

copy of the amendment has omitted the first part and has incorporated only the second part. I beg to move:

(i) Page 2, line 7 for "5" substitute "5(1)".

(ii) Page 2, after line 9, add:

"(2) The Central Government shall cause every rule made under this Act to be laid as soon as may be after it is made before each House of Parliament, while it is in session for a total period of thirty days, which may be comprised in one session or in two successive sessions, and if before the expiry of the session, in which it is so laid or the session immediately following, both Houses agree in making any modification in the rule or both Houses agree, that the rule should not be made, that rule shall thereafter have effect, only in such modified form or be of no effect, as the case may be, so however that any such modification or annulment shall be without prejudice to the validity of any thing previously done under that rule." (2).

As you are aware, Sir, in all recent enactments of Parliament, in which Government takes upon itself the power to make rules, a similar provision has been incorporated. In this case also, Government is taking power upon itself to make rules. So, to be in conformity with the pattern we have been following, I think it is necessary and also desirable that we should have a provision like this. Hence my amendment, and I hope Government will accept it.

Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri: I am sorry the hon. Member was not present in the House when this Bill was being discussed. If he had been present, he would have sensed the feelings of the Members of this House and, perhaps, he would not have liked to move his amendment. Since he was not here, he does not know that the consensus of opinion in this House was that this

amount of Rs. 12,000 per annum should be placed at the disposal of the President, no rules as such should be framed and that it should find a place in the Act itself. That was the general sense of the House. Now, if the hon. Member comes forward with this amendment, it would in fact be going against the wishes that were expressed in this House.

It is a small matter and the rules will be framed. As I said, the convenience of the President also will have to be taken into consideration. So, I do not think all this paraphernalia is needed in this Bill. Therefore, I would request the hon. Member to withdraw his amendment.

Mr. Speaker: Does he want to withdraw his amendment?

Shri Siddananjappa: Yes, I am prepared to withdraw it if the House has no objection.

Amendment No. 2 was, by leave, withdrawn

Mr. Speaker: The question is:

"That clause 4 stand part of the Bill".

The motion was adopted.

Clause 4 was added to the Bill.

Clause 1, the Enacting Formula and the Long Title were added to the Bill.

Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri: I move:

"That the Bill be passed".

Mr. Speaker: The question is:

"That the Bill be passed."

The motion was adopted.

16.05 hrs.

MOTION RE: RAILWAY ACCIDENTS

Mr. Speaker: The House will now take up the motion to be moved by Shri Nath Pai regarding railway accidents.

Shri Nath Pai (Rajapur): Mr. Speaker, I beg to move:

"That the situation arising out of recent series of accidents on the railways including the accident to the Poona-Bangalore Express involving loss of life and property, be taken into consideration."

Mr. Speaker, an accident has been defined in legal terms as something which a legitimate degree of care, precaution and diligence cannot prevent, but if we take into consideration the frequency and regularity with which accidents are taking place on the Indian railways, I think it will be a little exaggeration to describe these tragedies as mere accidents. We may not be successful in improving the regularity of the arrival and departure of our trains but, certainly, we are fulfilling the average quota of accidents which have been taking place in this country on our railways since 1939. There seems to be an inexorable regularity with which the accidents are taking place. There is a dismal record of accidents since our new Minister took over. Our sympathies go to him and we realise that he cannot be, as yet, held responsible for what is happening but, none the less, one notes this tragic fact.

Before I take into consideration certain other aspects, I should like to draw the attention of the House to this gloomy picture. The House assembled on the 16th and we were beginning to take oath and we took our papers and found that a serious accident had taken place on one of the railways. This has been the pattern right up to date. I have found with such material as we could collect that as many as 22 serious accidents have taken place during this period, that is, from the 16th of April to the 18th of June. In less than seven weeks 74 lives were lost on the Indian railways. The number of injured runs into hundreds and the loss of property has yet to be ascertained, and this is not something peculiar that is happening this year; this has been the pattern every year.

I would like to draw the Minister's attention to a survey that was conducted in 1961. During the first six months, there were as many as 1,883 accidents. Earlier, when the country was vexed with the growing spectacle of these accidents, a committee was appointed in 1954, which is now known as the Shahnawaz Committee. That Committee, in its summing up, had pointed out that, on an average, we were having accidents which are recorded, accidents which are taken note of, accidents which disturb the public conscience and, therefore, force the hands of the railway administration to look into—because, the number of minor accidents which are glossed over, which are ignored, which are never recorded, they run into bigger figures; here I want to draw attention to the fact that from 1st January, 1953 to 10th January, 1954 there were as many as 3,282 accidents just in one year—about 3,500 to 4,000 such accidents of a serious type are taking place every year. I think we seem to be keeping up the record.

Now, what is the reason for this? Normally, whenever they are confronted with a serious tragedy, like the one that recently took place at Dhanbad or Jaipur, because of pressure of Parliament and public opinion and strong criticism in the press, they come and announce the formation of a committee or an inquiry. We also heard the announcement that a Committee has been appointed under Pandit Kunzru. Only, one does not as yet know what progress that committee has made. Now and then, even an inquiry is ordered and, later on, its gloomy findings are placed on the Table of the House. But I should like to submit to the House that the malady is indeed very deep-rooted. Unless we are prepared to go into the causes the one certainty we can entertain about the performance of our Railways is that the number of accidents and their frequency is likely to increase. The Railway fail as they did fail in the Second Plan period. I remember that

he had contradicted my figure, but I **have come equipped with the figure.** The Railway had failed during the Second Plan period to move that amount of goods which it was expected to move. I am not quite sure, looking at its performance today, if particularly in the movement of strategic goods, like, steel, iron and coal, which is causing serious bottlenecks in wide sections of industry, any improvement would come about. Only yesterday we read reports of a conference which was held under the aegis of the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh to look into these bottlenecks and if some remedies could be suggested to move coal. I do not know if any improvement would come about. I should like to pray that the new hon. Minister succeeds and the improvement comes about. But one thing that we will be succeeding in is in maintaining the record of these accidents unless these causes which are well known are removed. It is not a mystery. A railway accident in very few cases is something, that cannot be avoided. In our country the majority of accidents as committee after committee has told this country are such which a reasonable degree of care, precaution, diligence and conscientiousness of duty would have prevented. It is this failure to exercise this caution and this degree of care and attention which is causing these accidents.

I will be taking now one of the very important causes of these accidents. Let us take track maintenance in this country. Very proudly they say that the Railways have done a brilliant job of work and then they quote the certificates distributed and dished out by experts. These experts' certificates are a little sickening because they are a combination of a condescension and ignorance about the conditions in India. When they come they come with the idea that this is a country of Maharajas and snake-charmers. They are bewildered by the spectacle of trains moving driven by Indian hands and of course they are ready to give you any certifi-

cate because they come with this kind of deepseated prejudice and ignorance. There is condescension in those certificates. When we are told that the performance of the Indian Railways is among the best in the world, I should beg of the Cabinet Ministers not to dish out and not to go round for these labels and certificates because rarely the Railways come in for some kind of criticism. We are reminded of the certificate given by the team of the World Bank, by the team which came from Switzerland or the United Kingdom and who-not and what-not. I should therefore plead with them not to place such a high premium in the light of our experience, of what we experience every day ourselves, on certificates given by guests who come here because, firstly, ignorance and then perhaps politeness, demands that they do not say very harsh truths.

Having said this, let me now point out something for the consideration of the hon. Minister. What is the condition of our track? What is the condition of the rail? What is the condition of the bridges? What is the condition of the sleepers? It will not be an exaggeration to say that we have a spectacle, as earlier an hon. Member had sought to say, of tired, overworked men labouring on exhausted engines, running on weakened rails which are supported by a dilapidated track which, in its place, is held by sleepers which are worn out and very often eaten away. I will be giving statistics and figures to substantiate what I have to say on this point

Taking the case of tracks alone the arrears on the 31st March, 1960, of all gauges were 4,173 miles complete track renewal. There was an arrear due of 1,590 miles through rail renewal and 1,463 miles through sleeper renewals making a total of 7,226 miles. The number of sleepers that were in arrears for spot renewals has not yet been counted. The Railway Board had laid down the minimum cushion of clean ballast to be provided under sleepers. There are thousands of miles of track where this cushion is

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not there or where the ballast is worn out or is broken indifferently. This is the arrears. Normally on the Indian Railways 1,400 miles come for renewal. At the end of the Third Five Year Plan nearly 7,000 rail miles will be due for renewal. Have we the capacity and the plan for it?

There is another permanent feature which needs to be looked into. What is the capacity of the rail? What is its strength in India? What is the pattern in the world? It is one of the causes of the accidents. Here, to be precise, I will be referring to my notes. No railway in the world carrying heavy traffic uses 90 lb. and 60 lb. rails, 2,137 and 2,200 sleepers per mile of broad gauge and metro gauge track respectively. This is one of the inherent things. The traffic is increasing. The traffic is heavy. It is true that before independence this was a good enough pattern. Then the traffic moved at a much slower tempo and that traffic was not heavy. We are approaching, I think, a dangerous point and unless these fundamental causes which are coming in the way of the smooth functioning of the Railways are removed and failing to give that service which we are entitled to expect from this primary means of transport in the country, I do not think we shall be making any progress. It is no wonder that we are failing in every aspect of the targets.

I will be taking some other aspects also. What about the bridges? I would like to know from the hon. Minister as to how many girders are in danger and how many girders and spans have been renewed, with how many we are just carrying on not knowing what will be happening. Now we are confronted with the shortage of foreign exchange because those need to be imported. But there was a time when with sufficient foresight and a little more vision and energy we could have afforded to buy when there was a sellers' market in the world. We ignored that. I may say that perhaps

the Railway Board has missed its bus. They may not like the competition with the roads; so, I may say that they have missed the train. I should like to point out that this is what is done.

They point out in their report that it is human failure which causes this number of accidents. Train accidents are mainly attributed to failure of station and train staff to follow the rules and to flaw in metal or design of rolling stock. The majority of accidents attributed to flaw in metal of rolling stock is really due either to faulty workmanship in workshops or neglecting running maintenance. I will take these two points in detail later. At this stage I will be speaking about this human failure.

When it was pointed out that it is due to the failure of the station masters and other staff to adhere strictly to the rules all the station masters decided that they were going to follow faithfully the rules to their very letter and spirit. What happened? There was a dislocation. Trains could not be moving and they got late everywhere. What happens is this. There is the Divisional Operational Superintendent in charge of movement. He comes and tells the station masters one after another, "Your job is to see that the train moves and moves speedily. It does not matter what happens. Accidents is none of your worry or my worry. See that the trains move." Then there is the Divisional Superintendent (General) in charge of accidents. He comes and says, "Whatever else may happen, accidents must not take place". Here is the poor station master sandwiched between these two contradictory orders. One officer says, "No accidents whatever else happens"; the other officer comes and says, "Whatever else may happen, no delay." Of course, the country in the process gets enough delay and enough accidents. But these are the mutually contradictory pressures to which the lower staff is subjected and we see what happens in the process.

I will be taking now some of the other things which can be remedied. There was almost a quixotic statement when the Asian Conference of Railways was held in India. We all admire the generosity and the spirit behind it, but the hon. Railway Minister of a country which still continues to import sleepers, rails and locomotives going and telling, "We are ready to supply you with everything you need to build your railway" looked a little ridiculous to those who were in the know of things and when we are still importing sleepers from Australia not of a very good quality.

The Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Railways (Shri S. V. Ramaswamy): We are not importing sleepers for the past three years.

An Hon. Member: From Australia.

Shri Nath Pai: After some enquiry and scandal.

Shri U. M. Trivedi (Mandsaur): We are lacking 4 lakh sleepers to be laid on the metre gauge with the consequence that we are running our trains at a speed of 23 miles an hour.

Shri Nath Pai: I wish some of this energy will be directed in improving the performance of the Railways. Incidentally, he will be having his time and I will be giving a reply later on.

Now I will be saying something about engines. I had read one paragraph about it. In the loco shops the repairs are carried in a very superficial manner. The reason is this that statistics must be provided here that the engines are repaired and are attended to. But very often the staff that looks after them is not duly trained for this. I like the policy of promoting the lower ranks, but then we must be having the necessary paraphernalia, the necessary facilities and the training establishment for training them so that they can do the job which is expected of them. What happens? Shri Shahnawaz Khan points out—and I know there is a subse-

quent report from which also I am going to point out—that there are no sufficient schools, there are no training facilities, and what facilities exist are often curtailed in the name of economy.

