above one thousand rupees to one thousand, you can only give eight annas per month to the rest of the staff. But as, for instance, we are today giving Rs. 18/8/- or Rs. 18 in grain shop benefits alone, the Honourable Member will see that it is an infinitesimal amount when distributed among the rest of the staff. I suggest that if you want to reduce everybody's salary to a maximum limit perhaps the best way would be to do it by taxation. I am only throwing out a suggestion, so that the merchant princes of the country would be reduced, as they are in the United Kingdom, to a dead level of £6,000 maximum or perhaps Rs. 80,000 per annum. That would not be fearfully popular among all sections of the House. One could introduce an Estate Duty at the same time. But it is not reasonable to expect that you would get the best class of officer, Indian or European, if you make the emoluments of service very much lower than what can be got outside. To get a good class of officers you have got to make the top jobs reasonably attractive.

**Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar:** What about the Railway Clearing Office?

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** I cannot deal with all my Honourable friend's points but with regard to the Railway Clearing Office I went into that

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with the late Financial Commissioner, Mr. Zahid Husain, 18 months ago, and we then came to the conclusion that the continuance of that office was desirable. It has been under consideration from the point of view of economy on several occasions but the general conclusion hitherto has been that you would not get much economy or increased efficiency. It is an open point which is always worth re-investigation, but that is the result of our past investigations.

My Honourable friend mentioned coal raisings. Those are really matters for the Industries and Supplies Department. But I think he is quite wrong in suggesting that the scope of the Coal Inquiry is too narrow. If my Honourable friend would see the questionnaire that has been put out, it is a colossal string of questions and covers an extremely wide ground, in fact, I think the whole ground. I do not think it can be said that the terms of reference are restricted. I noticed my Honourable friend's remarks on stores, on third class passengers, on buildings and refreshment rooms and also on the rate of interest. My Honourable friend suggested that we should float debentures on railways at 3 per cent., instead of Government paying 3.48 per cent. to which figure it has come down. May I explain that it comes down each year according to the average rate of interest on Government's total outstanding borrowings. Therefore new borrowings which are now at about 3 per cent. will gradually bring it down each year.

**Sir Cowasjee Jehangir:** This money we have already borrowed.

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** Yes, for the purpose largely of railways. But I am grateful to my Honourable friend's suggestions. They are attempting to meet the situation, but as I shall go on to point out, I do not think they succeed.

**Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar:** What are your suggestions?

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** I am coming to them. My Honourable friend the Mover, a financier of great stature, whose mind is as broad as he is long.

**Shri Sri Prakasa:** May his shadow never get less.

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** My Honourable friend has said that we must examine the problem of how we are going to meet the diminishing receipts with expenses probably more or less stable, at any rate lagging behind the fall in receipts. Well, Sir, when you turn to economy the first thing you have to look at is the biggest item of your expenses, that is, staff. If you would look at page 3 of the Explanatory Memorandum, you will find in para. 9 that in 1938-39, our expenses on staff were 35.09 crores and they rose in 1945-46 to 75.11 crores, that is the increase of 40 crores which I mentioned in my budget speech. That is a total of 75 crores out of a total of ordinary working expenses, excluding special adjustments for locomotives, of 119 crores; that is to say, 75 crores out of 119 crores is represented by staff. Well, Sir, we are up against the problem of what to do. You can adopt a strictly economic line and thereby reduce the numbers. As my Honourable friend Prof. Ranga said yesterday, you should increase the efficiency. Reducing numbers and increasing efficiency would also thereby increase the chance of each individual getting better pay. But that would mean driving a large number of men out of work. You can keep the same number of men as you have got and reduce their emoluments right through. That, of course, would be very strongly resisted, and it is not Government's plan. This therefore rules out economy in the biggest item of expenditure. It is a very serious problem and one that we have got to try and meet. The Government's policy is.

**Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar:** Is the middle course.

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** Government has a very clear policy in this matter. It would like of course to increase every railwayman's wages to, say, the standard of the British or the American railwayman. It would like to do that, but it would not be the right thing. As Prof. Ranga said you must keep the level of your railway workers and other Government workers roughly in accord with the standard of the community as a whole. What we are trying to do at the moment is to create work in and for the railways, and

we believe that so long as you can keep up the railway activity, there is a fair chance of keeping in employment the bulk of the railway workers. As Mr. Guruswami said in his last speech on the subject you should keep these men as long as there is work in the Department. That is what we are trying to do. We are not trying at the moment to go in for a policy of rigid retrenchment in the railways either by reducing the numbers or by reducing the pay. What we are trying to do is the constructive policy of trying to keep the railways busy. Two other items on which you would naturally look for economy would be coal and stores. I will not dwell on these, but I pointed out in my budget speech that our coal bill had gone up by no less than 12 crores of rupees. Obviously at some time or other there is room for very considerable economy there, and in my opinion the present basis cannot exist for ever. As regards stores prices, we do not know what the general level of stores prices, of steel, cement, and a hundred and one other articles that are wanted on the railway, will be, but one hopes that there will be a reduction in the prices of the very heavy item of stores which we consume. But I am inclined to agree that we cannot bridge the gap merely by economy.

The Honourable the Mover asked how we are going to meet the budget of 1947-48. I understand that was the purport of his speech. We come back to the old question of whether you are going to effect these economies in staff and coal or otherwise or whether if you cannot keep up the quantum of your traffic, you will have to increase the rates and fares. Obviously—and I pointed this out in 1944 in my budget speech—to increase the rates and fares at a time when trade was in difficulties and the level of prices was falling would be a very serious burden on traders. It is a thing that we want to avoid.

Now, Sir, I do not propose to indicate a budget for 1947-48, but what I have tried to do in this budget is to secure that the railways are in the best possible financial position at this critical juncture in India's history and to pose the problems of the future. I have not tried to settle these interlinked problems but only to bring to the notice of the House what they are. I have also indicated that there is likely to be a gap and the question is how to bridge it. First, however are we certain that there need be a gap at all. Till there is a gap, I think we should adopt what I regard as a more constructive policy of trying to create work. We, the Government as a whole, are aiming at an expanding economy generally and the railways are trying to make their contribution to it. We have relatively a very heavy programme of rehabilitation and we are going ahead with all the activities that are likely to lead to further employment, we are going ahead with loco. works, we are going ahead with a policy of new construction. This is not very heavy this year because before you can embark on new construction, you will have to get out your surveys and lay your plans and all that takes time. But a new construction will consume steel and cement, it will occupy labour and it should help in keeping the general economy of the country going, that is to say it will help the steel works and it will help the cement works

**Shri Mohan Lal Saksena** (Lucknow Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural): What about the surveys already completed?

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** There are very few of them which are completed up to a stage where you can start work, but where they are completed we are endeavouring to start.

If we are going to get through the difficult period which is ahead of us, we have, in my opinion, got to make a very wise and careful use of our reserves. It is tempting to spend all the money we have got in creating activity at the moment, but if we squander away our reserves now, we shall come to a period of real slump when we will have nothing to spend. You have an example of that in the past history; In the goodish times in the twenties we spent lavishly and when we came to the thirties and ought to have spent money to keep up the economy of the Railways and the country in general we had not got much left to spend. And, therefore, Sir, we consider that it is a wise policy that we should have a steady planned programme for all these post-war works. We are, for instance, planning the production of engines

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and wagons on a more or less steady basis over a number of years, a programme which we hope will not be affected by fluctuations in business activity generally. Whether times are good or times are bad we hope to keep going a steady programme of construction.

Then, Sir, another requisite to ensure a sound position in the future is a sound correlation of our rates and fares structure with the structure of our wages and other expenditure. I do not think I need go into that. I do not want to be controversial again after yesterday, but, Sir, one of the props which we were looking to for future stability was knocked away yesterday. As the Wedgewood Report pointed out, road competition had taken away 4½ crores from the Railways before the war, and, if I remember aright, the Wedgewood Committee expected it to double in the following decade. If you take the lesson of what happened in the United States, you will find that between 1921 and 1939 they closed, owing to competition from other forms of transport, no less than 22,000 route miles, that is to say they closed a route mileage equivalent to half the mileage of the whole Indian Railways, and 38 per cent. of the American Railways, that is about 2,40,000 miles, were not paying even their interest. I don't want to dilate on that, but obviously if you have not got a co-ordinated policy, well, whoever is in charge of Railway finances in the future is bound to have a much more difficult time.

**Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar:** Why don't you think of coastal shipping also? ont

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** We have. We raised the railway port to port rates in order to make them level with the coastal rates, in order that shippers may not lose by being forced to ship their goods by sea. Sea rates had gone infinitely higher than rail rates; that is why we had to do it. They are co-ordinated.

Finally, on looking to the future and trying to get an expanding and stable economic position, the country as a whole has to depend upon a period of tranquility, a time when business people can go ahead with their schemes of production in confidence, and that depends upon a sound and stable political position which we hope will be forthcoming as a result of the discussions. If, on the contrary, you have periods of disturbance, business will be affected, railways will be affected, and there will be less obviously for everyone to eat or to wear.

