

12.49 hrs.

**\*DEMANDS FOR EXCESS GRANTS  
(RAILWAYS), 1959-60**

**Mr. Speaker:** We take no discussion on the Demands for Excess Grants in respect of the Budget (Railways) for 1959-60. Cut motions have been given already.

**DEMAND NO. 3—PAYMENTS TO WORKED  
LINES AND OTHERS**

**Mr. Speaker:** Motion moved:

"That a sum of Rs. 1,50,130 be granted to the President to make good an excess on the grant in respect of 'Payments to Worked Lines and others' for the year ended the 31st day of March, 1960".

**DEMAND NO. 7—WORKING EXPENSES—  
OPERATION (FUEL)**

**Mr. Speaker:** Motion moved:

"That a sum of Rs. 28,71,248 be granted to the President to make good an excess on the grant in respect of 'Working Expenses—Operation (Fuel)' for the year ended the 31st day of March, 1960".

**DEMAND NO. 8—WORKING EXPENSES—  
OPERATION—OTHER THAN STAFF AND  
FUEL**

**Mr. Speaker:** Motion moved:

"That a sum of Rs. 21,77,473 be granted to the President to make good an excess on the grant in respect of 'Working Expenses—Operation—Other than Staff and Fuel' for the year ended the 31st day of March, 1960".

Any cut motions being moved?

**AMOUNT SPENT ON UNIFORMS, CLOTHING  
AND STORES OF RAILWAY EMPLOYEES  
WORKING IN LOCO SHEDS AND OPEN  
LINES**

**Shri Nambiar** (Tiruchirapalli): I beg to move:

"That the demand for an excess grant of a sum of Rs. 21,77,473 in respect of 'Working Expenses—Operation other than Staff and Fuel' be reduced by Rs. 100." (1)

Sir, from the Demands for Excess Grants, it is seen that there is an Excess Grant in Demand No. 4. It is said that it is for Ordinary working expenses—Administration. The amount is very small and the hon. Deputy Minister for Railways might say that there cannot be much objection to the grant of Rs. 76 for administrative purposes. Though the amount is small, we consider that there is a principle involved, namely that in the matter of administration, generally speaking, the Railway Administration is not very efficient while dealing with the staff.

The railways are to supply uniforms to the staff and materials to the loco-sheds and workshops. Here is a Demand for an Excess Grant of a few lakhs of rupees for the supply of uniforms. I submit that certain sections of the railwaymen only are supplied with uniforms. Even this, they are not regularly supplied with. For instance, the pointsmen, the station masters and the guards who have to be supplied with uniforms do not get their supplies regularly. Even if they get their supplies, the uniforms do not fit in. There was a demand that instead of the stitched uniforms being supplied to them, the cloth and the stitching charges may be given to them, but this has not been accepted.

Sometimes, the pointsman looks like a monkey with the cap that he is given, which never suits his head. Similarly also, these pointsmen are given jackets which will suit only ladies and not men. While travelling in the trains, often we look at the pointsmen standing at the points with their monkey-like caps and jacket-like or frock-like dresses. On several occasions, we have demanded that these pointsmen and other staff should be given cloth and the stitching charges. I would request the hon. Minister to consider this question.

There is another Demand for paying the staff for a decree in the court. I would like to submit that it has

\*Moved with the recommendations of the President.

[Shri Nambiar]

become, of late, a practice with the Railway Administration not to pay the dues to the railwaymen in the form of their salaries, allowances or other settlements, with the result that very often they are forced to take the cases before the court. It is not an easy thing to take the cases to the courts and get decrees, because they have to undergo the difficulty of spending some money, and then waiting. Therefore, it is prayed that in the matter of settling the claims of the railway employees, the bureaucratic practice may be given up, and the employee may be given the opportunity to receive their salaries etc. through the administrative counters instead of they being compelled to go to the court, because in many cases, they spend more than what they get, with the ultimate result that they are incurring a loss. Therefore, it is again submitted that such occasions may be avoided, and proper payment may be made in time.

With regard to the supply of stores, I have to submit one thing, particularly with regard to supply of stores to the loco-sheds. Very often, in the open line, we see many engines go out without complete parts, and to put the matter straight, often, instead of the engines being allowed to go out with their own parts, parts from other stand-by engines are taken and fitted on to them, and so on. I know personally that in many places, this is so; for instance, in the Tambaram electric traction line, many of the traction units do not have their own fittings. Whenever the trains are to start, parts are taken from the nearby unit and fitted on to that unit. Even ordinary materials like nuts and bolts which can be easily made available are not properly supplied. This particular point has been canvassed here before during the discussions on the Railway Budget, and I would request the hon. Minister to see that the supplies are made properly.