They recently appointed a committee, called the Basu Committee. And the committee in conclusion says:

"Compared with the revenues earned, Indian Railways, even with all the recent expansions, are not spending any considerable amount in training their staff".

Half-trained, illiterate staff are supposed to do the job without their ever getting the chance to use the necessary, requisite and, I think, competent tools, nor are they given a chance to use their individual competence. I am coming to the question of tools and where these things are supposed to be repaired, but I will first finish with this neglected aspect of training of the staff which works in the loco sheds and workshops, particularly the Class IV staff whom I have in mind. And this is what the Basu Committee has pointed out:

"The American Railroads, we find, lay a good deal of emphasis on training as a means of increasingly efficient performance and they have not grudged the expenditure involved."

Then they point out that they are not doing financially so well. Still they think that it is a long-term investment and it is worthwhile and we should not grudge it.

They urge:

"Even during the course of our tours on different Railways, we found that some of the classes started for the training of Class IV staff on the Railways were abandoned for reasons of economy, as we were told. It meant, perhaps, the surrendering of the post of an instructor in the grade of an As-

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sistant Station Master or of a Junior Inspector, and we could not help feeling that the so-called economy lay more in showing a formal surrender of a sanction than in the actual amount of money saved."

Then the economy is fictitious, the economy is imaginary. But the loss is real, genuine, true and, in the end, a very dangerous type of loss. What happens? This is what this Committee has said. The report of this Committee is the latest on the technical training on Indian Railways.

May I turn to another factor which causes these accidents? The other Committee has said:

"During our tours and during our discussions with various officers we were particularly struck by the shortage of essential stores required for repair and maintenance work. Even such common items as split pins, cotters and bolts and nuts appeared to be extremely scarce to get and local imperfect improvisations were being freely resorted to. Cannibalisation"

which, Mr. Speaker, is a special phrase and very popular among railway men . . .

"Cannibalisation, that is stripping a part from one wagon for the purpose of providing it on another was found to be ordinary fair game, and the Chief Mechanical Engineers admitted that though they realised that this practice was highly undesirable, the position with regard to supply of components was so precarious that they could not afford to prohibit this practice."

Pinching from Paul to give to Peter! And this is the normal practice. I do not know how then we can go on complaining that engines fail and accidents increase.

"This is a serious position to which we must draw attention as without a reasonable supply of components, maintenance work cannot but suffer".

Of the accidents, Mr. Speaker, many have been at level-crossings. You know what is the position about level-crossings? Here again is a committee which was headed by someone who today is our Deputy Minister.

"We find that it is only at the time that a level-crossing is constructed that a consideration is made of the intensity of road and rail traffic at the level-crossing to determine its classification."

Now, we are told that there are thousands of level-crossings which cannot be manned. Why can they not be manned? Because we do not have the wherewithal, we do not have the money, we would be incurring heavy expenditure which we cannot afford, and also, the real reason is that the traffic there is negligible. But do we go on checking if the traffic has increased since we classified that level-crossing a long time back? No, that is not done. And this is what the report says about it?

"Hereafter conditions may change. The road traffic may develop or dwindle, but it is rare for the classification of the level-crossing to be reviewed until an actual accident takes place".

It is only when a toll of lives is paid, when twenty people or thirty people are killed, when Parliament is told, "Of course, it was a sad thing, but the users of the crossings also, the users of the road also are expected to use caution, and what can we do?"

Mr. Speaker, an *obiter dictum* casually dropped by your worthy predecessor, Shri Ananthasayanam Ayyangar, I think, is used by the Railway Administration and the Railway Minister as a kind of shield. He

was pleased to remark in the last session of Parliament that the Minister is not responsible for the accidents. I think a very literal interpretation is being put on his words. What he said was very different. The basic responsibility of the Railway Board and, so far as this House is concerned, of the Railway Minister cannot be shirked. I am not interested in saying anything harsh with regard to one who has just assumed responsibility. But these are permanent causes, and unless we go into them we shall not be making any headway either in stopping the frequency of accidents and assuring the public a safe passage for the money they pay or in improving the general performance of the Railways.

Mr. Speaker, during the few minutes that I have at my disposal, may I point out another aspect of this. It pertains to the staff. What happens is this. The Rajadhyaksha Award laid down norms of work—this was in 1949—that at a stretch a railway employee shall not work more than twelve hours. Now, a literal interpretation is put on this. Actually what has happened? I can give you statistics of Bombay. 70 per cent of the goods trains leave late. The employee concerned goes for his duty, reports for duty, at two o'clock. The train in seventy per cent of the cases does not depart, does not leave, does not steam off for four to six hours. That is the average. But let us take the smaller figure, four hours. His hours of duty are counted not from two o'clock but from six o'clock, so that the man will have put at the end of the duty sixteen to eighteen hours of work. If he fails to exercise caution, can you blame him? Because, in level-crossing it is said that the drivers should exercise some caution, the bus drivers should exercise some caution, if there is no signalling they should use their normal prudence. This is the expectation. Regarding the manner of railway level-crossing, the rule according to them is, "We cannot go on providing very costly and expensive equipments, sig-

nalling equipments, you will have to do with what you have and, of course, depend upon your instinct." Mr. Speaker, instinct does not work if you have overworked yourself for sixteen to eighteen hours. And then we get a tragedy of an accident.

Then there is this thing about these over-worked parts, recently in regard to the accident at Hubli. The hon. Minister is glaring at me. I am sorry to be saying such harsh things. What happened was this. If my information is correct—it happened five days ago at the metre gauge at Delhi Station—there was a failure of a YB engine. It derailed. Why did it derail? Very simple. The cabin man operating the lever sees that the lever has worked. But there is no joining of the two points. That remains as it is. He has pulled the lever, but there is no joining of the points, because the cabin lever is over-worked, it is tired, it has lost its elasticity, it has lost its capacity to do the job which it is supposed to do. On paper the man has done his duty, but in actual life we have found that the engine derailed causing five hours delay in the departure and arrival of all the trains everywhere. This happened only five days ago. You can make an enquiry about this. I have my facts very carefully checked, and it is on the basis of that that I am making this point.

I will be reserving some of my points for my conclusion on this matter. One point that I should like to suggest for consideration, therefore, is that these are perhaps long-term maladies and they need long-term plan and devices and curative measures. Two things perhaps could be done. I am not enamoured, like some of my hon. colleagues in the House, that the only remedy for everything is to have a judicial enquiry. I would rather like two expert committees to go into this whole question. One committee should be appointed to look into the working of our bridges, our tracks and our railway line. And a second committee should go and find out the condition of the workshop and the locomotives.

[Shr Nath Pai]

These committees should be constituted of experts. If he assures perhaps that these committees will be constituted—I do not think there is any embarrassment involved in accepting this simple proposal that two committees of experts should study these two things—much will be gained.

I had a lot to say regarding failure to carry out inspections. Inspections do exist. Surprise inspections are carried in the night. My information is that, often, the night is spent in the air-conditioned coach and they carry on surprise inspections. I may perhaps sound harsh. I would like to be corrected.

There is another aspect. Minor accidents are ignored. It creates a wrong psychology. Once you are in the habit of—I refer again to Shri Shah Nawaz Khan and he is eminently right on this point—once we inculcate the psychology that you can break a small rule, slowly, the mind gets ready to break a big rule. If we do not take serious note of minor accidents, big accidents are unavoidable. Regarding my suggestion to carry out vigorous inspection and see that the findings are really finalised, I conclude by saying, would he tell the House how many cases of accidents are finally decided upon? Is it not a rule of the Railway Board that an accident shall be looked into and finally decided within three months of its occurrence and is it not that 64 per cent of accidents go undecided, and then it is left, for the simple reason that there is a tacit agreement? There is a civil side, there is a mechanical side, there is a transport side of officers sitting. There is a Hindi saying *तेरी भी चूष मरी भी चूष*. You will not disclose what is wrong in mine and I will not disclose; the country will not know; we will have a hush enquiry. That is what happens. I hope we will get a forthright reply—not a rhetorical one—and all these matters will be looked into and perhaps remedial measures taken.

Mr. Speaker: Motion moved:

“That the situation arising out of recent series of accidents on the railways including the accident to the Poone-Bangalore Express involving loss of life and property, be taken into consideration.”

The motion is before the House. I will call Shri Nambiar: He will have 15 minutes. For other Members, I request that they will condense their remarks within 10 minutes each. I find there are a large number of Members who want to participate and express their opinions.

Shri Nambiar (Tiruchirapalli): Mr. Speaker, I am thankful to the hon. Mover of this Motion who has ably presented the case of the railway travelling public.

Coming to the recent accidents, I may be permitted to give some information. Of course, the matter is under enquiry by the Inspector of Railways. However, without doing harm to that enquiry, I shall give some information. With regard to the Dhanbad accident, I would submit that this accident did not take place accidentally. Before the actual accident took place on that fateful day, there was a previous accident on the same line. Loose wagons were passing by in that section unattended and they had to be derailed by the workers. In this particular case, the Railway administration did know that this crossing is a dangerous one. There was also a proposal to have an over-bridge. All these questions were left out un-cared for and this serious accident happened killing several passengers in the bus. Not only did the bus get hit, there was another electric supply truck, and a rickshaw also got involved. My information is, I submitted in this House, that the total deaths is more than 40. The other day, the hon. Deputy Minister only contradicted me. He did not tell us till today the actual number of deaths. Not only that. I asked a pertinent question whether there is a bell provided in the gate. He has not informed us about it so far.

Coming to the particular accident, a week prior to this accident, there was a demonstration in the office as to whether an automatic gate with track circuit system could be possible. It was found feasible and there were proposals of various improvements to that particular gate which were not attended to; uncared for. Coming to the Sambhar lake gate accident, I have got information just now by post saying that there was a circular from the General Manager to the Railway that sign posts on the railway way crossing there should be put up. This was not done. The Divisional Superintendent, even though he had instructions from the General Manager for providing sign posts on such crossings, particularly at this crossing, did not care to do it. Not only was the gate not manned, even the sign board was not put. On my information, I found that the driver of the bus could not see both sides when he crossed the railway line. He had to take a right-angular turn. When he took the right-angular turn at the so-called gate—there was no gate; there were posts—the posts which were put up were so narrow that the driver who had a pullman bus with 50 passengers, had to take care to see that the bus passed through the poles safely. While, at the same time, driving carefully because it was an embankment, he had to look and it was physically impossible to look both sides. He could look only one side and that was the wrong side. On the other side, the train was coming and it hit. To say that the bus driver was careless is a crime. Therefore, I submit that this is a matter which requires...

Mr. Speaker: There is one thing which I would certainly ask hon. Members to take care of, because enquiries are being conducted and we should take care. General causes and other deficiencies—all these can be discussed for all the accidents generally. But, to go into detail about one particular thing which is under

investigation and enquiry, would not be fair because that would be prejudicing it.

Shri Nambiar: In this connection, I may be permitted to submit that this so-called enquiry which is going on there is not a real enquiry in the real sense in which we can have it. Not that I want to explain everything here. I have certain points reserved. Under the Government of India, Ministry of Transport and Communications, the procedure for holding enquiries is this:

"The press and the public are not admitted to a Government Inspector's inquiry. The public is, however, invited through the press and the radio to give evidence at his inquiry in the capacity of witnesses. The public and the press are excluded from the inquiry because

so many reasons are given. The other day, the hon. Minister asked, what is the difference between a public enquiry and this enquiry, everybody can say what he wants to say. But, he must know that the enquiry which is being held under this procedure is not a public enquiry. It is only a departmental enquiry wherein only certain facts are available and the public have no access to the enquiry. That is why, even the other day, with regard to the Dhanbad accident as well as the Sambhar lake accident, we submitted that there must be a judicial enquiry. A judicial enquiry under the Enquiry Commissions Act gives more scope for all to give evidence and to get information out so that certain important facts cannot be concealed. Again, we press the point that in certain serious accidents at least, there must be a judicial enquiry.