I think that covers, in broad outline, the sort of policy which we have in mind for stabilizing the future financial position of the railways. As I said in my budget speech, I don't think the financial position is at all unsound. It is not as healthy as one would have wished. Possibly on another cut motion we shall deal with the question of the healthiness of the depreciation fund, but, on the whole, I think I can say with a good conscience that the railway finances are in a sounder position than they have ever been before. I should like to take this opportunity of recognizing the assistance that we have had from the Standing Finance Committee and from other committees of the House. Naturally we don't always agree and we have not been able to accept every one of their recommendations, but I think we have accepted a good 90 per cent. of them, and I think that on the whole the results of the co-operation between the Standing Finance Committee and the Government have led to a position which is not unsound, and I fully believe that the same courage and wisdom will be found in dealing with problems of the future, problems far more difficult than we have had in the last five years.

I have tried to cover the ground that my Honourable friend opened up. I hope he finds what I have said reasonably satisfactory, and will not press his motion. I hope this time I am not hoping in vain.

**Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar:** Rs. 100 is nothing in Rs. thirty-five crores.

**Mr. President:** Would the Honourable Member like to withdraw his motion?

**Mr. O. P. Lawson:** Sir, I did not anticipate that the Honourable the War Transport Member would be up quite so soon since only one Honourable Member has spoken since the mover . . . . .



**Mr. President:** I will make the position clear. It was not with a view to reply that I called upon the Honourable the War Transport Member to speak. It was arranged yesterday that somebody on behalf of Government will put the Government case before the House and then the motion will be discussed. The Honourable Member will have the right to reply afterwards.

**Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad:** Mr. Hirtzel has raised the very important question of railway economy, which I suppose nobody has ever considered, that is the relation of the operating ratio to the income and to the rates and fares. The operating ratio is a subject to which very few financiers of economy pay serious attention.

**Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar:** On a point of information. What is the operating ratio unless it has some reference to the income?

**Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad:** The operating ratio is the expenditure divided by the gross income. In boom time the operating ratio comes down and in the time of depression the operating ratio always goes up and then we judge the welfare of the railway employees and measure it by means of the operating ratio. In the period of greatest depression in 1931, which the House remembers, we had been fighting all the time on the floor of the House that Railway employees should not be retrenched. Our operating ratio at that time was rather low. In fact it ought to have been much more during the time of depression and I quoted at that time some figures which are really exceedingly important. During the time of depression the operating ratio in India was only 65.03 and it was the lowest, except that for Japan where it was 61.77. The operating ratio at the time of the greatest depression in the United Kingdom was 81.25, in Denmark 102 and France 110. That is the expenditure was greater than the gross income at the time of the depression, and then the question arose how is this to be met and the deficit should always be met by a special fund which is called the Equalisation Fund, which my friend has divided up into three heads called Depreciation Reserve Fund, Reserve Fund and Betterment Fund. I always felt that there should be one fund to meet all the troubles including the troubles that arise in the time of the depression, when the operating ratio is greater and must be met by this Equalisation Fund. The second point to which Mr. Hirtzel's attention has not been drawn is—I wonder if he has studied it—that in every other country there is one operating ratio. In India there are two. If you consult 'the Statistique national des climats de far de Monde' you will find that on the operating ratios of all the countries of the world—and the operating ratios of 74 countries—are given—for every country there is one operating ratio given. In the case of India there are two operating ratios, one with the Depreciation Fund and the other without it and difference between them is abnormal. I calculated the true operating ratios and published in my book. This shows that we are the only country which has not made up its mind what the Depreciation Fund really is. Is it a reserve or an expenditure? That is the reason why we have two Depreciation Funds. The War Transport Member has been talking of business method but this part of the business never entered into his head or of any Railway man in any other country. Why should there be two operating ratios for India and one for the rest of the world? This means that the whole theory of his depreciation requires very serious consideration and should be brought on the level of the theory in other countries, because we are not the only country that runs railways. There are other countries whose railway systems are much better and whose financial arrangements are superior to ours. In this matter we should not make any attempt to give a lead because the lead is the mislead. Depreciation should be depreciation and not reserve.

The other thing which is very useful is that in the operating ratio there is one expenditure which ought to be taken into consideration. That is the expenditure which we have to incur on account of the dearness allowance. Dearness not only in wages but also in the price of coal. The dearness allowance is an expenditure which is very peculiar and is due to the fall in the purchasing power of the rupee. In this case a third operating ratio ought to have been

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shown in the current budget, the operating ratio after making the dearness allowance to see how dearness allowance affects our operating ratio.

If you have studied rates and fares, I am inclined to believe that the rise in the operating ratio, due to the fall in the purchasing power of the rupee must also influence your rates and fares. If your operating ratio rises on account of the fall in the purchasing power of the rupee naturally the purchasing power of the rupee must affect the rates and fares. Why should it affect only the wages, only the food, the clothing, the ekka-wallahs? Why not the railways as well? Therefore the rates and fares should be increased if there is a depression in the purchasing value of the rupee. If there is a fall in the purchasing power of the rupee then every business, every form of transport raises its rates and fares, then I think it is just and reasonable that the railways should follow suit. It is not increasing the rates and fares. The increase is only visible on account of the contraction of the measuring rod. The purchasing power of the rupee has fallen and therefore it will effect the prices of all articles all forms of wages and rates of transport. It ought to be clearly stated in framing the theory of rates and fares whether your operating ratio is due to the fall in the purchasing power of the rupee, and to the same extent, I think, the rates and fares ought to be increased. That is one point which my friend the Railway Transport Member repeatedly raised on the floor of the House, but he could not give sufficient reasons to convince us that they ought to be raised.

Therefore, I think the whole of this question which Mr. Hirtzel has raised requires very careful consideration and I do not think we have any railway economist in India who is studying this problem. I think the Railway Board ought to take up the formal study of this question, that is the relation between the operating ratio, income whatever it may be, the manner in which the losses should be borne in the time of depression and their effect on the rates and fares. Of course during a time of depression, you cannot possibly increase, otherwise the depression will become more acute. The losses in that case ought to be borne by some reserve. If it is due to other causes that should be taken into account. Therefore, the relation of these three factors ought to be studied. I am glad that attention has been drawn to this and that somebody interested in this will make an attempt to solve the problem.

**Prof. N. G. Ranga:** I cannot agree with my Honourable friend, Dr. Zia Uddin when he says in such a lighthearted manner that the question of raising rates and fares, with special reference to what he calls inflation, should be re-examined. Sir, if inflation there has been, this question should have been taken up six years ago. Government, for their own good reasons did not take it up because according to the prevailing rates and fares, Government was loaded with such high profits that they were able to disgorge large portions of it in order to repay what could not be paid, the accumulated deficits in regard to the railway conversion and also to place quite large quantities of money in the Depreciation Fund, etc. Now everybody knows that efforts are being made, though not with much success, for the Government to effect a reduction in the total quantity of money that is in circulation, and it is feared also in very many quarters that India as well as the rest of the world may very soon come to be faced with an economic depression. Is this the time when we should be thinking of raising rates and fares merely on the plea that there has been till now an inflation in our currency circulation and therefore money has become cheaper and so people may be made to pay more and more? I certainly cannot agree with my Honourable friend Dr. Zia Uddin Ahmad. This certainly is not the time.

**Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad:** Your measuring rod is the purchasing power of paper rupee.

**Prof. N. G. Ranga:** I do not know what the Honourable Member means by 'measuring rod'. We know one thing that is that money is going to become dearer and dearer. Therefore it will be more and more difficult hereafter for

people to continue to pay the same rates and fares. Therefore this is not the time when that ought to be considered.

Then he referred to the working expenses and the ratio. There are two ratios in this country. There is only one in America. We know that with the ratios that we have today our railways are making such a bad show of it. I do hope that there will be only one ratio. I am not one of those people who think that Indians today pay much less than what ought to be paid for the services rendered by the railways. Therefore I cannot agree with my Honourable friend and I trust that the Railway Member will not run away with this little bit that is thrown to them by my Honourable friend and then start inquiring afresh into the necessity or otherwise for the revision of rates and fares to the detriment of the users of the railways.

**Mr. C. P. Lawson:** Mr. President, to speak on this particular subject is a little off my beat. I have rarely spoken on a Railway Budget before nor have I belonged to any of the Railway Committees. That removes from me any inhibitions or any wish to deal with any but the broadest issues. I am concerned mainly with the concluding portion of the Honourable the War Transport Member's Budget speech from which I take the following extract:

"The one great essential which has to be faced is the war time legacy of high level of operating costs and the postwar commitments for amenities together with a level of rates and fares out of tune with the general level of prices."