Then, there is a Demand for Excess Grant in regard to fuel. Especially in the south, we find that the coal supply is so bad that the trains go often very late, as a result of the bad quality of coal supplied. And, here, we have provision for an excess grant to be made on that account. I submit that let better supply of coal be made, and if that is done, then delay in the movement of trains can be averted, moreover, the engines also will perform better with better quality of coal rather than with inferior coal. I know that there is shortage of coal, and there is also the difficulty of transporting the coal to the south. Even granting that, effort must be made to see that good quality coal is transported to the south, because with the help of the railways, other work could be done better. Since industrial progress is based on quick transport of coal, which is one of the main criteria to be taken into consideration, I submit that the supply of better quality of coal to the railways will help in improving the general condition of transport in the south. This point also may be taken into consideration.

With these words, I hope that the Railway Minister will consider these points carefully.

**Shri Priya Gupta** (Katihar): While speaking on the cut motion to the Demands for Excess Grants, I would submit at the outset that the renewal of the permanent way tracks, the renewal of the lines and the sleepers etc. are very much in arrears. We have seen even in the Delhi yard that wherever four dog spikes are required to be put, only two are put, and it is on such tracks that the main trains are running.

The brake blocks fitted to the wagons have got no nut or washer; only a split pin is put without the grover washer, with the result that by lateral movement when the split-pin is sheared, accidents happen. This is a matter which can be inspected

easily in the Delhi yard itself. That is so everywhere in India, but since the hon. Ministers are in close proximity to the Delhi yard, they may kindly go and examine these things.

In regard to the supply of stores, owing to stores not being available for the repair of the dilapidated and over-aged locomotives, wagons and other coaching-stock, only ordinary running repairs are being done by cannibalisation. You will be astonished to know that when an engine after having done some period of work is placed in the loco-shed for examination and re-certification by the examining fitter, the required period of time is not given for the overall examination after which alone it can be sent out again on the line, with the result that the staff in the event of failure, are charge-sheeted later on. This is the condition prevailing all over the railways.

This is one of the reasons why accidents happen. There are other reasons also, namely track not being maintained properly for want of sleepers, for want of lines, for want of dog spikes and other materials. No spare tools are also supplied to the key-man. If a key-man breaks one of the tools, he has to wait till the other one is supplied, and he has got to manage his work somehow. This is one of the main and reasonable causes why accidents occur, but, in spite of this, the staff concerned are being penalised.

As regards fuel, I would like to point out that fuel of a particular grade or a particular class is not being supplied to the drivers, and so, if the driver has got to consume more coal of an inferior grade or category, he is charge-sheeted for that purpose.

13 hrs.

Regarding staff, I would once again request that the Ministry should see that the arrears due to them are paid. Arrears in respect of leave salaries, overtime, travelling allowance and relieving allowance are never paid in

time. These arrears amount to crores in quantum.

Then I would request the Ministry of Health to clarify one point, whether registered and MBBS doctors doing private practice and not employed by the railways are less qualified to give medical certificates than doctors employed by the railways. I am told that in places where there is no provision of railway doctors, class III and class IV staff obtain medical certificates from private doctors. But these are not accepted as valid and therefore they are not paid the leave pay due to them and the period of absence is not treated as absence on account of sickness. It is automatically treated as L.W.P. Not only this, when the employee reports for duty fit to the subordinate in charge, he sends him to the railway medical authority of another station, and if the doctor there is absent, even the intervening period, the period between reporting for duty and his being given a certificate by the railway assistant surgeon is treated as L.W.P. The entire period i.e. sick period and joining period is treated as L.W.P.

The hon. Deputy Minister of Railways in reply to a question said that the certificate of private doctors would be accepted provided it was correct. I do not understand the meaning of the word 'correct' here. Is it that the private MBBS doctor available in the open market is different from the doctor engaged by the railways? Is it that the MBBS degree held by a private doctor is different from the MBBS degree held by the railway doctor? This has got to be ascertained.

Regarding operation, you will kindly see that as a matter of normal course the hours of employment regulations are violated. A guard comes for duty to take charge of a train. The train is delayed at the marshalling yard. The guard is compelled to wait there for four or five hours, until the wheels move. His duty starts only from the

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time the wheels move. That is, he has to wait for four or five hours and then put in his regular duty. By the time he finishes his duty, he is exhausted. The operational staff are forced to work beyond the hours specified. The authorities on the line increase his duty from 8 hours to 12 hours.

**The Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Railways (Shri S. V. Ramaswamy):** I do not know how all these points are relevant.

**Mr. Speaker:** I was also about to ask him that. He mentions the head 'operation'. From 'fuel', he begins to talk about the guards and so on.

