

12.55 hrs.

PETITION RE: RECOGNITION OF PROVISIONAL REVOLUTIONARY GOVERNMENT OF SOUTH VIETNAM AND STOPPAGE OF BOMBING IN VIETNAM BY U.S.A.

SHRI A. K. GOPALAN (Palghat): I beg to present a petition signed by Shri P. Ramamurti and others regarding recognition of Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam and stoppage of American bombing of North and South Vietnam.

I am presenting only one copy of the petition, the other copies will be presented at 4 O'clock at the Reception Office.

MR. SPEAKER: There is no need. When it is presented to the House, they need not be presented to me.

SHRI SEZHIYAN (Kumbakonam): What he meant was that the other copies will be given in the Reception and in course of time it will come to you.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU (Diamond Harbour): One crore of people have signed the petition, Sir.

MR. SPEAKER: When it has been presented to the House, the copies may be sent to my office.

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE (Kanpur): May I have your guidance, Sir, on this? The present practice is that when such a petition is presented, it goes to the Petitions Committee. But it should be circulated to the Members.

MR. SPEAKER: No new practice please.... (*Interruptions*)

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE: Sir, when you hear many irrelevant things, kindly hear some relevant things. I want your guidance in this matter.

MR. SPEAKER: No guidance is necessary. It has been presented...

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE: Should not the Government come forward and recognise the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam? What can the Petitions Committee do? Can it take any action in this matter?... (*Interruptions*) Sir, we demand the immediate recognition of the PRG.

Let the Government announce and let them also condemn the American bombings. Otherwise, what can the Petitions Committee do.... (*Interruptions*) I have never seen a Government more indifferent, cold and callous regarding such a big problem.

SHRI DINEN BHATTACHARYYA (Serampore): But no government is sitting there. Yesterday, Mr. Indrajit Gupta raised it and to-day a petition has been presented. The Government should make an immediate announcement....

MR. SPEAKER: No, please. This cannot go on like this.

श्री हुकम चन्द कडवय (मुरेना) : मैं समझता हूँ कि इस प्रकार से आप और लोगों को भोखने की अनुमति देंगे।

अध्यक्ष महोदय अगर पिटिशन की डेफिनिशन में आयेगा तो दी जायेगी।

श्री एस.एम.बनर्जी : आप ने अनुमति दी इन के बिना मैं बर्दाई देना चाहता हूँ क्योंकि आप इन की सहमियत को समझते हैं।

अध्यक्ष महोदय : अरोजीशन का झगड़ा मेरे सामने क्यों लाते हैं। श्री किरतिनन।

RESOLUTION RE: RECOMMENDATIONS OF RAILWAY CONVENTION COMMITTEE—contd.

SHRI THA KIRUTTINAN (Sivaganja): Mr. Speaker, Sir...

MR. SPEAKER: You can continue after lunch. Now, it is 1 O'clock. We

adjourn for lunch and meet at 2 p.m.

About Assam, the notices will be ballot at 1 O'clock.

13 00 hrs.

The Lok Sabha adjourned for Lunch till Fourteen of the Clock.

The Lok Sabha re-assembled after Lunch at four minutes past Fourteen of the Clock

[MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER—in the Chair]

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Mr. Kiruttinan...

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU (Diamond Harbour): Sir, in the UNI, the journalists are on strike and the work is paralysed there. This is an institution which is financed by the Government. We want to know what is being done about it. We cannot afford to allow this institution to go on like this when the staff are on strike and the work is paralysed. I request you to be good enough to ask the Minister to make a statement, for resolving this dispute and helping to arrive at a settlement.

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE (Kanpur): Shri Khadilkar had made a statement in the other House. Let him make a statement here. I am connected with the UNI also as President of the Union there. This matter has to be settled. As the Parliament is being adjourned, he should make a statement regarding settlement of the dispute.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: That may be conveyed to the Minister..

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE: No question of conveying; you should direct him. This matter has to be settled.

SHRI RAMAVATAR SHASTRI (Patna): You may direct the Government to make a statement.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: You will have a long holiday after the 22nd instant. So, bear with us for today, tomorrow and the day after.

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE: Kindly direct the Government to make a statement.