With regard to the Poona-Bangalore Express train accident which occurred recently, the story is that four coaches capsized and four died. How

[Shri Nambiar]

can it be believed—I cannot for my life believe—that when four coaches capsised, and that too an Express train, there were only four deaths? Whenever a serious accident occurs in our Southern Railway—unfortunately, I am sorry to say in our Southern Railway wherefrom I come—the sabotage theory is brought in and the railway dog—there is a dog kept for this—comes into the picture and the removal of fish plates is brought in the story. Here is a case, on my information, either of bad track or bad engine which caused the accident. Between the engine-locomotive—and track, we have yet to decide. But, the question of sabotage is ruled out, as far as my information goes. At every crucial point, this sabotage is brought in, I may be permitted to say, to conceal the real truth so that the peoples minds may be set up towards a particular angle and they may forget the idea of the failure on the part of the Railway administration.

The Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Railways (Shri Shahnawaz Khan): The Commissioner for Railway Safety is looking into this matter. I would humbly request that such an insinuation should not be made.

Mr. Speaker: When we are very keen to discuss it so early and feel so agitated over that, enquiry is going on and certainly we ought to take care that we do not prejudice that enquiry. That is the general rule and practice that is always observed that we should not prejudice the enquiry. When such a discussion takes place here and opinions are expressed with such firmness and such conviction, they are certainly likely to prejudice that enquiry. As was done just now and he has also been doing, we may discuss the causes that probably can lead to such accidents. As was said, the track is old, the engines are old, the other

things require rehabilitation—these things are quite right.

Shri Nambiar: This generalisation has been done many a time. I did it during the Railway budget debate. Kindly my speech may be gone through. All these generalisations have been done. When serious accidents take place, automatically, or *suo motu*, the inspectorate gets into the shoes and they start the inquiry. If when we canvass on the floor of the House that we want a judicial inquiry, it is said that we prejudice the inquiry by the Inspector of Railways, then, I am afraid we have no remedy.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Member can say that a judicial inquiry is wanted, but he cannot discuss the merits or the details.

Shri Nambiar. I am canvassing for a judicial inquiry. I plead even now that a judicial inquiry may be ordered, and that can be done only at the governmental level here. I plead that a judicial inquiry should be ordered into the following three accidents, namely the accident at Dhanbad, the accident at Sambhar lake gate, and thirdly, the accident to the Poona-Bangalore express train.

I attended personally the inquiry into the Ariyalur train accident, on behalf of the public. A learned High Court judge was conducting the inquiry. Prior to the actual conduct of the inquiry by the learned High Court judge, there was an inquiry by the Inspector of Railways. So, we had the raw material which had been prepared by the Inspector of Railways as our starting-point for conducting the inquiry further. So, it is not at all late, and I plead even now that a judicial inquiry may be ordered. I do not say that there must be a judicial inquiry in all cases, but only in serious cases.

The hon. Mover has already quoted from the report of the Shahnawaz

Khan Committee. I think even though that report is eight years old, still, some of his observations remain fresh even today. There, he has mentioned two aspects regarding serious accidents. There, he has said that 36.5 per cent of the accidents were due to the failure of the human element, and 34.8 per cent due to the failure of the metal.

Even in regard to this 36.5 per cent caused by the failure of the human element, I find that the fatigue of the human being who does the operations is contributed by the fact of his over working. The hon. Mover has already referred to this. I have facts with me here to show that that has been the case in particular cases; of course, those cases have already been inquired into, and there is no inquiry pending, and, therefore, I can quote those instances. In one case, the driver and the guard had put in more than 20 hours of duty, and the station master about 17 hours of duty; that was what happened in the case of an unfortunate accident in my part of the country in the Southern Railway. I shall just quote the relevant portion, and I shall be pleased to hear from the hon. Minister that that is not so:

"There was an accident in the Vijawada division on the Southern Railway between Chevur and Kavali and in that accident, it was found afterwards that the crew of the loco-running, the driver and firemen were working 25 hours and the assistant station master on duty 17 hours, and the accident took place at 11.30 hours on a collision."

Of course, the station master has given the line-clear signal, and he did it wrongly, and I would attribute this to the long hours of work which he had put in, which had incapacitated him, thus leading to that accident. According to the Shahnawaz Khan Committee's report, this ac-

cident was due to the failure of the human element. But, that has been created on account of overworking.

I would also submit other facts to show that there were failure on the part of the Railway Administration in granting sufficient number of men for work. The failure of the metal is due to that also. I can cite the instance of the loco-sheds in this connection. In one of the loco-sheds on the Southern Railway, where there are 102 engines, there are men for repairing only 92 engines. There is system by which for every 100 engine-miles, there must be a certain number of men for repairs. But in that loco-shed, if there are 102 engines, actually, there are men for repairing only 90 or 92 engines; according to that engine-mile system, only 90 or 92 engines will get qualified to move; therefore, only that number of engines will get due attendance, and the remaining engines will be left unattended to; but those engines are also working. When those engines which have had no proper attendance also come into play and also move on the lines, then, naturally, that contributes to the general deterioration in the maintenance of the locomotives.

I can quote many other cases, but I think that the hon. Minister would agree that there is poor attendance to locomotives and poor attendance to rolling stock. Therefore, I need not labour the point further. But if he disputes this, we can prove with facts that our contention is correct.

We have also failure of signals. I think—I am subject to correction—that the signalling system on our railways is not foolproof. There were instances where we found that when the points were set up for a particular loop line, the signal was turned to the loop line, but the points actually did not divert to the loop line but stood in the main line. There are many instances like that. A goods train waits on the loop line. The

[Shri Nambiar]

signal is set up for the main line. An express train comes running through. The driver finds the signal set up for the main line and he goes with full speed. When it actually comes to the point wrongly set and unnoticed the train runs into the goods train.

You can say that the cabin man did not raise the signal to the correct line; therefore, he is responsible. But **facts show** that the signalling system is not foolproof with the result that serious accidents occur. My submission to the hon. Minister is not that there should be a wholesale change of the signalling system on the Indian railways, which is not possible, but attention must be devoted to see that the signalling system is made more perfect.

I will now quote from the report of the Inspector who after inquiries recommended certain things to be done, but which unfortunately, the Railway Administration have failed to do. With regard to level crossings, there is a specific recommendation. He says:

"A Committee should be constituted at the district headquarters to review the classification of level crossings periodically by the officers of the railways and the State transport organisation. They should also suggest suitable safety measures to prevent accidents where conditions so warrant at any level crossing".

This is in the report for 1960-61. I would like to know in how many districts these committees have been formed, where periodical revision has been done, and if so, whether the Sambhar Lake level crossing was left unmanned on the recommendation of the committee concerned.

There are so many recommendations which are given but which are not acted upon. Therefore, to say

that accidents take place accidentally is wrong. We are pressing this point not out of vindictiveness. When there are 34,000 miles of track and thousands of trains are running, there may be failures. We agree. But the spirit in which we are making our suggestions is to see that the administration becomes more vigilant and see that the travelling public are taken into confidence and given their due.

Shri Frank Anthony (Nominated—Anglo-Indians): I hope you will give me more than 10 minutes. In any case, I intend to deal only very briefly and broadly with some major points.

I am very glad that a Committee has been appointed under the chairmanship of my old friend, Pandit Kunzru, to go into this matter. I sincerely hope that its terms of reference are not going to be unduly restricted. I hope the whole range of accidents will be within their purview, and I also sincerely hope that this Committee will not be unduly in the hands of senior railway officials or of alleged experts. I say this for a very special reason.

I was very closely associated, not as a Member, but in my professional capacity, because I was appearing on behalf of some of the staff, with the commission set up to enquire into the Mohri accident, the most disastrous accident that has ever occurred on the Indian railways in which 36 people were killed and a very large number of people were injured. I say this with a good deal of regret that the whole purpose of the commission of inquiry in the Mohri accident case was completely stultified. The major purpose was to enquire impartially not so much into that particular accident, but more into the whole working of the interlocking system, and unfortunately—and I say this without any qualification—railway experts, Members of the Railway

Board, General Managers, came there with pre-conceived notions. They had made up their minds as to who was guilty, although that was not the purpose of that commission; what was more, they came there with the settled notion that their interlocking system was absolutely infallible, with the result that right from the beginning the presiding High Court Judge and my good friend, the late Shri Feroze Gandhi who was a Member, were put into a strait jacket, and they could never go on to enquire into the real working of the interlocking system, and I had it pigeon-holed in some legal objection that I raised. I am quite certain the railways are going to treat this report presided over by the High Court Judge as their Bible in the matter of the interlocking system.

Shri Nambiar referred rather vaguely to this matter, but I was convinced from the evidence that came before the commission, I was convinced from what I saw, I was convinced more by what I was told off the record, that the interlocking system, in spite of the claims made for it by the railways, even on your Class "A" stations is not infallible—and this was a third class station at Mohri. You go there with this notion that your interlocking system is infallible, that once the signals are set for the reception of a train, then the interlocking system makes it humanly impossible for the signals also to be set for the reception of another train from the opposite direction. They were not able to conceive that in one case out of ten million this could take place, with the result that all the resources of the railways in money and men were all directed to proving the infallibility of this system.

The commission never began to look into the fallibility of it. They could have adduced abundant, overwhelming evidence of people who were actually running the trains. I sought to get them called, but they were not called.

How do your accidents occur every other day? Just before that at Ganga-pur at 2 O'clock in the afternoon one mail train was at the main station and another mail train was brought in from the opposite direction. Fortunately, the driver was alert, he averted a collision, he pulled up the train within 50 yards of the other train. Yet, the station staff were not negligent. That is your interlocking system. The other day an accident to the Calcutta Mail was averted by another driver, and he got a handsome reward. He was brought into the same line on which the down mail was. Yet, in the face of what is happening every day, the railway administration comes there blithely, blandly, with all their mechanical engineers, the Railway Board, General Managers, and they say it is humanly impossible for the interlocking system to fail, it is humanly impossible for two trains to be brought in from opposite directions. Yet drivers will tell you that every other day it is happening.

I am only hoping that the Kunzru Committee will not accept this Nigam Committee Report for gospel, because I know from personal knowledge that the Nigam Committee only acted on the evidence that the railway officials allowed to be placed before it. I hope the Kunzru Committee will go into this question of the interlocking system and the alleged infallibility of the system. Senior members of the Railway Board said that it was utterly impossible. Yet an ordinary waterman—they are the people at the levers—came and told me privately and told me: "Sir, you can call your General Manager and you can call your Members of the Railway Board; if they allow me—they would not—I will show you in spite of all their protestations, I do a little manipulation, mechanical manipulation and without going through all that elaborate procedure I can set the signals in both directions at safe." I can throw back your signals within split second to danger." Ac-

[Shri Frank Anthony]

According to your theories these things are humanly impossible but your illiterate class IV waterman who operates it will tell you how he can short-circuit your elaborate and infallible system. I had lined up a number of people, drivers who are dealing with these matters every day. Seeing the signals at safe they brought in their trains while the other train was there. They dare not say all this as they say if we come before the commission and say these things our bosses will get after us and somehow or the other we will be victimised. Unless the Kunzru committee has some special procedure for taking evidence either in camera or seeing that the senior railway officials have not much to do with the actual procedure you will never get to the bottom or to the real causes of many of these railway accidents.

There are other matters which are so common and it came out in the course of the Mohri enquiry. It was amazing how for months and months the drivers complain and say: we cannot see the signals; all your trees have overgrown your signals. Nobody takes any note. They say you cannot see the home from the outer signal. The request for repeater signals is ignored. These are comparatively small matters.

The trouble is this. As my friend, Shri Nath Pai pointed out, there is this fetish for statistics. You want to show to this House from these rather lovely looking books containing statistics that operational efficiency has improved; that engine failures are less—they are not that the over-aged engines are decreasing they are not; and it is that way you draw all your statistics. When these poor chaps say: we have this engine failure, you say 'do not record it' because you want to impress this House with wrong statistics. My friend Shri Nath Pai has given certain figures; I will not repeat them. I have given figures in greater detail and four or

five years ago I said these things and I did not blame anybody except perhaps the Planning Commission and the Cabinet and I said: you have confronted your Railways with a humanly impossible task; your allocation for the Railways is hopelessly inadequate; you are not even catching up with the backlog of the Second World War. I gave you what the backlog was. I gave figures and I said that so far as your track renewals or rolling stock or over aged engines were concerned, your position at the end of the Third Plan was going to be infinitely worse than what it was at the end of the Second Plan. That is precisely what my friend Shri Nath Pai has underlined.