**Shri Nambiar:** Maintenance requires staff.

**Mr. Speaker:** Track and those things are covered.

**Shri Priya Gupta:** Staff is there—sanction for staff payment.

**Mr. Speaker:** He just mentioned 'operation' and from there he begins to talk about when the guards are entrusted with their duties, when the wheels begin to move. That cannot be discussed under that.

**Shri Priya Gupta:** Operation is done by the guards. They are of the operational staff.

**Mr. Speaker:** He should not simply go by the dictionary meaning of 'operation'. He should also see what is mentioned under the Demand for Excess Grant.

**Shri Priya Gupta:** In respect of the Train lighting shift staff of the Electrical department of the North-Eastern Railway, who were doing continuous 8-hour duty since long the duty hours have been increased to 12 all of a sudden as a measure of economy.

**Mr. Speaker:** Under which Demand is he speaking?

**Shri Priya Gupta:** Misuse of the money.

**Mr. Speaker:** There is no Demand like that.

**Shri Nambiar:** He refers to Demand No. 5—Working Expenses—Repairs and maintenance.

**Mr. Speaker:** He has passed on to Demand No. 8. Now Shri Nambiar is taking him back to Demand No. 5

**Shri Nambiar:** All Demands are put together.

**Mr. Speaker:** No, no. He should be clear within himself as to what he is arguing.

**Shri Priya Gupta:** In respect of these Demands, I would request the Ministry to consider and tell us about the steps they are going to take to remove the difficulties I have pointed out as regards staff, their grievances, maintenance of tracks, non-renewal, non-supply of stores and other matters.

**Shrimati Renu Chakravartty (Barrackpore):** I just want to make one or two observations regarding Demands Nos. 8 and 15.

Under Demand No. 8, extra money has been spent on such railway operational expenditure as ticket handling etc. In Howrah station, which is one of the biggest and most busy stations in the whole of India, I think, there is great trouble in trying to get platform tickets. For a long time, we have been hearing that the Railway Ministry is proposing to start mechanisation of platform ticket issue. If you go in the evening when a large number of trains come and go out, you will find a long row. We have to wait for almost ten or fifteen minutes before we can get platform tickets.

Therefore, when all the time we are voting even excess grants, why cannot we have a small amount of expenditure incurred in automatising the issue of platform tickets instead

of doing it manually. We have always been told about foreign exchange difficulties. This time also, we may be told the same thing. But for the last five or seven years I have been hearing that this proposal is under consideration.

Coming to Demand No. 15, where we are talking about the construction of new lines and extra expenditure thereon, I want to point out to the hon. Minister and the Deputy Minister that a few days ago when I had raised the question of the Haldia-Kharagpur line and asked whether the alignment was going to be changed, they had assured me that there was no change in the alignment. But in spite of this assurance, hearing which we were all glad, we are told that actually survey work is still continuing between Pachkuda and Haldia. The local staff tell us that they have received no orders to the contrary, that actually survey work will continue between Pachkuda and Haldia. I want to be quite sure that we do not go in for an additional expenditure otherwise, later we will be told to vote again an excess grant.

Therefore, I would like to be enlightened on this point. Last time we were told that the Haldia line would pass through Kharagpur and thereby serve both north India and south India as well as west India. Therefore, on this point also I would like the hon. Minister to give a short reply.

**Shri U. M. Trivedi** (Mandsaur): When these Demands for Excess Grants are being discussed, I would like to draw the pointed attention of the hon. Ministers to the wastage which is being caused in open line works and in the construction and change of loco sheds. For years together, if a loco shed exists at a particular place and it enters the head of some engineer concerned that he can make more money by having the loco shed shifted from that place to some other place, immediately the old scheme is given up—where for a

hundred years the loco shed existed and where a big colony had been built up—and the whole big colony gets demolished, and a new loco shed somewhere else is constructed. I draw pointed attention to the scheme which is now being formulated at Neemuch. Neemuch is having a loco shed for the last 80 years. A scheme was mooted. About Rs. 11 lakhs were recently sanctioned for acquiring land and having a new loco shed with new lines and removing certain operational difficulties. But in comes some other engineer who has got a few contractors with whom he is very thick, and to have his purpose served he wants to shift this loco shed to Chittorgarh. Why this scheme is being formulated is not understood by me. All the guards are at Neemuch, all the drivers have got their houses at Neemuch, and a huge colony of nearly 18,000 houses is already there.

