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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY DEBATES

(Official Report)

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SECOND SESSION

OF THE

THIRD LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY, 1928



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Legislative Assembly.

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THE HONOURABLE MR V. J. PATEL.

Deputy President :

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MR. K. C. NEOGY, M.L.A.

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CAPTAIN SURAJ SINGH, BAHADUR, I.O.M.

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MR. N. M. JOSHI, M.L.A.

MR. JAMNADAS M. MEHTA, M.L.A.

DR. A. SUHRAWARDY, M.L.A.

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Friday, 24th February, 1928.

The Assembly met in the Assembly Chamber of the Council House at Eleven of the Clock, Mr. President in the Chair.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

INDIAN REPRESENTATION ON THE FEDERAL COUNCIL OF THE FEDERATED MALAY STATES.

289. ***Mr. N. M. Joshi:** With reference to my starred question No. 52 asked on the 1st February, 1928, will Government kindly state whether they have received any further information as regards Indian representation on the Federal Council of the Federated Malay States?

Mr. G. S. Bajpai: The Government of India have recently been informed by their Agent in Malaya that an Indian gentleman has been nominated to the Federal Council of the Federated Malay States.

PAY OF SELECTION GRADE CLERKS OF THE POST OFFICES.

290. ***Mr. Anwar-ul-Asim:** (a) Are the Government aware of the fact that the recent revision of the pay of selection grade clerks of the Post Offices has adversely affected those who had been officiating in the former grade of Rs. 175—225?

(b) Is it not a fact that the initial pay of officials cannot be fixed at a stage lower than that they had been drawing up to the date on which the revision is given effect to? If so, how are the audit offices fixing the pay of the officials on Rs. 145—170 (substantive) who had been officiating in the grade of Rs. 175—225 and drawing Rs. 225, 215, 210, 195, 185 on the 1st September, 1927, at Rs. 180?

(c) Do the Government realise the difficulties of the officials mentioned above on account of fixing their pay at a stage less than that of the amount they were drawing in the old grade? If so, do the Government propose to issue immediate orders to the effect that the revised initial pay in the grade of Rs. 160 to 250 of the officials of the old grade of Rs. 145—170 should be fixed on the pay drawn by them while officiating in the grade of Rs. 175—225 prior to 1st September last?

The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra: (a) Yes.

(b) The initial pay in the new scale is fixed at the stage next above the *substantive* pay of the officials concerned when brought on to that scale.

(c) Yes. The matter is receiving attention.

RECRUITMENT OF MUSLIMS IN CERTAIN BRANCHES OF THE POST OFFICE.

291. *Mr. Anwar-ul-Azim: (i) Will the Government be pleased to lay on the table a statement showing the total number of officials on the 31st January, 1928, who have passed the departmental examinations for the posts of (1) Superintendent of Post Offices (2) Inspectors of Post Offices and Head Clerks of the offices of the Superintendents of Post Offices and (3) Accountants, Circle by Circle and (a) Hindus, (b) Muham-madans and (c) others separately?

(ii) What action, if any, do the Government propose to take in order to give a greater share to Musalmans in the above posts?

(iii) Is it a fact that generally graduates are selected to sit at the examination for Superintendents of Post Offices and Inspectors of Post Offices, etc.? If so, would the Government be pleased to lay on the table Circle by Circle a statement showing the total number of graduate clerks on the 31st January, 1928 (1) Hindus (2) Musalmans and (3) others separately in India, Burma and Baluchistan?

(iv) What action, if any, do the Government propose to take for the recruitment of a larger number of Musalman graduate and under-graduate clerks?

The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra: (1) A statement showing the number of departmental officials who have passed the examination for the appointment of Superintendents of Post Offices and are considered fit for that appointment and a statement showing the number of departmental officials who have passed the examination for accountants since the date of its introduction in 1925 are being supplied to the Honourable Member. Similar information in regard to the number of departmental officials who have passed the examination for Inspectors of Post Offices and Head Clerks of Divisional offices is not available and Government does not propose to collect the information as its collection will not in the opinion of Government serve any useful purpose. I may state for the information of the Honourable Member that the examination for Inspectors of Post Offices has now been abolished and has been replaced by a new examination, called the selection grade examination, which all officials must pass before they are eligible for promotion to posts on the selection grade in the Post Office whether as Inspectors of Post Offices or as Head Clerks or as Head Postmasters or selection grade clerks. Of course, mere passing of the examination does not give the official any claim for such promotion.

(2) The examination for accountants is open to all clerks who may desire to appear for it. As already stated, the examination for Inspectors of Post Offices has been discontinued, but when it was being held it was also open to all clerks who desired to appear for it. Only selected officials are permitted to appear for the examination for Superintendents of Post Offices and the claims of Muslim clerks are considered equally with those of clerks of other communities. Government does not consider it necessary to take any special action in the matter. It is for Muslims to qualify themselves for promotion to gazetted and selection appointments by passing the prescribed examinations and otherwise establishing their fitness for the same.

(3) and (4). Graduate as well as non-graduate clerks are selected to appear at the examination for Superintendents of Post Offices and were allowed to appear at the examination for Inspectors of Post Offices. The latter parts of part (iii) and part (iv) of the question do not arise.

RELAXATION IN FAVOUR OF MUSLIMS OF THE THIRD VACANCY RULES IN THE POSTAL DEPARTMENT.

292. ***Mr. Anwar-ul-Azim:** Is it a fact that according to the rules in force in the Postal Department Musalmans are only taken in the third vacancy and that the Superintendents cannot take them because they are required to be provided within a year and at the same time in a third vacancy? If so, are the Government prepared to issue orders to relax the third vacancy rules in respect of Musalman graduates and undergraduates?

The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra: The position is not as stated by the Honourable Member in the first part of his question. A copy of the orders on the subject is being sent to him. The latter part of the question does not arise.

CONVENIENCES FOR WOMEN PILGRIMS ON PILGRIM STEAMERS.

293. ***Mr. Anwar-ul-Azim:** Will the Government be pleased to furnish the following informations:

- (i) When a Haji takes a return ticket for his journey, and cannot complete it, does he get his fare back?
- (ii) In view of the fact that a great number of women perform pilgrimages to Mecca and Medina, every year, do the Government propose to arrange separate conveniences for them on board the steamers, and provide women on those steamers for bathing the dead women, which is now done by males when the occasion arises?

Mr. G. S. Bajpai: (i) The attention of the Honourable Member is invited to rule 68-I of the rules published in the Government of India Notification No. 1734-Health, dated the 15th December 1926.

(ii) Under the rules for pilgrim ships printed as Appendix E to the "General Instructions for Pilgrims to the Hedjaz" (a copy of which publication will be found in the Library), separate screened bathing places and latrines are provided for women. The Government of India do not think it necessary to provide a special staff for bathing the dead bodies of women.

SLEEPING ACCOMMODATION FOR PILGRIMS ON PILGRIM STEAMERS.

294. ***Mr. Anwar-ul-Azim:** What spaces are allotted to the pilgrims on board the ships for sleeping and keeping their luggage? How many third class passengers will be accommodated on the pilgrim steamers leaving Bombay on the 21st and 22nd of this month for Jeddah? Is it a fact that third class passengers are put inside the holds for sleeping purposes without proper arrangements for ventilation?

Mr. G. S. Bajpai: As regards the first and third parts of this question, the attention of the Honourable Member is invited to sections 193

and 194 of the Indian Merchant Shipping Act, and to rules 19 and 22 published in Appendix E to the "General Instructions for Pilgrims to the Hedjaz". A copy of this publication has been placed in the Library. The Government of India have no information as to the number of passengers who will sail by the ships referred to by the Honourable Member.

COOKING ARRANGEMENTS, ETC., FOR PILGRIMS ON PILGRIM STEAMERS.

295. *Mr. Anwar-ul-Azim: Who runs the kitchen on these pilgrim steamers, what arrangements are there for sweet water on board? How is the consumption of sweet water regulated during the voyage? What arrangements are made for the cooking of the pilgrim's food? Is it a fact that huge blocks of wood are given, without any instrument to cut them into pieces? Are there sufficient number of bathrooms and conveniences for men? What deck is provided for the pilgrims to walk about on these steamers? Are ice and mineral waters available on these pilgrim ships? How are the dead pilgrims disposed of during the voyage? Are they given coffins and clothes and religious rites before they are interned?

Mr. G. S. Bajpai: As regards the first six parts of his question, the attention of the Honourable Member is invited to the rules printed in Appendix E to the "General Instructions for Pilgrims to the Hedjaz". As regards the last three parts of the question, the Government of India have no precise information but have made enquiries.

PLATFORM TICKETS AT THE PORTS OF EMBARKATION FOR THE FRIENDS OF PILGRIMS, ETC.

296. *Mr. Anwar-ul-Azim: Are platform tickets available at the ports of embarkation for the friends of the pilgrims? Has Government granted monopolies to any company to carry the Haj pilgrims?

Mr. G. S. Bajpai: Government have no information regarding platform tickets. The reply to the second part of the question is in the negative.

RECOVERY OF OVERTIME ALLOWANCE DRAWN BY OFFICIALS OF THE RANGOON GENERAL POST OFFICE FOR THE SORTING OF INWARD ENGLISH PACKETS.

297. *Mr. Anwar-ul-Azim: (a) Will the Government be pleased to state whether the sorting of inward English packets for Burma in the Rangoon General Post Office during the period from July, 1926 to January, 1927 by the officials of the Rangoon General Post Office was optional?

(b) If so, will the Government be pleased to state the circumstances under which a sum of Rs. 700 or thereabouts was ordered to be recovered from the different officials who drew overtime allowance for having worked beyond their legitimate hours of duty?

(c) Will the Government be pleased to state whether the overdrawal was due to a mistake of the Directorate? If so, do the Government propose to waive the recovery of the overdrawn amount? If not, do the Government propose to recover the amount from the official or officials who may be responsible for the mistake leading to the overdrawal?

Mr. H. A. Sams: (a) The work was done by volunteers who were given special payment for the extra work.

(b) The amount that has been ordered to be recovered is not the whole of the overtime allowance paid. The volunteers were paid at a rate higher than they were really entitled to get and the excess payment made has been ordered to be recovered in easy instalments.

(c) The overdrawal was due to a small typing mistake in the copy of the orders issued to the Postmaster General, Burma. The answer to the remaining parts of the question is in the negative.

HOUSING SCHEME FOR POSTAL OFFICIALS IN RANGOON.

298. ***Mr. Anwar-ul-Azim:** Will the Government be pleased to state what action has been taken on the memorandum of grievances submitted to the Honourable Sir B. N. Mitra, Member-in-charge of the Department of Industries and Labour of the Government of India, by the Burma Provincial Postal and Railway Mail Service Association, Rangoon, during April last relating to the abnormal rise of house rent in the city of Rangoon on account of the expiry of the Rangoon Rent Act of 1920? Do the Government contemplate launching on a housing scheme for the postal officials in Rangoon or propose to grant house rent allowance to them?

The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra: No action has been taken on the memorandum. Government do not propose to launch on a housing scheme for postal officials in Rangoon or to grant them house-rent allowance. The new rates of pay introduced from March 1926 allowed for the cost of living in Rangoon which includes house-rent paid.

INSPECTORS OF POST OFFICES AND DIVISIONAL HEAD CLERKS IN THE BURMA CIRCLE.

299. ***Mr. Anwar-ul-Azim:** Will the Government be pleased to state the total number of appointments of Inspectors of Post Offices and Divisional Head Clerks in the Burma Circle and how many of them are filled by Burmans, Hindus, Mussalmans and Christians?

Mr. H. A. Sams: There are 26 Inspectors of Post Offices and Divisional Head Clerks in the Burma Circle of whom 13 are Burmans, 12 Hindus and 1 Mussalman.

INADEQUATE REPRESENTATION OF MUSLIMS IN THE POSTAL SERVICE IN BURMA.

300. ***Mr. Anwar-ul-Azim:** Will the Government be pleased to state the total number of clerical appointments in the Rangoon General Post Office? How many of them are filled by Burmans, Hindus, Mussalmans and Christians? In view of the poor representation of Mussalmans in the postal service in Burma, do the Government propose to take steps to ensure a greater representation of the Muslim community in the postal service?

The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra: The total number of clerical appointments in the Rangoon General Post Office is 431. Of these, 100 are filled by Burmans, 215 by Hindus, 78 by Mussalmans and

38 by Christians. As regards the last part of the question the Honourable Member is referred to the copy of orders supplied to him in reply to his question No. 292.

301*—303.*

(Mr. N. C. Kelkar was absent when question No. 301 standing in his name was called.)

Lala Lajpat Rai: May I, Sir, ask that question on behalf of Mr. Kelkar?

Mr. President: Has the Honourable Member got the authority of Mr. Kelkar to do so?

Lala Lajpat Rai: No, Sir.

Mr. President: The questions standing in the name of Mr. Kelkar (questions Nos. 301 to 303) are so important that the Honourable Member should have been here to put them. I direct that they shall not be treated as unstarred questions and entered in the proceedings.

THE RAILWAY BUDGET—LIST OF DEMANDS.

SECOND STAGE.

Expenditure from Revenue.

DEMAND No. 1.—RAILWAY BOARD.

Mr. President: The House will now proceed to consider the Demands for Grants on the Railway Budget.

The Honourable Sir George Rainy (Member for Commerce and Railways): Sir, I beg to move:

“That a sum not exceeding Rs. 11,70,000 be granted to the Governor General in Council to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1929, in respect of ‘Railway Board’.”

Entire Railway Policy.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta (Bombay City: Non-Muhammadan Urban): Sir, I beg to move:

“That the Demand under the head ‘Railway Board’ be reduced to Re. 1.”

Mr. B. Das (Orissa Division: Non-Muhammadan): I rise on a point of order, Sir. Last year, when my Honourable friend Mr. Jayakar moved a similar cut, you gave it as your ruling that an amount of Rs. 100 should be left to the Government, so that other Honourable Members may move further reductions in it.

Mr. President: The Chair gave no such ruling. The Chair merely made a suggestion to the Honourable Members to that effect.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: Sir, the Railway Board is a pocket edition of the Simon Commission, and it deserves no better treatment than what

the Commission has got at the hands of this House. The Simon Commission was appointed by an authority over which this House has no control. So is this Railway Board. The Simon Commission is responsible not to this House but to an extraneous authority. So is this Railway Board. The Simon Commission will carry on its work or the absence of work irrespective of what this House does. So does the Railway Board carry on all its activities irrespective of the opinion and the vote of this House. Whenever it has come into conflict with this House on a question of vital importance, it has rushed to the Governor General for restoring the cuts which this House has made. And, Sir, for this reason it is absolutely necessary for this House to assert its self-respect and give the Railway Board no better treatment than the Simon Commission has got.