श्री मुकम चन्द कछवाय (मुरेना) : उपाध्यक्ष महोदय, मैं निवेदन करना चाहता हूँ कि जो क्रिकेट का खेल हो रहा है, उस के लिये हिन्दी संवाद समितियों—हिन्दुस्तान समाचार, समाचार भारती आदि—और हिन्दी समाचारपत्रों के प्रतिनिधियों को प्रवेशपत्र नहीं दिये गये हैं। इस बारे में न शिक्षा मंत्रालय और न मूचना और प्रसारण मंत्रालय जवाब देती लेने के लिये तैयार हैं। यह भेदभाव नहीं होना चाहिये। इस में सब की रुचि है। जानबूझ कर हिन्दी के प्रति भेदभाव किया जा रहा है। मेरा निवेदन है कि हिन्दी संवाद समितियों और समाचारपत्रों के प्रतिनिधियों को प्रवेशपत्र दिये जाने चाहिये।

श्री रामावतार शास्त्री : सब संवाद समितियों और समाचारपत्रों को यह सुविधा दी जानी चाहिये।

RESOLUTION RE: RECOMMENDATIONS OF RAILWAY CONVENTION COMMITTEE—contd.

*SHRI THA KIRUTTINAN (Sivaganja): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I rise to say a few words on behalf of my party, the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam, on the Resolution moved by the hon. Minister of Railways, which incorporates certain recommendations of the Railway Convention Committee, 1971.

At the very outset, I would like to object to the method of selecting only a few recommendations of the Railway Convention Committee in such a Resolution for which the approval of the House has been sought. It is also stated in the Resolution that the action taken by the Government on the other recommendations made in the

*The Original speech was delivered in Tamil..

[SHRI THA KIRUTINAM]

Report would be reported to the next Parliamentary Committee, which may be appointed to review similar matters. Here, I would like to know from the hon. Railway Minister whether the other recommendations of the Railway Convention Committee should be given such a low priority as for the next Parliamentary Committee to review whether they have been implemented by the Railways or not. The proper procedure would be that this House should have been asked to approve of a Resolution incorporating all the recommendations made by the Railway Convention Committee. After appointing such a high-power Railway Convention Committee and after the Committee have gone into these questions in great detail, I do not approve of the shoddy treatment meted out to the recommendations of the Committee.

I would now like to express my views about the payment of dividend by the Railways to the General Revenues. The Railway Convention Committee has recommended that dividend of 6 per cent should be paid by the Railways to the General Revenues on the capital invested after 31st March, 1964. I have been repeatedly pleading in this House, on several earlier occasions, that there should be no contribution from the earnings of Railways to the General Revenues. If the Central Government have invested some money in the Railways, then a certain percentage of dividend, depending upon the rate of profits made by the Railways every year, can be given by the Railways to the General Revenues. If the Central Government have given loans to the Railways, then interest at an agreed rate can be charged from the Railways. I do not know under what category the amounts given by the Central Government to the Railways fall and on what basis the Railways are to contribute to the General Revenues from their earnings every year and why should the Railways be compulsorily

asked to do so. I would request the hon. Minister of Railways to clarify this point.

I have also been witnessing that the Railway earnings are manipulated in such a way that ultimately the workers, whose major contribution in the railway earnings cannot be denied by anyone in this House, are denied of their rightful and legitimate share in such earnings. The Railways, apart from contributing 6 per cent dividend to the General Revenues, have got the Depreciation Reserve Fund, Revenue Reserve Fund, Development Fund, and any number of such funds, which take away in some proportion or the other all the earnings. This has led to the inevitable consequence of the Railway workers not being paid adequate emoluments in proportion to their labour. I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Railway Minister to the imperative necessity of paying adequate remuneration to the workers so that the railway earnings can substantially go up. I hope that the new Railway Minister will bear this in his mind and take steps to remunerate the railway workers adequately.

The Railway Convention Committee has pointed out that contribution to the Depreciation Reserve Fund is at present not related to the amount of depreciation calculated as accruing on the wasting assets of the Railways year by year. Whether an asset like railway carriage has depreciated every year at a certain rate or not, the allocation to the Depreciation Fund is not done at the rate at which the asset has depreciated. For example, a certain depreciated value is shown on the house constructed for a railway worker. In the course of years, the cost of construction of the house has been wiped out by the depreciated value shown every year. Simultaneously, the Depreciation Reserve Fund is also getting swelled by regular yearly allocation and the money remains unutilised. In this connection, the Railway Convention Committee has made certain import-

tant observations. Whether it is a house, engine, carriage or rails, the depreciation implications of these assets should be specifically mentioned in the Budget papers. The Committee has also pointed out that the wasting assets of the Railways are not being replaced, with the consequence of heavy accruals in the Depreciation Reserve Fund. I request the hon. Minister of Railways to look into this and do the needful.