Now, that, Sir, was the basis on which this cut motion was moved and viewing it from a purely lay point of view and not thinking of anything in the way of reserve or amortisation funds and the like, it seems to me that this danger has got to be faced in one or two ways. Either the Railways have got to make money or they have got to save money. I think it will generally be admitted that it is far better to make money if we can and save money too but the making of money by the Railways would quite clearly be the more advantageous form. I will not conceal from the House that I am afraid of retrenchment. I fear that there would be a loss of efficiency. I fear that any attempt to retrench to the extent that will be required to meet what seems to me to be a large and widening difference between revenue and expenditure, any attempt to meet that sum by retrenchment will undoubtedly, to my mind, lead to a loss of efficiency. It may in fact improve your financial position and, at the same time, increase your accidents. So, Sir, I would like to direct my attention to the methods whereby the Railways might try and make a little money, make a bit more than is ordinarily adumbrated in their normal planning. Their planning, if I may say so, seems to me to be a rather parochial type of planning dealing, I suppose, quite naturally with railway affairs, without very much regard to whether the railway affairs will cross the affairs of other departments. It seems to me, Sir, that quite apart from making money the Railways, as a very large, shall I say, business undertaking, have got to consider the type of money-making which will induce industrial activity, which will altogether hot up the general process, which I take to be a process based on an expansionist theory. Well, now what particular processes that the Railway might employ would be most likely to boost ancillary forms of activity? For instance, let us consider the manufacture of new railway lines. Thinking of it purely as a business proposition, there will be earth work, there will be labour employed, there will be steel. To a large extent you will be using labour, you will be using material which will have to be brought and that is all good. But what other projects are there which would induce wider and larger activities. I am thinking, for instance, of building, which I think is generally taken to be a form of activity which throws the net wide.

**An Honourable Member:** Unproductive.

**Mr. C. P. Lawson:** I am coming to that a little later. Wait a minute.

In thinking of building my mind, again purely lay, with no knowledge of the working of the Railway Member's mind, which is undoubtedly as large as is his stature and the stature of the mover—I am struck by the possibility of building railway hotels I think anybody who has travelled abroad and certainly anybody who visits this country, is immediately struck by the low standard of hotels in this country. All other countries have railway hotels,

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which bring in a considerable amount of revenue. Why should we not have some decent railway hotels or even some decent hotels in this country? (*Interruption* by Prof. N. G. Ranga) I was just waiting for a scream of protest from Prof. Ranga, who I see getting ready to spring, whenever I mention even the smallest matter which might be described as a luxury. I think I heard my friend Mr. Ayyangar say just now that he would consider no item of retrenchment too small. May I match that remark of his on the other side by saying that I consider no item of profit too small. I know that Mr. Ranga and others would like to increase the wages of the lower grades and decrease the wages of the upper grades until in due course of time everybody would be on a common wage. I do not know how that would suit certain, say, High Court barristers, who get large fees for their briefs. I do not know how it would even suit members of this House, whose allowances have increased since the war started, certainly more than the 8 per cent. that has been put on the rates and fares of the railways. But the point that I was getting to was this: that if the happy state of affairs that Prof. Ranga and possibly others would like was achieved, and everybody reached a common wage, I will guarantee that at the end of the first year there would be a certain section of the public with money in hand and a certain section of the public that were owing money to the rest. Now, will there be any harm in making a little profit by relieving the people who have got the money—they will always exist—so if they will only hand out their money by buying luxuries, is there any particular harm in supplying them with the luxuries that they can pay for and make them pay for it? Every time we mention hotels or air-conditioned coaches and like luxuries, I get ready for the launching of an attack from the other side. But I am not cutting out the amenities for the poor; I am not cutting out any kind of development of that sort. But if by making some little advance in the direction of touching the luxury trade our railways can make a bit more money, I would very much like to see them do so . . . .

**Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar:** May I remind my Honourable friend that we are all for departmental catering? We have been insisting upon it.

**Mr. C. P. Lawson:** I thank my Honourable friend: that is certainly one of the forms: let us have departmental catering—large establishments and good meals which would be a nice change from the present. . . .

**Prof. N. G. Ranga:** While all others go starving, you want to have sumptuous meals?

**Mr. C. P. Lawson:** I do not want anybody to starve and I do not suggest for a moment anything in the way of sumptuous meals. I am merely trying: in the sense of this cut motion to suggest means whereby extra profits are made in other countries and whereby profits could equally be made in this country; I do not see any particular objection to that.

Another point, and I do not know whether the Railway benches will have any chance to reply to it today, is this: I was wondering whether they had considered the possibility of money-making out of the various hydro-electric schemes that are now on the stocks. These various hydro-electric schemes are of course largely under provincial direction; and I dare say as usual there are a certain amount of water-tight compartments going on: those subjects which are provincial subjects are being closely associated with these hydro-electric schemes—agriculture and so on, irrigation and the like are very closely associated; and I am wondering—we have not heard for some time or to what extent railways are concerning themselves with these hydro-electric schemes and the utilisation of cheap power. It seems to me that on the Bombay side they seem to run very efficient electric service on the trains and with the very cheap power that these hydro-electric schemes seem likely to produce, there seems to me no reason why there should not be a saving in coal costs and a certain help there.

Now, I do not propose to touch the vexed question of rates and fares, although of course there is no question that the ordinary business method of getting yourself out of a financial fix is the normal one of charging people a bit

more. It seems to me that if you do embrace an expansionist theory, you have got to embrace that in all its aspects. The possibility of one particular portion of your expansionist theory being retarded while all the rest are advanced seems to me to be wrong, particularly since all these various departments are dependent on one another. That is to say, if one particular form of transport, say, the railways, starts to lose money and go down-hill, its effect is wide, and all other forms not only of transport but of business must go the same way; and if that is the case I think you are falling between two stools and not going the way things should go.

These are just a few of the points I wanted to put forward as constructive suggestions as to means whereby revenue might be increased. I could put over a lot more which possibly would be more in the nature of a debate on the actual forward plans of the railway. That must be a pleasure that I must save up for the War Transport Member for a later day, and I will leave it there.

**Sir Cowasjee Jehangir:** Sir, I do not intend to take up very much of the precious time of the House. But this debate reminds me of the many warnings we have given the Honourable Member in charge of the railways during those years in which money flowed into his coffers. I can well remember the days when the railways made losses, year in and year out. During those days, as the Honourable Member has reminded the House, according to the convention, the railways were made to pay a certain amount to the general treasury and it was debited to the railways when they could not pay. When the time came, when money rolled into the coffers of the railways, what happened to that convention? It was promptly put into the waste paper basket. Moneys were taken away to the general treasury. Even a sufficient amount was not set aside for the depreciation fund, till a committee had to be appointed and the committee made the railway department put aside what they thought was a reasonable amount for depreciation.

[At this stage Mr. President vacated the Chair which was then occupied by Mr. Deputy President (Sir Mohammad Yamin Khan)]

Our expenditure has gone up by leaps and bounds because the activities of the railways went up by leaps and bounds. There is no convention in existence. I presume that it will be one of the duties of the Honourable Member in charge to place before this House a convention to take the place of the one that has been put into the waste paper basket. I do not know when he will do it, when that event will take place I presume he intends to appoint a committee to go into the question—there was a committee in existence, I do not know what has happened to that committee. That has gone into the waste paper basket too for the time being, but something will have to be done; and a new convention will have to be studied by this House and brought into existence. When that is done and we fix the question of depreciation, then we shall perhaps be in a better position to judge of the future of the railways. I was just saying that our activities on the railways have gone up by leaps and bounds. Due to the war the railways had to employ men in much larger numbers than they have ever done before in the history of the railways. Those activities are now decreasing; and what is the agitation we find all over the country—that there should be no retrenchment, that they should go on employing men that they really do not require. Well, if that is the proposal, that has to be seriously considered. I see the point that you cannot suddenly thrust large numbers of people into unemployment. The taxpayer has to pay for it. He pays for it in one way or another. The railways belong to the taxpayer. Go on employing these men in the railways even if it means a loss and don't put them into the streets—I can understand that point of view. If that point of view is to be accepted, then it is no use talking about your ratio of costs. You are incurring costs deliberately in order to stop unemployment. It is a head of expenditure which you are incurring for a particular purpose—nothing to do with the railways. You are creating work in order to employ a certain number of

[Sir Cowasjee Jehangir]

men. Well, that question will have to be considered most seriously. I would beg the Honourable House to realise that the Railways are a great asset of the country. The country cannot afford to play about with the finances of their railways. They must go back to pre-war mentality. Our coat must be cut according to our cloth. We cannot afford to go in for luxuries when we cannot afford them. Some of my Honourable friends sitting behind me will say that the railways have no right to retrench the men that they have employed. They must find work. If that is the point of view, then let us not talk of the railways being a business concern. Let us call it a pure and simple philanthropic institution, a charity to keep up employment. Now that the war is over, the whole debate seems to me to be rather premature. We do not know what the Convention is. We do not know what the Finance Member has to say about his share of the profits, if there are profits. If there are losses, is he going to share the losses? We do not know whether a reasonable amount of depreciation is going to be allowed to the railways. Or, is there going to be quibbling on the question of depreciation? Is there going to be argument? I would again appeal to the House to treat this matter in the most serious manner possible or else these railways instead of being a great asset to the country may become a cause of the greatest anxiety. We have seen profits and we have seen losses. In the days of profits, warnings were not heeded. The days of losses are coming and steps will have to be taken to see that those losses are cut in a way that is the most equitable for all concerned.