But irresponsibility and arbitrariness are not the only sins of omission or commission of the Railway Board. The disease goes deeper. Indian Railways are for India, the money invested is Indian, and yet this Railway Board is constituted entirely out of non-Indians. During the last seventy years, since the Railways were first built, the Government of India have tried to exercise their control on the various railway administrations by about fifteen different methods; the form of control has changed from time to time, but on no occasion has an Indian been associated with the machinery of control. Promises have been given, opportunities have arisen, but these promises have not been fulfilled. Hopes have been raised, but they have not been satisfied and to the people of India the Railway Board is an institution for broken pledges and blasted hopes. The House knows how Sir Basil Blackett promised that when there was a vacancy on the Board the claims of an Indian would weigh very heavily in the scales. That vacancy did occur but the promise was not carried out. It has occurred again when Sir Clement Hindley has gone on leave; it was open to the Government to have an Indian on the Railway Board if only temporarily. Sir, on principle, I maintain, with great respect to the gentlemen who constitute the Board, that none of them has any place on the Board which is meant for India and Indians. The appointment of Europeans should be a rare exception (*Cries of "No, no" from the European Members*), once in a century if necessary, while the appointment of Indians on the Railway Board should be the ordinary normal policy. That is as clear as daylight, except to people who either through perversity, ignorance or selfishness will not look at things in the proper way. Quite naturally and properly the Railway Board should consist of Indians primarily and ordinarily, and only on rare occasions of foreigners. (*Cries of "No, no" from the European Benches.*) But in the Railway Board everything is unnatural and the sons of the soil are deliberately kept out of the charmed circle.

When I was coming to Delhi a constituent of mine sent me a question, but there was one mandate of the Madras Congress against putting questions and being a loyal Congress man I did not put it. For the information of the House however I will now say what that question was:

"(a) Will Government be pleased to say whether they have any information—as Kamsa received that of the birth of Krishna—that the Indian, who is going on the Railway Board has so far been born?"

(b) If the reply to the above is in the negative, will Government be pleased to say what measures they propose to take in order to bring about this event?"

That shows the extent of the disappointment and despair in the minds of my constituents who feel that so far as it lies in the hands of those

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who now control the destinies of our Railways, they will not appoint an Indian to the Railway Board. A Civil Servant may do almost any work he is capable of doing anything on earth, and also in Heaven. (*An Honourable Member*: "Can he go to Heaven?") I hope so. But in the opinion of the Railway Board Indians cannot be trusted. A Civil Servant may mismanage our currency, but he can be promoted to the Governorship of a province. To-day he is doing finance work, to-morrow army work, another day archæological work, the next day some other work, and in fact he is competent to do everything under the sun. But for an Indian to be on the Railway Board—that is out of the question. And apparently in the opinion of those who control the destinies of Indian Railways the Indian who will go to the Railway Board is not yet born! Sir, a self-respecting House will meet such supercilious attitude by passing this amendment that the Railway Board should be dismissed and dissolved, and that is the meaning of the amendment which I move on behalf of my Party.

The second question is that of the Indianisation of the superior services of the railways. My Honourable friend, Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas, in his remarks yesterday, on the general discussion of the Railway Budget, referred to the Press Communiqué which some of us on the Railway Finance Committee had issued in November last, in connection with the slow process of Indianisation in the superior railway services; we had invited those who had failed in getting admission to the various railway services to send us their names and qualifications, and the posts for which they had applied; we have got shoals of communications and here, with your permission, Sir, I place the list* of those who have written to us on the table, with a view that the House may find out how many competent Indians, fully qualified in every way to fill the posts for which they applied, have been turned down, while all the time the excuse given is that there are not competent Indians available and that the employment of Europeans became inevitable. Sir George Rainy in his speech the other day tried to make out that though there was remissness in the past, so far as the year 1927-28 was concerned things were moving normally, that 70 per cent. of permanent vacancies were being given to Indians and that in the temporary list the percentage was even better. I am afraid Sir George Rainy has been misled and the House has been misled by that statement in his speech. He said there were 42 Indians appointed in permanent posts, as against 18 Europeans, therefore the percentage was 70. As a matter of fact thirteen out of the forty-two Indian youths are not permanent. They have still to undergo a course of probationship, through which they may come out successful or may not; therefore it is not quite correct to say that 42 Indians were appointed to permanent posts. It all depends on how many of them will eventually go to permanent jobs, and therefore to-day these 13 cannot be counted as permanent appointments; and the percentage is thus really reduced to 60 per cent. and not 70 per cent. as claimed. But apart from that I want to put two questions to Sir George Rainy: why is it that in the matter of claims they have suddenly called in the services of a Claims Officer from England on the Great Indian Peninsula Railway? The claims amount has recently been going down very considerably—from 120 lakhs it has now come down to a few lakhs and that shows that there is greater watchfulness and efficiency

* Printed as Appendix A to these Proceedings.

in the various departments of the Railways. If that is so, I cannot understand why the Great Indian Peninsula Railway has appointed a European gentleman as the Claims Officer, against, as I understand, the advice of the Railway Board. Why was the Great Indian Peninsula Railway allowed to do so? We find that this very fortunate individual has passed what is equivalent to the matriculation examination here, and that he has worked in one or two railways for some time. That is about all the merit that this gentleman has for superseding a number of competent Indians who have served very creditably and well for years in the Claims Department, and they could have very well been appointed; and I ask Sir George Rainy, why this Claims Officer was indented from England, in supersession of the rights of many competent Indians who could have been appointed? I ask him also whether this Publicity Officer's post which has been created during the current year has been given to an Indian or to a European; the wages seem to show that it cannot have gone to an Indian, it is Rs. 2,500 a month, and therefore I am right in assuming that even this post has not been given to an Indian. What publicity is there that an Indian cannot do? May I know what this present officer is doing that an Indian officer could not have done? Sir, you find that the policy, however disguised, is still one of giving preference to foreign talent and foreign material over indigenous talent; and for these reasons I do maintain that there is every justification for the House to reject the Demand except to the extent of granting it a solatium of one rupee.

Sir, the railway policy in 1921 was investigated by a Committee of this House. That Committee recommended that Rs. 150 crores should be spent during five years for the purposes of rehabilitating Railways; and in March 1922 the House recommended that out of these 150 crores as much as possible should be spent in India for the establishment of railway industries. These 150 crores have been voted; they have been spent probably, but the two most important railway industries have still to come; and such of them as could have been established have been ruined by the vacillating policy of the Government. We were told that out of 150 crores, 48½ crores would be required for purchasing wagons. Have the Indian wagon companies been given orders to the extent of 48½ crores? Is there a flourishing wagon industry in the country? We were told that coaches to the extent of 18 crores would be required. Have those coaches been manufactured in this country? Engines were to cost 30 crores and so on; and I venture to say that the amount of 150 crores was obtained on false pretences if it was not to be spent in the manner recommended by this House. The two most vital industries connected with the Railways are wagons, coaches and locomotives. But such of them as existed have been crushed and those not existing have not been allowed to come into existence; and Heaven only knows when any railway industry will come into existence.

Sir, there is another matter. Since the separation of railway finance we have discovered what we did not know before. I just want to remind my friend, Mr. Neogy, with whose remarks I agree entirely, that the powers which we now do not enjoy, we have never enjoyed; the only new element is that we now find out that they are powers which this House should enjoy and that without those powers our control is and will be illusory. Sir, we find that, never mind whether a scheme of railway construction or survey or preliminary investigation has or has not come before this House, any unspent amount of a particular grant is being spent

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on such unsanctioned schemes by re-appropriation; and this re-appropriation proceeds to the length of spending money on schemes about which the House knows nothing, which never appeared on the budget paper and this kind of re-appropriation becomes criminal misappropriation because it evades the constitutional control of this House; and in no self-governing country can constitutional control be evaded with impunity. And, Sir, not merely the Railway Board can do this, but also the Railway Agent; and sometimes he does it without consulting the Railway Board. In the forthcoming review of railway finances, the House must take a determined stand against the unconstitutional power of the Railway Board.

Then, Sir, the profits of the Railways, such as they are, are due to exchange and sweated labour. It is a disgrace that a railway workman should get Rs. 9 a month; Sir Charles Innes in answering that point last year said that Rs. 9 was more than a man would get as agricultural wages, and the Rev. Dr. Macphail, I think he was, supported the statement. Sir, I have in my possession a copy of an official report on agricultural wages in the Bombay Presidency and I want to tell the House and the Railway Board that, so far as the Bombay Presidency is concerned, the statement of Sir Charles Innes was wholly inaccurate, it is simply not true that agricultural wages in the Bombay Presidency at any rate are below Rs. 9 a month. This official document will make it clear that the minimum wage is 9 annas a day, which is certainly quite 80 per cent more than Rs. 9 a month which works out to five annas a day—an amount which a fashionable lady would spend on washing her lap-dog. Is this the wage you want to pay to human beings in the twentieth century and then say that it is more than the agriculturist gets? If it is so, it is all the greater disgrace to Government (*An Honourable Member*: Government?)—yes—that in this country things should have come to such a pass that agricultural labour should get less than Rs. 9 a month. (*An Honourable Member*: “They do not want more”.) Even the peons in the Railway Board get Rs. 14 a month. The contrast between Rs. 6,000 a month and Rs. 14 a month is so glaring that people sitting at the head of a table with sepoys standing behind them—Rs. 6,000 against Rs. 14—is a contrast which anybody could have noticed but the Railway Board. I think the one most important thing which ought to come under revision is the wages of these peons and workmen; and they should be raised to a human and decent figure.

I find in one of the railway books a statement, about latrines in third and intermediate class compartments, not that they are cleansed regularly, but that they are being cleansed at reasonable intervals. This statement is really a euphemism for stating that they are not being cleansed regularly. (*An Honourable Member*: “Which Railway?”) It is the Bengal-Nagpur Railway I think. That sanitary conditions are not being looked after properly in the Railways, and that the Railway Board should boast of running the Railways at a profit is sufficient to condemn the Board before the civilised world.

Sir, there is one further point with which I want to deal. The Railway Board utilise the services of contractors for structural works or for reconstruction of lines when they themselves cannot do these things departmentally. Sir, in this matter the policy of the House is that contracts should go to the lowest tender, but everybody will be prepared to agree that that rule should not be carried out blindly. For instance, if you want

to build the Khyber Railway on contract the best method is not to give the contract to Afridis or Waziristan people, but to people who show that they have got plant and machinery and equipment, who have got trained and skilled technical labour at their command, who have got financial resources and who can carry out the contract satisfactorily. The Great Indian Peninsula Railway must have recently suffered loss to the extent of lakhs of rupees and delay as well on account of holding up some important schemes because in giving the contract to the lowest tenderer, care was not taken to see that the contractors had experience and resources in railway construction. On the other hand, the contracts for loading and unloading of wagons in which only a small amount of labour is necessary and no technical equipment is essential, are passing as heirlooms in the family of some people. In the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway these contracts for which no particular technical skill is necessary are passing from father to son and it is because the lowest tender principle is not followed in regard to giving out loading and unloading of wagons contracts that loss to the extent of some lakhs of rupees is suffered. Also the ice and aerated water contracts do not require any technical skill, but they are also not given out on the lowest tender principle.

Sir, the last point I want to make is what I said in the general discussion that your Railways are really not paying, that your so-called profit is illusory, that your reduction of expenditure is an eye-wash, that all your so-called surpluses are a premium on inefficiency, wastefulness and extravagance. All these profits are due almost exclusively to the profits on exchange you are making. Sir George Rainy said only 62 crores of expenditure for four years in succession, in spite of the increase in traffic and mileage. It all means that you have been benefiting at the cost of the mass of the people of this country. For instance, regarding the repairs to locomotives Sir George Rainy gave many particulars and said that they have reduced the cost from Rs. 14,000 to Rs. 11,000 and so on,—it cannot be true. Their present accounting system is so chaotic that they are not in a position to tell the world what they spend on the repairs of each locomotive. On page 11 of the Dickinson's Report, you will find a quotation from the Raven Committee, paragraph 156. I gather from that paragraph that the way in which repairs are carried out cannot indicate as to how much a particular locomotive costs for repairs. I will quote the exact words:

“ . . . we consider it necessary to express our disapproval of the practice that has in recent years been adopted of charging all repairs to engines to one Standing Work Order. This has practically resulted in the costing system running to seed and in the Standing Work Orders for repairs being used as a dumping ground for outstanding balances ”

and so on. On account of the system at present followed you cannot tell at any given moment what is the cost of repairing a particular locomotive because there is only one Standing Work Order under which everything is done—it is a dumping ground—and therefore it was very courageous on the part of Sir George Rainy to say—unless the system has been changed since 1927—that he has reduced the cost of repairs of engines from Rs. 14,000 to Rs. 11,000. Nothing of the kind can happen. For all this, Sir, I say that it is merely the exchange profits and not their economy which has led to the reduction of expenditure. For these reasons, I suggest that the House should, for its own self-respect, in the interests of economy

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and in the interests of efficiency, tell the Railway Board that they do not deserve to remain where they are.

Sir, I move.

Mr. President: Motion moved:

"That the Demand under head 'Railway Board' be reduced to Re. 1."

Mr. E. K. Shanmukham Chetty (Salem and Coimbatore *cum* North Arcot: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I support the amendment moved by my friend Mr. Jamnadas Mehta. In support of the amendment, he gave a detailed exposition of the various aspects of railway administration policy pursued by the Railway Board. I do not propose to cover as vast a field as he has attempted, but I would like to confine myself to one or two aspects of railway policy.

I propose, Sir, in supporting my Honourable friend's motion to say just a few words on the steps taken by the Railway Administration to give effect to the policy recommended by this House in 1922 and accepted by the Government of India, namely, the policy of encouraging the establishment of the necessary industries for the manufacture of railway material. Last year during the discussion on the Railway Budget we had a very interesting discussion on the policy pursued by the Railway Board with regard to the wagon industry in this country. On that occasion my chief, Pandit Motilal Nehru, gave a very vivid exposition of the policy of the Railway Board in this matter, a policy which has resulted in killing practically the wagon industry in this country. The Honourable the Chief Commissioner for Railways in a speech, characterised more by resentment than by reasoning, attempted an elaborate justification of the policy of the Railway Board. And to-day, Sir, I propose to bring to the notice of Government and of this House the fact that the Government of India, instead of trying to do something to set the wagon industry

Sir Walter Willson (Associated Chambers of Commerce: Nominated Non-Official): On a point of order, Sir. There is an amendment on the paper dealing with the wagon industry in which very many of us are very much interested and hope to have a full debate on the subject. May I ask the Honourable Member if he could keep over that subject and not bring it on the Railway Board policy? If it is sandwiched amongst so many subjects it will perhaps be lost sight of to some extent.

Mr. E. K. Shanmukham Chetty: I am sure, Sir, my Honourable friend Sir Walter Willson would have an opportunity of raising this discussion on the wagon industry on the present vote itself. If he considers it so important why should he not press it on the present amendment?

Sir Walter Willson: Because there is a special amendment to deal with it.

