

[Mr. Speaker]

- (10) Shri K. Kelappan
- (11) Shri N. C. Chatterjee
- (12) H. M. Maharaja Rajendra Narayan Singh Deo
- (13) Shri Jaipal Singh
- (14) Shri K. Subrahmanyam.

INDIAN INCOME-TAX (AMENDMENT) BILL

The Minister of State for Finance (Shri Tyagi): I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill further to amend the Indian Income-tax Act, 1922.

Mr. Speaker: The question is:

“That leave be granted to introduce a Bill further to amend the Indian Income-tax Act, 1922.”

The motion was adopted.

Shri Tyagi: I introduce the Bill.

RAILWAY BUDGET—GENERAL DISCUSSION

Mr. Speaker: The House will now proceed with the General discussion of the Railway Budget. Before the discussion commences, I have to announce to the House that I fix the maximum time-limit for speeches as 15 minutes for each hon. Member excepting the hon. Minister of Railways for whom 45 minutes or more will be allowed, if necessary. We will now start with the discussion.

Shri P. C. Bose (Manbhum North): Sir, it is somewhat peculiar that out of the thirteen paragraphs of the Railway Budget speech of the hon. Minister nine or ten are exclusively devoted to the question of the regrouping of the railways and with regard to all other questions with which the public are concerned it has been disposed by one single sentence at the concluding part of the speech. That sentence reads as follows:

“Need I assure the House that it will be my constant endeavour to maintain the steady progress achieved in operating efficiency, to foster better and closer relations and understanding between labour and administration and to continue to improve the scale of amenities made available to the travelling public and labour.”

This one sentence disposes of all the other points with which the public at large are concerned.

I do not want to minimise the importance of the question of regrouping. Recently there have been various controversies and agitations over this issue. However important this question may be, I feel that the hon. Minister should have dealt with the other points which are of importance to the public.

The grievances of the public may be counted by hundreds and I do not propose to enumerate them one by one. But I would like to speak on a few points which are of importance and call for the immediate attention of the authorities concerned.

The first point is with regard to the difficulties undergone by third class and inter class passengers. There is lack of accommodation and sanitary arrangements in the compartments. Any person who has travelled in third or inter class compartments would testify to that. If you happen to occupy a corner seat in the compartment you cannot approach the latrine due to the heavy crowd. I know the case of a small boy who wanted to go to the latrine and his father tried his best to carry the boy to the lavatory but could not succeed due to the overcrowding. Meanwhile the boy did the mischief where he was. As a matter of fact there was no alternative for him. In that dirty condition of the compartment the passengers had to travel a long distance, for there was no sweeper available in the intermediate stations to clean up the compartment.

With regard to inter-class compartments, very few are provided in a train: generally one and sometimes two. The passengers do not get seating accommodation. What is the good of one or two first and second class passengers getting all the facilities they want and the rest going without them. This is a matter which should be attended to at once by the authorities concerned.

There is another point with regard to third class passengers. Railway magistrates go about from station to station, catch hold of persons travelling without tickets and after a summary trial fine them Rs. 15 or 20. If the person cannot pay the amount he is sent to the nearest police lockup and he has to remain there until he pays the fine. I know the case of a villager, a very honest man, who had a case in a court in a nearby town. The booking office counter was so overcrowded that he could not purchase a ticket in time and since he had his case in a sub-divisional court he got into the train without a ticket. He was caught and in a summary trial the magistrate fined him

Rs. 15 or 20. He could not pay the money on the spot. He was put in the lockup from where he informed his family, who came over and paid the money. His case in the sub-divisional court was decided *ex-parte* and a decree was granted against him. The case related to rent which he had paid to a *zamindar* for which he could not get the receipt. He was in jail for 15 days for what was only a technical blaine. He was ready to purchase a ticket but due to overcrowding he could not do so.

If you go to a roadside railway station in the evening you will find that there is no electric light and every thing is in dark. The booking clerk comes only five or ten minutes before the train arrives with a kerosene lamp smoking and the chimney of the lamp darkened by soot. You cannot see the face of the booking clerk, nor could you read how much the ticket costs. In five minutes the passengers have to buy the tickets and if due to urgency a passenger gets into the train without a ticket he is caught by the magistrate, who after a summary trial fines him. These are the difficulties suffered by third and inter-class passengers which should be remedied as soon as possible. You must provide more inter-class compartments as also third class compartments and more amenities as well. If coaches are not immediately available from Government factories some wagons may be converted with squatting arrangements for passengers, so that people can travel without overcrowding. This is a very urgent matter.

Now I come to the question of the supply of empty wagons to the collieries. I come from a coalfield area. I was told that collieries are going to be closed for want of supply of sufficient number of wagons. The coal industry entirely depends on the wagon supply. As a matter of fact the railways are a partner to the coal industry, because the railway income from coal freight is much more than what the colliery owners earn. Daily the railways supply 3,000 wagons all over India—2,000 to the Jharia coalfields and 1,000 to other coal fields. You can imagine how much the income through coal freight is to the railways. Thus the railway administration earns much more than the industry itself through the supply of wagons. But there is some bungling somewhere, for the wagons are not properly supplied. Some get more and others do not get any at all. This

is a matter which should be investigated by the Railway Board as to why some of the collieries are being closed down for want of wagon supply. It is a very important matter and should be attended to because the coal industry is dependent on the supply of wagons. This matter should be attended to and remedied by the Railway Board, otherwise there will be trouble not only to the industry but also to the labour employed there—there will be unemployment, agitation and so many other difficulties.

A point which came to my notice while attending a meeting of railway employees was the question of education of the children of railway employees. The Railway Administration is not making any arrangement for the education of its employees' children. Such arrangements existed to some extent when the railways were being run by companies but since they came under the Government the railways have altogether stopped giving any grants to new schools or new arrangements for education. The railway staff move about from place to place and they have practically no home. When the father works going from station to station, sometimes 100 miles away from his home, the family is left behind without anybody to look after them. Under such circumstances unless there are good educational facilities there is the fear that the children of those employees may go astray. This is a very serious matter not only from the point of railway employees but also as a national question. There should be some educational arrangements for the children of the eight lakh of railway employees and the Railway Administration and the Government should take this matter as their duty, though I know that the question may be raised that it being a question of primary education it is an all India question and not one for the railways alone.

There is another point which though a local matter is an important one. I come from Dhanbad where one of the important and busy colliery railway lines cuts across a road which is a very important road. This road links up Sindri and the Grand Trunk Road, Ranchi and the Grand Trunk Road etc. It also connects the road leading to the various offices like the Mining office, Welfare office, Hospitals, the court, the station etc. People always find it difficult to cross that line which cuts across the road. Because of personal experience I can say that out of ten times that you go along

[Shri P. C. Bose]

that road eight times you will be held up. Only the other day the Chief Minister of Bihar, the hon. Shri Shrikrishna sinha who was going on some urgent work was held up. Sir, the question of this level crossing is a very old one and I appeal to the Ministry to look into it so that at least an overbridge may be put up. Otherwise, not only the colliery people but also the military population of Ranchi are delayed in their day to day journeys along this road or when they have to use the road for journeys to Calcutta or Delhi

Mr. Speaker: Before I call upon other hon. Members to participate in the debate, I would just like to make one observation. We are now discussing the Railway Budget generally and not any specific grievances. I think I should make this statement after having heard what the hon. Member has just said. The general debate may go on and so far as specific points or grievances are concerned, Members will have an opportunity of speaking again when the Demands for Grants come up. A general survey of the Administration would be in order now and Members would be wasting their time practically, on details. Well, I need not say anything further.

Shri Nambiar (Mayuram): Sir, I have before me the two speeches of the two hon. Ministers, one of Mr. Gopalaswami Ayyangar and another of Mr. Lal Bahadur Shastri, which give a rosy picture of the Railways in India today. If it had been so I am here to congratulate them, but unfortunately the facts that they have themselves given us show that it is not so.

Mr. Gopalaswami Ayyangar in his speech stated:

"The balances in the Depreciation, Development and Revenue Reserve Funds will amount to Rs. 163.55 crores on 31st March, 1952. I mention these facts to indicate how sound at the present moment the finances of the Indian Government Railways are. There are indeed few railways of the same magnitude in the world, in countries of comparable size and volume of traffic, which can claim to have done anywhere near so well in recent years as Indian Railways."

But on the very same page he further says something else which if you read

you will find contradicts his previous statement. He states:

"On the 1st April, 1951, the number of locomotives which required to be replaced was 1640, the annual replacement figure calculated on our total stock being of the order of 200."

When we have 1640 locomotives, that is eight times the number annually replaced to be replaced still he says that our railways can compare very well with any other in the world. Then he says:

"Under coaches, 5120 was the figure and under wagons 25,000 wagons remained to be replaced on the same date, the normal annual wastages under these heads being only 600 and 5,500 respectively."

This also gives the same picture. Then:

"The condition of the track had considerably deteriorated as maintenance and replacement could be carried out only to the minimum required for safety purposes in previous years."

This is the position of our railways and what are the other figures which indicate the condition of the railways? According to the figures published by Government for 1950-51 and the previous four years there were 22,450 accidents on the Railways killing 4117 human beings. This is the figure published by the Government of India, and they say these accidents were due to sabotage by certain elements including the railway workers and organisations. You can see from the facts given by Mr. Gopalaswami Ayyangar that with dilapidated coaches, wagons and engines and permanent way we have been running the railways for the last five years, killing 4,000 people, and still he says that it was due to sabotage by individuals and organisations. Sir, I want your indulgence in the matter, and the indulgence of hon. Members here. I would ask whether this sort of campaigning against "elements" and railway workers should continue. It must be stopped, and we must also see what sort of a railway we have.

Glancing at the Budget I find that Rs. 282.16 crores are our receipts out of which we spend Rs. 187.69 crores for the maintenance and purchases and for wages. I do not know the exact figure of the wage bill but in 1950-51

about Rs. 110 crores have been spent on the wage bill. Barring that all the rest of the money is allocated to various heads. If any man in the street looks at the Budget he will find in it nothing but a jugglery of figures; figures and figures. Nine lakh workers get somewhere about Rs. 110 crores and the rest of the money is allocated to various heads out of which the main one is Rs. 34 crores for the General Revenues at four per cent. interest. What I say is that the Britishers during their days took in the name of interest more than their capital over and above which we had to give them by adjusting it towards our sterling balances. Are we to continue to do the same sort of thing when we see that our railways are so useless and so dilapidated and when there remains so much to be done for them?

Coming to the labour, I find that according to the figures published by the Government of India the minimum wage of a worker is Rs. 70; that of a Class IV employee working in a factory is Rs. 100; that of a Class III employee, viz. clerks etc., is Rs. 150; whereas the Chief Commissioner of Railways, who is now called Financial Commissioner, gets Rs. 4,000. I have no objection to your paying him Rs. 4,000 or even more, but please see the difference; the gap; and this is exactly what the Britishers did. Are we to continue the same? The minimum wage of a worker is Rs. 70 whereas the salary of a railway officer is Rs. 4,000. I have no grievance against anybody being paid such a high salary, but let the worker be paid more, because he must live. We do not want to have anything special, but let us point out that the nine lakh railway workers who are running the railways are very badly treated.

Coming to the general public, if you look at the figures during the 1950-51-52 period, you will find that there is an increase in the third-class fare from 20 to 25 per cent. There has also been an increase in the freight on foodstuffs and on coal, which is so essential for the industrial development of our country. While we have a surplus of Rs. 23 crores on one side, and while we have allocated Rs. 34 crores to the General Revenues and Rs. 30 crores to the depreciation reserve, while we have done so many things, there is not a single attempt on the part of the Railway Minister to give better amenities for the passengers. Of course, he has given Rs. three crores for amenities. But look

at the number of third-class passengers carried in 1951. They were 130 crores and for these 130 crores of people, the Railway Minister has made a provision of Rs. three crores, i.e. 6 pies per head, for passenger amenities. It is the most surprising and the most shameful situation that a passenger gets six pies by way of amenities in a year. And then, see the condition of the railway coaches and the condition of third-class travel. Next to going to jails, you can travel in third-class. A passenger from Madras coming to Delhi has to be in the train for 58 hours without any chance of leaning, let alone sleeping. I have recently gone to China. Within two and a half years, they have made arrangements whereby the third-class passenger is given facilities to sleep during night. I ask you: why could not this be done here? Yes, it cannot be done here, because the money has to go to General Revenues and from the General Revenues you have to spend nearly Rs. 197 crores for defence. Defence against whom? Who is going to attack this country? We have been spending half of our income on defence for so many years now, when the ordinary man in the street is suffering. He has to pay more for the third-class fare. The ordinary businessman and industrialist who is just able to make both ends meet has to pay more for the freight on coal. Therefore, I say this is a general attack on the people—not alone on the workers, not alone on the passengers, not alone on the industrialists. When our leader Shri Gopalan said that the President's Address was in the nature of a declaration of war on the people, they became angry. Of course, they may become angry with the word "war" but may I humbly ask them what else is this except a forthright attack on the people?

Sir, I request the hon. Railway Minister to reconsider the matter. I am not expecting that anything that has happened in China or anything that has happened in the Soviet Union will happen here just now. That is not my point. But what I humbly suggest is a re-allocation of the Budget on the basis of the figures and facts that I have placed before you—re-allocation in the sense that today we cannot afford to pay to the General Revenues Rs. 34 crores. Whether it is right or wrong on principle can be decided later on. We have to give more facilities for the travelling public. We have to give a living wage to the workers. Therefore, we have to re-allocate the Budget.

[Shri Nambiar]

I have got a concrete suggestion, because I want to help the hon. Minister of Railways. I want to help the Government with my co-operation. The Communist Party is prepared for co-operation by giving concrete suggestions. We do not want to embarrass the Government for the sake of embarrassing the Party in power; we want to help them and thereby help the masses of this country. That is all our intention. I am therefore prepared to give you a concrete proposal in regard to the railways. You have got the Depreciation Fund, the Railway Reserve Fund and the Development Fund. You will be really afraid to see so many Funds. I suggest that there may be only one Fund. That Fund must extend a possibility of rehabilitating and replacing the railways every year. Let us pool all these Funds together and make them one. To that, we shall contribute every year and that money may be spent for useful purposes.

You have got a Development Fund in which there are Rs. 163 crores today and still you go to America or request aid under the Colombo Plan for our railways. Why should these Rs. 163 crores lie idle? I do not know how it is being utilised. It may be utilised in some other matters. I do not know. But the thing is that when we have so much money left, we should spend it in order to make the railways self-sufficient. By self-sufficiency I mean that we should produce what all is needed for the railways. Let us not go to Canada for engines. Of course, the Chittaranjan workshop is there. What is going to happen there in 1952-53 and how many engines it is going to produce, nobody knows. I have very little hope, because during the war period I tried my best in the Golden Rock Workshop of the South Indian Railway; we had a chance of building boilers; we had chance of building cylinders and we had a chance of making some effective contribution to the railways; but as soon as the war was over, all these encouragements given during the war were withdrawn and the railway factories were not allowed to produce any more. They were made to depend upon others and we are now going to Canada and we are begging from other countries, because we have no industry which will make our railways self-sufficient. Therefore, my humble suggestion is that these Rs. 163 crores must be utilised to make our railways self-sufficient in the matter of wagons, coaches and

locomotives. That is my suggestion number one.

And then, as regards amenities, third-class passengers must have sleeping space; if not, at least sitting place. People come and tell me, "Do not argue for sleeping space; let us get at least a place for sitting." That is the position. There are saloons—more than a thousand of them—in our railways. These can be converted into coaches, which can be used for ordinary men in the street, so that we may give a chance to the third-class passenger to have at least sitting space.

Then, coming to the labour problem, I have already represented to the hon. Minister that labour is attacked today. Trade Unions are discouraged. Our union which has a membership of 20,000 has been refused recognition and no cooperation is given to it. The present labour policy is to make one section fight against another, which is exactly what the Britishers did. There are two Federations now. Why should there be two? The National Federation of Railwaymen has been recognised very recently to set it against the All-India Railwaymen's Federation which has been in existence for so many years. There is victimisation. New disciplinary rules have been framed. Hundreds of workers are being dismissed. In the name of National (Safeguarding of Security) Rules, as many as 200 workers have been dismissed in the Southern Railway. The reason is that they are supposed to have had some idea of Communism in their minds. Why should politics come in here, when the railway worker is doing his duty and when he is obeying the rules and regulations of the country? Public men are being detained without trial. Why should you have these rules applied to railway workers? Not only has he to go to jail, but as soon as he comes back he must lose his job, all because once upon a time he had something to do with the Communist Party. I am representing to the hon. Minister and I shall try to carry conviction to him that this is a wrong policy. These National (Safeguarding of Security) Rules, must be terminated and the railwaymen should be given reasonable consideration.

These are my suggestions. I shall summarise them. The first is about these Rs. 163 crores. I have already suggested that these must be used for making the railways self-sufficient. Secondly, a reasonable amount must be reserved every year for rehabilitation purposes. We can decide the

quantum. I am prepared to sit with the hon. Minister or with any other Committee in order to see how much amount we can give. Thirdly, amenities for third-class passengers must be considered more than heretofore, and there must be a reduction in the fares. A reduction of the fare to the extent it was raised by Mr. Gopalaswami Ayyangar. I would request you to give me one more minute, Sir.

Mr. Speaker: He has taken one minute three times now. He should confine himself to a minute exactly; otherwise I cannot give a chance to other people.

Shri Nambiar: A reduction of the fares and freight to the extent it was raised by Mr. Gopalaswami Ayyangar; proper implementation of the recommendations of the Central Pay Commission, so far as railway men are concerned, with consideration for pre-1931 entrants with a view to elimination of anomalies; grant of dearness allowance according to the recommendation of the Central Pay Commission; no victimisation of Railway men and harsh application of disciplinary rules for political reasons. Those who have been victimised may be taken back to duty. I have many grievances of the men of the South Indian Railway which I am prepared to convey to him. The other point is the compulsory dividend arrangement of four per cent.

The last point I would refer is the regrouping. We have our own grievances from the point of view of the staff as well as the people which my colleagues will deal with. We are against the regrouping plan being implemented here and now. Let us have a Parliamentary sub-committee to go into the whole question. We are prepared to go with Government for the implementation of the scheme in a better way from the point of view of the staff as well as of the general public.

Shri G. D. Somani (Nagaur-Pali): Sir, in the ordinary course it would have been a matter of sincere gratification to find that our hon. Minister for Railways has been able to present such a prosperous railway Budget, but at the same time we have to consider whether this prosperity Budget has been obtained without any undue hardship either to the travelling public or to the general trade and industry.