If you have this backlog of track renewals you are bound to get accidents because of your defective track. Some senior railway official said: what with increasing traffic and defective track and WP engines never meant for this kind of a track, they may jump off the rails every other day if they run beyond a particular speed. I hope we never reach that position.

There are these over aged engines. My friend also referred to the question of lack of maintenance. This has been a grievance which has been getting steadily worse from week to week. Again, there is this fetish for operational efficiency. I would ask the hon. Railway Minister to see the turn round and maintenance of engines as it obtained even two years ago. Now you have speeded it up with the result that even if your men are good they have not got the time to attend to your engines. Then you have introduced the pooling system. Before you had the pooling system every mail driver was responsible for his own engine; he looked after it and polished it and he gave it a name plate and he treated it almost with the tenderness of a fond husband. Now you have the pooling system and five drivers are responsible for one engine. Not one of them feels that it is his

17 hrs.

own engine. The worst feature is this. The mail-drivers tell me. A lot of them have resigned and they disagreed and said that they will not work under these conditions. We do not know, from day-to-day when we are going to meet with an accident. They said, "our conscience will not allow us to work under these conditions." What happens? They book urgent repairs. The DME or the mechanical engineer in charge says, "you will take this out." One case came to me. I do not want to mention the name. He is dead. He said to me, "I am a mail-driver. I was asked to drive the mail-train with dummy brakes." But the authorities said; "you take it out." He took out the engine. Then he resigned from the railways after 30 years of service.

"I am not going to take out a mail-train engine with defective brakes." It happens regularly. They tell me that even the gauge-glass is often not there, and when they say that the engine cannot be taken out without the repairs they have been compelled to take it out. That would affect operational efficiency figures. But what happens? They said that "we dare not; we cannot be held responsible for the safety of the people if we are asked to work like that." You said: "take them out. Otherwise, you will be suspended." Certain senior railway locomotive men have told me that they cannot work under these conditions.

I am not blaming the Railway Minister. But I say that you are in a dilemma. On the one hand there is this tremendous backlog of over-aged engines, with lack of stock such as bolts and nuts? On the other hand, you compel your men, because I suppose you have to carry out the burden of the Plan, to take out the defective and dangerous engines. What are you going to do about it?

My hon. friend has spoken about the rules. What happens? Your rules are very good, and so good that no-

body can work up to them! I will give you only one instance. It is only when a poor chap is caught in an accident that these rules are flung at him and he is told he is in the wrong. He says that no human can follow the rule; it is not humanly possible to observe these rules. I had a number of cases wherein I called driver after driver. There was one man whom I was defending but who was ultimately convicted. One of the reasons for the conviction was that the driver came into the station at a speed of 15 to 20 miles an hour. But every driver on the railways does this. The rule is you cannot enter a station at more than ten miles.

Yet, many drivers come and say it is not humanly possible. "If we come at 10 miles per hour we lose so much steam; it takes us so much time to generate enough steam that we cannot humanly keep up to the schedule." And then we are charge-sheeted for being late. "So we have to ignore the rule."

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Member's time is up.

Shri Frank Anthony: I will finish in two minutes. So, either you adapt the rules to realities or do something by which these rules can be worked up to particularly by the locomotive staff. Every day, as a matter of practice, they do not work to the rules. Fortunately, they do not have accidents. But when they do have accidents. You send them to jail for not observing the rules which their other colleagues are also not doing.

I want to deal with two matters which refer to the staff. One of them is a very delicate matter. It has, however an increasingly dangerous potential. No one is more sympathetic than I am to the members of the Scheduled Castes. I still think that we do not treat them fairly. But what has been happening within the past year? I am not going to say anything about the Supreme Court judgment which struck down the high court judgment.

[Shri Frank Anthony]

As the House knows, the Madras High Court said in their judgment that you can only make reservation at the point of entry. The Supreme Court said "No." I know what is happening on the railways. As I said, it is a delicate matter. I was referring to the Scheduled Caste people. At the point of entry you may give a reservation not only of 16 per cent but 20 per cent. But it is not only dangerous but disastrously dangerous to give them a 16 per cent reservation at the point of promotion. What is happening now? Apart from the resentment, Class C men who have no experience of passenger trains, because they have no other scope, are being pitchforked into Class A as mail drivers and this is happening in every department. In another five or six years, you will get this tremendous pitch-forking into promotion cadres. I do not want to venture the percentage of it. It will be 16 to 20 per cent perhaps. And that will result in inexperienced and unqualified people coming in, and that will be the danger of making this reservation in the promotion cadre.

Finally, I want to come to the question of Class IV. No one has been more solitious than myself for railway staff generally, including Class IV. But this is a problem that has got to be faced. My friend, Shri Nambiar, will repudiate what I have got to say—that is, this increasing lack of sense of responsibility among sections of the Class IV staff. There is this failure of the human element. In regard to Class III, the complaint there is that not only they are badly treated, but they are unfairly treated and they are savagely punished, because they do not belong to vocal and vociferous unions. But there is no way of enforcing any discipline among Class IV people.

I will give an example. It may represent an exception or it may represent the rule. An official told me, "I went the other day to a level crossing. The man in charge of the

level crossing was absent during the duty hours. I sent for him and asked hiw why he was absent during duty hours. He gave some cock and bull story, but I did not charge-sheet him." I asked, why? He told me, "As an officer in the olden days, I would have suspended him, charge-sheeted him and removed him. But now I dare not charge-sheet a Class IV man. I will tell you why. Because most of them belong to communist unions. They can always get their communist colleagues to support them in a false story and if they are removed after enquiry, the communist union threatens strike." The result is today the gangmen, the watermen, the pointsmen, largely suffer from a sense of lack of responsibility and these people are holding key positions. If a pointsman fails in his duty, if a gangman or waterman fails, you get these accidents.

There are many other matters, but these are some of the general propositions I have made and I hope the Kunzru Committee will keep some of these matters before them.

Shri U. M. Trivedi: Sir, accidents have taken place on our railways pretty often. We have the Sambalpur accident, Sambar accident, Dhanbad accident, the Phulera accident and so on. All these accidents are before us. One difficulty about the investigation of these accidents has always been, as Shri Frank Anthony put it, the preconceived notions of the officers who conduct these enquiries and their desire only to place the fault on a particular department. The engineering department wants to father the guilt upon the loco; the loco desires to father the guilt on the traffic and the traffic desires to father the guilt on the loco. This rivalry between three departments never leads anybody to come to a proper and just conclusion.

Falsehood is one of the foundations of railway working. Day in and day out, every day, at every hour, every

railway officer tries to tell lie and telling lie means putting it in writing—false booking timings at the station etc. The result is, at the time of enquiry when an accident takes place, it leads to wrong figures and wrong ideas being obtained. The Controller tells lie; the Station Master tells lie and the guard tells another lie. We are not able to find out what is the reason behind the whole accident.

Shri Nambiar: It is not a lie; it is normal.

Shri U. M. Trivedi: Thank you very much; it is normal and Shri Nambiar wants to encourage it perhaps.

The difficulty that we find is this. As has been put by Shri Nath Pai, we are not taking stock of the position that our engines have become very heavy. With heavy engines, we require heavier rails, better sleepers and better foundation. Yet we are still having rails with 5'6" gauge and weighing 90 lbs. on the broad gauge, whereas with a gauge of only 4'6" in Europe and England the rails weigh 108 lbs. We have not supplied proper sleepers for miles of tracks. At least 7000 miles of track require sleepers.

It may be that some sort of sabotage does take place—Shri Nambiar may not agree. Sabotage takes place at various places. Very recently, only four days back, four sleepers were placed across the track before the arrival of the Frontier Mail near Shamgarh Station. It is good that the thing was discovered by a poor chowkidar and they were removed. Sabotage does take place. Sabotage has taken place at higher levels—the Government may deny it—and finding given that it was an accident. What happened to the sleepers at Dhilwan? How were they destroyed? It was not due to fire. Was it not due to sabotage? It was sabotage of a very high order.

Sir, we are to be kept at this stage simply because another country wants to do us in the eye and deprive us of

a good number of sleepers. Every year we hear that lakhs and lakhs of sleepers just flow away across the river Sutlej and go into Pakistan. Is it just by chance that the Sutlej carries all the sleepers that we are preparing? Lakhs and lakhs of sleepers have gone away like that. Who is doing it? These are all the causes why we are lacking in sleepers. The net result is that we are not getting sleepers and we are not getting rails.

When we do not get sleepers and rails what we do to prevent accidents is that we slow down the trains. Where do we slow down the trains? We only slow down the trains where there never have been any accidents. We do not slow down the trains where there are accidents. We just hit up some spot where already the trains are moving at a speed of 25 miles and bring it down to 20 miles. A train running from Barnagar takes five hours to reach Javla, a distance of only 50 miles. Therefore, you say, there are no accidents.

But, as Shri Anthony put it, your inter-locking system is so wretched that all the accidents take place. What precaution do you take? You make a train dead-stop the moment it comes to the outer signal and do not allow it to travel. Sir, on an enquiry in which I appeared a policeman was giving evidence, a man who did not know anything about railway working. He said: "the tumbler lever simply jumped". I could not understand it, I could not understand the tumbler lever jumping and changing points. Yet the man concerned was on the verge of being convicted. The investigating inspector who conducted the enquiry said that the tumbler lever jumped because the key was still inside the lock. I had to carry the whole court and make a demonstration to show that the tumbler lever cannot jump whatever happens. These are pre-conceived notions on which things go on.

The real cause of accidents is because of the human element that is

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there—it is not 36 per cent human element, I should say it is much more than that. What are the reasons? The reasons are, although there are hours of employment enforced on the various railways by regulation the administrative staff never look into it. The DOS wants that his work must be done. The man concerned works not only for 8 hours but the works continuously for 16 hours and sometimes 24 hours and even 27 hours. What happens? In the disaster of the Kirti Express the man had been working continuously for three days. The other day I was standing at a way-side station called Utran on the Bhusaval line. The man there told me that he had been working for 36 hours and he had no rest. Nobody listens to him. After all, human fatigue is there. He is bound to make accidents. What happened at Panch Pipala recently? There also an accident took place. But it was not enquired into because only two goods trains had collided. The whole time the tablet block instrument was kept open. They were just drinking and, because they were drinking, they forgot to close it. Therefore, the pointsman who was standing there took the wrong tablet block instrument and gave it to another train and there was collision. It is this human element which must be looked into during enquiries.

I am not agreeable to enquiries by High Court judges because most of the judges themselves probably do not know the working of the railways and sometimes they are misguided by the facts that are placed before them in a subtle manner. These enquiries must be conducted by those experts who have inside knowledge of the working of the railways who may be able to arrive at the truth. Also, while making enquiries, they must look into the whole condition of the railways, whether the rails are properly laid, whether the sleepers are properly laid, whether the track has

been renewed, what is the age of the dilapidated sleepers on which the rails have been laid, when the renewal order was made and why it has not been complied with, whether attendance has been carried out, whether the bridges have been laid, whether the loco-shed is working in such a way as not to have cannibalising which ought not to be permitted, whether real sabotage is being practised or not and whether the pre-conceived notions and the little small falsehoods of the various officers is a contributory cause for creating this trouble. All these matters should be looked into thoroughly.