Mr. E. K. Shanmukham Chetty: That does not matter. Make this as your special amendment for that purpose.

Sir, I propose, as I said, to bring to the notice of this House the fact that the Railway Administration are persisting in a policy the ultimate result of which will be to completely wipe away the wagon industry. Honourable

Members will remember that as a result of a communiqué issued by the Government of India in the year 1918 guaranteeing the purchase in India of about 3,000 wagons annually for a period of 10 years, two new companies specially designed for wagon building, with a capital of about a crore of rupees, came into existence, and two other existing companies at considerable expense altered their plant to suit it for the building of wagons. In 1924, as the result of the report of the Tariff Board, the Government of India undertook the policy of giving a subsidy to the wagon industry, and in 1926, when the wagon manufacturers in India were in a position to compete favourably with the foreign manufacturers and were in a position to stand on their own legs without bounty or any further support, the Railway Board made the startling announcement that for two or three years more to come they would not require any more wagons. As I said, this aspect of the question and the circumstances that led to this announcement by the Railway Board were discussed at very great length last year. I do not therefore propose to traverse the ground once again. As a result of the sad plight in which the wagon companies were placed I understand negotiations were carried on between the Railway Administration and some of these wagon companies which resulted in the purchase by the Railway Administration of the Peninsular Locomotive Company for about Rs. 20 lakhs. In so far as the Railway Administration had come forward to compensate this company for the disappointment we have absolutely no complaint to make. But then, Sir, the intention that the Government have at present of utilising the plant of the Peninsular Locomotive Company for the building of carriage underframes will, I submit, completely wipe away the wagon industry in this country. The policy which the Railway Administration now propose to pursue to build carriage underframes in the Peninsular Locomotive Company will not merely finally kill the wagon industry but it will be a violation of the declared policy of the Government. I said that the building of carriage underframes by the Railway Administration itself will finally kill the wagon industry, and I will give my reasons for making this contention. Besides the Peninsular Locomotive Company there are three other companies, one of which specially came into existence as wagon building concern and two others made considerable alterations to their plant to suit them for the building of wagons specifically on the strength of the Government communiqué of 1918. I suppose it will be conceded that though the Railway Administration may not require any more wagons for two or three years to come, after the lapse of two or three years they would certainly need wagons and the problem therefore now is how to keep alive these companies so that, when the demand for wagons again comes, these companies might be in a position to manufacture wagons. I am not a technical expert in these matters, but I am told that the only other manufacture which a wagon manufacturing concern can engage in the absence of wagon building is the construction of carriage underframes. If the Railway Administration is to undertake the manufacture of its own carriage underframes, I ask, what work has these three companies to undertake? If these three companies are given a chance of manufacturing carriage underframes, it will give them just sufficient work to keep them going for two or three years, after which period they expect that the Railway Administration will place orders for wagons once again. If these companies are now deprived of the opportunity of manufacturing carriage underframes, then the only course open to these companies will be to shut their works down and when the time comes for the Railway Administration to purchase

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more wagons, they will not find in India any undertaking prepared to construct wagons.

Apart from this serious situation the intention of the Railway Board to build carriage underframes in the Peninsular Locomotive workshops would be, as I said, a violation of the declared policy of Government itself. The policy of Government in this matter is contained in a letter from the Railway Board, dated the 11th August, 1923, to the Indian Engineering Association. In this letter the Railway Board says:

"I am directed to inform your Association that it is the policy of Government to restrict railway workshops to their primary function of dealing with the repairs and maintenance of the stock and equipment of the railway as far as this can be done with observance of economy in the working of the shops. To some extent it is desirable to undertake work that is not purely repair or maintenance work in order to make the best use of machines and staff that could not otherwise be given continuous full time employment. But it is the policy of Government to keep the amount of such work to a minimum and particularly where it can be done by private firms."

Now, I submit, Sir, that the proposal of the Railway Board to undertake the manufacture of carriage underframes will be a direct violation of this declared policy. In addressing a meeting of the Associated Chambers of Commerce on the 20th December, 1927, my Honourable friend the Commerce Member said that the acquisition of the Peninsular Locomotive Company's works was not the result of any change of policy nor was it connected with any change of policy. It is true that the acquisition of the Peninsular Locomotive Company by the Railway Board is not the result of any change of policy. The acquisition was necessitated by the fact that the Government had to come to the help of this Company which had specifically come into existence on the communiqué of 1918 regarding wagons. But I submit that the decision of the Railway Board to build carriage underframes in these works would be a direct violation of that policy. This proposal to build carriage underframes has caused serious apprehension in the minds of those engaged in these industries so much that the meeting of the Associated Chambers in December 1927 was forced to adopt the following resolution:

"This Association, having regard to the expressed policy of the Government of India with reference to manufacture in railway workshops, views with apprehension the recent acquisition and extension by Government of the Peninsular Locomotive Company's works and the extension of various State Railway workshops which would appear to be preliminaries to a reversal of that policy."

But my Honourable friend, the Railway Member, might very well ask, what are we to do with the plant of the Peninsular Locomotive works? To which my answer is that the Peninsular Locomotive Company was originally started as a concern for the building of Locomotives and Government must now make the necessary alterations in the plant to enable the Locomotive Company once more to build Locomotives. It is for that purpose that the Peninsular Locomotive Company's works must be used by the Railway Administration. Apart from the fact that such a step will avert the serious danger of wiping away the wagon industry it will have the further beneficial effect of making a start in the building up of locomotives in this country. After the very sad experience of Indian manufacturers with regard to the wagon industry, it is not now possible for any private concern to come into

existence for the manufacture of locomotives, whatever assurances Government might give. Are we then to go without having any works for the manufacture of locomotives in this country? If locomotives are ever to be manufactured in India at all, then some step ought to be taken in this direction. I submit that the acquisition of the Peninsular Locomotive works by the Railway Administration furnishes a splendid opportunity for making a start in this direction. After working it for some years probably they may think of handing it over to a private concern.

I would just, before I conclude, like to say a few words on the question of the reorganisation of railway workshops and their consequences to the railway manufactures in this country. This question becomes important especially in view of the Raven Committee's report. Honourable Members will remember that among the terms of reference to this Committee are the following:

"The advisability of concentrating the manufacture of spare parts in one or more of the larger workshops and of relieving the repair shops of all such manufacturing processes."

In accordance with this term of reference the Raven Committee have recommended certain measures for centralising manufacture and for standardisation. While I welcome the decision of the Government of India to give effect to the recommendations of the Raven Committee Report with a view to manage their workshops more effectively and economically. I submit that they must always keep in view this fact that whatever they do in the enlargement of their activities in the railway workshops these measures should not have the result of competition with indigenous private manufacturers. If the railway workshops are to undertake the manufacture of spare parts for themselves, then they must make out a case that they can make these spare parts cheaper than private agencies, and they must also make out a case that private agencies have failed to supply these spare parts regularly for the Railway Administration. Unless they have made out a case on these two points, they would not have any justification for manufacturing spare parts and thereby competing with private manufacturers. Sir, these are some of the points to which I thought it would be worth while to draw the attention of this House and of the Government of India so that whatever might be the consequences of the disastrous policy followed in the past, the Railway Administration may not persist in the following of such a policy as to discourage and ultimately cripple the indigenous industries connected with railways.

Mr. E. F. Sykes (Bombay: European): Sir, Mr. Shanmukham Chetty devoted a large part of his speech to the question of the wagon policy of the Government of India. My Honourable friend, Sir Walter Willson, has pointed out that it is a little inconvenient to have this point raised at this stage of the debate, because while my Honourable friend, Mr. Shanmukham Chetty, has explained the situation with very great lucidity in a manner that I think commends itself to the greater part of the Members of this House.—it certainly commends itself to me and to many of my friends on this side—he has raised it at a stage in which it is impossible to support him with our votes for he has raised it on a cut to reduce the demand of the Railway Board to one rupee, which we could not possibly support. On the other hand, if we do not give expression to our views on this point at present we should probably not have an opportunity

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to do so later. I therefore wish to deal very shortly with some of the points on this question of wagon construction. I think my Honourable friend, Mr. Chetty, has made the general position perfectly clear to the House and I do not want to go over it again. It has a long history and we have heard it several times, and I think most of the Honourable Members know what we think about it. The only point which I wish to take up is the proposal which Mr. Chetty has made for dealing with the existing situation. I have seen in the newspapers of the last few days an advertisement by the Railway Board in which they call for tenders for underframes, and comparing it with the figures that are shown in the Budget for new construction and renewals of rolling stock it appears that this invitation covers the current year's programme. It is not clear from the advertisement whether the Government propose to place these orders in the country, but I suppose they would be placed in the country, if the prices are considered to be satisfactory. That provides for the immediate future. Mr. Chetty's suggestion is that the construction of all underframes should be given on satisfactory terms to the firms in the country until the demand for wagons enables them to revert to the manufacture for which they were designed. If the Government are going to proceed with this

proposal for manufacture in the Peninsular Locomotive factory, that would only be a temporary paliative. If additional wagons will not be required for two or three years, then there will be a gap of one or two years. Mr. Chetty's suggestion was that the works having been originally designed as a locomotive works should be utilised by the State for the same purpose. I doubt whether they can be utilised very much for this purpose. The policy that Mr. Chetty suggests may be a suitable one but it is not one that we can assent to on the spur of the moment. The House will remember that when the Government decided not to proceed with the proposal to give locomotive contracts to the Peninsular Locomotive Company some figures were given which showed that it was quite impossible to give sufficient orders to keep the Company going. I have no information on the subject myself but the point is worth considering before we go any further. Then Mr. Chetty is a little inconsistent. He addressed the House with a view to getting its assent to the proposition that State manufacture should be restricted as much as possible. Nevertheless in the course of his remarks he also suggested that the State should undertake the manufacture of Locomotives.

Mr. R. K. Shanmukham Chetty: When I spoke I made my position perfectly clear. I wanted the State to undertake the manufacture of locomotives for two reasons. Firstly, if they begin to manufacture underframes, that means that wagon companies will have absolutely no work for two or three years and they will have to shut down. Secondly, since there is no chance of a private locomotive manufacturing company coming into existence the State must give support in that direction by beginning to manufacture locomotives.

Mr. E. F. Sykes: I do not think I seriously misunderstood Mr. Shanmukham Chetty's position in this matter. I understood his proposal was to establish State manufacture of locomotives on the site of the present Peninsular Locomotive Works which although called locomotive works are not now locomotive works. I take it that the value that you can attach to them as locomotive works is very slight. As I have said before, this

proposal of Mr. Chetty is a little inconsistent with the whole tenor of his speech and I think a little inconsistent with the views of the House on this subject and a little inconsistent with the views of the Government expressed on previous occasions. The Government has always been ready to encourage private enterprise in India. We agreed on that a long time ago. The general feeling of the House is against State manufacture except in unavoidable circumstances. The proposal was that the State should take them over and later on hand them over to a private company. The House will remember what happened not long ago when the personnel of one of the railway workshops had to be reduced for perfectly good and urgent reasons. I am perfectly certain that once the manufacture comes under State control, there will be no chance whatever of transferring it to a private company. I admit that this is a purely negative criticism and that something further is required. But I am sure that Mr. Chetty will agree that we have had very little time to think about it and to produce a reliable scheme, nor have we the requisite information. For example, I am not certain that we know what the cost of the locomotive works was.

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons (Financial Commissioner for Railways): We paid twenty lakhs for them, but I hesitate to say that that is their value.

Mr. E. F. Sykes: Thank you, Sir: naturally some think that the price exceeds the value—others that the value exceeds the price. However we may take it that expenditure so far incurred is twenty lakhs. But if we are going to set up a locomotive building plant, we can assume that all we have towards it is a site and some roofing and some sidings: our attention needs to be fixed rather on the further expenditure to be incurred than on that already incurred: and in view of the disproportion between these amounts, it might be well to follow a recent precedent. The House will have learnt from the proceedings of the Standing Finance Committee and from its own votes that the Railway Department withdrew from an unsatisfactory investment—I refer to a small branch line in Arakan, selling what was saleable and writing off about thirty lakhs of capital. Similarly it might be well to sell the works for what they would fetch and abandon the proposal. I have no more to say except to repeat that in many respects I am in agreement with Mr. Chetty, and that I appreciate the manner in which he has presented the case. My regret is that I am unable to show my agreement by joining him in the lobby.

Mr. B. Das: My friend Mr. Sykes who happens to be the other engineer in this House laid down the principle that this House has always been against State manufacture.

(At this stage the President vacated the Chair which was occupied by Sir Darcy Lindsay.)

He might be voicing the views of the group to which he belongs but the opinion of this side of the House is that as long as there is not proper development of the engineering industry by the Indian nationals so long must the State take up the manufacture of these things and give encouragement to engineering industries. If we look into the case of the Peninsular Locomotive Company, it was started at the instance of Government and certain people invested huge sums in it. 20 lakhs of rupees were paid to that company by the Government for its purchase and when that Company did not receive orders from the Government who are the only purchasers of locomotives it had to liquidate and sell its assets to the Government for a

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song. Whether Government has turned that Company into a wagon manufacturing company or not is not our concern; we on this side desire that the Government should introduce and initiate the manufacture of locomotives in India. Unless Government do it, it will be very difficult for another company to start the manufacture of locomotives. Indian companies will not start it as they have no confidence in the promises of Government that they will ever receive any orders for locomotives. If my friend Mr. Sykes is so anxious that the State should not manufacture locomotives I do not mind his advising British manufacturers to start such a company in India, and if such a company is started we would then not mind asking Government not to manufacture locomotives.