**Mr. Muhammad Nauman:** I should not have got up to speak on this cut motion but for the fact that certain remarks were made by Sir Cowasjee Jehangir and other members who said that we have got to define our policy as to the financial position of the railways in relation to the general exchequer. Whether the general exchequer is going to be a party to our losses or not is an issue which Sir Cowasjee Jehangir thinks this House must decide once for all. Personally I believe that the general exchequer has got to be responsible for the losses in Railways so long as Railways are taken as "Public utility organisation" as well. Now, I am not going to say whether the railways should take up retrenchment or not and whether they should employ men irrespective of the fact that they require them or not. What we have suggested all along is that the railways should take up such projects as would be profitable to the railways as a business concern and give employment to as many men as possible. From the very beginning my position has been that I have never opposed retrenchment in principle. I have always said that no Government in the world can maintain a war-time organisation in normal condition. No organisation, big or small, railways or others, can maintain all those employees whom they recruited for a particular contingency but certainly it is open to us to advise the railways to find new projects which would absorb as many of them as possible and practicable. In this connection my learned friend Mr. Lawson speaking before Sir Cowasjee Jehangir has already suggested the idea of the Railway Hotel and departmental catering. I am getting confirmation from Mr. Lawson that the departmental catering should be taken up and all these contracts which exist in the railways should be done away with, for catering, for employment of coolies, for pay and cash establishment, for raising of coal from collieries and many others. The less said about corruption in the contract system the better. The less said about food supplied by these contractors the better. This House has been considering this issue for very many years. In spite of all inquiries that the Railway authorities have made, they have not been able to implement these assurances and those recommendations which we have made from time to time. The Honourable Member for War Transport this time has promised to go into these things one by one and probably we would have the satisfaction of seeing that we have got the right kind of thing that we wanted and that all contract systems are abolished.

Another issue which I wanted to raise was with regard to the question put by the Honourable the Railway Member a few days ago whether we would be a party to the raising of rates of freight and fares on the Railways. My friend Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad said that as the buying capacity of the rupee has been diminished, probably there may be some justification in connection with the working ratio issue and in connection with the working expenses and the income position of the Railways and I am here to oppose it tooth and nail. I agree with Prof. Ranga when he said that you have no case for any increase. Honourable the Railway Member said that 22,000 miles railway services had to be discontinued in the U. S. A. because they could not compete with the automobile road service there. I am not going to indulge in that but I would just like to tell the Honourable Member . . . . .

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** It is a bit awkward for you to talk about it.

**Mr. Muhammad Nauman:** The House has given a verdict on it. I do not want to discuss a subject which has already been discussed and on which I have already expressed an opinion. I would like to tell the Honourable Member that the rates of freight and fares are already higher in this country compared to the standard of living in this country and the *per capita* wealth of India as they compare with the standard of living and the *per capita* wealth of other countries. Does the Honourable Member for Railways know that the individual wealth in this country which means the *per capita* wealth is only about Rs. 64, whereas that of the U. S. A. is nearly Rs. 1,300 and that of U. K. is Rs. 900? As such the incidence of taxation by Railways or the effect of the rates and fares in this country is certainly by far the highest than it is in those countries.

Another issue which I wanted to raise is this. Does the Government Member realise that the amount of comfort that he gives and the amount of amenities that he has provided on the railways do not justify even that much as is prevailing on the Railways today? Any good company which was being run on the basis of profit and loss would not have kept the conditions of Railways so distressing as they are today. The Honourable Member for Government may ask me why the Railway Companies did not improve conditions when these railways were being managed by directors of commercial companies? They did not improve because they had the Government of India's guarantee for a certain amount of interest to be paid to them. They knew that the investment was a paying concern at all times and if they neglected the country or the business of efficient Railway service it will not be a matter of any concern to them. That is the position which the Honourable Member should realise. I am only compelled to make these remarks because I notice that on previous occasions the Honourable Member tried to get an answer from this House as to how we would like the increase of the rates of fares and freight. As we were trying to increase the dearness allowance and to provide other amenities to labour he thought we could sanction him a lighter rate as well. Naturally, there he meant that we have got to find money from somewhere and the proposal that he had in his mind was by increasing the rates of freight and fares. So far as the rate of freight for the movement of the commercial goods are concerned, I have not got much time to discuss it elaborately but the Honourable Member would see that no facilities have been provided for the industrial development or development of cottage industries and agricultural commodities of this country. The rates are more favourable from port to port, and their means only imports and exports have got a certain advantage which the industrial production have not got in this country.

Now, I would like to say whether in any country if these railways were to run definitely on a commercial basis; would they keep their concern in the condition in which they have been kept so far? Would they be so adamant in their policy and would they be so callous to all those things which have been said in this House from time to time? In the last two days I think we have

[Mr. Muhammad Nauman]

told Government exactly what the country feels about the management of the railway administration. We have told them how corruption, thefts and pefferages are going on; we have told them what has been their attitude in the matter of the settlement of claims. Sir Edward Benthall happens to be a businessman of a very high order. Could he tell me that Bird and Co. would behave like that if these railways were owned by them, whose boss he happens to be? I do not suppose in any country or in any business concern this sort of thing would have been allowed to exist. Things are going on in this fashion in this country because its representatives have as yet no power or force to shape things to their own plan and can keep no check on the Railway Board. In conclusion I would only suggest that Sir Edward Benthall should believe that the railways are a commercial concern and he should behave in the manner in which a commercial concern should behave and should rely on the exchequer only for such contingencies which may arise and when we may have to bear the losses or share the profits as Railways are also utility concern, organisation.

**Mr. A. O. Turner** (Government of India: Nominated Official): Sir, the question of operating ratios has been raised and I think very rightly so. Our working expenses for 1945-46, that is, our revenue expenditure, excluding special adjustments, comes to 119 crores and the gross revenue receipts are estimated at 225 crores. That gives an operating ratio of 61.7. Next year our estimated gross receipts are 180 crores and the operating ratio rises to 73.4. Should we go back to our pre-war level of receipts, adding the 8 per cent. increase in rates and fares the gross receipts would fall to 108 crores, which is below the present time revenue expenses. In other words, the operating ratio would be over 100. Sir, I think my Honourable friend Mr. Hirtzel was very right in drawing attention to that fact and it is a matter of considerable anxiety both to the Railway Board and to the Government, and so it should be to this House. The picture is probably not quite so bad as this, because if our gross receipts fall, there will be some, though not as much, fall in our working expenses. However, the position, even allowing for that factor, is sufficiently serious.

I think there was a good deal in what my Honourable friend Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad said about the fall in the value of money. That point was referred to by the Honourable the Leader of the House in his Budget speech when he pointed out that we are at present saddled with a level of rates and fares which is out of keeping with the ordinary level of prices. If prices keep up and if wages consequently, have to keep up then our working expenses are bound to remain high and surely in the end we may be forced to increase our rates and fares.

**Prof. N. G. Ranga:** Is it not a fact that during the depression there was no reduction in the rates and fares and that the rates and fares have been continually increasing and not decreasing?

**Mr. A. O. Turner:** Sir, I think there were some reductions . . . . .

**Prof. N. G. Ranga:** There were appreciable reductions. Is that the information of the Honourable the Railway Member?

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** My information is that there was no question of wholesale reduction but rates were constantly adjusted downwards to meet, for instance, coastal shipping rates and also to meet road transport competition. I recall, for instance, special rates in competition with road rates in the Punjab which were excessively low.

**Prof. N. G. Ranga:** Was it not due here and there to local competition that they had to meet with the rates of the coastal shipping? It was certainly not due to economic depression at all.

**Mr. A. O. Turner:** I heard it suggested from one quarter of the House today that the railways are creating unremunerative work. I would like to dispel that impression. That is not the policy of the railways. The policy of the railways is to find work which will be remunerative and keep the railwaymen employed on that work. If we fail to find remunerative work, we shall have no



option but to retrench and it will then be for the Government as a whole to find work for the workers so displaced.

Another suggestion made was that the railways should go in for luxury hotels. That evoked a certain amount of response from the other side . . . . .

**Mr. Deputy President:** Has the Honourable Member finished his speech?

**Mr. A. C. Turner:** Not yet, Sir.

**Mr. Deputy President:** The Honourable Member's time is up and another cut motion will be taken up now. It is now 4 o'clock and the time of the European Group is finished.

**Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar:** That means it is talked out.

**Mr. Deputy President:** Yes, it is talked out because the Honourable Member has not finished his speech in time.

Now, we shall take up the cut motions of Unattached Members. May I know if any arrangement has been come to among the Unattached Members about the time to be taken on each cut motion.