**Mr. Speaker:** On which Demand is the hon. Member speaking?

**Shri U. M. Trivedi:** Demand No. 7.

**Mr. Speaker:** Neemuch will not come here.

**Shri U. M. Trivedi:** Neemuch may not be here, but the working is there.

**Mr. Speaker:** The hon. Member is an experienced parliamentarian, and he knows what can be discussed on Demands for Excess Grants.

**Shri U. M. Trivedi:** The question is one of incurring expenditure which can be prevented, of saving.

**Mr. Speaker:** I do realise he is under very great pressures, but then he should not overlook the relevancy.

**Shri U. M. Trivedi:** All right, Sir.

**The Minister of Railways (Shri Swaran Singh):** Currently we are holding meetings of the informal Consultative Committee.

**Shri U. M. Trivedi:** It is very difficult to attend the meetings of your Consultative Committee, unless one gives up everything. I will get a salary of Rs. 27 out of Rs. 400 and out of that I will have to make both ends meet and make my children eat properly; and I will have to indulge in some other activities also.

**Mr. Speaker:** Is that an argument?

**Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath** (Hoshangabad): The meetings are fixed during the sittings of the House, from 3 to 5 p.m. or so and we cannot attend.

**Mr. Speaker:** Is that an argument to be addressed to the Chair that he has a more important task to do in order to earn more money than what he is doing?

**Shri U. M. Trivedi:** What is being addressed to the Chair is merely a reply to the question that is put. We will be glad to attend those meetings. There is absolutely no doubt in my mind that we should be very glad to, but the time that is fixed for the meetings of the Consultative Committee is such that one has to keep oneself in occupation from early morning.

**Mr. Speaker:** He can instruct the other Members who are there that they should do his job also.

**Shri U. M. Trivedi:** It becomes very difficult through proxies.

However, as I was saying, wastage in expenditure on railways, which is the result of the Demands for Excess Grants, must be avoided. That is the purpose of my making this suggestion. Every suggestion must be well looked into. I was merely giving an instance as to how these engineers sometimes do very great harm to our country for the sake of a paltry sum of money that they may be able to secure for themselves by backdoor methods.

You, Sir, must have travelled from Delhi to Bombay, and it is a very important line, but you will be surprised to find that stations have been built in such a manner as to be away at least four or five miles from the villages whose names are appended to the stations. Why has it been done so? There is a story, and the story is that one engineer wanted to make about Rs. 10,000 by having the location at a particular place. As it was not agreed to by the poor villagers...

**Mr. Speaker:** Now he is generalising and making accusations. He wanted only to put forward the case of one station, and now he is putting forward more.

**Shri U. M. Trivedi:** This is only a suggestion.

**Mr. Speaker:** I request him to confine himself to the things before the House.

**Shri U. M. Trivedi:** Whenever such things come, the Ministry would do well to look into the schemes that are suggested, as to why demolition of old structures is suggested and construction of new structures is contemplated.

Then I come to Demand No. 8 under the head "Revenue—Ordinary Working Expenses—Operation other than staff and fuel". Here, the excess that has been shown in the Appropriation Account is Rs. 21.95 lakhs, but for regularisation the PAC has suggested Rs. 21.78 lakhs. This is with reference to clothing stores. One very great complaint about the clothing stores is that the clothing issued is fixed. Measurements are not there. There are particular sizes like 1, 2, 3 etc., or I do not know how they are put down. Particular sizes of coats and pants are prepared and they are issued indiscriminately to the staff. What happens is that one who is six feet tall has to wear the pants which are fit only for one who is 4' 9" high. So, it becomes very difficult for him to wear it. Similarly, a coat which

can fit a person with a chest measurement of 40" is given to one who has a chest measurement of 32". It becomes extremely difficult for that man. He has got to get those things altered, and every those things altered, and every money out of it, the contractor makes more money out of it, and the poor staff does not derive benefit out of it. Therefore, I suggest that the cloth may be supplied to the staff and they may be paid something in the bargain for stitching charges, so that they may have suits made according to their measurements to fit them. That will save more money to the Government, and the money that goes into the pockets of the contractors can be saved.

**Mr. Speaker:** Is there not the danger in that case that the man will go to the cheapest tailor?

**Shri U. M. Trivedi:** Let him go. We will not grudge two annas or four annas going into the pocket of the staff.

**Mr. Speaker:** I was not only thinking of the money that he pays but the results achieved, the uniform that is on the person. Would that look decent?

**Shri Swaran Singh:** There will be wastage of cloth when the same lengths are supplied because some people will require more, some less.

**Shri Trivedi:** But what you are supplying is causing more waste.

**Mr. Speaker:** The Member says that it is not the cloth that is tailored to the requirements of the staff, but it is the staff that is tailored to the requirements of the cloth. That is his allegation.