Sir, I will now come to the general proposition before the House, namely, our condemnation of the railway policy of the Government of India. In 1924, when this House passed a Resolution which my Honourable friend Sir George Rainy characterised as a convention, this side of the House was not satisfied with the particular convention that the Government desired the House to pass, and two riders were added to the effect that the Railway Board should be Indianized and the stores purchase policy should be defined and altered — the actual words were, “that the purchase of stores should be undertaken through organizations of the Stores Purchase Department of the Government of India.” Those two riders were not opposed by the Government, and the convention as amended was unanimously passed by this House. During the discussion my Honourable friend Sir Basil Blackett said in regard to Indianization that Government would promise the House that there would be 75 per cent. of Indianization in the Railways in the superior services, as recommended by the Lee Commission's Report, and there was no use in doubting the *bona fides* of the Government. Well, we have ample reasons to doubt the *bona fides* of the Government and I will come to that later. It has already been referred to by my friend Mr. Jamnadas Mehta. The history of this stores purchase policy is a long tale, but in brief the policy of the Railway Department in this connection has been not to encourage the Indian Stores Department which then came into existence but to have a different policy to which I will refer later on. Further, when this convention was passed it was decided that after three years the Government would come before the House and re-discuss the general policy of the separation of railway finance from general finance. I may say that I am in favour of the separation but nevertheless the Government have violated their promise. This is the fourth budget since the separation and it should not have been introduced in this House without a discussion of the whole policy of this separation of railway from general finance. I therefore say that that convention has been violated not only in that aspect but in the non-appointment of Indians as Members of the Railway Board. I maintain that as long as the present policy of separation continues there should be a representative of the Finance Department on the Railway Board, and whether he be a European from the Finance Department, as my Honourable friend Mr. Parsons is, or another Indian Member, it does not matter. And the Chief Commissioner of Railways should be the technical adviser of the Government of India as under the Statute, and at present I think he should be an European during the transition stage, as owing to the policy of Government and the Railway Department Indians are not promoted to the highest posts in the engineering service of different Railways. But the other two Members need not be

Europeans at all. If they are, it is because of the benign policy of the Government who do not want to give effect to the unanimous will of the Indian people that those two Members should be Indians. Of course at times cuts in Demands have been made insisting that all the Members of the Railway Board should be Indians; but I think that during the transition stage that is not possible. I do however claim that those two Members should be Indians so that the Indian view-point may be properly represented on the Railway Board. Last year in discussing this very thing the Honourable Sir Charles Innes said that he never promised that he would give effect to that policy, namely, that one Member should be an Indian—although Sir Basil Blackett had promised that on the floor of this House. He said that he had never assured us on behalf of the Government that one Member should be an Indian, but he gave us the names of two Indians, Mr. S. D. Gupta and Mr. Hayman, who he said gave him valuable assistance and occupied two important posts on the Railway Board. I know that our old colleague, Mr. P. R. Rau, is now acting for Mr. Hayman, but Mr. S. D. Gupta has since been removed from the Railway Board. In 1925 a cut of Rs. 77,000, known since as the Patel cut, was made by us in the hope of teaching the Railway Board a lesson, but the Railway Board taught Indian India another lesson, it removed some of the Indians employed on the staff of the Railway Board on the plea that there was no place for them there. That is the way in which the staff of the Railway Board is Indianized. At present there are one or two Indians whom we look upon with respect, Mr. P. R. Rau and Mr. Kaul. But generally the Government's policy is to weed out Indians. If that is Indianization then that policy ought to be condemned by this side of the House.

Sir, referring to Indianization, when this House gave its tacit sanction to the enjoyment of the Lee concessions by the Company-managed Railways, some of us wanted to see that the bargain on the other side was kept, which was to the effect that the Company-managed Railways were to be Indianized to the extent of 75 per cent. in their superior services and in that case we did not mind them enjoying the benefits of the Lee loot. I remember my old friend Sir Alexander Muddiman asked me to vote with him for expressing that sentiment on the floor of this House. Now, what has happened? Here I would like to congratulate my Honourable friend Sir George Rainy on his possession of that sixth sense, which members of the Government always lack, of intuition—human understanding of the sentiments of Members on this side. I appreciate that sixth sense in my friend. However, my Honourable friend Sir George Rainy has grappled with the problem in anticipation but he has not been able to grapple with it properly. About Indianization he says that this year's recruitment may come up to the 70 per cent. standard in State-managed Railways, but he has been ominously silent about the Company-managed Railways. Well, the Honourable Mr. Parsons from his place in the Public Accounts Committee, when we were discussing the allocation of funds to the Company-managed Railways, told us that Company-managed Railways belong to the State and they should receive the same consideration as State-managed Railways. Well, if the State-managed Railways are going to have 75 per cent. recruitment, the Company-managed Railways are in duty bound to do the same; and from the Railway administration Report of 1926-27 we find that the Indianization of the State-managed Railways went up during that year from 33.2 per cent. to 34.68

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per cent., and I think this year it will be about 38 or 39 per cent. in the State-managed Railways, while on Company-managed Railways it would not be more than 12 to 15 per cent. and on some of the Railways like the Bengal-Nagpur Railway it would be much less. What is the use of giving them the Lee concessions from 1924 when they have taken no steps to give effect to the 75 per cent. Indianization? Remember, Sir, we want 75 per cent. of the whole cadre of officers, and if 75 per cent. are recruited every year it will take us 20 or 30 years to reach the 75 per cent. There ought to be a policy initiated that in some years the whole 100 per cent. of the recruitment for the superior staff should be Indian,—and that is not being given effect to. That is our charge against the Government.

I may draw the attention of the Honourable Member for Commerce to the fact that last year we initiated a debate that the portfolio which he holds is a misnomer. He ought not to be the Member for Commerce, he ought, as the Acworth Committee recommended, be the Member for Communications. The Department of Posts and Telegraphs should be placed under him, and the Member for Industries and Commerce should be another Member, be he an Indian or non-Indian it matters little. But then the high commercial policy which always characterizes the policy of the Government of India has prevented them from taking such action because if they do that, an Indian will be in charge of the Commerce Department and the Government of India cannot be a party to that, nor would our friends, the representatives of British commerce, like an Indian Member of the Government of India to be in charge of commerce. The Honourable Member is in charge of ports, docks and harbours, but he should also be in charge of inland navigation; at present he is not: and so inland navigation, which forms a large part of the communications in the country, is neglected. There was a chance when Sir Charles Innes left the Government of India and my Honourable friend Sir George Rainy took charge of his portfolio to adjust things and Government could have easily reshuffled the portfolios, but they do not like to give effect to anything in compliance with any of the recommendations from this part of the House, and in this matter they would have received the support of all of us in this part of the House. (*An Honourable Member*: "Address the Chair.")

Sir, if we look at the papers that have been presented to us, by the time we turn from the pink books and come to the blue book we turn blue (Laughter) (*An Honourable Member*: "White.") and we find that there is a policy of evasion in presenting the materials which will help us. After all, all of us are laymen, none of us are experienced engineers like my Honourable friends of the Railway Board. (*Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh*: "You are an engineer yourself,") and it is high time that Honourable Members should not lose themselves in the pink books and the blue books because they cannot get much information. Of course I will come to this point again on another occasion, and I would suggest to the Government that, as has been suggested by the Public Accounts Committee, Government should alter their whole system of presentation of the Railway Budget, and this point has also been touched upon by the Dickinson Report. Sir, I consider Government should take a note of warning that the presentation of the Railway Budget is not satisfactory. While I congratulate the present Member on his successful Budget, on

his showing an increased passengers and goods traffic for the year and on his keeping down the expenditure, I think with the aid of his sixth sense he has also been able to judge that the railway working expenses are going up to an alarming extent, though I congratulate him on his keeping down the operating expenses to Rs. 62½ crores as it was last year. But we are going down headlong into the precipice: we are incurring heavy capital expenditure every year. Then this year the interest charges have been 1½ crores more, and the depreciation charges 50 lakhs more. Every year the depreciation charges are increasing and the interest charges on every growing Capital are also increasing, but the proportionate income from excess passengers and goods traffic is not increasing, as my Honourable friend, Mr. Neogy, and my Honourable friend, Mr. Jannadas Mehta, pointed out the other day. So Government should take a note of warning and consider how they are going to reduce their general cost on operation and maintenance. Although my Honourable friend, Pandit Nilakantha Das, brought forward a proposition before this House which seemed to some a quaint proposition at the time, now I think we should consider it a right suggestion that Government should Indianize in spirit the administration of the Railways. "Indians always draw lesser salaries than Europeans and if you recruit Indian staff more and more you will thereby reduce your operating costs, and you should take a note of warning about your heavy capital expenditure every year in spite of your showing in the pink books that such and such a project will produce 5 or 6 per cent. income to the State, because the anticipated income from the increment of passengers and goods traffic will not come in although your interest charges and depreciation charges are increasing."

Sir, this Government has a policy of putting down their military expenditure into every nook and corner and they play the game of hide-and-seek and they want to test our sixth sense in this House to see if we can find out that the Government have introduced military expenditure into a civil Budget. Sir, the expenditure on strategic lines is growing, the capital expenditure on them is growing, and the operating expenses are also growing. The question is whether if Government will spend more and more money on strategic lines and if they want more strategic railway lines, whether it should not come from the special sum of money that is allotted to my Honourable friend, Mr. Macworth Young. Sir, I specially draw the attention of the House to the question of the Aden Railway. Last year during the budget discussion we came to know that we have to pay in future £250,000 to the British Government and that the British Government are responsible for the military policy of the Aden territory; and we were told that only the municipality and some other functions would be under the control of India. Why is it, Sir, that the Aden Railway, which is running at a loss of 40 to 50 lakhs, will be a permanent burden on the Indian tax-payer? If Aden is not to be controlled in its military policy by the Government of India, the cost of the Aden Railway should be better borne by the British Government and the British Government ought to pay us the money spent so far by the people of India on the capital outlay of that Railway, and they ought to bear all future losses that will occur on the Aden Railway.

Sir, these are some of the remarks that I have to make, and before closing my speech I just want to make one observation about the mandate which we in this side of the House give and which the Government always

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ignore. The Acworth Committee pointed out that large stores to the value of 23 or 25 crores were lying at different railway stores. This House has often insisted that the Railways should reduce their store balances. I compare the 1925-26 Audit and Appropriation Account with that of the Stores Account of this year. I may tell the House that I had to take lots of trouble to collect these accounts from the pink books. They are placed at such places and a summary is not put in, so that Members are not in a position to see the figures at a glance. In 1925 there were 16 crores and 86 lakhs worth of stores in different railways. This year the total stores balance is almost the same; while the debit that was made in that year was more, this year it amounts to much less. I will just give one or two figures. I will take the case of the North Western Railway. The North Western Railway had a store balance in 1925 of Rs. 3 crores and 24 lakhs. At the end of the year 1926 it was reduced by Rs. 64 lakhs. In this year's Budget the stores balance is shown as 412 lakhs, even a higher figure than the balance of 1925; and the total stores was something less than ten crores. This year the total stores was 10 crores and 28 lakhs and the debit from the surplus balance is only 20 lakhs. I do not know what steps the Government are taking to reduce the large stores balance. Last year during the budget debate we drew the attention of the Government to the Raven Committee's Report on this stores balance and pointed out how different railway workshop managers have a campaign of reducing stores balance; we pointed out how they take stores from one workshop to another and keep them in suspense account and the stores are never utilised on actual work. I find the Dickinson Committee's Report has also touched the very subject. That the Railway Companies are keeping such enormous stores, which lock up the tax-payers' money to the extent of 16 to 20 crores, is deplorable; and in spite of the warning from this side of the House and the insistence on the Government cutting down the large amount, Government have taken no steps to do that. It is on this ground and on the various grounds that we have to take the drastic step of bringing down the whole grant to just one rupee. When a patient is very sick, he is always given a big dose of medicine, and the Department of the Honourable Member for Commerce and Railways happens to be the biggest spending department. My Honourable friend the Finance Member, like the busy bee, gathers honey, but it is the Railway Member and the Army Secretary who spend the largest amount of money. My Honourable friend spends Rs. 62 crores in operation expenses and 30 to 40 crores in Capital works. And when after 5 years he leaves the country and goes away, he is not responsible for the large amount of money invested in Capital expenditure, for sinking 100 crores in unproductive work. His predecessors were never held responsible for their acts of omission and commission. We had to write off 350 crores of capital that we put on the Railways; that was given from the tax-payers' money, money guaranteed to different railways for running the railways according to their own sweet will and for which the tax-payer suffered so heavily. It is for these reasons that we have to adopt this big cut, so that from year to year my Honourable friend may be reminded that there is the big axe of this House, which will always come down on him if he does not look after railway finances fully in the interests of Indian India.

Mr. M. S. Sessa Ayyangar (Madura and Ramnad *cum* Tinnevely: Non-Muhammadian Rural): Sir, my Honourable friend Mr. Das quite forgot the realities of the situation. He has been recommending the House for carrying this cut. But is he not aware, as every Honourable friend of mine is aware, that while we are conscious that with some effort we can vote down this Demand No. 1 of the Railway Board, my Honourable friend Sir George Rainy will have far less difficulty in getting it restored by certification? So it has become more or less an annual show; but all the same we are bound to take part in this show only for this reason that we owe it to our constituency, as this is the only opportunity, to shape the policy, the railway policy, as we conceive it to be in the best interests of the country. Sir, I refuse to entertain the idea that for want of really competent Indians there is not one Indian talent on the Railway Board now. If Indians could be found competent to serve on the Council of the Secretary of State for India, to serve on the Executive Council here in the Government of India and on the provincial Executive Councils, it is too much really to indulge in a serious statement that there is no competent Indian to be entertained on the Railway Board. But if systematically as years roll by this prospect of the entertainment of Indian talent is being repelled by the Government, there ought to be very substantial reasons for that position. Now, what is that that really enables the Government to repel this thing? Is it because they would fight shy that an Indian talent, a patriotic Indian talent, once he finds a seat in the Railway Board would be alive to the secrets of the railway policy? Is it because the patriotic Indian serving in the Railway Board would at once find out the ramifications of the railway policy, which, in one word, in one short sentence, is really a policy, or rather the impolicy I should call it, of peaceful penetration with the ultimate idea of economic exploitation of this country? Or is it really because, Sir, the policy of railway administration cannot be such as could be scrutinised by the Indian talent and adopted by him in the interests of this country? I do not know if any such reason really is at the back of the Government's mind in refusing to entertain an Indian on the Railway Board. Sir, if railway administration is carried on successfully, conceived in the best interests of this country, it can make or mar industries. In fact, the theory of rate-making is not a science, but certainly an art which is understood by experts. There are certain fundamental principles which, if recognised and applied in the interests of the country, might certainly foster the indigenous industries of this country and might be so utilised as occasions arise that there is a great impetus given to the industries of this country. There are two sides broadly to the railway policy in these matters. It has got, first of all, the policy of levying rates and fares. Now, in this matter it is no doubt very healthy to stick more to the cost standard than to the other higher standard. This principle has already been adopted in America by an Act of 1920 and it has led to a great success in the case of the American railways. If that standard is approximately adhered to in fixing the rates in India, certainly it would tend also to the success of the Indian railway administration. So far as freights are concerned, it was announced the other day by Sir George Rainy that he proposed a reduction in the freights on grains, pulses and seeds. In this connection, I would invite the attention of the House to the fact that from January to the end of November 1927 grains and pulses have been exported to the value of Rs. 39,54,00,000 and during the same period seeds have also been exported to the extent of Rs. 17,05,00,000. So, all these

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three commodities which have been especially chosen for the purpose of reduction of freights are certainly articles of export and it would certainly give comfort to the exporter of these very necessary commodities to India. Sir, it would be fair to say that so far as these freights are concerned, if they could only levy a higher rate for the carriage of these goods, taking into account the long distances, it would certainly tend to foster the indigenous industries. A distinction should certainly be made between long and short distances. A fundamental principle of railway economics is that the charge of conveying a commodity or a consignment varies not with the distance but with the square root of the distance. So, that would be a very good principle to start with and if that principle were to be applied the question of higher rates for carriage of goods for export could also be solved. With reference to this matter I put a question on the 15th instant. I refer to question No. 69. Unfortunately, it had to be unstarred. I had a good mind to pursue it with supplementary questions to get more light; but the great Congress Party, to which I have the proud privilege to belong, asked me to put it as an unstarred question. I was very much aggrieved that my Honourable friends in this House had no opportunity of supplementing the answers given by Government and getting more information upon that very interesting question. I would quote that question. It ran as follows:

“(a) Will the Government be pleased to state how many cases in all were dealt with by the Railway Rates Advisory Committee at Calcutta during the current financial year?”