**Lt. Col. Dr. J. C. Chatterjee:** We take our chances. There is no arrangement.

**Sardar Mangal Singh** (East Punjab: Sikh): It is fifty-fifty, Sir.

**Mr. Deputy President:** All right, Sardar Mangal Singh will move his amendment.

#### *Inadequate representation of Sikhs in Railway Services*

**Sardar Mangal Singh:** Sir, I move:

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

Sir, I wish, by this Motion, to discuss the inadequate representation of the Sikhs in the railway services. Sir, my justification for coming before this Honourable House is that the points which we raised last year have not been appreciated and conceded by the Railway Department. I should not take up much of the time of the House, but I must say that we, the Sikhs, and our sister community the Christians have suffered from a particular disadvantage which I would request this House to realise. The smaller minority communities consisting of the Sikhs, the Indian Christians, Anglo-Indians and the Domiciled Europeans and the Parsis are bracketted together and given 8 1/3 per cent. representation in the services. Now, Sir, from this share, the lion's share has been taken away by the Anglo-Indians and the Domiciled European community, if I may say so, without giving any offence to my Honourable friend behind me. They are cent. per cent. literate and they have easy access to the higher authorities who make the appointments. Therefore we, the Sikhs and the Indian Christians suffer by this arrangement. The population of the smaller minority communities is 76 lakhs out of which the Sikhs form 41 lakhs and the Indian Christians form 33 lakhs.

**Lt.-Col. Dr. J. C. Chatterjee** (Nominated Non-Official): That is a matter of dispute.

**Sardar Mangal Singh:** I submit that this share should be divided among ourselves according to our population ratio. This is a sort of family partition. By this arrangement, the interests of the Muslims or the Hindus are not affected in any way. I do recognise the force of the claim of the Muslims that their share should be made up as soon as possible. In the railway services the Muslims are under represented and it is quite just and fair that they should be given due representation. Similarly, we, the Sikhs and the Indian Christians also claim that our due share should also be reserved in this block, as the Anglo-Indians and the Domiciled Europeans are gaining at our expense. This is in a nutshell our whole case. If we make this sort of family partition, then the

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share of the Sikhs would come to about 4·5 per cent. At present we are hardly getting two per cent. Then, Sir, in the recruitment for this year, we have not got even this much. In this year, altogether 107 appointments have been made to the superior services and only one Sikh has been taken. Not only that, while making promotions to the superior services 25 lower gazetted officers and subordinates were promoted to the superior services during the year. Of these 11 were Hindus, 3 Muslims, 5 Anglo-Indians and one belonging to the Parsi community and no Sikh or Indian Christian was promoted. Then, Sir, 25 promotions were made to the lower gazetted services in the various departments. Of these 18 Indians, 9 were Hindus, one Muslim, 6 Anglo-Indians or Domiciled Europeans and two Indian Christians and no Sikh. Sir, my complaint is that even this 2·2 per cent. which we were told last year we were getting as our share, even this much is not maintained while making recruitment to the services. The reason is that the Sikh community is largely concentrated in one Province, and recruitment is going on all over the country and the present rules for locally recruited areas are defective. Last year also, we submitted, myself and my friend Sardar Sant Singh submitted, and made strong representations that these rules of recruitment should be amended and that separate share of services should be reserved for the Sikhs. But I am sorry to say the Government of India in the Railway Department have not given their attention to this question. We say, Sir, injustice is done to us even in this House. While discussing these cut motions, about four hours have been allotted to the European Group consisting of eight or nine Members, while we, here, twenty unattached members are given only one hour to move our cuts.

**Mr. P. J. Griffiths** (Assam: European): We are a Group.

**Sardar Mangal Singh**: But we are 20 in numbers while you are only eight or nine.

**Mr. P. J. Griffiths**: Then come and join us.

**Sardar Mangal Singh**: If you can tolerate my beard and admit me. Now, Sir, in the case of recruitment to the superior services, the same is the story. Out of 2,000 persons recruited, there are only 20 Sikhs. So, I request the Honourable the Railway Member to look into this question also. He can take steps in two directions, firstly he should fix a separate share for the Sikhs and Indian Christians and secondly he should make some amendments in the rules for recruitment. I see on the G. I. P. where the population of the minority communities is less, in the recruitment for smaller minorities more share is given, while in N. W. R., although the population of the minority communities is much greater, only six per cent. is reserved for their recruitment. I would submit that just as rules have been framed for recruitment to take in more Muslims, similarly on the same lines rules to take in the Sikhs and Indian Christians should be framed so that our deficiencies may be made up in the next few years. Sir, with these words, I move.

**Mr. Deputy President**: Cut motion moved:

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

**Lt.-Col. Dr. J. O. Chatterjee**: Mr. Deputy President, my Honourable friend Sardar Mangal Singh has referred to my community in such, shall I say, affectionate terms that I feel that it is my bounden duty to stand up and support his Motion. But, Sir, I do so for very different reasons. I feel, Sir, that in supporting his Motion, I should state here and now and clearly that I do not want to participate in this struggle for loaves and fishes. Nor do I plead for any more miserable crumbs of office for my own community. Sir, I stand up and support the motion in order to register an emphatic protest against the whole system of recruitment to public offices in this country. I think it is a crying disgrace that the public services of this country should be recruited on any basis of communal representation at all. There was a time when a man's best qualification for holding office, and particularly a good office, under Government was

the pigment of his skin. Now it is becoming increasingly, and I think even more unfortunately, clear that the first and foremost qualification for a man to hold office in the public services of his country is to be his religious or communal label. I think so long as this pernicious system goes on there can be no real efficiency in the public services of this country. So far as my community is concerned—and I feel that I am representing to you honestly and fairly the view of the thinking portion of my community the vast majority of whom are poor and are neither landlords nor commercial magnates and therefore have to depend for their livelihood on their daily wages—but are prepared to say and stand by it for all time that merit and merit alone should be the sole criterion for entry into the public services of the country, whether the office is great or whether it is small. I feel that it is not much use censuring Government on matters of this kind. I feel, Sir, that we have now got into the habit of blaming Government for every possible thing. It may be true that Government have seen their opportunity to divide us further by introducing this method of representation on communal lines. But we have to ask ourselves—even my Honourable friends opposite have to ask themselves whether we are not ourselves responsible for giving them this opportunity to throw among us an apple of discord. I say that even among the minorities they have thrown an apple of discord by giving them a round proportion of 8½ per cent. and then not saying how that proportion is to be divided. But I shall give them their due; they are impartial in the sense that they have no particular love for any particular community; they do not love the Hindu more than the Muslim and they certainly do not love the Indian Christian. They may have some remorseful affection for the Anglo-Indians; but otherwise they are impartial and they give jobs not according to merit but on the nuisance value of each community; the greater the nuisance value of the community the greater will be their weightage in the public services, and even in this House and other legislatures. I submit that this is a disgraceful state of affairs. But the question goes much deeper; we must go to the root of it. Why has this pernicious system of communal representations come in? Who is really responsible and how far has it gone? The other day my Honourable friend Mr. Nauman complained about the inadequacy of promotions among the Muslim staff in the railways and said . . . .

**Mr. Deputy President:** Order, order. I do not wish to stop the Honourable Member, but the issue before the House is the inadequacy of Sikh representation in the railway services, and the Honourable Member should confine himself to that aspect, though a reference was made to his own community. But the time allotted for this debate is only half an hour, and the Honourable Member has already spoken for five minutes.

**Lt.-Col. Dr. J. O. Chatterjee:** I was developing my argument to show how this trouble about the communal percentage can be removed.

**Mr. Deputy President:** That is a broader question; the time allowed for this is only half an hour.

**Lt.-Col. Dr. J. O. Chatterjee:** I will take only five minutes more. Sir, I have had some experience of Government administration. Directly a man is charged with some act of indiscipline or neglect of duty and asked for an explanation, the first defence he puts down is, "I am a Hindu and my superior officer is a Muhammadan and therefore this charge has been trumped up against me"; and *vice-versa*, and the same thing goes on. Sir, we stand today on the threshold of a new era; at any rate we are continually reminded that it is so. Therefore I want to speak to my friends opposite and I want to ask them whether, when they take over the Government, they are prepared to make merit and merit alone the first test and the sole test for admission into the railway services—we are discussing railways now but it should be true of all public services—and thereby remove this canker and this trouble. Why is it that my Honourable friend today has asked for more representation for Sikhs and for Indian Christians? Why is it that my Honourable friends there yesterday asked for more representation for Muslims? There must be something wrong.

**Mr. Deputy President:** Order, order. I have allowed a good deal of latitude to the Honourable Member to discuss it. I have reminded him that the narrow issue before the House is not the general policy about communal representation but the insufficient representation of Sikhs, and if the Honourable Member has any contribution to make on that point he can go on. Otherwise I will have to ask him to stop.

**Lt.-Col. Dr. J. C. Chatterjee:** I will wind up in one sentence. I will merely say that as he has brought in the Indian Christians into it; and in view of what he said I feel that as the present state of affairs stands—which I consider is vile—his community and my community are badly treated—so long as this system lasts I support his motion. And in view of the support he has given to me I am prepared to surrender to his community even the 3 per cent. which my community is said to enjoy. With these words I support the motion.

