

Tuesday,
24th February, 1948

THE
CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY OF INDIA
(LEGISLATIVE) DEBATES

Official Report

VOLUME II, 1948
(17th February to 4th March, 1948)

SECOND SESSION

of the

CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY OF INDIA (LEGISLATIVE)
1948



CONTENTS

Volume II—17th February to 4th March 1948

	PAGES
TUESDAY, 17TH FEBRUARY, 1948—	
Starred Questions and Answers	795—809
Election to Indian Oilseeds Committee	809
Resolution re—	
State Recognition of Homoeopathic System of Medicine—Adopted as amended	809—24
Representation of Rural Population in Services—Not moved	824—25
Socialist Economy for India—Withdrawn	825—36
Abolition of entries of Castes and Religion, etc. from Government Registers, Forms and Records—not concluded	836—56
WEDNESDAY, 18TH FEBRUARY, 1948—	
Starred Questions and Answers	857—68
Change in Time of Meeting of Assembly and Extension of Lunch Interval	868
Damodar Valley Corporation Bill—Passed as amended	868—914
THURSDAY, 19TH FEBRUARY, 1948—	
Starred Questions and Answers	915—30
The Railway Budget—General Discussion	930—31
FRIDAY, 20TH FEBRUARY, 1948—	
Starred Questions and Answers	983—97
Unstarred Question and Answer	997—1001
Cancellation of Meetings of the Assembly fixed for Saturdays during the Current Session	1002
Railway Budget—List of Demands—	1002—1040
Demand No. 1.—Railway Board	1002,1004—40
Inefficiency in Railway Administration	1004—19
Passenger Fares based on Uneconomic Rates Structure	1019—24
Grievance of Third Class Passengers	1024—36
Reorganisation of Railways	1036—40
Demand No. 3.—Miscellaneous Expenditure	1002
Demand No. 5.—Working Expenses—Repairs and Maintenance	1002—09
MONDAY, 23RD FEBRUARY, 1948—	
Starred Questions and Answers	1041—78
Postponed Starred Questions and Answers	1078—79
Transferred Starred Questions and Answers	1079—85
Electricity (Supply) Bill—Extension of time for the presentation of Report of the Select Committee	1085
Railway Budget—List of Demands	1086—1131
Demand No. 1.—Railway Board	1086—1101, 1126—31
Late Running of Trains	1086—96
System of Selection obtaining on the Railways	1096—1101
Application of Pay Commission's recommendations to the Members of the Railway Board and Officers of Railway	1126—31
Demand No. 5.—Working Expenses—Repairs and Maintenance— Manufacture of Locomotives and Machine Tools	1101—12
Demand No. 15.—Construction of New Lines—Capital and Depreciation Fund Construction of new lines and restoration of dismantled lines	1112—26 1112—26
TUESDAY, 24TH FEBRUARY, 1948—	
Starred Questions and Answers	1133—58
Postponed Starred Questions and Answers	1158
Budget as corrected of the Railway Revenue and Expenditure—Laid on the table	1159
Railway Budget—List of Demands	1159—96
Demand No. 4.—Working Expenses—Administration	1159
Ground Elevators and special facilities for Working and Movement of Agricultural Commodities especially Foodstuffs	1159—67

TUESDAY, 24TH FEBRUARY, 1948—*contd.*Railway Budget—List of Demands—*contd.*

Demand No. 9.—Working Expenses—Miscellaneous Expenses	1159,
Loss on Railway Grain Shops	1167—76
Demand No. 5.—Working Expenses—Repairs and Maintenance	1167—76
Prevention of Thefts of Railway Fittings	1176—88
Demand No. 1.—Railway Board	1176—88
Conditions prevailing on Oudh and Tirhut Railway	1180—92
Demand No. 13—Appropriation to Betterment Fund	1180—92
Demand No. 14—Appropriation to Reserve	1192—95
Demands Nos. 1—11 and 13—18	1192—95
	1195—96

WEDNESDAY, 25TH FEBRUARY, 1948—

Starred Questions and Answers	1197—1219
Election to Standing Committee for Ministry of Transport	1219
Demand for Supplementary Grant (Railways) 15th August, 1947 to 31st March, 1948	1220
Provincial Insolvency (Amendment) Bill—Referred to Select Committee	1220—23
Resolution <i>re</i> extension of period mentioned in Sections 2 and 3 of the India (Central Government and Legislature) Act, 1946 as adapted—passed	1228—38
Dentists Bill—Motion to consider as reported by Select Committee— not concluded	1239—64

THURSDAY, 26TH FEBRUARY, 1948—

Starred Questions and Answers	1265—82
Short Notice Questions and Answers	1283—84
Provincial Insolvency (Amendment) Bill—Motion to consider—not moved	1284
Code of Criminal Procedure (Amendment) Bill—Amendment of Sections 161 and 162—Withdrawn	1284—85
Code of Criminal Procedure (Amendment) Bill—Amendment of Sections 4, 20A, etc.—Introduced	1286
Delhi Sikh Gurdwaras and Religious Endowments Bill—Introduced	1286
Criminal Tribes (Repeal) Bill—Introduced	1287
Indian Penal Code (Amendment) Bill—Amendment of Sections 53, 121, 132, etc.—Introduced	1287

SATURDAY, 28TH FEBRUARY, 1948—

Presentation of the General Budget for 1948-49	1327—50
Indian Finance Bill—Introduced	1350

MONDAY, 1ST MARCH, 1948—

Starred Questions and Answers	1351—78
Transferred Starred Questions and Answers	1378—88
Election to Standing Committee for Ministry of Education	1388—89
Election to Standing Committee for Ministry of Transport	1389
Delhi and Ajmer-Merwara Land Development Bill—Extension of time for presentation of Report of Select Committee	1389—90
Indian Power Alcohol Bill—Introduced	1390
Taxation on Income (Investigation Commission) (Amendment) Bill—Referred to Select Committee	1390—1411
Rehabilitation Finance Administration Bill—Discussion on the motion to consider as reported by Select Committee—not concluded	1412—24

TUESDAY, 2ND MARCH, 1948—

Starred Questions and Answers	1425—1446
Death of Shri Dobi Prasad Khaitan	1446
Interim Agreement on Sterling Balances—Papers Laid on the table	1447—1452
Rehabilitation Finance Administration Bill—Passed as amended	1452—1466, 1467—1501
Announcement <i>re</i> allotment of Additional Dates for voting on Demands and for Reference of Finance Bill to Select Committee	1466—1467

CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY OF INDIA (LEGISLATIVE)

Tuesday, 24th February 1948

The Assembly met in the Assembly Chamber of the Council House at a Quarter to Eleven of the Clock, Mr. Speaker (The Honourable Mr. G. V. Mavalankar) in the Chair.

STARRED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

ORAL ANSWERS.

PURCHASE OF WHEAT FROM ARGENTINA.

427. ***Mr. R. K. Sidhva:** (a) Will the Honourable Minister of Food be pleased to state whether any enquiry is being made for the purpose of purchasing wheat from Argentina?

(b) Is it a fact that Argentina has a surplus of 40,00,000 tons of wheat for export?

(c) What is the prevailing price of a ton of wheat in Buenos Aires?

The Honourable Shri Jairamdas Daulatram: (a), (b) and (c). The Honourable Member has made enquiries with regard to certain purchases which we tried to negotiate. But Government feel that it is not in the public interest to publish at this stage all the efforts they are making to secure foodstuffs to meet the situation in the country. The transactions to be made are of a commercial character and all references to the efforts being made in different quarters to secure high quantities at best prices may prejudice national interests. Information regarding their inquiries from various countries for this purpose cannot therefore be given by Government. But Government will have no objection to supplying all necessary information to the House after the transactions are completed.

Mr. R. K. Sidhva: May I know whether any order has been placed in Argentina for the purchase of food?

The Honourable Shri Jairamdas Daulatram: As I said, we are trying to negotiate these purchases. Government at this stage feel that they should not give more information.

Seth Govinddas: Will the Government see that before the *rabi* crop comes, no import of grain should be negotiated for, because we are having sufficient grain and if the *rabi* crop comes.....

Mr. Speaker: I may point out to the Honourable Member that all questions making suggestions for action are inadmissible. These are restrictions under the rules.

Mr. Hussain Imam: Is Argentina a member of the international pool or not?

The Honourable Shri Jairamdas Daulatram: It is outside the pool.

Mr. R. K. Sidhva: May I know whether Government will see that no fabulous price is paid for the purchase?

Mr. Speaker: I invite the Honourable Member's attention to what I have just said with reference to a question put by Seth Govinddas.

Mr. R. K. Sidhva: Will Government see that the purchase is made at competitive prices?

Mr. Speaker: It comes to the same thing.

FERTILISER PLANT AT SINDRI AND IN OTHER PROVINCES

428. **Mr. R. K. Sidhva:** (a) Will the Honourable Minister of Industry and Supply be pleased to state when the fertilizer plant at Sindri is likely to be completed?

(b) Do Government intend to erect fertilizer plants in other Provinces?

The Honourable Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee: (a) Towards the end of 1950.

(b) Yes, if practicable.

Mr. R. K. Sidhva: Is there any fertilizer plant owned by any private manufacturer in India?

The Honourable Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee: The other factory is at Travancore, which is really State-owned.

Seth Govinddas: Are there any provinces which have applied that such fertilizer companies should be developed? And if so, which are those provinces?

The Honourable Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee: Mardas wants one but we have not considered that until we make some progress in regard to our Bihar project.

Seth Govinddas: No other province except Madras?

The Honourable Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee: I am not sure. I think the Central Provinces also!

Seth Govinddas: That is what I wanted you to say!

Mr. R. K. Sidhva: Do they want to scatter the construction of these plants various provinces or only in one province?

The Honourable Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee: We shall have other factories.

Mr. R. K. Sidhva: In which provinces?

The Honourable Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee: I do not know yet.

Mr. Hussain Imam: Have any sources for this raw material been found in India to replace the source from Malabar? We expect to get some gypsum within the Indian Union and we are investigating this possibility.

Seth Govinddas: Will Government see that priority should be given to those provinces which have applied first and not to provinces who applied later?

The Honourable Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee: It is very difficult for me to say what the policy will be. But we shall bear that request in mind.

CONSTRUCTION OF A RAILWAY LINE BETWEEN KANDLA AND JODHPUR BY CATCH AND JODHPUR STATES

429. **Mr. R. K. Sidhva:** (a) Will the Honourable Minister of Railways be pleased to state whether it is a fact that an agreement has been reached between the Cutch State and the Jodhpur State for construction of a railway line between Kandla and Jodhpur?

(b) Is it a fact that the sanction of the Railway Board for the construction of this railway line, has not yet been given?

(c) on what date did the above States apply to the Railway Board for such sanction?

(d) Do Government propose to consider the desirability of expediting the matter?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: (a) An agreement has been reached between the Jodhpur and Cutch States for the survey and construction of a line between Kandla and Raniwara.

(b) Yes.

(c) The Jodhpur State applied to the Ministry of States for obtaining the consent of the Government of India to the construction of this Railway. The Ministry of States made a reference to the Railway Board on 19th January 1948, forwarding the traffic survey reports of the project and have asked for the Railway Board's comments.

(d) The construction of this line is closely linked with the question of development of Ports in Kathiawar. A Technical Committee is being appointed to consider the need for a major Port in the stretch of coasts covering Kathiawar and Cutch and a decision on the Kandla Raniwara Railway will be taken after the report of the Committee is received and considered by the Government.

AERODROMES IN INDIAN DOMINION AND ACCEDING STATES

430. *Mr. R. K. Sidhva: (a) Will the Honourable Minister of Communications be pleased to state the names of places in the Dominion of India and the States which have acceded to India where Aerodromes exist?

(b) Do Government propose to build aerodromes at other stations? If so, where?

(c) What is the total maintenance cost per year of all aerodromes in India?

(d) What is the total income derived from licence fees and by way of postage stamps for air mail letters, etc.?

The Honourable Mr. Rafi Ahmed Kidwai: (a) and (b). I lay on the table of the House statements giving the requisite information.

(c) The total estimated cost of maintenance during 1947-48 of the Civil Aerodromes maintained by the Director General of Civil Aviation in India is Rs. 40,59,000. No information is available of the cost of maintenance of the aerodromes in the States.

(d) The net receipts from surcharges on inland and foreign air mails during 1946-47 amounted to Rs. 1,41,32,000. The estimated revenue for 1947-48 from fees for the grant and renewals of licences and certificates, landing and housing fees is Rs. 16,65,930.

Statement I.

Internal Aerodromes	Minor Aerodromes
1. Bombay Airport (Santa Cruz)	1. Akola.
2. Calcutta Airport (Dum Dum)	2. Amritsar.
3. Delhi (Palam)	3. Bareilly.
Major Aerodromes	4. Bilsapur.
1. Ahmedabad	5. Cuddapah.
2. Allahabad.	6. Donakonda.
3. Lucknow (Amausi)	7. Gauhati.
4. Madras (St. Thomas Mt.)	8. Gorakhpur (Kusmi).
5. Nagpur	9. Jhansi.
6. Patna. (Proposed to be taken over by the D.G.C.A. for development as a Central Government aerodrome).	10. Jorhat.
7. Vizagapatnam	11. Jubbulpore.
Intermediate Aerodromes.	12. Khandwa.
1. Asansol.	13. Madura.
2. Banaras (Babatpur).	14. Manipur Road.
3. Bezwada.	15. Raipur.
4. Bombay (Juhu).	16. Rajahmundry.
5. Cawnpore (Civil).	17. Ramnad.
6. Cochin.	18. Saharanpur (Sarasawa).
7. Coimbatore.	19. Siliguri (Bagdogra).
8. Cuttack (Bhubaneswar).	20. Tanjore.
9. Delhi (Safdar Jung).	21. Tezpur.
10. Gaya.	22. Vellore.
11. Jhvsuguda.	
12. Mohanbari.	
13. Trichinopoly.	

(This statement does not include aerodromes mentioned by the Defence Ministry).

Statement II.

Name of aerodrome	State in which located :
1. Agartala	Tripura.
2. Baroda	Baroda.
3. Bangalore (H.A.L.)	Mysore.
4. Bangalore (Yellahanka)	Mysore.
5. Bhavnagar	Bhavnagar.
6. Bhopal	Bhopal.
7. Bhuj (Rudramala)	Kutch.
8. Bikaner (Nal)	Bikaner
9. Deesa	Palanpur
10. Gwalior (Maharajpur).	Gwalior.
11. Jaipur (Sanganer)	Jaipur.
12. Jammu	Jammu & Kashmir.
13. Jamnagar (Chela)	Nawanagar.
14. Jamnagar (Gordanpur)	Nawanagar.
15. Jodhpur	Jodhpur.
16. Keshod	Junagadh
17. Khambalia	Nawanagar.
18. Kolar	Mysore.
19. Mandvi	Kutch
20. Morvi	Morvi.
21. Porbandar	Porbandar.
22. Rajkot	Rajkot.
23. Srinagar	Jammu & Kashmir.
24. Trivandrum	Travancore.
25. Wadhwan	Wadhwan.
26. Wankaner	Wankaner.

Besides the above there are landing grounds at a large number of places which are not being maintained up to normal standards.

Statement III

New Civil Aerodromes which the Government of India proposed to construct.

1. Ajmer.
2. Aligarh.
3. Berhampur.
4. Calicut.
5. Cuddalore.
6. Dehra Dun.
7. Jubli.
8. Mangalore.
9. Nellore.
10. Ootacamund.
11. Salem.
12. Ratanagiri.
13. Saugor.
14. Surat.

Mr. R. K. Sidhva: May I know if an aerodrome exists in Bhuj in Cutch and that it has now been abandoned?

The Honourable Mr. Rafi Ahmed Kidwai: I require notice of that.

Mr. R. K. Sidhva: I have asked that question in part (a) of my question. I want to know from that statement.

The Honourable Mr. Rafi Ahmed Kidwai: Well, it is not on the list.

Mr. R. K. Sidhva: May I know whether an aerodrome exists in Bhuj?

The Honourable Mr. Rafi Ahmed Kidwai: I have said that I require notice of that question.

Seth Govinddas: Are Government aware that recently an air service has begun between Jubbulpore and Nagpur and that the Jubbulpore aerodrome is eleven miles from the town? Under those circumstances will Government see that the aerodrome which is nearer to the town is repaired and made fit for use?

The Honourable Mr. Rafi Ahmed Kidwai: Since the party concerned. was in a hurry to start the service, we had to go to that aerodrome.

Seth Govinddas: Is Government going to improve the nearer aerodrome to Jubbulpore in the near future?

The Honourable Mr. Rafi Ahmed Kidwai: Not in the near future.

Seth Govinddas: How much time will it take to improve that aerodrome?

The Honourable Mr. Rafi Ahmed Kidwai: I do not know because the aerodromes which are immediately under construction and repairs will themselves take time and I do not know when the turn of the second aerodrome to Jubbulpore will come.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: In view of the growing need for more and more aerodromes and landing places for various purposes, including strategic purposes, is Government pursuing their earlier process of dismantling some of these aerodromes, removing these landing grounds and giving those lands back again to those people from whom they were taken?

The Honourable Mr. Rafi Ahmed Kidwai: Where the aerodrome is not detailed off, its rights of possession are given back to the owners or cultivators.

Shri Deshbandhu Gupta: Was there an aerodrome in Bahadurgarh and is it being abandoned? Will Government see to the urgency of keeping more aerodromes roundabout Delhi and issue orders to stop their being dismantled?

The Honourable Mr. Rafi Ahmed Kidwai: I think we have sufficient aerodromes in Delhi and therefore the land goes back to the cultivators.

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member is either asking for opinion or making suggestions and not asking for information.

Shri Deshbandhu Gupta: I shall ask a question for eliciting information. Sir. Is it a fact that there are lots of buildings standing on that aerodrome which can be used for refugees?

The Honourable Mr. Rafi Ahmed Kidwai: I do not know.

MEMORANDUM BY SOUTH INDIAN RAILWAY WORKERS' UNION *re* ANOMALIESNI-
FIXATION OF NEW SCALES OF PAY

431. ***Shri Harihar Nath Shastri:** (a) Will the Honourable Minister of Railways be pleased to state whether it is a fact that the South Indian Railway Workers' Union has, in its memorandum dated 2nd December 1947, brought to the notice of the South Indian Railway administration and the Government of India various instances of unfair fixation of scales of pay on the said railway?

(b) Are Government aware that a large number of experienced men on the said railway with twenty to thirty years of service are put on the same pay as new entrants with two or three years of service?

(c) If the answers to parts (a) and (b) be in the affirmative, what steps do Government propose to take to remove the anomalies pointed out?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: (a) An advance copy of a Memorandum which is undated but purporting to come from the S. I. Railway Workers' Union, has been received but Government have not been able to examine in detail the contents of the Memorandum, pending its receipt through proper channel with the recommendations of the South Indian Railway Administration thereon.

(b) According to the method of fixation of initial pay in the prescribed scales recommended by the Central Pay Commission and accepted by Government, every employee is assured of a certain minimum benefit over his existing pay. Government are aware that, on the South Indian Railway, the method of fixation adopted has, in some cases, given rise to results as referred to.

(c) Government feel unable to depart widely from the recommendations of the Central Pay Commission and have already gone, as far as they could, in meeting the demands of the All India Railwaymen's Federation for the removal of some of the more glaring anomalies. Government have also recently agreed to representatives of the All India Railwaymen's Federation being associated with the machinery in the office of the Railway Board for discussing special points or anomalies in the implementing of the Central Pay Commission's recommendations and hope thereby that many of the questions still outstanding will be more expeditiously investigated and settled.

Shri Harihar Nath Shastri: Has the attention of the Honourable Minister been drawn to the fixation chart issued by the South Indian Railway as addenda to the Railway Service Rules, 1947, according to which several categories of workers with services ranging from 10 to 39 years are now put on pay that an entrant of today would get in his second year of service?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: That matter is the subject of a question that comes late.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Will Government give equal opportunities to those unions which are not affiliated to the All India Railwaymen's Union and which are affiliated on the other hand to the Indian National Trade Union Congress so that they may also be consulted when these questions relating to the Pay Commission are being decided?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: I think probably the Honourable Member would appreciate that in the settlement of questions of this kind it is better, as far as possible, and much more convenient from an administrative point of view if the Railway Board is in a position to deal with a single body, whether representing one Association or more associations. If the Railway Board is asked to discuss these questions with a variety of deputations, it is very difficult to come to a reasonable settlement. I would suggest to the Honourable Member that if there is any particular sector of labour opinion in which he is interested, they should associate themselves with others as far as the discussion of these outstanding questions is concerned.

Shri Harihar Nath Shastri: Is the Honourable Minister aware that in connection with a number of committees and conferences held by the Government of India not only one representative organisation but also other national organisations of labour find representation and are consulted?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: I am putting this forward simply as a matter of administrative convenience, that if it would be possible for other labour associations to come and discuss with the Railway Board at the same time and in the same negotiations with the representatives of the All India Railwaymen's Federation, it would, to my mind, be more convenient from the administrative point of view and it would also be more advantageous from the labour point of view.

Mr. Speaker: I think this is a question which should be discussed with the Honourable Minister outside the House.

Diwan Chaman Lal: May I, with your permission, ask one supplementary question, Sir?

دیوان چمن لال کیا میں پوچھ سکتا ہوں انریبل منسٹر کہ اب اس وقت سے گفتگو ہو رہی ہے فیڈریشن اور بورڈ کے درمیان کیا تسلی بخش ہے؟

(Sir, May I ask the Honourable Minister whether negotiations which are, at present, going on between the All India Railwaymen's Federation and the Railway Board are proceeding satisfactorily?)

Mr. Speaker: That again is only a question of opinion.

LOWEST SCALES OF PAY FOR STAFF OF SOUTH INDIAN RAILWAY

432. *Shri Harihar Nath Shastri: Will the Honourable Minister of Railways be pleased to state whether it is a fact that about 90 per cent. of the staff of the South Indian Railway are now put on the lowest prescribed scales of pay fixed for different categories of employees?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: Government are informed that the number of posts in the lowest prescribed scales in the various principal and miscellaneous categories for which more than one scale has been prescribed ranges from 33 to 99 per cent. according to the strength in each category.

Shri Harihar Nath Shastri: Is it a fact that 3,323 out of 3,478 general office clerks on the South Indian Railway, 1,124 out of 1,171 station masters, 901 out of 908 booking and parcel van clerks and 579 out of 592 goods clerks are at present put on the list of the prescribed scales of pay?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: I am unable to answer off hand the particular detailed question which the Honourable Member has put.