In the short time at my disposal I will confine myself to certain difficulties and problems of trade and industry. What is the contribution which the trade and industry are making to the prosperity of the

railways? You will find, Sir, from the White Paper that about Rs. 162 crores are estimated to be the earnings from trade and industry in the year 1952-53. This shows that about 55 per cent. of the railway revenue is received from the goods traffic.

Now, the hon. Minister for railways has presented a Budget which shows a net revenue surplus of something about Rs. 57 crores after making all sorts of provisions for depreciation, for Development Fund and for other items as per revised financial convention which was approved in December 1949. What is the picture before us now. On the one side we find that the railways have been able after making all sorts of provisions, to provide a net revenue surplus of about Rs. 57 crores and on the other hand that trade and industry which are the biggest customers of railways are suffering grievously due to recession, slump or depression, whatever you may call it.

[SHRI ANANTHASAYANAM AYYANGAR in the Chair]

10 A.M.

In the ordinary course it would not have been too much to expect that our hon. Minister for Railways should have taken account of the present depressed conditions of almost all sections of trade and industry and should have examined in what directions and to what extent he should give relief to the suffering trade and industry. But, what is the position? In the last provisional Budget heavy additional burdens have been imposed. The coal freight has been raised by as much as 30 per cent and in the name of rationalisation and readjustment of the freight structure the railway freight has been increased for so many other commodities like food-grains, pulses, steel, sugar, etc.

What is the argument that has been advanced for raising the freight on coal, with which I want to deal first. It has been explained in the White Paper that was circulated with the provisional Budget that the average hauling cost to the railways for one ton per mile was something in the neighbourhood of about nine pies, whereas the average earning from the coal traffic was something about 4.5 pies. It has been sought to be justified that on the basis of its operation cost even a 100 per cent. increase in the coal freight would have been justified. Sir, I submit that this is a mere statistical calculation. It will not stand a moment's test of reality. I am not a railway economist or a railway

[Shri G. D. Somani]

expert and I do not claim to know the intricacies of the complicated railway rate structure. But, we all know that the railway rate structure is not based on the average operation cost. The whole structure is based on the capacity of each commodity to bear the burden. The more valuable the commodity the better its capacity to bear the burden and therefore the higher the transport charges for that commodity. Now, this is a sound principle and I do not see how the argument that the railways are losing something on the transport of coal and therefore they should raise the coal freight while they have been making very nuge profits on the transport of various other commodities where rates are as high as 14 or 15 or even 18 pies against the average cost of nine pies would appeal to anybody. So, this argument that the average operating cost of coal is something much less than the average earning from the coal traffic is absolutely unsound and it should not have been applied in imposing as much as Rs. 3.60 crores additional burden on the industries.

On the one side we find Government following a disinflationary policy and doing everything to assist the industries to reduce their cost of manufacture. Now, this increase is absolutely contrary to that policy. In this connection I may also be allowed to quote something from what Shri Gopalaswami Ayyangar said in his Budget speech last year:

"In considering any further adjustment of freight rates, it is necessary to bear in mind the possible inflationary stresses and their inevitable repercussions on the price level in the country, both on industry and some other goods. On these considerations, I feel that it would be extremely inadvisable to increase the freight rates further in the context of our requirements of additional finance."

This was what our former Railway Minister said only last year and in view also of the present difficulties of the trade and industry it seems absolutely unjustified that the railways with all their surplus and prosperous Budget should have thought fit to impose such a heavy burden on such an essential commodity as coal.

There is also another aspect about this position in respect of coal to which I should refer, and that is about the availability of sufficient wagons for the transport of coal. The Bombay textile mills were using coal in the pre-war period, but they gradually reverted to oil firing for their process steam be-

cause at that time the fuel oil prices were cheaper and because in the intervening war period the question of transport was very difficult. Now, most of the mills or practically all the mills are on fuel oil. But the prices of fuel oil have gone to fantastic levels, and the price to-day stands at Rs. 183 against only Rs. 90 that was prevailing two or three years ago. Representations have been made from time to time to the railway authorities that if a sufficient number of wagons are available, practically most of the mills are even today prepared to revert to coal. Our coal production is increasing and at the same time we are spending very valuable foreign exchange in the import of fuel oils at such fantastic prices. It is essential therefore that the railway authorities should seriously look into the question of making the necessary wagon supply available to the Bombay textile mills to enable them to revert again to coal firing.

Then, I want to say something about the general rates structure policy of the railways. This whole rate structure was revised sometime in 1948 and the telescopic class and wagon load system was introduced. Formerly we had the flat or the horizontal system under which special station-to-station rates used to be quoted and a volume of traffic used to move on these concessional rates. Today with the introduction of the new telescopic basis the system of quoting station-to-station rates has been cancelled and several commodities have been upgraded. The position that arose from the introduction of that system is that, specially for short distance traffic, the incidence of freight on several raw materials rose as much as from 100 to 300 per cent. I do not want to go here into the details as to how and which raw material and for which industry has shown such increase, but it is sufficient to emphasize here that the various industries like chemicals, cement and sugar have made representations from time to time to the Railway Board pointing out the heavy incidence of the burden on the transport of the raw materials for the industry. Our freights structure obviously must be based so as to assist the growth and development of industries in the country, but if the transport of raw materials has to bear such a prohibitive burden you can see how harshly the whole telescopic system is working on the industries.

We have been told that the respective railway administrations have the power or discretion to grant certain concessions in individual hard cases. But the experience of the industry is that during the last four years

representations have been made by various industries to the different railway administrations, but I am not aware of any concession having been granted even in one single case. It has really been very difficult to fulfil the requirements of the railway administrations and to prove the theory on which the whole concession seems to have been based, that it cannot bear the burden that has been imposed on it. Because, it means that the particular industry must stop or remain closed for some time to satisfy the railway administration that it cannot bear the burden. But so long as it remains working, the only inference that the railway authorities draw is that the industry is in a position to bear the burden, and no favourable response has come from the railway administrations on all these representations.

I am also aware of the fact that there is a statutory authority called the Railway Rates Tribunal which can also go into these questions of railway rates. But, here again the jurisdiction of the Railway Rates Tribunal has been restricted. I mean the jurisdiction of the Tribunal does not apply to the short distance and terminal charges which really increase very heavily the incidence of freight on the short distance traffic for raw materials. I submit that the Railway Rates Tribunal is not allowed to review the incidence of heavy burden caused by the introduction of this telescopic schedule under which the charges for short distance and terminal charge have been increased so heavily. When the Tribunal is not competent to go into the question, it is certainly of no relief to the industry. Furthermore, the procedure as laid down for the Railway Rates Tribunal is so lengthy and costly that the industries have found it more and more difficult to get any relief from the Tribunal.

I submit with all the emphasis at my command and looking to the present conditions of slump by which the whole trade and industry has been affected that our new Minister of Railways should seriously consider the advisability of appointing a high level Committee to enquire into the whole question of the rates structure and to examine and find out whether the complaint of the various industries that this railway rates structure is causing undue hardship to them is correct or not. Representations have been made to the Railway Board from time to time on the question of the appointment of this Enquiry Committee, but every time the reply has been either to approach the individual railway administrations or to go to the Rates

Tribunal. But, as I have pointed out earlier, this has been of no relief to the industry. After all, our hon. Minister will not be committing himself or the Railway Board to give any relief to the industry merely by appointing such a Committee. Let the representatives of the industry get at least an opportunity to convince any impartial Committee whether the present rates structure is really causing hardship to certain industries or not. Our railway undertakings are working under a monopoly and this factor all the more entails a heavy responsibility upon our Government to ensure that trade and industry which contribute so substantial an amount to the prosperity of the country get a fair deal. Particularly at a time when there are genuine difficulties before trade and industry, who are the biggest customers of the railways, it is only just that their grievances should be sympathetically looked into. I therefore hope that our new Railway Minister, who has come with an open mind, will seriously examine the various representations made during the last three or four years, which are on the files of the Railway Board, and in the end I again stress the appointment of an impartial Railway Rates Structure Enquiry Committee to go into the whole question of the railway rates structure.

Shri Raghuraj Sahai (Etah Dist.—North East cum Budaun Dist.—East): Sir, before I make my observations on the hon. Railway Minister's speech delivered the other day I would like to make one or two preliminary remarks. Shri Gopalaswami Ayyangar, while he was presenting the Budget in February last made one prophetic observation. In his speech he said that before the Budget for 1952-53 was presented, he would be handing over this magnificent national asset to young and capable hands. I am sure the hon. Minister, Lal Bahadur Shastri, who has presented this Budget is comparatively young and I think the House will share with me the feelings that he is capable too. But I may be allowed to pay my meed of praise to Shri Gopalaswami Ayyangar because it was due to his administrative skill and his vast experience that so many improvements have been made during the time he was in charge of the Railway portfolio. The Britishers have left many painful legacies, but I am sure this one, the Indian Railway system is one of those for which we can feel beholden to them. It is now an All India and national concern and there will be no two opinions that this concern rose from a very small beginning. The

[Shri Raghubir Sahai]

House perhaps is aware that there were no railways before 1853. It was only in that year that a railway shunted out of Bombay. It was a very small beginning. There was no regular policy on the part of the Government of those days to have railways in India. It was in 1857 when India rose in revolt against the British Government that a particular policy was formulated in regard to the railways and it may be due to (1) strategic reasons, so that the military could be transported from one place to the other easily and (2) for the expansion of the British trade. Thereafter so many companies were formed in England to start railways in India and very favourable terms were offered to them, namely, grant of free land to them and a guarantee for the return of capital invested on them and naturally, companies were started in England to construct railway lines here. But as I said previously, there was no regular policy about these railways and there was no All India policy with regard to them. It was only after the first world war, that the Government seriously considered that there should be an All India policy and the railways should be taken over by the Government. So, in 1925 the E. I. Railway and the G. I. P. Railway managing agency systems were terminated and the O. & R. section of the Indian Railways was amalgamated with the E. I. Railway. Thereafter other railways were taken over by the Government in 1944, but still many railways lying in the Indian States, had not been taken over. They were taken over in 1950, if I am right. But the partition of the country put a very heavy strain on some of our Railways, especially the N. W. Railway section which is now grouped in the Northern Railway and the Eastern Bengal Railway. Their size was very much reduced and not a single workshop was left where necessary repairs could be undertaken. Thereafter it was considered necessary by the Government that they should frame and formulate an All India policy and I understand that in 1950 a Committee of the Railway Board reviewed the entire situation, and came to the conclusion that all those railways in different parts of the country should be welded into one and six zones be formed for administrative purposes. The underlying idea about this arrangement was to do away with a lot of duplication of work, unnecessary correspondence and inter-railway adjustments. The recommendations of this Committee were later forwarded to the Central Ad-

visory Council for Railways, and happily, they unanimously agreed with the recommendations of the Committee of the Railway Board. After this, regrouping started in right earnest and the Southern Railway was constituted on 14th April 1951 and immediately after the regrouping started in Central India, the Central and Western Railways were formed. Regrouping started, as I said, with the formation of the Southern Railway on the 14th April 1951 and thereafter by forming the Central and Western Railways on 5th November 1951, but when the regrouping was to be undertaken of the railways lying in the north, a storm of opposition was raised, mainly on two grounds; one of them was that this regrouping would result in inefficiency and the second was that the ministerial staff connected therewith apprehended that unnecessary transfers, retrenchments and so on, would take place, thereby creating a number of hardships to them. So far as the second difficulty is concerned, I believe an assurance by no less a person than the hon. Prime Minister of India was given that the interests of the Ministerial staff would be kept before the mind of the Government and they would not be unnecessarily retrenched nor transfers would take place without their consent. That assurance was given by the retiring Railway Minister also when he presented his Budget last February and that very assurance has been repeated by the present Railway Minister. I have no doubt that this assurance would be kept to the very letter, though I would like to bring to the notice of the hon. Minister that there have happened some cases in which transfers have taken place against those very assurances. I have brought them to the notice of the hon. Minister and I hope he would look into them sympathetically and see that the needful is done.

With regard to the other fear of inefficiency, I would submit that that fear need not be seriously entertained. After all, it is an arrangement which should be given a fair trial. We have seen that after the attainment of Independence and the creation of Pakistan, so many States lying in Indian territory have been amalgamated and those States have been brought together for purposes of administration. We are watching that experiment as well. We can

similarly watch this experiment of re-grouping and integration of Railways. If that experiment works out well, well and good. After that, we shall have time to see whether any change can be made. In this connection, the recommendations of the Wedgwood Committee and the Kunzru Committee are also quoted. I submit that much water has flowed under the bridge since those Committees made their recommendations. The Wedgwood Committee was formed long ago. The Kunzru Committee recommendations was that the question of integration and re-grouping should be deferred for five years. Hon. Members would note that the Kunzru Committee made their recommendations in 1947 and the re-grouping took place in 1952, exactly five years after. Therefore, my submission is that this question of integration and re-grouping of Railways should be considered in a very calm atmosphere and it should be given a fair trial.

So far as the question of amenities to Railway passengers is concerned, I am quite alive to the fact that much has been done during the last two or three years and many necessary amenities have been provided to railway passengers, especially, third class passengers. But, there is still much leeway to be made up. For instance, there is a lot of over-crowding and this has been admitted in the report of the Government, issued by the Railway Ministry as well. Specially, I would like to bring to the notice of the hon. Minister that there is a lot of over-crowding in the O.T. section between Kasganj and Bareilly. There is very little Inter class accommodation on the Saharanpur-Allahabad trains. I hope necessary steps will be taken in this direction to alleviate public grievances.

Then, there is the question of safety of passengers who travel by trains, especially the higher class passengers. There was the Gadgil episode in which an hon. Member of this House, previously one of the respected Ministers of Government, narrowly escaped death. Had it not been for his presence of mind, probably, the ruffians would have given him short shrift. It appears that the Railway escort is no good. The number of thefts and pick-pocketing is very large. I think that the Government should seriously consider this matter. If ticketless travelling can be controlled with a strong hand, I am sure this could also be checked.

Last but not the least, I would like to draw the attention of the hon

Minister to the recent Railway accident that took place near Bikaner. For the last 1½ years, we had not been hearing about any such accidents and we thought that none would take place in the near future. Loss of life in this accident has gone up to 50 nearly; the number of injured must be really very high. That brings us to the consideration of how these collisions can be prevented. I would like to bring this to the notice of the hon. Minister through you, Sir, that this question should be seriously considered, whether behind the engine some empty vans or luggage vans may not be attached so that the lives of the third class passengers may be saved. It is really a problem for us to consider whether it is necessary for the Railway department to always put third class bogies behind the railway engine. I submit that can be avoided.

Sir, I thank you and the House for the very patient hearing that has been given to me.

Shri Sarmah (Golaghat-Jorhat): Sir, I am thankful for the opportunity afforded to me for taking part in this debate.

Of vital importance as railways are to industry, trade and commerce, they may be treated as a thing apart for some States, but it is her whole existence for the State from which I come, Assam. After the Partition, Assam was cut off from the rest of India both by river and rail. The only river communication was by the Brahmaputra which passed through Pakistan. The Pakistan authorities helped themselves freely with whatever commodities they wanted out of shipments for Assam and for this they detained steamers at Goalandaghat and unloaded things from the steamers. At one time there was great scarcity of salt in Assam because the Pakistan authorities detained some steamers containing salt cargo for Assam. Thus it was found that a railway link with Assam was of essential necessity.

I congratulate the Railway Administration for the improvements that they have brought about in their operations. Not many years ago, one required as many as four or five days to reach Calcutta from Assam, which journey was formerly covered in less than 24 hours. A Barrister from Calcutta I remember, took nearly 6 days to come from Jorhat to Calcutta. During the war years, the Assam Railways were operated by the Americans and when they left this country, they left us

[Shri Sarmah]

literally in mud and mire. The railway lines were in an absolutely shattered condition. The lives of the engines and rolling stock were run out and the bogies and coaches were in a most dilapidated condition. Travelling by trains during those times and even after 1947 was a risky business. The doors of railway compartments in our part of the country could not be shut, nor the shutters, because all the fixtures, etc., for fastening had been removed. The seat covers of coaches and bogies had been ripped open, not to speak of other amenities such as water, electric light and other things in the compartment. The discipline amongst the railway staff was such, only to cite an instance, that in the Mariani Junction, the station master was shut up and detained in his own room for about four hours by his own subordinate staff, because he sought to enforce discipline which was not welcome to them. Things so happened that I was told, even information about such illegal act did not reach the higher authorities in the Railway Administration. At that time,—I am speaking of 1947 and 1948, small batches of railway employees in procession in the railway yards and the colonies with red flags, shouting slogans of Zindabad and Murdabad were almost a daily sight. This condition of things in the Railway Administration has improved a great deal. Discipline has been restored to a considerable measure. There are less breakdowns and the running of trains has been improved. Now, it takes 3 days to come from Assam to Calcutta, which journey was completed by rail in less than 24 hours previously and by air, now, in one hour and 35 minutes. Yet, I must say, there is plenty of room for improvement in the Assam link. There are the bottle-necks at Manihari-ghat, where transhipment has to be done by breaking up of wagon loads from broad gauge to metre gauge and then at Amingaon-Pandughat. There was a proposal of a railway bridge at Pandughat but it was perhaps dropped on account of financial stringency. I would urge on the Railway Administration with all emphasis that these two bridges should be built as quickly as possible. These are essentially necessary not from the point of view of trade, commerce and industry, only, but from the point of view of defence also. Speedy improvement of railway communication to Assam is essential for the North East frontier of India. It may be recalled that when the Japanese besieged Imphal in Manipur State and marched up to Kohima it took months for the Americans and the British with all their vast resources to reach their

supplies to the Assam frontier. The Americans took over operation, the rail lines and tried to work these to maximum capacity; they also tried to rush up men and arms by road and steamer. Even then it took them several months for their supplies to reach the frontier. Then only the Allies could put up a resistance against the advancing enemy forces on that front. If anything happens in that frontier, which God help may not happen, India would find it extremely difficult to defend herself, because only one railway line which also cannot be said to be working efficiently and effectively now, connects Assam with the rest of India. It may be incidentally mentioned that means of transport to Assam is so inadequate that even rice had to be lifted by air. Transport of any big quantities of supply by air is practically an impossible proposition. If the railway is not made more efficient by having those two bridges constructed it is difficult to understand how that frontier is going to be defended in an emergency. I therefore submit that this aspect of the question needs to be examined urgently by the Railway administration.