श्री बागड़ी (हिसार) : अध्यक्ष महोदय, आज जब इस एवान के सामने रेलवे हादसात पर विचार करने का मौका मिला है तब मारा हिन्दुस्तान इस तरह देख रहा है कि इन दुर्घटनाओं का क्या भविष्य बनता है। मैं आप के सामने यह अर्ज करूंगा कि यह जो दुर्घटनायें होती हैं, हादसात होते हैं, यह कोई कुदरती नहीं है। अगर कुदरती होते तो आप मोटी बात मानिये कि कभी भी बहुत कम तादाद में हमारे मिनिस्टर साहब सफर नहीं करते, रेलवे के बड़े बड़े अफसर भी कम सफर नहीं करते, लेकिन कभी ऐसा नहीं होता कि रेलवे के ऐक्सीडेंट्स या हादसात उस वक़्त हों जब मिनिस्टर सफर करते हों या रेलवे के बड़े बड़े उच्च अधिकारी सफर करते हों। यह कोई मजाक की बात नहीं है, न मैं कोई जलन के नाते में कह रहा हूँ, इस की तरह में क्या बात है? एक ही बात है और वह खास बात यह है कि हिन्दुस्तान के दिमाग में यह चीज आ चुकी है कि एक जान जो कामती है उस की कद्र की जाती है और बाकी आम जिन्दगियों की कद्र नहीं की जाती। जब रेलवे मिनिस्टर चलते हैं तब कभी रेल से रेल नहीं भिड़ती क्योंकि सब लोग अलर्ट हो जाते हैं, सारे मशीनरी और अफसर अलर्ट हो जाते हैं। लेकिन जब आम जनता चलती है तब कोई मरे या जिये, कोई पूछने वाला नहीं

है। यह गम्भीर बात है जिसे सोचना है कि जो एकमीडेंट्स होते हैं उन का इलाज क्या है। पहले ऐसा ब्याल था कि जगजीवन राम जी मिनिस्टर हैं, वह समझते थे कि अष्ट ग्रह चढ़े हुए हैं, व्यक्ति बदल जान में कुछ भला होगा। लेकिन बात वह नहीं हुई। जगजीवन राम जी चले गये, स्वर्ण सिंह जा आ गये, लेकिन कुर्मी बदलने में, चेहरे बदलने में कोई फर्क नहीं आया। इस का क्या मतलब है? इस की तह में कोई चीज है जिसे मोचना है। यह मैं बुराई के नाने में या आलोचना के नाने में नहीं कह रहा हूँ, लेकिन सिर्फ दूसरे दिन कालिंग अटेंशन के आ जाने में या उम के बारे में चर्चा हो जाने में हम ट्रिस्टुन्तान के लोगों की जिन्दगियों को नहीं बचा सकते, या खाकी सवाल जवाब हो जाने में इस देश के अन्दर हादसा तो नहीं रोका जा सकता है।

यह ठीक है कि हर हादसे के पीछे कोई न कोई इतिहास होता है। यह बात ठीक है कि हादसा तो तह में जाना चाहिये। जो हादसा होते हैं उन की तह में देखो। उन की तह के अन्दर कुछ बुराई है, उसे देखो। हादसा तो रोकने के लिये पैसे की जरूरत तो पड़ेगी। ऐसा कोई मन्तक नहीं कि छमन्तर हो जाये और हादसे रुक जायें। पिछले साल के अन्दर २१० हादसा तो लेवल फ्रांसिग के हैं। आप कहते हैं कि पैसे नहीं हैं। ठीक है, पैसा नहीं है; जब कहो कि यह पुल क्यों बनाया गया, तो कहते हैं कि पैसे नहीं, जब कहो कि सरकारी कर्मचारियों की या जो छोटे मुलाजिम हैं उन की कमी है, उसकी वजह से उनसे ड्यूटी ज्यादा ली जाती है, उन की तादाद एसी नहीं है कि वे ड्यूटी कर सकें, तो कहते हैं कि पैसे नहीं अंग्रेज का राज्य था, उस के वक्त में रेल की पटरी बना दी गई, स्लिपर्स डाल दिये गये। लेकिन उस के बाद से आज तक वह वैसे ही पड़े हुए हैं। इस लिये जो पटरी है उस का एडजस्टमेंट ठीक नहीं है

क्योंकि ओवरहालिग नहीं हो सकी है। गाड़ी पटरी से उतर जाती है। उस को ठीक नहीं किया गया क्योंकि पैसे की कमी है। इस को करने के लिये पैसा लगेगा। साहब, पैसा जरूर लगेगा। इस में कोई रोने की बात नहीं है। मैं यह अर्ज करूंगा कि दरअसल यह हादसा तो नहीं है क्योंकि हादसा तो वह है जो कि एकमीडेंटल तौर पर कुदरती तौर पर हो जायें। यद्ये बाद दीगरे गर्ननियां कही जा सकती हैं और दरअसल पूछा जाये तो यह गर्ननियां नहीं बल्कि जुर्म किये जाते हैं। दीदीदानियता जुर्म किये जाते हैं। लेकिन जुर्म करने वाले को ताकत इतनी बड़ी है कि जिन के साथ अन्याय होता है वह उस के लिये उसको मजा नहीं दे सकते करना जो आज हाकिम है वह मुजरिम होने और उन की जगह जेन्खाने में होती।

अब यह क्या मजाक है कि हर एक चीज के वास्ते इस बात की आड़ लेली जाती है कि हम क्या करें पैसा नहीं है? आनरेबुल रेल मिनिस्टर ने बतलाया कि हजारों ऐसे लेबिल फ्रांसिग हैं जहां कि आदमी ड्यूटी पर तैनात नहीं है। अब वहां पर ड्यूटी पर क्यों तैनात नहीं हैं? इस के लिये कौन जिम्मेदार है और कौन कमरवार है? अब हर एक बात के लिये कह देना कि पैसा नहीं है इस का क्या मतलब है? आप के पास मिनिस्टरों की फीज बढ़ाने के लिये पैसा है लेकिन लेबिल फ्रांसिग पुल बनाने के लिये और वहां पर आदमी तैनात करने के लिये आप के पास पैसा नहीं है। रेल पटरियों की मुरम्मत करने और नई बिछाने के वास्ते आप के पास पैसा नहीं है, मजदूरों की तादाद बढ़ाने के लिये आप के पास पैसा नहीं है। अब जादू से तो कोई बात बनने वाली है नहीं और वह तो ऐसे ही होगा जैसे नेहरू जी का पंचशील सिद्धान्त थोथा चलता है। इस में को कुछ बनने वाला है नहीं।

अध्यक्ष महोदय, लगे एकमीडेंट्स को ठीक करने के लिये मैं तीन बातें आवश्यक समझता

[श्री बागड़ी]

हूँ और मैं चाहूंगा कि उन के बारे में भी अमली कदम उठाये जायें। पहली चीज तो यह कि जितने भी लेबिल आसिंग हैं इन सब के ऊपर आदमियों की ड्यूटी लगाई जाये दूसरे यह कि जितने और जहाँ भी पुल बनाने जरूरी हों यह बनाये जायें। अब दिल्ली, रोहाक हिसार डेड पर रेल का फाटक बन्द होने से काफी बोटेलनेक हो जाता है, ढाई ढाई घंटे और तीन, तीन घंटे गाड़ियों, बसेज और कारों वगैरह खड़ी रहती हैं अब रेलवे दुर्घटना भजे ही यहां पर हों, या न हों, लेकिन यह दरवाजा बन्द होने की बिना पर छोटे छोटे एक्सीडेंट्स आपस में टकरा कर हो जाया करते हैं अब यह किस की जिम्मेदारी है? इस को कौन करेगा या अब इसे कोई नयुवा चीफ़ीदार करेगा या इस देश की सरकार करेगी? अब यह जो कह दिया जाता है कि पैसा नहीं है तो पैसे की समस्या हल करनी पड़ेगी एक तरफ तो टैक्स बढ़ाये जाते हैं, किराये बढ़ाये जाते हैं और ज्यादा से ज्यादा जनता से पैसा लेते हैं और दूसरी तरफ यह पैसे का ढोना लेते हैं। अब जैसा कि आप कहते हैं कि पैसा नहीं है तो पैसे के वास्ते देश के नाम अपील कीजिये आप सारे देश से रेलवेज में सुधार करने के नाम पर अपील कीजिये। आप सारे देश से पैसा देने की अपील कीजिये और जैसा भी हो रेलवे में सुधार कीजिये। अब वह तो कुछ होता नहीं है और हमारे मिनिस्टर साहब से अगर कोई आनरेबल मेम्बर रेलवे आसिंग के पुल को बनाने के लिये कहता है तो उस को यह कह कर बाल दिया जाता है कि भाई हम क्या कर सकते हैं तुम अपने पंजाब को या दूसरी किसी स्टेट गवर्नमेंट को मना लो, कुछ हिस्सा वे दें और बाकी हम ते दे देंगे और इस तरह न नौ मन तेल होणा न राधा नाचेगी वाली कहावत चरितार्थ होती है मेरा कहना है कि मिनिस्टर साहब का यह रवैय्या माकूल नहीं है और इस तरह से कुछ काम होने वाली नहीं है। यह बात कह कर हमारे रेलवे मिनिस्-

टर साहब साफ बच निकलते हैं और कहते हैं कि भाई हम क्या करें तुम्हारे प्रदेश की सरकार नहीं मानती और वह इस के बनाने के लिये अपना हिस्सा नहीं देती इसलिये हम इस को नहीं बना सकते हैं। मैं तो आप से अर्ज कल्गा कि जहां आप ने पहले से जनता के ऊपर टैक्स लगाये हुए हैं आप पुल बनाने के नाम पर एक टैक्स और लगा दें लेकिन कम से कम इस देश के शीब आदमी जो कि भाये बिग कोड़े मकीणों की तरह एक्सीडेंट्स में मर जाया करते हैं वे तो बच जायें।

मैं आप से अर्ज कल्गा कि ४०-४५ हजार जो आप को लेबल आसिंग है वहां पर आप आदमी लाइये। इस से ४०-४५ हजार आदमियों को काम मिलेगा। अगर वहां पर पैसा लगाया भी जाता है तो भी कोई हर्ज को बात नहीं है क्योंकि इस देश के ४०-४५ हजार इंसानों को रोजी मिलती है और उन को बेकारी की समस्या हल होती है। वह वहां पर तैनात हो कर इंसानों को रेलवे दुर्घटनाओं में मरने से बचायेंगे। अब इस के अलावा वह लोग कोई मिनिस्टर्स थोड़े ही हैं जो कि हजारों रुपये लेंगे। वह तो इस देश के मजदूर तबके में से होंगे और उन को काम पर लगा कर देश में से बेकारी को हम दूर करेंगे और साब ही लोगों को जानें भी बचायेंगे।

जैसा मैं ने पहले कहा यह हादसात नहीं है बल्कि गुनाह है जोकि आज तक हम करते आये हैं। यह रेलवे मिनिस्टर साहब ही हैं जो कि देश के साथ इस तरह का गुनाह और जुर्म करते आ रहे हैं और इंसानों को इस तौर पर मौत के घाट उतारते आ रहे हैं। अगर इस से कोई नर्म या डा शब्द चाहिये तो मैं कहूंगा कि वे इस बात के गुनहवार जरूर हैं कि इन हादसात को वह रोक नहीं पाये हैं जो कि रोके जा सकते थे। जब देखो वह पैसे का सबाल उठा कर अपनी जिम्मेदारी से बचना चाहते हैं।

मैं अब से अर्ज करूंगा कि एक मोटा कारण इन रेलवे ऐक्सीडेंट्स का यह भी है कि मिनिस्टर्स की तादाद जो कि बहुत ज्यादा है जब यह लॉग रेल पर जाते हैं तो रेलवे कर्मचारी ऐलेंट हो कर ड्यूटी से ज्यादा ओवर ड्यूटी देते हैं और अक्सर देखा जाता है कि मिनिस्टर्स के दौरे के बाद कोई न कोई हादसा हो जाता है। मिनिस्टर्स के दौरे के बत वह गीब कर्मचारी ओवरड्यूटी करते हैं और जिस का कि नतीजा यह होता है कि दौरे के बाद में ऐक्सीडेंट हो जाता है। आप भले ही मिनिस्टर्स की तादाद कम कर दें क्योंकि उन की फीज वैसे ही काफी बड़ी है लेकिन रेलवे के कर्मचारियों और मजदूरों की तादाद कदापि न घटाएँ। इन शब्दों के माध्यम मैं अपना भाव्य समाप्त करता हूँ।