دیوان چمن لال کیا یہ تھیک ہے کہ آریبل منسٹر نے وعدہ کیا تھا کہ سب سے نیچے کا جو اسکیل (scale) اس میں نہیں رکھے جائینگے بلکہ اس میں رکھے جائینگے جس پر پہلے تھے۔

Diwan Chaman Lal: Sir, Is it a fact that the Honourable Minister promised to place them on the scales of pay on which they were employed and not on the lowest scales of pay?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: (Replied in Malayalam) I cannot answer the question since I do not follow it.

Prof. Shibban Lal Saksena: Will the Honourable Minister promise to look into the case if the figures given are found to be correct and see that injustice is not done?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: I am prepared to look into that.

FIXATION OF LOW SCALES OF PAY FOR ARTISANS, STORE-KEEPERS AND SUB-HEADS IN RAILWAY DEPARTMENT

433. *Shri Harihar Nath Shastri: (a) Will the Honourable Minister of Railways be pleased to state whether it is a fact that artisans, store-keepers and sub-heads, till recently drawing higher scales of pay than their assistants, are put on the lowest of the prescribed scales?

(b) Are Government aware that store-keepers at Golden Rock have asked the railway administration to relieve them of their stock responsibility for this reason?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: (a) In equating the lowest prescribed scale to more than one existing scale on a uniform basis for all railways, it has been reported that on some railways like the S. I. Railway, staff who were hitherto holding selection and supervisory posts have been grouped with their assistance and placed on the lowest scales. The question of removing this anomaly is at present under consideration in consultation with the Railway Administrations concerned.

(b) Yes. The representation is receiving the attention of the Railway Administration.

Shri Harihar Nath Shastri: How long will it take to settle these questions?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: They will have to be settled as quickly as possible.

ENQUIRY INTO SELECTION BOARDS OF SOUTH INDIAN RAILWAY

434. *Shri Harihar Nath Shastri: Will the Honourable Minister of Railways be pleased to state what was the result of the inquiry, conducted by the Conciliation Officer deputed by Government, into the functioning of the Selection Boards in the South Indian Railway?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: The Conciliation Officer, Madras after contacting representatives of the South Indian Railway Workers' Union as well as officers of the Railway Administration has so far submitted only an interim report to the Chief Labour Commissioner which is under examination. A further report is awaited from the Conciliation Officer and it is, therefore, not possible at present to give a reply to the question asked by the Honourable Member.

Shri Harihar Nath Shastri: Do Government propose to publish the report of the Conciliation Officer?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: That question should be addressed to the Labour Minister.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Have Government appointed a Conciliation Officer for each Railway Administration, such as the S. I. Railway, M. S. M. Railway and so on?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: I should have notice of that question.

Diwan Chaman Lal: In view of the delays caused in making these enquiries through Conciliation Officers, has my Honourable friend considered the possibility of implementing the suggestions made by the Royal Commission on Labour (Whitley Commission, as it is called) regarding conciliation machinery, on the railways?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: These are matters which come within the province of the Labour Minister and not mine.

Diwan Chaman Lal: May I know whether it is not a fact that this particular type of machinery was specially recommended for railways alone?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: I am not very familiar with the details of the Whitley Commission Report.

Diwan Chaman Lal: May I know whether the Honourable Minister will make himself familiar with it?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: I will consult the Labour Ministry and give the Honourable Member the information he wants.

LOWER SCALES OF PAY ON SOUTH INDIAN RAILWAY

435. *Shri Harihar Nath Shastri: (a) Will the Honourable Minister of Railways be pleased to state whether Government are aware that the scale of pay on the South Indian Railway is much lower than that on most of the other Railways?

(b) If so, do Government propose to raise the pay on the South Indian Railway to the level of that on other railways?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: (a) Government are aware that the scales of pay on the South Indian Railway were generally lower than these in force for corresponding categories of staff on other railways.

force for corresponding categories of staff on other railways. by the Central Pay Commission and approved by Government have been introduced uniformly on all Indian Government Railways.

REORGANISATION OF INDIAN RAILWAY SYSTEM

†436. *Pandit Mukut Bihari Lal Bhargava: (a) Will the Honourable Minister of Railways be pleased to state whether the Government of India have evolved any scheme for the re-organisation of the existing railway systems and the amalgamation of certain railway administrations in India?

(b) If so, what are the details of the said scheme and do Government propose to lay a copy of the scheme on the table of the House?

†Answer to this question laid on the table, the questioner being absent.

(c) Do Government propose to publish the said scheme for inviting public criticism and also to afford the Legislature an opportunity to discuss it before a final decision is taken?

(d) If so, when is the scheme likely to be published?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: (a), (b), (c) and (d). Government have under consideration the question of the regrouping of existing railway systems. No decision has so far been arrived at and it is likely that some time will elapse before the matter can be finalised. Government will take the interests of the public served by the different railway administrations into account before a decision regarding regrouping of railways is taken.

ESTABLISHMENT OF BENGAL NAGPUR RAILWAY DISTRICT HEADQUARTERS IN ORISSA

437. *Shri Lal Mohan Pati: (a) Will the Honourable Minister of Railways be pleased to state how many miles of the Bengal Nagpur Railway pass through the Province of Orissa?

(b) Do Government propose to consider the desirability of establishing a Bengal Nagpur Railway District Headquarters at any suitable place in the Province of Orissa?

(c) If the answer to part (b) above be in the affirmative, when will it be possible for Government to establish it?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: (a) The mileage of the Bengal-Nagpur Railway passing through the province of Orissa, including the Orissa States, is 875 approximately.

(b) and (c). There is already a District Commercial Headquarters of the Bengal-Nagpur Railway at Khurda Road which is situated within the province of Orissa. As regards the location of the District Headquarters of other departments, *viz.*, Locomotive, Civil Engineering and Operating, the question is at present under consideration in consultation with the Bengal-Nagpur Railway Administration.

Shri Lal Mohan Pati: Will the Honourable Minister be pleased to state when we can expect to have a definite answer as to the time by which it will be possible to open the District Headquarters in Khurda in all respects?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: That is a matter which I am at present discussing with the local railway administration, and I will have a decision arrived at as early as possible.

MANUFACTURE OF MOTOR SPARE PARTS IN INDIA

438. *Shri V. C. Kesava Rao: (a) Will the Honourable Minister of Industry and Supply be pleased to state whether any motor spare parts are being manufactured in India?

(b) Are Government aware that batteries for motor cars are almost impossible to get even in cities, like Delhi, Madras and Calcutta?

(c) Do Government propose to encourage the manufacture of motor car batteries and if so, what assistance do Government propose to give to individuals for starting this industry?

The Honourable Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee: (a) There is no organised production of motor spare parts in India at present. A few items of motor vehicle spare parts such as pistons, gaskets, piston rings, batteries, radiator hoses, diaphragms are, however, manufactured by unorganised manufacturers. It is expected that in the next three years a large number of spare parts will be manufactured in India on an organised basis.

(b) Government have no definite information, as distribution of batteries is not controlled, but it is believed that they are now in short supply.

(c) Yes, Sir. Government have taken active steps to increase the production of batteries in India. With the assistance given to firms by Government for the import of machinery and raw materials there are now over 10 firms who are manufacturing batteries on a planned production basis, with an aggregate annual capacity of 248,000 numbers, as against an estimated domestic demand for 200,000 numbers. Steps are also being taken to encourage the manufacture of containers required for the manufacture of batteries.

Seth Govinddas: May I know what Government is doing with respect to the importation of the machinery of those two concerns which started a few years ago for preparing motor cars but whose work is not being started as they are not getting the machinery?

The Honourable Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee: I believe, Sir, the Honourable Member refers to Premier Automobiles Limited and Hindustan Motors Limited.

Seth Govinddas: Yes.

The Honourable Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee: We are trying to give them as much facilities as is possible and it is believed that they will be able to start their work in the course of 1948.

Shri H. V. Kamath: Do Government propose to regulate or control the unorganized manufacturing of spare parts to which the Honourable Minister has referred?

The Honourable Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee: So far as batteries are concerned, we have in India nine factories which are now producing about 70,000 annually. This is expected to go up to 248,000 and we are encouraging them within our existing resources.

Seth Govinddas: Are Government aware that if certain alterations are made in the machinery of the Jubbulpore Ordnance factory, most of the motor car parts can be manufactured even in the government factory?

The Honourable Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee: I can ask the Defence Minister to look into the matter—the Ordnance factories are under him.

Dr. B. V. Keskar: Will the Honourable Minister be pleased to explain the reasons for continued control of motor spare parts while motor cars themselves are not controlled?

The Honourable Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee: I believe the reason is to regulate the kind of supply that is needed. We want to organize the whole thing according to the scale which will be approved by Government and that is why some regulation is necessary.

Shri V. C. Kesava Rao: May I know whether the manufacture of these batteries is confined to lead acid cells or are alkali cells being manufactured?

The Honourable Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee: I cannot say definitely. But so far as my information goes, it relates to both.

Shri V. C. Kesava Rao: Is it not a fact that lead is not available in India?

The Honourable Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee: That may be so.

Shri K. Santhanam: May I know why the distinction is made between batteries and other spare parts when both are in short supply?

The Honourable Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee: Actually batteries are being manufactured in India more than the other spare parts.

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: Is it not a fact that the Government's desire to organize the distribution of spare parts has merely increased the difficulties of people who want them?

The Honourable Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee: I do not think so. We have been able to help in some cases.

SUPPLY OF WHEAT OR WHEAT PRODUCTS AND RICE TO WEST BENGAL FOR 1947-48

439. *Shri Basanta Kumar Das: Will the Honourable Minister of Food be pleased to state:

(a) what quantities of rice and wheat or wheat products were supplied to West Bengal by the Government of India in the year 1947;

(b) whether any allotments of rice and wheat or wheat products have been made for West Bengal for the year 1948 and if not, why not;

(c) whether any representation has been made by the Government of West Bengal regarding the allotment of food-stuffs and if so, what the quantity of each variety asked for is; and

(d) whether Government have taken any action in connection with such representation and if so, what it is?

The Honourable Shri Jairamdas Doulatram: (a) From 1st January 1947 to 15th August 1947, the following supplies were made by the Government of India to the Government of United Bengal:

Wheat and Wheat Products.	59,204 tons.
Barley.	46,049 tons.
Gram.	16,837 tons.
Maize.	13,522 tons.
Rice.	27,195 tons.

From 15th August 1947 to 31st December 1947 the following supplies were made to the Government of West Bengal by the Government of India:

Wheat and Wheat products.	50,745 tons.
Barley.	8,000 tons.
Gram.	3,547 tons.
Maize.	6,650 tons.
Rice.	30,241 tons.

(b) For 1948, a ceiling import quota of two lakh tons consisting of 140,000 tons of wheat and 60,000 tons of barley has been allotted to West Bengal.

(c) It has been represented to the Government of India that the ceiling import quota is inadequate.

(d) The Government of India have promised to give all possible assistance to Bengal subject to the limited resources available at their disposal and other competing demands, but no further definite commitment for the whole year's supply to Bengal can be given at this stage, as the Government of India are not sure at present of what they will be able to import; nor can they anticipate at present where new demands on account of failure of *rabi* or some such unpredictable cause may arise later in the year.

Shri Mihir Lal Chattopadhyay: Does the Honourable Minister know the number of rice and wheat ration card holders in the province of Bengal?

The Honourable Shri Jairamdas Doulatram: I suppose, Sir, I cannot be expected to give an answer to that.

Shri Mihir Lal Chattopadhyay: Does he know that only four chattaks of rice and wheat are given to the ration card holders in Bengal?

The Honourable Shri Jairamdas Doulatram: I am quite prepared to accept that statement. All I can say is that Government are aware of the difficult times through which people are passing in certain provinces. All the resources at the disposal of the Government of India are at the disposal of the provinces and we make the best possible effort to see that the minimum inconvenience is suffered anywhere.

Shri Mihir Lal Chattopadhyay: May I know whether the attention of the Honourable Minister has been drawn to the fact that only the other day the Minister in charge of Civil Supplies in Bengal has come forward with a statement that there is no prospect of any increase of ration so far as rice or wheat in Bengal is concerned?

The Honourable Shri Jairamdas Doulatram: My attention has been drawn to that statement. But things may improve.

Shri Mihir Lal Chattopadhyay: May I know, Sir, how long the province of Bengal will have to live on this meagre supply: do the Government of India propose to increase the supply of rice and wheat to Bengal?

The Honourable Shri Jairamdas Doulatram: As I said, the Government of India represents the people of India and the interests of all the provinces will be safeguarded. There is no question of favouritism being shown to one province at the cost of another province.

Haji Abdus Sattar Haji Ishaq Seth: Is it not a fact, Sir, that the ration that is allowed in Bengal is much higher than what is allowed in Madras?

The Honourable Shri Jairamdas Doulatram: Possibly so.

RUNNING OF GRAND TRUNK EXPRESS IN THREE CONNECTED SECTIONS FROM DELHI TO MADRAS

440. *Haji Abdus Sattar Haji Ishaq Seth: (a) Will the Honourable Minister of Railways be pleased to refer to the answers given to starred question No. 27, asked by R. B. Lala Raj Kanwar on the 30th January, 1948 and to its supplementaries and state whether Government propose to consider the advisability of running the Grand Trunk Express in three separate but connected sections, i.e., Delhi to Balharshah, Balharshah to Bezwada and Bezwada to Madras to obviate some of the difficulties pointed out by him?

(b) Do Government propose to compare the running of the Grand Trunk Express with the running of G. I. P. Trains Nos. 5 and 6 (Punjab Mail) and Nos. 197 and 198 (Peshawar Express) which have to run upto Itarsi on the same track with all the handicaps mentioned by him and yet do not run habitually so late, and state the reasons for this vast difference in the running of these two different sets of train?

(c) In view of the fact that the real traffic bottleneck is much more between Itarsi and Nagpur, than between Itarsi and Bhopal, do Government propose to examine the necessity of taking up the doubling of this section first?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: (a), (b) and (c). The problems relating to the running of Grand Trunk Express which have been a source of continual anxiety to the Government are being taken up for special investigation and the points raised by the Honourable Member will receive careful consideration in connection therewith.

SUBSIDIES BY GOVERNMENT AND QUANTITY OF MANURES AND FERTILIZERS USED IN COORG UNDER GROW MORE FOOD CAMPAIGN

441. *Shri C. M. Poomacha: Will the Honourable Minister of Agriculture be pleased to state:

(a) the quantity of manures and fertilizers used in Coorg during the years 1944-45, 1945-46, 1946-47 and 1947-48 under the Grow More Food Campaign;

(b) the quantity of groundnut cake, Sulphate of Ammonia and bone-meal separately;

(c) the amount subsidised by the Government of India towards the cost of these manures and fertilizers;

(d) whether it is a fact that the Province of Madras has banned the export of these manures and fertilizers to Coorg this year; and

(e) if so, whether Government propose to take necessary action immediately, so as to enable Coorg to import the required quantity of manures and fertilizers?

The Honourable Shri Jairamdas Doulatram: (a) and (b). A statement (No. I) showing the quantities of manures and fertilisers used in Coorg under Grow More Food Campaign since 1944-45 is placed on the table of the House.

(c) A statement (No. II) showing the grants sanctioned to the Coorg Administration for the subsidised sale of manures and fertilisers is placed on the table of the House.

(d) The Government of Madras have prohibited the export of manures and fertilisers to any place outside the Province and not merely Coorg except under permits issued by them. Due to heavy deficit of manures and with a view to conserving their resources, the Madras Government did not allow the export of manures to Coorg this year.

(e) The Coorg Administration is free to obtain the requirements of oilcakes and bone-meal from any available source in the country. Regarding Sulphate of Ammonia, the Government of India have already met the requirements of Coorg in full by allocating 30 tons of this fertiliser during the current fertiliser year.

Statement I

Showing the grants sanctioned to the Coorg Administration for the subsidised distribution of manures and fertilisers.

Name of the scheme	Amount of grant sanctioned for subsidy	Quantity involved
	Rs.	Tons
<i>1944-45</i>		
1. Distribution of oil-cake to growers of paddy .	30,000	400
2. Distributin of Ammonium Sulphate at 50% of cost price	5,000	25
<i>1945-46</i>		
3. Scheme for conducting experimental tests with Ammonium Sulphate in comparison with Ammonium Nitrate	2,205	9
<i>1946-47</i>		
4. Distribution of Ammonium Sulphate	2,345	25
5. Distribution of Ground-nut cake .	22,500	500
<i>1947-48</i>		
6. Distribution of bone-meal	14,966	166
7. Distributuion of Ammonium Sulphate	2,822	23

Statement II

Showing the quantities of manures and Fertilisers used in Coorg under the 'Grow More Food' Campaign from 1944-45 to 1947-48.

Year	Salphate of Ammonia	Groundnut cakes	Bonemeal
	Tons	tons	Tons
1944-45	Nil	Nil	Nil
1945-46	25	394	Nil
1946-47	24	443	Nil
1947-48	12	Nil	46

Shri C. M. Poonacha: Is it a fact, Sir, that this annual grant for subsidising the supply of fertilisers for Coorg has now been stopped?

The Honourable Shri Jairamdas Doulatram: I require notice of that question.

EXPORT OF PADDY FROM COORG TO MYSORE STATE AND MADRAS.

442. *Shri C. M. Poonacha: (a) Will the Honourable Minister of Food be pleased to state the quantity of surplus paddy exported from Coorg to the Mysore State and the Province of Madras during the years 1945-46, 1946-47 and 1947-48?

(b) What is the quantity of surplus paddy available this year for export from Coorg?

(c) Under whose orders was the surplus paddy exported from Coorg to Mysore and Madras?

(d) Do Government propose to issue necessary directions to these two Governments (*viz.* Mysore and Madras) to supply the required manures and fertilizers to Coorg?

The Honourable Shri Jairamdas Doulatram: (a) Exports during 1945-46 and 1946-47 of paddy from Coorg were as follows:

1945-46	Mysore	11,480 tons
	Madras	Nil ..
		11,480 ..
1946-47	Mysore	7,738 tons
	Madras	5,026 ..
		12,764 tons

1947-48

Please see answer to part (b)

(b) For 1947-48 Coorg has declared an exportable surplus of 7,500 tons. Out of this, 3,000 tons have been allotted to Mysore for export during the quarter, January to March 1948. So far only 426 tons have been exported.

(c) Under the instructions of the Central Government in accordance with the Central Basic Plan of allocations.

(d) No; Allotment of foodgrains from surplus to deficit areas made by the Central Government in accordance with their Basic Plan did not impose upon the recipients any such obligations, and it would not therefore be proper to give the proposed directions to Mysore and Madras.

Shri H. V. Kamath: What is the quantity of paddy produced in Coorg in a normal year?

The Honourable Shri Jairamdas Doulatram: I want notice of that question.

Shri C. M. Poonacha: Sir, in view of the fact that there is a steady decline in the export from Coorg would the Government of India consider the feasibility of issuing some sort of a direction to the neighbouring States or provinces to supply the necessary fertilisers or manures to Coorg?

The Honourable Shri Jairamdas Doulatram: I think we cannot give any instructions or directions to a province like Madras, which itself today is in dire need of fertilisers.

Shri C. M. Poonacha: Would it not be in their own interest that a certain amount of filip is given for the production of food-grains in Coorg in order to augment their own supply to their deficit area?

Mr. Speaker I am afraid the question will not be admissible.

APPOINTMENT OF CATTLE PROTECTION COMMITTEE.

443. *Shri Ram Sahai: (a) Will the Honourable Minister of Agriculture be pleased to state when the Committee, appointed by Government for the protection of cattle, started functioning and when it is likely to finish its work?

(b) What are the names of the persons serving on this Committee?

The Honourable Shri Jairamdas Doulatram: (a) The first meeting of the Cattle Development and Preservation Committee was held on the 18/20th February, 1948. It is expected that the work of this Committee will be concluded before the next session of the Constituent Assembly (Legislative).

(b) A list showing the names of the members of the Committee is laid on the table of the House.

Stu'hm n.

Showing names of the members of the Cattle Preservation and Development Committee.

1. Sardar Bahadur Sir Datar Singh, Vice-Chairman, Indian Council of Agricultural Research, and Cattle Utilisation Adviser to the Government of India—Chairman.
2. Rai Bahadur P. N. Nanda, Animal Husbandry Commissioner with the Government of India.
3. Mr. N. B. Shahi, Director of Veterinary Service, C. P. and Berar.
4. Dr. Zal, R. Kothawalla, Dairy Development Adviser to the Government of India.
5. L. Hardev Sahai, Secretary, Gau Rakshini Sabha, Hissar.
6. Rai Bahadur J. N. Manker, Honorary Secretary, Bombay Humanitarian League, 149, Shroff Bazar, Bombay.
7. Sardar Bahadur Harchand Singh, Agricultural Commissioner, Patiala.
8. Guru Partap Singh, Bhaini Sahib, District Ludhiana.
9. Shri Dharam Lal Singh, Secretary, Bihar Gowshala Federation, Sadaqat Ashram, Patna, P. O. Dighaghat.
10. Mr. Satish Chandra Dass Gupta, Khadi Pratisthan, Sodepur near Calcutta.
11. Shri Mahabir Parashad Poddar, Gorakhpur.
12. Shrimati Jankibhai Bajaj, President Cow Protection Committee, Wardha.

Seth Govinddas: Are Government aware of the fact that in spite of various orders of theirs that the slaughter of cows, bullocks and calves of a particular age should not take place, such orders are not obeyed and indiscriminate slaughter of cattle still goes on?

The Honourable Shri Jairamdas Doulatram: Government will go into this matter.

Shri Jainarain Vyas: May I know, Sir, whether the activities of the Cattle Development and Preservation Committee extend to the cattle population of the States also?

The Honourable Shri Jairamdas Doulatram: I think it will be able to cover those of the States which have acceded.

Shri H. V. Kamath: What are the various species included in the term 'cattle'?

Mr. Speaker: That question is not admissible.

GRANTS TO EAST PUNJAB FOR SINKING WELLS.

444. ***Ch. Ranbir Singh:** Will the Honourable Minister of Agriculture be pleased to state:

(a) the grant allotted to East Punjab for the year 1947-48 for the purpose of sinking wells;

(b) the sum spent out of this grant;

(c) whether it is a fact that due to disturbances and partition, the programme of sinking wells had to be postponed; and

(d) if so, whether Government propose to include the said amount together with the allotment for the year 1948-49 in the Budget Estimates for the year 1948-49?

The Honourable Shri Jairamdas Doulatram: (a), (b) and (c). A grant of Rs. 50 lakhs was sanctioned to the Government of the Punjab before the Partition for the sinking of wells during 1947-48. The amount spent out of this in East Punjab is not yet known. The disturbances and partition obviously had some effect on the programme of sinking wells. After the Partition the Government of the East Punjab was asked to submit a revised scheme to cover the existing boundaries of the Province but the Provincial Government have not so far submitted any scheme.