I would not touch upon purely local problems and dilate upon inconveniences here and there. With regard to the taking over the Tezpur-Balipura Railway by the Central Government it is gratifying to have the assurance that the Government do not propose to throw out or retrench any employee of that section. I would request the Government to extend the metre gauge line from Rangapai to Tezpur and on to North Lakhimpur. It may surprise some friends here to learn that the distance of 27 miles only from Jorhat to North Lakhimpur in Upper Assam takes 48 hours to cover. One is required to undergo all sorts of stress and strain of steamer and bus journey to go from one place to the other. This is the part of Assam, that is to say Rangapara, Tezpur, North Lakhimpur lies north of the Brahmaputra and requires the urgent attention of the Government in respect of communication. The resources of this State of Assam are limited and the State is unable to cope with the situation. Therefore it is essential not only for the development of the country but also for defence purposes that the metre gauge railway be extended from Rangapara to Tezpur and on to North Lakhimpur.

There is coal of a high quality and in great quantity in the Garo Hills. We are also told that there are other mineral resources of very great value

to the Nation in the Garo Hill region of Assam, but at present we have no means of communication to enable operation of the coal fields to any appreciable extent. A survey for a railway line was made sometime ago and it is to be fervently hoped that the Railway Board will consider opening a line to exploit the natural resources of the Garo Hills without avoidable delay.

Our friends to my right said that the condition of the railway wagons and bogies is very bad. If it is so it is a part of the legacy we inherited from our outgoing masters. The Railway Administration have been demonstrably doing their best to improve the rolling stock, coaches and wagons. But may we request my friends to my right, whom I would like to believe to be patriotic Indians even if we may have our ideological differences, to urge upon that section of labour on whom they have influence not to go slow in workshops in the matter of repairing wagons etc. It is a regrettable matter that in many shops where repair works are done to engines and other things a go-slow policy was being followed, which considerably impeded progress. It is to be hoped that our friends will exercise their influence over that section of the workers and persuade them to work with patriotic enthusiasm in the service of the motherland.

Even at the risk of being accused of provincialism, unjustifiably though, I am constrained to say that with regard to the regrouping of the railways the people of my State have certain misgivings. But since it is an accomplished fact we take it with such grace as our good manners can afford us. Regrouping is said to be effected with a view to economy and efficiency. As regards economy we do not find it in the present Budget. It is quite understandable, for we have all been urging that none of the employees should be thrown out of employment as a consequence of the regrouping. We therefore hope and trust that economy will be effected in course of time progressively.

As regards efficiency, we hope that we will have evidence of it soon. People of Assam, North Bengal and portions of North Bihar have their principal connection in industry, trade and commerce with the port of Calcutta. With the tagging of the Sealdah section to the Eastern Railway the people of these areas are apprehending that there will be a setback in the matter of railway communications. We hope and trust that the assurance given by the Railway Minis-

ter that a Director of the Railway Board will be placed at Sealdah and a Deputy Director at Katihar to arrange for quick movements will considerably undo the mischief that was done by severing Sealdah section from us. If we acquiesce in regrouping, the Government take upon themselves a heavy responsibility of proving by facts and figures their plea of efficiency and economy for the regrouping.

In the matter of employment in the railways I have a suggestion to make. Just as in the general administrative services we have the I.A.S. and the provincial services, in the matter of the railways also, for efficiency in operation and the convenience of the local railway passengers a scheme should be evolved for the recruitment of at least class III and IV employees locally. With regret I have to bring it to the notice of the House that in the Assam Railway we have not got perhaps more than two officers from amongst the people of Assam, and one of them is retiring soon. When I was travelling by rail during my school and college days I saw pointsmen and chowkidars in the Assam-Bengal Railway belonging to Assam, but when I have grown up I find Assamese vanishing from even those humble and insignificant posts. I hope I am not parochial, because it will not do to say "Yours is mine and mine also is mine", and then call me parochial when I protest. I hope we may not be considered selfish in that way. It is only in the fitness of things that for convenience in operation of the railways and for the benefit of the local people who travel by the Assam Railway and who do not know any other language excepting Assamese, recruitment may be made locally at least for Classes III and IV services with headquarters for the recruiting agency at Gauhati. I thank you again, Sir.

Shri B. S. Murthy (Eluru): Sir, I thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak on the Budget. Before I speak I would like to refer to the charge made by the previous speaker, Mr. Sarmah from Assam. Mr. Sarmah said that in the railway workshops the workers are not doing their duty as nationalists and he made a request that the opposition would do well in advising the workers to do their duty. Sir, I refute that charge as an entirely unfounded one. I can assure the House that every worker today considers himself a citizen of India and wants to do his best to see that India marches onward and to see that progress comes to this country of ours which has been for centuries under

[Shri B. S. Murthy]

foreign rule. He is today conscious that he is the ruler of the country and that as such he must see that his country must have an honourable place in the comity of nations.

But when you ask the workers to do their work, their legitimate and full work, what has the Government done to allay their fears of retrenchment, to give them more wages, to see that their service conditions are improved? It must be said to the credit of the workers that in spite of all difficulties today they are carrying their banner of economic freedom as high as possible. Therefore it is not desirable that the workers should be accused of sabotage or of indulging in similar acts. I can assure the House that every worker is alive to his duty and is doing his duty as best as he can. But it is the duty of the Government which says that the railways are a nationalised industry of the country to become a model employer. They have stated that the Chittaranjan housing scheme is the best as far as possible. They have also stated that the retiring rooms and other facilities for passengers are matters of difficulty. But I would bring to the notice of the hon. Minister the fact that the tenements provided for most of these workers are a living disgrace. It is really a disgrace in a country which can boast of such an ancient civilisation. Therefore, if you want the workers to work hard and make them give their best to make rail transport a success in India, Government must come to the rescue of the workers by giving them though not the maximum wage at least the minimum wage to help them make both ends meet.

I would now like to say a few words on the Budget itself. Rail transport has become a very important factor for any country in the world, much more so for a vast country like ours. Therefore we must see how far we have progressed from the layman's point of view. I am not enamoured of these figures. Some times they are magical and some times they take us to a labyrinth from which we may not be able to come back; therefore I would like to speak from the consumer's point of view. I would like to speak about the transport facilities we have and also about the transport of passengers and of goods as also the service conditions of the workers. I must say that the transport of passengers today is meagre, inadequate and unsatisfactory. I am not saying this as a cursory remark. I will quote

from the Five Year Plan. At page 171 the Plan says:

"The large increase in traffic has aggravated the problem created by the arrears of maintenance and replacement expenditure. Passenger traffic has increased to nearly two and a half times the pre-war level. If the passenger accommodation enjoyed by the public in 1938-39 is taken as a standard, even doubling the existing stock of passenger carriages will not be sufficient to provide the required accommodation for the existing traffic."

Sir, I need not quote further. It is enough to state that today the passenger traffic has increased to a great extent and even by doubling the present stock we will not be able to cope with the requirements. But what has the Government done? I am not asking about the amenities, I am referring to mere accommodation. Have they provided accommodation to meet the minimum requirements of the travelling public? In the pronouncements made by the hon. Minister from time to time references are made to orders placed for passenger coaches at home as well as abroad. The number of such carriages and the cost of procuring them make sufficiently impressive reading but if the statements made above, namely that to provide the existing travelling public the same comfort as existed in 1938-39 we require more than twice the present number of carriages. But we have, it is correct.....

Shri M. Khuda Baksh (Murshidabad): On a point of order. Is it permissible in this House to read speeches?

Mr. Chairman: I know the hon. Member very well. He is a good speaker. He is possibly referring to his notes now and then. If he looks down, well, it may be this mannerism. Some people look down and speak and some people look up.

Dr. Lanka Sundaram (Visakhapatnam): Some people look across.....

Shri Namdhari (Fazilka-Sirsa): It also depends on the size of the man and the different wave length on which he speaks.

Shri B. S. Murthy: Thank you, Sir, I am just referring to my notes, and I must also be given an indulgence because I am new to this House.

An Hon. Member: But you are not new to a Legislature.

Shri B. S. Murthy: Thank you, but the Madras Legislature cannot be compared to this House of the People.

I was stating that we had been told that orders have been placed by the hon. Minister both abroad as well as in India for more coaches. But before orders are placed, have Government taken any statistics as to how many carriages they require? The Wedgewood Committee as well as the Kunzru Committee have gone into the matter, but so far as stock-taking is concerned, I do not think the present Government has ever attempted to assess its needs. The British Government did not want to let the Indian public know the number of coaches they required, because they were trying to make use of rail transport for themselves alone and whenever they wanted additional revenue, they used to give a little amenity and charge more from the travelling public. Now that we are in free India, we must have a correct picture before us. Let us not camouflage things by saying that we have ordered so many hundreds or thousands of coaches. Let us know how many are required; how many have been ordered for from abroad; and how many are expected to be manufactured in our own railway workshops. The first requisite is that the Railway Ministry should find this out. I request the hon. Minister to see that these figures are arrived at at an early date, so that we shall know the exact position, instead of merely being told that so many coaches are coming from Italy, so many from America and so many from Germany.

One more point, Sir, and that is about zonal regrouping. It is well and good that the late Minister of Railways..... (An Hon. Member: 'Late' Minister?) As far as my little knowledge of English goes, "late" Minister is not wrong. I am not saying "late" Mr. Gopaldaswami Ayyangar: I am merely saying "late" Minister Mr. Gopaldaswami Ayyangar. Now, he has contemplated a very efficient economic drive in the administration of railways. Though he has begun with a broad mind and with purity of purpose, later on I think some politics has, as is usual in our country, crept in and today we find all these zonal groups in a chaotic condition and one group is fighting another and the result is the utmost confusion in the railways. As far as the Southern Zone is concerned, Andhra Desa has been divided into three groups. One is handed over to the north; one to the south; and one, God knows, to whom it will be handed over. Today it is the Central Zone; tomorrow it may be

the Eastern Zone, because Bombay is having two; Calcutta may have two and Madras also may have two. Like that, zones are being created overnight. The Government could have drawn up a separate zone from Thada in the South to Kharagpur in the North and Masulipatam in the East to Bellary and Raichur in the west; and from Arkonam in the south to Ballarshah in the north, so much so all the Telugu speaking people will be in one zone. It may be against the national interests as some think if you ask for a linguistic province. (An Hon. Member: Why?) It has been said several times in the House that the demand for linguistic provinces is bad as it is equivalent to asking for communal rights. In this respect, may I say that dividing the poor Andhra working class people into three or four groups and making them a prey to this or that intention of the Government is not desirable? When you create a zone, let a zone comprising the areas I have enumerated be formed as Andhra Zone, so that it will help in the efficient economic drive in the administration of the railways.

We are told, Sir, that a profit of nearly Rs. 27 crores has been made, but what are the amenities that have been given to the third-class passenger? No doubt, we say that India is free today. But is the railway passenger free from all this age-long suffering which he had under the British regime? As has been rightly stressed in the President's Address, freedom must be seen and felt by the common man. Today, he does not know whether he is free or he is not free. Freedom for him means freedom from economic want; freedom for comfortable travel; freedom for something which other countries are proud of. Therefore, when we are talking in terms of progress, our progress must be interpreted in this way, that the third class passenger should be happy and when he goes from place to place he should travel in comfort. Similarly, when a worker in a workshop of the railways toils, he should be able to feel that his sweat is contributing to the basis of Indian freedom.

11 A.M.

Dr. S. P. Mookerjee (Calcutta South-East): Sir, while speaking on the Railway Budget one need not hesitate to express his general satisfaction that the railway organisation, which is a proud asset for free India irrespective of party politics, has been maintained during the last five years in a state of efficiency. After partition the railway system received a blow from which many had thought it would be difficult

{Dr. S. P. Mookerjee}

for it to recover, and that we have been able to tide over the difficulties throws credit on all concerned with railway administration from top to bottom. I am not forgetting the lowest of the workers without whose whole-hearted cooperation this could not have been achieved. If therefore some of us criticise the Railway Budget or we disagree with certain matters which are now under consideration or which are now being given effect to, we do it not for the purpose of offering criticism for criticism's sake.

Sir, time will not permit me to deal with a large number of questions. When the voting on grants will take place we expect to participate in the debate and express our viewpoint on several other points. We are showing a surplus year after year, but I cannot understand why this inordinate anxiety should continue on the part of Government to keep such large funds in reserve when so many matters still await urgent solution. A reference has been made to the amenities for the third-class passengers. I need not repeat it, but let us not forget that amongst the passengers there is a fourth class, namely, passengers who travel on foot boards and on the roofs of railway trains....(Shri B. Shiva Rao: And without tickets).....and their number has not decreased. Obviously, this means that increasing facilities must be made available.

Then there is the question of finding housing accommodation for the thousands of displaced railway employees who are still living in wagons. I would have expected from the Minister some figures indicating as to how many of such thousands of families will be provided for in the coming year. Then there are the questions of dearness allowance, revision of fares, rates and freights. So far as rates and freights are concerned, naturally much depends upon their proper assessment for ensuring the future economic progress of the country. Then there is the question of rehabilitation. That also is a big problem. We have got to make good all the deficiencies from which the railway administration now suffers.

I shall now deal with the question of regrouping of railways which has given rise to so much controversy during the last few weeks. I do not hold the view that no regrouping was necessary. Obviously, regrouping was necessary, especially after it became essential to integrate so many of the small railway systems belonging to Indian States, or to private companies

over which free India had established full control. But one important ingredient which was mentioned over and again was that this regrouping was not to be made in an arbitrary or fantastic manner, but keeping in view certain important, if not essential requirements. When a regrouping is made it must lead to increased efficiency—or at any rate efficiency must not deteriorate. It must ultimately lead to increased economy. It must also lead to better administration and operational control. Over and over again these points were emphasised in reports and speeches of persons who had spoken or written on behalf of Government.

Let me come to this last regrouping regarding Northern India, which was announced about two months ago and which had led to so much controversy. It does appear that the present hon. Minister—to whom, if I may be allowed to say so, I offer a most hearty welcome to his very arduous duties which await him—has tried to explain away the changes which have been made in language which does not carry sense or logic to those who read it. I would remind him that the best way for him to understand the position would be to read the statements and speeches of his own predecessor.

Now, when this particular regrouping scheme was considered, Government rightly took a long time to make up its mind as to what should be its final attitude. It took not weeks, not months, but about a couple of years, and ultimately in January last the proposals of Government were placed before the country. I can certainly presume that these proposals were not arrived at in a light-hearted fashion. They included the division of the railways in northern India into three zones—Northern, Eastern and North-Eastern. It decided that the headquarters of two of the railways, North-Eastern and Eastern would be located in Calcutta. It decided that Sealdah Division should form part of the North-Eastern Railway. It decided that Allahabad Division at least should form part of the Eastern Railway. These were not arbitrary conclusions. If time had permitted me I could have quoted chapter and verse—not much of verse, but plenty of chapter—to satisfy anyone that there was full cogent reason in support of everyone of these recommendations given by expert committees for last thirty years and also by officers of Government itself. Now when that matter came up before this very

House—I mean the previous Parliament—the hon. Ministers, Shri Gopalswami Ayyangar and Shri Santhanam, very boldly and categorically justified the decisions. I have here with me the statement which was made by Shri Gopalswami Ayyangar when the question of Gorakhpur was raised in the course of the debate. These are his words:

“It was said that Gorakhpur was going to be affected. Now Gorakhpur is the headquarter of an old and tired railway (he was not referring to himself, the hon. Minister) and now we want to do away with that railway. We want to remove the tiredness from it and all the prejudices that ensue from a person or thing which gets old.”

And then he concludes by saying:

“There is no doubt that Calcutta is the obvious headquarters for each of the zones, namely Eastern and North-Eastern. We certainly are providing for intermediate headquarters in other places to serve the needs of areas included in the whole scheme.”

Mr. Santhanam came out with his reply categorically that the matter had been considered from all points of view and there is no question of provincial or political pressure. It is only from the point of view of the interest of the people and also of the economic functioning of the railway that these decisions had been taken. Mind the date—26th of February 1952.

And then on the 6th of March 1952 there was a meeting of the Central Advisory Council for Railways the papers for which had been circulated to us. First of all the meeting was called by the hon. Minister on the 27th of February 1952 and there the Members pressed for a postponement of that question. No decision could be taken. Hurriedly a meeting was summoned which was held on the 6th of March 1952. The proceedings were opened by the same Mr. Gopalswami Ayyangar who had spoken on the floor of the House ten days earlier. “The Chairman explained to the Council that in response to public opinion the Government were prepared to modify the proposals and locate Gorakhpur as the headquarters of the North-Eastern Railway.”

Now what happened during these eight or ten days—that a decision which had the full support of expert opinion and of officers associated with Government, a decision which the Ministers

justified on the floor of the House, is suddenly given a go-by and the statement comes from the Minister himself that out of deference to public opinion a change, a major change, had been effected.

What was this Central Advisory Council, Sir? Elections had already been held. A new Parliament was coming. Would anything have happened to this country or to the Railway Administration, if the decision had been postponed until the Members of the new Parliament met and a Central Advisory Council more representative in character had the opportunity of discussing this question? Why this hurry? What was the reason that the decision must be altered before a particular date?

Then agitation started and again a conference was held and these printed papers which elaborately explain why the original proposal was justified and no other proposal could be accepted, all these are given a go-by and a further change was introduced and Sealdah Division was tagged on to the Eastern Railway, contrary to all previous recommendations and decisions of Government—a third change! And now some sort of explanation has come which is included in the hon. Minister's speech which practically gives no justification for this major change.

A lot has been said that the matter is being looked upon from a provincial angle. Some have said it is a Bengali cry. I am here to give this categorical assurance to the House that it is no provincial or parochial or sectarian considerations which make us raise this question. We want the matter to be decided on its merits. Repeatedly have the spokesmen of Government and representative public men said that these are questions of administration and the railway system is not a plaything of party politics or provincialism or parochialism. We want the matter to be considered on its merits and decided. If on expert investigation and in interest of sound administration, not one single railway headquarter should remain in Bengal, if that is decided on its merits, I shall be the first person to submit to this. But why was this question reopened? Provincialism had been raised. Mr. Gopalswami Ayyangar, one of his press conferences said that due to pressure after consultation with the United Provinces Government this change had to be made. Why this special consideration for United Provinces? If it is considered necessary that in the United Provinces' interest a particular change has to be made.

[Dr. S. P. Mookerjee]

no matter what happens to the rest of India, then you can amend the Constitution of India and where you describe India as 'Bharat' you can well add 'that is, United Provinces'. You can do that very well. But I take it it is not the people of U.P. If they are properly approached with regard to this matter, they are bound to understand the implications? Take for instance Moghalsarai. You have made Moghalsarai the junction for the Northern Railway. Read any of the speeches, any of the official reports in the last thirty years. Warning after warning was given that you cannot split the old East Indian Railway and break it into two or more near Moghalsarai, it will create bottlenecks. Already reports are appearing in newspapers, which have not been contradicted, that bottlenecks have started and movement is suffering. One justification given is that the Lucknow and Moradabad Divisions were originally part of another Railway, the O. & R. Railway and therefore nothing new is being done now, if after twentyfive years we again break the East Indian Railway into three compartments. As somebody said, the reason why these Divisions from the O. & R. Railway were brought into the East Indian Railway was that the East Indian Railway was being compelled to walk on one leg and therefore both the legs had to be joined together so that the system might work properly. And now the remedy is to take off both the legs and allow the E. I. Railway to disintegrate. It is an amazing thing. I have tried to find some cogent justification for the decision taken, but I have not been able to find any. Then there are the financial implications, there is the question of staff recruitment and transfer, there is the uncertain and undefined question of capital expenditure.