**Shri Nambiar:** Exactly.

**Shri U. M. Trivedi:** This is what is going on. What they supply is not with reference to the particular person, but what they have got, whether it fits the person or not, whether he is Shri Ramaswamy's height or Shri Swaran Singh's height.

**Mr. Speaker:** They have no complaint about that.

**Shri U. M. Trivedi:** Because they are not supplied uniforms.

**Shri Swaran Singh:** Why not your size?

**Shri U. M. Trivedi:** My size will fit many persons.

I suggest one little thing more, and it is this, that there must be some control over the speed of the trains, not in the sense that there is excess speed but that it is being lowered. We seem to be going slower. We must put a stop to this slow movement that we are indulging in. At my place they are running trains at 23 miles an hour. Will you kindly look into that, whether it is due to lack of fuel supply or lack of efficiency that has crept in, as a result of which the train is moving at a snail's speed. Because we are very docile people, we do not complain, we have no papers, we do not create a hullabaloo, we are not living in Bombay and our voice does not reach you, the net result is that we suffer. Although we are very docile, I hope you will hear the complaint we are making.

**Shri Dasaratha Deb (Tripura East):** I am speaking on Demand No. 15. I am glad that the Railway Ministry has started the construction of the new railway line from Patharkandi to Dharmanagar. In the beginning the work was speedy, but in the last six months the work has been held up due to some reason which I do not know. The other day also I told the House that our communications depend only on air and that is why our people are finding it very difficult. After a long struggle, the Ministry has agreed to construct the new railway line, but if that work is also held up like this, it would be very difficult for us and make us miserable. That is why I request the Ministry that it must be completed at least during the Third Plan.

[Shri Dasaratha Deb]

This line is upto Dharmanagar only which is only 24 miles. From there to Agartala is about 126 miles, which is the life line of Tripura. This line should be extended further by 32 40 miles Survey work should be made during the third five year plan. (Interruptions).

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, order. He has made that request also; it was not at all relevant.

**Shri Dinen Bhattacharya** (Serampore): In respect of Demand No. 4, I want to make a submission about the problems faced by the commercial clerks of the Eastern Railways. It is unjust that in spite of repeated representations by the concerned employees through proper channel they are not being looked into. About the promotion of these commercial clerks, the Eastern Railways and the Railway Board follow a different policy. By this the Railway Ministry also lost a huge sum of money by promoting junior hands. Although the Railway Board by their circular letter No. ENG 61/PM/13 dated 26-1-1962 asked the general managers of all the railways to follow a uniform policy in the matter of promotions of commercial clerks and promote such categories of clerks strictly on a seniority basis. but sir, things have not improved in the Eastern Railway even after that circular letter. I will request the hon. Minister to look into the matter and also see that the claims of clerks who have been superceded may be conceded.

Again I request the hon. Minister to realise the difficulties of the booking clerks of Howrah.

**Mr. Speaker:** We are now dealing with Excess Demands.

**Shri Dinen Bhattacharya:** This is under 'Administration'.

**Mr. Speaker:** Administration is too general a term; it is a vast subject.

**Shri Dinen Bhattacharya:** Passenger traffic has increased three or four times in Howrah but arrangements regarding the booking system has not changed. Each clerk has to cater more than 400 stations. On the 5th of May there was so much of rush that the police had to lathi charge the persons standing in queue for purchasing tickets and there was a question about it in the Parliament. But the Minister in his reply denied it. But with a due sense of responsibility I may say that there was a lathi charge on the persons who were purchasing tickets.

**Mr. Speaker:** That is not the Excess Demand; the Excess Demand is only for Rs. 76!

**Shri Dinen Bhattacharya:** In this connection I suggest that the working hours of the city booking offices with additional staff in Calcuta may be increased and some new city booking offices may be opened. Then the pressure on the booking counters at Howrah will be reduced.

**Mr. Speaker:** He must conclude. Rs. 76 is the Excess Demand; he is speaking all this on that Demand!

**Shri Dinen Bhattacharya:** By doing this and also by the appointment of more booking clerks position can be improved.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, order. I cannot allow this. I have been asking the hon. Members to be relevant; none of them have been. I am very sorry. If such latitude is given we will lose the reality of the Debate altogether. They ought to confine themselves to the subject that is before us. I cannot allow unlimited latitude. Shri D. C. Sharma.