श्री तुलसीदास जाधव (नांदेड़): अध्यक्ष महोदय, रेलवे ऐक्सीडेंट्स के बारे में जो सदन में चर्चा चल रही है तो ऐसी तो कोई बात है नहीं कि रेलवे ऐक्सीडेंट्स की तादाद हर साल बढ़ रही हो। यह बात सही है कि रेलवे ऐक्सीडेंट्स हर वर्ष बढ़ नहीं रहे हैं। रेलवे ऐक्सीडेंट्स इनक्वायरी कमेटी की सन् १९५४ की रिपोर्ट में ४८ पेज पर सन् १९३७ से लेकर १९५३ तक के आंकड़े दिये गये हैं। उसको देखने से यह नजर आता है कि टोटल नम्बर आफ ऐक्सीडेंट्स कम होते हैं। पहले की अपेक्षा अब रेलवे लाइनों का काफी विस्तार हुआ है और उसको देखते हुए यह ऐक्सीडेंट्स कम हैं लेकिन मेरे कहने का यह मतलब न लिया जाये कि ऐक्सीडेंट्स होते रहें। जो भी ऐक्सीडेंट्स होते हैं उनको बंद होना चाहिए। ऐक्सीडेंट्स जितने भी कम हो सकें हमें उनको कम करने की कोशिश करनी चाहिए।

मैं यह नहीं समझता हूँ कि छोटे से लेकर बड़े जितने भी अफसरान हैं उनके दिल में कुछ ऐसी बात है कि ऐक्सीडेंट्स हों ऐसी बात तो कहीं नजर नहीं आती है। लेकिन जहां मैं यह

कहता हूँ वहां अपोजीशन के लोगों की तरह मैं भी यह चाहता हूँ कि ऐक्सीडेंट्स कम से कम हों। इतना ही नहीं मैं तो चाहता हूँ कि ऐक्सीडेंट्स हों ही नहीं। जैसा कि मेरे पूर्व वक्ता ने भाषण दिया उनकी यह बात सही है कि मिनिस्टर्स और दीगर बड़े अफसरान जब रेल में सफर करते हैं तब रेलवे स्टाफ के द्वारा काफी प्रीकाशन बर्ता जाता है लेकिन आम जनता जो रेलों में सफर करती है उनके लिए कोई प्रीकाशन नहीं लिया जाता और जिसके कि कारण ऐक्सीडेंट्स होते हैं अब इस तरह की लापरवाही के कारण ऐक्सीडेंट्स हो जायें और लोगों की जान चली जाये यह कोई ठीक बात नहीं है। अब इस का यह अर्थ नहीं है कि जान बूझ कर ऐसा किया जाता है तो भी मैं अपने मिनिस्टर साहब से रिक्वेस्ट करूंगा कि इन ऐक्सीडेंट्स को रोकने के लिए ज्यादा से ज्यादा प्रीकाशन लिये जाने के लिए वह प्रमत्ती कदम उठावें।

रिपोर्ट में भी ऐक्सीडेंट्स की वजह के बारे में रोजनी डाली गई है लेकिन मैं उनको यहां पर पढ़ कर नहीं बतलाना चाहता क्योंकि उसके लिए समय नहीं है। अब ऐक्सीडेंट्स की एक वजह यह भी है कि रेल की पटरियों के ऊपर से गुजरते हुए डिब्बे ठीके डिरेल्ट हो जाते हैं। अब इस तरह के डिरेलमेंट को रोकने के लिए और अधिक प्रीकाशन लेना चाहिए और जो स्टाफ उसके ऊपर तैनात होता है वह उसके बारे में ज्यादा से ज्यादा देखभाल करे और सावधानी बर्ते।

17:27 hrs.

[MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER in the Chair]

लेवल क्रॉसिंग, रेलवे पुल और प्लेटफार्म ऐसे तीन जगह ऐक्सीडेंट्स होते हैं। अब जरूरत इस बात की है कि उसके बारे में जरूरी प्रीकाशंस लिये जायें ताकि दुबारा ऐक्सीडेंट्स न हों। अब ऐक्सीडेंट उसी जगह पर बार बार हो यह बात भी ठीक नहीं है। मैं अपने शोलापुर जिले में मुद्देवाड़ों और पाकणी न दोनों

[श्री तुलसी दास जाधव]

रेलवे-स्टेशनों के दरम्यान सोना नदी के रेलवे ब्रिज के ऊपर जो २८-५-६२ को दिन के साढ़े धारह बजे एक्सीडेंट हुआ है उसकी ओर मैं अपने मिनिस्टर्स और दीगर ग्रफसरान का ध्यान दिलाना चाहता हूँ। २८-५-६२ को दिन के साढ़े धारह बजे शोलापुर पूना पैसेंजर गाड़ी इस रेल ब्रिज पर आई और वहाँ एक्सीडेंट हो गया। सन् १९४६ से लेकर सन् १९६५ तक इन बम वर्षों में इस रेलवे पुल पर चौदह आदमी मरने के एक्सीडेंट्स हुए। पहले वहाँ पर फुट-पाथ दोनों तरफ था लेकिन वह किसी कारण से खराब होकर गिर गया उस के बाद उस पुल के ऊपर दोनों बाजू कोई फुट-पाथ नहीं है। स सम्बन्ध में शोलापुर जिले के लोगों ने कई खत लिखे हैं। श्रीयू एस० बी० शिंदे ने इस बारे में भी खत लिखे। उन्होंने पहला खत २५-७-५६ को लिखा, जिस का उत्तर आया कि हम इस मामले को देख रहे हैं और कुछ कोशिश कर रहे हैं। उस के बाद दूसरा खत १८-८-५६ को लिखा गया, लेकिन उस का कोई उत्तर नहीं आया। इसी प्रकार २५-९-५६ को लिखे गए तीसरे खत का भी कोई उत्तर नहीं आया। उन्होंने चौथा खत २८-११-५६ को लिखा, जिसे महाराष्ट्र स्टेट गवर्नमेंट ने सेंट्रल रेलवेबोर्ड को भेज दिया। इस प्रकार उन्होंने नौ खत लिखे, जिन में से १७-१-६१ को लिखे गए आखिरी खत के उत्तर में उन को यह सूचना दी गई कि यह पुल रेलवे सर्वेन्ट्स और रेलों के लिए है, दूसरे लोगों के लिए नहीं है।

मैं यह कहना चाहता हूँ कि उस एरिया में जो दस पदरह ग्राम हैं, वहाँ रहने वाले लोगों के इधर-उधर जाने के लिए इस रेलवे ब्रिज के अलावा कोई रास्ता नहीं है। जैसा कि मैंने अभी कहा है, वहाँ पर पहले फुट-पाथ बना हुआ था। अभी जो एक्सीडेंट हुआ, उस में दो औरतें और एक मर्द कट गए। उन के टुकड़े-टुकड़े हो गए—वे नदी में गिर गए इससे पहले भी वहाँ पर चौदह आदमी मरने के एक्सीडेंट्स हुए। एक दफा एक्सीडेंट होने के बाद प्रीकाशन्ड

लेने के बजाय स्टेट और सेंट्रल गवर्नमेंट आपस में लिखा-पढ़ी करती रही कि यह काम स्टेट गवर्नमेंट का है या सेंट्रल गवर्नमेंट का। १९५६ से लेकर १९६२ तक इन पांच छः सालों में लोग बार बार खत लिखते रहे, लेकिन एक्सीडेंट्स की संख्या बढ़ती जा रही है। मेरी रिक्वेस्ट यह है कि चाहे स्टेट गवर्नमेंट इस काम को करे या चाहे सेंट्रल गवर्नमेंट करे, जल्दी से जल्दी उम पुल पर दोनों बाजू फुट-पाथ बनाना चाहिए, ताकि इस तरह के एक्सीडेंट्स न हो सकें। इस के प्लान्ज और एस्टीमेट्स पहले बने थे। एक बाजू के फुट-पाथ पर पैंतीस हजार रुपया खर्च होगा, जिस का अर्थ यह है कि दोनों बाजू के फुट-पाथ पर ज्यादा से ज्यादा सत्तर हजार रुपया खर्च होगा। इस बारे में अग्लवार में बड़े हेडिंग के साथ वर्णन निकला था। इस लिए मेरी अर्ज है कि मिनिस्टर माहब इस तरह ध्यान दें।

जहाँ तक लेवल क्रॉसिंग का सम्बन्ध है, लातूर के पास सिग्नल के नज़दीक जो गेटवे है, उस पर रेल का इंजन एक बस के ऊपर चढ़ गया। उस बस का ड्राइवर खलास हो गया, खत्म हो गया। ड्राइवर के अलावा उस बस में कोई व्यक्ति नहीं था, नहीं तो और आदमी खत्म हो जाते। गाड़ी के आने पर उस गेटवे को बन्द करना चाहिए, लेकिन पता नहीं क्यों, उस को खुला रहने दिया गया और इस प्रकार बस और इंजन का एक्सीडेंट हो गया।

मैं निवेदन करना चाहता हूँ कि शोलापुर इलाके में मुंडेवाडी और पाकणी के बीच में यह रेलवे ब्रिज है। मैं माननीय मंत्री महोदय से प्रार्थना करता हूँ कि वह जल्दी से जल्दी कृपा कर के वहाँ पर फुट-पाथ बनाने की व्यवस्था करें।

The Minister of Railways (Shri Swaran Singh): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I am glad that we have discussed this important matter and certain points have been urged which require careful consideration. It is not my intention to give statistics or to quote from some of the published literature, a fear which was voiced by my esteemed friend Shri Frank Anthony. He said that....

Shri Frank Anthony: No.

Shri Swaran Singh: He said that I was likely to quote from some of these beautifully got up pamphlets in support.

Shri Frank Anthony: I said that is usually done. I did not say that the Minister will do it.

Shri Swaran Singh: But, we are discussing this matter in the context of some recent accidents, and not naturally the observations and the debate have split over to other relevant aspects. Acautally, I could notice a certain measure of uneasiness even amongst the participants, because some thought that there were general and basic questions which should be attended to while others thought that these basic and general questions are raised and some general and basic observations are made always, and, therefore, they should make concrete suggestions and should try to grapple with the problem that faces us today. But I must confess that in the ultimate analysis, except that the importance of this has been highlighted, there is nothing of a concrete nature on which I could take action in directions in which action is not already being taken.

For instance, one of the points which has been made is that there should be some inquiry which is not circumscribed by making the terms of reference narrow, but should have

some broad terms of reference with a fairly wide field for inquiring into the whole issue. That was what my hon. friend Shri Frank Anthony mentioned.

Shri Nath Pai, towards the end of his speech, made the suggestion that there should be two committees at expert level, one to go into the question of maintenance, track renewals and the like and the other to go into the conditions of working of the staff.

These are the three suggestions that have emerged. Let us see now whether what we have already done answers these or not.

With regard to the terms of reference, we have made the terms of reference very wide indeed, and we expect that the Kunzru Committee will go into the various aspects and would give us the benefit of their scrutiny and would make recommendations which would be of great use in facing the situation so far as accidents are concerned. The terms of reference are:

"(1) to go into the question of railway accidents; and

(2) to suggest measures so as to further reduce their incidence."

So, the terms of reference are so wide that they are not circumscribed in the scope of their inquiry by narrow issues, and it is for the committee to go into the whole question and to make recommendations, after careful scrutiny of the material that might be available.

For the information of the House, I might mention here that the committee have already met and they have finalised a questionnaire, and they have also entrusted the technical members of the committee with the task of carefully analysing the various accidents that have taken place over the last several years,—over the last five years I think that that is the period that they have selected,—going into the matter

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carefully in each case, and then making suggestions as to what should be done to improve the situation. So, so far as the inquiry is concerned, it is broad-based, and the terms of reference are comprehensive enough to cover various issues.

As regards the other suggestion, to which in principle I have no objection, that there should be scrutiny into the question of track renewals and also on the question of maintenance, I feel that this is covered by the broad terms of reference under which the Kunzru Committee is functioning. There are two expert members on that committee, and it need be, they can always take the help of assessors, and they can co-opt for specific purposes any other technical people, so that all these questions about the track renewals, over-aged rolling-stock, that is, coaches, wagons and engines and also the question of the workers being over-worked and being strained etc. can all be gone into by that committee. Therefore, I have a natural reluctance to constitute other committees, the functions of which are likely to overlap, because perhaps no useful purpose would be served by that.