The constructive suggestion which I am here to make is this. Do have the matter re-examined by an Expert Commission? After all, the East Indian Railway has been described by all, coming either from this country or from outside, as one of the biggest achievements in Indian administration. The system had been working efficiently. Now you have new problems. India has been partitioned. Assam is virtually cut off. It may be that later on you may have a broad gauge right from Calcutta joining the Eastern zone of India. So many developments are now being conceived of. So why rush with this thing and do something which is contrary to all expert advice—to satisfy whose whim, we have not been able to understand. So, let a Com-

mission be appointed consisting of representative persons, experts. Let all the different viewpoints be examined. I have not referred to the various criticisms made. Bihar has put forward its own point of view. Orissa has put forward its viewpoint. Assam has pointed out some difficulties. U.P. has its problems. Trade and commercial interests have pointed out some difficulties. So many points of view have been put in. Almost all are dissatisfied with the present decision. How can you meet it? There is one way. You can ignore the whole thing completely and say that the car of Juggernaut must move and Government is not going to listen to any criticism. That is not a democratic approach to the solution of this problem. We are here to offer our co-operation. We feel distressed at the way in which one of the biggest achievements of free India is just going to be made a plaything of party politics and parochialism. Mohamed Tughlak played with the removal of capitals in Delhi, and at what cost? This is another such experiment, perhaps a little smaller in scale, which is now being done by the Government, being the successors of Mohamed Tughlak in Delhi. And what are the consequences that may fall on the country? This is a matter where we should consider it not from party interests at all. We are prepared to offer our fullest co-operation. We have got lots of material which we can place before an independent Commission. Let the Government's case be also placed before such a Commission. I am sure that if this reasonable proposal is accepted by Government it will lead to an improvement in the present state of affairs and also ultimately solve a very vexed problem.

One last word and I shall have done for the present. And that is about the Ganga Bridge. A lot of controversy has started over this matter. Bengal wants it within Bengal. Bihar says it must be near Mokhama. And I had been reading with considerable amount of pain the way in which this very important question is going to be discussed,—not from the point of view of national interests but as to which province will win the race. If I may throw out a suggestion to the Railway Minister, it is this. Both have strong cases to offer. So far as Bengal is concerned, the Ganga Bridge near Farukhabad is essential not only for Railway Administration but ultimately for the very life of the City of Calcutta. Similarly, with regard to Bihar, unless there is some bridge set up

near Mokhama it is cut off from Northern Bihar and it will create the greatest difficulties and bottlenecks which you cannot solve otherwise. Why is it not possible for us to have both bridges, one in Bengal and another in Bihar? Why should one province be made to quarrel with another on these issues which are of vital national importance to the country? Let us join hands and demand, if we can satisfy the experts and others, that both these important points have got to be tackled—and they cannot be tackled except through railway bridges constructed at these points. Let us jointly ask Government and also seek the support of the rest of India that this proposal should be accepted by Government. It may mean another four or five crores of rupees. For reclassification you wasted—I do not know how much—perhaps two or two and a half crores of rupees. And the hon. Minister who was in charge has been promoted as a Lieutenant-Governor. We wish the best of luck to him. But here it will be no question of wasting anything. If it means four or five crores of rupees, you have such an abundant amount lying in the reserves and soon you will get a satisfactory return. The expenditure incurred on this will not only be in the interests of the two provinces but will solve the difficult and complex problem of transport and future development of the Eastern Zone of India itself.

Shri Chattopadhyaya (Vijayavada): On a point of information, Sir. The hon. Member Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee just now said that he could quote chapter and verse. Then he changed his opinion about himself...

Dr. S. P. Mookerjee: I left it to the hon. Member.

Shri Chattopadhyaya: And he said that he would quote the chapter and leave the verse to me. I would submit this:

The increment in railway fares is very very fair,
It does not touch the Ministers
who always go by air;

Our newest railway Budget re-
veals progressive signs,

But when they talk of railways
we must read between the
lines.

I should like to know, Sir, whether there is any reason for believing that there is reason in my rhymes.

Mr. Chairman: I believe no other person than the hon. Member himself will be able to give the answer in

verse! Therefore he will have an opportunity to speak in verses at great length later.

श्री हेबा : माननीय सभापति महोदय, सर्वसाधारण जनता की दृष्टि से तीन चार वर्षों में रेलवे का जैसा काम हुआ है उस की तरफ अगर हम नजर दौड़ाते हैं तो आम तौर पर यह तसलीम किया जाता है कि रेलवे ने हमारे इस देश में काफी प्रगति की है। अभी अभी श्यामा प्रसाद मुखर्जी साहब ने भी यही फरमाया, हालांकि इस हाउस में और इस हाउस के बाहर कुछ इन्ने गिने ऐसे लोगों की कमी नहीं है जो कि इस बात पर जोर देते हैं कि किसी भी प्रकार की प्रगति न रेलवे में और न किसी और चीज में हुई है।

जहां तक यर्ड क्लास का सम्बन्ध है मेरा ख्याल है कि इन चार वर्षों के अन्दर सब से ज्यादा तरक्की यर्ड क्लास पैसेजर्स को जो सुविधायें दी जानी चाहियें उस के सम्बन्ध में हुई है। इस तरक्की का जहां तक सम्बन्ध है वहां तक वास्तव में तरक्की सन्तोषजनक और पूरी तरक्की हुई है; ऐसा न मैं कह सकता हूं और न शायद कोई और कह सकेगा। इस दृष्टि से समाधान होना कोई अच्छी चीज नहीं माना जाता और जीवित व्यक्ति और जीवित संस्थायें हमेशा प्रगति पर चलती रहती हैं। लेकिन तीन चार वर्ष पहले यर्ड क्लास की जो हालत थी और आज जो हालत है उस में, मैं बगैर किसी विरोध की सम्भावना के कह सकता हूं कि जमाने और आसमान का फर्क है। ३०० मील से ज्यादा सफ़र करने वालों के लिये आज विशेष सहूलियतें हैं और बड़ी दूर जाने वाली रेलों में सफ़र करने वालों के लिये मैं समझता हूं कि पहले के जमाने की इंटर क्लास की लगभग सारी

[श्री हेडा]

सुविधायें मौजूद हैं। इस सदन के एक सदस्य श्री नम्बियार साहब ने फ़रमाया कि थर्ड क्लास के अन्दर लोग सो नहीं पाते हैं। हाँ, सब के सब तो नहीं सो पाते हैं। लेकिन फिर भी लम्बी ट्रेन के अन्दर जो थर्ड क्लास के विशेष प्रकार के नये कम्पार्टमेंट्स हैं, उनके अन्दर वह बराबर सो सकते हैं। इस प्रकार की सुविधायें थर्ड क्लास में मिली हुई हैं। अभी हाल में जब मैं हैदराबाद से आ रहा था तो उनके पास बैठने वाले दो मित्र प्रवास कर रहे थे, जिन में से एक फ़स्ट क्लास में और एक थर्ड क्लास में थे, मैं इन दोनों के बीच के क्लास में था। मेरा निरीक्षण बताता है कि दोनों की सुविधाओं में अगर जो खर्चा हुआ है उस को देखा जाय तो विशेष फ़र्क नहीं था। जहाँ तक मुझे मालूम है वहाँ तक मैं यह कह सकता हूँ कि लगभग ५०० मील या ५०० मील से ज्यादा दूर आने वाले प्रवासी आज थर्ड क्लास में सो सकते हैं। फिर भी मैं यह ज़रूर निवेदन करूँगा कि थर्ड क्लास के नये कोचेज जितनी संख्या में होने चाहिये उतने नहीं हैं। बड़े बड़े स्टेशनों को मिलाने वाली गाड़ियों में भी थर्ड क्लास के कोचेज उतने अच्छे नहीं हैं। लेकिन जैसे जैसे नये कोचेज आ रहे हैं वैसे वैसे यह सुविधा बढ़ती जा रही है और मुझे आशा है कि एक दिन, और वह दिन बहुत जल्द आ जायगा जब कि हर प्रवासी चाहे थर्ड क्लास का हो या और किसी क्लास का हो २००-२५० मील से ज्यादा जाता है तो वह सो सकेगा।

इसके बाद एक विशेष चीज के सम्बन्ध में, जिसके बारे में मैं ने गत वर्ष भी ध्यान आकर्षित करने की कोशिश की थी, कहना चाहता हूँ। नयी लाइन्स के वास्ते इस बजट के अन्दर जो गुंजाइश रखी गयी है वह बहुत

ही कम है। वह गुंजाइश ३ करोड़ ६१ लाख और ४७ हजार रुपये की है। और रैस्टोरेशन्स (restorations) के लिये एक करोड़ १४ लाख रुपये हैं। रेलवे का जितना माइलेज (mileage) हमारे इस देश में है, और इस देश की इतनी बड़ी जन संख्या होने के बावजूद और हमारा क्षेत्रफल भी इतना ज्यादा होने के बावजूद यह काफी कम है। अमेरिका, इंग्लैंड, रूस, जर्मनी, फ़्रांस, इन में से कुछ देश क्षेत्रफल में काफी छोटे होने के बावजूद, और जन संख्या में सब के सब हम से काफी छोटे होने के बावजूद, हम से बहुत ज्यादा रेलवे माइलेज रखते हैं। और इस रफ़्तार से जो कि इस बजट में बनाई गयी है, अगर हम चलने लगे तो वहाँ तक पहुँचने के लिये भेरे ह्याल से हम को पचास या सौ वर्ष की दरकार होगी। तो यह रफ़्तार बहुत ही कम है। मैं ने गत वर्ष यह सुझाव दिया था और मैं जानता हूँ कि उस में कुछ वैधानिक कठिनाइयाँ भले ही हों, लेकिन फिर भी इच्छा हो तो कुछ न कुछ रास्ता निकाला जा सकता है, कि जिस प्रकार हम रेलवे बजट में हर वर्ष डिविडेंड टू जनरल रैवेन्यूज (Dividend to General Revenues) के नाम पर लगभग ४ पर सेंट का एक आंकड़ा निकाल रखते हैं और वह जनरल रैवेन्यूज को जाता है और यह ह्याल किया जाता है कि जनरल रैवेन्यूज ने जो कंटीब्यूशन (Contribution) कैपिटल (Capital) के रूप में रेलवेज में किया था उसके सूद के तौर पर या डिविडेंड के तौर पर यह वापस जाता है, उसी तौर पर मैं ने निवेदन किया था कि जो कैपिटल है उस में से कम से कम दो पर सेंट कैपिटल वापस करने की स्कीम हर रेलवे बजट में होनी चाहिये।

और यह जो कैपिटल वापस करने की बात है उस को हम नयी रेलवे लाइन्स में खर्च कर सकते हैं। इस प्रकार अगर रेलवे बजट तैयार किया जाय तो मैं ने गत वर्ष भी बतलाया था कि हमारा गत वर्ष का रेलवे बजट भी लास (Loss) में जाता है, सरप्लस (Surplus) नहीं है और इस वर्ष का बजट भी कोई सरप्लस (Surplus) नहीं होगा। एक तरफ़ हम यह ख्याल दिला देते हैं कि हमारी रेलवेज २३ करोड़ रुपये का फ़ायदा करती हैं। तो उस क जनता पर एक मनोवैज्ञानिक असर होता है कि जब रेलवे इतना कमा रही है तब क्यों नहीं हमारी सुविधायें बढ़ाने की बात सोची जाती। लेकिन साथ ही साथ हम लोगों को यह बतावें कि नयी लाइन्स के लिये हम को लगभग १०० करोड़ रुपये की ज़रूरत है तो इस प्रकार हमारा यह बजट कोई ७०-७५ करोड़ का डेफिसिट (deficit) बन जाता है। तब जनता इस प्रकार नहीं सोचेगी और न हमारी प्रगति कम हो सकेगी। प्रगति के दो ही रास्ते हैं, एक तो यह कि हम जो मेहनत कर उस में से कुछ बचत करें और उसको आगे तरक्की में लगा दें या दूसरा रास्ता यह है कि हम कर्ज़ लें। कर्ज़ लेने की हमारी शक्ति सीमित है और कर्ज़ लेना उतना मुनासिब भी नहीं है। बचत करना हर दृष्टि से सर्वोपरि है—और इस ख्याल के तहत इस प्रकार की एक साइकोलाजी (Psychology) बनाने की आवश्यकता है। और मैं नये मंत्री महोदय से, जिन का कि सार्वजनिक संस्थाओं से बहुत ज्यादा सम्बन्ध रहा है और जो सरविसेज (Services) में से न आ कर राजनीतिक पार्टी से आये हुए हैं, प्रार्थना करूंगा कि वह इस के ऊपर सोचें और इस प्रकार की एक मनोवैज्ञानिक परिस्थिति निर्माण करने के

वास्ते बजट के अन्दर जैसे हम डिबिडेण्ड टु जनरल रैवेन्यूज के लिये गुंजाइश रखते हैं उसी प्रकार की गुंजाइश नयी रेलवे लाइन्स के लिये रखें तो ठीक होगा। इस को आप कैपिटल के रिपेमेंट (Repayment of Capital) करने का नाम दे दीजिये, चाहे नयी रेलवे लाइन्स को खोलने के वास्ते एक विशेष फंड का नाम दे दीजिये, लेकिन इस प्रकार का एक एक आइटम (item) रखना मेरे ख्याल से ज़रूरी है।

एक और बात इस सम्बन्ध में श्री नाम्बियार साहब ने फ़रमाई थी और वह यह कि चूँकि इस क़दर ज्यादा मुनाफ़ा, २३ करोड़ से ज्यादा मुनाफ़ा, रेलवेज को हुआ है, इसलिये आज मजदूरों की जो परिस्थिति है उस में सुधार होना चाहिये। वास्तव में हर एक के दिल में इसी प्रकार का ख्याल पैदा होता है। यह ठीक है कि मजदूरों की परिस्थिति उतनी अच्छी नहीं है और इस लिग़ज से उस में सुधार होना चाहिये। लेकिन यह सुधार और मजदूरों की सुविधाओं में इज़ाफ़ा, यह चीज़ें सिर्फ़ एक ही जगह नहीं होनी चाहियें। जिस प्रकार बारिश अगर सब जगह हो तो वह अच्छी होती है, एक ही जगह अगर होने ल ग जाय तो उस से तूफ़ान मच सकता है उसी प्रकार उजरतों में इज़ाफ़ा लगभग हर जगह होना चाहिये। अगर इस दृष्टि से हम एग्रीकल्चरल लेबर (Agricultural Labour) की तरफ़ देखते हैं तो उन की जो परिस्थिति आज है उस का मुक़ाबला फ़ैक्टरी लेबर (Factory labour) या रेलवे लेबर (Railway labour) से हम कर ही नहीं सकते, इस प्रकार की दयनीय परिस्थिति बड़ा मौजूद है। इस के बाद एक और चीज़ में निवेदन करना चाहता हूँ।

[श्री हेडा]

रेलवे और इस प्रकार के जो हमारे दूसरे डिपार्टमेंट्स हैं वह व्यापार के सिद्धान्तों पर चलते हैं। हमें इस में देखना चाहिये कि अगर किसी का नुकसान न होते हुए हम कुछ ज्यादा नफ़ा निकाल सकते हैं तो हमें वह बराबर प्राप्त करना चाहिये। लेकिन जगह जगह अलग अलग रिवाज ऐसे चले आ रहे हैं जिन की वजह से मेरा खयाल है कि हमारी रेलवे जितना मुनाफ़ा कमाना चाहिये उतना नहीं कमा रही है। मिसाल के तौर पर मैं सिर्फ़ दो चीज़ों का उल्लेख करूंगा। दिल्ली के आस पास विशेषकर जिसे हम पहले ईस्ट इंडियन रेलवे कहते थे वहां पर जब रेस्टोरेंट्स (Restaurants) या होटेल्स (Hotels) बंगौरह का आक्शन (auction) किया जाता था, मैं ने बहुत ही विश्वसनीय व्यक्तियों से सुना है, यह रिवाज था कि दस पंद्रह साल पहले जिन को वह कंटेनर्स दिये गये थे उन्हीं को कुछ कम ज्यादा कर के फिर से दे दिये जाते थे, और इसी प्रकार अब भी वह कार्य चल रहा है। अगर उन के नये सिर से आक्शन किये जाय और सब लोगों से टेंडर्स मांगे जायें तो मेरा खयाल है कि कम से कम पच्चीस लाख का नफ़ा हो सकता है, और पचास लाख तक भी उस में हमारी आमदनी बढ़ सकती है। दूसरी चीज़ जिस को मैं ज्यादा निकट से जानता हूँ वह यह है कि सिकन्दराबाद जैसे स्थानों में वहाँ स्टोर्स के अन्दर सप्लाय करने के वास्ते टेंडर्स मांगे जाते हैं वहाँ कुछ अड़चने पहले से पैदा कर के रखी गई हैं जिस की वजह से ज्यादा टेंडर नहीं आ पाते हैं। बहुत कम टेंडर आते हैं। परिणामस्वरूप रेलवे को ज्यादा महंगी दरों पर चीज़ें खरीदनी पड़ती है, इस तरह से हमारा नफ़ा कम होता है। जो शर्तें

रखी गई हैं उनमें से एक यह है कि काफी बड़ी रक़म, दस या पंद्रह हजार रुपया हर टेंडर के साथ दाखिल करने के लिये कहा जाता है। होना तो यह चाहिये था कि टेंडर मंजूर होने के बाद यह रक़म डिपॉजिट के तौर पर ली जानी चाहिये।

मैं अपना भाषण समाप्त करने के पहले एक चीज़ की तरफ़ ध्यान दिला देना चाहता हूँ, वह यह है कि जौ लम्बी लम्बी ट्रेनें हमारे बड़े बड़े शहरों के बीच चलती हैं, जैसे दिल्ली मद्रास और दिल्ली कलकता वंगौरह जिन के बीच बड़े बड़े फ़ासले हैं वहाँ उन रेलों की स्पीड (Speed) जो है वह बहुत कम है। दुनिया के और देशों की रेलों को देखने के बाद ऐसा मालूम होता है कि अगर हमने कोशिश की तो दस से पच्चीस प्रति शत हमारा समय बच सकता है, और आज कल जितने समय में हम दिल्ली से हैदराबाद या मद्रास पहुंच सकते हैं उस से दस या पच्चीस प्रति शत कम वक्त में वहाँ पहुंच सकेंगे और उस से हमारा बड़ा लाभ होगा। यह दो तीन सूचनायें देकर मैं अपना भाषण समाप्त करता हूँ।

(English translation of the above speech).