(b) How many of them related to the rates affecting trade adversely with the details of the trade in question?

(c) How many of them related to rates giving room to undue preference to places, persons or goods?

(d) How many of them related to the disparity of the rates relating to the transport of raw and finished products to the port stations?

(e) Has any case been examined *suo motu* by this Rates Advisory Committee?”

Now, the answers to these questions are as follows:

“(a) The Rates Advisory Committee have had 12 cases under their consideration during the current financial year.

(b), (c) and (d). Of the 12 cases the complaints allege

undue preference—in three cases,
unreasonably high rates—in six cases,
both undue preference and unreasonableness—in two cases,
undue preference to port rate—in one case.

(e) No.”

These four groups of cases which have come before this Tribunal clearly indicate that there is a serious complaint so far as these rates are concerned. The House may also be aware of the fact that it is not every ordinary trader who can have his grievances redressed by this Tribunal, however legitimate they may be, because it is a costly business to approach them and to get justice from them. Therefore, if there has been a serious cause of complaint under these four heads, does it not clearly show that there is something seriously wrong with the railway policy which fixes these freights and that it ought to be examined? So that if all these years the railway administration has not successfully coped with the realities of the situation and has not tried to eliminate the causes of complaint, as we see that they do exist from the answers to these questions,

that is a *prima facie* case, therefore, to bring a serious charge against the Railway Board.

Then the next direction in which the railway administration can exercise its control by enunciating a sound policy is this, namely, the question of what materials to purchase and where to purchase them from. That is also a very serious question. I will instance only one thing, because there are ever so many things necessary for the railway administration to purchase. I will confine myself to one single thing. Of late there is a general tendency to use iron and steel sleepers in the place of wood and timber. As the House is aware, India may be rich in timber, but it is not resourceful so far as iron and steel are concerned. As the House knows, in spite of the fact that we passed last year a legislative enactment for the protection of the Tata Iron and Steel Company, they are not able to give all that the railway companies want; and now the railway companies send out indents of considerable size from foreign countries for manufactures of iron and steel. That is certainly a very serious cause of complaint. In order to elucidate this matter I put a series of questions in this House, unstarred questions Nos. 64, 65 and 67. The first relates to the fact whether steel sleepers are newly introduced and largely used both in the State and Company-managed Railways, and if they are used in the opening of new lines only or in the place of wooden sleepers in old lines. The answer was:

"Steel sleepers have been in use on Indian Railways for the last 40 years."

I dare say not to a very large extent. But this is more important:

"An order of considerable size for these sleepers was placed in 1926 for use on both State and Company-managed Railways."

The next question was:

"Will the Government be pleased to state where the wooden sleepers were got from, and where the steel sleepers are got from now?"

Was any demand made of the Tata Iron Works to make the necessary supplies of steel sleepers?"

The answer was:

"Practically all the wooden sleepers now obtained for Indian Railways are of Indian timber, though occasionally Jarrah from Australia or Douglas Fir from North America has been used. The Tata Iron and Steel Company have supplied steel sleepers, but the large order for these sleepers, which I think the Honourable Member has in mind, was placed in Belgium and Germany, after the Tata Iron and Steel Company had been given an opportunity of quoting for it."

The Honourable Members of this House, who happened to be at the Congress Session will have noticed that near the Congress pavilion there were a number of wooden sleepers stacked, and mud thrown over them. On enquiry I found that those were Jarrah sleepers, which had been covered with earth to find out how they would fare when submerged. They have been experimenting after sending indents for them to see how Jarrah sleepers would stand the strain they would be put to. The Tata Iron and Steel Company have supplied steel sleepers, but the large order for these sleepers was placed in Belgium and Germany. I asked whether Belgium or Germany, from where these sleepers had been ordered, were using steel sleepers of their own. My information, Sir,—and I rely on it—is that there are no steel sleepers employed on any railway on the

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Continent. I do not know, why, if that is the situation, Indian railway administrations are so fond of using steel sleepers, and to a very large extent, on our Indian Railways. (*An Honourable Member*: "To encourage non-Indian interests.") Possibly so; I perfectly understand it. How do these steel sleepers compare with wooden sleepers? I again rely upon the source of information that I have got with me that even as regards the price of wooden sleepers and steel sleepers there is this difference: steel sleepers in 1925—I am quoting from my authority again—cost Rs. 10 in India; but wooden broad gauge sleepers from the Jaipur forests were supplied in Calcutta at Rs. 8, and if we eliminate the numerous intermediaries and intermediary profit, it might be reduced still further to Rs. 6 or Rs. 7 per broad gauge wooden sleeper; and certainly it does compare favourably with the price of the steel sleeper which cost Rs. 10 each in 1925.

Now, what about the comfort of passengers? I am also told by my engineering friends that steel sleepers give less comfort to the passengers than wooden sleepers. So that from the point of view of price and from the point of view of comfort for the passengers, the wooden sleepers are certainly superior to the steel sleepers. And then, as regards age, I am told again on reliable authority that a wooden sleeper lasts 18 years whereas a steel sleeper lasts only 15 years. (*Mr. A. A. L. Parsons*: "Question.") So, all these points about price, comfort and age are considerable which, if I am right, merited the attention of the Railway Board. If in spite of all these things, the Railway Board has been consistently pursuing this policy, of late, of indenting in considerable quantities steel sleepers from abroad, that is a policy again that requires to be condemned.

Mr. Chairman (Sir Darcy Lindsay): Is the Honourable Member likely to be much longer before concluding his remarks?

Mr. M. S. Sesha Ayyangar: No; in two or three minutes I will conclude, Sir. In this connection I may also invite the attention of the House to the fact that when I wanted a statement from the Honourable the Financial Commissioner for Railways a detailed statement showing the relative costs of sleepers, telegraph posts and wagon bodies, I was promised a statement; but unfortunately I have not got it yet and it is unfortunate I cannot make use of it now.

I submit, therefore, that this policy of so arranging freights as to foster foreign industries with the result that indigenous industries stagnate and are even baffled, must be condemned; and as I submitted to the House already there is a way of doing things. It is perfectly possible that a motive to kill and a motive to enable a thing to live can both be utilised under the present railway system; but if the interests of the country are certainly placed in the forefront, much can be done in this way and that can be successfully done only if there is a patriotic Indian element in the Board; and I would also invite the attention of the House to this particular circumstance, that these Railway are after all public utility corporations and they are public-aided too. Therefore the question of profit sharing alone ought not to be the dominant factor in enunciating or in sustaining or even in pursuing a policy which is detrimental to the nation as it is.

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. President in the Chair.

Pandit Nilakantha Das (Orissa Division: Non-Muhammadan): Sir, in supporting the amendment of my Honourable friend Mr. Jamnadas Mehta, which practically is a vote of no confidence in the Railway Board, I must apologise to my friends on this side if I feel somewhat inclined to congratulate the Honourable Sir George Rainy and his colleagues on the manner in which they have concealed substance in language, the reality and appearance which they have painted with a charming gloss to conceal the real darkness of their design. (Laughter from the Non-Official European Benches.) My friend Mr. B. Das and others complain that there is no Indianization, no factory for manufacturing locomotives, stores are purchased in foreign countries, and they often talk of sacred pledges and conventions, distinctions between strategic and commercial lines and various other things which I am simply surprised they have not been able to synthesise. The whole thing hinges upon one thing, and that is the whole railway administration is strategic and military. The name commercial may be charming enough, but in fact there is nothing commercial in it so that the Board may safely invite Indian Members into their midst. How can they trust Indian Members? And we depend upon the pledges of the Finance Member. What is that pledge after all? Is it for the first time that we have experience of broken pledges? We must be wanting in intelligence and knowledge of history if we induce ourselves to believe that any foreign rule in this world has been true to its pledge given to the conquered at the call of convenience or emergency. It is on a series of broken pledges and even worse make-believes that such a rule as we are now labouring under must stand, and we should not think of or speak of those pledges that were given on the floor of this House. Pledges given in better places have also been broken for no pledges are ever meant.

As to the work of the Railway Board, the fine language in which the real substance has been clothed comprises three things, Indianization, with a prospective percentage of 75 perhaps in two or three years, relief to travellers and tax-payers, and new construction with open line work. In all these three things, as the speech of the Commerce Member appears to show, we have got a tremendous advancement. This is what is perhaps apparent on the very surface of it. But what do all these mean?

First let us come to Indianization. On the face of it, and I know it for certain as my friends know, no Indian should under the present circumstances be liked by the Railway Board, which manages ready and easy communication throughout the land; and that communication must be secure in the hands of the ruler class in case of emergency of which our friends on the other side are always in fear. This mistrust and suspicion is common knowledge and needs no explanation. Here the *bona fides* are in question.

As regards relief to the tax-payer or the travelling public, last year and this year we have been told that the travelling public have been given some relief. But I do not understand the telescopic and square root theory. They have some enigmatic significance which I do not comprehend. I do not understand why people travelling 50 miles, who pay perhaps a larger share of the revenue, are not given any relief. There is no account to show what percentage of the income is due to

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them. But I am sure they pay a larger proportion of the revenue. There is one class of the public, however, who travel long distances, namely, pilgrims. They get no relief. They go from place to place and they cannot depend upon a through ticket and they generally do not do it. This proposal of lower fares for long third class travelling is perhaps to give relief to some servants of Government officials who travel long distances and some merchants. Officials will get their travelling allowance, and their servants paying less the profit will come to their own pockets. Why the first 50 miles has been kept a sacred reserve of the Railway Board requires explanation and deserves condemnation as a part of the policy of the entire administration.

And then relief to the ordinary tax-payer in foodstuffs, oil-seeds, etc., which are all exported! I do not know if the Commerce Department were Indian it would countenance all those exports as they are being done. Are not these new avenues of exploitation in the name of development?

As to new construction we are told, you must develop your ports, just as we were told the other day you must have your Navy. Everything is ours! Our ports, our navy and so on and so forth! Vizagapatam Harbour on which we have been spending crores has a good share in capital expenditure. This is all to exploit what is called virgin land. But in reality is it not a brother of the Singapore Base? Other items mean opening up certain coal fields and electrifying some city sides. Is not all this mainly strategic, and should not this be a charge on the Military Budget?

All capital expenditure should take note of public convenience. I shall here give an instance of something in which my constituency is particularly interested. Cuttack and Sambalpur are in one Division and at a distance of about 150 miles from each other, Cuttack being the headquarters. But the distance by railway from one place to the other is now about 610 miles. For 10 or 12 years there was an actual proposal for putting up a direct line from Cuttack to Sambalpur. Up to last year there was some hope given for a survey showing at least a mark on the memorandum and pink book. But this year there is no trace of it. But a line has been put up to Talcher because there were coalfields to be developed in the locality. I do not know on what ground the proposal for the Sambalpur line has been completely abandoned now. Is it on account of want of money, or for readily opening up the port and other coalfields for having some strategic advantages? This particular instance gives me an idea that there is something else at the bottom of all these new constructions.

As to open line works, I do not know if my Honourable friends in this House have any experience, I mean intuitive experience and not symbolical, of third class passengers. I do not know if my Honourable friend, Mr. Joshi, even travels in the third class, not to speak of others. But I have often been purposely in the third class, and sometimes for long journeys after I became a Member of this House, and I know that a compartment which is meant for 34 ordinary men, or 21 Indian soldiers, or 14 European soldiers, is sometimes packed with, I counted once, 110 men, and there was no standing or even squeezing accommodation in that whole carriage. When I came down to look into the other

carriages I found the condition was not a whit better. And this is what is happening from day to day. In our open line works we are planning electrification, whereas the comforts of the third class passengers are ruthlessly neglected. Is this a proper policy for the Railway Board? In that self-same train, let me tell you again, there was one full compartment reserved for Europeans and that was empty. We could not go in to it because we had not trousers. (Laughter.) That is the test of Europeans. Perhaps my Honourable friend, Sir George Rainy, will remember that we passed a Resolution that such compartments should not be reserved, and on that day during the discussion it was made quite clear that only trousers meant European.

Mr. K. C. Neogy (Dacca Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Weren't your pillow cases with you?

Pandit Nilakantha Das: Then I do not know what is at the bottom of all these arrangements.

There have been profits in the stores purchase policy. I apprehend, as Mr. Mehta pointed out, they were due to the exchange muddle. If they are real profits I do not know how much comes from State-managed and how much from Company-managed lines. All Indianisation and all profit shown here perhaps relate to the State-managed portion. We all know and it is our daily experience that the Company-managed lines are utterly mismanaged, and there the profit is steady, if not less. In this connection let me revert a little to Indianisation. I know that in the Bengal Nagpur Railway, the number of Europeans in higher services is growing more and more and so also is it more or less with all other Company-managed Railways.

Coming again to the percentages of Indianisation, which is so much made of, may I point out that the higher services range from Rs. 250 to 6,000. We should like to know how many Indians there are drawing over Rs. 1,000. We should like to know the percentage. Last year I made a proposal which was then considered rather funny. I said, I do not mind if our servants are Europeans or Indians. By Indianisation I do not mean that they should all be Indians. We may have to bring Europeans from America, Germany or England for that matter. But they will be our servants. We shall fix the pay of the service according to our standards. It is this policy that the Railway Board should aim at. I do not know what the Railway Board have done in this direction. You say Englishmen will not come for less than 2,000 or 3,000. Then you give them the Lee concessions and other allowances. That is not Indianization at all. We have not all the money of the tax-payer in our pocket to give away. We must economise and we must put the value of service according to our own standard and we must make a beginning in that policy. I do not say that men who are drawing Rs. 6,000 a month should be given notice. No, they should be there, but a policy should be at once inaugurated so that the world may know what price we are prepared to give for our service, and then if people like to serve on that price let them come, otherwise not. This is what I hinted last year and this is what should be the policy of the entire system of administration, otherwise it is not Indianization. You bring in a foreign standard here and you make the Indians adopt that standard and give them the same wages because you want your own people to serve. That is not real Indianization. The real Indianization is that

[Pandit Nilakantha Das.]

the Board should be in the hands of Indians, and that Indian standards of salary and remuneration should guide the entire policy of the administration, and if you fail in that, then you fail in the entire administration of the railway policy, be it commercial or be it strategic. For if it be given into our hands we should understand where and how far we should make it strategic and how far we should make it commercial. But my idea of Indianization which I request my friends to consider is this, that the standard of remuneration should be according to our circumstances. Let foreign people from outside come and serve on that standard if they want to; or if we want some expert which we do not find in our country he can demand any money and we will pay, but not otherwise. Do not say we have no fit man. When you have put Indians in your Board and they have served you and worked for you, you drive them away and say perhaps they are not fit, for you have been their irresponsible master with your own ideas of business, exploitation and politics.

