

the train services unless they were guaranteed protection from intimidation or assault. This followed an assault by passengers on the motorman of a train which was held up at Nangi station because of the theft of overhead wire and of an underground signal cable resulting in total interruption of services on the section. The motorman was hurt so severely that he had to be removed to hospital in an ambulance.

55. The Indian Railways constitute the proudest possession of the Indian people. It has to be considered and treated by the Indian citizens as their property. The occasional outrages against the Railways and its property by certain misguided people create feelings of pain and sorrow in our minds. Let me appeal to all sections of the House and through them to the entire people of the country to see that a new approach is developed informed by intelligent regard for this great asset of ours.

Conclusion

56. I have to make one more observation. The Indian Railways, working as they do on capital provided by the General Revenues for which they pay interest every year, are and have been looked upon and treated as a commercial enterprise. This is as it should be. The tax-payer should not be called upon to contribute to the maintenance of a commercial system. But I wish also to emphasise that the Railways, while they should earn a profit and contribute to the general revenues, must always keep in the forefront their responsibility as a public utility concern. We have to keep in mind that the Railways afford, and for long years to come will continue to afford, the only means of long-distances transport to the common man of this vast country of ours.

57. I am well aware that there are numerous requests to extend Railways lines to new areas and places in the country. To accede to all these requests will be an impossible task. It will, however, be my earnest endeavour to consider all these requests with a view to implementing as many of them as may be practicable and justifiable within the available resources. As a first

step, several surveys are being carried out and have been included in the next year's budget to examine the technical and economic feasibility of various new lines, doublings, conversions, etc. As a result of the information that would become available from these surveys, the decision would be taken in respect of the actual construction of the projects.

With these words, I commend the Railway Budget for 1970-71 for the support of this House.

13.31 hrs.

COMMITTEE OF PRIVILEGES TENTH REPORT

SHRI SWELL (Autonomous Districts) :
I present the Tenth Report of the Committee of Privileges.

ESTIMATES COMMITTEE HUNDRED AND FIRST AND HUNDRED AND SECOND REPORTS

SHRI THIRUMALA RAO (Kakinada) :
I present the following Reports of the Estimates Committee :

- (1) Hundred and First Report regarding action taken by Government on the recommendations contained in the Seventy-second Report of the Estimates Committee on the Ministry of Health and Family Planning and Works, Housing and Urban Development (Department of Works, Housing and Urban Development)—Development of Printing and Stationery (Stationery Wing).
- (2) Hundred and Second Report regarding action taken by Government on the recommendations contained in the Seventieth Report of the Estimates Committee on the Ministry of Railways—Railway Electrification Projects.