**Sardar Sampuran Singh** (West Punjab: Sikh): Sir, I have enjoyed the beautiful speech of my Honourable friend Lt.-Col. Chatterjee, but the feelings and ideas he has expressed are more of a person who has always lived in high society and does not know the pangs and troubles of poor people living outside, the trouble with which they get education and the handicaps they have to struggle against to rise in this world. He says he is a poor man. Yes, he is born a Chatterjee, the highest class of Brahmins in this country; he has not inherited any of those handicaps which the lower classes and those who live in the villages have. If these backward classes—as we call them—do not get their proper share and encouragement in the Government services, I am afraid the greater portion of the population of this country will remain backward. For the whole nation to stand shoulder to shoulder and to make the whole country advance it is necessary that the people who have been left behind so far should be encouraged and even fed artificially so that the entire nation may become one harmonious unit.

With these few remarks I support the motion of my Honourable friend Sardar Mangal Singh and I hope that Government, who have not so far looked to our rights and claims, will at least in future give us full encouragement and the share which is due to us in the Government services.

**Khan Bahadur Zafar Hosain Khan:** Sir, the House is aware that there is no specific reservation for the Sikh community, as has been pointed out by the Honourable Mover, because the 6 per cent. is reserved for them with Indian Christians and Parsis. The All-India population ratio for Sikhs is 1.56 per cent. while the actual recruitment intake during the years 1939-40 to 1944-45 to Subordinate Services has been above this figure, viz., 2.1, 2.2, 2.2, 2.1, 1.6 and 1.8 respectively.

**Sardar Mangal Singh:** What should it be? What is our share according to population?

**Khan Bahadur Zafar Hosain Khan:** I am coming to that, Sir.

I will explain briefly, Sir, how this percentage was fixed. A communal census of subordinate staff on State-owned railways was carried out on 31st December 1932 when the percentage composition of each community was determined. In this census the percentage of 'Other Minority Communities' was 5.86 of which the Sikhs had 1.50, Indian Christians 3.30 and Parsis 1.06. In accordance with the policy laid down by Government, it was decided, therefore, that reservation in recruitment should be 6 per cent. for 'Other Minority Communities' including Sikhs. This reservation approximated to the composition percentage of 'Other Minority Communities' as a result of the Census mentioned. This 6 per cent. has been broken down into different percentages for each railway and the percentage allotted to Sikhs on the N. W. Railway, the railway in which my Honourable friends are particularly interested, is 6.79. Actually on that railway the percentage of Sikhs has risen from 6.8 in 1932 to 10 in 1945. It will be seen, therefore, that Sikhs have actually obtained a greater proportion of appointments than their composition status in 1932.

With regard to the demand made by the Honourable the mover that they should be given a separate quota from the share allotted to the 'Other Minority Communities', it may be stated that reservations are necessary only if a community is not able to obtain their share on merit. From the figures which I have quoted, it is obvious that Sikhs have obtained more than their share in the Subordinate Services.

With regard to staff on scales of pay rising to Rs. 250 per mensem and over in the old scales of pay and Rs. 200 per mensem in the new scales, the percentage of Sikhs in 1934 was 2 which has risen to 2.29 in 1945.

As regards the intentions of Government to see that Sikhs get their proper share, it may be mentioned that on the N. W. Railway, recruitment to Subordinate Services is made by the N. W. R. Service Commission one of the Members of which is a Sikh.

So far as Superior Services are concerned, the Sikhs share the 6 per cent. with 'Other Minority Communities'. In these Services their percentage in 1934 was 1.2 and this has risen to 2.3 in 1945. I will now state the percentage of Sikhs in Superior Service on the North Western Railway. This percentage in administrative posts is 5.88; in Senior scale posts it is 8.54 and in Junior Scale posts and Lower Gazetted Service it is 6.75, i.e., the overall percentage in all superior posts on that railway is 7.24. It cannot, therefore, be said that the Sikh Community is not receiving their proper share in Railway Services.

With regard to promotions mentioned by the Honourable the Mover, I stated yesterday in reply to my Honourable friend, Mr. Muhammad Nauman's motion that it is the settled policy of Government that communal quotas are not to apply in the case of promotions.

I hope, Sir, that in view of the information I have given to the House, the Honourable the mover will not press his motion.

**Sardar Mangal Singh:** I do not press the motion not because the reply given by Government is satisfactory but because I don't want to divide the House on this issue. Sir, I wish to withdraw the motion.

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

*Need for granting a minimum wage of Rs. 60 per mensem to Railway employees in the lower Cadre.*

**Mr. Frank E. Anthony** (Nominated: Non-official): Sir, I move:

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

This motion has been put down in order to discuss the need for granting a minimum wage of Rs. 60 per mensem to Railway employees in the lower cadre.

I might mention in the beginning that it is rather unfortunate that those who appear to be the only people who represent the interests of railway labour should have been allowed about one hour to discuss their motion. And because of that it has been rather conspicuous that the interests of railway labour have gone by default during these discussions for a period of four days.

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** We discussed that at some length on cut motion No. 2.

**Mr. Frank E. Anthony:** A very limited discussion. That was the only motion in four days which had anything to do with railway labour. But I feel, Sir, that I can reasonably ask for the support of all sections of the House with regard to this cut motion.

My Honourable friend, the War Transport Member, is bound to tell us that my request will raise serious financial implications not only for the Railway Administration but for the whole Government Administration as such; that they only represent one department of Government and you cannot expect them unilaterally to raise the minimum wage level of the railway employees, otherwise you will have a similar request from other employees of Government. But my submission to this is that the Railways do occupy rather a unique position in

[Mr. Frank R. Anthony]

the whole Government machine. They are a commercial or quasi-commercial organisation which has earned, and is continuing to earn, huge profits. If the railways do consider introducing this minimum wage, which I have asked for, it will not be necessary . . . . .

**Sir Cowsajee Jehangir:** How can they meet the extra expenditure? And supposing the Railways incur a loss?

**Mr. Frank R. Anthony:** Mr. Guruswami said that he will be able to tell the Honourable the War Transport Member, if he will let him, exactly how he can raise the money in order to meet this enhanced charge . . . .

**Sir Cowsajee Jehangir:** He cannot do it.

**Mr. Frank R. Anthony:** No, no. He is prepared to tell the Honourable the War Transport Member how to raise the money in order to meet this enhanced bill.

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** I hope my Honourable friend will do the same. He has plenty of time to do it.

**Mr. Frank R. Anthony:** I am a much humbler person. I don't arrogate to myself any of the knowledge of a financial expert. A financial expert has been defined as a person who tells people how a thing cannot be done. These bogeys raised by financial experts and economic experts have been paraded in season and out of season. Whenever we get down to peace-time conditions, experts trot out all sorts of reasons why a thing cannot be done . . . .

**Mr. Deputy President:** Order, order. Under cut motion No. 2, the House discussed the attitude of the Railway Board on staff matters especially those relating to wages, allowances, working hours, etc., etc. The Honourable Member in moving his motion should particularly confine himself to the issue which he has raised, namely the need for granting a minimum wage of Rs. 60 per mensem to Railway employees. He should not mix up this with the general question which has already been discussed on cut motion No. 2 moved by Mr. Gadgil.

**Mr. Frank R. Anthony:** I am merely anticipating some of the reasons which I think my Honourable friend will adduce in order to resist this request of mine. As I say, the economic experts always tell us in time of peace that a certain thing is impracticable, that this is a bogey, but when the need really arises or when it becomes unavoidable to get the money, then some way or another this money is procured. And that is where I want to sound a note of warning to the Honourable the War Transport Member. The Railways represent perhaps your most valuable departmental asset or governmental asset in India today. It is your business in the testing times ahead not only to maintain the efficiency of the railways but to keep them open and unless you accede to this request you will not be able to do either one of these duties. One of the Honourable Members speaking today said that the reason for corruption in certain sections of the staff was that the lower staff are inadequately paid. I might mention to the Honourable the War Transport Member that it is claimed today by the Communist movement that they represent labour, which includes railway labour. And as far as I am aware the Communists have, and continue increasingly to get, a hold on the labour movement in this country. All your arguments that you cannot raise the wages, the minimum wage of the worker in this country, will count for nothing in the face of impending strikes, strikes which I feel these people who are getting an increasing stranglehold on the labour movement in this country, will call and back up with violence. That is the issue which you face today. There is no point in trying to fob it off by academic arguments. Railway labour today is increasingly joining the fold of these unions which draw their inspiration from certain "isms" which do not have their source in this country. I deplore the transfer of labour into these folds but unless you do something to meet the needs of the lower stratum of railway labour you will drive them increasingly into the folds of these unions.

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** May I ask the Honourable Member a question? To whom does he refer by "lowest cadre"? Does he refer to the lowest grade of the subordinate service or the unskilled labour?

**Mr. Frank R. Anthony:** I am talking about everybody. I am not aware of the technical difference. I am talking of the railway employee. We were told the other day that the labourer in the Ahmedabad mills has been put on the minimum wage of Rs. 83 per month. A few days ago when I was talking to a member of the European Group, who is an influential business man concerned with labour, he told me that they had anticipated this increasing demand, which has now become universal, for a minimum living wage by labour in this country and he has introduced a minimum wage of Rs. 60 per month to his lowest stratum of employee, the labourer. If I remember aright a minimum of Rs. 55 was recommended by a Royal Commission on Labour. Why I have put down Rs. 5 more is to take into account the increased cost of living today.