There is the Railway Safety Works Fund, out of which only a sum of Rs. 1.24 crores has been utilised, though during the years 1966-67 to 1971-72 the total contribution to this Fund has been of the order of Rs. 10.80 crores. The State Governments have spent substantial sums under this head "safety", but they have not yet been reimbursed through the Safety Works Fund has got Rs. 10.80 crores. Sir, you will not under-rate the need for wider bridges over level crossings on account of density of traffic, the need for over-bridges and under-bridges in many parts of the country. According to the existing rules, the expenditure on these items is shared between the Railways and the States on 50:50 basis. The States are finding it difficult to spend moneys on these items from their slender resources. That is why the Safety Works Fund has not been utilised properly. I would plead with the Railway Minister that the Railways should bear 75 per cent of the expenditure on these items and the remaining 25 per cent should be borne by the States. Then only the much-needed over-bridges and under-bridges will come about in the country.

Sir, the hon. Minister of Railways will not dispute the fact that there are lakhs and lakhs of unmanned level crossings throughout the country, and that too predominantly in the rural areas. 10 per cent of the amount in the Railway Safety Works Fund should be earmarked for manning or

upgrading of unmanned level crossings and that the Zonal Railway Managers should be authorised to draw directly the amount from this Fund with a view to expediting these works.

There is persistent shortfall in expenditure in the matter of providing quarters for Class III and Class IV staff, though there is acute shortage of residential accommodation in the country. It is really surprising that the sums allocated for this purpose from the Development Fund remain underutilised. The Railways should give due priority to the provision of quarters to all the Class III and Class IV staff of the Railways.

The Study Team of the Administrative Reforms Commission has also made important recommendations in regard to Railway Accounts. They have not been brought before this House and the Railways have also not implemented those recommendations. By implementing all the recommendations of the Railway Convention Committee, the problems besetting the Railways can be solved to some extent. That is why I pointed out in the beginning of my speech that a Resolution containing all the recommendations of the Convention Committee, not merely a few of them, should have been brought before this House.

Reverting back to the contribution of Railways to the General Revenues, you may feel that my suggestion that the Railways should not contribute anything to the General Revenues is somewhat novel. Some months back there was a farmers' agitation in the State of Tamil Nadu sponsored by the Ruling Congress Party here and the Communist Party of India. The main plank of the farmers' agitation was that the loans obtained from the World Bank, from the Reserve Bank and from other foreign countries and given to the farmers through the co-operative societies should be revoked and the agitation was directed against the State Government. I have referred

[Shri Tha Kirutinam]
to this because here the Central Government is demanding dividend from the Railways on the capital invested 20 or 22 years before. I am sure, Sir, you will now appreciate my contention that the payment of contribution by the Railways to the General Revenues must be stopped at once. I also hope that the hon. Minister of Railways will appreciate that this is a valid argument in view of what I have stated in my speech and ensure that the Railways do not pay any dividend to the General Revenues at least for two decades to come so that the development of Railways in all sectors is assured within this period.

With these words, I conclude.

SHRI K. S. CHAVDA (Patan): I would like to bring to the notice of the hon. Minister one point regarding manning of sleeper coaches on the Rajkot Division between Ahmedabad and Palampur. Because, between Ahmedabad and Palampur, 26 sleeper coaches are manned by the Rajkot Division also, though the number of TTEs in the Rajkot Division is 102 and the kilometrage is 1 510 while in the Ajmer Division, the total kilometrage is 1,290 and the strength of the TTEs is 106. Therefore, the comparative figures will convince the Minister that more passenger trains run on the Rajkot Division, nearly 167, and only 58 trains run on the Ajmer Division. Though a greater number of passenger trains run on the Rajkot Division covering a larger kilometrage than on the Ajmer Division the sanctioned strength of the ticket-checking staff is less on the Rajkot Division which in turn provides a lesser number of posts of senior TCS/TTEs and TCS/CTIs as based on the percentage of the strength of the checking staff. This is the dispute between the two divisions—Rajkot Division and Ajmer Division—which is not settled by the administration.

On 26th June, 1972, I met the General Manager and discussed it with him

and brought to his notice that the railway is incurring excess expenditure because the staff of the Rajkot Division and the staff of the Ajmer Division are manning 26 sleeper coaches attached to the Delhi Mail, Delhi Express, Janata Express and 31 UP and 32 Down between Ahmedabad and Ajmer. These trains terminate at Ahmedabad and start from Ahmedabad, and still, this injustice is done to the Rajkot Division staff. My demand is that justice should be done to these people. That is the only point which I wanted to bring to the Minister's notice, because this has resulted in over-expenditure of the railways, and there is discontentment among the staff of the Rajkot Division because they say that this position has deprived the Rajkot Division of its rightful cadre strength of TCS/TTEs and in turn the posts of STCs/STTEs and HTCs/CTIs. It is a sad plight of TCS/TTEs of the Rajkot Division that they are thus deprived of their chances of promotion in higher grades. That is why I request the hon. Minister to look into the matter and do justice to these people.