Apart from this, the only other concrete thing I could hear from the other side was about the judicial inquiry. It is very strange—and it is not just a matter of coincidence—that two of the three hon. Members who touched upon that aspect do not appear to be very much in favour of a judicial inquiry. For instance, my hon. friend, Shri Frank Anthony, who made some very useful suggestions, was, I feel, functioning under the shadow of a judicial inquiry in which he had the privilege to defend one of the accused persons. The way he presented his case left an impression on my mind that the functioning of the judicial officer, circumscribed, as he said, by the terms of reference or dominated by certain expert opinion,

was such as to suggest that Shri Anthony does not appear to be very much enamoured of a judicial inquiry. To the same effect appeared to be the opinion of the leader of the Jan Sangh. On the other hand, Shri Nambiar, who five or six years ago had to work when a judicial inquiry was on swears by it and says that that is the only way of going into these questions.

My approach is that we need not be dogmatic about this. Most of these accidents, unfortunate as they are—no one likes them, everyone feels unhappy—are such that we cannot really adopt any uniform course suggested. There may be cases where a judicial inquiry may be necessary. In the past, in certain cases judicial inquiry was considered necessary and was ordered. There are other cases where the facts are simple—may be inconvenient, not to our liking—and do not require any detailed inquiry by a judicial officer. Therefore, it is not necessary that we should swear by one particular mode of inquiry.

I want to reiterate what I have often said, that it is wrong to say that inquiry by the Inspectorate is a departmental inquiry. It is certainly not a departmental inquiry. It has been mentioned time and again that the Inspectorate functions under the Transport and Communications Ministry. They are not a part of the Railway Administration or Railway Ministry. They are not in any way subordinate to or connected with the Railway Board.

Shri Priya Gupta (Katihar): On a point of information....

Shri Swaran Singh: Let me finish. That will probably answer his point.

Shri Priya Gupta: No. I want to know whether the Inspectorate does not consist of persons who are railway officers in the engineering department, and whether they have not worked in the railways.

Shri Swaran Singh: I think they should be railway engineers. There is no doubt in my mind that no one going into this question can make any contribution unless he is a railway engineer.

Shri Priya Gupta: Therefore, they have a soft corner for the railways.

Shri Swaran Singh: An electrical engineer, irrigation engineer or P.W.D. civil engineer is not the person who would be most suitable for discharging the functions of the Railway Inspectorate. All doctors must be surgeons or physicians; such is the case here regarding the need for railway engineers or railway technical personnel.

Shri Priya Gupta: Are they not interchangeable? They go to railways also.

Shri Swaran Singh: They are not. I am afraid this is stretching the point a little too much. When many of our friends who have been practising at the Bar go to the Bench, you cannot say that because they have worked at the Bar, therefore, they carry their own prejudices with them. There is a limit to which we can carry on this type of argument. They are independent people, technical people, who know their job and who understand the problem. It is not a layman's problem, as is clear from the divergence of opinion expressed even on the floor of the House.

Then the inquiry is also open to all people. The Inspectorate issue notices in the press. They even have it broadcast on the radio. The only other objection mentioned by Shri Nambiar is that it ceases to be a public inquiry because the Press is not there and the whole crowd is absent.

Shri Nambiar: That was not my point.

Shri Swaran Singh: When an inquiry is public, what it means is that everybody is permitted to come. Any one can tender evidence. Not only is everybody permitted to come, but we encourage people to go there and give evidence. The Inspectorate issues

certain notice saying that it would like anybody who could come to do so. Anybody who knows anything about it and who wants to help the enquiry is most welcome and he can come. It is not a sort of closed enquiry, and to throw it open to hundreds of people from outside or to arrange that the entire press present, does not make it any more public. The essence of the enquiry is that people can come there and give evidence freely. Not only can they come, they are invited to come, and notices are issued. Therefore, whether we examine it from the point of view of the independent character of the inspectorate, or from the point of view of the anxiety that the enquiry should be open to every one who wants to come and give evidence, I think this arrangement is a proper one. It has worked well, and it has thrown up very useful suggestions which have from time to time been implemented with considerable improvement in the working and functioning of the railways.

Shri Nambiar: What about the right of cross-examination? In the one there is the right, in the other there is no right, and answer has to be given to whatever is asked by the Inspector. One is the North Pole and the other is the South Pole. To say that they are equal is something absurd, if I may be permitted to say so.

Shri Swaran Singh: If he says absurd, I am not going to call what he is saying as absurd, because that is not the language that I use. But we have to remember that careful scrutiny by a technical man of the material is important, and the right of putting questions is not denied by the Inspector who is the person who holds the enquiry. The basic thing to remember in this connection is whether the person is independent. If he is independent, why should we depend upon an outside agency to have a type of cross-examination, and what is the result of cross-examination by a person like Shri Anthony who even Shri Nambiar will

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concede is much more experienced in the matter of cross-examination as compared to many others? Shri Anthony's reactions about the Nigam Report are that this is likely to be quoted as a Bible, indicating thereby that the enquiry was circumscribed and held under certain conditions which are not conducive to the coming out of the material in the form in which he hoped or expected it would come out.

Therefore, while the manner and the form of enquiry are really important with regard to a large number of accidents, in some cases lives unfortunately being lost and others being of a less serious character, the proper thing is the functioning of the Inspectorate. As I have already said, we have never announced it that as a matter of policy we are opposed to judicial enquiries. In appropriate cases where the facts are of such a nature that it is considered necessary that there should be a judicial enquiry, we will not hesitate to constitute a judicial enquiry. So, that will be a matter which can be considered in each particular case, and there is no question of principle involved in that.

Having disposed of that matter, now I come to some of the points which were urged by my esteemed friend Shri Nath Pai, which he described as of a general character. As is common, when things go wrong, anything can be piled up and some sort of connection can be built between the particular unfortunate accident and the failures elsewhere. It is not for me to urge, at any rate not on this occasion, about the performance of the railways, how much of the targets they have achieved in the course of the Second Plan, the shortfall and the reasons for it, and the impact of that on the economy. These are broader issues, but there is always the temptation to mention every lapse and then to connect it with accidents where the connection, to my mind, does not appear to be a precise or even an appropriate one.

For instance, there have been a number of accidents, and the provocation for the present debate are the three accidents about which mention has been made. Two of them took place at level crossings—taking four in all—Dhanbad and Sambhar Lake. These two took place at level crossings; the other two are the accident to the Poona-Bangalore Express and the one that took place near Bhilai. They were really the present provocation for holding the discussion. It may be recalled that there was a discussion sometime towards the end of 1961 and some of these general questions were gone into. These questions are important and should be attended to and we should supply information to the House, the hon. Members and the country on points like over-aged engines, track renewals and maintenance and the like. But most earnestly I place this for the consideration of the House that none of those would apply to the two accidents that took place at the level crossings; in the third case the typhoon, the strong gale appeared to be the main cause of accident and with regard to the fourth, the accident near Hubli, investigation is still going on. It is not for me to forecast the cause of that accident. The provisional finding, as my colleague pointed out, of the Inspector or Additional Commissioner of Railway Safety is that it appears to be a case of sabotage. To go over the entire ground again and to pile up all those deficiencies such as track-renewals or maintenance and getting more work from the staff according to a section of the House and getting indifferent work, according to another section of the House, some people alleging that there is lack of discipline while others are saying that the people are being flogged and made to work too hard—this sort of a conflicting picture emerges and there is very little to connect any of these important points with the accidents that led to the present discussion. Those points have been touched, however, and I would like to refer to them, not

because there is any relationship with the accidents.

श्री बागड़ी : लेवल क्रिसिंग भी तो उसमें है ।

श्री स्वर्ण सिंह : उसका भी जिक्र करूंगा अग़र मन्त्र करेगा ।

श्री बागड़ी : मन्त्र नहीं होता है ।

श्री स्वर्ण सिंह : कबना पड़ेगा ।

There has been a backlog of track-renewals but if the performance is seen, it will be found that it is not that bad. Against Plan targets of 12,875 kilometres of rail renewals and sleeper renewals, upto 31st March, 1961 upto that date authentic figures are available—some 9,959 kilometres of rails and 11,364 kilometres of sleepers were renewed and the shortfall is mainly due to difficulties in supplies of rails. This is made clear in page 6 of the Railway Board's Annual Report, copies of which have already been supplied to the Parliament Library.

Against the original provision of Rs. 100 crores in the Second Plan actually Rs. 154 crores were spent on Track-renewals. With an average of 1500 miles yearly, the arrears of track renewals were brought down from about 7000 track miles to about 5000 track miles. The Third Plan provides for Rs. 170 crores for track and rail renewals of about 7500 miles and about 6500 miles of sleeper-renewals. This means an yearly average of 1500 miles of rails and 1300 miles of sleeper renewals. During 1961-62 only about 1100 miles of rail and sleeper renewals were done and the expenditure was about Rs. 43 crores. It is proposed to carry out 1900 miles rail and sleeper renewals in 1962-63 to make up for the shortfall in 61-62. The main reasons for the shortfall in 1961-62 were late receipt of 90 lbs rail and shortage of 60 lbs rails and track fittings like fish-plates, tie-bars etc., being a little in short supply.

Shri U. M. Trivedi: Are the rails now available?

Shri Swaran Singh: Yes; the procurement action has been initiated and our indigenous production also, as the hon. Member is aware, has been stepped up.

Mention was made about over-aged engines and about coaches. Even with regard to that, although the position is not as satisfactory as I wish it should be, still, the improvement is significant. The percentage of over-aged locos in 1955-56 was 32.2, on broad gauge and 25.8 on metre gauge. In 1960-61, by pumping in new locos, this percentage was reduced to 25.4 in the case of BG and 19 in the case of MG. In the case of wagons, it was 18 per cent for broad gauge in 1955-56, it came down to 10.3 in 1960-61. In the case of metre gauge, from 21.2 in 1955-56, it came down to 12.3 in 1960-61. Therefore, there has been a steady improvement in this regard. I agree with Shri Frank Anthony that there is a huge backlog into the reasons of which we need not go. It takes sometime before all that backlog is cleared, but the steps that have been taken should create this feeling that we are seized of the situation and every possible effort is being made to improve the position.

Shri Priya Gupta: In the meantime, to prevent accidents let there be accident *yajnas* observed everywhere in the country, till the tracks can be renewed and the rolling stock can be replaced!

Shri Swaran Singh: I do not have a pessimistic view as my hon. friend is accustomed to. Frankly speaking, I am a little averse to quoting percentages in the matter of accidents, because I feel that accident is a bad thing, whatever the percentage may be. And it is not perhaps a very proper way of presentation if I were to say that there are many millions of people who travel and the number of people who are involved in accidents is very microscopic. It is not from that angle that I want to quote

[Shri Swaran Singh]

percentages, yet, it is a fact that although the intensity of traffic on the rails has increased, still, if we compare the number of accidents—I would not quote percentages—to the ton miles that have been actually done or the miles per passenger that are covered, this percentage has steadily come down from the year 1955-56. So, it is wrong to say that there is an increasing trend. I do not want to quote statistics. They have been mentioned on earlier occasions also. But it is a fact that there is a decreasing trend. Therefore, we should not take an alarmist view, although, personally I feel.....

श्री बागड़ी : दो महीने का क्या परसेंटेज है ?

श्री स्वर्ण सिंह : हिसाब जरा मुश्किल पीज है। दो महीने का परसेंटेज नहीं निकाला जाता, साल भर का निकाला जाता है। एक दिन का अगर परसेंटेज निकालें तो बहुत ही बढ़ जायेगा। चूँकि हिसाब की बात है, इसलिए शायद मुनासिब नहीं है कि बागड़ी साहब को इस की याद दिलाई जाए क्योंकि हिसाब में उन का कोई सरोकार नहीं।

श्री बागड़ी : तभी हम मरते हैं। अगर हिसाब आता होता तब क्यों मरते ?

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: We have a half-an-hour discussion after 6.0 p.m.

Shri Swaran Singh: I will try to wind up within a very short time. Therefore, I have mentioned these things because it was necessary to counteract the feeling.

Only one important aspect is left. It has been mentioned that we make our workers work too hard or for too long. I will be very happy if I were able to really report to the country with confidence that people work hard. In this, I seek the cooperation of my esteemed friends, who claim so much influence with the workers.

18 hrs.