(d) If the Government of the East Punjab launch a scheme for the sinking of wells during 1948-49 which offsets the effect of postponement the Government of India on their part will be prepared to consider favourably the inclusion of the unspent amount intended for East Punjab.

ALLOTMENT OF FOOD GRAINS TO WEST BENGAL IN VIEW OF INCREASED POPULATION

445. ***Shri Arun Chandra Guha:** Will the Honourable Minister of Food be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of Government has been drawn to the statement made by the Premier of West Bengal recently, that the Government of India have not made any allotment of foodgrains for West Bengal for the year 1948-49;

(b) whether the Government of India have ascertained if the last paddy crop will be sufficient to meet the needs of West Bengal for the year;

(c) whether Government are aware that a large number of immigrants have been and are coming into West Bengal from East Bengal and other parts of India;

(d) whether it is a fact that since 1943-44, the Government of India have been taking the responsibility of feeding the people of Calcutta and the industrial areas; and

(e) whether Government are aware that about 25 per cent. of the total population of West Bengal live in Calcutta and its industrial areas and that no foodgrain is grown in these areas?

The Honourable Shri Jairamdas Doulatram: (a) Yes. The statement is incorrect in so far it omits to mention the fact that an allocation of 200,000 tons has been given to Bengal for 1948 under central Basic Plan.

(b) Figures necessary to compare paddy crop in West Bengal during 1948 with that of 1947 are not available. Given intensive procurement by Bengal Government and economy by the public and all possible assistance that the Centre could give to Bengal, it is hoped that unless something unforeseen happens they would be able to tide over the situation.

(c) Yes.

(a) The Government of India assumed responsibility for meeting the entire food demand of Calcutta on rationed basis only during 1944, that is to say in the year after the famine, when conditions were exceptional but in subsequent years the responsibility has lain with the Bengal Government and the central allocations made to Bengal have been on the same basis as for other provinces.

(e) Government are fully aware of the concentration of population in Calcutta and its industrial character and they have taken full account of the demands of this population in the allocation already made to West Bengal.

Shri Mihir Lal Chattopadhyay: May I know whether the Honourable Minister is going to make any extra allotment in view of the fact that a large number of people have been pouring into West Bengal from East Bengal.

The Honourable Shri Jairamdas Doulatram: Government will consider any excess of population in any province from the Pakistan area. The whole question has to be considered from time to time and we are watching the situation very carefully, and if necessity arises and supplies are available, the requirements of all parts of India will be met.

Shri Mihir Lal Chattopadhyay: May I know from the Honourable Minister whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that more than ten lakhs have migrated from East Bengal to West Bengal?

The Honourable Shri Jairamdas Doulatram: The newspapers give that figure.

COLLEGES FOR TRAINING INDIAN FOREST SERVICE PERSONNEL

446. ***Shri V. C. Kesava Rao:** Will the Honourable Minister of Agriculture be pleased to state:

(a) the number and the location of colleges for training Indian Forest Service personnel;

(b) whether Government propose to re-open the Forest Training College at Coimbatore;

(c) whether the number of men trained from the existing colleges is adequate to meet the requirements of the country; and

(d) if the answer to part (c) above be in the negative, what are the plans of Government to train the requisite number of men?

The Honourable Shri Jairamdas Doulatram: (a) There are three Colleges for training Indian Forest Service Personnel at Dehra Dun: The Indian Forest College for Gazetted Officers, and the Indian Forest Rangers' College, at Dehra Dun. and the Madras Forest College for Rangers at Coimbatore.

(b) The Madras Government re-opened the College at Coimbatore in 1945.

(c) They are adequate for the present and immediate future demand but not for a full development of the Indian Forests.

(d) In their post-war plans the Government of India had provided for accelerated training of Forest Officers at the Forest Research Institute and Colleges, but difficulties are in regard to material and staff have retarded the proposed expansion at Dehra Dun. The Government of India are now considering a proposal to take over the Coimbatore College as well, which if utilised to full capacity, can relieve the pressure on Dehra Dun. These two together will then be able to train the full number required for the present.

Seth Govinddas: Is it a fact that the C.P. being a province of vast forests, the Central Provinces Government have written to the Government of India to have a college of the kind at Dehra Dun in the Central Provinces also?

The Honourable Shri Jairamdas Doulatram: Yes.

Seth Govinddas: Are Government contemplating to give aid to the Central Provinces Government to start this college?

The Honourable Shri Jairamdas Doulatram: That matter is being considered.

Shri V. C. Kesava Rao: May I know if any persons are being sent to Oxford for study in forestry?

The Honourable Shri Jairamdas Doulatram: I want notice of that question.

APPLICATIONS FOR NEW ROUTES IN INDIA AND NEW AERODROMES UNDER CONSTRUCTION.

447. *Shri V. C. Kesava Rao: Will the Honourable Minister of Communications be pleased to state:

(a) the places in the Indian Union where aerodromes are under construction and the probable dates of their completion; and

(b) the new air-routes for which applications have been received and are under consideration of Government and the probable dates of commencement of air traffic in these routes?

The Honourable Mr. Rafi Ahmed Kidwai: (a) I lay on the table of the House a statement I showing the Civil Aerodromes in the Provinces of India where major construction works are in progress. This works programme covers a period of 5 years.

(b) Grant of licences for the operation of scheduled air services is the function of the Air Transport Licensing Board. I lay on the table a statement II showing new routes for which applications for grant of licences are under consideration by the Board. Probable date of commencement of the services on these routes cannot be anticipated as the licensing of such services depends on various technical and economic factors which require detailed and careful consideration by the Board.

Statement I

Showing Civil Aerodromes in the Provinces of India where major construction works are in progress.

International Aerodromes.

1. Bombay Airport (Santa Cruz).
2. Calcutta Airport (Dum Dum).
3. Delhi Airport (Palam).

Major Aerodromes.

1. Ahmedabad.
2. Allahabad.
3. Lucknow (Amausi).
4. Madras (St. Thomas Mt.)
5. Nagpur.
6. Vizagapatam.

Intermediate Aerodromes.

1. Banaras (Babatpur).
2. Cuttack (Bhubaneswar).

Minor Aerodromes.

1. Amritsar.

2. Gauhati.
3. Siliguri (Bagdogra).

Statement II.

Showing new routes for which applications for grant of licences are under consideration by the Air Transport Licencing Board.

1. Delhi-Lahore-Rawalpindi-Srinagam.
2. Lahore-Bikaner-Jodhpur-Ahmedabad.
3. Calcutta-Siliguri-Cooch Bihar.
4. Bombay-Indore-Bhopal-Cawnpore-Lucknow.
5. Calcutta-Dacca-Sylhet-Tezpur-Dinjan.
6. Bombay-Poona-Belgaum-Bangalore-Coimbatore-Cochin-Trivandrum.
7. Calcutta-Chittagong-Akyab-Yonanguang-Rangoon.
8. Delhi-Gwalior-Jubbulpore-Cocanada-Bezwada-Madras.
9. Patna-Gaya-Koderma-Hazaribagh-Ranchi-Jamshedpur-Purulia-Aansol-Dhanbad-Giridih-Deoghar-Jamui-Bihar-Patna.
10. Patna-Chapra-Siwan-Hathwa-Gopalganj-Bettiah-Mothihari-Sitamarhi-Madhubani-Darbhanga-Muzaffarpur-Patna.
11. Patna-Arrah-Buzar-Sasaram-Dehri-Deltonganj-Gaya-Patna.
12. Madras-Andamans-Rangoon-Mandalay.
13. Bombay-Hyderabad (Sind).
14. Dum Dum-Bhubaneshwar-Vizianagaram-Vizagapatam-Bezwada-Bangalore-Trichinopoly-Colombo.
15. Calcutta-Benaras-Bhopal-Bombay-Lahore.
16. Calcutta-Dacca-Sylhet-Comilla-Chittagong-Calcutta.
17. Nagpur-Jubbulpore-Cawnpore-Allahabad.
18. Bombay-Bellary-Madras Colombo.
19. Bombay-Gao.
20. Agra-Delhi-Saharanpur-Ambala-Amritsar-Rawalpindi.
21. Jamnagar-Mandvi-Bhuj.
22. Bombay-Madras-Rangoon.
23. Calcutta-Cuttack-Vizagapatam-Madras-Pondicherry-Madura-Colombo.
24. Delhi-Jaipur-Jodhpur-Bikaner.
25. Karachi-Jaipur-Agra-Benaras-Calcutta.
26. Lucknow-Bareilly-Rampur-Moradabad-Hardwar-Dehra Dun-Meerut-New Delhi.
27. Lucknow-Allahabad-Benaras-Allahabad-Jhansi-Gwalior-Agra-Aligarh-New Delhi.
28. Lucknow-Gorakhpur-Lucknow-Cawnpore-Jhansi-Agra.
29. Lucknow-Bareilly-Haldwani-Meerut-Dehra Dun.
30. Bombay-Karachi-Jiwani-Sharjah-Basra-Baghdad.
31. Calcutta-Patna-Jubbulpore-Bombay.
32. Calcutta-Lalmonirhat-Gauhati-Tezpur-Jorhat-Dinjan or Chebua.

Shri V. C. Kesava Rao: May I know whether there is any application for a new service between Madras and Delhi?

The Honourable Mr. Rafi Ahmed Kidwai: Yes, there is an application for a new service between Madras and Delhi.

Shri Jainarain Vyas: May I know whether the Government are constructing aerodromes in the States also since the Honourable Minister has laid on the table a statement showing the aerodromes in the Provinces?

The Honourable Mr. Rafi Ahmed Kidwai: For the present the Government has not undertaken any construction of aerodromes in the States.

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: Will the Honourable Minister be pleased to see that this alternative route that is being considered between Madras and Delhi passes through Berar and halts at Akola and Amraoti?

Mr. Speaker: Order, order.

Shri Khurshed Lal: May I know, Sir, if in considering these new routes, Government would also consider the question of state-owned air services on these routes?

The Honourable Mr. Rafi Ahmed Kidwai: I said that applications are being considered, but as a report appeared in the press at the last Standing Advisory Committee it was suggested that the possibility of operating a route by the Government should be considered and a committee is being appointed to look into it.

Shri V. C. Kesava Rao: May I know, Sir, whether the Gannavaram aerodrome is under consideration?

The Honourable Mr. Rafi Ahmed Kidwai: Bezwada is under consideration.

Haji Abdus Sattar Haji Ishaq Seth: Arising out of the reply to part (b) and the statement that is laid on the table, may I know whether there is any proposal for an air route between Bombay and Cochin on the West Coast, and if so what is the position in regard to that proposal?

The Honourable Mr. Rafi Ahmed Kidwai: There is one application for Bombay and Goa.

Shri Mihir Lal Chattopadhyay: May I know what is the attitude of Government regarding nationalization of airways as a whole?

Mr. Speaker: It does not arise.

Shri S. V. Krishnamurthy Rao: Is there any application for a service between Bombay and Bangalore?

The Honourable Mr. Rafi Ahmed Kidwai: No.

Shri Krishna Chandra Sharma: Will Government be pleased to consider the advisability of allotting Government land to people of villages evacuated for aerodrome construction?

Mr. Speaker: I believe that has been answered on a previous question.

Shri Ramnarayan Singh: Is it under the contemplation of Government to have many more landing grounds in addition to aerodromes?

The Honourable Mr. Rafi Ahmed Kidwai: No.

RAIL-ROAD CO-ORDINATIONS FOR 1948-49

448. *Shri V. C. Kesava Rao: (a) Will the Honourable Minister of Transport be pleased to state what is the extent of rail-road co-ordination under consideration for the year 1948-49?

(b) Do Government propose to operate bus services on these lines on a monopolist basis, or will private enterprise also be allowed to co-exist on these routes?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: (a) Rail-road co-ordination in the matter of passenger transport is proposed to be achieved by the formation of road transport undertakings in which railways should be given a minimum of 20 per cent. financial interest. Schemes for the purpose are under the consideration of the Provincial Governments and are expected to be introduced in most of the provinces in the year 1948-49. In the matter of goods transport the policy of the Central Government is to encourage road transport for short distances and to reserve long distance traffic, except in perishable and fragile goods, for the railways. A majority of the provincial Governments who considered the matter have accepted it and correspondence with the rest is proceeding.

(b) The new concerns are proposed to be operated on a monopolistic basis ultimately. In this connection, Honourable Member's attention is invited to para. 14 of the *White Paper* which was laid on the table of the Central Legislative Assembly on the 20th January, 1946.

Seth Goyinddas: Is there any proposal, Sir, before the Government to have some sort of co-ordination of all forms of transport, including airways?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: The only arrangement that we have for co-ordinating all forms of transport is the Central Board of Transport which has been set up recently here, which of course as at present is a purely official organization representing all the departments of the Government of India which are concerned with transport in one form or another: but as I explained once to the House, when questions arise which are of provincial importance, it is the intention of Government to invite representatives of provinces to attend meetings of the Central Board of Transport.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Are Government aware that the Madras Government are considering the nationalization of road transport, and if so, what role do the Government of India propose to play in financing it and also in running it?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: The Government of India's idea with regard to road transport organization is what is embodied in this white paper which briefly is that the Government of India would favour organizations in which the provincial government, the Central Government and the operator would all be represented. That was the basis on which the proposals were originally made by the Central Government, but the tendency appears to be in the provinces to provincialize road transport. But the Railways for the present are taking the line that if in these provincialized concerns the Provincial Governments would offer the Railways what they consider a reasonable minimum interest, the Railways would accept it.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Are there any negotiations going on between those Provincial Governments which are nationalizing the road transport and the Railway Department?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: Yes, that is so.

PROSECUTION OF TICKETLESS TRAVELLERS DURING 1947 AFTER 15TH OF AUGUST

449. *Shri V. C. Kesava Rao: (a) Will the Honourable Minister of Railways be pleased to state the number of prosecutions launched against ticketless travellers from the 15th August, 1947 to 31st January, 1948?

(b) Have the new arrangements to check ticketless travel proved satisfactory and if so, what is the increased income from this source?

(c) Do Government propose to take any further steps to check ticketless travel?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: (a) Information so far available which, however, is not quite complete, is that the number of prosecutions launched by Government Railways against ticketless travel, during the period 15th August, 1947 to 31st January, 1948, was 25,452.

(b) It is presumed that the reference is to the drive against ticketless travel being conducted on the E.I., E.P., G.I.P., B.B. and C.I., and O. T. Railways with the co-operation of the United Provinces Government. The scheme which came into force only from 15th January, 1948, is considered to be working satisfactorily. Booking office earnings have increased in certain areas and first reports received, mostly relating to the second half of January 1948, show that an amount of over Rs. 55,000 has been collected as a result of the surprise checks made.

(c) It is the intention of Government to extend the drive to all Provinces. The Bihar and Bombay Governments have already indicated their willingness to co-operate in this matter. The Assam Government are assisting by providing the help of armed police on the worst affected sections and they have in addition appointed a special magistrate to try cases in a mobile court. Measures adopted by Railways include the inauguration of a special publicity campaign directed towards securing public co-operation in combating ticketless travel, the provision of improved facilities for purchasing tickets and booking luggage, a stricter check on 'Entrances' and 'Exits' at stations, the appointment of additional checking staff, the introduction of a greater element of surprise in checking, the reduction of opportunities for collusion by controlling Travelling Ticket Examiners from a Central Office, and the co-operation of railway officers of all departments in a drive against irregularities both at stations and in trains. Fencing is being provided or strengthened at stations as rapidly as existing conditions permit.

Seth Govinddas: The Honourable Minister said that the returns of the booking offices have increased. Is there any booking office in any part of India where these receipts have gone down, or everywhere they have increased?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: It is much too soon to tell; I have based it entirely on the report that I had for a fortnight from certain areas of the U. P. I am not in a position to answer this general question.

Md. R. K. Sidhva: The Honourable Minister stated that 25,452 prosecutions were launched. May I know how much money has been realised from the ticketless travellers from these prosecutions?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: That I am unable to say offhand.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: In how many cases were convictions obtained in regard to these prosecutions?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: That again is a matter for which I require notice.

Shri H. V. Kamath: Which Railway showed the highest incidence of ticketless travel?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: I have said more than once in this House that the O. T. Railway happens to have the highest incidence.

Shri Khandubhai K. Desai: Does the Railway Administration try the technique of surprise mass checkings of trains at out of the way roadside stations?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: That is precisely the method that is being followed in the U. P.

Shri Khandubhai K. Desai: Does the Railway Administration think of trying the same technique on other Railways?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: Yes, Sir.

گیانی گور مکھ سنگھ مسافر : کیا آنریبل منسٹر اس بات سے واقف ہیں کہ without ticket سفر کرنے والوں کی تعداد اس وجہ سے بھی بڑھ رہی ہے کہ بہت سے سٹیشنوں پر Printed ticket ملتی ہی نہیں ہیں -

Giani Gurmukh Singh Musafar: Is the Honourable Minister aware that people are travelling without tickets because printed tickets are not available at many stations?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: I am aware of that; we are trying our best to meet that difficulty.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Were any prosecutions launched against those officers and employees of the Railways who have been found to be colluding with some of these ticketless travellers?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: Certainly

Shri Khurshed Lal: Is it a fact, Sir, that there is lot of ticketless travelling on trains starting from Delhi for Ghaziabad and does Government propose to take steps for checking at Delhi Station?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: There is a very active campaign organised in connection with the Delhi Station.

**LOCOMOTIVE EQUIPMENT OF EAST PUNJAB RAILWAY RECEIVED FROM
NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY HEADQUARTERS**

450. *Dr. Bakshi Tek Chand: (a) Will the Honourable Minister of Railways be pleased to state whether it is a fact that at the time of the partition of the Punjab, a portion of the stores components for the up-keep of locomotives and other equipment at the North Western Railway Headquarters and workshops were allotted to the Government of India for the use of the East Punjab Railway?

(b) If so, has the whole of it since been received by the East Punjab Railway?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: (a) At the time of the partition of the North Western Railway, permanent-way, bridge, signal, electrical, medical and general stores and foodgrains were divided; the maintenance of locomotives of the Eastern Punjab Railway was to be done by the North Western Railway (Pakistan).

(b) No. A small proportion of the foodgrains due to the Eastern Punjab Railway and 8 wagon loads of locomotive and carriage and wagon component parts, etc., have been received by the Eastern Punjab Railway from the North Western Railway; the receipt of other stores is awaited.

Mr. R. K. Sidhva: When do Government expect to receive the remaining allotment?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: The matter has been the subject of constant communication between us and the Pakistan Railways, and recently at my instance the matter was taken up at the highest possible level; the Prime Minister has addressed a strong communication to the Pakistan Government and I believe a larger release will be possible in the near future.

Shri K. Santhanam: Had any stores to be sent from here to Pakistan and have they all been sent?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: They are being sent.

RESUMPTION OF RUNNING OF FRONTIER MAIL BEYOND DELHI

451. *Dr. Bakshi Tek Chand: (a) Will the Honourable Minister of Railways be pleased to state why the running of the Frontier Mail beyond Delhi, which was stopped owing to the disturbances in the middle of August 1947, has not been resumed?

(b) What is the approximate date by which this is likely to be resumed?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: (a) The passenger traffic now offering does not justify the resumption of running of the Frontier Mails beyond Delhi.

(b) In view of the reply to part (a) it is not possible to state when the running of these trains will be resumed.

Mr. R. K. Sidhva: May I know whether there is no traffic between Delhi and Amritsar for the Frontier Mail?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: There are four trains running between Delhi and Amritsar and one of them starts from Bombay and goes right up to Amritsar.

Shri H. V. Kamath: What is the position with regard to the old Peshawar Express?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: It is gone.

Mr. Hussain Imam: Is there any railway communication for passengers between India and Pakistan at the moment?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: I am afraid, not.

Mr. Hussain Imam: Do Government propose to establish some kind of communication in the near future?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: I am not in a position to answer the question at present.

RE-EMPLOYMENT OF MUSLIM EMPLOYEES OPTING FOR PAKISTAN ON OUDH AND TIRHUT RAILWAY.

452. *Dr. B. V. Keskar: (a) Will the Honourable Minister of Railways be pleased to state whether it is a fact that the Muslim employees of the Oudh and Tirhut Railway who had finally opted for Pakistan are being reposted to their original posts?

(b) What are the reasons for the reversal of policy of Government with regard to the personnel who opted for Pakistan?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: (a) No. Nine Muslim employees of the O. T. Railway who had opted finally for Pakistan were reposted to their original posts some time back following an incorrect declaration made by them. As soon as these cases came to notice, the staff concerned were discharged from service and action was also taken to avoid a recurrence of such cases.

(b) There is no reversal of Government's policy in regard to personnel who opted for Pakistan.

Dr. B. V. Keskar: If the names of such employees are supplied to Government will the Government be prepared to take action?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: Yes, I should like to have the information.

REGULATION OF RATES AND FITTING OF METERS IN TAXIS IN DELHI.

453. *Shri Deshbandhu Gupta: (a) Will the Honourable Minister of Transport be pleased to state whether Government are aware that taxis in Delhi are not fitted with meters and that their charges are not regulated in any manner?

(b) Are Government aware that a trip from Old Delhi to New Delhi and back generally costs about Rs. 20 whereas at the rates prevalent in Bombay and Calcutta, it should not cost more than Rs. 5?

(c) Has the attention of Government been drawn to an editorial note published in the *Statesman* dated the 29th January 1948 on the subject?

(d) Do Government propose to take steps to see that all taxis are fitted with meters?

(e) Do Government propose to import taxi meters and if the same are not available in India, do they propose to direct the licensing Board not to pass any taxi which are not fitted up with meters?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: (a) Yes. While taxis in Delhi are not fitted with meters, their charges are, regulated by a tariff issued by the Provincial Transport Authority in Delhi.

(b) No. A comparative statement of basic taxi fares in force at present in Delhi, Bombay and Calcutta is laid on the table of the House. A trip which according to these rates should cost Rs. 20 in Delhi will cost Rs. 23-8 and Rs. 17-7 in Calcutta and Bombay respectively.

(c) Yes..

(d) Yes, compulsory fitting of taxi meters will be enforced as soon as meters become available in the market.

(e) No. Any direction to the Licensing Board on the lines suggested by the Honourable Member will cause a breakdown of taxi services in Delhi, as due to world shortage of taxi meters, it is not possible to import them in sufficient numbers.