Shri Heda (Nizamabad): Sir, if we look at the working of our Railways for the last three or four years from a common man's point of view, we come across the fact that it is generally recognised that the Railways have made much progress. Shri Syama Prasad Mookerjee also said so; though there are many in the House as well as outside, who insist that no progress has been made either in Railways or anything else.

In my opinion, greatest progress has been made in providing amenities to the third class passengers. Neither I, nor anybody else can say that this progress has really been satisfactory. It is never good to be sure about this. Live organisations and individuals always

make progress. But I can say without any fear of contradiction or hesitation that the difference between what third class travel that was three or four years ago and what it is now, is very great. Special amenities exist for those travelling for more than 300 miles, and I think that the amenities for long distance third class passengers are the same as existed for Inter Class passengers in the past. An hon. Member Shri Nambiar has said that the third class passengers cannot sleep. It is true: all of them cannot, but they can sleep in special third class coaches attached to long distance trains. Such amenities do exist in third class. While I was coming from Hyderabad recently, two hon. friends sitting near him were my fellow travellers, one of them in the First Class and the other in the third class. I was travelling in the class in between the two. My observation is that there was not much of a difference in the expenditure on the amenities provided in the two classes. As far as I know third class passengers travelling 500 miles or more can sleep. But I would submit that the number of new III class coaches is not sufficient. The III class coaches in the trains connecting important stations are also not so good. New coaches are arriving every day and the day, I expect, is very near when all passengers, whether travelling in Class III or otherwise, travelling for more than 250 miles, would be able to sleep.

Now I would like to touch upon a point towards which I tried to draw your attention last year also. The provision made in the Budget for new lines is too inadequate. While the provision for restoration of lines is Rs. one crore 14 lacs, the amount provided for new lines is only Rs. 3,61,47,000. The railway mileage in our country as compared with its large population and extensive area is very inadequate. America, England, Russia, Germany and France have more railway mileage in spite of the fact that each one of them has smaller population than our country and some of them have even smaller areas. If the pace of extension of railway mileage, as indicated in the budget, is adopted, it would take us five decades or a century to reach up to their level. This pace is very slow. Last year I had suggested that we should provide in every Budget for return of at least two per cent. of the capital, in the same way as we set apart about 4 per cent. in the name of Dividend to General Revenues. This is considered as interest on the capital contribution of General Revenues to the Railways. I know there were certain constitutional impediments in the way of ac-

ceptance of this suggestion; but where there is a will, there is a way. And the capital to be returned can be invested in new lines. If we prepare our Budget on these lines, our last year's Budget will also become a deficit Budget, as I pointed out at that time. This year's budget will also not be a surplus budget. When the public comes to know that our Railways have made a profit of Rs. 23 crores, it has an adverse psychological effect on them and they begin to ask themselves why Railways are not thinking of giving them increased amenities. But if we tell the public that we need Rs. 100 crores for new lines, then ours will be a deficit Budget to the extent of 70 or 75 crores. The public would not complain of the lack of amenities and our progress would be unhampered. There are only two ways of making progress, namely (i) either we economise in our current expenses and invest the amount thus saved in development, or (ii) we borrow. Our capacity to borrow is limited, nor is it proper to borrow. To economise is above everything, viewed from whatsoever point it may be; and we have to create a psychology for that purpose. I would request the hon. Minister, who has been connected with public organisations to a great extent and comes from a political party and not from the Services, to consider this suggestion and create such psychological atmosphere by making such a provision in the Budget for new railway lines, as the one made for Dividend to General Revenues. You may call it Capital Repayment or a special fund for new railway lines, but I think such an item in the Budget is necessary.

Shri Nambiar also said that we should improve the conditions of railway workers, because the railways have made a profit of more than Rs. 23 crores. No doubt such an idea takes shape in everybody's mind. It is true that the conditions of railway labour are not what they should be, and they ought to be improved. But the improvements and increase in amenities should not be concentrated in one place. It is like rain, which, if not wide spread as it should be, ends in a flood. In the same way increase in wages should be all round. If we look at the conditions of agricultural labour, who are in a much worse position, we cannot compare them with those of railway workers or factory labour.

I want to make another submission. Railways and other such departments are run on commercial lines. What we should see to is that we should get more profits if that does not harm anybody. Different practices are in vogue

[Shri Heda]

at different places on account of which, I think, our railways are not earning the profits they should. I would mention only two instances. In the vicinity of Delhi, especially on the late East India Railway, catering contracts were given by auction. Many reliable persons have told me that contracts were given with small variations to the same persons who were holding them for ten or 15 years. This is going on even now. If contracts are given afresh by calling tenders, I think the Railways can make a profit of at least Rs. 25 lakhs. We can even increase that amount to Rs. 50 lakhs.

The other instance with which I am more familiar is that of tenders for supply of stores in places like Secundra-bad. Certain impediments are placed on account of which the number of tenders received is not great, rather it is very small. The result is that the Railways are compelled to purchase stores at a higher rate, and that reduces their profit. One of the conditions for sending a tender is that it should be accompanied by a fat sum, amounting to something like ten or fifteen thousand rupees. The right course would be to demand this fee as a deposit after the acceptance of the tender.

I would like to invite your attention towards the low speed of long distance trains running between big cities like Delhi, Madras and Calcutta. If we follow the example of trains in other countries of the world, we may save 10 to 25 per cent. of our travel time, i.e., we may reach Hyderabad or Madras, starting from Delhi, in 10 to 25 per cent. less time than before.

With these words I resume my seat.

Mr. Chairman: Before calling upon the next speaker, I would like to inform hon. Members that I propose to call upon hon. Members in this order, so that they may be in their seats and not lose their chance, to speak. Otherwise, we have to send for them from time to time. Now I intend to call upon Mr. Lakshman Singh Charak, Mr. Reddy of the Socialist group, Dr. Lanka Sundaram, Dr. Jaisoorya, then, two Congress Members, Shri Fulsinhji Dabhi, Shri Sofi Mohd Akber, Mr. T. K. Chaudhuri, and Mr. Frank Anthony. I shall follow this order and we will go as far as we are able to go.

For the benefit of new hon. Members, I may also say, that though 15 minutes are allowed, it is open to a Member to close even in ten minutes. Just two

minutes before the time fixed is over, I shall ring the bell. That does not mean that the hon. Member has to stop immediately. If he wants, he may carry on for a couple of minutes more. Exactly at the end of 15 minutes, the bell will be rung and hon. Member will kindly resume their seat and not put the Chair to the necessity of ringing continuously. This is the procedure that I intend to adopt.

Dr. Lanka Sundaram: I apologise for not being in my seat, Sir,.....

Mr. Chairman: He has not yet been called. He may speak when he is called.

Dr. Lanka Sundaram: I would like to say a word about this speakers' list. There are some basic elementary needs of hon. Members and some occasionally go into the lobby, certainly with no intent to insult the Chair or the House. It would be a better procedure if the names of the speakers in the order in which they are going to be called is hung up outside in the lobby. We would then know when our names will be called. We have come here to work.

Mr. Chairman: I will have the list hung up in the lobby.

شری چرکا : جد پہ والا - ۱۹۵۲
۵۳ کے ریلوے بجٹ کے ملاحظہ سے جو
پہلا خیال میرے دل میں آیا ہے وہ
نہایت خوشی کا ہے - خوشی اس لئے
کہ ہندوستان کی آزادی کے پانچویں
برس میں اپنی حکومت کے دور میں
منسٹر اور باقی ملازمین نے اس محکمہ
کو اس قابلیت سے سنبھالا ہے جس
کی مثال شاید دنیا کے کسی طبقہ
میں ملنی مشکل ہوگی - اس بات
کو سمجھنے کے لئے لازمی ہے کہ سنہ
۱۹۳۷ء کو یاد کیا جائے جس وقت کہ
تقسیم ہندوستان کے بعد ریلوے کی
بھی تقسیم ہو گئی - ریلوے کی
تقسیم کا پہلا اثر جر ہندوستان کی
ریلوں پر خاص طور پر ایسٹ پنجاب

(East Punjab) کی ریلوں پر جس کو دیکھنے کا موقع مجھ کو برابر ملا وہ یہ تھا کہ یہاں کے میکینک اور ڈرائیور اکثر پاکستان کے بننے سے گھبرا کر ہندوستان کو چھوڑ کر پاکستان چلے گئے۔ جس کا نتیجہ یہ دیکھنے میں آیا کہ تمام ریلوں کی حالت خراب ہو گئی۔ تقسیم ریلوے میں ایسٹ پنجاب کے حصہ میں بہت رسی قسم کے ریل کے ڈبے اور انجن آئے اس پر طرہ یہ کہ ہندوستان کی تقسیم سے ساٹھ لاکھ شہری تھے جب ہندوستان کی طرف آئے لگے تو اس ریلوے کو وہ کام کرنا پڑا کہ اکثر یہ دیکھنے میں آیا کہ پانچ دس میل کی رفتار سے زیادہ شائد ہی کوئی ایسٹ پنجاب کی ریل چلتی ہو۔ ان حالات کو سنبھالنے کے لئے ہمارے لیڈر نے جس قابلیت سے اور جس دانشمندی سے کام کیا وہ وہ آنریبل ممبران ہاؤس اور ہندوستان کے لوگوں کو اتنی جلد بھول نہیں جانا چاہئے۔ یہ انہیں کی قابلیت سمجھئے کہ اپنی دانشمندی سے انہوں نے ریلوے کے کافی ملازمین کو واپس بلا لیا اور اچھی طرح سے ریلوں کا چلنا ممکن کر لیا۔ اور پانچ برس کے عرصہ میں اب آپ یہ دیکھ سکتے ہیں کہ جہاں ۱۹۴۷-۴۸ میں ہماری ریلوں نے یہاں تک کہ میل تریلیں دو دو تین تین گھنٹے لہٹ آیا کرتی تھیں۔ اب یہ حالت ہے کہ ریلوں اپنے ٹائم سے پانچ دس منٹ پہلے

پہنچتی ہیں۔ اس قسم کی ترقی ہوتے ہوئے بھی اگر اپوزیشن (Opposition) کے ممبران یہ کہوں کہ ابھی بہت کچھ ہونا چاہئے اور جتنا ہونا چاہئے تھا اتنا نہیں ہوا میں مانتا ہوں کہ ترقی کے لئے بہت کچھ گنجائش ہے اور اس سے بھی زیادہ ترقی ہونی چاہئے۔ لیکن ساتھ ہی یہ بات ہم کو بھولنی نہ چاہئے کہ ہر ایک کام کرنے میں وقت لگتا ہے۔

تیسرے درجہ کے مسافروں کی تکلیف کا انگریزوں کے وقت میں بھی ہندوستان کی سنٹرل اسمبلی (Central Assembly) میں اکثر ذک ہوا کرتا تھا۔ اور اس کے بعد بھی اس ہاؤس کے ہر طبقے سے یہی آواز نکلتی رہی ہے لیکن گورنمنٹ اس سے پوری طرح باخبر ہے۔ ذرا چند برس پہلے کے نقشہ کا ملاحظہ کیجئے جب کہ استیشنوں پر تھرتہ کلاس کے پسیجنڈروں کو پہلے کو پانی بھی نہیں ملتا تھا اور نہ بیٹھنے کو جگہ ملتی تھی۔ پانچ برس کے عرصہ میں پہلے سے بہت زیادہ کمپارٹمنٹس بن گئے ہیں اور عام تھرتہ کلاس کے پسیجنڈروں کی تکلیف کو محسوس کرتے ہوئے آج ہندوستان کے ہر حصہ میں چلتا ریلوں چارو کی گئی ہیں جن سے لوگوں کی تکلیف بہت حد تک دور ہو گئی ہے۔ میں یہ

[شری چرک]

مانتا ہوں کہ اب بھی ہندوستان کے بہت سے حصوں میں لوگ فوٹ بورڈس پر چڑھ کر چلتے ہیں۔ لیکن اس کا علاج ایک دو برس میں نہیں ہو سکتا ہے ہم کو یہ یاد رکھنا چاہئے کہ سڈہ ۱۹۳۹ء میں جر جنگ شروع ہوئی تھی تو ۱۹۳۹ سے ۱۹۴۳ تک برٹش راج میں ہندوستانی ریلوں سے وہ کام لیا گیا کہ جب یہ ریلیں ہندوستان کی لیڈران کے ہاتھ میں دی گئیں تو رولنگ اسٹاک (Rolling stock) سب خراب ہو چکا تھا۔ ریلوں کے انجن بہت خراب تھے اور انگریز اپنی جنگ میں اتنے مصروف رہے کہ ان کو فرصت نہیں ملے کہ ریلوں کی طرف توجہ دے سکیں۔ اور ایسی حالت میں چھوڑ گئے کہ اگر قابلیت سے ان کو سنبھال نہ لیا جاتا تو ریلوں کا خاتمہ ہی تھا۔

اس کو ماننا ہی پڑتا ہے کہ ریلوں میں ہر طرف ترقی ترقی ہی نظر آتی ہے۔ ریلوں کے کنڈاکٹمنٹس ریلوے اسٹیشن اور ویٹنگ روم وغیرہ آپ کو پہلے سے بہت اچھی حالت میں دکھائی پڑیں گے۔ ہاں اب کچھ شکایت کی گنجائش ہو سکتی ہے تو پہلے اور دوسرے درجہ کے کنڈاکٹمنٹس میں ہو سکتی ہے کیونکہ گورنمنٹ کی برادر توجہ دوسرے درجہ کی بہتری کے لئے دہتی ہے اب یہ دیکھنے

میں آیا ہے کہ پہلے فرسٹ اور سیکنڈ کلاس کنڈاکٹمنٹس جہاں بڑی صفائی کی صورت میں رہا کرتے تھے۔ آج کل حالت یہ ہو گئی ہے کہ اگر کوئی آدمی باہر کوڑا ہو کر نمبر نہ دیکھے تو کئی دفعہ یہ دھوکا ہو جاتا ہے کہ فرسٹ اور سیکنڈ کلاس ہے یا تھرد کلاس۔

اس کے متعلق گورنمنٹ کے سامنے دو دبانہ یہ عرض کرنا کہ جہاں آپ تیسرے درجہ کے مسافروں کے زیادہ سے زیادہ مراعات دیجئے۔ ان کا سونے کے لئے بھی بندوبست کیجئے۔ وہاں فرسٹ اور سیکنڈ کلاس کے جو کنڈاکٹمنٹ بنے ہیں یا بنائے جا رہے ہیں ان کو کم سے کم سنبھال کر رکھئے اور اپنے ملازمین پر یہ بھی واضح کر دیجئے کہ جہاں وہ گورنمنٹ سے اور ماگ سے یہ چاہتے ہیں کہ ان کو تلمذواہیں بڑھوں۔ ان کو مراعات ملتی رہیں ان پر یہ بھی لازمی ہے کہ وہ اس بات کو محسوس کریں کہ یہ ملک ہمارا ہے۔ صرف تلمذواہ مانگنا ہمارا کام نہیں ہے بلکہ اپنی ذمہ داری کا احساس ہونا بھی لازمی ہے۔ یہ صورت حال صرف ریلوں میں ہی نہیں ہے۔ اکثر محکموں میں یہ دیکھنے میں آتا ہے کہ جن جن افسروں کو پوزیشن (position) ملی ہیں وہ تو اپنی طرف سے بہت کوشش کرتے ہیں لیکن سبازٹیویٹ اسٹاف

(subordinate staff) میں اس ذمہ داری کا ابھی تک احساس نہیں ہے۔ اور یہ دیکھنے میں آتا ہے کہ عام سبآڈیٹس اسٹاف اس طرح اپنی ذمہ داریوں کو پورا کرتا ہے جس طرح : کوئی پوچھنے والا نہ ہو۔ اس لئے اگر ہم یہ چاہیں کہ ریلویز سے زیادہ سے زیادہ مذاق ہو۔ زیادہ مراعات تھرتے کلاس کے پیسنیجرز کو ملیں۔ تو ان لوگوں کے لئے جو خاص کر ریلوے ملازمین سے کنٹیکٹ رکھتے ہیں یہ ضروری ہے کہ وہ ان پر یہ امپریس کریں کہ وہ اپنی ذمہ داری کو پوری طرح سمجھیں۔ اور یہ سمجھیں کہ یہ ہمارے ملک کی ریلوے ہے اور اسے اچھے سے اچھا رکھنا ہمارا کام ہے۔ محض گورنمنٹ کی نکتہ چینی کرنے سے ریلوے کی حالت اچھی نہیں ہو سکتی۔

ریلوے بجٹ کے بارے میں اتنا کہہ کر اب میں ریاست جموں اور کشمیر کو ہندوستان سے کنکٹ (connect) کرنے کے لئے جو جموں پٹھان کوٹ لائن بہت لازمی ہے اس کے بارے میں ذکر کروں گا۔ میں ہاؤس کے ممبران کو جناب کے ذریعہ سے یہ یاد دلانا چاہتا ہوں کہ پارٹیشن (Partition) سے پہلے ریاست جموں دو ریلوے لائنوں سے نکلتی تھی۔ ایک طرف راولپنڈی کے ساتھ جو کہ سری نگر سے تھرتے سو یا پونے دو سو میل تھا اور دوسری

طرف جموں تک ریلوے اسٹیشن تھا جو کہ جموں میں ہی موجود تھا۔ اور ہماری سٹائٹس میل کی ریلوے لائن، یہ ریاست کی بدقسمتی تھی کہ ۱۵ اگست ۱۹۴۷ سے پہلے ریاست کے حکمران نے ہندوستان سے الٹائی نہیں کیا۔ اس وجہ سے ہم پر جتنی مصیبتیں آئیں۔ نقصان ہوا۔ اور بربادی ہوئی اس سب کا ذکر اس موقع پر مناسب نہ ہوگا۔ اس وقت جناب کے ذریعہ سے میں ہاؤس اور گورنمنٹ پر جو ظاہر کرنا چاہتا ہوں وہ یہ ہے کہ ریاست جموں اور کشمیر کی اقتصادی حالت کو درست کرنے کے لئے یہ لازمی ہے کہ جموں پٹھان کوٹ ریلوے کو چلایا جائے اور اس کو پرائیٹی (priority) نمبر ۱ دی جائے۔ اس لئے ہی نہیں کہ اس سے ریاست کی اقتصادی حالت اچھی ہوگی۔ اس لئے ہی نہیں اس سے ملک کے لوگوں کو آرام اور آسائش ہوگی۔ بلکہ اس لئے کہ اس سے ڈیفینس کے معاملات میں ہماری حالت بڑی ساؤنڈ (sound) ہو جائیگی اور خدا نہ خواستہ اگر کہیں جھگڑا پھر سے چھڑ جائے تو امداد پہنچانے کے لئے یہ ایک بڑی لازمی چیز ہوگی۔ ہم یہ سمجھتے ہیں کہ ہندوستان نے جو ہمارے لئے جموں پٹھان کوٹ روڈ بلٹائی ہے یہ ہم پر بڑا احسان کیا ہے اور ہم اس کے بہت مشکور ہیں۔ لیکن ہم یہ چاہتے ہیں کہ ریلوے لائن کو بھی