श्री रामाचतार शास्त्री : (पटना) :

उपाध्यक्ष महोदय, रेल मंत्री जी ने रेलवे कन्वेंशन कमेटी की कुछ सिफारिशों को मंजूर करने के लिये यहाँ प्रस्ताव पेश किया है। इस क्रम में मैं यह कहना आवश्यक समझता हूँ कि रेलवे कन्वेंशन कमेटी ने अपने कार्य की परिधि को, स्कोप को बढ़ाने का निश्चय किया है ताकि जहाँ से आय अधिक हो सके उन बातों का पता लगाया जाय तो मैं उम को इस निश्चय का स्वागत करता हूँ। यह जरूरी है कि रेलवे की आय को बढ़ाया जाय और किस तरीके से रेलवे में गोलमाल हो रहा है, गडबड़ी चल रही है, वैसे को पचाया जा रहा है और देश को नुकसान पहुँचाया जा रहा है, इस को रोकना

जाय और इप के लिए यह जो फैसला किया गया है कि इस के स्कोप को बढ़ाया जाय, मैं ममन्नता हूँ यह उन्होंने सही किया है।

आकड़ो को देखा जाय तो यह पता चलता है कि निर्माण के काम और रेल कर्मचारियों के ऊपर जो खर्च होता है दोनों में काफी का फर्क है। जकरन इप बात की है कि अगर कहीं फिजूलखर्ची है और रेलवे के अंदर फिजूलखर्ची तो उन को रोका जाय। तभी हम राजस्व के आम खाते में पैसा चुका सकेंगे। अगर सरकार का इरादा यह हो कि मजदूरों को, कर्मचारियों को सहूलियत न दे कर पैसा बचा ले और उमी को राजस्व खाने में डाल दे तो यह मुनासिब न होगा। रेल मजदूर उस को कभी स्वीकार नहीं करेंगे और मजदूर आन्दोलनों में काम करने वाले लोग भी इसे स्वीकार नहीं करेंगे। जहा जहा रेलवे का पैसा अटका पडा है, बगवादी हो रही है, रेलवे में जैसा अष्टाचार है, सब को मालूम है चोरी किस तरह से होती है सब को मालूम है, स्टोर के रख-रखाव पर क्या खर्च होता है, लाटनों की मेन्टेनेन्स पर क्या खर्च होता है—जब तक इन तमाम बातों की तरफ आप का ध्यान नहीं जायगा, वहा से पैसा निकालने की कोशिश नहीं करेंगे, तो जाहिर बात है कि जनरल रेवेन्यू में, आम-राजस्व में पैसा नडो दे सकेंगे। इस निशे मैं चाहता हूँ कि कर्मचारियों को आपने जो सहूलियत दी है कागज पर तो बहुत सारी सहूलियतें हैं लेकिन तमाम सहूलियतें कार्यान्वित नहीं हो रही हैं, उन्हें कार्यान्वित कीजिये। लोगों के पास रहने के मकान नहीं हैं, कई बार इस

विषय पर इस सदन में हम लोग बहम कर चुके हैं, दिल्ली के बारे में बहम हो चुकी है, आप ने 20 लाख के करीब मजदूरों में से केवल 5 लाख को मकान दिये हुए हैं—उन की तरफ सरकार का ध्यान जाना चाहिये।

इसी तरह से जनता को सहूलियतें मिलनी चाहिये। तीसरे दर्जे के यात्रियों की क्या स्थिति है—इस का बयान न करना ही अच्छा है। उनकी बहुत दयनीय स्थिति है। गर्मी के दिनों में तो और ज्यादा हालत खराब हो जाती है। पखे नहीं हैं, बिजली नहीं है, पानी नहीं है—इस लिये तीसरी श्रेणी के यात्रियों की सुविधाओं की तरफ भी सरकार का ध्यान जाना चाहिये।

इसी मन्दर्भ में एक बात में यह कहना चाहता हूँ कि आप रेल मजदूरों से काम लीजिए, हम भी उन के बीच में काम करने की तैमियत में उन को कहते हैं कि काम करो, माथ ही माथ पूरे दाम भी मागो, उन को पूर्ण मजदूरी मिले और वे काम भी करे। यह मुल्क किमानो, मजदूरों और गरीबों का मुल्क है, केवल शासन करने वालों का मुल्क नहीं है और न यह मुल्क टाटा, बिडला और दालमिया का मुल्क है यह 75 डजारेदारों का मुल्क नहीं है, गरीबों का मुल्क है इस लिये उन की तरफ सरकार का ध्यान जाना चाहिये। अभी कुछ दिन पहले 15 दिसम्बर को आप ने देखा कि यहा पर कितने लोग प्राये थे। मजमा के बारे में अखबारों ने 30 से 50 हजार लिखा है लेकिन उस से कहीं ज्यादा रेल मजदूर यहा प्राये थे और उन्होंने यह माग की थी कि उन्हें बोनम