Statement

Showing the comparative rates of motor car fares in Calcutta, Bombay and Delhi

Fares	Calcutta	Bombay	Delhi	Remarks
Per mile				
(i) For the first mile or part thereof	Re. 1/-	As. 9/-	As. 12/-	
(ii) For miles after the first, upto five miles .	*As. 12/-	As. 9/-	As. 12/-	*As. 2 for every 1/6th of a mile.
(iii) For miles after the first five miles	do.	do.	As. 10/-	
Detention charges	nil.	As. 2 for 5 minutes	As. 2 for 4 minutes.	
Empty haulage if discharged outside municipal limits	nil.	nil.	1/4 of the above rate for the distance between the place of discharge and the municipal limit.	
Additional fare per mile if more than three passengers are carried.	nil.	nil.	As. 4/- per adult and As. 2/- per child.	
Additional fare per mile for travel during the hours of 12 p.m. to 5 a.m.	nil	nil.	As. 2/-	
Additional fare for carriage of packages not normally carried by hand.	nil.	nil.	As. 2/- per package.	

POSTPONED STARRED QUESTION AND ANSWER

(Postponed from 20th February, 1948)

CONTRACT SYSTEM FOR HANDLING B. B. AND C. I. RAILWAY TREASURY AND APPLICATION OF PAY COMMISSIONS RECOMMENDATIONS TO STAFF

1360. ***Shri Gokulbhai Daulatram Bhatt:** (a) Will the Honourable Minister of Railways be pleased to state whether there is a contract system in handling treasury on the Broad Gauge line of the B.B.&C.I. Railway?

(b) If so, what is the reason for retaining this system?

(c) Has such a system been abolished on the N. W. Railway and if so, why?

(d) Are Government aware that the treasury contractor on the B.B. & C.I. Railway, Broad Gauge, does not recognize the Staff Union organized by a recognized association (B.B. & C.I. Railway Employees' Association), and if so, why?

(e) Is it a fact that the treasury staff do not get advantage of the recommendations of the Pay Commission?

(f) Do Government propose to abolish the contract system? If so, when? If not, why not?

(g) Are Government aware that the treasury staff are going to stage a symbolic strike?

(h) Do Government propose to look into the grievances of the staff concerned and redress them?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: (a) Yes.

(b) The reasons for retaining this system are that:

(i) the arrangement has been working satisfactorily ever since 1921.

(ii) a large security is given by the contractor and the Government is fully protected against loss of all kind by the Contractor, his Agents or Employees. The system is also flexible in that specialised trained staff are provided by the contractor whenever required.

(c) On the partition of the country the Cash Contractor was not willing to continue his contract for the work on the N. W. Railway in Pakistan and that Railway decided to have the work done departmentally.

(d) It is understood that the Contractor on B.B. and C.I. Railway, Board Gauge, has agreed to recognise the staff union.

(e) As the Contractor's staff are not Government servant, the recommendations of the Pay Commission do not apply to them.

(f) Not for the present for the reasons stated in answer to (b) above.

(g) and (h). It is understood that the Contractor's staff has given up the idea of staging a symbolic strike. The dispute between the Contractor and his staff has been referred for conciliation by the Regional Labour Commissioner (Central) Bombay to the Conciliation Officer Central (Bombay) and negotiations are in progress. The Government has not been approached by the staff for redress of any grievances.

† Answer to this question laid on the table, the question hour being over.

BUDGET AS CORRECTED OF THE RAILWAY REVENUE AND
EXPENDITURE—LAID ON THE TABLE

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai (Minister for Railways and Transport):
Sir, I beg to lay on the Table a copy of the *Budget of the Railway Revenue
and Expenditure of the Governor General, February 1948, as corrected.

RAILWAY BUDGET—LIST OF DEMANDS—*contd.*

SECOND STAGE

DEMAND NO. 4—WORKING EXPENSES—ADMINISTRATION

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai (Minister for Railways and Transport):
Sir, I beg to move:

“That a sum not exceeding Rs. 18,98,43,000, be granted to the Governor General to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1949, in respect of ‘Working Expenses—Administration’.”

Mr. Speaker: Motion moved:

“That a sum not exceeding Rs. 18,98,43,000, be granted to the Governor General to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1949, in respect of ‘Working Expenses—Administration’.”

DEMAND NO. 9—WORKING EXPENSES—MISCELLANEOUS EXPENSES.

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Minister may move Demand No. 9 also.

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: Sir, I beg to move:

“That a sum not exceeding Rs. 32,30,37,000, be granted to the Governor General to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1949, in respect of ‘Working Expenses—Miscellaneous Expenses’.”

Mr. Speaker: Motion moved:

“That a sum not exceeding Rs. 32,30,37,000, be granted to the Governor General to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1949, in respect of ‘Working Expenses—Miscellaneous Expenses’.”

DEMAND NO. 4—WORKING EXPENSES—ADMINISTRATION

Ground Elevators and Special Facilities for Working and Movement of Agricultural Commodities especially Foodstuffs

Prof. N. G. Ranga (Madras: General): Sir, I move:

“That the demand under the head ‘Working Expenses—Administration’ be reduced by Re. 1.”

Sir, I find and everyone knows, that foodstuffs comprise one of the biggest items producing goods revenue to the Railways, and yet, the Railways have not been taking the least amount of trouble and care to encourage this traffic and to help those who are interested in sending their foodstuffs including oil seeds through the Railways to the places of their destination, namely, the consumption centres. If you will look at the Chapter on Goods Revenue, Statement No. 13 in Volume II of the Report of the Railway Board, you will find all the statistics that one wants in regard to this matter. So far as grain and oilseeds are concerned, as much as Rs. 15 crores are being derived by the Railways as opposed to Rs. 9 crores from coal and Rs. 69 crores from other commodities. Therefore, we find that grain and oilseeds alone contribute easily 15 per cent. of the total revenue from goods traffic, and yet, are we quite sure that the Railways are giving even five per cent. attention to the conveniences that are needed for the transport of goods by the Railways? I am afraid the answer is in the negative.

Then, Sir, in the pamphlet that they have published, on the policy that guides Government in fixing the freight rates for goods traffic, it is stated that so far as raw materials are concerned, both for agriculture as well as for industry, lower rates should be fixed than for consumers goods, because the

*Not printed in these Debates. Copy placed in the Library of the House.—*Ed. Deb.*

[Prof. N. G. Ranga]

consumers goods are expected to carry a heavier rate than raw materials, and in addition to that, an idea of public benefit is also brought in there that these raw-materials being the fundamental factors of production for the manufactured goods they should be helped in every possible manner in their movements by a lower scale of freight rates. But I find, Sir, that the concession that is actually enjoyed by the grains is not very much. In actual practice, we found that in 1946-47, whereas for all other commodities only 11.1 pies was being collected for one mile per ton of goods, as much as 9.8 pies was charged for grain and oilseeds. So there was only less than 2 pies difference between grain and oilseeds and other commodities. I am afraid, this difference is not enough if we are really to encourage the grain and oilseeds traffic.

Then, Sir, look at the way the Railways treat themselves. When it comes to the coal that is needed for their consumption, they charge only 2.25 pies per mile and when the public want coal they charge as much as 3.19 pies. Even then coal is being charged only one-third as much as grain and oilseeds are being charged. I quite understand the importance of coal as being the most basic raw-material for all industries including the Railways, but even then, is there any justification for so much of a difference between the rate charged for coal and the rate charged for grain? I would rather think that coal might be expected to carry a heavier rate and grain and oilseeds may be expected to carry a little lower rate and other commodities may be expected to carry a little higher rate, so that the difference between these three kinds of rates for the different materials carried by the Railways may be much more evenly and much more justly graded.

Then, Sir, coming to the other point, namely, what is being done for their benefit and encouragement, we know in very many cases open trucks are being utilised for the conveyance of foodgrains and also oilseeds, with the result that they are exposed to the vicissitudes of seasons and naturally they reach the consumers in a very damaged condition, and that is not conducive either to the consumers or to the producers and it certainly hurts the whole of the community. Secondly, Sir, in all these cases, not enough care is taken at the goods sheds to protect the foodgrains as well as oilseeds from the vicissitudes of the seasons and also from pilferers or robbers or rogues and it generally happens that by the time any stuff reaches the consumer quite a good portion of it has been lost and the Railways protect themselves by saying that they will not be held responsible for any such loss. And who really are the people who pilfer these foodgrains? We cannot very well say it is only the public; possibly a portion of the public may also come in, but I do not think more than 25 per cent. of these losses are due to pilfering indulged in by the public, but the other 75 per cent. must be placed at the doors of the Railway Administration itself. Which particular section of their employees really indulge in this sort of thing is not material just at present. From the station master right down to the gang cooly, may be, everybody has his hand in it. My Honourable friend mentioned in fact. . . .

Shri Ramnarayan Singh (Bihar: General): How can the public approach the station?

Prof. N. G. Ranga: You have yourself answered it, but if I may add one word more, I can say that the railway stations are the less approachable things in these days and the public also cannot very well go in and have a hand in it. My honourable friend is very glad that I have admitted that the public have a hand in it, but let him not be sure that the Railway staff does not have a hand in it at all. Personally I feel that 75 per cent. of the pilfering is due to the railway staff themselves. Therefore, something has got to be done to stop this pilfering.

Then, Sir, while quite a lot of care is being taken in the transporting in good condition what are known as the perishables, so far as the consumers' goods are concerned, practically no care is being taken to see that the foodgrains are transported in good condition and are protected properly, not only from pilferers, but also from various troubles on the way and I suggest that some special care should be taken. Some campaign should be started to see that adequate protection is afforded from rain, from various other vicissitudes of seasons and from pilferers and that the foodstuffs are actually transported to the consuming centres in good condition and that is a very important thing.

In many cases I have had reports that even the stuff that is being exported is being adulterated. The quantity remains the same, but inferior stuff is put into it, whereas the better stuff is already being taken out and one other difficulty is being met by our people and that is too much time is being taken in the transit, so much so that the grain is kept for too long a period either at the first station or in the wagons themselves which are exposed to the wind and rain; or either on the platform or in the goodsyard or in the goods station. And this delay not only affects the price of foodgrains but also their quality as well as their quantity. Something has got to be done to minimise the total amount of time that is being taken today in transporting the foodstuffs from one place to another and this raises a bigger question also and that is this: Whereas a little more care is being taken to expedite the transit of industrial goods from one station to another, when you come to agricultural produce not so much care is being taken at all, if any care can be said to be taken in very many cases.

Lastly, Sir, I wish to draw the attention of the Honourable Minister to the practice that obtains for a number of years in America and Canada. The railways have themselves taken the initiative in establishing huge big grain elevators. There they store on payment of a fixed or prescribed rent, the wheat that is brought there by the producers themselves. An effort should be made in this country to construct such grain elevators. I feel sure that their construction will be an economical proposition. Except for the first five or six years they are bound to pay their own way and even during the first five or six years, they will not involve the Government in any heavy losses at all. But what is most necessary is the investment of a very large bit of money. The railways alone can invest such huge quantities of money in an important thing like this. Now by providing this facility, the railways will help the public utility side also. We are badly in need of very good elevators which should be so constructed as to minimise the present losses that are being incurred by our peasants as well as consumers and merchants due to rats, insects, fungus and various other things. In our own country the Food Department has been making very many experiments as well as demonstrations as to the various methods of constructing these elevators as well as grain stores on an economical scale. If the Government in the Railway Department were to consult the Food Department, I am sure it would be possible for them to construct these grain elevators in a manner which would be cheaper and more efficacious than is to be found in other countries. Then, Sir, we need grain banks in this country and this can be helped also by the railways by establishing these grain elevators.

Lastly, we want a more even distribution of foodgrains as between different parts of the country. It is no good even for the railways that all the foodgrains should be simply rushed out from the producing centres within say two or three months and then the stuff again to be blocked on the way or rather to be sent to the consuming centres there again to be dumped to be exposed to the vicissitudes of the season. Therefore it would be advisable to have an even distribution of foodgrains, their proper usage, their protection and also proper usage of the railway wagons and railway traffic and all the rest of it. If we are to construct these grain elevators at suitable places and expect the peasants

[Prof. N. G. Ranga]

to bring their stuff, put it there, insure it also against fire and all things and pay the necessary rent and keep it there, so that as the consuming centres need more and more foodgrains according to their deficit months, it would be possible for the railways to so arrange their railway programme as to send out the stuff in a regular planned fashion and the present wastage of effort on the part of the railways as well as the public can be minimised. I request the Honourable Minister for the Department to cause a special investigation made into the possibilities for establishing these grain elevators and see that some active definite steps are taken at an early moment in order to give satisfaction to the public, the peasants as well as the railways themselves.

Mr. Speaker: Cut motion moved:

"That the demand under the head 'Working Expenses—Administration' be reduced by Re. 1."

Mr. Mohd. Tahir (Bihar: Muslim): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I rise to submit a few words in support of this motion that has been moved by my Honourable friend, Prof. Ranga. As you know, I had also given notice of a motion to discuss the non-availability of wagons for transporting jute from the district of Purnea in Bihar to Calcutta. But unfortunately that motion is not coming for discussion and I think this also covers the same idea. Therefore, Sir, I will especially draw the attention of the Honourable Minister towards this aspect only. In Purnea, Sir, the only district in the Province of Bihar where jute is grown, the jute growers feel great difficulty as regards the shortage of wagons in those places. This shortage of wagons brings great financial loss to the jute growers there in this way that generally in the rate of jute in Calcutta and in the Purnea district there is a difference of only two or three rupees per maund. But when there is shortage of wagons the dealers in jute have to stop purchasing it; but the poor cultivators have to sell it and they have to dispose of their jute at a price which is Rs. 10 or Rs. 8 lower than the price in Calcutta. So there is great financial loss to these jute cultivators because jute is a money crop in that area. Further, the non-availability of wagons also leads to corruption because there arises a vigorous competition for these wagons among the dealers who have to send their goods to Calcutta, and whoever proves to be more generous and more hospitable gets the wagon all right. The shortage of wagons therefore leads to this kind of corruption. For all these reasons I request the Honourable Minister to see that at least in the jute and tobacco seasons—which are the two main crops in our place—sufficient arrangements are made for wagons so that the cultivators may dispose of their crops at a good price and thus save themselves from financial loss.

चौधरी रणबीर सिंह : अध्यक्ष महोदय, मैं पंजाबी होने के नाते मंत्री महोदय को ३० लाख पंजाबियों को पाकिस्तान से हिन्दुस्तान लाने और इसी तरह का हिन्दुस्तान से पाकिस्तान ले जाने में जो भारी इमदाद की और इन लोगों की जान बचाई उसके लिए कृतज्ञता प्रगट करना अपना पहिला कर्तव्य समझता हूँ।

जिस तरह का कट मोशन (Cut motion) श्री रंगा ने भेजा है उसी तरह कट मोशन मैंने भी फौडर (Fodder) गुड़ और अनाज की जो स्पलाई (Supply) है उसके लिए वैगन (Wagon) का स्पलाई न किए जाने पर किसानों को जो बहुत भारी मुश्किल हो रही है, उसके लिए रक्खा था। कल ही गुड़ के बारे में एक सवाल का जवाब देते हुए मंत्री महोदय ने बताया कि गुड़ जहां पैदा होता है वहा ७ ६० मन विक्रता है और हिन्दुस्तान के बहुत से हिस्सों में गुड़ की कीमत

६० और ५० रु० मन हैं। इसका कारण यह है कि वैगन न मिलने की वजह से गुड़ वाली जगह से दूसरं जरूरत की जगहों पर नहीं भेजा जा सकता। इसका नतीजा यह होता है कि जो गुड़ पैदा करने वाला किसान है उसको तो इस बढ़ी हुई कीमत का हिस्सा नहीं मिलता है लेकिन व्यापारी जो कि इसमें कुछ भी मेहनत नहीं करता वह सारा मुनाफा ले जाता है और इसी की वजह से ब्लैक मारकेट बढ़ता है। इसलिए मैं मंत्री महोदय का ध्यान इस चीज की तरफ आकर्षित करना चाहता हूँ। इसी तरह अनाज और फौडर के लिए भी तकलीफ बयान करना चाहता हूँ जब पाकिस्तान से हजारों भाई अपने साथ डंगर लाये तो वह अपने साथ चारा नहीं ला सके थे। यहां भी चारा नहीं मिलता था। इसका कारण यह था कि जो मुसलमान भाई थे उन्होंने चारे की काश्त नहीं की। यू० पी० और सी० पी० से भी चारा नहीं पहुंच पाया। इसका कारण यह था कि चारा लाने के लिए वैगन न मिल सके इससे ३० और ४० फीसदी डंगर जो हिन्दुस्तान के अन्दर पहुंचे वह चारा न मिलने की वजह से मर गये। इसलिए मैं मंत्री महोदय का ध्यान विशेषतः इस तरफ भी दिलाना चाहता हूँ। अगर किसानों का सामान इधर से उधर नहीं भेजा गया तो इससे रेल को जो ज्यादा आमदनी किसानों से होती है वह कम हो जायगी। रेल में जो ज्यादा सवारी बैठती है वह किसान ही है। अगर उनका सामान इधर से उधर करने के लिए सहूलियत नहीं दी गई और उनके सामान का वह पैसा उनको नहीं पहुंचा तो जो रैविन्यू (Revenue) मंत्री महोदय को मिला है वह भी गायब हो जायेगा और लड़ाई के पहिले जिस तरह से खाली गाड़ी चलती थी उसी तरह से चलनी शुरू हो जायेंगी। और किसानों के पास जो छोटी छोटी इंडस्ट्रीज (Industries) हैं वह खतम हो जायेंगी। इसलिए मैं मंत्री महोदय से विनम्र प्रार्थना करता हूँ कि पहिली प्रौइरटी (Priority) किसानों के सामान के लिए दी जाय। मुझे बड़ी खुशी हुई कि जब उन्होंने हाल ही में गुड़ के लिए पहिली प्रौइरटी देने का एलान किया था कि जहां भी गुड़ बनता है वहां यह प्रौइरटी दी जायगी। इस तरह से मैं मंत्री महोदय से प्रार्थना करूंगा कि वह अनाज और फौडर के लिए भी पहिली प्रौइरटी दे जो मनुष्य तथा डंगर की जिन्दगी बचाने के लिए बहुत जरूरी चीज है। यह कहकर मैं इस कटमोशन का समर्थन करता हूँ।

(English translation of the above speech.)

Sh. Ranbir Singh: (East Punjab: General): Mr. Speaker, as a Punjabi it is my first duty to pay sincere thanks to the Honourable Minister for saving the lives of 30 lakhs of Punjabis and moving them from Pakistan to India and from India to Pakistan.

A cut motion similar to the one sent by Shri Ranga was also tabled by me in which attention was drawn to the great difficulties faced by the farmers in not getting wagons for the supply of fodder, gur, and foodgrains. The Honour-

[Ch. Ranbir Singh].

able Minister in reply to a question has stated only yesterday that the price of *gur* is Rs. 7/- per maund in the areas of its production, while in many other places the rate is about Rs. 40/- to Rs. 50/- per maund. The rise in price is due to the fact that wagons have not been available for moving *gur* from the areas of its production to places of its demand. This results in a loss to the farmer who is the actual producer and he is not able to take any advantage of the rise in the price; whereas, the merchant who has not to work hard receives the entire profits; this factor promotes black marketing. It is therefore for this reason that I wish to draw the attention of the Honourable Minister to these facts. It is the same difficulty in the case of fodder and foodgrains that I wish to explain here. When thousands of refugees came from Pakistan and brought their cattle with them but could not bring any fodder, an acute shortage of fodder was visible here. Such a situation arose because our Muslim brethren had not grown fodder and the supplies from U. P. and C. P. were not received. As no wagons were made available for this purpose. Ultimately about 30 to 40 per cent. of the cattle brought to India died of hunger: I draw the attention of the Honourable Minister particularly to this. It should also be considered if the railways do not carry the farmers' goods, a great fall in the substantial income from that source will follow. The farmers, indeed, constitute the largest number of passengers. If they are not provided with facilities to move about their goods in the trains and they are not able to get money out of it, the entire revenue which the Honourable Minister has received will disappear, and you will see, once again, that the trains have to run without passengers as they did before the war. This will definitely bring small industries of the farmers to an end. I, therefore, make an earnest appeal to the Honourable Minister to grant first priority to the farmers' goods. In fact it delighted me most when he recently made an announcement granting first priority for *gur* at all places of its production. On the same ground I request the Honourable Minister to grant first priority for foodgrains and fodder also as they are the essentials for saving the lives of men and animals.

With these words I support the cut motion.

Dr. V. Subramaniam (Madras: General): Sir, with regard to the movement of foodstuffs by railways I must say that there are no proper arrangements at present for the movement of food and milk. The first thing that we must have for free supply of milk from villages to towns is for the railways to have special facilities in the shape of refrigerators. The village dairy farms can bring their milk and put it in these refrigerators, or the railway people themselves can construct a small tank where the milk can be collected and then delivered to the towns. So also about the movement of vegetables and other things. By the time the vegetables or fruits reach their destination a greater portion of them gets spoiled. Specially in the hot seasons here some such arrangement will be very good for the foodstuffs, vegetables and fruits. These arrangements are made in many foreign countries; and as we are deficit in foodgrains we have to supplement our foodstuffs with fruits and milk products; and this kind of special arrangement will be very beneficial.

Then when foodstuffs are removed from areas affected by plague and other diseases no arrangements are made for fumigation. Such arrangements should be made when these things are brought to the station and loaded there because when they reach their destination the railways are unable to do it as a preventive method. The railway authorities can themselves arrange these fumigation methods when they load these vegetables and other articles of food.

These things can also be undertaken or some arrangements made in collation with the public health authorities.

Shri Khurshed Lal (U. P.: General): I wish to draw the attention of the Honourable Minister to the conditions prevailing in my district. I come from Dehra Dun and that is a district which produces hardly a month's supply of foodgrains in a year. For eleven months supply we have to depend upon imports from outside. The district comprises important towns like Dehra Dun, Mussorie and Chakrata. Our difficulty is that the U. P. Government have now done away with the rationing of wheat and rice. They only provide wheat and rice to persons with an income of Rs. 100/- and less. But there is great difficulty in procuring wheat and rice. Therefore, I would request the Honourable Minister to make special arrangements in view of the special difficulties of this district of the transport of these two foodgrains to this district.

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: I was very interested in the speech with which my Honourable friend, Prof. Ranga, moved this motion, because I think the question that he raised are questions of very great practical importance.

The most important that he raised was the question of the classification of railway rates. The present classification is a long-standing classification and personally I do not mind confessing that I consider it in many respects an unsatisfactory classification. It is high time that we considered revising the present classification of rates. One of the objects with which I have proposed the setting up of a railway rates tribunal is that in matters of the kind that my Honourable friend raised, that is to say whether the freight rate applicable to a particular class of commodities is unfair or unreasonable as compared with the rates applicable to other classes, such matters could appropriately be taken up before the railway rates tribunal and any award made by them would be absolutely binding on the railways. For the moment I leave the question at that. But I want to assure the Honourable Member that this question of the classification of railway freight rates is a question to which I attach a great deal of importance.