[شری چرک]

وہی پرائیوٹی دے کر جہاں تک جلد ہو سکے قائم کیا جائے۔ پتھان کوٹ ریلوے اسٹیشن کی حالت اب پہلے سے بہت اچھی ہے۔ اور اُس سے ہم لوگوں کو بہت فائدہ ہو رہا ہے۔ ریاست جموں کشمیر نے وہاں ایک انفارمیشن بیورو (Information Bureau) وزیٹرس (visitors) کے لئے قائم کیا ہے۔ جو وزیٹر ہندوستان سے وہاں جائیں وہاں ان کو ہر طرح سے سہولت پہنچانے کے لئے و امداد کرنے اور واقفیت حاصل کرنے میں امداد کرنے کے لئے یہ بیورو قائم کیا گیا ہے۔ لیکن دیکھئے میں یہ آیا ہے کہ اس انفارمیشن بیورو کے لئے وہاں ریلوے ڈپارٹمنٹ نے ایک چھوٹا سا کمرہ دے رکھا ہے۔ جس کے آس پاس وزیٹرس کو کھو مہن کھڑا ہونا پوتا ہے۔ اور بیٹھنے کو بھی جگہ نہیں ہے۔ اس لئے ریلوے اتھارٹیز سے میں استدعا کروں گا کہ یا تو اس کمرے کو بڑھایا جائے یا دو تین اور کمرے بنا دیئے جائیں۔ تاکہ اس دقت کو دور کیا جاسکے۔

تیسرے وزیٹرس کے آرام اور آسائش کے لئے یہ لازمی ہے کہ مکیریاں تک جو اب نئی لائن بنی ہے وہاں جو ڈائننگ روم (Dining Room) ہیں ان کو درست کیا جائے۔ ہمیں اتفاق سے یہ دیکھنے میں آیا کہ اول درجہ

کے مسافروں کے لئے جو کھانا دیا جاتا ہے وہ ایسا ہے کہ اگر آپ کہیں کسی تھاپے میں چلے جائیں تو دس۔ بارہ آنے میں مل جائے۔ مگر وہاں اس کھانے کا مسافروں سے دو روپیہ چارج کیا جاتا ہے۔ تو میں استدعا کروں گا کہ ریلوے منسٹر صاحب اولین فرصت میں اپنی توجہ اس طرف کریں اور اس کو درست کرنے کی کوشش کریں۔

جموں لائن کو جب آپ کانسیڈر (consider) کریں تو اس کے ساتھ ہی مجھے یہ آپ سے عرض کرنا ہے کہ آپ جنکل گلی میں جو ایک کول مائن (coal mine) جموں صوبے میں ہے اس کو بھی اس سے کلیکت کر دیں۔ اس سے ہندوستان کا کول پرابلم (coal problem) بھی حل ہو جائیگا۔ ریاست نے یہی اس پر کام کیا مگر بہت اچھے قسم کا کولہ نہیں نکلا۔ مگر ایکسپرٹس (experts) کی یہ رائے تھی کہ اگر کان کو گہرائی میں لے جایا جائے تو بہت اچھا کولہ نکل سکتا ہے۔ جب منسٹر صاحب جموں پتھان کوٹ لائن پر غور کریں تو جنکل گلی پر بھی اسٹیمیت بنوا لیں تو زیادہ مناسب ہوگا۔

یہ خوشی کا مقام ہے کہ ایوزیشن کے سہمراں نے جو کچھ ہمارے منسٹر صاحب نے قابلیت سے کام لیا ہے اس

کی سزاہذا کی ہے۔ اور میں اپنی طرف سے اور اپنی ریاست کی طرف سے منسٹر صاحب اور گورنمنٹ کو مبارک باد دیتا ہوں کہ انہوں نے اس قابلیت سے متحرکے کو سنبھالا ہے اور اسہد ہے کہ ہمداری عرض داشت جو کہ جموں پٹوآن کوٹ دیلہ بے لائن کے متعلق ہے اس پر غور کریں گے اور اگر ممکن ہو سکا تو اس سال میں اس کام کو جاری کیا جائیگا۔

(English translation of the above speech)

Shri Charak (Jammu and Kashmir): Sir, my first reaction to the Railway Budget, 1952-53, as I look at it, is a happy one. I feel happy to note that the hon. Minister and other railway workers, during their administration of five years after our independence, have managed the railways so well that it will be difficult to come across a parallel in any other region of the world. Our thoughts naturally go back to the year 1947. The partition of the country had its repercussions on our railways too. They too were split in parts. The division of railways and in particular of the East Punjab Railways resulted in first of all—as I have been able to study it—the migration of all mechanical hands and drivers to Pakistan out of a sense of insecurity. The result was that the conditions on Railways got worse still. In the division of assets, East Punjab got very bad type of railway compartments and engines. To provide a climax, that particular Railway had to meet the pressure of an influx of sixty lacs of refugees in India. It is difficult to come across a parallel elsewhere. In those days hardly any train in the East Punjab was found running at a speed of more than five to ten miles per hour. The public of India and hon. Members of this House should not forget so soon the ability and wisdom with which our leaders have pulled our railways from such a morass. It was due to their wisdom that so many employees returned and the working of the Railways was thus made possible. You can yourself see the progress made within five years. In 1947-48 the trains used to be frequently late by two to three hours

But now they reach five to ten minutes before time. It is a different thing if despite that remarkable progress the opposition members choose to criticise and regard it as insufficient. I concede that there is a large scope still for progress and that there should be progress further still. But we should not forget this fact that everything takes its own time.

The hardships experienced by the third class passengers used to be discussed in the former Central Legislative Assembly also ever since the British times and their case has been pleaded by all sections of this House also. The Government are fully aware of their hardships. You should, however, compare the present situation against the conditions prevailing only a few years back when these passengers could not get either water or a place to sit on the railway stations. Within five years, however, quite a large number of railway compartments have been built and it is out of a feeling for their hardships that Janata trains have been started in all parts of India and which have gone a good way to give them relief. I, however, don't deny that on many sectors people still travel on footboard. But we cannot do away with it in a year or two. We should not forget that our leaders had taken over the railways at a time when the whole rolling stock had become depleted and deteriorated due to excessive use in 1939-44. Railway engines were mostly in bad condition and the British were too busy to give them any attention. They left them in a condition which, but for able handling, would have put an end to the entire railway system itself.

We have to admit that there has been an all round progress in the working of our railways. You will come across better conditions in railway compartments, railway stations and waiting rooms etc. Some scope for complaints no doubt still exists in respect of first and second class compartments. The reason is the Government have always been concerned with the improvement of conditions of travel for the 3rd Class passengers. Now first and second class compartments are not so clean as they used to be—and verily a person standing outside—unless he studies the marking—may well take them for 3rd class compartments. Let the third class passengers be given all amenities by all means—say even the sleeping space, but let the Government at least take proper care to maintain the first or second class compartments whe-

[Shri Charak]

ther already built or to be built in future. The Government should impress upon their employees the need to regard this country as their own. They should not merely ask for increased salaries, wages and other concessions. It is imperative that they also feel their responsibility. Such a state of affairs is not peculiar to Railways alone. In many departments the officers who have secured positions for themselves, are found to exercise initiative. They work quite hard. But this sense of responsibility is still lacking in the subordinate staff. It is generally noticed that the subordinate staff discharge their duty in a way as if they were quite independent and there were nobody to supervise them. If therefore we want to earn more and more profits in the Railway Department and give more concessions to the third class passengers, then we have to impress upon those in contact with the railway employees in general to infuse a sense of responsibility in them. They must realize that the Railways belong to our own country and it is their bounden duty to keep them in the best possible condition. Mere criticism of the Government will not improve matters any way.

So much about the Railway Budget. I shall refer to the Jammu-Pathankot Railway line which is so vital a link between India and the State of Jammu and Kashmir. I should like to remind the hon. Members that before the Partition, the State of Jammu was connected with two railway headquarters—on one side with Rawalpindi which is at a distance of 150 or 200 miles from Srinagar and on the other side with Jammu railway station itself. We had a 27 mile track of our own. It was our misfortune that the ruler of our State did not declare its accession to India before August 15, 1947. Only because of that lapse we had to undergo all these hardships and incur such heavy losses. A reference to them may not appear to be proper on this occasion. I want to explain that for the improvement of economic conditions of the State of Jammu and Kashmir, it is vital to operate and give priority to the Jammu-Pathankot Railway. Not only will it improve the economic conditions and add to the comforts and convenience of the local population, but it will also make our position with regard to defence very sound. If God forbid hostilities break out afresh, it will serve as a vital link for purposes of reinforcement. We feel much grateful to India for the construction of the Pathankot Road. We,

however, want the same priority to be given to the construction of the railway line and it should be completed at the earliest. Pathankot Railway station is now in a much better condition and we are much benefiting therefrom. The State of Jammu and Kashmir has opened an Information Bureau there for the benefit of visitors. The function of this Bureau is to assist the visitors from India in every way and to offer them all facilities and information they may need. It is observed that the Railway Department has placed only a very small room at the disposal of that Bureau where the visitors have to stand in a queue. There is no space even to sit. I request the Railway authorities either to make this room more spacious or build two or three more rooms so that this difficulty could be removed.

Next from the viewpoint of affording facilities and comfort to the visitors, the Dining Room at Pathankot needs to be improved. I happened to see the kind of meals that are served to the First Class passengers. The quality is such that it can be available for a nominal price of ten to twelve annas in any *dhaba* whereas the passengers are charged Rs. 2 for that. I request the hon. Minister to give his attention to this matter at the earliest and bring about the necessary improvement.

I request you to consider the need for connecting the coal mine in Jungle Gali in Jammu State with the Jammu Railway line. It will solve India's coal problem to some extent. The State has worked on the scheme, but coal of superior quality has not been found. Experts, however, think that digging to a greater depth may yield superior quality. The hon. Minister will do well to have a statement prepared on Jungle Gali while considering the issue of Pathankot-Jammu Railway line.

It is gratifying to note that the opposition Members have commended the hon. Minister for the ability with which he has handled the Railways. I on my own behalf and on behalf of my State congratulate him for his ability and competence in managing this Department. I also hope that he will give due consideration to our request regarding the construction of the Pathankot railway line and if possible to start work this very year.

Shri Vallatharas (Pudukkottai): Sir, the integration of the various railways in India is an accomplished fact at present. Doubts have been expressed that the integration and coordination

of the railways as at present arranged are not proper. But as I see the arrangement, and as it has been materialising in the five years past, it is a matter that deserves appreciation. No substitute arrangement has been brought forward in the place of the present arrangement.

The railway system has been placed on a sound basis. A net profit of 63 crores is shown, though it is not a healthy sign, though from the point of view of the taxation on the poor man, namely the passenger, it is not a proper levy. Yet under the present circumstances the railways have been placed on a sound footing and that is a matter for congratulation.

The hon. Railway Minister has stated that the overall needs of the country and the community should gain priority over local preferences, and that the hon. Members of this House should rise above narrow parochial and provincial sentiments and prejudices in the larger interests of the unity, solidarity and prosperity of the Indian nation as a whole. It is a salient fact. But it must be remembered that the Government should not be misled and obliged to give preferential treatment to one province or the other by the pressure brought on the hon. Ministers by some one or other of their followers or other agencies. The importance of this aspect cannot be belittled.

The Indian Railway is the fourth largest in the world with a total mile route of about 34,000 miles, worked by about 72,000 stations. Yearly about twelve crores of people travel. About nine lakhs of persons are employed on the railways and the annual revenue is 300 crores.

The railways in India have got a history of 100 years and over. The importance of this huge system of transport for the economic, cultural and political development of this country and for the defence of this country needs no emphasis. The economic, political and cultural progress of the country greatly depends upon the efficient maintenance of the railway system. Over and above all these, the defence of the country is a matter which every one should bear in mind.

India today is a free nation, and as such, it must try to see that internal peace is maintained; and whenever danger threatens from outside, the country should be in a position to concentrate all its forces in particular sectors. Thus efficiency of defence depends upon the safety with which the trains can carry men and munitions to any part of the country.

Recently French experts have been called by the Government of India and they have given the opinion that the present railways can sustain a speed of 68 miles, whereas it is regrettable to see that the average speed is only between 12 to 18 miles in case of local trains, and the mail train from Delhi runs between 15 to 24 miles per hour. To travel 1000 miles the train takes about 52 hours. The speed of our trains must therefore be enhanced. Further, the rehabilitation of the Indian Railways is a very difficult affair. The Government deserves much praise in the matter. They showed a temperate attitude in gauging the importance of the situation and in providing all the resources available to effect the rehabilitation in an efficient manner. But at the same time they have forgotten to see that the speed of the trains has increased at least in respect of mail trains.

So far as regrouping is concerned, it has to be pointed out that things have been done in haste, and it is essential that the system should be stabilised on a scientific and well disciplined basis. One of the principles of the regrouping of the Indian Railways is that the Railway administration should serve as a compact region, large enough to provide a headquarter organisation of the highest calibre capable of following and assimilating an up-to-date improvement in the railway technique equipped with adequate workshop facilities, statistical training and research institutions. A central organisation of information, development and research for railways should exist.

The Indian Railway system is lacking miserably in uniformity. It is considered to be an unfortunate and reactionary feature. There are three kinds of Railways now: broad gauge, metre gauge and narrow gauge. The absence of uniformity is considered to be a potent factor in fostering inefficiency of the Indian Railway system, and for causing the isolation of large areas from direct access to the ports and the industrial areas. This question needs investigation and clarification by some expert person or by some Committee appointed for the purpose.

The railway area is divided into six regions for administrative purposes and operational efficiency. That the Government have devoted their careful attention to the economic and administrative conditions suitable to effect the divisions is apparent. But it is safer and beneficial to verify and satisfy by means of investigation by a special Committee whether each zone

[Shri Vallatharas]

constitutes an economic unity and favours integration, and whether the prospective division of the country into self-governing linguistic areas will affect or assist the regional conception.

The existing proposals do not indicate the nature of the internal administration of each zone. It seems the district system of administration continues. It also seems that having regard to the route mileage of the combined system and the volume of traffic which it handles, an intermediate co-ordination is proposed by setting up three operational regions within each zone. Creation of new offices will be necessary. How the economy is sought to be effected, how far retrenchment is possible and how labour is to be manned and used are matters on which this House may be desirous of being acquainted with.

An Hon. Member: Is the hon. Member entitled to read his speech?

Mr. Chairman: He started speaking extempore, then he read it, then once again he will speak, then perhaps read.....

Shri Vallatharas: Then the co-ordination of the Road, Railways, Aviation and Waterways the four means of transport and communication is highly essential. Total nationalisation should be effected in all these four items. Besides there is provision made in the Budget for renewal of tracks etc. Renewal of tracks can be so done as to ensure the increment of the speed of the trains.

12 Noon

The booklet "Towards Better Conditions of Travel" is highly disappointing. As a matter of fact, much money is being spent upon the so-called facilities being created for the passengers. Some trains are said to have been newly set up on various lines and various routes are said to have been extended. But on the other hand overcrowding in these trains has not been stopped. The booklet says that a complete elimination of overcrowding in trains will take some time, and that the overcrowding is sought to be lessened by putting on the route some new passenger trains and by extending some of the existing routes. It is a significant fact that accommodation in the Third and Inter Classes is very short, insanitary, unsatisfactory and inconvenient. Third class passengers contribute nearly 90 per cent. of the total revenues of the Railways and only about ten per cent.

is contributed by the Upper Classes. In spite of the fact that so much money is contributed by the third class passengers and the very fact that the Railway system cannot go on without the contribution of the poor third class passengers, the Government and the Railway Administration are miserably neglecting the case of these passengers. They are never felt to be members of a sovereign community after the attainment of freedom in this country. It is deplorable that the heads of departments who are in the permanent service of bureaucracy have never changed their views to feel that, whereas even a beggar as a voter hereafter is a ruler in this country. There is reservation of seats in Third and Inter classes but it is only a farce,—if I may say so, a dishonourable farce, because when once you ask him to reserve his ticket and he does it, when he gets into the carriage he finds hundred and one people sitting on his head. Quite recently during my journey from Madras to Delhi I saw a Third class Madras to Delhi carriage meant for sixty or seventy containing three to four hundred passengers. In the Inter class there is a railway officer and by his side there is a commission agent who enters the carriage with the permission of the officer and prepares a berth for someone who has paid him money. Hereafter, in a country like this we legislators who come from various parts of the country to the capital should not be annoyed by such scenes of indifference on the part of Railway management. As a matter of fact, congestion in these long-distance trains can be stopped forthwith if additional special-through carriages to number provided are attached and only ticket-holders to Delhi are permitted to travel in the compartments. Two Third Class and one Inter Class compartments may be attached in this manner. If that is done in each of the lines, the overcrowding will cease to exist at least by 75 per cent. That is my hope.

Mr. Chairman: The hon. Member can refer to his notes. He speaks with such an amount of fluency that he does not require to read his speech. Now, interruptions are made often that hon. Members are reading. The reason of the rule is a wholesome one that it ought to be the speech of the hon. Member here and not one written out by some other man so that parrot-like the Member may go on reading it on the floor of the House. Otherwise I have nothing against hon. Members referring to their written notes. In foreign countries many orators and even Ministers all write

out their speeches and then read them out. The manner of delivery itself indicates that it is not parrot-like. Sometimes such objections as the one that was raised may be unnecessary for the simple reason that the Member concerned may be a fluent speaker who refers to his notes occasionally. Then, some Members may be new and if they get opportunities to speak on two or three occasions they will become first class speakers. Therefore such interruptions may not be made and they are not in good taste also.