[श्री रामाधर शर्मा]

मिलना चाहिये। अगर इन 15-20 लाख रेल मजदूरों को आप बोनस नहीं देते तो उन को कठिनाई महसूस होगी। महागाई बढ़ रही है—उस का फायदा उठे मिलना चाहिये। आप पड़गार्ड को रोक नहीं सकते। इस लिये उम का यद्दी दलाज है कि उन की तनखा में से दक्षिणी कीजिये, उन्हें बोनस दीजिये। उन के लिये वे कमीशन की रिपोर्ट जल्दी प्रकाशित हो और उम को लगू करवाइये ताकि हमारा मजदूर यह समझे कि यह हमारा देश है, हम जो उत्पादन करते हैं उन का हिस्सा हम को भी मिलना है। बोनस हमारा हक है। उम लिये उन की सुविधाओं की तरफ आप का ध्यान जाना चाहिये, तब ही हम सजायों में उन का कोआपरेशन ले सकेंगे।

रेलवे के अन्दर जो अष्टाचार व्याप्त है, जो चोरी चोरी होती है, हम में बड़े बड़े अफसरों शामिल हैं। मैं सब के लिये नहीं कह रहा हूँ, लेकिन बहुत से लोग इस में शामिल हैं। मैं जानता हूँ कि अष्टाचार के अन्दर जो रेलवे इम्प्लोयर्स एसोसिएशन शामिल है उस में कई चिट्ठी या आप को लिखी, वे अष्टाचार के विरुद्ध सरकार से कोआपरेट करने को तैयार है, लेकिन सरकार तैयार नहीं है। वे कहते हैं कि यह रिगनाइज्ड यूनियन नहीं है। मैं कहना चाहता हूँ कि आमदनी बढ़ाने के लिये तार्किक जनरल रेवेन्यू में आप पैसा दे सकें, आप तमाम मजदूरों का कोआपरेशन लीजिये, चाहे वह रिगनाइज्ड हो या अनरिगनाइज्ड हो और साथ ही साथ जनता का भी सहयोग लीजिये लेकिन जनता का सहयोग तभी मिलेगा जब आप उन के लिये काम करेंगे।

उम समय हमारे देश में बैंगन की बहुत शार्टेज है। आप कहते हैं कि शार्टेज नहीं है। मैं बिहार से आता हूँ। बिहार धन धान्य में परिपूर्ण राज्य है, जमीन के अन्दर सम्पत्ति भरी गड़ी है। कोयला निकाल कर रखा

बुरा है, लेकिन उम ने जाने के लिये कोई व्यवस्था नहीं है। कमी बिजली की काइसेज आ जाती है, कमी धर्मत पावर स्टेशन, पत्रगत और बरौती का काम नहीं पहुँचता। क्या हमारे यहाँ कोयले की कमी है? कोयले की कमी नहीं है, बैंगन की कमी है। मैं चाहता हूँ आप का ध्यान इस तरफ भी जाय।

इस सब बातों का ध्यान रखते हुए, यदि आप के पास फाजिल पैसा बचता है तो आप जनरल रेवेन्यू में ले जाएँ, इस कोई एतराज नहीं है। लोहा जनता की सहूलियतों को पहले देखना होगा, मजदूरों की सुहूलियतों को देखना होगा, और त्रिजत्र बतवाइये, बैंगन रूज बतवाइये, पीने के पानी का एतराज कीजिये, उम ने बाद कुछ बचे तो उम तरफ ले जाइयें—हमें कोई एतराज नहीं है।

डिप्टी-मेम ब्रैवियर के बारे में आप बड़ी दफा यह चुके हैं मुझे भी तर्कनीय नहीं है, क्योंकि उम हमारे सबेरा काम भाते। इस को रोकने के लिए मैं भी सहयोग लीजिए। यह काम केवल अफसरों में नहीं होगा, अफसर सहयोग करें, जनता सहयोग करे, मजदूर यूनियन सहयोग करें ता डिप्टी-मेम ब्रैवियर जरूर खत्म होगा।

मुझे उम्मीद है कि मजदूरों की तरफ सरकार ध्यान देगी ताकि जनता, मजदूर और रेलवे अधिकार, सब मिलकर रेलवे के आमदनी बढ़ा सकें।

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS
(SHRI T. A. PAI) Sir I am grateful to the hon. Members who have given me very useful suggestions. Whenever there is a debate on railways, I have heard off repeated complaints about bad catering, lack of amenities or third-class passengers, corruption, theft and ticketless travelling, which seem to be the perennial state of affairs. I would point out that there are greater things involving the railways

in this country, which require the attention of this House. I would require the help and assistance of this House to see that this organisation, which is the biggest public sector undertaking in this country and which is the lifeline of the communication and transport system in this country, is managed efficiently and much more efficiently.