Mr. President: I did not do anything of the kind. (Laughter.)

Pandit Nilakantha Das: It is through you, Sir, that all the proceedings are going on. My "You" is impersonal. I have nothing more to say. I should still impress upon the House and my friends that if you speak of Indianization you must remember this, that there must be an Indian standard of remuneration based on Indian circumstances and any one who cares to serve on that standard may serve. With these words I support the motion of no confidence moved by my friend Mr. Jamnadas Mehta.

Mr. M. S. Aney (Berar Representative): In supporting the motion moved by my friend Mr. Jamnadas Mehta, I only wish to make a few observations. This motion has now become an annual fixture, and I have been asked by some of my well-meaning friends both on this side and on the other, as to why it is that we persist in carrying a cut like this every year, and my object in rising at this late hour is to try to give an explanation on that point. The reason is this. The Railway Department is now an administration by itself. The Government of India is one administration here, and I look upon this Railway Department as a Government by itself. It has got its own Board, it has got its Chief Commissioner, it has got its Financial Commissioner, it has its own Finance Committee, it has its own Central Advisory Board and it has its own provinces managed by Agents and Advisory Committees. That is the sort of organisation that it has grown into. And the question is this. When an organisation has grown like that and is continuing to be fed by the tax-payer's money, is it not time for the Government to consider whether this administration should not be brought under proper popular control? It is said that the Assembly-exercises its control. In a way it does, it is true. But the functions of the Standing Finance Committee and the functions of the Central Advisory Council which are appointed by this House in conjunction with the other House are more or less of an advisory nature. Their voice is not final; it is not binding. That being the case, the organization at the head of this whole department, namely, the Railway Board, must have an Indian element to give proper direction

to the whole administration from the Indian point of view. That is the least we can expect from the Government—to bring this railway administration under some qualified control of the people. If things continue to be left as they are we shall have to depend more upon the good intentions of those who constitute the Railway Board rather than upon anything else. We shall be leaving things to chance. If we find something good this year in the administration, well, we are prepared to give the due to those who are in charge. But what this House wants is not to leave things to chance like that but to create some sort of situation in which the popular voice shall be reflected in the administration itself, and one of the measures which this House thinks necessary to bring about that result is to insist upon the appointment of at least one or two Indian members on the Railway Board. (*An Honourable Member*: “Elected by this House?”) I have not said that and I do not think my friend will import into my speech what I have not suggested. So long as the Executive Councillors of this Government are not elected and responsible to us, I am at least not the man to make a proposal of that kind. When the day comes and when the Executive Councillors are responsible to this House, I shall not fail in making a demand that the members of the Railway Board should be elected by this House or some executive body having our confidence. That day has yet to come though I wish it may come as early as possible. (*An Honourable Member*: “This is not the Reserve Bank.”) When that question comes up my friend’s advice may have some weight with me. But in this matter my own experience on the Finance Committee is a better guide. Secondly, Sir, we also look upon the constitution of this Railway Board which is responsible for the administration of the entire railway affairs as a sort of affront to the intelligence of this House. The question often put to us is, shall we get a man who is competent and qualified enough to work with his other three colleagues on the Railway Board? I am afraid I am not able to point out a particular man, but I am sure if there was a desire on the part of the Railway Board to have an Indian as one of their colleagues it ought not to be difficult to find one man at any rate even from among their own staff, leaving aside the other engineering staffs employed elsewhere. Even from their own staff it ought not to be difficult for them to find a competent and qualified Indian who can sit with them and work with them with the same ability and efficiency as the other members of the Board. Why should there be any difficulty in finding a man of that type? In spite of the demand of this House for many years past there is a persistent and even perverse obstinacy on the part of the administration in not associating an Indian with them on the Railway Board. It is a sort of denial of the right of the Indian to be their colleague on that Board. So long as that is the attitude, this House, notwithstanding its recognition of some of the good things done by the Railway Board during the last few years to make the service of the Railways more popular, cannot see their way to sanctioning the funds necessary for carrying on the Railway Board. It is a protest against this particular iniquity. That is what I want this House to bear in mind and that is the meaning of this protest. I do not want to make a series of charges over the failures of the railway administration in many other ways. They may be right; they may be wrong. They are proper matters for consideration under other Demands. But so far as this demand is concerned, our protest is mainly for this reason.

3 P.M.

[Mr. M. S. Aney.]

As I have got up, I also take advantage of making a few remarks upon certain other points which are matters of policy. I find important questions of policy are settled without the knowledge not only of this House but even of those Committees and Councils which have been appointed last year. When last Session there was an occasion for the Honourable Sir George Rainy to move for asking this House to proceed to elect certain members of the Central Advisory Council as well as other Committees, a complaint was made on this side. We asked what was the use of asking this House to proceed to the election of members of those Committees and Councils when their meetings were not held, when they were not virtually consulted at any time during the whole of the year. I believe, if I remember aright, the Honourable Sir George Rainy said, whatever might be the experience of the members during the last regime, he would see that that sort of mistake was not repeated. I wish to bring to his notice one thing and want to know from him how many meetings of the Central Advisory Council have been held during the year. (*An Honourable Member*: "None.") Was there no occasion for the Railway Board to consult and take the advice of the members of that Council? One of the members of the Central Advisory Council, my friend Mr. Jayakar, who is the Deputy Leader of the Party to which I have the privilege to belong, asked me "Am I a member of any Committee? I have never been called." I said in reply that probably there was no occasion for him to be invited and so he was not. Members have even begun to forget that they are members of a particular Council. That is the position created by the sort of indifference shown to these Councils by the Railway Board. I think that is not a fair way for the Railway Board, at any rate, to deal with the Councils, whose assistance they count as very important and for the sake of which they took all the trouble of asking this House to constitute that body. Now, whether there was any occasion for the Railway Board to consult this Council or not is also a point to which I wish to give a short reply. I find that certain important questions of policy have been settled during the year by the Railway Board in consultation with the Secretary of State. For example, the question as regards the organisation of a separate Medical Department for the Railway is under consideration and I have read certain papers which show that a report was made by Colonel Needham for the reorganisation of that Department. I have read in the papers that were supplied to me that the proposals in that report have been sanctioned already and a certain scheme is being prepared. In pursuance of that scheme a regular proposal was placed before the Standing Finance Committee for the appointment of a Chief Medical Officer for the North Western Railway. At that time in the Finance Committee we asked what was the report of Colonel Needham, what were the proposals he had made, what were the consequences of a separate Medical Department, was it not likely to affect the relations between the Government of India and the Provincial Governments as well as between the transferred departments of the Provincial Governments and the Government of India. These are matters of policy. These are not matters to be mutually settled by agreement between the Secretary of State and the Railway Board. We were told that certain Provincial Governments were consulted, particularly the Government of the Punjab and the Government of Bombay, and they had accepted the proposals. It may be that there were certain Provincial Governments, who, without consulting their own Legislatures, were ready

to part with the rights and control that they have got over the Medical Department. Whether it would be an advisable course or not is a matter in which the Railway Board ought to have consulted its own Central Advisory Council when that body is constituted with all the pomp and ceremony which the system of election by a single transferable vote in this House always means. I have given only one example to indicate that occasions for consultation also at times have arisen during the course of the year; even those occasions were not availed of to invite those persons who were elected by us to that Central Advisory Council. In short what do we find? The position is that there is an autocratic Railway Board. And what is the control of this House over it? There is the Honourable the Commerce Member who is in touch with the working of the Railway Board, and I am not sure of the sort of exact control he is able to exercise over their work; it is a matter between the Railway Board and the Honourable the Commerce Member. Probably he is accepting their proposals as coming from the experts and therefore he has no choice to consider them purely from a financial point of view. But what I do believe is this that if the railway administration is to run under certain democratic principles, then some sort of popular control must be established. If that is a matter for you to consider in the future, the minimum that you can do at present is to immediately associate an Indian with the Members of the Railway Board. I maintain, Sir, that this should be the first step which the Government should take in that direction. And so long as that is not done, this side of the House will have no option but to record its emphatic protest by refusing the grant that goes to support the Railway Board. We know what that rejection means. It is not a new thing for us. But all the same it is the most emphatic way in our hands under the constitution to register our protest. We know that sometimes our protest affects adversely even our own fellow-countrymen in the Railway Board. But we are prepared to take the risk and make that sacrifice because this is the only way of registering our protest under the present constitution. For these reasons, Sir, I support the cut moved by my friend Mr. Jamnadas Mehta.

Khan Bahadur Haji Abdullah Haji Kasim (West Coast and Nilgiris: Muhammadan): Sir, I desire to invite the attention of the Railway Board to an inconsistency which it is necessary for them to clear. The other day while I was travelling from Bombay to Delhi by the Great Indian Peninsula route I happened to see some steel sleepers.

Mr. President: This is not the occasion for the general criticism of the Budget. Does the Honourable Member wish to support or to oppose the motion under discussion?

Khan Bahadur Haji Abdullah Haji Kasim: I want to touch on the policy of the Railway Board.

Mr. President: What is the Honourable Member's object? Is he speaking on the amendment moved by Mr. Jamnadas Mehta?

Khan Bahadur Haji Abdullah Haji Kasim: I am speaking in support of it.

Mr. President: I thought he was merely criticising the Railway Budget.

Khan Bahadur Haji Abdullah Haji Kasim: I found that some steel sleepers were lying on the railway line. On my inquiring I was told that these sleepers were imported from Germany. On my further inquiring I was told that not only the Great Indian Peninsula but the Bombay, Baroda and Central India and Madras and Southern Mahratta Railways also get their sleepers from Germany and other foreign countries. I do not know how far this is true.

Mr. President: Is that the reason for rejecting the Railway Board grant?

Khan Bahadur Haji Abdullah Haji Kasim: Why not, Sir?

If it is a fact, I must confess that it was really a surprise to me because the House will remember that it was only last year that a Bill called the Steel Protection Bill was passed with a view to encourage Indian steel, to give preference to British steel and also to discourage the importation of Continental steel into India by levying a heavy import duty on it. In spite of this measure, which was initiated by Government themselves not very long ago, it passes my comprehension why the Government still persist in the policy of importing Continental steel into this country. If Government is really anxious to promote and foster the commerce and industry of India, I feel, Sir, that it is the duty of the State to encourage as far as possible the existing Indian concerns.

In this connection, coming nearer home, I may point out to the House that the West Coast supplies sleepers to the extent of some lakhs annually and the Railways have always found, looking to the demands which the timber dealers have from the railway authorities, that the sleepers from the West Coast have met with their approval and are as good as the sleepers imported from Australia and Canada. If Government encourages the policy of importing sleepers from the Continent, the object of the Bill which they passed will be defeated, and I need hardly say that Indian trade and industries will suffer immensely. I would therefore ask the Railway Board to reconsider this point

Mr. President: But you are not going to have the Railway Board.

Khan Bahadur Haji Abdullah Haji Kasim: I would therefore ask the Railway Board to reconsider this point of importing the steel sleepers in the light of the Bill passed last year in this House. (*An Honourable Member:* "Perhaps it was old stock?") No, new. Besides I was told one consignment was received in Marmagao for the Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway, about sixty thousand steel sleepers, and another of about forty thousand was expected shortly. They are not old, but new.

Sir, there is one more point to which I should like to invite the attention of the House, and that is with reference to the construction of the Mangalore-Malpe line. Sir, this line is of the utmost importance to the commerce and trade of the whole of the West Coast. In last year's programme it was stated that as soon as the survey was completed, the construction of the line would be undertaken in 1930-31, and that the line would be completed before 1932. I submit, Sir, that even this period is somewhat late, because it is expected that the survey will be over by the end of the current year, as I find that under the head "Survey" the Railway Board have allotted a sum of Rs. 25,000 for 1927-28 and Rs. 10,000 for 1928-29. But, Sir, in this year's programme I find that the construction

of this line has been postponed to so late a date as 1932-33, and I can see no justification for this postponement. I would therefore ask the Railway Board to expedite the construction of this line as soon as the survey is completed. I may mention here that when His Excellency the Governor of Madras paid a visit to South Kanara some time in October or November last, the commercial community of South Kanara pressed upon him the necessity of an early construction of this line. They also pointed out that the cost of construction of this line could be considerably reduced if the line were diverted and taken *via* Karkal to Malpe, because by adopting this course a number of rivers which would require bridges could be avoided.

Mr. C. S. Ranga Iyer (Rohilkund and Kumaon Divisions: Non-Muhamadan Rural): On a point of order, Sir, is the destruction of the Railway Board consistent with the construction of railway lines? (Laughter.)

Khan Bahadur Haji Abdullah Haji Kasim: I therefore trust that the Railway Board will be good enough to bear in mind the immediate urgency of undertaking the construction of the Mangalore-Malpe line at least from the middle of next year. If this is done, I need hardly say that the trade and commerce of the whole of the West Coast will be fostered to a considerable extent.

With regard to this year's programme, I find that they have sanctioned a line between Tellicherry-Paradur-Makut, but this line would be a blind line. It would not connect with any line in Mysore, and Tellicherry Port has no harbour, whereas Malpe has got natural facilities to convert itself into a harbour. In this connection I would like to call the attention of the Government to the letter from Mr. Rochards, dated 31st December, 1916, paragraphs 14, 17, 30, 31, 32 and 51.

I would therefore press upon the Railway Board that the line from Mangalore to Malpe is more important than the Tellicherry one, and I request them to construct this line at an early date.

Mr. President (calling on Mr. Sarabhai Nemchand Haji): I hope the Honourable Member will bear in mind that this is not the stage of the general discussion of the Budget.

Mr. Sarabhai Nemchand Haji (Bombay Central Division: Non-Muhamadan Rural): The few words that I intend to speak will refer to the entire railway policy which seems to be the purpose of Mr. Jamnadas Mehta in proposing that the Demand under the head Railway Board be reduced to Re. 1. But I do not propose to cover in detail the whole field of railway policy in this country. I would therefore like to draw the attention of the Railway Board to one or two items of policy which I think they should bear in mind

Mr. President: Who should bear in mind?

Mr. Sarabhai Nemchand Haji: The Railway Board should bear them in mind.

Mr. President: The Honourable Member knows that the motion before the House is that there should be no Railway Board. (*Some Honourable Members*: "One rupee is still left.") Will the Honourable Member proceed on the basis that the motion is that there should be no Railway Board?

Mr. Sarabhai Nemchand Haji: Thank you, Sir. But with your permission, Sir, I will take it for granted that a better kind of body will be evolved after the present Railway Board has been done away with.

Mr. President: When that Board comes into being, the Honourable Member will be entitled to speak about it.