Shri Vallatharas: I want to refer to another matter before I conclude, and that is about corruption. The hon. Minister has referred with some satisfaction to corruption saying that it has much lessened or does not even exist. It is a false notion, and corruption, as time has gone, has become more scientific, steady and been put on a resourceful basis. Corruption on the platform, in the ticket room and with the checking officers in the trains is not visible, but it has not lessened nor is it extinct. The rough shod system of one time of directly asking the passenger or quarrelling with him does not exist now but on the other hand things are going on so silently that the common observer is not able to get at things easily. Corruption should be rooted out. Corruption in the Goods Section is of a so very high order of efficiency and resourcefulness that all the efforts of the Government to put it down have not been able to have any effect on it. In my opinion, a time may come when those working in the Goods Section may defy Government's attempt to root out corruption. Corruption is inevitable unless there is a change of mind on the part of the bureaucratic heads of railway institutions. Unless that takes place, we cannot hope that the poorly paid clerks and servants would be able to act honestly with the little that they get.

So far as labour is concerned, unless the Government is able to frame a proper, well planned and well thought out scheme for utilising the labour and encouraging it and making it contented, the times ahead are going to be very troublesome.

With these few words. I take my seat. Once again, I thank you for giving me an opportunity to participate in the debate.

Dr. Lanka Sundaram: Sir, I desire to congratulate the hon. Minister of Railways for his double luck in deliver-

43 P.S.D.

ing to us the other day perhaps the shortest of the Railway Budget speeches ever made in this House, and for his being the successor of a Minister who has the reputation of being one of the ablest administrators in this land. In February this year there were certain token grants on account passed by the provisional Parliament, with the result that the hon. Minister of Railways this morning had only to ask for something like Rs. 190 crores out of the original sum of Rs. 285 crores asked for on behalf of the railway administration.

I am bewildered, Sir, at the lack of interest in this House in the fortunes of such a vital public utility as the railways. I find that even on the very first day not many hon. Members seem to be interested in the progress of our railway system; in the responsibilities of the railway administration; in the duties of railway workers; and in the rights of the railway passengers. With a capitalisation of Rs. 862 crores, the railways as I have said earlier are our public utility number one and annually we are carrying 130 crores of passengers; the passenger miles run are 402 crores; and the freight miles run are 6.2 crores. Indeed, these are magnificent indices of the operation of our public utility number one and very naturally I felt that this House would show a tremendous amount of interest in the manner in which the railway administration is being run these days.

As a preliminary remark I would like to draw the attention of the House to one important factor which emerged from an examination of the papers made available to us. In 1950-51 87 lakhs of ticketless travellers were apprehended and I have written down here the total amount realised, namely, Rs. one crore and 71 lakhs. Compared to the 130 crores of passengers using the railway system every year, it occurs to me that if only the railway administration tackled this question of ticketless travel a little more energetically and scientifically, part of the financial picture would have been completely reversed. I will have occasion to show presently how the entire railway administration is subject to the grip of one single consideration, namely, finance. As I said, if only this question of ticketless travel had been tackled properly, the railways would be heirs to a good crop of money which would have prevented any further increase in fares and freights, and which would also have made possible so many schemes of reorganisation and rehabilitation.

I believe I will not be exaggerating the picture when I say that there are

[Dr. Lanka Sundaram]

two predisposing factors in this Railway Budget. In the first place, there is the controversy about regrouping and I do not propose to waste the time of the House with an examination thereof in detail. The second thing is the lengthening shadow of the threat of strike which was averted last year. On this question of regrouping, I would limit myself to one or two general observations. I do not think any hon. Member in this House would object to any system of integration or rationalisation which is in the country's interest. I am glad that my hon. friend Dr. S. P. Mookerjee was able to make a reference to considerations of parochialism and even of the political lobbying. If I do not misinterpret things, it occurs to me that a tremendous amount of horse-trading has gone into this question of regrouping. I would have liked to know from the hon. Minister why it was that the original scheme was altered repeatedly. I daresay he will inform the House about it. The attention of this House and of the country in general is being riveted upon the claims of Sealdah, Moghulsarai etc. but I am asking this straight question so that he will be able to answer it when he intervenes in the debate at a later stage. Ajmer or Jaipur was originally selected as headquarters for the Western Railway. Why were they dropped? What were the considerations that led to this particular aspect of the matter? I am only illustrating the point regarding the horse trading and the political lobbying which has been so much in evidence during the last few months as regards the regrouping scheme. I wish that once the Government of India comes to a definite conclusion, after technical advice and competent examination about the manner in which they should run their administration, they will have the courage of their conviction to stick to their guns. I am prepared to argue the point without wasting much time, namely, that at every stage the policy of the Government is halting in its approach to problems of public importance. They are swayed by pressure groups. I will not be a party to this matter where the pressure groups dominate the counsels of the Government of India. We know what happened to the re-classification scheme of three years ago. It cost the taxpayer Rs. three crores. We know also something about the debacle of the communications-link with Assam. That cost the taxpayer another Rs. two crores. I want an assurance from the hon. Minister that this regrouping

business would not be further subjected to any political pressure or provincial considerations. (An Hon. Member: It is already in operation.) I am not unaware of that fact, but I am also aware of the fact, and I daresay my hon. friend would be willing to believe that such a fact exists, namely, that there is a tremendous pressure sought to be re-imposed upon the Government of India to reverse decisions already reached in this regard.

Now, turning to the lengthening shadow of the threat of strike, as I put, I am aware of the fact that the second increase in dearness allowance of Rs. five granted in June 1951 in addition to the *ad hoc* grant of Rs. ten in January last year has not satisfied the Federation of Railwaymen. I know there is a feeble attempt made at establishment of permanent machinery to bring about an adjudication of this all-important matter, and as one who has seen something of trade union activity in this country, I would like to make an appeal to my hon. friend the Minister of Railways that he should not stand on considerations of prestige but that he should sit down with the Railwaymen's Federation or such other organisation which may be competent to express an opinion on the claims of dearness allowance, basic wages etc. and come to an honourable settlement, because I am most anxious to see that the railway system of this country continues to function in order that our economic recovery may be made possible. Otherwise, even considerations of national security will be imperilled if as last year the Railway Board stands on prestige in coming to terms with the Railwaymen's Federation.

In paragraph 23 of the White Paper circulated last February, I came across one of the most amazing statements ever made in a Government document. With your permission, Sir, I would make a brief reference to it. It runs as follows:

"In consequence of the raising of coal scale, the additional revenue would be of the order of Rs. 6 crores of which Rs. 2.4 crores will be borne by the railways themselves on their own coal consumption."

Then follows this other statement and I quote:

"Thus, the net burden which will be imposed upon industries and consumers will be of the order of Rs. 3.6 crores only."

To my mind, such a non-chalant and blatant way of putting across a statement defending the position of fares and freights is most objectionable as far as I can see from the point of view of procedure in this House. My hon. friend Shri Somani earlier in the debate this morning made a reference to the needs of the industrialists. As an economist, it occurs to me that considerations of finance and finance alone have led to this blatant position being reached. There is another question which has a connection with this. With your permission, Sir, I would like to read a brief extract from paragraph 25 of the White Paper:

"As against all this, the increase in average railway fares and freight rates as a result of rationalisation of freight structure and the introduction of a uniform mileage basis for passenger fares, was only of the order of 46 per cent. and 73 per cent. respectively."

Then follows another statement equally remarkable:

"In other words, the increase in fare and freight rates had lagged woefully behind the increase in operational costs."

Every commercial firm looks into expenditure before it adjusts its business operations. But what occurs to me most in this present position is this that the increase in fares and freights of the order of 46 per cent. and 73 per cent. respectively was not considered even today sufficient to meet the operational cost. On this point, Sir, I have got a few more observations to make with your permission. I have worked out here two tables for the past decade.

Fares were increased first by 15 per cent. in 1942-43; again by 25 per cent. in 1944-45 and finally in 1950-51 by one pie in the case of third class, two pies in the case of second class and three pies in the case of first class. These are the increases within a period of eight years.

On the freight rates, in 1942-43 there was an increase of 12½ per cent.; in the current year there is a proposal to increase the coal freight by 30 per cent. The argument which I would like to present to the hon. Minister is this. Have these repeated increases in fares and freights been related to the economic situation in the land, or are they merely conditioned—as I have grave doubts and suspicions about them—only by financial considerations? I have worked out here, another table which I dare say my hon. colleagues in

this House would like to listen to. I am here to suggest very seriously to my hon. friend the Railway Minister the fact that a saturation point has already been reached as regards fares and freights. I am quoting from paragraph 5 of the Supplementary Explanatory Memorandum in justification of this statement. These are the figures as regards passenger earnings. Upper class was Rs. 13.89 crores in the revised estimate of 1951-52 and we are now budgeting for Rs. 13.64—a drop of Rs. 25 lakhs. As regards earnings of third class from Rs. 99.33 crores in 1951-52 we are now budgeting for Rs. 98.55 crores—a drop of Rs. 78 lakhs in one year. Now as regards coaching earnings, from Rs. 19.65 crores last year, it will be Rs. 19.40 crores this year—a drop of Rs. 25 lakhs. And finally comes, the tell-tale position of goods earnings which is the crux of the problem, as far as we are concerned, in regard to the discussion of the Railway Budget during this session. Goods earnings were estimated at Rs. 151 crores last year and this year it is estimated at Rs. 145 crores—a drop of Rs. six crores.

I have examined with considerable care the documents circulated to us. As regards fuel cost there is a drop this year of Rs. twelve crores in the estimates. If only this drop was not there, I am sure the entire structure of railway finance would have collapsed. How this drop came about, I am not in a position to know. I hope the Railway Minister will enlighten us on this matter.

A word, Sir, about the employment policy of the railways and I have done. Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri in his speech said that it has also been found possible to increase substantially the provision originally made for labour welfare, particularly housing. In paragraph 34 of the White Paper there is a very important statement. "The Central Pay Commission's recommendations have been extended to all railway employees, including those who were in receipt of low scales of salaries on the ex-Indian States Railways." To my mind, this is a very bald statement. I have here two statements prepared about the manner in which 40,000 workers, including, filing, despatching and indexing clerks, have not been given the Pay Commission's recommendation scales. I have also a statement about the non-implementation of the Pay Commission's recommendations in regard to 4,000 typists. I am not here to weary the House with further details as regards the employ-

[Dr. Lanka Sundaram]

ment policy of the railways. But I am here to point out statements which on verification are found to be incorrect.

One final word, Sir. The time has come when we in this country cannot run the railway administration, the nation's foremost public utility concern, as a hand-maid of general finance. It must be run on commercial lines, and I would like to have evidence from my hon. friend the Minister for Railways that it is being run on commercial lines. It is a national asset of vital importance which will be an instrument of economic recovery. I have not seen any indication either in the Railway Budget or the General Budget anything said about attempts being made by the Government of India to pull this country from out of the slough of despondency and slump. I do hope, Sir, that during the course of the demand for grants, further observations will be possible on this.

Shri Bhagwat Jha (Purnea cum Santal Parganas): Let me join the previous speakers, in congratulating the hon. the Railway Minister. Speaking purely from the financial point of view, the railways have continued and are continuing to make good progress. During the last five years the railways have recovered from the after-effects of the war and have made considerable improvement.

The White Paper makes a very interesting and instructive reading, because it gives a justifiably optimistic tone of the sound financial position of the railways. Substantial amounts have been earmarked for railway rehabilitation, labour welfare and passenger amenities. Not only that the financial position of the railways has shown a perceptible change in equipments but there has also been considerable improvement in the matter of operational efficiency which was reduced to and worn out to dangerous level during war time.

Before proceeding further let me thank the hon. Minister for Railways for the invaluable assistance given by the Railways to Bihar during the last famine. On account of the efficient and speedy way in which food-grains were rushed to famine areas, thousands of lives were saved. Within a period of three months five lakh tons of grains were rushed to scarcity areas.

Now I come to the question of regrouping, which has been a subject matter of controversy for the past few months. Nobody can challenge the principle underlying the regrouping of railways. I think that this integration of railways has avoided the complicated method of accounting, resulting in an economy of about Rs. two and half crores which can be spent on labour welfare and amenities. As the hon. the Railway Minister has put it, in this matter the economic affinity of contiguous regions as well as the natural flow of traffic has been taken into consideration. Not only that. The Railway Minister, over and above the assurance coming from the Prime Minister, has stated that he will take every pain to see that as a result of the regrouping there is no retrenchment. He has also said that transfers of railway employees, particularly of class III and class IV, will be limited to those who agree to the same, as far as possible.

Just now we heard a speech from Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee, coming from Bengal, that he is dissatisfied with the Railway administration that it had given consideration to the opinion of the U.P. Government. And he went on to say that the Constitution might be changed from "India that is Bharat" to "India that is U.P.". Very well. But there is just one point. I have also gone through the proceedings of the Central Advisory Council for Railways of the 27th February, the 6th March and the 19th, when the final decision was taken on this regrouping matter. I have seen with satisfaction that the Governments of Assam, Bihar and U.P. have given assent to it. And I say here that in respect of the metre gauge system the decision to have Gorakhpur as the headquarters for the North-Eastern Railway is justified. There was only one Member from Bengal who dissented and who said that the headquarters should be shifted to Calcutta. So I find that it is not we who are the descendants of Mohamed Tughlak but there is another Mohamed Tughlak who wants the headquarters shifted from Gorakhpur to Calcutta! So I say let us give a fair trial to it. If it succeeds in time, well and good. Otherwise, we are going to be here for five years and we have liberty to change the whole regrouping if circumstances warrant, especially in relation to the North Eastern Zone. So much for regrouping. I feel that the system is sound, but nonetheless I may submit to the hon. the Railway

Minister that if a Committee of Experts is to be set up—I led a deputation to him yesterday and we spoke to him over this matter—we have no objection, if there be a Committee of Experts who may examine the whole system without interfering with the working of the regrouping. There will be no harm if this is done.

Shri Nambiar: What is it for?

Shri Bhagwat Jha: It is for examining the whole system again.

I must congratulate the Railway Ministry for pooling all the indigenous resources of the country. It has not only tried to establish various factories all over India but has also taken great pains to establish at Chittaranjan a big workshop for the manufacture of locomotives. My hon. friend asked rather indignantly "Well, what has this Chittaranjan workshop produced?" I might tell him that it has already produced 21 locomotives and in the current year it is producing about 42. I might also add that the Government has taken a right decision in giving a share capital of Rs. two crores to the Tata Iron and Steel Company for producing the things required for the railways. Besides, the Hindustan Aircraft Company is producing 100 coaches a year for our railways. The Government is also taking steps to construct another coach building factory at Madras at a cost of Rs. four crores. I feel that all these things will not only provide us with the necessary materials for our railways but also save valuable foreign exchange, besides giving employment to many. I think this one task which this Ministry has done and will continue to do will greatly relieve us of the drain on our foreign exchange resources.

It has been criticized that the operational efficiency of the railways has been reduced. I must submit that operational efficiency has been achieved not only in engine mileage but also in the wagon turn-round. The wagon turn-round both on metre and broad gauge which was 11.1 and 6.4 in March 1949 has been brought down to 10.5 and 5.8 respectively in March 1951. Not only that. The engine mileage which was 75 in 1949 increased to 76 in 1950-51. The Expert Committee has fixed a target of 87 in this respect. We have now come up to 78 and I think the Railway administration will take all care to see that this target in the matter of engine mileage is achieved.

I have heard with great care the speeches delivered by the Opposition Members. They are full of contradictions. My hon. friend Mr. Nambiar for instance talked of replacements and asked what the Railway Ministry has done in this respect. I do admit that on 1st April, 1951 we had 1,640 over-aged engines and 5,210 coaches and 25,000 wagons due to be replaced. But my hon. friend should not forget that this shortage did not come about overnight. I can tell him that during the war the railways were not in a position to have normal replacements, and this position continued for a number of years after the war also. In other words these are the liabilities that have been cast over the shoulders of the Railway Ministry during the war and even after that in the post-war period. And then in the very next breath my hon. friend asks "What for are these Revenue Reserve Funds, Development Funds and all these funds? Why not pool them together?" I would suggest to him that he ought rather to consult a housewife why it is necessary to set aside separate amounts for clothing, food and other things. It is simply a matter of convenience to keep one fund for revenue reserve, another for development purposes and so on. (*An Hon. Member:* He may not have a wife!) Then let him consult the wife of his neighbour. So, I say that all these remarks that have been offered by my hon. friend sitting on the Opposition do not really bear any sense. I do admit that the Revenue Reserve Fund will stand at Rs. 40.18 crores and the Development Fund at Rs. 99.28 crores at the end of 1952-53. But nonetheless I would like to know from my hon. friends where the shortage will be met from when it comes to a question of amenities and so on. I have read the bulletin of the Ministry "Towards better travelling" and I have seen that quite a large number of new lines are to be opened.

In this connection I would like to press another claim in respect of Santal Parganas which have been neglected for the last so many years, not only by the State Government but also by the Central Government.

Shri Velayudhan (*Quilon cum Mavelikkara—Reserved—Sch. Castes*): Will you get that new line?

Shri Bhagwat Jha: Better address that to the hon. Minister, not to me. So there are about a dozen new lines mentioned in that bulletin. I am here asking for another in Santal Parganas with a population of 24 lakhs where the railway lines touch only the

[Shri Bhagwat Jha]

north and south poles and where there is no communication either by rail or by road. So I am pressing the claim for this new line in the Santal Parganas district. Now, wherefrom is the money to come? If you want the rates to be reduced, I must ask you to go back into the decision to increase rates and fares. The post-war period brought a lot of strain on the railways; there were the replacement of locos, etc. and the Minister was justified in raising the fares. I do admit the point raised by Dr. Lanka Sundaram that saturation point has reached and I think the Minister realizes it that there should be no further raising. I would suggest that a slight reduction of one pie in fares may have a tremendous psychological effect on the people, but at the same time, I must say that this does not mean that we should depart from our railway policy. It has been stated that with these operational expenses and pooling of resources by achieving indigenous capacity, accidents still continue to be there. Let me suggest to my friend, to direct this question to his friends sitting all round him. I come from Santal Parganas and I know that a big accident occurred near Jasidih and I know also why that accident took place. I would ask my friend to put the question to his friends, who are seated all round him with red brand, I mean the Communists.

Mr. Chairman: The hon. Member has exceeded his time.

Shri Bhagwat Jha: I have only one point more. The Ministry's bulletin had mentioned that many railway stations are being furnished with new things. I may mention that Railway Stations like Pirpanti and Mathurapur are in a neglected condition and there are no shelters and the public are put to great inconvenience. I would also request the Ministry to reconsider the railway return ticket system which existed during the pre-war period. I think it will be a great boon to the common people if this system is introduced again. With these observations, I thank you very much for having given me an opportunity to speak to this House.