Before I conclude, Sir, I would like to ask the Honourable the War Transport Member a question which has a bearing on this whole question of wages. What is your policy with regard to the question of the continuance of dearness allowance and war allowance to the railway worker? We are told that the war officially will end on All Fool's Day. Is it your intention also to whittle down or abolish altogether your dearness allowance and other allowances paid to the railway worker? I would like to have an answer to that question because this is a matter which is agitating railway workers throughout the country. They feel that so long as the cost of living remains at its present high level, the railway authorities will have no justification for withdrawing their war time and dearness allowances.

This request of mine for a minimum wage is a perfectly legitimate one and I feel that if some kind of body is convened to go closely into this matter, you will be able to find the money with which to meet this request on the part of the workers generally and of the railway worker in particular. Sir, I move.

**Mr. Deputy President:** Cut motion moved.

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

**Miss Maniben Kara** (Nominated Non-Official): I rise to support the cut motion of my Honourable friend, Mr. Anthony, for a minimum wage of Rs. 60. It is a little surprising, Sir, that much concern was expressed in the House for safeguarding the vested interests in this country by throwing out yesterday the rail-road co-ordination scheme. And for this question, I take it that opinion will be expressed by the Members of all the Parties that a demand for a minimum wage of Rs. 60 is not an unjustified request. Nobody in this House can say that for a decent human existence—I would not say living, as it is mere existence—Rs. 60 is an unreasonable demand on the part of railway workers. I reiterate what I said before that railways cannot be regarded as a mere commercial concern and I would here take the opportunity of replying to my friend, Sir Cowasjee Jehangir, who says that we must remember that railways are a business concern. I beg to differ from him because it is essential they should be run as a social service. They are for public utility and as such I do not think there will be anybody in this House who will consider a minimum wage of Rs. 60 as something exorbitant in these days when we do not want to go back to pre-war standard of life. It is gratifying to find that the Honourable Member has casually mentioned in his note about the staff in the report that he submitted that there will be no immediate reduction in the wages of the railway employees. Now I am very glad that he has stated that but may I draw his attention to the fact that the existing wages are not sufficient? Existing wages are not enough for decent condition of life for the worker. I would also like to mention that the cut motion also involves a matter of principle. It is not only a fact that it will be a figure of Rs. 60 but the question is that a new idea will be accepted and that of a minimum wage. In no civilized country will you find that a minimum wage legislation does not exist. I am glad that very soon the Honourable the Labour Member is contemplating to bring such legislation and



[Miss Maniben Kara]

it will be quite the right thing if on this occasion we give a lead by saying that we accept the principle of the minimum wage. My friend who has moved this motion has not only done a service by saying that it should be Rs. 60, but he appeals to all the Members of this House that the principle of minimum wage should be accepted and I say that there should be nobody in this House who will say that we should not have the minimum wage principle adopted. So long as there is no minimum wage level, there is always the danger that because there is a large army of unemployed people the wages may drop still further and further. There was a question put by my Honourable friend, Sir Cowasjee Jehangir, that if we kept the wages at Rs. 60 where was the money coming from? Sir, I am not in a position to give him all the details at this stage, but I will not say that I am not in a position to sit down with the Honourable Transport Member and show him how the budget can be replanned so that the workers can get a minimum wage of Rs. 60. Sir, it is only at the time of the budget that we can plan in such a way as to show that we really feel that the human needs of the workers, who run our railways and who carry us from one place to another, should be provided for. Accepting that principle the Railway Budget will have to be adjusted in such a way as to meet the minimum requirements of the workers. It is not enough to ask: how are we going to meet it? It is the task of those people who are at the head of the department to see how it can be adjusted. The workers and the poor man should not be sacrificed, simply because we cannot find the money. There are many other expenses which can be reduced so that the standard of the workers can be increased, so that they can have a decent human existence for themselves.

There are many questions concerning the workers which it will be irrelevant to raise at this time. They are mentioned in another cut motion but unfortunately we will not have the time for that. I will only take this opportunity of saying that the wages of the workers should be standardised now that the railways are coming under state control. There is a terrible dissatisfaction among the workers on account of two different rates of wages, one in the company managed railways and another in the state-owned railways. For example on the G. T. Railway the rates of wages of the workers are definitely lower than on other railways. I take this opportunity of appealing to the Honourable Member to see that this distinction is immediately done away with. After all the workers do the same type of work. Why should there be two different rates of wages? I appeal to the Honourable Member to abolish immediately the differences in rates of wages prevailing over various railways and I once again appeal to all sections of the House to support the principle that a wage of Rs. 60 is the minimum absolutely necessary for human existence.

With these words, Sir, I, support the motion.

**Sgt. N. V. Gadgil** (Bombay Central Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural):

Sir, I support the cut motion moved by my friend Mr. Anthony. Somehow or other he seemed to think that Rs. 60 today answered to what he called the minimum wage. In India the Railway Department is the biggest employer of labour. It is time for the department to adopt some modern method of dealing with the large number of labourers under its control. The Minimum Wage Legislation is to be found in most of the Western countries and some such legislation was recommended by the Royal Commission on Labour in India. To understand precisely what minimum wage means, it is necessary to indicate that it should include sufficient food, sufficient clothing, decent housing and adequate leisure, to enable the worker to utilise it in order to improve his prospect and improve his mental outlook and his general educational equipment. In fixing the minimum wage care should be taken that it does not become the maximum. That is a danger which should be guarded against, because experience has shown us that in most of the industries where some attempt has been made to fix the minimum wage, that wage remains the maximum throughout the life of the worker. In arriving at the minimum wage it is not the wage that is



required for the ordinary worker alone that should be taken into account. Some unit has to be fixed. For the present I agree with the unit assumed by the Textile Enquiry Committee in Bombay. They have accepted family as the unit. The unit to consist of 4 persons and three consumption units. The four persons include the earning man, his wife and two children below 15. Working on that standard these four persons would constitute 3 consumption units. These four persons must have sufficient food, sufficient clothing, decent housing and enough purchasing power to spend the minimum amount of leisure in the best possible way. There must be some provision for the education of the children. He must have some luxuries. You cannot make the life of the worker a real life if you do not include in it expenditure on *pan*, *smoke*, or *supari* or an occasional visit to the cinema theatre. After all when the upper classes do not feel satisfied with their lives, unless they visit cinema theatres, buy books of all sorts and enjoy other amenities; these factors must be taken into consideration when one has to fix the minimum wage of the worker. Prices of commodities and services which determine the minimum wage are not stable necessarily. You may fix the minimum wage today but unless there is a machinery present whereby the minimum wage is revised and brought up from time to time in level with the prevailing prices, the minimum wage that may be fixed today may continue till the worker is forced to threaten a strike. If we take the data as available today, I said the other day, the minimum wage would work out to Rs. 69. To fix minimum wage at Rs. 60 to-day is not advantageous to the worker. I understand the cut motion as a plea to have minimum wage fixed. That principle I want to support.

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** Sir, my Honourable friend has referred to a bogey which he anticipated that I shall raise. I am going to talk on that point, because Honourable Members must realise the seriousness of what they are asking for.

My friend, Mr. Anthony, has altogether outdone Mr. Guruswami. He has asked for a minimum wage of Rs. 60 as against a minimum wage of Rs. 36 asked for by the Federation at their Moghulserai meeting.

**Mr. Frank R. Anthony:** Mr. Gadgil wants Rs. 69.

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall:** I am speaking to the Honourable Member's suggestion in the motion. Mr. Guruswami asked, in fact, for an additional 57 crores a year on this account and apart from that, he asked for something extra on dearness allowance, bringing the total of his request to 78 crores per annum. My Honourable friend's request would amount, in round figures, to 100 crores per annum. I will return to that in a minute. He said that he was no economic expert and therefore could not make any suggestion as to how to meet this demand. Any man of average intelligence could grasp that sums of this sort have got to be found from somewhere, and any man of average intelligence ought to be able to sum up whether they are feasible or merely fantastic, or alternatively whether something very drastic has not got to be done on the earnings side to meet his demand. If I may put it in the simplest terms, my friend Mr. Anthony could take his own case. He demands a minimum wage of Rs. 60. I have no doubt that being so, that he pays his own servants, even the most menial, Rs. 60. If he decides that that is not sufficient and he wants to put them up further and he thinks that it ought to be Rs. 100, he has clearly got to turn over in his own mind how he is going to find the money to meet that. If he is in ordinary service he would ask for more pay; if he is a learned barrister he would have to earn more briefs to pay for it; and so precisely is it with the railways. If we are asked to produce another 100 crores for the staff, we have got to earn more money, and I think, as a result of all that I have said in the last week, I really think the House understands that fact now, but I have met nobody yet with the courage to say that the two things go together. I grant of course that a great deal can be done in the way of economy and more can be done in the way of increasing earnings by some of the

[Sir Edward Benthall]

means which have been suggested. But nevertheless there is as far as we can see at present a serious gap. My Honourable friend asks for a sum of Rs. 100 crores per annum. If he will add that to the figure which we pay for staff now, that is, 75 crores, he will reach the total of 175 crores. He is asking that the wage bill, without dearness allowance or anything else, should be increased by 125 per cent. at a stroke of the pen. In other words, he asks for a wage bill of 175 crores per annum against a pre-war wage bill of 85 crores—that is to say, he asks that the wage bill should be put up to over 500 per cent., when the railways themselves have put up their rates and fares by 8 per cent. Sir, those figures strike me as being purely fantastic, and as I said before I cannot understand how any man of such eminence and legal acumen as my Honourable friend can seriously put them forward, without coupling them with some constructive suggestion. If you take the wage bill of 175 crores and add to it the other inescapable items of the railways including interest and depreciation fund contribution, you will find that the total will come to something like 260 crores. Next year our budget is in the nature of Rs. 180 crores of receipts. To bridge the difference of some 80 crores or so you would in fact have to raise your fares by 50 per cent. . . . .