Mr. Sarabhai Nemchand Haji: I propose, Sir, to suggest a line of policy which will enable the Railway Board to carry on its work effectively

Mr. E. K. Shanmukham Chetty: On a point of order, Sir. Is the House then to understand that if this amendment of Mr. Jamnadas Mehta is carried and the Railway Board abolished, there will be no further discussion of the Railway Board?

Mr. President: There will be, if the Railway Board remains in spite of your vote. (Laughter.) The Honourable Member must confine himself to the motion before the House that the Railway Board stands condemned and that it must go.

Mr. Sarabhai Nemchand Haji: Whether, Sir, I am prepared to condemn the Railway Board as it is constituted to-day or not, will depend upon the reply that I get to the

Mr. President: Order, order. The Honourable Member is not relevant. Colonel Gidney.

Lieut.-Colonel H. A. J. Gidney (Nominated: Anglo-Indians): Sir, before I begin my speech I should like a ruling from you as to whether, in supporting or opposing the motion of my friend, Mr. Jamnadas Mehta, I should be in order if I referred to the motions that stand in my name and which also constitute a criticism of the policy of the Railway Board.

Mr. President: The Honourable Member will not be in order in referring to those amendments; those amendments will be reached in due course and then he will have his opportunity.

Lieut.-Colonel H. A. J. Gidney: Sir, I thank you for your ruling. I have very few words to say in opposing the motion moved by Mr. Jamnadas Mehta. Sir, whilst I look at the filled opposite Benches of to-day and compare them with the empty Benches of yesterday, it demonstrates the true spirit and desire of those Members in regard to the motion before the House. The desire cannot be very serious in nature nor constructive in extent knowing full well, as they must, that His Excellency will certify the cut, if carried, and knowing full well that there are a number of Members of this House who have scheduled very important cuts of a constructive nature, which, if this motion is carried, they will be precluded from moving.

Mr. President: The Honourable Member comes in their way by rising to speak.

Lieut.-Colonel H. A. J. Gidney: If the attitude taken by those people, those Members on the opposite Benches, is one of destructive obstruction

Mr. B. Das: Is "people" the right word to use here?

Lieut.-Colonel H. A. J. Gidney: Of course, it is. Are we not the peoples of India? Sir, as I was about to state, if my friend, Mr. B. Das, will only

allow me to continue, if that be the object of the Honourable the Mover's motion, then I, on this side of the House, oppose it tooth and nail. There is absolutely nothing constructive in it. It is wholly destructive—wantonly destructive in intent. When there was a constructive proposal yesterday before this House for the upliftment and education of the depressed classes, were you Honourable Members sitting in those seats serving your country like true patriots of India as you profess to be? When we were discussing the Railway Budget, were you to be found sitting in your seats doing your obvious duty? No. You were drawing your travelling allowance outside this House comfortably ensconced in your rooms callously indifferent to the real needs of India.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: May I say, Sir, that Colonel Gidney is quite wrong; I was sitting here in this very place.

Lieut.-Colonel H. A. J. Gidney: Mr. Jamnadas is a little bit previous: I was prepared to exclude Mr. Jamnadas; I know that he was here and we heard his views. I am referring to the gentlemen, Honourable Members sitting on the opposite side who come here—march in and out of this House as if it were their own—their one object being to destroy everything that we want to construct for the good of India and we are asked to come here at great sacrifice and inconvenience to listen to a lot of twaddle that they have to say. They don't want Reforms. They don't want a Navy. They don't want an Army and now they don't want a Railway Board. What do they want? They want their own way. The Mover however desires a Railway Board run on one rupee. Why doesn't he become the Chief Commissioner for Railways and run it?

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: I am prepared to run the Railway Board on one rupee.

Lieut.-Colonel H. A. J. Gidney: The only man in India who could! I want to know if he will submit his application for appointment to the Railway Board, because I am sure the Honourable Member will be very glad to have a Chief Commissioner capable of running the Railway Board on one rupee.

Sir, I wish to oppose the motion on many grounds, the chief ground being one of expediency. It is an absolute disgrace to this House and a waste of time to ask us to come here to discuss this most important matter, one which concerns the Railways of India in which nearly a million of our countrymen are employed and to treat us to this farce asking us to discuss and pass a motion condemning the Railway Board simply because you want to get one Indian on the Railway Board. Your motion and your argument being—if you cannot get one Indian on the Railway Board the whole Railway Board must go or be administered on one rupee—a one rupee cut would have served your purpose just as well.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: Perfectly right.

Lieut.-Colonel H. A. J. Gidney: If that is the policy and tactics you wish to adopt

Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh (Muzaffarpur *cum* Champaran: Non-Muham-
madan): Please don't be excited Colonel. (Laughter.)

Lieut. Colonel H. A. J. Gibney: If that is the policy the opposite Benches wish to adopt, then I stoutly oppose it and would conclude my remarks in the following verse :

The Assembly has some white-capped lambs,
Who walk in and out all day;
And, though they do no work at all,
They always draw T. A.

Mr. C. S. Ranga Iyer: Sir, after the unhappy expression of ugly sentiments by the previous speaker not only deprecating the action of Members on this side of the House but hitting them below the belt in one respect, I thought I should just contribute my own little unwisdom as the gallant gentleman might take it to be, to the stock of wisdom of the House. The Honourable Member attacked us not only in prose but also in poetry, and if he is really trying to attain the role of one of the famous poets of the world, I would not grudge him the poetic license he took, for it was nothing less than a case of license to import into this debate on the Railway Board the depressed classes. He accused us not only of destroying the Railway Board but also the depressed classes. (Laughter.) Forsooth! We are going to destroy the depressed classes by not attending a debate of very vital consequence, from his point of view. But, Sir, we absented ourselves from that depressing debate for a very obvious reason. We have been charged time and again by men who belong to the class from which the previous speaker comes, we have also been arraigned by people from across the seas, we have also been attacked by the jackals of the Anglo-Indian Press, that we are the enemies of the depressed classes, and we thought that when a proposition was placed in this House, which was the true test of friendship, it was quite as well for the enemies to stay away,—and the enemies stood away, but when a Financial proposition for the mitigation of the miseries of those unfortunates was placed before this House the gentlemen who are eloquent about their devotion to the depressed classes did not vote for the amendment of Lala Lajpat Rai. Whether we discuss politics or Railways, the depressed classes are on the brain of a class of people! But, Sir, perhaps in a railway debate, according to the gallant Member there should be less of relevance and more of bluster. That is perhaps the excuse of the Honourable Member for the considerable license that he imported into his speech and also for considerable irrelevance.

Then he assailed my friend Mr. Jammadas with a fantastic question, if he was prepared to be the Chief Commissioner for the Railways and run the Railway Board with one rupee. I may tell him from this side of the House that we are prepared to be members of the Railway Board on no pay at all. (Hear, hear from the Swarajist Benches.) We are prepared to be honorary members of that Railway Board which will respect the peoples' wishes if even a corresponding sacrifice is not made by Members on the other side. Sir, if it is a question of money, if it is a question of rupees, annas and pies, and if it is also a question that Indians should not get the same amount of rupees, annas and pies, then I can understand the exclusion of Indians from the Railway Board. From the rupee point of view, perhaps the Honourable Member imagines that when the Railway Board is run without any money, then alone India and Indians would be competent to get admission into that sacred Board. Until that awful day comes, when there will be honorary service, in place of the highly paid service, perhaps the Honourable Member expects—until that awful day comes—we

have got to stand out and not even express the aspiration for admission to the Railway Board. Members of the Railway Board are entitled to a salary, and when they are not entitled to a salary, an invitation will come to this side of the House. If that is the Honourable Member's meaning, it is ridiculous.

Another most annoying—I was almost going to say wicked—statement that he made was that we were keeping out of this House and drawing our "T. A." when the oppression of the depressed classes was discussed with grim purpose. For this observation alone I should have emerged from my silence to make an observation. It is an ignoble statement for a noble Member of this House to make—(*An Honourable Member* "Gallant Member")—an ungallant outburst for a Gallant Member of this House. No more is "T. A." an encumbrance to us than for him. However if we stood away, we stood away only because we wanted the Honourable Member and his unsympathetic tribe to prove the vaunted sincerity of their profession in regard to the depressed classes.

The Honourable Member further said that it was a "disgrace" for this side of the House to come forward with a proposition of this kind. I wish there were some grace in his observation. He said, "What? The non-admission of one Indian on the Railway Board to be responsible for the abolition of the Railway Board itself?" If he is parochial in his view point, I can say, the non-admission of even an Anglo-Indian in the Railway Board may be responsible for the attitude that we take. If he were to consult his own constituency in the matter perhaps they will enlighten him a little better.

Mr. B. Das: His constituency is looked after all right in the Railways.

Mr. C. S. Ranga Iyer: My Honourable friend (Mr. B. Das) says that his constituency is looked after all right in the Railways, and that is the crux of the whole question. (Hear, hear.) "The entire railway policy", as Mr. Jamnadas Mehta has truly said,—within brackets, explaining the subject of his motion—the entire policy of the Railway Board is summed up in one phrase "racial". Perhaps the Honourable the Railway Member is not aware that the Honourable the Commerce Member, the distinguished gentleman who preceded him in that high office and who occupies a very distinguished position elsewhere in this country, said that the Anglo-Indians or Eurasians—and when I use the word "Eurasian" I use it without any offence, in the classical sense—had more competence or extra competence to manage the Railways or to do the particular work that is allotted to them. That may be his view. I would rather like to know what is the view of his successor in the matter. I do not say that the Anglo-Indians are not competent. But I do say that Indians are also equally competent and I do believe, Sir, that even to-day, though promises—I would not call them promises, but assurances if I may use a milder term than promises—have been given from the other side in answer to our questions that steps would be taken for the abolition of racial discrimination in the Railways, especially in the East Indian Railway, such a racial discrimination does exist on the East Indian Railway to-day and perhaps in the other Railways also in the matter of pay, in the matter of position, in the matter of prospects. The Indian guard draws less pay than the Anglo-Indian guard, the Indian station master draws less pay than the Anglo-Indian station master, the position and prospects before the Indian are much less than those before

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the Anglo-Indian. These are matters which should come within the consideration of the Honourable the Railway Member. He is new to this debate, and I feel I am voicing the feelings on this side of the House when I say that even without the previous experience of a debate there are certain features in the Railway Budget which at once reveal that he is guided certainly by the noblest of sentiments and also by the best of feelings at least for the third class passengers. And this brings me to the vexed question of third class passengers.

The position of the third class passengers has been throughout neglected by the Railway Board. If for no other reason, at least for the fact that the third class passengers have been treated so shabbily, the Railway Board must go; if it cannot be mended it has got to be ended, for the backbone of the Railways in India is the third class passenger. The enormous profits that the Railways derive are from the third class passengers, and in no part of the world does such a scandal exist as in India, crowding people in compartments as though they were not human beings. Even cattle are given more comfort than people in India, who according to the Railway Board come under the category of cattle. Perhaps, that is their conception of the comfort that they should give to a class of travellers who are really the mainstay of the railways. On the Continent, and there is some resemblance between India and the Continent, you have not only first, second and third class compartments, but you have also got fourth class compartments in Germany. I know that the modern tendency is to reduce the number of classes, but whatever that may be, it is possible, it ought to have been possible to run more trains so that overcrowding could have been abolished. This scandal has been the subject of discussion in this country for the last 20 years. We are professedly the enemies of the depressed classes, but those depressed people who travel in these overcrowded trains could have evoked the mercy of the gentleman who preceded me! They have no sleeping accommodation, they have no sitting accommodation, they have not even standing accommodation. If the Honourable the Railway Member were to disguise himself as a Muhammadan or as a Hindu, and travel third not as an Englishman, if he travels in disguise by one of these trains, in one of those overcrowded Indian compartments, I am sure it will not be necessary for gentlemen on this side of the House to tell him exactly the plight of the people, the very people who are the mainstay of the Railways.

I now come to the last, and I think one of the most essential aspects of this question which have been discussed on this side of the House time and again, and that is the exclusion of Indians from the Railway Board. I do not know why there should have been so much speechifying from this side. . . (An Honourable Member: "Hear, hear.") Certainly I welcome that cheer and I think it is quite legitimate. I do not know why we should have indulged in the luxury of words and at the same time the other side should have indulged in the abstinence of action. (Hear, hear.) Words should not have been necessary for a commonsense proposition like that. You have admitted Indians into very high places. It was possible for an Indian not only to rise to the position of the Governor of a province but also to be Under Secretary of State in Parliament.

Mr. B. Das: Lord Sinha was made to vacate his Governorship.

Mr. C. S. Ranga Iyer: Obviously my friend is not in the confidence of Lord Sinha. I can claim his acquaintance. He vacated the governorship not because he was asked to do so by an outside but by an inside agency, namely, his condition of health. I was saying that Indians have been placed in very high positions. Those who have read Lord Morley's "Recollections" will remember the controversy that continued between Lord Minto and Lord Morley. Both of them were trying to understand the situation, one from the Indian and the official point of view and the other from the British and Parliamentary point of view. Lord Morley impressed upon Lord Minto the need for admitting Indians into the Executive Council. After a good deal of correspondence which are public property to-day, Indians have been admitted. When you have made an opening like that, on the administrative side, it is time that you made a similar opening on the Railway side. I know the railway matter is a little more important than matters of administration. Then comes the department of my distinguished and Honourable friend (Sir Denys Bray) who is in charge of the Foreign Office. Then comes the Army. I think, it is time that one step more is taken in the direction of taking Indians into your confidence. I do recognise that in times of exigencies, railways are not merely of normal importance but they are also of strategic importance. Therefore I feel—I think I am not doing an injustice to the other side but if I am, I hope I will be corrected—that the exclusion of Indians from the Railway Board is purely on strategic grounds. A word was given by an Honourable Member on the other side with the best of intentions and it remains to be fulfilled. I do believe it will be fulfilled in course of time. I want to accelerate the pace of fulfilment. I fully understand the reason for the delay. I am afraid it is perhaps governed by bigger considerations, reasons of State. We have been reading in the British papers and hearing from the lips of great statesman in England that the next war is likely to be somewhere in a place where India is expected to play an important part. The Singapore Base is not without its significance. The Chinese rebellion is not without its importance and the travel of a King belonging to a neighbouring State on the Continent of Europe trying to understand modern methods and trying to make his own little country keep abreast of modern movements is again of consequence. I was told once by a distinguished military officer whom I can name that in the days when he was a student he was taught what is known as the Russian menace. What was a bogey then has certainly become a menace now. The Russians are extending their tentacles far and wide. There is great talk of war, in the West at any rate. I did attend a few meetings, while abroad, though I did not take part in them, to understand what the position was. Is it, I put it to the Honourable Member, the consideration of the exigency that keeps back Indians from being put on the Railway Board? If that is so, let us understand it. But if that is so, I would urge a reconsideration of that position, because when the need arises we have always felt that it is our duty to stand by the British Raj and the history of India's connexion with England is full of evidence as to how in times of crisis we felt it our duty to stand by the British Empire (*Pandit Nilakantha Das*: "And not ask for a Member?")—that is not exactly the sentence that I was going to say,—how we invariably felt and acted on the principle, their calamity is not our opportunity, and therefore, should they not in the higher interests which I have just mentioned take more Indians into their confidence. I can quite understand the question that was put to the Honourable Member from Berar (Mr. Aney) by an Honour-

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able Non-Official European Member (Sir Victor Sassoon), whether he wanted the admission of Members of the Legislature by election to the Railway Board. I know in Europe the Legislature does not elect its Members to the Railway Board; I also know that the Government in this country is not responsible to the people just as the Government in other countries is, but I am not to-day saying that you should elect Members of the Central Legislature to the Railway Board. I concede that a Railway Board must consist of experts. Experts alone can manage it, but when you say that you cannot find any experts amongst Indians—and I believe that is the argument on the other side—it is time that you found an expert. If you have not trained an expert so long, it does not reflect much credit—(*Lala Lajpat Rai*: “Will you define an expert?”) I have been asked by the Honourable the Leader of the Nationalist Party to define the word “expert”. I have not brought with me Webster’s Dictionary (Laughter), but I think the word “expert” carries with it a certain amount of efficiency and special knowledge of the inward working of a system, and I plead that Indians can be found, and I think Indians must be found to take their place in the administration of the Railways just as they have been found to take their place in the administration of the country: and even as Indians have distinguished themselves as administrators of the country, they will distinguish themselves as administrators of the Railways. Sir, it is difficult to learn swimming if one does not enter the water. It is time that you took some Indians into the water. I do not say you should drown them in the deep (Laughter), but give them a chance to swim on the ford. (Applause.)