The next question was about the kind of wagon accommodation provided for the transport of foodgrains. I am aware open trucks have been used but that is the result of the extremely serious wagon situation with which we are at present faced. That is to say, where it is found that immediate movement is of greater importance than safety, we adopt that. It is not of course the most satisfactory course to adopt but we are working under abnormal conditions and the Honourable Member will appreciate that in the conditions in which we are working, a situation of that kind arising from time to time cannot altogether be avoided.

The question of pilferage is a question with which I have been a great deal concerned during the past few months. I do not want to apportion responsibility but the important thing is to try to devise measures for preventing it. As far as I can find, the pilferage occurs either when the wagons are standing still or it occurs when the wagons are on the run. Personally, I think most of the pilferage occurs when the wagons are at sidings or in stations. The only way in which, by taking railway measures, we can prevent that immediately, is by securing the absolute safety of the contents inside a wagon by mechanical devices, and that matter is receiving very close attention.

The question also of providing more Watch and Ward at stations where the wagon stands is, also a question to which we are giving attention. That pilferage still exists on a very considerable scale I quite admit and so long as you have an extreme shortage of consumer goods of various kinds, the temptation for pilferage is likely to continue. That is no justification for the railways not taking every precaution it possibly can to meet the situation. That is as far as I can carry that matter for the time being.

Then my Honourable friend, Prof. Ranga, raised the question of elevators. I am aware of the important part played by elevators in the agricultural economy of advanced countries like the United States and Canada. As far as I have been able to understand the part played by elevators in these countries,

[Dr. John Matthai.]

they seem to me to serve two purposes; one is the existence of suitable elevators facilitates. I think, the mechanical handling of grain in bulk; the second thing it does, and under Indian conditions to my mind it is more important, it provides for the safe storage of foodgrains. My Honourable friend is sufficiently familiar with the co-operative movement in India to know that the question of setting up warehouses for the storage of agricultural commodities is a subject which has received a great deal of public attention. It is a very important matter from the point of view of agricultural marketing generally. If you want to see that the agricultural producer receives a fair price for his produce, it is necessary that he should be in a position to wait until market conditions are suitable from his point of view, and waiting necessarily implies the provision of suitable storage. So that you will find all workers in the co-operative movement who are familiar with this problem, consider the setting up of warehouses as one of the most important things to be done from the point of view of agricultural marketing. That is the main consideration with regard to warehouses or elevators.

If that is the position, then the question that arises is: Is it a governmental responsibility or is it specifically a railway responsibility? I do not pretend to know in detail how elevators are worked in the United States and Canada but the impression that I have formed, and I am speaking subject to correction, is that the State hands these elevators over for the purposes of operation to private or semi-private agencies. As far as my reading goes, the only country where State-owned elevators are operated by railways is South Africa where I believe it is the railways who operate these elevators. The whole question therefore that my Honourable friend has raised is whether in the conditions of this country we should adopt the South African practice. It raises a very big issue. Personally, I am inclined to think—although from the point of view of transport elevators have their importance—that the general importance of elevators is of a much wider character than is covered by transport considerations. Therefore, it seems to me it is for the State to take up this question. It is for the Government to consider it. But I am prepared to act on the suggestion put forward by my Honourable friend, that is to say, that this question should be taken up for examination in consultation with the Food Minister. I may inform my Honourable friend that this is not the first time that we have been up against this question of elevators. Two or three years ago, before the partition, this question was considered in regard to the situation in the Punjab, and recently also we have considered it in consultation with the Food Ministry but not in the comprehensive manner suggested by my Honourable friend. I can assure him that I shall keep the matter continually under consideration.

Questions were raised with regard to specific commodities. The position of jute is one of increasing anxiety, I admit, and we are trying to do what we can, in the existing difficult circumstances, to meet the acute situation which has arisen in regard to jute. Similarly with regard to *gur*, which probably gives one more anxiety than any other commodity at present. What we have done for the time being is—we are trying to run at intervals of a few days special trains consisting of about 50 to 60 wagons for the movement of *gur*. These special trains move *gur* from the producing centre to the main distributing centres. As far as I am able to make out the grievance that *gur* producers have is largely concerned with the provision of transport for wagon loads to be sent on to centres of retail distribution, that is to say, in order to maintain prices at a satisfactory level they need transport not merely to the main distributing centres but also to retail distributing centres. There the question of the rationalisation of transport arises. If railways are required to move wagons up to every small centre of distribution, then it would mean a scattering of our rather limited railway resources which, in my opinion, would not, at

present, be in the public interest. But the *gur* question is continually present to our mind and we are giving, in consultation with the Food Ministry, very active attention to it.

The last question which was raised was by my Honourable friend Dr. Subramaniai and it is regarding refrigerators. I realise the importance of refrigerators in the transport system, particularly with regard to milk and perishable articles generally. There the whole question is whether we should be in a position in the near future to get a sufficient number of refrigerators. It is not possible for us to get them locally.

The last question was I think raised by my Honourable friend Mr. Khurshed Lal about Dehra Dun. If he will be good enough to give me a note stating the precise difficulties and what he wants to be done I shall be glad to give attention to it.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Sir, I beg leave of the House to withdraw this cut motion.

Mr. Speaker: Has the Honourable Member leave of the House to withdraw his cut motion?

The cut motion was, by leave of the Assembly, withdrawn.

DEMAND NO. 9.—WORKING EXPENSES—MISCELLANEOUS EXPENSES.

Loss on Railway Grain Shops

Shri Mohan Lal Saksena (U. P. General): Sir, I beg to move:

“That the demand under the head ‘Working Expenses—Miscellaneous Expenses’ be reduced by Rs. 100.”

Sir, let me inform the House at the very outset that I do not want by this cut motion that the benefit which the railway employees are deriving at present under the scheme should be reduced or curtailed in any way. My object in moving this cut motion is quite different. If you refer to the estimates you will find that there is a provision under this head of 2480 lakhs. The provision that was made in the last budget for 7½ months, it was 14 crores. The revised estimate for the same period is 16 crores. That means that even during the last 7½ months the estimated amount has been exceeded by about two crores under this head. The Honourable Minister was pleased to accept a cut of 50 lakhs but we find that this has already been exceeded by two crores. When I was in the Lucknow Municipal Board I found that a few hundred rupees this way or that did not matter. When I went to the provincial council I saw that a few thousands this way or that did not count. And when I came to this House I found that a few lakhs one way or the other did not matter. Now I find that 25 crores are being given without any notice. These estimates were brought before the Railway Standing Committee. A meeting was held on the 4th February at 10 o'clock and all the estimates were placed before this committee and these estimates were passed. I am one of those who believe that the Committee should have refused to look at these estimates as it was not given sufficient time to scan these estimates. We have got a number of provinces whose revenues do not come to the figure of 25 crores which we are asked to sanction under one item. In provinces they spend days and weeks discussing ways and means to reduce the demands and to effect economies. We find here that 25 crores are asked for under this head. My fears are that this figure may be exceeded during the coming year, if the estimates for 7½ months are expected to be exceeded by two crores.

I want to place before the House a few figures. The figures relate to the losses on different railways. The rates being more or less the same it was expected that the losses would be somewhat uniform; but it is not so. I shall take the S. I. and M. & S. M. railways first. I have not got the exact number of employees but from the report Part II supplied to us we find the figures as

[Shri Mohan Lal Saksena]

on the 31st March, 1937. On that basis I have worked out. On the M. & S. M. Railway the loss comes to about 220 per head per annum. On the S. I. Railway it comes to Rs. 166 per head per annum. On the other hand we find that on the O. T. Railway (that notorious railway) it comes to Rs. 307 per head per annum. On the G. I. P. Railway it is Rs. 410 per head per annum, on the B. B. & C. I. Railway it is Rs. 430 per head per annum and on the B. N. Railway it is 367 per head per annum.

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: On a point of information I would like to know from the Honourable Member whether these average figures relate to average worker per annum or average cardholder per annum?

Shri Mohan Lal Saksena: It relates to the average employee. I could not get the number of dependents. Even under the increased provision we find that on the M. & S. M. Railway it is Rs. 222 per head per annum and on the S. I. Railway it is Rs. 166 per head per annum. Looking at the prospects of the harvest we know that there are scarcity conditions prevailing on those two lines and naturally one would expect the loss these railways would have to pay would be much more than on other railways. On the contrary the provision is for Rs. 166 and Rs. 222, whereas on the O. T. Railway it is Rs. 307, on the G. I. P. it is 410 and on the B. B. & C. I. it is 430. The B. B. & C. I. and G. I. P. Railways are almost in the same area and yet we find this difference. If we calculate the percentage in relation to the salaries paid we know that the total bill comes to about 60 crores, which includes the salaries of the gazetted officials. I do not know whether they are benefitting under the scheme or not. If they do, even then it comes to 66 per cent. on the B. N. Railway, 67 per cent. on the E. I. R., 50 per cent. on the G. I. P. 68 per cent. on the O. T. and 27 per cent. on the S. I. Railway. I would like to know whether the Honourable Minister went into the figures or any other responsible officer of his department did so and ascertained the reasons why this disparity exists.

We might look at it from another point of view. The figures I am giving are estimates of the value of the grain that is proposed to be purchased during the year and the amount that is to be realized by the sales. On the B. N. Railway the value of the grains proposed to be purchased is Rs. 5.72 crores and by sales it is expected to recover Rs. 2.67 crores. The loss comes to Rs. 2.05 crores. But they have provided Rs. 3.17 crores. That is, over and above the actual difference they demand nearly a crore of rupees more. That means that this amount is being spent on overhead charges, in the maintenance of the shops, on the staff engaged to run these shops and other losses. Similarly we find in the B. B. & C. I. the value of the grain estimated to be purchased is Rs. 5.54 crores and the sale proceeds are expected to be Rs. 2.62 crores. The net difference comes to Rs. 2.92 crores. Instead of that we are required to pay Rs. 3.69 crores. We can compare the figures with the S. I. and M. & S. M. For the M. & S. M. the total value of the grains which is expected to be purchased is Rs. 2,88,96,000. The sale proceeds to be realized is Rs. 1,68,96,000. The net loss comes to Rs. 1,20,00,000. But the demand is Rs. 1,62,00,000. For the S. I. Railway the value of grain to be purchased is Rs. 1,50,00,000. The sale proceeds are expected to come to Rs. 88,00,000. The loss is about 62,00,000. But they want Rs. 71,53,000. For O. T. Railway we find that the estimate comes to about 307 per head. The expected value of the grain to be purchased is Rs. 1,90,15,000. The sale proceeds are expected to come to Rs. 96,00,000. The net loss is about Rs. 1 crore. But we are expected to provide for Rs. 1,40,00,000. That is, over and above the actual losses in the purchase and the sale price of the grains we are required to provide for another Rs. 40 lakhs more.

These are the figures that I have collected from the estimates of the different railways. We have not been provided any consolidated statement in regard to losses that are going to be incurred on this item. Sir, I am not disclosing any

secret when I say that during the meeting of the Public Accounts Committee when my friend was the Chairman of the Committee as Finance Member, we had scrutinized these items and we came to the unanimous conclusion that this sort of losses in the maintenance of grain shops were due to fraud, pilferage and other mal practices. That information came to our notice. We therefore came to the unanimous conclusion that this system should be changed and, if necessary, the employees should be paid the difference of the rates as that would mean a considerable saving to the state, I do not want for the present that this demand should be reduced because, the Honourable Minister has not got any definite figures. What I want to suggest to him is that under the circumstances it is absolutely necessary that a Committee of this House, or, failing a Committee of this House, at least a Committee of the Standing Railway Finance Committee, should be appointed to go into the question, actually visit the shops and find out how much wastage there is in this system. An effort should be made to eliminate wastage in this direction as far as possible. If it is not possible to eliminate the wastage it is much better if we paid the workers the difference in the price of the grains i.e. between the market price and the price at which we are supplying them. At least they will then be getting much more than what we are giving them now.

There is one more factor which we have to take into consideration and it is this. This is the report for 1945-46. We do not know how many persons have actually been covered, but it says that 9,34,000 card holders were registered at the end of the year. We find also that they were supplied 1,73 maunds per month which came to about 75 ounces a day. I do not know at what rate the employees were being supplied. We know it does not come to more than 6 ounces per head, or at the most eight or ten ounces. But how this 75 ounces is worked out I do not know. You will remember that during the last Budget debate my friend Mr. Patil informed the House how the employees were taking cloth from the mills and how it found its way into the black market. I would like the Honourable Minister to examine and find out whether the grain that is being supplied through these shops is not being misused or that the privilege is not being abused.

I may also remind the House that the railway employees are also getting dearness allowance in addition to the facility of grain shops. If that factor is taken into account—I suppose the representatives of railway labour are on the Railway Finance Committee, but if they are not there I would like them to be included in it—I hope they will co-operate with us in eliminating the wastage that is involved in the present working of the grain shops.

With these words, Sir, I move.

Mr. Speaker: Cut motion moved:

“That the demand under the head ‘Working Expenses—Miscellaneous Expenses’ be reduced by Rs. 100.”

I may just tell the Honourable Member, Prof. Shibban Lal Saksena, that I find him changing his seat every now and then and it becomes difficult for me to know who is anxious to speak. The only remedy for me is to ignore those Members who change their seats.

Prof. Shibban Lal Saksena (U. P.: General): Sir, I will try to fix a seat for myself.

Sir, I am very glad about the motion which has been moved by my Honourable friend Mr. Mohan Lal Saksena. The loss on grain shops is certainly a very large amount. The figures which he had quoted do make out a case for careful scrutiny. I want to point out one thing. Probably he is not aware of the working of the system of distribution of grains. He pointed out just now that the amount per worker was 75 ounces and he was surprised how it was done. Probably he does not know that workers are given family rations. They are given rations for all the members of the family. One of the main causes why the Railway Federation and the workers prefer this system is that

[Prof. Shibban Lal Saksena]

it enables men with large families to be able to live an existence which makes it possible for them to work. Men on low salaries, if they have large families, are helped by this rather than those that have small families.

Shri K. Santhanam (Madras: General): Are the railway workers having larger families than the average Indian?

Prof. Shibban Lal Saksena: Not that. Probably he knows that the population of Gorakhpur is denser. That is a question probably that need not be raised here. What I wanted to point out was that 75 oz. per man is probably equal to six men's grain per day. I do not think that is a very large amount because normally 12 oz. was the amount given per man. If it is 75 oz., it means six men's grain. So that is not a thing to be wondered at. But while I condemn the system, I want its maintenance because railway employees want it. I also want to point out that a large part of the money is wasted and probably embezzled. I will give you the instance of the strike which took place on the O.T. Railway. It was a 12 hours strike and the complaint was the bad kind of grain supplied in grainshops. They had given notice to the Manager 15 days before and promises had been made that things would improve: but nothing happened and so the workers went on strike. Suddenly the District Magistrate and everybody else was stirred, the trains were at a standstill. We had immediately to go to the grainshops and to our surprise we found the kind of grain in those shops was such that no man could eat it. When we went to the Regional Food Supplier where the grain had come from, we found very fine quality of grain there. When the two were compared, the District Magistrate was surprised. After some trouble the grain was changed. The grain taken for the shop had been stolen away and the worst kind of grain was supplied to the workers and this resulted in a strike. In fact the workers had been allowed heavy manual workers' allowance, i.e., they were to get eight chhataks of grain, four chhataks of rice and four chhataks of wheat, but much less was given. The workers resented this and ultimately it was found that there had been swindling. I was really sorry to see that the whole matter was hushed up. It only shows that the working of the grainshops is at fault. During the war the railway workers had been able to do a large amount of work on account of the encouragement given to them. I know that a large amount of the money given to them had been swindled away and taken away by those responsible for the working of the system and my friend was quite right in saying that a large part of the money goes away. I know the tenders which are given and the amounts purchased. It is an open scandal that the tenders that are given are sometimes much more than the actual cost and there is a sharing between the members of the Committee and the contractor who gives tenders. I would like the Honourable Minister to hold an enquiry into these scandals and find out whether it is so or not. I really know that if this whole thing is carefully gone into and an enquiry committee is appointed, many things will come to light. This amount of money if properly utilised will do substantial good to the workers. The workers will get better quality of grain. These days they do not sometimes get what they want because what they want is taken by others. So while I do not think that the system should be changed, while I do not think that the railway workers should not be allowed the salary which they have been getting, and while I do not think that these figures of the amount of grain are excessive, I do think there is strong ground for looking into the whole thing. Now let us take this figure of 1,40,00,000—one crore for grain and 40 lakhs the actual cost of the administration. I want a committee of the House to go into the matter. 40 per cent. of the overhead charges is really too much. The Committee should see that all this waste is avoided and what is really wanted is given to them. With these few words I support the motion.

Mr. Hussain Imam (Bihar: Muslim): Sir, I do not wish to intervene in the debate on the inequities or equities of the grainshops. I simply wish to draw the attention of the House to paragraph 74 of the Report of the Central Pay Commission. This question came before us as to whether the grain shops should be continued or not. Some of the railways wanted that it should continue, while others wanted to do away with it. We had to steer a middle course and we recommended that whatever be the policy which is adopted by the Government, one thing should be encouraged. That was the establishment of co-operative stores. The specific recommendation which we made was in these words:

"We only wish to say that as long as any concessions in the matter of supply in kind are allowed, the estimated monetary value of such concessions shall be deducted from the dearness allowance calculated in accordance with the above scale."

I want to know from the Honourable Minister for Railways whether these losses are to be recovered from the government servants or it is being made as a present. If it is a present, I think, Sir, an invidious distinction is being made between one class of government servants and another. One of the fundamental principles which we recommended there was that there should be uniformity of conditions in all government services, so much so that we recommended PTO's being given to other government servants who were not entitled to have this concession in the older days. It was urged before us that Madras is a cheap place, prices are very low and that is a justification for smaller rates of pay in Madras than in Northern India. We did not listen to that. We said there must be uniformity as far as the minimum living wage was concerned. We tried to introduce a system of uniformity to the largest measure possible compatible with the conditions existing. It is for this reason that we recommended that in bigger towns, and in the specially expensive places, special allowances should be given in order to compensate government servants for the higher cost. But I personally believe that if these grainshops are maintained only for railway servants and not for others, it will make an invidious distinction unless an amount is deducted from the dearness allowance. I would like to have some light thrown on this subject.

Shri Khandubhai K. Desai (Bombay: General): Sir, the House is really grateful to Shri Mohan Lal Saksena for raising the debate on an issue on which the facts that he has placed before us, are really staggering. The disparity that is shown between the losses incurred on the South Indian Railway and other Railways is really very, very glaring indeed. He has shown that whereas the loss in the South Indian Railway is Rs. 166 per annum per employee, it goes up to a figure of Rs. 430 in the case of the B. B. & C. I. Railway. I must admit at this stage that as far as employees working in the Railways on lower scales of pay are concerned, they have really been benefited by this grain allowance, and if a suggestion is made, as one previous speaker did make, that the grain allowance in kind be withdrawn, I would very strongly protest against it. If the grain allowance is withdrawn, it will mean disorganisation and discontent, and the Railway system which even today is not working smoothly will be further disturbed.

But, Sir, looking at it from the Railway finance point of view, I think Shri Mohan Lal Saksena has made out a very good case indeed that there is something wrong with the administration of the grainshops. I find from the figures that he has quoted that for the administration of Rs. 20 crores worth of grain and other commodities supplied to the Railway employees, rupees five to six crores are spent in administration. Surely these five crores of rupees are spent away. They do not come to the employee but are spent away in administering the shops. This is really a very high expenditure as far as I can see. If the Railway Administration, in co-operation with the labour organisations, is able to evolve a system whereby without putting the lower

[Shri Khandubhai K. Desai]

paid employees to any lowering of their standard of living, and if the money can be saved for Railway finance, certainly the arrangement would be welcome. I think a case has really been made out to explore this system of supplying amenities in kind when the cost of living has gone high. It has been suggested by one of the previous speakers that Stores for supplying the needs of the employees may be started on a co-operative basis. Well, Sir, this is not a co-operative Stores that is working—they are centrally managed grainshops with which, as I know for a matter of fact, quite a large number of employees are not satisfied in respect of their administration. I am sure that in the matter of purchase as well as in the matter of distribution, if very active and close co-operation of the employees is taken, much of the mal-administration that it is alleged is going on in those two or three Railways will be removed. Therefore, Sir, I suggest that without any loss of time this question should be taken up by the Railway Administration with a view to further investigating the disparities that have been shown between expenditure incurred on the various Railways, and evolve a system whereby the Railway Administration, may be benefited to a great extent, without bringing down the standard of living of the lowest paid employees. The country cannot afford to lose such a large amount of money if it is proved that this loss is due to maladministration or mismanagement or waste, which is avoidable.

With these words I very humbly request the Honourable the Railway Minister **I. P. M.** not to lose any time but immediately to appoint a Committee on which various sections of the House are represented, to look into this question very closely and evolve a system whereby the criticisms that have been levelled in this House may be looked into.

The Assembly then adjourned for Lunch till Half Past Two of the Clock.

*The Assembly re-assembled after Lunch at Half Past Two of the Clock
Mr. Speaker (The Honourable Mr. G. V. Mavalankar) in the Chair.*

Kazi Syed Karimuddin (C. P. and Berar: Muslim): Sir, may I bring one fact to your notice? We find in today's agenda there is the question of appropriation to Reserve Fund and Betterment Fund. We have no occasion to discuss this item. Will you give us an opportunity now to have a discussion on it, Sir?

Mr. Speaker: Does the Honourable Member refer to the additional accounts that were filed today?

Kazi Syed Karimuddin: I refer, Sir, to the addendum to the combined list of business under the heading "The Budget (Railways)—Second Stage" in the "List of Demands", after Demand No. 11, to insert the following, namely,—

"13. Appropriation to Betterment Fund.

14. Appropriation to Reserve."

The matter, as we know, Sir, was referred to a Committee and we had no chance of discussing the findings of that Committee.

Mr. Speaker: Yes.

Kazi Syed Karimuddin: The matter being of very great importance, I think we should be given an opportunity to discuss this matter.

Mr. Speaker: Yes, the member will get an opportunity when the demand comes up.

Kazi Syed Karimuddin: But we could not give notice of any cuts to those demands.

Mr. Speaker: But how can any cuts be moved now?

Kazi Syed Karimuddin: This was only issued today.