Shri Vittal Rao (Khammam): Sir, when we consider the Railway Budget, we have to take into consideration two principles, namely how the railway labour is treated and whether the Government, which is by far the largest employer of the largest number of railway employees is setting up an ideal example to the other industrialists in the country.

When the Central Pay Commission made its recommendations, the Government accepted those recommendations, but when the time came for implementing it, they went back. In the Central Pay Commission's recommendations, it was clearly mentioned that what we are recommending to the railway workers is far less but we have to balance the Budget. Therefore, we are recommending this, but we would urge on the Government of India to increase the purchasing power of the rupee. What has happened to the purchasing power? Since the Pay Commission's recommendations were announced, the purchasing power has gone farther down and up till now no revision of the pay scales has been made. With regard to the dearness allowance, it was clearly stated that Rs. five should be given for every 20 points increase in the cost of living index to meet the same but that also has not been given. Of course, after a big agitation in 1949 a Rs. ten increment was given and in 1951 when we were about to launch on an All India strike, there was another increment of Rs. five. Now the Railway employee should get Rs. 70 against the present Rs. 45 and 55.

As for the housing problem, the hon. Minister for Railways has stated that he had sanctioned about Rs. three to four crores. I must submit all this does not altogether go to the railway labour. The officers are also included in it. While the officers' bungalows cost about Rs. 40,000 to Rs. 50,000 a unit, the railway workers' two room tenements would only cost Rs. 2,000 each and basing my estimate on the Ministry's own figures, I think we can construct about eight thousand to nine thousand houses per year. At the present time there are 6,33,000 railway employees without quarters, and at the present pace of construction, it will take 80 years to complete the housing programme, and in the meantime the present quarters in which three lakh employees are housed, would have reached a state of utter collapse. Then I come to the medical aspect. In the year 1951-52 there were 65 lakh days lost due to sickness and what is the sort of medical aid that is provided? There are about 60 hospitals and 300 dispensaries with 2,000 beds. I ask, is this sufficient for nine and a half lakh railwaymen? It works out to about one bed for every 475 persons but along with this privilege, we were getting diet free but since the last two years, that system has been changed. Even what we were getting in the British Imperialists' days, have been snatched

away. The Railway Board have issued statements saying that during 1938-39 the railways were spending Rs. 60 lakhs on medical aid but today they are spending Rs. two and a half crores. Anybody who is conversant with the present prices of medicines will know that this increased spending on the part of the Railways is not bringing any increased relief to the railway employees. In view of the increasing risks that the workers have to undertake, I consider that more dispensaries and hospitals would have to be provided for them.

As regards the ministerial staff, I submit that this question has been hanging fire for the last seven years. The Central Pay Commission stated in its recommendations that there were 31,000 clerical staff in the whole of the railways who were in the lower grade. After a lot of representation the Joint Advisory Committee recommended that 25 per cent. of the lower grade staff should be brought on to the higher grade, but unfortunately the Committee's recommendations have not been implemented, and these 31,000 clerical staff have not obtained any relief in spite of the high cost of living.

Today in the whole of the railways 1,25,000 workers are temporary, out of a total of nine lakhs and odd. These men have been holding temporary jobs since September 1945, even though the Railway Board and the Railway Ministry accepted in principle that those employed prior to September 1945 should be confirmed. There are some cases where even those appointed prior to September 1945 have not been confirmed. Due to integration and retrenchment these men are working without any hope of security of service, and in great fear. Recently, they have been asked to appear before the Public Service Commission and many such methods are being adopted. I entirely agree that some permanent standing machinery should be devised to settle disputes. After a long number of years of representation, the Railway Board has come out with that suggestion. In addition to two tiers, they have added a third one. If any dispute between the Railway Board and the All India Federation is not settled, and if the Government so thinks, it may be referred to a Committee consisting of Members of the Railway Board, representatives of railway workers, and an impartial Chairman, some Judge or other. This cuts at the very root of the birth-right of the railway

workers to strike. Then, the recommendations of this Committee will be sent to the Government. If the recommendations of this Committee are not accepted by the Government, we should not raise that issue for one year; if the recommendations are accepted, we cannot raise the issue for two years. If there is an unfavourable decision, say, for example, cutting our wage, we cannot go on strike. This provision should be amended properly.

Then, Sir, I wish to refer to the stores purchasing policy of the railways. Originally, there was a principle that at any time, the stores balance should be equal to 40 per cent. of the total issues during the year. But, what do we find now? Generally, it is in excess. By some jugglery in figures, at the close of the year, in the month of February or March, the other departments are simply asked to draw and keep these stores in stock. So much so, there is an inflated figure. Recently, the Shroff Committee has also pointed out that in certain railways the materials purchased by them would be sufficient for them at the present rate of annual consumption for 200 or 300 years, and in one case, for 800 years, if I remember correctly. That is the position in regard to stores. So much money is being wasted. When the workers ask for more wages or more dearness allowances, the reply is that there is no money available. For all these stores, etc. money is available; but for the employees no money is available. And, when after going through all the constitutional channels, they want to go on strike legally, after taking the strike ballot, they are arrested and the Preventive Detention Act comes very handy against them.

In the S. I. Railway, there are 100 workers who are under suspension or dismissal. Among these 100, there are some fine office bearers of the S.I. Labour Union. After the Partition, when there were riots and the whole railway system was paralysed, these S.I. office bearers offered themselves for service, went to Punjab and worked those railways, at a time when no other railway employee came forward. Today, what is their reward? They were in detention for three or four years and finally when they were released, they are not reinstated. Is this the treatment to be accorded to them? Whenever we ask for more wages or make any demand, some people say, "you are not patriotic; India is in danger; it is not patriotism to claim higher wages."

[Shri Vittal Rao]

This is the result of being patriotic: three or four years of detention.

In the N.S. Railway, we have got instances where even after release in September 1950, persons have not been reinstated. One of the Railway employees was released in September 1950; he has not been tried in a court of law; he was detained without trial for two years. Even after release, he has not been reinstated. There are many other cases in other railways. In the case of persons arrested and detained without trial, no subsistence allowance was paid in 1949. When we go to the Railway Administration, they say, "you will have to refer the matter to the State Home Minister". When we go to the State Home Minister, he says that this matter is entirely in the hands of the Central Government and the Railway Ministry.

During the recent elections, the railway employees, despite several representations made on their behalf, were not allowed to contest the elections. They were not allowed even to assist the candidates. Whereas in England the railway workers and postal employees are given this right, we are denied this democratic right here. Otherwise, we would have actually had more representatives of railway labour in the Legislatures of the provinces and also in the Centre.

In the N.S. Railway, there has been a demand for a long time to construct the Hingoli-Khandwa line. This has not been taken up. Survey work has been completed and even certain preliminary work was also done. But, no provision has been made in this Budget for that line. In Mysore, there is the Chamarajnagar-Satya-mangalam line, which would only cost about Rs. five crores. It is said that the Assam rail link was completed in record time. If they could spend so much money on other projects, cannot they find these five crores for this important line in Mysore? Nanjangud is fast becoming an industrial town. We must find money for this important line, near Mysore. You have got 40 crores in the Reserve fund, and that can be utilised.

When the State Railways were integrated with the Centre, the State Governments were not paid any compensation. But, we find the capital has been increased by that amount. So much so, we have to pay the interest charges or dividend charges on that. This over-capitalisation should

be put an end to. The reserve fund of 40 crores should be utilised for opening out new lines. This would help in the industrialisation of the country.

Referring to the Ex-N. S. Railway, the Adjudicator's Award has not been implemented fully even though four years have elapsed now. On the other hand, the work-load has increased; the unit rates have been raised. In certain factories where two coaching units were done, previously, they have raised it to three. The liberalised leave rules have not been implemented in the Ex-N.S. Railway even after two years now. Whenever, a representation is made, it is said in reply that it is under consideration.

Mr. Chairman: The hon. Member has exceeded his time.

Shri Vittal Rao: One thing more, Sir, and I shall finish.

Mr. Chairman: I must now call on another Member.

صوفی محمد اکبر : محترم صدر -

اس ماٹس میں جو ریلوے بجٹ پیش
ہوا ہے اس کی تائید اور تعریف
کرتے ہوئے میں آنریبل وزیر متعلقہ
کی توجہ چند باتوں کی طرف دلانا
چاہتا ہوں - پہلی بات یہ ہے کہ
ریاست جموں اور کشمیر ایک ایسی
ریاست ہے جس میں ایک میل بھی
ریلوے لائن موجود نہیں ہے -
ہندوستان کی تقسیم سے پہلے جہاں
تک ریلوے کا تعلق ہے یہ ریاست
اس وقت بھی کچھ زیادہ خوش
قسمت نہیں تھی - لیکن اس وقت
سیالکوٹ اور جموں نے دو مہیاں ایک
مختصر سی ریلوے لائن قائم تھی
جس کے ذریعہ سے یہ ریاست پنجاب -
اور ہلدیہ تان کے ساتھ کنیکٹڈ
(connected) تھی - یہاں کی

تجارت اور کاروبار کو رونق حاصل ہو رہی تھی اور مسافروں اور ستیاحوں کو سہولتیں مہیا تھیں۔ ہندوستان کی تقسیم کے بعد اس ریاست کو جو فوجی اور سرحدی پوزیشن حاصل ہوئی ہے اس کے لحاظ سے لڑائی تھا کہ اس ریاست میں پتھان کوٹ سے سری نگر تک پوری دوری تک نہ سہی لیکن پتھان کوٹ سے جموں اور ادھم پور تک ایک لائن بنائی جاتی تاکہ یہاں کے اقتصادی معاملات کو فروغ قوتا۔ جناب والا۔ آپ کو معلوم ہے کہ ریاست جموں کشمیر کا تجارتی راستہ کل ایک ہی ہے جو ریاست کو ہندوستان اور دنیا کے دیگر ممالک کے ساتھ ملاتا ہے۔ وہ یہی جنوں اور پتھان کوٹ کا راستہ ہے۔ اس راستہ پر ریلوے لائن کے قائم نہ ہونے کی وجہ سے ریاست میں جو چیزیں۔ جو ضروریات زندگی، نمک، کپڑا اور دوسری ضروریات جو ریاست میں لائی جاتی ہیں ان پر کرایہ کا بھاری بوجھ پڑتا ہے۔ اس لحاظ سے یہ چیزیں وہاں کے لوگوں کو گراں قیمتوں پر مہیا ہوتی ہیں۔ اس کے علاوہ جو چیزیں اس ریاست سے درآمد ہوتی ہیں بالخصوص تعمیری لکڑی۔ مہوہ اور پھل اور اس قسم کی دوسری چیزیں ہیں ان کے باہر لے جانے میں بھی بھاری کرایہ دینا پڑتا ہے۔ مارکیٹ میں وہ چیزیں اصلی قیمت سے بہت زیادہ

ہمتوں پر کرایہ کی وجہ سے پہنچانی پڑتی ہیں اور خریداروں تک گران قیمت پر پہنچتی ہیں۔ اگر اس ریاست کے اندر ریلوے لائن قائم ہوتی اور جاری ہوتی تو یہ چیزیں جو ریاست سے درآمد ہوتی ہیں مہوے وغیرہ یہ ہم زیادہ سے زیادہ مقدار میں اور سسٹے داموں میں دوسرے ممالک کو بھیج سکتے تھے۔ اور اس طرح سے ہم اپنی ریاست کی مالی پوزیشن کو مضبوط کر سکتے تھے اور لوگوں کی اقتصادی حالت کو کافی حد تک درست کر سکتے تھے۔ جناب والا۔ جہاں تک فوجی ضروریات کے لئے چیزیں لے جانے اور لانے کا تعلق ہے ریلوے لائن کے قائم اور جاری نہ ہونے کی وجہ سے اس سلسلہ میں بھی کافی روپیہ ضائع ہو جاتا ہے۔ اگر اسٹیٹ (State) میں ریلوے لائن قائم ہوتی تو جہانتک ڈیفینس (defence) کا تعلق ہے اس سلسلہ میں کافی روپیہ بچ سکتا تھا جس کو اور ضروریات پر خرچ کیا جا سکتا تھا۔ جناب والا۔ ریلوے لائن نہ ہونے کی وجہ سے اور اس کے جاری نہ ہونے کی وجہ سے ہمیں کافی مقدار میں۔ بہت زیادہ مقدار میں۔ پیٹروئل خرید کرنا پڑتا ہے۔ دیگر ممالک سے حاصل کرنا پڑتا ہے۔ اس سلسلہ میں بھی کافی روپیہ ہمارا باہر چلا جاتا ہے۔ اور اگر ریلوے لائن قائم ہو جاتی اور جاری

[صوفی محمد اکبر]

ہو جاتی تو ہمارا کافی روپیہ بچ سکتا تھا اور اس سرمایہ کو ہم اپنے کاموں میں خرچ کر سکتے تھے۔

جناب والا - دوسری چیز جس کی طرف میں آپ کی توجہ منڈول کرنا چاہتا ہوں وہ یہ ہے کہ جو کشمیر ریلوے لائن پتھان کوت کہ جاتی ہے وہ ریل صبح ساڑھے نو بجے وہاں پہنچتی ہے - ان لوگوں کو - ان سیاحوں کو جن کو کشمیر جانا ہوتا ہے وہاں ساڑھے نو بجے پہنچنے کی وجہ سے ایک دن زائد خرچ کرنا پڑتا ہے - اگر آریہل منسٹر کے لئے یہ ممکن ہو کہ وہ واقعہ میں اس طرح تبدیلی کر لیں کہ پتھان کوت اسٹیشن پر گاڑی اس وقت پہنچے کہ جن لوگوں کو کشمیر جانا ہو وہ ایک ہی دن میں جا سکیں تو بہتر ہو گا - یہ صرف کشمیر ریل کے وقت میں تبدیلی کرنے سے ہی ہو سکتا ہے -

مہرے دوست شری لکشمی سنگھ - چازک نے جہاں تک ریلوے بجٹ کا تعلق ہے اس کے متعلق کچھ کہنا ہے اور اس پر تفصیلی روشنی ڈالی ہے - میں بھی جہاں تک ریلوے کے انتظام کا تعلق ہے موجودہ حکومت نے - موجودہ گورنمنٹ نے اور ہندوستان کے رہنماؤں نے اس تمام تباہی کے بعد اور ہندوستان میں نظامی

حکومت کے تہو بالا ہونے کے بعد جس قابلیت اور جس ہمد اور جس جرات کے ساتھ اور کیا کہوں جس مردانگی کے ساتھ ریلوے کا انتظام کیا ہے وہ بہت ہی تعریف کا کام کیا ہے - باقی باتوں کے لحاظ سے بھی جو بجٹ ہاؤس کے سامنے پیش ہوا ہے وہ قابل تعریف ہے -

میں آخر میں پھر منسٹر متعلقہ کی توجہ اس بات کی طرف دلانا چاہتا ہوں کہ جہاں تک موجودہ بجٹ کا تعلق ہے کشمیر کے لوگوں کو توقع تھی کہ اس بجٹ میں کشمیر کے ریلوے کے متعلق روپیہ مہیا کیا ہو گا - لیکن میں ظاہر کرنا چاہتا ہوں کہ ایسا نہیں کیا گیا ہے - میں پھر زور کے ساتھ منسٹر متعلقہ کی توجہ اس طرف دلانا چاہتا ہوں اور ان سے درخواست کرتا ہوں کہ جہاں تک کشمیر میں ریلوے بنانے کا تعلق ہے اس معاملہ میں فوری طور پر توجہ کرنے کی ضرورت ہے - اور توجہ کر کے فوری طور پر کام کرنے کی ضرورت ہے - ان الفاظ کے ساتھ میں اپنی تقریر ختم کرتا ہوں -

(English translation of the above speech)

Sofi Mohd. Akbar (Jammu and Kashmir): Sir, while supporting and welcoming the Railway Budget presented in the House I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister concerned to some of the facts. The first thing is that not a single mile of railway-track exists in the State of Jammu and Kashmir. Even before the partition of the country this State was not much fortunate in this respect. But

then there existed a small railway line between Sialkot and Jammu which connected the State with the rest of India. Trade and commerce flourished at that time and facilities of travel etc. were available to the passengers and tourists. After the Partition of the country it was desirable from the strategic point of view also to construct a rail link connecting Pathankot at least with Jammu and Udhampore if not with Srinagar proper. Such a step would have resulted in the economic betterment of the State as well. Sir, you know that there is only one trade route which connects the State with the rest of India and the world, and that route is this Jammu Pathankot route. There being no railway track on this route heavy fares have to be paid for the imported essential supplies such as salt, cloth and other things, with the result that these things are available in Kashmir at high prices. Besides that, heavy freight charges have to be incurred on the exports of the State such as timber, fruits, dry fruits and other things of this nature, with the result that they come to market at prices which are much higher than their real prices. The prices reach the highest pitch before the goods actually reach the hands of the consumers. Had there been any railway line in the State we could have exported fruits and other products in greater quantities and also at cheaper rates. In this way, we could have made the financial position of the State very sound, and could have ameliorated the economic conditions of the people living there. Sir, so far as the movement of military supplies is concerned, this also involves a heavy expenditure, because there is no railway line. So had there been a railway line there could have been much saving in the defence expenditure as well, and that saving could be utilised for some other purposes. Sir, in the absence of any railway line in the State we have to purchase petrol in large quantities which we have to import from other countries, with the result that a huge amount of money goes out of the country on this account. If a railway

line could be constructed in the State a large amount of money would be saved and we could use that amount on other nation-building activities.

Sir, the other thing to which I want to draw your attention is that the Kashmir Mail, which runs between Delhi and Pathankot, reaches that place at 9.30 in the morning. The passengers and the tourists who are bound for Kashmir have to spend one extra day as a result of the present time table before they actually reach Srinagar. I wish it would be possible for the hon. Minister to modify the railway time table in such a manner that the train may reach Pathankot at such an hour, that the tourists bound for Kashmir could reach that place in one single day. It would have certainly been good, but this can be achieved only by changing the timings of the Kashmir Mail.

My hon. friend Shri Lakshman Singh Charak too dwelt upon this subject to a great extent. So far as the railway administration is concerned I too am subscribing to the view that the manner in which the present Government or, in other words, the leaders of India have administered the railways after the havoc created by the partition of the country is really daring and praiseworthy. In other respects as well the Budget presented in the House is praiseworthy.

In the end I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister to the fact that so far as the present Budget is concerned the people of Kashmir had expected that there would be some provision for the construction of a railway line in Kashmir. But we see there is no such provision. I request the hon. Minister in most emphatic words that so far as the construction of a railway line in Kashmir is concerned, it needs immediate attention and immediate action. With these words, Sir, I close.

The House then adjourned till a Quarter Past Eight of the Clock on Tuesday, the 27th May, 1952.