[At this stage Mr. President (The Honourable Mr. G. V. Mavalankar) resumed the Chair]

. . . . . and members this afternoon have still been complaining that the rates and fares are already high enough. I entirely agree with that point of view. You do not want to force up your fare at the expense of the poorer sections of the people, nor do you want to force up your rates at the expense of the industries of the country. My Honourable friend said that what he was asking for applied to all classes of workers, whether they are skilled, unskilled, subordinate or inferior. It must of course be confessed that the unskilled workers do not get anything like that figure. But in the subordinate services, the lowest grade already receive a minimum wage of Rs. 30 with an allowance during the war of Rs. 10—that is Rs. 40—and they receive a dearness allowance which varies according to the zone from Rs. 14 to Rs. 20, and they receive grain shop benefits which on the average come to about Rs. 13. If you add all these three figures together, you will find that the minimum of the subordinate grade is something between Rs. 67 and Rs. 73: so that, so far as the subordinate services are concerned they are already receiving the minimum which my Honourable friend is asking for.

If anything in the nature of those figures were to be conceded by the railways alone, one must consider what the effect would be not only upon Government servants but upon all classes of labour in the country. Such a move has to be done not in one department of Government only by the railways putting up their rates, but by concerted action throughout the country. Otherwise individual action by particular Government departments would create repercussions not only upon other departments of the Central Government but also upon the Provincial Governments and finally upon all employers throughout the country. I do not know quite how my Honourable friend would propose to deal with the situation which would arise from agricultural labourers not getting an economic wage, a wage which was not fixed by legislation, while all other workers received the minimum of Rs. 60. How would he reconcile the two and would it not be necessary also to apply this minimum wage to agricultural workers, and if so how would he enforce it in agricultural areas? No, Sir. I am merely saying this because a request has now been made for the railways to take the lead, regardless of anybody else. I maintain that that is not possible. Government must deal with these problems as a whole, and the economy of the whole country must be viewed as a whole. For instance, if we put up wages by this amount would the Honourable Member—and I have shown that it would be necessary—put up rates and fares by 50 per cent. The next cry we should hear

would be that the poor agriculturist who is not getting the minimum wage could not afford to send his goods to the market. Once again, therefore, at this late hour I do most sincerely appeal to my Honourable friends, when they are putting forward these demands, to take into account also the other side of the picture. Repeatedly in almost every quarter of the House . . . .

**Mr. President:** Is the Honourable Member likely to take long? He can finish his sentence if he likes. It is time.

(It being five of the clock)

(The Honourable the War Transport Member resumed his seat)

#### DEMAND No. 1.—RAILWAY BOARD

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

“That a reduced sum not exceeding Rs. 33,73,400, be granted to the Governor General-in-Council to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1947, in respect of ‘Railway Board’.”

The motion was adopted.

#### DEMAND No. 2.—AUDIT

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

“That a sum not exceeding Rs. 18,78,000 be granted to the Governor General-in-Council to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1947, in respect of ‘Audit’.”

The motion was adopted.

#### DEMAND No. 8.—MISCELLANEOUS EXPENDITURE

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

“That a sum not exceeding Rs. 45,00,000 be granted to the Governor General-in-Council to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1947, in respect of ‘Miscellaneous Expenditure’.”

The motion was adopted.

#### DEMAND No. 5 —PAYMENTS TO INDIAN STATES AND COMPANIES

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

“That a sum not exceeding Rs. 1,76,85,000 be granted to the Governor General-in-Council to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1947, in respect of ‘Payments to Indian States and Companies’.”

The motion was adopted.

#### DEMAND No. 6-A.—WORKING EXPENSES—MAINTENANCE OF STRUCTURAL WORKS

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

“That a sum not exceeding Rs. 16,74,36,000 be granted to the Governor General-in-Council to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1947, in respect of ‘Working Expenses—Maintenance of Structural Works’.”

The motion was adopted.

#### DEMAND No. 6-B.—WORKING EXPENSES—MAINTENANCE AND SUPPLY OF LOCOMOTIVE POWER

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

“That a sum not exceeding Rs. 42,59,97,000 be granted to the Governor General-in-Council to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1947, in respect of ‘Working Expenses—Maintenance and Supply of Locomotive Power’.”

The motion was adopted.

**DEMAND No. 6-C.—WORKING EXPENSES—MAINTENANCE OF CARRIAGE  
WAGON STOCK**

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

“That a sum not exceeding Rs. 16,41,84,000 be granted to the Governor General-in-Council to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1947, in respect of ‘Working Expenses—Maintenance of Carriage and Wagon Stock’.”

The motion was adopted.

**DEMAND No. 6-D.—WORKING EXPENSES—MAINTENANCE AND WORKING OF FERRY  
STEAMERS AND HARBOURS**

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

“That a sum not exceeding Rs. 57,72,000 be granted to the Governor General-in-Council to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1947, in respect of ‘Working Expenses—Maintenance and Working of Ferry Steamers and Harbours’.”

The motion was adopted.

**DEMAND No. 6-E.—WORKING EXPENSES—EXPENSES OF TRAFFIC DEPARTMENT**

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

“That a sum not exceeding Rs. 18,29,82,000 be granted to the Governor General-in-Council to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1947, in respect of ‘Working Expenses—Expenses of Traffic Department’.”

The motion was adopted.

**DEMAND No. 6-F.—WORKING EXPENSES—EXPENSES OF GENERAL DEPARTMENTS**

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

“That a sum not exceeding Rs. 6,81,59,000 be granted to the Governor General-in-Council to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1947, in respect of ‘Working Expenses—Expenses of General Departments’.”

The motion was adopted.

**DEMAND No. 6-G.—WORKING EXPENSES—MISCELLANEOUS EXPENSES**

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

“That a sum not exceeding Rs. 17,82,44,000 be granted to the Governor General-in-Council to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1947, in respect of ‘Working Expenses—Miscellaneous Expenses’.”

The motion was adopted.

**DEMAND No. 6-H.—WORKING EXPENSES—EXPENSES OF ELECTRICAL DEPARTMENT**

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

“That a sum not exceeding Rs. 5,84,49,000, be granted to the Governor General-in-Council to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1947, in respect of ‘Working Expenses—Expenses of Electrical Department’.”

The motion was adopted.

**DEMAND No. 7.—WORKING EXPENSES—APPROPRIATION TO DEPRECIATION FUND**

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

“That a sum not exceeding Rs. 13,21,62,000 be granted to the Governor General-in-Council to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1947, in respect of ‘Working Expenses—Appropriation to Depreciation Fund’.”

The motion was adopted.

## DEMAND No. 8.—INTEREST CHARGES

**President:** The question is:

“That a sum not exceeding Rs. 87,000 be granted to the Governor General-in-Council to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1947, in respect of ‘Interest Charges’.”

The motion was adopted.

## DEMAND No. 9.—APPROPRIATION TO BETTERMENT FUND

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

“That a sum not exceeding Rs. 3,00,00,000 be granted to the Governor General-in-Council to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1947, in respect of ‘Appropriation to Betterment Fund’.”

The motion was adopted.

## DEMAND No. 10.—APPROPRIATION TO RESERVE

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

“That a sum not exceeding Rs. 1,85,93,000, be granted to the Governor General-in-Council to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1947, in respect of ‘Appropriation to Reserve’.”

The motion was adopted.

## DEMAND No. 10-A.—WITHDRAWAL FROM RESERVE

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

“That a sum not exceeding Rs. 13,81,89,000, be granted to the Governor General-in-Council to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1947, in respect of ‘Withdrawal from Reserve’.”

The motion was adopted.

## DEMAND No. 11.—NEW CONSTRUCTION

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

“That a sum not exceeding Rs. 2,00,00,000 be granted to the Governor General-in-Council to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1947, in respect of ‘New Construction’.”

The motion was adopted.

## DEMAND No. 12.—OPEN LINE WORKS

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

“That a reduced sum of Rs. 32,50,50,000 be granted to the Governor General-in-Council to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1947, in respect of ‘Open Line Works’.”

The motion was adopted.

The Assembly then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Thursday, the 4th February 1946.

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**Copies of the Debates of the Legislative Assembly and of the Council of State are obtainable on sale from the Manager of Publications, Civil Lines, Delhi.**

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