Mr. Speaker: That I know, but the point is really, whether there are cuts or not, today being the last date, when the guillotine time comes, if all the other demands are finished and if there is time, these two demands can be discussed; otherwise, cuts or not cuts, it makes no difference. Thus, if the House takes time in discussing the remaining cut motions up to 5 o'clock, then the question of moving cut motions to these two items becomes more or less an academic right. Of course, there was this possibility, that if the Honourable Member wanted to make any cut motions, perhaps by agreement it could have been included earlier, but as the position actually stands at present, it is not going to make any difference. If these two demands are raised earlier, I will give the Honourable Member an opportunity of discussing the matter.

श्री गोकुलभाई दौलतराम भट्ट : माननीय सभापति जी, जो कटौती का प्रस्ताव हमारे सामने है वह एक तरह से बहुत महत्वपूर्ण चीज है। यह देखा गया है कि अनाज की दुकानों को चलाने में हमें ४० फीसदी खर्चा करना पड़ता है तब यह जरूर सोचना पड़ता है कि यह बदइन्तजामी की वजह से है जिसे जल्दी ही दुरुस्त करना चाहिये। जब ४० लाख रुपया इस इन्तजाम में खर्च करना पड़ता है तो हर एक दुकान में मजदूर संघ के एक या दो आदमी इन्तजाम करने के लिये रहें जोकि ठीक रीति से सामान तोला जाता है या नहीं यह देखें। जैसेकि अभी श्री खन्डू भाई ने सुझाव रक्खा है इस से यह फायदा होगा कि हमारा काम भी अच्छा होगा और आधे खर्च में हमारा इन्तजाम हो जायगा।

अनाज की दुकान के बारे में मुझे और जगहों का तो अनुभव नहीं है मगर मेहसाणा और आबू रोड़ की बात जरूर जानता हूँ। इन दुकानों के बारे में यह सुना है कि अनाज खराब तो है और खराब होता भी है मगर इसके साथ ही साथ कम दिया जाता है और लोगों को नुकसान होता है। तब यह जरूर सोचना चाहिये कि कहीं न कहीं ऐसी जरूर बदइन्तजामी है जिसकी ओर हमारे माननीय मंत्री को जरूर ध्यान देना चाहिये।

अभी यह सुझाव रक्खा गया है कि इस चीज के लिये एक कमेटी बनाई जाय। मगर इस कमेटी के पहले यह जरूरी है कि इस इन्तजाम में ऐसे लोगों को दाखिल किया जाय जिनकी भावना सार्वजनिक कार्य की हो। सार्वजनिक क्षेत्र में काम करने वाले आदमियों के हाथ में इस चीज का संचालन दिया जाना चाहिये। कमेटी जरूर बैठेगी तो हमारा खर्चा जरूर कम हो जायगा। इस से यह हो सकता है कि हम एक दो आदमियों पर उस दुकान के नाप और तौल का काम छोड़ दें। इस दुकान में आप माल लगा दीजिये कीमत लगा दीजिये वे दियानतदारी से यह सब काम करेंगे। इससे हमारा खर्चा कम हो जाता है। एक दुकान में इस चीज का प्रयोग किया जाय कि वहां सामान रख दिया जाय और भाव नियुक्त कर दिये जाय। एक दो नागरिक बैठे हैं, सौदा पड़ा है लोग आवें और सामान खरीद लें। यह एक बड़ी चीज है। यह

[श्री गोकुलभाई दौलतराम भट्ट]

प्रयोग हिन्दुस्तान भर में किया जाय यह भी मैं नहीं कह सकता हूँ। लेकिन हम देखते हैं कि अमेरिका में बहुत सी ऐसी जगह हैं। जितने अखबार बेचने वाले हैं या दूसरे सौदे बेचने के बारे में ऐसा किया गया है वहाँ चीजों के भाव नियत कर दिये जाते हैं और लोगों को जो जरूरत होती है वह डिब्बे से ले जाते हैं। हम ऐसा प्रयोग कर सकते हैं या नहीं यह सोचने की बात है। मैं नहीं कहता कि यह प्रयोग जल्दी होना चाहिये। लेकिन मैं यह मानता हूँ कि हमारे महेकमे में इस वक्त जो इन्तजाम में खर्चा करते हैं वह सब आधे खर्च में हो सकता है अगर लोग अपनी दियातदारी को समझेंगे और वह इस बात का ख्याल करेंगे कि सब इन्तजाम उन्हीं के ऊपर छोड़ा गया है। इस तरह से हम लोगों को एक प्रकार की शिक्षा भी दे सकेंगे। मैं समझता हूँ कि यह चीज एकदम करने लायक नहीं है लेकिन मैं जरूर कहूंगा कि एक दुकान में इसका प्रयोग करने से मालूम हो जायगा कि लोगों की भावना क्या है। अगर हम ४० लाख रुपये की बजाय कम खर्च करना चाहते हैं। कमेटी बैठेगी यह एक तरीका है। दूसरा तरीका श्री खन्डू भाई ने बताया है कि मजदूर संघ के आदमी इस काम में लिये जायं जिससे कम खर्चा हो। तीसरी बात यह है कि इस तरह का प्रयोग किया जाय। मुझे आशा है कि इसका अगर एक दुकान में प्रयोग किया जायगा तो नतीजा अच्छा आयेगा।

इस लिये मैं इस कटौती का समर्थन करता हूँ और माननीय मंत्री से प्रार्थना करता हूँ कि कम खर्च करने के लिये इन सुझावों को वह जल्दी से अमल में लायेंगे।

(English translation of the above speech.)

Shri Gokulbhai Daulatram Bhatt: (Eastern Rajputana States Group): Mr. Speaker, the cut motion before us is quite important in one way. When it has been found that we have to spend about 40 per cent. on running the grainshops, it is considered that this is due to bad management. It is therefore necessary that steps should be taken to remedy it immediately. Our expenses are now touching the figure of Rupees forty lakhs, we should try to reduce them; we should have only one man or two on each shop to manage it and they should be of the labour group, they will check the weighing of commodities also. This is what Shri Khandubhai also suggested just now. In this way you will find that our work will be done smoothly and efficiently and our expenses will be halved.

I do not know what is happening at these shops at other places. But I know about Mahsana and Abu-Road. I have heard that while the quality of grains supplied from these shops is bad—and it is really bad—they are not weighing the quantities properly, so that it is a loss to the public. Therefore there is definitely something wrong with the management, and the Honourable Minister should pay his attention to it. Earlier a suggestion was made that a committee should be appointed to look into this matter. But before setting up such a committee it is necessary that the persons who are appointed on the committee have a spirit of social service as the working of the committee rests on those who are actually working in the social field. If we can have such a committee, I am sure, our expenses will certainly come down. Then you can also put one or two men in charge of a shop and they will attend to weighing also. When you have supplied the stocks and have marked their

prices on them you will find that everything goes on quite smoothly and there is no dishonesty in the dealings. We can reduce the expenses, in this way. Then in another shop you can try this method where the stocks have been arranged and the prices have been marked, one or two local men may be posted there who will attend to buyers. This is a novel way and I do not say that this should be practised all over India, but in America there are many examples of it. There the hawkers of newspapers and the sellers of other articles mark their prices on each piece and keep them in a box so that when a man comes he has simply to take out what he wants. Let us therefore see if we can introduce such a method in our country also. I know that it cannot be done all of a sudden but I am quite convinced that whatever we are spending on the existing arrangement can be done in about half the amount. If the people are honest and realise their responsibility we can set an example before the public. I agree that this method cannot be put into practice all of a sudden but I must say that after introducing it in one of the shops you can understand the reaction of the public.

Therefore to bring down our expenses from rupees forty lakhs, the first step would be to appoint a committee and the second is the one proposed by Shri Khandubhai, viz., appointing men of the labour group, and the third is the introduction of the new method in the shops. I hope this is going to have very good results if it is introduced just in one shop at the present.

Therefore I support the cut motion, and request the Honourable Minister that to minimize the expenses these suggestions should be put into practice immediately.

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: I shall be brief in reply to this motion. The two aspects of the question which the House discussed are these: first whether there is a justification for the continuance of the grain shop system and the other is whether in point of the administration of the grain shop system, satisfactory results are being achieved. As regards the first, the House will appreciate that ever since the inflationary process began in this country, it has been felt by people who employ large numbers of workmen that one of the ways in which inflation can be kept down is by providing part of the remuneration in the form of foodstuffs. To that extent it prevents increase in the circulation of money; that is the justification. The question which arises in this connection is whether in accepting this on the railways, we are exceeding the quantum of relief prescribed by the Pay Commission. Actually what has been done is we have accepted the continuance of the grain shop system, but along with that we have accepted also the lower scale of dearness allowance which has been in existence so far. The Pay Commission's dearness allowances are higher than the dearness allowance which is now being paid in conjunction with the grain shop concession to railway employees. That really is the ground on which we are able to justify it in the light of the Pay Commission's recommendations. The House is probably aware that under the Pay Commission's proposals dearness allowance is to increase with increases in the cost of living index. Now that would not apply as far as the present system which we have adopted on the Railways is concerned. The main point which has been raised by the Honourable the Mover is that there are very considerable disparities between different railways in the matter of expenditure incurred on grain shops. *Prima facie* the expenditure on different railways would vary in accordance with the scope of the articles included, in accordance with the number of dependants, in accordance with the local scale of price and so on, but whether actually the discrepancies correspond to the working of these considerations is a matter on which I am unable to give any reply. It is a matter for investigation. I am prepared to admit that having listened to the speeches which have been made in the course of the discussion that a strong case has been made out for an enquiry into the grain shop

[Dr. John Matthai]

system and I propose therefore to accept the suggestion made by the Honourable the Mover that a committee composed of Honourable Members of this House should be appointed straightaway to look into the administration of the grain shop system and I have decided, therefore, to appoint a Committee consisting of my Honourable friend Mr. Mohan Lal Saksena as Chairman and Mr. Santhanam and Mr. Khandubhai Desai as members, to go immediately into this question and make a report to us.

Shri Mohan Lal Saksena: In view of the statement made by the Honourable Minister, I beg leave of the House to withdraw my cut motion.

Mr. Speaker: Has the Honourable Member leave of the House to withdraw his cut motion?

The cut motion was, by leave of the Assembly, withdrawn.

DEMAND NO. 5.—WORKING EXPENSES—REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE
Prevention of Thefts of Railway Fittings

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh (C. P. and Berar: General): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I move: "That the demand under the head 'Working Expenses—Repairs and Maintenance' be reduced by Re. 1."

I wish by this cut motion to raise a discussion, not as it has been entered in the agenda, Sir, namely, for 'steps being taken for the thefts of railway fittings', but 'the prevention of the thefts of railway fittings.'

Sir, it is a matter of common knowledge that in spite of the war conditions, there were not many deficiencies in the fittings in the compartments of the railways. But although the war was over, we are experiencing the dearth of almost every fitting that was available in the railways. As, on the last occasion I had given a fair list of the missing fittings, I need not repeat what I then said, most if not all of them are missing as a rule and if some of them which are absolutely irremovable, are there they are in such a bad condition that they are more a source of nuisance than convenience. For instance, sometimes we find that the wash basins are missing. But the fitting that brings water to the wash basin however continues to leak with the result that whenever you wish to have the advantage of having a wash, you find that there is no water. Similarly, Sir, the hangers are removed; mirrors are removed, and all this has been going on unchecked. Although the Honourable Minister has given replies to all our cuts and given the best explanations he could offer for all the inconveniences we suffer, I did not find any explanation or any hope of the lack of these fittings being supplied from any of his speeches. He did not show that he was very much concerned about these fittings, although he might have certainly been; and has also not said whether he is going to do anything in the matter.

It was pointed out, Sir, in one of the speeches made during this debate that some times the passengers also are responsible for pilferage. Prof. Ranga probably only for argument sake admitted that the public also may be responsible for pilferage of the goods stored in the stations and station-yards. Whatever that may be, so far as the fittings are concerned, my contention is that it is impossible that any passenger or any member of the public could remove them. The very fact that the trains are far too overcrowded is itself an adequate preventive for anything being removed by a passenger. I feel certain, Sir, that all these things happen in the yards and at junction stations. This again cannot happen only because of the thieves; the thieves must perforce be assisted by the railway staff, the police and every one connected with the yards. Unless there is complete co-operation and complete understanding between the

whole lot of them, the thefts of fittings and these things is absolutely unfinagable and inconceivable. So I put it to the Honourable Minister that this is a nuisance which has gone too far and has become a tremendous joke. My Honourable friend who just spoke was trying to suggest that it is time we took some steps to improve the morals of our countrymen. Here is another instance where probably my Honourable friend might give deep thought and consider whether this is also not another item where he might try his hand at improvement. So far as this House is concerned, it is well-known how anxious we are to co-operate with Government; we are very careful to see what words we use and we weigh our words twice before we actually utter them. So in view of this I think if the Honourable Minister were to come before this House with a drastic measure to stop these thefts he will have the whole-hearted co-operation and support of this House. That was exactly what I meant last time; I had very insufficient time at my disposal to express my views and all that escaped me was that we were prepared to give him the power to shoot at sight. Actually this was what I had in mind, namely, that if it is necessary that we should empower our Honourable Minister with an enactment arming the policemen who will guard the yards with power to shoot at sight any one who touches the fittings, we are prepared to give that power to him. But this nuisance and this nonsense must be stopped under any circumstances; and if the Honourable Minister puts his heart to it surely it should not be impossible.

Then, Sir, these are not articles which can easily be hidden. Every article used on the railway is marked usually with the letters of that particular railway, company, and I am sure that these articles which are stolen generally come back to the railways in some shape or the other, after of course the proper price is given for them. I was told some time ago that there was a regular gang in Calcutta; we have heard nothing more about it. We have also heard that there was a regular gang of young boys who stole bulbs from trains and these were resold to the same railway at perhaps black market prices. Although this may be an exaggeration I am sure some such system must be operating; or the whole police and railway staff must be connected with this. As I said, every one of these articles is marked and I do not think our sense of truthfulness or morality has fallen so low that we would observe the letters "B.B. & C.I." or "G.I.P." on articles used in houses and not mention the fact to any one. So I feel sure that these articles are not really in the use of any person; I at least have not seen them at any time anywhere. So the mystery actually is as to where these things go. As a matter of fact, some of the bulbs used on the railways cannot be used elsewhere. So, as the nature of circumstances discloses it should be quite easy to catch hold of those persons who steal them. My Honourable friend is keen on propaganda. Here is another item of propaganda where he can tell every citizen of India that wherever he finds any article on which the name of a railway is marked he should consider it his duty to give this information to the nearest police station so that the man may be caught. And if he wants any salutary punishments to be inflicted and if the present enactments are not sufficient for the purpose we are prepared, as I said, to empower him still further. But some drastic and concerted action must be taken to stop this; otherwise along with the fittings our morals also will go to pieces. Taking all these things into consideration I hope the Honourable Minister will put his heart into it, and if he makes sufficient effort it should be possible for him to tackle this. I do not think every railway servant is so bad. The Honourable Minister of course is prepared to admit only that a very small percentage of his staff are bad. According to ~~me~~ the percentage is very high; but we will not quarrel about that. If it is possible to find at least one man to guard the station yard who will be honest and will not permit any thefts, that will suffice to diminish the

[Dr. P. S. Deshmukh]

mischief, although it may not end it, altogether. I am sure he will be able to find at least a few dozen honest people who will give him a clue as to where these articles have gone, whether they come back or not, and if they do not come back what happens to them. If he is proud of the honesty of railway-men let his assertions be tested in this way. I am prepared to give him six months; in six months we should like to see that not a single fitting in any of the railway carriages is missing and that it will never be missing thereafter. That should constitute a good test for the Honourable Minister himself and also a good test to convince us of the morals of his department. Sir, I move.

Mr. Speaker: Cut motion moved:

"That the demand under the head 'Working Expenses—Repairs and Maintenance' be reduced by Re. 1."

Shri H. V. Kamath (C. P. and Berar: General) Sir, I am glad that my Honourable friend Dr. Deshmukh has raised through his cut motion this somewhat important matter which has been causing a lot of inconvenience to the travelling public. We who travel by train know very well to our cost how very often the absence of fittings like light and water adversely affect our convenience. I hope the Honourable Minister will not dismiss this complaint in a summary fashion by saying that there are kleptomaniacs. There are kleptomaniacs but I believe psychologists are now agreed that the proportion of kleptomaniacs in any society is very small; they are perhaps very much smaller than the small number of black sheep among railway servants to whom the Honourable Minister referred in the course of his illuminating budget speech. We should therefore dismiss from our minds this idea that these thefts are committed by kleptomaniacs and we should tackle this question on a different basis, and that is, anti-social elements deliberately pilfering and removing these fittings for their own advantage. It was stated the other day by the Honourable Minister to which my Honourable friend Dr. Deshmukh referred just now—that some passengers are in the habit of removing these fittings. My Honourable friend Mr. Sidhva said the other day that many of these articles fit only the railway coaches and are a misfit in other places. So I think we as sensible people should dismiss this theory also from our minds that passengers are in the habit of committing these petty thefts. (Kazi Syed Karimuddin: Question.) My Honourable friend questions this. Well, if he is aware of any passengers having actually committed these thefts in his presence, he as a responsible leader of society will, I am sure—if he has not actually done so—bring this to the notice of the administration. As he has not done that so far—I do not know whether he will do it in future—I take it that he questioned it just for question's sake and did not mean anything beyond the question. It is in a certain measure true that this question of thefts goes to the very root of our social order. It was said that in Ram-Raj there were no thefts of any kind, and every one used to keep his house open. Of course there were no railways in those days and so there is no knowing whether there were thefts of coach fittings and light fittings, etc. But generally speaking there were no thefts at all in those days and it may be taken for granted that if there had been railways there would have been no thefts the social order was then based on principles of equality and no discrimination of creed, caste or sex. But today, as we know to our cost, the social order is based on a pernicious principle and that is perhaps responsible partly for this evil tendency in human nature,—whether it is the ordinary people or railway servants. After all they are all human and are perhaps not exempt from the evils that the social order seeks to perpetuate today.

Therefore the fundamental remedy is to change the social order and to increase firstly the standard of living of the people and their economic condition, so that there may be no temptation to commit thefts. So long as the standard

of living is low and their purchasing power is low, this temptation of theft will continue. An Honourable Member: "Question". An Honourable Member has questioned my remark. I hope he will answer that question when he speaks on this motion.

Dr. Deshmukh referred to the standard of morality. He said there should be a sustained drive to educate the people and reorientate the outlook of the common man. Certainly I would wholeheartedly support him in this. In these days we find many advertisements and publicity posters in 3 P. M. railway coaches, yards and platforms. Some of them are absolutely of no use and to no purpose. There are still in some railway coaches advertisements regarding mosquitoes and malaria which were put up in war time, asking soldiers to roll up their sleeves, to pull down their sleeves and to apply some cream. Those publicity posters are still there. They should be substituted or supplemented by posters such as telling people how bad it is to steal and how your own fellowmen suffer and that it is to your advantage that people should not steal; suppose someone stole your own things etc. etc.—putting it in an elementary fashion. That would be profitable. Formerly on the South Indian Railway, many years ago, when I was a student, I used to see publicity posters. *Dongalannaru Jagratta undandi* in Telegu, meaning "Beware of thieves and pickpockets." I did not see them on other railways. But the other day when I travelled on the South Indian Railway I did not even find these posters: *Dongalannaru Jagratta undandi*. I do not know whether it is due to the fact that there are no more thieves or whether there are too many to be counteracted!

I would make one suggestion and that is about having a sort of vigilance squad. Besides a sustained propaganda and publicity drive, a vigilance squad should be there to patrol and go up and down the train at junctions and big stations; at any rate before the train leaves a station and when a train arrives at the terminus. They could go up and down the whole train and ascertain from the passengers whether any thefts have been committed and if so who are the thieves and certainly the Railway Department should not merely ask people to report thefts, but also offer rewards to those who would report thefts of railway fittings to the administration, so that they can take prompt and proper action. That would be an inducement to many people. Of course people do expect some sort of inducement, human nature being what it is. And if the Honourable Minister offers rewards to people who would report such anti-social practices to the administration, I think he would go a long way to remove such thefts.

Lastly, I wish to draw the attention of the Honourable Minister to what happened in Italy many years ago. Before Mussolini came to power, when conditions were as disturbed, as chaotic and perhaps more chaotic than they are today on the trains—trains never ran to schedule there were thefts, robberies, pillage and plunder—he declared: 'I will see that the trains will be clean: the trains will run to time and there will be no thefts in trains'.

I think he succeeded to a remarkable degree. Unfortunately he is not alive today.

Shri Khurshed Lal: Did he administer castor oil?

Shri H. V. Kamath: He is not here today to tell the Government how he managed to eliminate these things from the railway. Whatever may be said to his discredit it should be admitted that the trains in Italy during the Fascist regime ran to time and that the railways were among the most efficient instrument during the Fascist regime. Though we are against Fascism and Nazism, I think there are some good points in them which we can emulate.

I wish to stress another point. During the last War Russia, though it had just emerged from backwardness, had a transport system which functioned so efficiently that the world marvelled how such a country that had just come out of serfdom, feudalism and slavery could organise their transport so well that

[Shri H. V. Kamath]

the war ultimately turned in their favour. It perhaps would not be out of place for me to suggest that the Honourable Minister might as well depute an officer of his department, if he himself could not go, to visit Russia.....

Shri Khurshed Lal: Or an Honourable Member of this House!

Shri H. V. Kamath: Yes, I accept that. He may be asked to visit Russia and

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: Press the suggestion. The Honourable Minister is in a good mood. He might accept it!

Shri H. V. Kamath:.....study how Russia managed her Transport system most efficiently and how today the railway in Russia are being run. I do not know anything about the German railways today. Before the war the German railways were famous for their efficiency and speed. But the Russian transport system today and during the war was very efficient and it would be very profitable for us to learn from the experience of this oriental country, which perhaps 20 years ago, was in a worse position than we are in today, and yet today it has become one of the greatest Powers in the world.

I would therefore most wholeheartedly support my friend, Dr. Deshmukh, in the motion he has brought before the House, and that is that we are all anxious to see that these thefts of railway fitting which cause so much inconvenience to all of us and to the travelling public come to an end. The sooner these evils are eliminated and the sooner this practice of pilferage is put an end to the better. By all means let the Minister assume all powers to this end and he will have a very thankful travelling public who will be all out to assist him in his very right and noble endeavour.

Mr. R. K. Sidhva (C.P. and Berar: General): I rise to support the motion moved by my friend, Dr. Deshmukh. One of the causes of bad name in the railway administration is the missing of these articles of bare necessities from railway compartments. It has now become a scandal. This State of affair has happened only after the war. There was no question of pilferage by passengers before the war. Suddenly, after the war, passengers have become so immoral that they begin to pilfer railway materials from the railway compartments, and the absurd argument is advanced that they have been stolen by the passengers when the trains are moving. You know that ordinarily about 54 passengers sit in third class compartments. Today there are more than a couple of hundreds.