I am grateful to the Railway Convention Committee for taking up four important subjects involving the management of the railways, namely, accounting, sub-urban services, commercial and allied matters and requirement and availability of wagons.

Coming to Accounting, though the book value of the assets of the railways would represent Rs. 3,500 crores, we may make a claim that the present market value of the assets are much more. But when a government undertaking owns immovable property, which has market value over the book value, it does not mean anything because we are not going to sell our assets. If all these years, up to the end of the year 1965-66, the railways have contributed substantially to the general revenues in this country, it is because half the total capital assets of the railways were valued at pre-war rates. This state of affairs could not permanently continue because every new asset at the present market rate is going to make the capital value of our assets more and more. A four-wheeler wagon, which ten years ago used to cost Rs. 16,000, now costs about Rs. 35,000. But it can convey only the same kind and amount of commodities: perhaps, a bit more with better designing. So, ultimately, it is the optimum use of these assets that may perhaps increase our profitability, and nothing else. In fact, it is not that we have been doing a lesser job. In 1951-52 we were moving 1,208 million passengers. In 1971-72 we moved 2,536 million passengers. Nearly 253 crores of passengers have moved by our trains in one year. As

against 215 million people, upto November this year, the figure is 233 million people. The number of passengers travelling by our trains is on the increase.

It is not only that. While in 1951-52, the passenger kilometre were 63,072 millions, in 1971-72, they are 125,033 million kilometres. So, they are covering larger and larger distances also. As regards the freight, while in 1951-52 it was 98.3 million tonnes, in 1965-66, it rose to 203 million tonnes. Of course, it came down in 1971-72 to 197 million tonnes. It is now moving up again. During the Fifth Plan, we expect to move at least about 300 million tonnes. It is nearly 50 per cent of what we did this year. So, the Indian Railways are getting into an era of mass-transportation of both the commodities and the people of this country.

I know. I am bound to listen to all the complaints that have come to me regarding catering. But the quality of food cannot be maintained throughout 365 days in a year. It varies from place to place. With the rise in prices, sometimes even adulteration could take place and we require continuous watch over the state of affairs. But the real thing is how to meet the problem of mass-catering. Formerly, it was only a problem of catering to the First Class passengers who form only 8 crores out of 253 crores of my passengers.

When we decided to abolish the Second Class in the Indian Railways, it was not a question of trying to do it on any ideological basis. Only 0.4 per cent of the people were traveling by Second Class. Today, the problem of Indian Railways is to look after the main cream of our business, that is, the Third Class passengers. In order to reduce overcrowding in the trains, in order to provide greater and greater passenger amenities, we may have to sacrifice even the classification. Here again, our society is so

[Shri T. A. Pai]

stratified, unfortunately, and we are after perquisites and privileges. The first protest that I have received from some of my employees is that they are being deprived of the chance of travelling by Second Class and that this decision has been taken by me unilaterally.

Ultimately, what I would like to point out is this. The question before the House is: Have we not lived too much on the assets that we have had? If we have contributed surpluses to the General Revenues in the past, have we or have we not provided sufficient depreciation in view of the fact that every time we have to go in for new rolling-stock or wagons, we may have to do it at a much higher cost? I am afraid these questions have not received enough attention.

I am glad, for the first time, the Convention Committee has raised these questions and have asked us to make a more effective study than what we have been able to do. It is absolutely necessary that the country must know how its large assets the Railways have, are being used.

Again, once the Indian Railways were considered the milch cow for the General Revenues. The moment you stop contributing to the general revenues, there is the criticism against the Railways that inefficient management has taken place overnight. They condemn the railways. Wherever condemnation is due, condemnation has to be there. But wherever appreciation is due, appreciation should be there. Unless appreciation is also mixed along with criticism even condemnation will not go fairly well. I would like to see, ultimately, how do you judge it.

One hon. Member of the House asked: Why do you contribute any surplus to the General Revenues? Why do you pay even the interest on the capital that you borrow from the Government? Whether I pay or not, if

the Government of this country has to borrow at 5½ per cent and it is not made good by somebody who uses that money, it is the poorest man in this country who will be called to pay more excise on kerosene or match box or sugar. So, ultimately if we are asked to contribute at least six per cent on this, it is logical. You have to see that your capital is most effectively used. Again, whenever any surplus is produced, let us not say that everything should go to the employees. Even the employees may not desire it. I quite agree that the employees should be looked after because management of railways is a service industry; management of men is also equally important as management of our resources. But if we get into a philosophy that, whenever an undertaking makes a profit, the general community in this country is not entitled to their share but whatever profits are generated in any undertaking should be distributed among the employees and the management, I think that would be a dangerous sort of thing..