**Shri D. C. Sharma** (Gurdaspur): On Demand No. 3, I want to ask the hon. Minister: How long will these lines continue to be owned by others? How long will the Railway Ministry take to get hold of these branch lines and run them? The Demand is for Payment to owners of

branch lines'. Who are these owners? What are their terms of contract with them? When is the contract going to be renewed? The House must get an answer to these things. It is no use having this kind of a patch work railway system in my country. How long are these subsidies going to be paid for the lines worked by the private companies? When we became independent, we thought that we would not have private companies at least in this field but they continue even after fifteen years of Independence. I do not want that the Railways should be so diversified as to have the main parts owned by the Government and a few parts owned by private companies. Something should be done about this.

I now turn to Demand No. 7 coal. There are so many questions put about the inferior quality of coal, wastage, pilferage, etc. of coal. How is it that coal has to be diverted from one part to another? Are not estimates prepared with a due sense of reality? If the amount of coal required at one place is sense there, what is the need for diverting coal from one place to another? This shows only lack of good foresight. Sometimes inferior coal is given in place of higher grade coal. Why does it happen? All these show lack of foresight on the part of the Ministry. All the trouble about coal is due to this. People do not get the kind of coal or the quantity of coal that they need. They are always given coal which is not necessary. Moreover why are we talking always in terms of high grade coal and inferior grade coal? There are grades of coal. I believe something has got to be done so that coal business gets straightened up and does not lend itself to all kinds of vagaries to which we have got accustomed not only when we discuss the general Budget but when we discuss the supplementary demands and at other times also.

13.20 hrs.

[MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER in the Chair]

My third point is about the clothes and stores and stationery and other things. I am definitely of the opinion that the stationery and other forms have deteriorated during the last few years. They are not of good quality; the quality has gone down. Perhaps it will be said that prices have gone up and the quality too has gone down. But I find that in most stations articles of stationery, such as forms, etc. are in short supply. Sometimes questions are put in Parliament about lack of adequate supply of these forms. Sometimes even tickets are not available; tickets are in short supply. Why is it that all these things are not coming in the right quantities?

About clothing I do not know what has to be said about it. But I am definitely of the opinion, firstly, that the quality of cloth is not as good as it should be. Secondly, the uniforms that are supplied to these people do not generally fit them. I have seen some of the booking clerks and others and have asked them how it was that the coats were a little bigger for them and the trousers did not fit them properly. They said that these things are done at the head office and they have only to use them. Clothes show the man. Clothes are a very, very important part of human beings. Clothes show what kind of person the wearer is. If the Railway Minister gives uniforms to the booking clerks and railway guards which do not fit them, it means this: as uniform show the man, they say that the uniforms are not suitable and therefore they are not also very smart, very up-to-date and very efficient. So, the uniforms given to the railway employees should be of the right quality and of the right dimensions and of the right proportions.

Of course, the Speaker was good enough to say that formerly the tailors were made for the employees but now the employees are made for the tailors. I think it should be the other way round. But I do not want to suggest any remedy. I only want to say that

[Shri D. C. Sharma]

the uniforms which give about the person the first and the right impression, in regard to the quality of the person's personality, should be such as do not give one any wrong notion about the person working in the railways. I do not know what is happening but I am sure that something should be done to give the people the right kind of uniform so that they feel proud of their jobs, feel proud of the work that they are doing and feel proud of the duties that they have to discharge.

Then I want to know what these freight charges are. Freight charges are standardised charges, and there cannot be any variation in them. Perhaps there is something about these freight charges which I do not understand, but my feeling is that these freight charges are standardised uniform charges. Yet, I see that we are being asked to give a little more for variation and adjustment of the freight charges. Then, I feel that the Railway Ministry should be a little more careful about coal and about the branch lines. I think this is a kind of jagirdari or zamindari which we have got in the Ministry. I hope that the Railway Minister will abolish this kind of zamindari as soon as possible.

**Shri Subbaraman (Madurai):** I wish to say a few words about Demand No. 7. An amount of Rs. 28 lakhs odd is required in addition to what was already sanctioned. The main reasons are given in the explanatory note. An amount of Rs. 24 lakhs are required for freight handling charges, etc., on coal as a result of rebookings and diversions of good quality coal within the limits of such coal received in relation to increasing supplies of inferior grade coal. Though huge amounts have been spent, still we find that the trains are running late. The main reasons given to us is the supply of inferior quality of coal and we find that the amount spent has been of no use or benefit. We do not know whether the reason given is correct or

not. Whatever it may be, I request the hon. Minister to find out whether the late-running of trains is due to the supply of inferior coal or not. If it is due to the supply of inferior quality of coal, then, good and proper quality of coal should be supplied, and proper measures should be taken so that the trains do keep up time.