Do you ever imagine that when one or two of the passengers steel the bulbs the others are so stooped in their immorality that they would not either prevent them or report the matter? I have taken some little interest in reporting this matter regarding the stealing of bulbs. Most of these bulbs are manufactured in India. They are also imported from foreign countries. Lakhs of them are purchased annually and they are specifically manufactured for railway purposes. These bulbs have their own marks and are not useful for ordinary purposes. They are of a particular voltage and cannot be used by common people in their houses in any part of the country. Notwithstanding that it is audacity or sheer effrontery on the part of the railway officials, right-down from the highest to the lowest to say that the bulbs are pilfered by the passengers. I told one of the members of the Railway Board two years ago, he was a European gentleman by name Mr. Brown, a Director of the Railway Board about these thefts. He sympathised with me and asked me to assist him. He said that the passengers steal them. I gave him some instances but still he was not satisfied. I went to the Member in Charge and he gave me the same answer which the Director gave me. This goes to prove that the Minister are absolutely guided by what their secretaries say and do not take pains to go a little further into the matter themselves.

An Honourable Member: That was in old days.

Mr. E. K. Sidhva: Of course these were old days. I am not mentioning it as a recent instance. But the fact remains that conditions today are the same and nothing is being done to remedy, or improve the situation. Therefore I have to repeat this. I do not know how from the inter class or even from the upper classes mirrors could be removed and put underneath the armpits and taken away in the presence of so many walking passengers. That really surpasses my comprehension, anybody could give an explanation. They are out to fool everybody all the time. I do not know whether they can fool everybody all the time. There is no denying the fact that I have investigated the matter too, that the whole pilferage happens among the railway staff itself. There is no question about it. They know the manufacturers or contractors who supply the bulbs to the railways and sell them.

When I was young I used to do welfare work among railwaymen and used to visit loco workshops. I used to find that every workman who returned in the afternoon from the workshop was searched by some chowkidar at the gate. I did not like then the idea of search of men who were released from duty in the workshops. If the chowkidar suspects somebody he would detain him and search him fully. In my opinion if these continue they should be vigorously held and proper type of honest men should be located at these gates. My friend Dr. Deshmukh went to the length of saying that they should be shot. I will not go to that length. Conditions have become so bad that my friend has become desparate. Let us take a realistic view. Is there nobody who can check this kind of thing? I have investigated several instances and in not a single instance was it proved that a passenger stole the articles. Have the Railway Board applied their mind and found out how the pilferage takes places? We would like to know what steps have been taken and who has been entrusted to check this crime that is constantly taking place. That really goes to prove that there is something so rotten in the administration from the very bottom to the top. The Honourable Minister must really take serious steps in the matter. I know he says that he has at heart the well being of the travelling public. He must concentrate his mind upon this matter and find out how these thefts take place. What happens is this. Not only are bulbs stolen but the switches are also stolen. In the upper class compartments there is no switch with the result the passenger has to twist two open wires to put on the light. If the third class passengers are thieves, am I to understand that the upper class passengers are also thieves. Everybody has become a thief excepting the railwaymen. That is the position that we are led to believe. The travelling public have become immoral but the railwaymen are perfect, honest and straight forward. I am not prepared to accept that. These articles are of no use to the average passenger. Ordinary person does not know who is the contractor or manufacturer who supplies these bulbs to the railway. It is the railway people who know it. They steal these things and sell them to the contractor.

On the B. B. & C. I. and G. I. P. the mirrors bear the stamp of the railways. Has anybody seen in anybody's house such mirrors existing? Even the pegs on which we hang our coats are removed and no notice is being taken by anybody of these matters. This is the condition in which we are asked to travel and we are asked to be patient until new coaches are received. We are told conditions are bad, stocks are not available, more coaches are not available and we should be patient. How long can the passengers be asked to be patient. This question does not depend on the availability of coaches or new engines or spare parts. When I represented these things there is no satisfactory answer either from the Divisional Superintendent or the Chairman of the Advisory Committee or from the member of the Railway Board. I have never received any satisfactory answer which would appeal to the ordinary common-sense man. I therefore humbly suggest to the Honourable Minister that he should seriously take this matter up and find out who is to blame. If he wants the co-operation

[Mr. R. K. Sidhva]

of some of our friends we are ready to help him in the matter. Do not dismiss us by saying that we do it merely to criticise the Government. It does not give us any pleasure to criticise our own popular ministers in our free Government of India. It is a disgrace and shame that I have to tell the passengers that our popular government cannot do anything. If we have to restore the good name of the railway administration and the name of the popular government, these matters which may be small to the Honourable Minister but are big ones to the public, should be attended to.

I do not know whether I will be in order in pointing out that in the budget under compensation for goods lost in transit a sum is provided and I think this covers.....

Mr. Speaker: It does not cover it.

Mr. E. K. Sidhva: A crore of rupees is provided by the Railway Board to give compensation for the articles lost, i.e. lost and pilfered by the railway servants. Of course there may be 5 or 10 per cent. theft by the public in this. Instances have been brought to the notice of the Railways that the railway police and the railway guards have been responsible for thefts of parcels from brake vans for which the Railways had to pay heavy compensation.

With these words I strongly support the motion of my Honourable friend. This is one of the main points and I am glad that it has been brought home to the Minister. I hope he will give it that attention which is due to it.

Shri Satis Chandra Samanta (West Bengal: General): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I wholeheartedly support the cut motion moved by my Honourable friend Dr. Deshmukh. Not only are the fittings being pilfered from the railway carriages but I know that wagons are broken. The investigations made by the railway authorities through the local police authorities are to no avail. I know of many cases where Congressmen, who tried to help to stop these pilfering cases, have been punished. There are many cases and I am still investigating these cases. I hope the Honourable the Railway Minister will help us in future in this matter. He has received many applications from the public and he is moving in his own way. I want to say that moving in that way cannot remove these gangs from those places. I have come to know that these gangs live by the side of the railway lines. They are in collusion with the railway servants. Station after station the men who are responsible for these pilferings are in collusion with the railway employees—the station masters and other railwaymen. When the railway authority tries to investigate the matter what happens is when the local police go for investigation they are bribed and the real incidents do not come out. Such incidents are going on. I hope that the Honourable the Railway Minister will give his kind attention to these matters and find out other means so that these pilferings may be checked.

With these words, Sir, I wholeheartedly support the cut motion.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra (West Bengal: General): Mr. Speaker, I think two very important points have been made in this debate by my two friends, Dr. Deshmukh, the Mover of the motion and Mr. Sidhva. This is a matter which ought to attract now the serious notice of the railway authorities. This does not entail very heavy expenditure on the part of the Government: It only requires a little toning up of the administration in the lower ranks. I do not agree with my friend Mr. Sidhva that this evil has been an aftermath of the war. If Honourable Members will turn to the pages of debates during 1944-45 they will see that we had in the past discussions of a motions very much on these lines. This evil really started from 1943 till it assumed such formidable proportions that it had to be taken serious notice of by this House. But whenever this matter was raised either in this House or in the Standing Finance Committee, surprisingly enough the usual stereotyped reply used to be, that all this act of pilferage was by the passengers. My Honourable friend Dr.

Deshmukh has not in the least exaggerated when he said that by trying to shift the whole blame on the travelling public the railway authorities were really going to shirk their own responsibility in the matter. I do not believe that my Honourable friend the Railway Minister holds the view that passengers, including passengers of first and second class go on stealing the railway fittings and equipment as they travel on. I openly asked Sir Edward Benthall, the Railway Member in those days, whether the excuses that were generally put forward by the railway administrations that these things were stolen by the passengers were thoroughly and scientifically investigated. I say 'scientifically investigated'. Mr Sidhva was on very strong ground when he said that the bulbs fitted in railway compartments could not be used any where else except in the railway compartments themselves or perhaps in private electrical installations at individual residences. I pointed out at that time to Sir Edward Benthall and do point out now also that among the third class passengers, who are charged with this crime, I do not know of many people who have private electrical installations or dynamos in their residences wherein to use these bulbs. The House would be interested to know that the type of bulb that is generally fitted in railway compartments can only be operated under a very low voltage not exceeding 110. The voltage in railway compartments is generally 30 to 40, whereas in all public electrical installations the current is supplied generally at 220 volts in this country. It is not America where for domestic consumption electricity is supplied at a very low voltage. In this country you have got D.C. installations in cities and A. C. installations outside big cities. In all such installations the current is generally distributed under fairly high voltage. If any bulb which is used in a railway compartment is put on any of the points on these electrical installations where current is distributed at high voltage the bulb will get fused in a second. It is no use therefore telling that these bulbs are being taken away for being sold privately to people. The question then arises who are the people that steal them? That is a question which requires investigation. It cannot be demonstrably proved that they are stolen by railway employees only to be sold to the railway concerns, but there is a grave suspicion. I had occasions to discuss this matter with the General Managers of the E. I. Railway and of the Bengal-Nagpur Railway. They told me very seriously that these bulbs were stolen by the people. They told me "You please do one thing for us. You are a public man of some standing. You please go on making propaganda to the public not to steal these bulbs". I said, "It is a wonderful suggestion you have made. How can I go about the country telling people all that?" They said "Unless you do that we cannot do anything to stop this". I suggested, "Why not introduce a system by which your railway operatives, when working on the station yards or in places where these coaches are stabled, can detect them. Why don't you institute vigorous measures? You have your watch and ward staff. What are these people doing?" But nothing was done. It is not only a case of bulbs. As has been pointed out, mirrors and other fittings also are being removed. There are other astounding things. I have seen compartments from which all cushions have been completely removed—the entire cushions. I remember the occasion when we were making a tour as members of the Joseph Bhoré (Post-War Reconstruction) Committee.

The railway authorities were requested to supply us an air-conditioned coach, but they could not do it. So we had to travel in an ordinary first class touring coach with no cushions. After a couple of hours I found that we had been really in a water-conditioned coach. There were sharp showers and water dripped through the roof. So we got soaked. Soon after that, when nightfall came we went to switch on the lights, but to our painful surprise there were all faked bulbs and they would not work. At every station we tried to get the bulbs replaced, but none could do anything. I then reported to the authorities the whole matter including the conversation that passed between me and the different station masters at important places. They also said the same thing—

[Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra]

'You carry on propaganda advising passengers not to steal bulb. So I am suggesting to my Honourable friend the Railway Minister that he should, and I am sure he would, pass strict instructions to all individual railway administrations to be very particular in this matter. After all it is true that we are still through a period of shortage of equipment and of bulbs, and we cannot afford now to allow this state of things to continue any further. In certain railway administrations they have put up something like anti-theft devices. I have seen them working in some of the railways and as a member of some of the local Advisory Committees I had asked railway administrations to give me an idea of the utility of the devices. But I found that it helped to put in more money into the pockets of the contractors but really did no good to the people as the compartments were very poorly lighted by reason of these devices. I want to tell the Railway Minister that these days I do not find the railway technical people coming and checking carriages—I mean the train inspectors, mechanics and fitters, who in the past, who, used to come at every important station and test every electric light or fan and the other fittings and fixtures. I wish that that practice were revived. You will say 'Yes, it is in force.' I would respectfully tell you that it is not. Either this department has been scrapped or these people have become so lazy that they do not turn up for their duty. If these people turned up at important stations, as they used to do before there could be some check. If at the starting point the guard is satisfied on the information of the technical staff that a particular rake is perfectly well fitted with all the necessary requirements and if at all subsequent important stations you have this inspecting arrangement then if there was anything missing, he could straight-way report it. Then one could really see whether the theft was committed by passengers. If on the other hand, throughout the journey of a particular train from the starting point to the point of its destination, there is no report of any theft by the technical staff in attendance, and if when the train reaches the destination it is allowed to be stabled somewhere and if thereafter you find bulbs and fittings missing, don't you think my Honourable friend Dr. Deshmukh or Mr. Sidhva has very strong ground for alleging that this theft must have been committed by people in the yard, that is, by the railway people? Therefore, Sir, if for no other purpose, but for the one of conserving the equipment that we have at present in our trains, the Honourable the Railway Minister could see that supervision was tightened-up, probably we could reduce the evil to the minimum. At the same time I do realise that there has been a considerable decline in the moral of our people. Many young people do mischief for the sake of mischief. But to check the evil propensity the authorities must see that proper propaganda is carried on. They can impress upon the people once or twice a week, through the radio that these railways are our national assets and that none should do any damage to them. If they did any mischief, they themselves would have to pay for it. If this kind of systematic propaganda is carried on through radio and through posters at all stations, probably good results could be achieved. But something must be done; mere statements that this is the work of passengers is absolutely useless. I hope this sort of attitude will not be taken. We are out to help the Railway Administration in every conceivable way, but I think these are some of the ways in which the evil can be checked or at least minimised in all railway administrations. The local Advisory Committees should be instructed to take definite step in the matter immediately, as every year we are losing a vast amount of valuable material. 'Sir, I support the motion.

Shri Biswanath Das (Orissa: General): Sir, Having followed the discussion on this important question I find that they have gone on, if I may be permitted to say so, rather in a way which could be called random. Sir, a friend has suggested that steps should be taken to make a search of the railway subordinates or officials or menials. I would never be a party to any search being realised the realities of the independence that we have secured after the 15th of

undertaken at our suggestion. I am out to appeal to all my countrymen, to August 1947. In this view of the question, I would never think of a search nor would I believe that any of our countrymen would be so mean as to go so low as to be a party to a crime which would necessitate search. Sir, the fact remains that there is pilfering. How best to put a stop to this pilfering? I would not convert the floor of this House into a debate putting the passenger against the railway subordinates or officials. Sir, it does not concern me in the least whether the passengers or the railway subordinates are a party to this pilfering. I would not go into these details. But I would appeal to the Honourable Minister in charge of the Railways to insist upon responsibility. Every railway is a property by itself. Let the officers or the menials concerned carry out checks when the train starts from a certain specified station, and they should be held responsible for the railway train and all things connected with it. Therefore let responsibility assert itself, and those who fail to discharge their responsibilities should be made to make good the loss. It is not mere propaganda, but it is propaganda and punishment. If and when found, both should be combined to produce the desired result. In this connection I would appeal to my Honourable friend to read that famous chapter on *danda*—punishment—which was inculcated by *Bhishma* on *Yudhishtira*, so well described in *Shanti Parva Mahabharat*. There in *Bhishma* explains how the world hangs on *danda*. I cannot understand why the gentlemen from the Railway Commissioner downward to the very porter should not be held responsible for theft or for any damage done to railways. I would not soil the floor of the House by discussing as to who is responsible for a theft.

It is they that have to enquire and bring before the court the persons responsible, they have to pick the criminal, it is not left to me nor given to me to investigate, enquire and place before them. They are paid for it and they must do it. If they do not do it, they have no place—that should be the attitude. Therefore, I would place before my Honourable friend the very good thesis left to us as a legacy by *Bhishma*, i.e. the chapter of *danda*, and this *danda* could be translated into actual practice by enforcing responsibility, responsibility which should be realised if necessary by searches. Let them do it; it is not our business to dictate as to how well it should be done or that pilfering be commuted into money. I want my property, the Nation wants the Railway asset to stand as it was. Therefore it is they—the high officials, the subordinate officials and the menials,—who must be held responsible equally whether they are a party to the pilfering or not.

If the passenger public do it, if there is any person so mean as to do it, let him also be brought before the law. What is the Watch and Ward Department doing? Under these circumstances I would appeal to you and through you to the Honourable Members of this House to insist upon the Honourable Minister that he will please see that responsibility is located and insisted upon and the punishment that flows from such lack of responsibility is insisted upon. Of late, it is painful to admit, the machinery of administration has become loose, and our notions of responsibility—we are also partly to blame for this—have also undergone some change. *Swaraj* brings responsibility; it brings freedom, it brings liberty and at the same time it brings responsibility. It has given India all the Railways of the country; that means and implies that we have to protect our railways and run efficiently—we, in the sense of the public as also the Railway officials. It is the joint responsibility of both because both are Indians. In this view of the question we have to realise our responsibility and see that this is insisted in practice. Therefore this pilfering has to be stopped. It is not only pilfering. Look at the Railway Budget—and I had given notice of a motion also—and the mounting provision for compensation that has been provided for losses. What really are "losses"? They are also pilferings. You may call them thefts; if it does not come under pilfering, I do not know, but you may expand the expression and call it thefts—Railway

[Shri Biswanath Das]

thefts. The Railways have to pay contribution to the police for watch and ward. They have got their own officials. I do not see why a combination of all these forces and the co-operation of the public will not be able to fight against these difficulties. For myself, I hold every official, including the highest official possible, responsible for these because in them lies the whole responsibility; if they could administer properly and could improve morale, I do not think such thefts would be common. If the morale goes down, it is the men at the top that are responsible; high salaries have no justification if these officials cannot instil high morale in the subordinate staff.

Sir, we on our part have given what all you placed before us. We have placed our grievances before you only to enable you to see our difficulties because your responsibilities and our difficulties are one and the same. We have only placed our difficulties, but we have unstintingly given all that you wanted. Having given all that you wanted, we have a claim, we have a right to insist that all these should be attended to. Let us hope that by next year we do not expect to have such discussions in the feeling that there will be no pilfering whatever, and that the officials fight their battle against pilfering. With these words I support the motion.

Dr. P. K. Sen (Bihar: General): Sir, the debate has already gone on for a long time and I should have been the last person to add to its prolongation. But there is one item which I feel has been omitted from the list of things that are the subject matter of pilfering. We have already heard that things that relate to comfort and convenience have been found to be missing. Well, apart from electric bulbs or looking-glasses or things of that sort, there is something very vitally important for safety which is often found missing. It has been my experience in six cases out of ten whenever I have travelled for the night, that the clamps of the door, the safety catches, were missing. It was for that reason that I had to go on from station to station shouting for some *mistry* to come and set it right because one is perfectly unsafe in a compartment with the catch gone either from the door or even from the window. There are three parts to each window—the glass shutter, the wire netting and the venetian wood-work. In the two, apart from the glass shutter, there is always a catch. These catches are more often than not found missing. Now it does nobody a bit of good—whether he is a first class, second class or third class passenger—to steal these. There can be no doubt whatsoever that it must be the work of somebody belonging to a gang of thieves who want to effect an entrance into the compartment at night. Therefore, I think it really is a matter of very great importance; and it does not cost much in money either—the missing parts being only small catches, either of iron or sometimes a piece of wood. Therefore, I would draw the serious attention of the Honourable Minister for Transport in regard to this matter so that this evil may be remedied at once. Otherwise it is extremely unsafe for passengers to undertake night journeys.

Kari Syed Karimuddin: Sir, I had no intention to intervene in this debate, but Honourable friends have suggested some measures which require comment from me also. It is suggested that no searches should be made on the railway servants or anybody else, and the objection was that from the moral point of view it was not proper. There is no reason why searches should not be made. None of the members of this House has suggested any measure as to how these thefts are to be stopped. We complain, and we rightly complain, that there are thefts and that there is pilfering. But the question is what is to be done? Whether the passengers are responsible or whether the railway servants are responsible is not the point at issue. Whether they have better morals or the passengers have better morals is also not a point to be discussed. The only real point is whether there is pilfering,—which is admitted—and if so, what are the remedies and what are the measures

to be taken for stopping this. In my opinion, Sir, there is only one suggestion which might probably improve the situation. In railway compartments, while the trains are running and at the railway stations, close inspection should be made by the detecting staff. Now, it is said that the railway servants should be made responsible. If the thefts are not detected are they to be prosecuted? Are the Police Officers to be prosecuted? What do you mean by 'holding them responsible'? If thefts are committed and they are not detected, it will be a proof of incompetency of the detecting staff. So the only remedy, according to me, is that the Member in charge of Railways should increase the detecting staff and the punishment meted out to them—I mean the offenders—should be serious.

Shri Satyanarayan Sinha (Bihar: General): Sir, I move.

"That the question be now put."

Mr. Speaker: The question is:

"That the question be now put."

The motion was adopted.

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: Sir, I am very grateful indeed to the House for the discussion which has taken place on this question and for the very valuable suggestions which they have made to me as to how this problem is to be tackled. I think I may conveniently summarise the problem with which we are faced in this manner. I do not want to apportion blame between one section of our population and another. The thefts that occur of these fittings might occur in one of two ways or in both ways; either when the train is on the move or when the train is on the stabling and the washing lines. As far as pilfering, if any, that occurs when the train is on the move is concerned, there is only one way in which we can tackle it, and that is, by intensifying the inspection of the train as it proceeds from point to point. That suggestion has been made, and I shall certainly see that it is carried out. There is inspection now, but the point is whether the inspection should not be strengthened and intensified.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra: Recently it has been very much slackened.

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: I will have that looked into and set right.

The other thing is the pilfering which occurs when the train has performed its journey and is on the stabling and the washing lines. So far, for a long time, we have been depending on the services of our Watch and Ward. We have also been depending on the services of our anti-corruption staff for detecting whatever thefts might occur at the station premises. We could strengthen these two measures, have more effective Watch and Ward and also take much stricter action in the way of anti-corruption. But there is one thing that I want to tell the House, and that is, since two or three months ago, we have been taking this matter up very seriously and we have instructed all the Railway Administrations to appoint Resident Conductors to take charge of rakes when they are on the stabling and the washing lines. That system has been introduced since about two months ago and I am waiting to see whether it will make for any improvement.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra: Is that the case on all Railways?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: A beginning has been made with some, but we are instructing all Railways now to have a system of Resident Conductors who will be in charge of the rakes. It is very likely, as far as pilfering by railwaymen is concerned, pilfering must take place when the rakes are on the stabling in the washing lines. Therefore, at that point we are going to

[Dr. John Matthai]

attack the problem on this basis. Whether there is anything more I can do at present, I do not know. I believe propaganda may help; I believe also something in the nature of rewards for information given may help, and stricter supervision at the stabling in the washing lines. . . .

Shri Biswanath Das: And punishment.

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: I think that is what is required. My Honourable friend Mr. Biswanath Das believes in punishment. I think the Honourable the Mover was prepared to give me powers to shoot at sight, and my Honourable friend Mr. Kamath said that I ought to emulate Mr. Mussolini. I do not mind having a shot at all these suggestions, but as far as Mr. Mussolini is concerned, he began well but I think his end was rather unsatisfactory.

Shri H. V. Kamath: But he carried on for a long time!

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: and as far as shooting at sight is concerned, I regret to have to say that I have never handled a gun in my life and I believe in non-violence.

[At this stage, Mr. Speaker vacated the Chair, which was then occupied by Pandit Thakur Das Bhargava (one of the Panel of Chairmen).]