SHRI K. S. CHAVDA: Not by increasing fares and freights.

SHRI T. A. PAI: You are complaining about fares and freight rates. Is there any railway system in the whole world which is called upon to bear social burdens as the Indian Railway system? The loss on unremunerative branch lines comes to about Rs. 8 crores. Any other country would have dismantled them, but we are required to keep them because where certain amenities were provided to the travelling public, I am not able to dismant them, now I would like to go into it and see how to reduce the expenses on them without reducing the facilities provided to the general public who have been making use of them.

I am very glad that these questions have been asked. Let the House raise these issues. They may tell me,

'You put a stop to ticketless travel; you will get Rs. 20 crores'. On passenger traffic in this country we lose Rs. 61 crores per year. Out of that, Rs. 12 crores represent loss on suburban traffic in Bombay, Calcutta and Madras, the three cities of India. I am not saying, 'What to do with this?' Let the fact be appreciated that the Indian Railway system today, so far as passengers are concerned, is incurring a loss. The passenger traffic is being subsidised by freight in this country. But for the profits that we make by moving goods traffic, we would not be able to move even these passengers. So, do not say that we are unnecessarily raising the passenger fares or freights. I may tell you that, in India, the average rate charged per passenger kilometre in 1969-70 was 2.46 paise. Ours is the lowest in the whole world. Even Burma charged 2.98 paise; Ceylon charged 2.62 paise, while it was 13.31 paise for U. K. . . .

SHRI K. S. CHAVDA: What is the per capita income in U.K.

SHRI T. A. PAI: What you pay for travelling is not based on per capita income. If I have the means of charging based on per capita income, this argument is quite valid. But there are millions of people in this country who do not travel by train and the loss is being borne by them also and not by the people who travel. So, let us not say that. I know, the burden of high passenger fare or freight cannot be borne by our country-men. I know they are poor. But this does not mean that wherever some adjustments are called for should not be made. If we want our people to go free, have everything free, how is that possible? Even the most affluent country in the world has not been able to provide it. Even those countries where there are more opportunities for better living, do not permit free movement of people from place to place on a mass scale as we do

SHRI K. S. CHAVDA: Ten per cent of the traffic travel free. Reduce it by 25 per cent.

SHRI T. A. PAI: About the people who travel free namely, ticketless travellers, on an analysis it has been found that 10 per cent of them are students, 12 per cent are beggars, 23 per cent are small business-men and small scale industrialists and 30 per cent are small farmers—socially weaker sections of the society whom we are encouraging through the banking system to build themselves up. I am not saying that they should travel free. But these are the facts of life in this country. Where do we go away from it? I would rather prefer to see how we go in for the maximum utilisation of the resources that we have, catering to the needs of the maximum number of people moving about and also moving the largest quantity of goods. That is the problem we have.

I am glad that the question of suburban traffic was raised. Sir, on the suburban traffic we are losing Rs. 12 crores. It is not because the fares are not paid by everyone, that we lose. On the monthly passenger tickets that we have issued at a fare of practically ten trips, people can travel any number of times for the whole month. All this has been responsible for our getting into losses. But, what I say is that if we have another index of measuring the performance of the Railways, not in terms of rupees and paise, but what is the economic contribution, what is the contribution the Indian Railway system has made, for the economic growth of the country, I think that should be a more positive way of evaluating our performance.

33 per cent of the goods we transport like foodgrains, coal, fruits and vegetables, fire-wood, are carried at a low cost of transportation. 75 per cent of what we transport like coal, iron ore or steel or cement as also

[Shri T. A. Pai]
the bulk commodities is being transported at a concessional rate. In prices, I would like you to know—during a period of six years, we have paid very heavily for the increase in the price of coal and some of the things. If the Indian Railways have to be managed economically, it can be done only provided the things that it uses very heavily, like the fuel or the iron and steel, are priced reasonably.

On coal, over a period of 20 years, from 1950 to 1971-72, we are paying 142 per cent extra. On Mineral oils we are paying 120 per cent extra. For electricity, we are paying 93 per cent more. For iron and steel we are paying 217 per cent more and cement 164 per cent.

Our performance, so far as our employees are concerned, cannot be considered to be something of which we have to be ashamed. In fact, I think we have to be proud. In 1950-51 what was the army of people working for the Indian Railways? Hardly nine to ten lakhs. Now, their number has doubled, including the casual labour; from 10 lakhs in 1951, to 18 lakhs in 1972.