**Shri S. V. Ramaswamy:** Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, taking the points made by Shri D. C. Sharma first. I would like to submit that at present we do not have any scheme for taking over these branch lines. There are about 11 branch lines with a total distance of 584 miles, and their book value is about Rs. 5 crores. Some of them belong to the district boards and the others to certain limited companies. We have certain contractual obligations to run them and if there is a profit above a particular limit we share the profit. This is a hang-over of the past. It continues, because we do not wish to expend our resources on buying something which is obviously not worth buying. The materials on these branch lines are worn out, and they have got different periods when the contractual obligation can be terminated either by the Government or the district board concerned. I need not go into the details. But as and when these contractual obligations are to be terminated, the question may be considered. But, at present, the Government have no policy of taking them over because we want to utilise our resources on new capacities and on developing other resources in the context of the needs of the third Five Year Plan. Therefore, we have got to respect our contractual obligations and pay the subsidies according to the several contracts as and when they arise. This cannot be obviated.

Several hon. Members including the last speaker, Shri Subbaraman, mention about the quality of coal. This fact should be understood by the hon. House: formerly the best quality of coal was given to the railways. But after

the setting up of the steel plants in the public sector and elsewhere, all the best coal goes to the steel plants. They have got the first priority. We are left with only that quality of coal which is not the best. If this has to be improved and if the low-grade coal has to be brought up to a higher grade, washeries have got to be set up. These low-grade coals have a high ash-content. If they are washed in the washeries the ash goes off and the grade is improved. We are trying to set up washeries, and until such time as the washeries get into operation and we are able to improve the low-grade coal to a higher grade, it will be difficult to have the very best coal for the railways. Therefore, we have got to put up with this difficulty for some more time.

Shri Subbaraman asked whether the maintenance of punctuality is affected by the quality of the coal. It is so. Sometimes, the engine is not able to pick up steam and develop the pressure that is needed to take the load. That is largely due to defective coal. We expected the production of coal of high grade according to a certain plan but that did not fully materialise. After all coal is a product of nature and it has got to be dug out. We anticipated coal of a certain grade in a particular place, but it is not of that grade and the railway has got to improve that grade. That is what we are trying to do and we shall soon achieve it.

The other point prominently made was about clothing, about which a cut motion was moved by Shri Nambiar. As usual, he was exaggerating certain things and said that when they put on the caps, they look monkey-like. Certain skull caps are monkey-like; it all depends on the angle of view that he takes. But by and large, the dresses that we have provided for various categories of railway employees are really good. Shri Sharma

mentioned about quality. The quality is really good. I may assure the House that I myself have visited a number of clothing depots and I have found that the quality of cloth is certainly good. Take, for instance, the Southern Railway. They have got their own cloth factories and all these are done by electric cutting machines. There are highly paid tailors and expert who are looking into this. Some-time back, it was brought to the notice of this House—I think it was in the last Parliament—that the dress that was being supplied to the various railway employees was not good. We went into the question.

**Shri Priya Gupta:** There was a Dress Regulation Committee. May I know whether its recommendations have been accepted and when they are going to be implemented?

**Shri S. V. Ramaswamy:** The recommendations of the committee are there. We are examining them; we have not yet fully implemented them. The dress is prepared according to the various sizes, but it is in the matter of distribution that some mistake has occurred. But by and large, it has been rectified. If the suitable size is given to proper person, there is no difficulty at all. But if size A is given to a man who should have size B, it is ill-fitting. That is due not to the tailoring, but to the distribution. We are checking this and we have almost rectified it.

**Shri Nambiar:** The dress that is being supplied today is being restitched by all categories of railway employees. Is the Government aware of it? They are not using the dress as such; they are spending more money and restitching the dress.

**Shri S. V. Ramaswamy:** Again my friend is indulging in exaggeration, when he says that all the clothes are restitched. It cannot be all; it can only be in some cases. As I have

[Shri S. V. Ramaswamy]

submitted, there are some mistakes. There are a series of different sizes determined, which do fit in by and large into the railway employees. But in the distribution, there is some slight mistake and alteration does take place. With regard to the distribution of cloth and allowing them to stitch their own cloth with their own tailors, the Speaker himself has remarked and I need not add to it.

By and large, our tailoring departments have worked well. I may inform the House that apart from these factories, we cut the cloth according to the various sizes and distribute it to the *mahila samitis*. In these *mahila samitis*, the wives of Class IV employees are given this work and they earn an extra living. They learn this tailoring and earn about Rs. 25 to Rs. 30 per month. That is the way in which we are augmenting the resources of the Class IV employees.

**Shri Priya Gupta:** In which railway?

**Shri S. V. Ramaswamy:** In almost all the railways—N.E. Railway, Southern Railway, Western Railway, Central Railway, etc. The hon. Member may go and visit the centres where wives of officers are doing very fine honorary work. They are leading the way. Some of them are taking tailoring classes and teaching tailoring to the wives of these poor employees, so that they may earn a better livelihood. I do wish the House appreciates these things; it can appreciate only if hon. Members go round and see these things.