But, Sir, the problem is one which is very seriously present to my mind and it is a matter not merely of importance to our travelling public but it is a matter, putting it at its very lowest, which is of very great financial importance to the Railways and therefore from both points of view I give a definite undertaking to the House that the suggestions which have been made will not only be considered but I shall do my very best to implement them.

Mr. Naziruddin Ahmad (West Bengal: Muslim): Will the Honourable Minister consider one suggestion? If the process of enquiry reveals a particular group or source, will he as an experimental measure consider a system of collective fine?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: I am not a believer in vicarious punishment. It is rather a drastic measure—the imposition of collective fines—but I think before we proceed to a measure of that kind we ought to see whether we cannot effect fairly substantial improvement along the lines which have been already suggested.

Shri H. V. Kamath: Will the Honourable Minister consider my suggestion of sending Dr. Deshmukh to Russia or America?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: I am prepared to give way to my Honourable friend as the suggestion has emanated from him.

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: I would leave the question to be settled between the two Honourable Members.

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: Sir, I beg leave of the House to withdraw my cut motion.

Mr. Chairman: Has the Honourable Member leave of the House to withdraw his cut motion?

The cut motion was, by leave of the Assembly, withdrawn.

DEMAND NO. 1—RAILWAY BOARD—*contd.**Conditions prevailing on Oudh and Tirhut Railway*

Prof. Shibban Lal Saksena: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I beg to move:

“That the demand under the head ‘Railway Board’ be reduced by Rs. 100.”

Sir, I am glad that the motion which I am moving is recognised to be a motion of extreme importance. In fact, the other day, during question-hour, the Honourable Minister for Railways said that O. T. R. was a headache. I am glad it is a headache, but I wish that headache went away and he became quite healthy and that it did not persist long.

Unfortunately the people on the O. T. Railway side have suffered far too long and any further prologization of the agony will not be desirable. In fact I listened with great interest to the discussion on the preceding motion
4 P.M. about the railway fittings and I was interested to see the resentment of the House at the removal of fittings. But if my Honourable friends were to travel on the O. T. Railway and they found that the whole trains there moved almost without a single light I wonder what they would think about it? This sight is not an exceptional one, but a very frequent sight. If merely for the absence of fittings or catches the Honourable friends in this House are excited, I wonder what they would do if they saw all trains practically every day going without any lights in all the compartments on the O. T. Railway? I repeat that this is not a rare sight, but a very frequent sight. In the compartments, there are no latrines and they are overcrowded in a manner to be found nowhere in any train in India. Every day there are at least half a dozen accidents on the O. T. Railway, because people are on the roofs, they are on the boards and they are everywhere and yet they have not got even ordinary lights at midnight. If I want to describe all that agony I will be simply repeating what has already been said here but I will say that all that has been said prevails on the O. T. Railway in a very extreme form and the question is how to remove it. I am glad the evils on the O. T. Railway are recognised and it is for us to see how we can remedy them. Apart from the passenger difficulties, the House has not probably heard the kinds of thefts that have happened. Have you heard that two whole wagons loaded with salt were stolen from the yards of the O. T. Railway Gorakhpur headquarters? Have you ever heard that whole wagons containing bales of cloth continued to be missing for months together? It is not possible that any single person or any passenger can remove all these things. Without the men on the top conniving these things cannot happen. You must have read, Sir, in the newspapers of the hardship and numerous grievances in Gorakhpur and other places and personally I find that things have not improved and do not improve. I therefore thought it necessary that I should bring this motion to bring pointed attention to this particular railway, which is in fact a sort of microcosm of all the evils that prevail on the railways in a most extreme form. The whole question is what is the cause of all these evils and how it can be remedied? As regards ticketless travelling in the O. T. Railway, I wish to say that everything is in its extreme form. I have known that on certain portions of the railway the T. T. E.'s have been beaten. In fact if they check the trains, they will be beaten and probably some are even maimed. The whole thing has been so unsatisfactory that unless the administration take the whole thing very seriously, things will not improve. Accidents on the O. T. Railway are the largest on record in India; derailments are a common thing; you can never expect to reach in time by the O. T. Railway.

[Prof. Shibban Lal Saksena]

I quoted a case of a strike in the railway on one of our grain shops and as I told at the time that matter was hushed. Why was it hushed unless the men on the top knew what happened? I therefore want that all these things when they are found out should be traced to the very source.

I have been connected with the O. T. Railway workers ever since I went to Gorakhpur in 1930 and I have known that things are still continuing in the same condition as they were then found. After the 15th of August, we had hoped that a new spirit will come, but what is happening? The other day I found that a Railway Police Sub-Inspector had arranged to carry some coal from Bhatni to Gorakhpur for his private consumption; the guard came to know of it; he was a young man from the north and he reported the matter and somehow or other that man was detained and an enquiry was begun. But I learnt that a very high official of the Railway who has now gone to Pakistan intervened and got the case hushed up. Very soon after that the Sub-Inspector got some case and got the poor guard named by the man who was guilty; and he has been suspended for six months. If anybody who tries to be honest or wishes to help Government by doing his duty this is the reward he gets. And this is also how the people who want to defraud work. So after a long consideration of the matter I think that the O. T. Railway has some traditions; for hundred years it has been managed by a company who was reputed to be the worst in the whole country.

I was just going through figures and I found that until 1946 in the expenses of management the O. T. Railway was the lowest. For the year 1945-46 the percentage of expenses on the B. and A. Railway was 83 per cent; on the B. N. R. it was 91; on the B. B. & C. I. cent per cent.; on the East Indian Railway it was 70 per cent and on the G. I. P. Railway 56 per cent; on the N. W. R. it was 76 but on the O. T. Railway it was 38.32 per cent. That shows how this railway was very badly managed and was a source of probable milking by the Company and the situation continued until 1946. I do not know of recently after the Pay Commission recommendations came in, but that was what was happening till then. Unless and until all those officers who are there were removed every year and a new staff,—who have been in an atmosphere quite different from that railway atmosphere or some other railways—are put there, I am afraid things will not improve. That is what I have heard from everybody; they say that the whole thing cannot be improved until at least for once the entire staff who has been connected with the railway for long years is completely changed and particularly the men on top. It is quite obvious that such extraordinary things cannot happen every day and nothing can happen unless such high officers connive at it. I do not want to condemn anybody, but it is a serious reflection on their efficiency and on the Government that they should continue to be so. When the matter has been referred here, without stopping such things from happening, the Honourable Minister has said that the O. T. Railway is his headache. But when I said that 38 per cent. was the expenditure on the O. T. Railway compared to the large percentage of the other railways, you can imagine how badly it is managed. I had the privilege of representing the O. T. Railway Union before the Railway Adjudicator Mr. Rajadhyaksha who was appointed to discuss the questions of leave and other matters and I was surprised that during that discussion there were cases where guards drivers and all those people had to work continuously some times for 80 hours, for 90 hours and station masters had to work for 139 hours and no relief was given. That is what has happened. I am sorry the report has not yet been published—at least I have not seen it—and the recommendations made by them have not been given effect to. The O. T. Railway staff is

probably the smallest in all the railways; unless it is increased in very large measure I think it will not be possible to set things right. I have heard workers complain that they cannot get leave because there is no relief available. I wish things were set right soon and this complaint stopped.

Then, Sir, the Pay Commission's report and its implementation by the Railway Board in the O. T. Railway has caused very grave dissatisfaction. In fact, as I said, it is worst paid of all railways and its men draw the lowest salaries. Even now after the Pay Commission's recommendation I find that conditions have not improved. This morning my Honourable friend Mr. Shastri gave figures for the S. I. Railway and said that 90 per cent of the staff was fixed on the lowest scales. I go further and say that on the O. T. Railway 95 per cent. of the staff is on the lowest scales, because they were all on the old scales and those have continued. And things are as bad now as they were before. In fact a man with 30 years service is now equal to one who was there three years ago. But if a man has been there for 30 years he should get increment for 30 years.

Then there is the question of overlapping. The Pay Commission suggested that things should be simplified and the pay scales should be reduced. But on the O. T. Railway I find that where there were two scales there are now three and where there was one there are now two. Still the major portion of the people are in the lowest grades. For instance, there are 31 drivers placed in grade A. All of them are Anglo-Indians or Europeans and the old things continue. In fact I have heard some drivers say that those who taught them are still in the lower grades on the Rs. 35-60 scale. I suggest that the Pay Commission's recommendations as they have been applied to the staff should be revised. There is too much overlapping. In fact it has been suggested that 15 years' time should be given for the pay scales of drivers. A driver cannot be a driver without 20 years' service; he must be a fireman and a shunter, and so on, and then alone he can be a driver. He will have to spend 20 years in that way and in 15 years he cannot reach the maximum. So I want that this should be rationalised and there should be such a scheme that everybody may reach the maximum.

Secondly, there should be only one scale for drivers. It is now Rs. 200-300 and another Rs. 60-120. There is no reason why there should be so much difference. There should be only one single scale. I have suggested that the O. T. Railway is in a very bad condition because the staff is badly paid, and unless the whole thing is revised things will not improve. I wish the Honourable Minister would go into this whole thing and remove this headache of his so that this blot on the railway administration is removed. Sir, I move.

Mr. Chairman: Cut motion moved:

"That the demand under the head 'Railway Board' be reduced by Rs. 100."

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: Sir, I am very familiar with conditions on the O. T. Railway and I have been anxious for some time for special steps to be taken in regard to the improvement of existing conditions on that railway. There are three directions in which I am hoping that some improvement may be effected. I agree with my Honourable friend Prof. Saksena that in the O. T. Railway Government have inherited a pretty bad legacy, and it is rather a difficult problem to meet all the handicaps which we have inherited along with the assets of the O. T. Railway. As I said, there are three directions in which I am hoping some effort may be made. First of all when it comes to appointments to the top offices of the O. T. Railway, the Chief Commissioner and I are agreed that we should in every case pick out the very best officer available anywhere on the Indian railway system. That is the principle

[Dr. John Matthai]

that we are going steadily to follow. I think the three General Managers that we have had recently on the O. T. Railway have been among the ablest of our senior Indian officers, and that principle will be applied also to the heads of the various departments.

Secondly, I hope that as a result of the application of the Pay Commission's recommendations and such proposals as may emerge from the Adjudicator's report some improvement would also be effected in the conditions of labour. The various specific points raised by my Honourable friend Prof. Saksena would be considered in the consideration which is at present going on regarding outstanding matters relating to the Pay Commission's report.

There is a third direction in which I am hoping something may be done, and that is by the regrouping of the railway system in India; and the O. T. Railway then will disappear in its present form and will be tacked on to other administrations whose traditions are, I hope, a little better.

So it is in these three directions that I am trying to apply my mind to the problem of improving conditions on the O. T. Railway; and I would ask my Honourable friend Prof. Saksena to rest assured that so far as it lies within my power I will leave nothing undone to secure a better order of things on the O. T. Railway.

Prof. Shibban Lal Saksena: Sir, I thank the Honourable Minister for the assurance given and beg leave of the House to withdraw the motion.

Mr. Chairman: Has the Honourable Member leave of the House to withdraw his cut motion?

The cut motion was, by leave of the Assembly withdrawn.

DEMAND NO. 13—APPROPRIATION TO BETTERMENT FUND

Mr. Chairman: May I request the Honourable Minister for Railways to move Demand No. 13?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: Sir, I move:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 83,62,000, be granted to the Governor General to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1949, in respect of 'Appropriation to Betterment Fund'."

Mr. Chairman: Motion moved:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 83,62,000, be granted to the Governor General to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1949, in respect of 'Appropriation to Betterment Fund'."

DEMAND NO. 14—APPROPRIATION TO RESERVE

Mr. Chairman: May I request the Honourable Minister for Railways to move Demand No. 14 also?

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: Sir, I move:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 4,50,00,000, be granted to the Governor General to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1949, in respect of 'Appropriation to Reserve'."

Mr. Chairman: Motion moved:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 4,50,00,000, be granted to the Governor General to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1949, in respect of 'Appropriation to Reserve'."

Kazi Syed Karimuddin: Mr. Chairman the amount that has been assigned out of the Rs. 10 crores surplus for the Reserve Fund is Rs. 4,50,00,000. In my speech at the time of the general discussion. I had argued and stated that the entire surplus should go to the Reserve Fund. It was stated in the speech of the Railway Minister that a Committee was appointed and the findings of

Committee was appointed and the findings of the Committee that would be arrived at would be communicated to the House. It seems, that the findings are that Rs. 4,50,00,000 should be given to the Reserve Fund and the rest should be appropriated towards general revenue. I had explained last time that it is an accepted principle that the Reserve Fund should be higher than Rs. 20 crores. The Wedgwood Committee had recommended that the Reserve Fund should be at least Rs. 50 crores. In the last budget speech by the minister in charge of Railways it was stated:

"All proposals for increase in fares and freights would be unpopular. I personally wish that it had been possible for me to avoid making these proposals. When I suggested a small increase during the last budget session I was so severely attacked that I had no mind to propose further increases, but circumstances have been altogether beyond my control. There is one difference between the last increase and the present increase. Last time the increase was made not in order to meet a deficit but to strengthen the surplus while this time we are making these proposals because it is the only way we can avoid a deficit."

Thus the rates and fares were increased because there was a deficit. And when there is a surplus rates and fares are not being decreased. I should say, that this will be a breach of faith on the part of the Government.

Sir, the need for an adequate Reserve Fund cannot be over-stated. I have already submitted that the Wedgwood Committee recommended that the Reserve Fund should be at least Rs. 50 crores. I do not know, Sir, the reasons why the surplus of Rs. 4,50,00,000 has only been assigned to the Reserve Fund and the rest has been taken away. The railways in India are a public utility concern. They are not only a commercial organization from which any exploitation of revenue to the general revenue is expected. As I have already said, the prices had gone up very high. According to all economic laws if there is a depression, there ought to be a sufficient reserve fund from which the railways could fall back to fill up the deficit? The minister in charge of Railways will come to this House and say that there is not a sufficient reserve fund. There is a deficit and the fares and taxes may be increased as was done the last time. Whenever there is a surplus that will be taken away to the general revenues and would not be credited to the reserve fund. This is a very peculiar position.

The Government of this country had given a definite promise last time that rates would increase only because there was a deficit. But when there is a surplus that amount of the surplus is not credited to the reserve fund nor are rates and fares being decreased. Therefore I submit that this is a betrayal of the interests of the poor people in any case. The rates and fares have increased. Therefore the Railway Member should not have accepted the giving away of Rs. 4,50,00,000 to general revenues.

One of the objects of the reserve fund is that money should be spent on the betterment or conveniences of the third class passengers. It is an admitted fact that 80 per cent of the revenue, or 85 per cent of it, come from the pockets of third-class passengers. This was the proper time when something could be done in that connection. This was the year when an improvement could have been made in regard to the comforts and conveniences of the third-class passengers. But this has been denied for reasons not known. No reasons have been assigned as to why the whole surplus is not being credited to the reserve fund and why this amount is not to be spent towards the reduction of the fares and rates and towards the comforts of the third-class passengers. As I have already stated there are no better coaches now: there are no better lavatories for passengers: there is no cleanliness and there is no remedy for over-crowding. My submission is that it has been stated that there is to be replacement of locomotives and other parts in the railway department. I have already submitted that if the entire depreciation amount is spent away it would

[Kazi Syed Karimuddin]

be difficult to replace the locomotives that have been worn out. This was the singular occasion that with Rs. 10 crores as surplus, the railway department could have applied this amount towards the betterment fund or towards the improvement of the comforts of third-class passengers, the replacement of old locomotives and to have kept a certain amount in the reserve fund.

There is already a move, and it is being openly discussed that the private concerns are better than State-owned concerns. If in a year of depression it is found that there is no sufficient reserve fund: if it is found that the railway industry is not prospering; it would be said that this nationalised industry, which is an asset to India, has failed because it is State-owned. But nobody would see what amount has been taken from the surplus. Nobody would have seen that this ought not to have been taken from the surplus. Therefore, this is a wrong and unjustifiable move and I submit that this grant of Rs. 4,50,00,000 should have been rupees ten crores, which is the surplus.

Shri O. V. Alagesan (Madras: General): Sir, I want to offer a few remarks about the Betterment Fund. When there was this surplus of nine and odd crores there were three parties claiming it—the Honourable the Railway Minister, the Honourable the Finance Minister and of course the third party which is the most important party, namely, the third class passenger. But the Committee which went into the question had to satisfy the two dominant claimants and so divided the amount equally and whatever remained, *i.e.*, Rs. 83,62,000, was allotted to the Betterment Fund. In my opinion the Betterment Fund is the only ray of hope for the third class passenger, who otherwise has to suffer a lot. This year from the Betterment Fund an expenditure of 5,80 lakhs has been proposed, out of which I find only 2½ crores have been provided for amenities for the third class passenger. Two crores is allotted for staff quarters and there are various other items like workshops, loco shops for which six lakhs and odd is provided and for 'Other Works' under one general head is allotted a sum of 27 lakhs. Though 5,80 lakhs is being allotted for expenditure from the Betterment Fund, less than 50 per cent of it actually goes to the third class passengers. When this fund was initiated in 1946 the intention was purely to help and provide amenities to the lower class passengers. But even at that stage other factors have been let in. I shall read from the speech of the then Railway Minister:

"In February 1945 the Standing Finance Committee for Railways recommended that during years of prosperity a fund be built up of appropriation from surplus for financing amenities for lower class passengers."

He goes on:

"We now have here a large programme of additions and improvements covering amenities to lower class passengers and staff welfare and other items designed for the safety and comfort of the public which are likely to be unremunerative."

While providing amenities to the third class passenger the then Member has brought in other items of unremunerative expenditure also. In that way the importance of this fund to the third class passenger has been in my opinion very considerably lessened. The other day during the course of the general discussion I was very glad to hear the Honourable Railway Minister say that this Betterment Fund is chiefly intended for providing amenities to the third class passenger. I only request him to put that into force and see that at least 75 per cent of this amount is actually spent on providing amenities for third class passengers. In the whole of the South Indian Railway they are spending about 32 lakhs and odd under this head and I find that only Rs. 20,000 is provided to improve the latrines and for other sanitary arrangements. Every body knows how woeful the sanitary arrangements are in the various stations. There are other matters also like watering arrangements. Actually there are large

crowds besieging the stations and whole nights they have to spend in the open without waiting room facilities or even a semblance of a roof over their heads. These things cry for urgent attention and wherefrom can provision be made for these things except perhaps from the Betterment Fund. I would therefore request the Honourable the Railway Minister to see to it that the best portion of this fund is spent on amenities to third class passengers and thus help really the man who contributes most to the revenues of the railway.

The Honourable Dr. John Matthai: Sir, I have very little to say on the subject. As the House well knows the proposals that we have made to the House are based on the finding of a very authoritative committee and I would not therefore like to offer any observations.

Mr. Chairman: There is no other cut motion and I will put all the demands to the House.

The question is:

"That the separate sums not exceeding the sums shown in the third column of the Order Paper be granted to the Governor General to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1949, in respect of corresponding demands entered in the second column thereof."

The motion was adopted.

[As directed by the Honourable the Speaker, the Motions for demands for grants, which were adopted by the Assembly are reproduced below:—Ed. S. D.]

DEMAND NO. 1—RAILWAY BOARD

That a sum not exceeding Rs. 17,84,000, be granted to the Governor General to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1949, in respect of 'Railway Board'.

DEMAND NO. 2—AUDIT

That a sum not exceeding Rs. 17,84,000, be granted to the Governor General to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1949, in respect of 'Audit'.

DEMAND NO. 3—MISCELLANEOUS EXPENDITURE

That a sum not exceeding Rs. 42,00,000, be granted to the Governor General to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1949, in respect of 'Miscellaneous Expenditure'.

DEMAND NO. 4—WORKING EXPENSES—ADMINISTRATION

That a sum not exceeding Rs. 18,98,43,000, be granted to the Governor General to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1949, in respect of 'Working Expenses—Administration'.

DEMAND NO. 5—WORKING EXPENSES—REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE

That a sum not exceeding Rs. 41,94,44,000, be granted to the Governor General to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1949, in respect of 'Working Expenses—Repairs and Maintenance'.

DEMAND NO. 6—WORKING EXPENSES—OPERATING STAFF

That a sum not exceeding Rs. 25,20,13,000, be granted to the Governor General to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1949, in respect of 'Working Expenses—Operating Staff'.

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

That a sum not exceeding Rs. 20,77,78,000, be granted to the Governor General to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1949, in respect of 'Working Expenses—Operation (Fuel)'.

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

That a sum not exceeding Rs. 7,93,87,000, be granted to the Governor General to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1949, in respect of 'Working Expenses—Operation other than Staff and Fuel'.

DEMAND NO. 9—WORKING EXPENSES—MISCELLANEOUS EXPENSES

That a sum not exceeding Rs. 32,30,37,000, be granted to the Governor General to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1949, in respect of 'Working Expenses—Miscellaneous Expenses'.

DEMAND NO. 10—PAYMENT TO INDIAN STATES AND COMPANIES

That a sum not exceeding Rs. 1,52,99,000, be granted to the Governor General to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1949, in respect of 'Payments to Indian States and Companies'.

DEMAND NO. 11—WORKING EXPENSES—APPROPRIATION TO DEPRECIATION FUND

That a sum not exceeding Rs. 11,18,41,000, be granted to the Governor General to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1949, in respect of 'Working Expenses—Appropriation to Depreciation Fund'.

DEMAND NO. 13—APPROPRIATION TO BETTERMENT FUND

That a sum not exceeding Rs. 83,62,000, be granted to the Governor General to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1949, in respect of 'Appropriation to Betterment Fund'.

DEMAND NO. 14—APPROPRIATION TO RESERVE

That a sum not exceeding Rs. 4,50,00,000, be granted to the Governor General to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1949, in respect of 'Appropriation to Reserve'.

DEMAND NO. 15—CONSTRUCTION OF NEW LINES

That a sum not exceeding Rs. 3,32,00,000, be granted to the Governor General to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1949, in respect of 'Construction of New Lines'.

DEMAND NO. 16—OPEN LINE WORKS—ADDITIONS

That a sum not exceeding Rs. 19,12,00,000, be granted to the Governor General to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1949, in respect of 'Open Line Works—Additions'.

DEMAND NO. 17—OPEN LINE WORKS—REPLACEMENTS

That a sum not exceeding Rs. 30,65,80,000, be granted to the Governor General to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1949, in respect of 'Open Line Works—Replacements'.

DEMAND NO. 18—CAPITAL OUTLAY ON VIZAGPATAM PORT

That a sum not exceeding Rs. 19,30,000, be granted to the Governor General to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1949, in respect of 'Capital Outlay on Vizagapatam Port'.

The Assembly then adjourned till a Quarter to Eleven of the Clock on Wednesday the 25th February, 1948.