So far as hours of work are concerned, I can claim that this matter was gone into very carefully in Shri Rajadhyaksha's Award which has been referred to, and very sound and cogent reasons were given about hours of work, when a break can be claimed and all that. We have tried to carry out and implement what is contained in that award. I do not think it will be correct to say that these accidents take place because people are over-worked.

There was a whispering sort of suggestion that certain sections, even amongst the workers, lack discipline, lack a sense of responsibility, etc. I do not want to repeat.... (Interruption). My hon. friend did not have the courage to interrupt when this objection was made by another Member.

Shri Priya Gupta: The Rajadhyaksha Award is being violated.

Shri Swaran Singh: We are considering the Rajadhyaksha Award in its relevancy with regard to accidents. The two accidents at the level crossings and the accident at Hubli and the third one where the gale was involved were not the result of anybody being over-worked. These points are interesting, and important, and we should find answers for them, but let us not take a distorted view and try to import considerations which are not there.

It is a fact that railway trains, coaches, wagons and locomotives have to be kept going all the 24 hours and therefore the work is strenuous. It is on account of the willing, hard and loyal work done by lakhs of employees that we are keeping this system going, with results of which any country can be proud. Comparisons in this respect are perhaps not very proper. But we have compared our performance, even in the matter of accidents, with some of the so-called advanced countries like United States

and U.K. I am glad to report to the House that compared to them, we have fared better in the matter of accidents. I can quote figures in this respect also, but I resist that temptation. I merely refer to the general results of broad analysis.

Something was mentioned about maintenance. I personally attach the highest importance to maintaining high standards of maintenance. In this respect, any suggestion which hon. Members from any part of the House may have to make, are most welcome. Maintenance is important in any country, but it is of the highest importance in our country in our present stage of development, because we want our resources to go the farthest. The obvious way for the resources to go farthest is to maintain a high degree of maintenance. Therefore, not only from the point of view of preventing accidents, but from the general aspect of keeping them in good trim, any suggestions that may be forthcoming either from the unions or from hon. Members who are familiar with the subject are most welcome and I would take steps to ensure that they are implemented.

श्री बागड़ी : लेवेल क्रॉसिंग के बारे में भी कुछ कहिये ।

Shri Swaran Singh: My friend, Shri Bagri, will not excuse me if I do not mention about level crossings. He tried to wax eloquent and said, "Why can't you find money and man the level crossings?" Whereas his sentiment appears to be based upon proper considerations, he has not suggested a practical approach. Our principle is, where there is any crossing point, whether that level crossing should or should not be manned is to be judged from time to time by the volume of traffic on the road and by the volume of traffic on the track. I agree with the suggestion made by some hon. Members opposite that there should be frequent checks and we should constantly be alive to the changing pattern of traffic on the

track and also on the road, so that at such of the level crossings as may not be manned today we may find it necessary to provide a regular gate and may feel the necessity of manning it a little later. The rest is a matter of financial adjustment as to how it should be adjusted between the Centre and the States. Let not my hon. friends unnecessarily feel agitated over these things, because these financial adjustments had been arrived at after understanding the State point of view and the Railway point of view. That is also a fair one. The broad principle is that when there is an important road already existing and a railway line is first started, the Railways provide a gate and man it. But by later development if some new roads come up and some new things develop, that is regarded as a part of development for which the State also, for the benefit of the road users, if they contribute a part of it it is not unreasonable. They get all road taxes, cess on petrol and a number of other things, and if an arrangement which has worked satisfactorily has been arrived at to share the financial burden between the State and the Railways that should not be grudged and every effort should be made to implement that.

About overbridges, Sir, I have already announced the position, that the Railways are prepared to provide a bridge at any place where the State Government provides the approaches. That is not an unfair thing, because approach roads involve a lot of construction on property which is not railway property, and the road users benefit greatly. Therefore, that arrangement is not an unfair one.

With regard to the particular accidents, I refrain, Sir, from offering any comments because they are the subject matter of enquiry. But I would like to assure that any remedial action that may be suggested as a result of that enquiry would, just as in the past, be very carefully examined and proper remedial action taken.

Shri Nath Pai: Mr. Deputy-Speaker, at the very outset, I would like to thank those who participated in the debate, and barring a slightly discordant note with regard to the manner the class IV performs, which my hon. friend Shri Frank Anthony brought, I did not see any contradiction as the hon. Minister was quick to find in the contribution made by the Members. I would very much urge my hon. friend Shri Frank Anthony, who speaks with such vast experience and authority on the matter of railway performance in the country, to somehow try to purge his mind of the prejudice which he has against those unfortunate class IV staff. May I assure him that we do not entertain any kind of prejudice against any class of railway workers; to us they are railway workers doing a very vital job.

Having said this, I shall try to ask one or two things of the Railway Minister. He has tried to take me to task for trying to say all kinds of things and trying to link them with the railway accidents. My whole submission was based on a central thesis, that the accidents or the tragic figures of accidents are part of a whole bad performance on the railways. I was not very happy to have to say this, nor do I believe in treading in figures when those figures connote so much of suffering and so much of tragedy to so many families. But the whole thing was based on the point that on the whole these accidents are likely to increase. Whether there is a temporary failure of one per cent or two per cent is not a matter in which I am interested at all, and I will not try to base my case, Mr. Deputy-Speaker, on a point like that.

The whole submission I had tried to make was that accidents, given the corollaries, are inevitable, and this we had tried to base on various points. To that the reply given—let alone the manner and tone, and perhaps the concern conveyed by the tone and manner improved—in the

beginning was that all these are known, everything is being done that could be done and everything seems to be all right. Then the simple question that comes haunting many of us is, if everything that could be done has been done how do we keep on having these accidents again and again. You do not like me going back into the whole range of accidents. My motion, if you had been careful enough, says "recent series of accidents". I have not tabled the motion about 1, 2 or 3 accidents. I have begun by citing the railway accident of the 16th of April and coming to the one that happened day before yesterday, citing 22 accidents. I have said that there is something to which there has not been a reply.

One or two points only I will try because this is, for me, not an indictment but a plea, though it may be a little late and though he might have heard of it all these years as a Minister, that all those recommendations have to be acted upon and remedial measures taken. May I ask him how many of the two hundred and odd recommendations made by the Shahnawaz Committee have been carried out? May I know how many of the findings of the Basu Committee regarding training have been carried out? May I know what happened to the innumerable precautionary steps suggested by the different judicial committees?

Then he tried to make fun with regard to the differences between my approach and that of Shri Nambiar regarding the necessity of instituting judicial enquiries. I think a judicial enquiry is always necessary in the case of major accidents. That gives us a reply to a specific matter. But what I was trying to suggest was that he takes the help of his own experts, no longer under the control, direction or favour of the Railway Board, and with their assistance go into these accidents. Let us have both these two enquiries. They do not necessarily come within the purview of the Kunzru Committee. I am

glad that he has made this concession at least that in principle he is prepared to think about it. Let him think of what I have in mind and, perhaps, a better reply will come

May I draw his attention to the very sad fact that there was an accident on the 23rd at Dhanbad? Within a few hours, there was another accident. And what a tragedy! Within exactly a month, again, at Dhanbad there is another accident. Everyday, on the 24th, 25th, 26th with an interval of two and a half days to three days there is an accident. This is not a matter that can be brushed aside by saying "we know all about it; all that can be done has been done". If all that can be done has been done, how is it that accidents are taking place? Are some forces, some supernatural forces, some ghosts, some witches, some goblins, in operation which are tampering with our railways and bringing about these tragedies? These are factors which can be controlled.

One factor I bring to his notice before I resume, repeating my plea that I am not interested in any indictment. I am not interested in apportioning blame, I am interested as much as the hon. Minister and, perhaps, every member, whatever be the party label that he bears, in seeing that we get an efficient, dependable railway service, that the accident number goes down and the efficiency quantum goes higher. This is a matter on which we expected a reply.

About maintenance he said all that can be done has been done. Here he was more conciliatory. This is his own report, "A Review of the Accidents on Indian Government Railways", and this says that on the Indian Government railways failures of engine, rolling stock and derailment account for 68.8 per cent of the total number of accidents. Is this something that cannot be cured? Is

this something that cannot be attended to? Is this something that cannot be stopped? I do think that these figures themselves indicate that they can be attended to. I do think that all of us can afford to work a little harder, Members, Ministers and the nation as a whole, and I say this in all seriousness.

Then I come to the workload of labour. In the olden days there used to be twelve gangmen for three miles. Now what is the position? The number of miles has been increased from three to four. What is it? 25 per cent increase. But the number of gangmen remains the same. I will give you an example to substantiate my point and bring it home. At Delhi station—will he kindly find out whether I am not right—in 1947 there used to be 66 shunters and there used to be 76 trains. Now the number of shunters has come down to 56 and the number of trains that pass has gone up to 152. So, there is a definite increase of load and this leads to exhaustion of man. We are already confronted with the over-working of the machines, of the locomotives, of the tracks, of the sleepers. And when two highly over-worked, exhausted forces, try to do a vital job, the result is an accident.

Therefore, in the end, whereas I accept that very fine manner he adopted in trying to reply, I would once again plead with him to brush aside from his mind that impression that he might have got that somehow we were trying to make an indictment. Certainly, we are interested in trying to emphasize that, on the whole, the performance seems to be far from satisfactory. Perhaps, with his new energy he may try to open a new leaf and, perhaps, we shall be able to congratulate him next year if the record, at least of accidents, has been a little better than the one to which this House has been accustomed to all these years.

Shri Swaran Singh: Since he put a specific question, I would like to

[Shri Swaran Singh]

inform the House that almost all the recommendations of the Shah Nawaz Committee were accepted.

Shri Nath Pai: That means the railways are incurable.

श्री कछवाय (देवास) : श्रीमान्, मैं समझता हूँ कि हाउस में इस समय काम नहीं है।

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Order, order.

18.15 hrs.

BAGH RIVER PROJECT*

Shri Balkrishna Wasnik (Gondia): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, we have just now had a very lively discussion and I hope the House will bear with me for a few minutes more.

This discussion arises out of my Unstarred Question answered on the 21st April, 1962. There is a river project on the Bagh River in Gondia Tahsil of Bhandara District of Maharashtra. This project had already received the administrative approval of the Madhya Pradesh Government prior to the re-organisation of States in 1956 and it was also included in the Second Five Year Plan proposal of that State. But it has been found that when the Chief Minister of Maharashtra State inaugurated the work on the pick-up weir in February 1961, the Government of Madhya Pradesh sent a telegram to the Government of Maharashtra requesting that the Government of Maharashtra should not go ahead with the project without that Government's concurrence. Actually, the concurrence of the Madhya Pradesh Government was a mere formality to be observed in an inter-State relations in view of the fact that what the Maharashtra Government, as a successor government to the ex-

Madhya Pradesh Government, had embarked upon was nothing but the fulfilment of the commitment of the ex-Madhya Pradesh Government. But we find that in April 1961 the Madhya Pradesh Government formulated another scheme as an alternative proposal for the construction of the Bagh River project and requested the Government of Maharashtra that the project should be taken up as a joint venture. I cannot understand one thing. This project as it was, was initiated by the ex-Government of Madhya Pradesh. At that time the District of Bhandara in which this project lies was in Madhya Pradesh. The neighbouring district, that is, Drug District, in which some water spreads over was also in Madhya Pradesh. At that time this project was given administrative approval by the Madhya Pradesh Government. What I want to submit is that no material change has been sought by the Government of Maharashtra. Everything is the same except that some technical features have been changed. What is this change that the Government of Maharashtra has sought to do? It is only to revise the project in respect of certain technical features of the dam, the canal, the rates and the crop pattern. So far as submergence is concerned that is virtually unchanged. The FRL having been kept practically the same, instead of a direct canal proposed in the old project the canal in the revised project takes off from a pick-up weir ten miles downstream to reduce relatively idle canal length. So there is practically no change in the submergence of land in the neighbouring district which has now gone in the State of Madhya Pradesh. I do not understand why the Government of Madhya Pradesh should take objection and formulate a new scheme and then come forward with a new proposal and ask the Government of Maharashtra to take up the scheme as a joint venture. Is it because there has been a re-organisation of the States? Is it be-

*Half-an-hour discussion.