Is there any undertaking in India which has increased its man-power two-thirds? It was the Railways that was considered to be one of the main institutions that could provide employment—I am not sorry that we have provided employment to so many people—but I want this to be appreciated that this public sector undertaking is employing the largest number of people. But for this. . . .

SHRI M. KALYANASUNDARAM: (Tiruchirappalli): You have also the largest number of casual labour.

SHRI T. A. PAI: Yes, we have the largest number of casual labourers. In this country, the working man is defined as the man who works. The man who has not got the work and is unemployed does not deserve the sympathy of any one. 3½ lakhs of casual labour. I wish I had the

strength to absorb them. But the fact is that we are trying to absorb them as and when vacancies arise. The alternative is not to employ these people at all. The alternative is to keep these people unemployed. It looks as if all of us are behaving sometimes like what people do in the third class carriages. I know I was also one of them. Once we got into it, we feel that we should close the door and do not permit anybody to come in, stretch ourselves as if it is all reserved for us. Similarly, if people who have jobs in this country think that it is all their preserve and that those who are unemployed do not matter, then we may have to see sympathetically, because the problem before this country is whether it should widen the base of employment or try to do its utmost for those who have. Both are equally important.

My friend, Mr. Kalanasundaram will agree with me that while we must consider their cases sympathetically, it will not be possible for me to absorb them. Let me not condemn 3½ lakhs workers. Let it be appreciated that we have 3½ lakhs of casual labourers for whom jobs have been provided by the Indian Railways system.

Sir, the per capita cost of an employee in 1950-51 was Rs. 1263 and in 1971-72 it is Rs. 3546. Another contribution that the Indian Railway system has been making is that it is losing Rs. 54 crores on low-rated freight traffic. There are various freight concessions on export trade also. There are certain relief measures undertaken. All these are to be taken into account. We had to remove even fodder from one part of the country to another at concessional rate. All these would account for some Rs. 125 crores. In a year now, Rs. 125 crores is the contribution that we make on our social burdens, which this Commercial Undertaking is taking up. I hope that this aspect will be duly taken note of. Our contribution to the welfare of our employees is also

not a small one. We contribute something like Rs. 20.13 crores on health, medical and welfare services; Rs. 3 crores on educational assistance to railway employees' children and Rs. 10.6 crores by way of subsidised housing of the employees.

As the single largest employer, the Railways have the right to feel legitimately proud that they have provided the maximum number of housing facilities. Hon. Members drew my attention and asked why I am not referring to some of the recommendations of the Convention Committee. Some of the recommendations are of immediate concern and some of the recommendations may be requiring that I should appoint some committees to go into depth in respect of certain matters, to look at the problem of the Railways in several respects. Some of them would relate to where the Railways have failed to do a job. For example, this relates to a sector where money was allotted for social welfare or welfare activities like housing but which has not been utilised. I give an undertaking that wherever this money is provided, it will be fully utilised. I don't think there should be any laxity in this matter.

Within our resources whatever welfare measures are needed by the employees are being attended to. We give this top priority because we know that time and again the Indian Railwaymen have risen to the occasion to bear burdens, next only to the defence personnel in this country. They have borne many burdens which should be fully appreciated.

Several hon. Members drew my attention to corruption. When I hear all that, it looks as if we have become a nation of corrupt people. I am not prepared to accept it. It would be only a small percentage; they misbehave; they do all these things. But, it is the system that permits such things. It is better to change that system rather than change men. Given opportunity, many people would like

to be corrupt. So, it is better to see that the system itself does not permit it. Whatever such instances are brought to my notice, I shall certainly see that we take immediate action and we will try to improve the system to the maximum extent possible.

The Committee has taken a great deal of trouble. They have examined in depth the various financial and accounting problems of the Railways. They have gone into various procedures, in depth.

The Committee is currently holding a number of sittings to go into commercial and allied matters and availability of wagons. They have also completed their sittings in respect of suburban services. I look forward to receiving valuable suggestions from the Committee for the improvement of all these important sectors of Railway operation.

Hon. Members have brought various points to my notice. I can certainly assure them that I will look into those points, as it is not possible for me to deal with all the points here. With these words, I commend the Resolution for the acceptance of the House.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Now, the question is:

"That this House approves the recommendations made in paras 1.1, 2.31, 3.18, 3.19, 3.27, 3.28, 4.12, 4.13 and 5.11 of the Report on Accounting Matters of the Committee appointed to review the rate of dividend payable by the railway undertaking to General Revenue as well as other ancillary matters in connection with the railway finance *vis-a-vis* the General Finance, which was presented to Parliament on the 15th December, 1972.

That this House further directs that the action taken by Government on the other recommendations made in the Report should