In regard to decrees of court, I do not think there is any delay about dispersal of salaries, wages, etc. We are dealing with 11 lakhs employees and what is the number of decrees? The number of decrees is a handful; you can count them on the fingers of one hand. About that, my hon. friend, Shri Nambiar said that there are enormous delays and employees are being forced to go to court. There

are certain complicated cases, where as a last resort, an employee may go to court after having exhausted all other procedures. But these are exceptional cases; they do not happen as a rule. So, my friend was wrong in submitting to the House that we are forcing the employees to go to the court of law.

About stores and locosheds, certain things were said which are not germane to this. We are looking into that matter. We are taking keen interest to see that proper stores are sent to the loco workshops and there should not be difficulty in putting them in order. There are some difficulties because some of these parts may have to be imported and they may not be readily available. My friend remarked that there was some cannibalisation going on. In an emergency, there may be cannibalisation.

**Shri Priya Gupta:** It is the regular practice in loco sheds.

**Shri S. V. Ramaswamy:** Perhaps he is talking with fuller knowledge. In certain emergencies, cannibalisation may have to be resorted to, but...

**Shri Nambiar:** It has become the normal practice. If I am wrong, I am prepared to be corrected.

**Shri S. V. Ramaswamy:** Coming to the points raised by Shrimati Renu Chakravartty about Haldia, we are surveying the various alignments. We have not taken any final decision. When that is taken, the House will certainly be made aware of it.

As regards the automatic ticket counters, I think it is a very good suggestion. Probably we do not have the resources to make it in our country. It is worthwhile exploring its possibilities it will relieve to a great extent the congestion in the booking offices. These are some good suggestions for action and we shall examine them.

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** I shall now put Shri Nambiar's cut motion to the House.

The cut motion was put and negatived.

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** The question is:

"That the respective excess sums not exceeding the amounts shown in the third column of the order paper be granted to the President to make good the amounts spent during the year ended the 31st day of March, 1960, in respect of the following demands entered in the second column thereof.

Demands Nos. 3, 7, 3."

*The motion was adopted.*

PRESIDENT'S PENSION (AMENDMENT) BILL

**The Minister of Home Affairs (Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri):** I beg to move:

"That the Bill to amend the President's Pension Act, 1951, be taken into consideration."

The present President's Pension Act provides for a life pension of Rs. 15,000 per annum to a President, who has retired from his office. The first President to retire was Dr. Rajendra Prasad. At the time of his retirement, entirely on our own, we felt that this amount may not be adequate for the retiring President. We thought about it not only keeping in view the case of Dr. Rajendra Prasad, but we felt there should be a law which would be applicable to all retiring Presidents. It is true that it struck us specially when Dr. Rajendra Prasad was about to go away. The House is aware of the fact that Dr. Rajendra Prasad was seriously ill only a few months before his retirement and he did not regain his full health even when he did retire. In the circumstances, we felt that it was essential for Government to see that he is looked after fully after his retirement and his health should not suffer in any way. We, therefore, thought

to put forth an amendment to the present Act with a view to providing him the necessary medical facilities, and it will be found that in the Bill we have provided for medical attendance and treatment free of charge.

The second amendment is to provide a sum of Rs. 12,000 per annum for secretarial assistance. This might appear to be somewhat an innovation. But I have to submit, Sir, that it is not so. It is to be realised that the President when he retires does not lose all his importance. Contrary to that, with all his experience and maturity he is in a position to give advice and guidance to the people and to the country in his non-official capacity also. I have no doubt that the retiring President will have many calls on him—I am not keeping in mind only Dr. Rajendra Prasad, I am thinking of all the other Presidents who will function as Presidents and then retire, who will succeed one after the other. The President who retires may be invited to a number of meetings and conferences. He may have to make speeches. He may have to deal with abundant correspondence. Naturally, people will like to get his advice and guidance in regard to many matters. Even today, Dr. Rajendra Prasad Ji is attending an important international conference in Delhi. So we felt that it would be desirable to give the ex-President an additional amount for this purpose, because the pension that he gets at present will not meet the additional requirements about which I have just now mentioned.

The President, it is also necessary, should have proper assistance. He should have—either one or two, whatever may be the number within the ceiling of Rs. 12,000—competent and efficient assistants so that the advice or the assistance given to him by his staff leads to accuracy and timeliness. Whatever he says and whatever statements he makes will carry weight and, therefore, accuracy etc., is absolutely important.

\*Moved with the recommendation of the President.