Mr. K. C. Neogy (Dacca Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I hope my Honourable friend, Colonel Gidney, realizes the impropriety of his flippant interventions like the one that we had just now from him.

Lieut.-Colonel H. A. J. Gidney: The Speaker will decide that, and not you.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: We can quite understand that he has absolutely no sympathy with the Indians in their demand for the Indianization of the Railway Board.

Lieut.-Colonel H. A. J. Gidney: That is absolutely untrue.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: That is exactly what the Honourable Member said; he said, “Why are you crying out simply because there is no Indian on the Railway Board?”

Lieut.-Colonel H. A. J. Gidney: Why are you wasting our time discussing this motion?

Mr. K. C. Neogy: The Honourable Member and the community which he represents call themselves Indians whenever it suits them; and then in this House the Honourable Member takes his seat in the European group and, further, attacks Members on this side simply because they are putting forward their legitimate claims for the consideration of Government.

Lieut.-Colonel H. A. J. Gidney: I attacked the procedure—the motion—and I am entitled to my opinion as much as you.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: You are, of course. Well the Honourable Member has no complaint against the Railway Board because he knows that while we have been crying for Indianization, Gidneysation has been proceeding apace. (Hear, hear.)

Lieut.-Colonel H. A. J. Gidney: Don't be excitable.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: I am not so excitable as the Honourable Member. The Honourable Member, whenever he gets up to speak, reminds this House that he represents a minority community, but here we are discussing a Department in which that particular minority enjoys the majority of the loaves and fishes,—and I can well understand the attitude of the Honourable Member! Now, Sir, when we have a sort of annual review of our grievances against the Railway Board, we say that the principal grievance certainly is that we have so far not succeeded in seeing an Indian appointed to the Railway Board. When we find that Colonel Gidney is not with us, I think we might well confine ourselves to the grievances of the pure-blooded Indian, the Indian who is not fortunate enough to have a strain of European, Hottentot or Chinese or Malayan blood in his veins. (*An Honourable Member:* "Is not that unparliamentary?") Well, Sir, as everybody knows, a mixture of a little bit of non-Indian blood of whatever character gives a man superiority over the pure-blooded Indian

Lieut.-Colonel H. A. J. Gidney: I am sure it does, but don't forget that is the community that has made and driven your railways and made and worked your telegraph system since their inception, and you should be grateful.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Well, I do not want to maintain that those who really took a prominent part in the old days of the railway administration should be driven out altogether, but then there ought to be some sense of proportion and some sense of fair play in the Railway Department.

Lieut.-Colonel H. A. J. Gidney: I quite agree, but you want to drive us out of the Railways.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: And you ought not to shut out Indians simply because they are pure-blooded. (*Lieut.-Colonel H. A. J. Gidney:* "I did not say so.") Now, Sir, it is not merely the Indianization of the railway services that we want; the spirit of the entire railway administration should be Indianized. I think my Honourable friend, Pandit Nilakantha Das, is not the only Honourable Member in this House who had occasion to repent that he had not a pair of trousers with him while travelling. Not very long ago as a member of a Committee appointed by the Government of India I had occasion to undertake long travels over the country, and it is generally my habit to move about in my national dress of which I am very proud just as the Honourable Member in charge is proud of his own national dress (*The Honourable Sir George Rainy:* "Thank you."), and when I walked into a particular first class railway restaurant I was promptly asked to go to the second class restaurant, and when I said I was a first class passenger, the man in charge asked me to show my ticket,—and all this because I am a pure-blooded Indian, because I did not happen to put on a pair of pillow cases, or something of that sort and I was not fortunate enough in having a European-sounding name. Now, Sir, talking of the Indianization of the Railway Board, my Honourable friend, Mr. Das, has already pointed out that there was a senior member of the Indian Finance

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Department in charge of the directorate of the establishment of the Railway Board for about three years while we had this particular question under discussion last year, when there was a larger number of Indians, not of course as Members of the Railway Board but in other responsible offices. Sir Charles Innes in the speech that he made last year referred to the fact that even establishment questions are technical questions. Therefore, I take it, Sir, that it is not necessary for a man to be nurtured throughout in the Railway Department in order to be able to deal with such technical questions as establishment questions, because we find that an Indian member of the Indian Finance Service was considered competent enough to hold this appointment for three years. But, Sir, after this officer acquired experience for three years in this technical branch, he was not retained, and I believe he has reverted to the general branch of the Finance Department. The result is that the experience, the special experience, that he picked up of railway administration is lost to the Railway Department and to the country. One of the difficulties, which Sir Charles Innes pointed out in having Indians on the Railway Board last year was, that there were not Indians of sufficient experience and sufficient standing in the Railway Department whose claims could be considered when vacancies occurred in the membership of the Railway Board. Here was a fairly senior officer who was in charge of a very responsible section of the Railway Board's work, and who in course of time certainly would be fit to hold the appointment of the member in charge of establishment, the very branch with which he had to deal with as the Director. Now, Sir, is it the policy of the Railway Department just to have a few Indians brought in for a time, only to be sent away after a few years and then to bring up the excuse year after year that they have not got Indians of sufficient experience and standing whose claims could be considered for a membership of the Railway Board? At the present moment we have comparatively junior officers, Indian officers, holding two responsible appointments connected with the Railway Board. I do not know how long they are going to stay there. I have heard a report that one of them is about to go away on leave. Now, I should like to know from the Honourable Member in charge as to exactly what policy he proposes to follow in this matter. I do not think that the Honourable Member will try to pursue a sort of hide-and-seek policy with regard to this question. Now, Sir, talking about technical qualifications and experience and special training, I am reminded of a kind of technical qualification to which Indians, as matters stand at present, cannot lay claim—I mean the advantage which officers get through social relationship. I know of an instance—I think, Sir, some of the Honourable Members sitting opposite also know it—in which a high railway officer, not yet in the Railway Board, who was not considered fit to hold a particular high appointment at one time, did after all manage to get it, and it is said that the main technical qualification or experience or standing, or whatever you may call it, was that he happened to be the husband of somebody's wife's sister. Now, Sir, that is a sort of qualification to which Indians can have no claim at the present moment.

... **Mr. Vidya Sagar Pandya** (Madras: Indian Commerce): Sir, I am very sorry that our gallant Colonel should have made an attack on the Members opposite; it is no use throwing stones on the part of those who live in glass houses. It was my misfortune on two occasions recently to draw

the attention of the Chair to the smallness of the House and on two occasions the House had to be adjourned for want of a quorum. I want to know what they have to say about their own absence on this side of the House; and then regarding the other charge of which he spoke to this side of the House, I want to know why the Members on this side were not present to hear the torrents of wisdom falling from the lips of Members on their own side. Under the circumstances, I am very sorry that the Members on this side of the House themselves do not muster sufficiently strong, although drawing their allowances, and blame the Members on the other side for the same fault.

Now, coming to the point at issue, the Chair has narrowed it down very much and so we can talk only about the sacking of the Railway Board and nothing else. I represent the Madras Presidency and, at any rate, the Members from the Madras Presidency would surely throw their votes to sack the Railway Board. We have solid reasons for doing so taking into consideration the figures as they are given in the Explanatory Memorandum of the Railway Budget of the Government of India which I have in my hand. The Madras Presidency has always been treated as the Cinderella in all these matters. Now, taking into consideration the figures of 30 crores of Capital Expenditure which is provided for in the Budget, we find that the open lines in our Presidency have been granted only 1,46,00,000 out of 70,59,70,000, which is the budgeted amount. Similarly, in the matter of the construction of new lines, out of 3½ crores, we have been allotted only 60 lakhs. Again, if we take into consideration the amount provided for the improvement of Rails and Sleepers and for the strengthening of Bridges out of 42.64 lakhs nothing has been provided for any of the Railways in the Madras Presidency. When we come to the remodelling or constructing of station yards, we find that out of 83.66 lakhs we have been given only 16 lakhs.

Mr. President: And therefore the Railway Board must go. (Applause.)

Mr. Vidya Sagar Pandya: I think so. We do not want such a Railway Board and the sooner we get rid of it the better for us.

Then, coming to the staff quarters, we find that out of 42 lakhs only 4 lakhs have been provided for the whole of the Madras Presidency. Similarly, in the case of important schemes of workshops, constructions and remodelling, out of 6½ crores, we get only 45 lakhs. Then, coming to the scheme of electrification

Mr. President: Order, order. The Chair regards all these arguments as absolutely irrelevant. Sir George Rainy.

The Honourable Sir George Rainy (Member for Commerce and Railways): This is the first occasion, Mr. President, on which I have been present when a reduction in the Demand for the Railway Board has been moved, and the turn the debate has taken has not been exactly what I had expected. To reply completely to all that has been said to-day would require a speech lasting perhaps for 3½ hours, for there is hardly a branch of the railway administration that has not been touched upon by one speaker or another. The debate has occasionally shown a tendency to take even a wider range, and at times I was not sure whether my friends on the other side of the House were not inviting me to indulge in a disquisition on the relations between Lord Morley and Lord Minto, on the Singapore base and on the Russian menace. I am

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always glad to meet the wishes of my Honourable friends opposite, but if I were to attempt to gratify them now, perhaps you, Sir, might find it necessary to restrain me. I will deal with this motion as seriously as I can, although it is not always easy to do so after the line that has been taken by some of the speakers. With certain points I shall deal quite seriously, while certain others may perhaps be dismissed more lightly.

I have had one or two very curious invitations to-day. One of them was to disguise myself as a member of some community—I am not quite sure which community it was—and to see for myself how the Railways looked like from that point of view. Well, if the Honourable Member, who gave the invitation, is willing
4 P.M. to stand to it, I am not sure that some day I might not be tempted to accept it.

Mr. Jamnadas Mehta opened his speech with a new name which he most ingeniously gave the Railway Board, and which I am sure they will all cherish, namely, a pocket edition of the Simon Commission. But it filled my soul with terror, lest he was going to find some analogy between some personality in the British Parliamentary world and myself. However, he mercifully spared me, and I have still to learn what view he takes of my position in the matter.

Mr. Jamnadas Mehta's own view of the proposal he put forward might, I think, be summarized in a few words, "We don't want a Railway Board, if we cannot have a Round Table." That is what it comes to. There is a close connection in his mind between his motion and the big constitutional question. I can understand that attitude, I can even respect it, but I cannot honestly say that I admire it. It does not seem to me to be a good line. Still there it is, and had my Honourable friend stopped at that point, the debate would have been a good deal shorter, and by this time we should have voted about it. But then my Honourable friend having explained at the outset his main objections that, so long as he could not get a Railway Board that was in some way responsible to this House, he was going to vote against having a Railway Board at all, started to paint the picture with a large brush, and one cartoon after another appeared upon the canvas as he painted. He outlined his views on Indianisation, on the 150 crores for rehabilitation, on the separation of railway finance, on the wages of railway labourers, on the amenities of third class passengers, on contracts given out wrongly, on illusory profits, and on other matters until I wondered whether his object was perhaps a desire that all the other motions should be ruled out of order, as having been already discussed. I do not know whether I am right in attributing that motive to him, but it is quite out of the question for me to attempt to run through all these points in detail, and I shall only select those which appear to me the most important.

One of the statements he made was that, under the present system of the separation of railway and general finance, the Board's powers of re-appropriation were such that it would be quite possible for them to start on their own responsibility important projects which were not in the Budget and had therefore not been before the House at all. I should

like to remind him that all such projects, before being started, are invariably put before the Standing Finance Committee, who are the natural watchdogs to look after the interests of the House.

Mr. Jammadas M. Mehta: Not always.

The Honourable Sir George Rainy: I cannot speak from my own experience as to what has actually occurred in the past, but I do know that that is our intention as to what ought to be done.

I was particularly glad to hear my Honourable friend's frank recognition of the great service which the fixation of exchange had been to the Railway Budget. Indeed he put the benefit rather higher than I should, because he attributes any reduction in our working expenses entirely to that one cause. He referred to what I said in my speech when I laid the Budget before the House, namely, that for four years in succession the working expenses were 62½ crores, and he said it was easy to talk like that because the decline was due to exchange profits. But had he observed the variations in exchange since the 1st April 1925, he would have seen that the rate has not during that period suffered any wide fluctuations.

Mr. Jammadas M. Mehta: I say that the effect of a higher exchange continues until an adjustment takes place. It is not exhausted in one year but persists for a number of years.

The Honourable Sir George Rainy: I should have thought that the Honourable Member's argument would have been more convincing if during the period to which I had referred exchange had not been practically stationary.

Now, I want to say very little about the speech of my Honourable friend, Mr. Chetty. Frankly, I regret, not that he brought the matters forward at all to which he devoted the greater part of his speech, but I do regret that he brought them forward at this stage. It seems to me it is a little unfair where there is a specific matter, which is naturally a matter on which many Members of this House are anxious to speak and when there are motions on the paper which give a natural opportunity for discussing it, it seems to me a great pity that they should be swept into an omnibus motion which may make it impossible for Members particularly interested in that subject to record their opinions by their votes. Indeed, I trust that the course that has been followed, perfectly legitimately no doubt under the rules, by my friends of the Swaraj Party will not be allowed to constitute a precedent, because if you are going to move a reduction in the Railway Board vote on the ground of disapproval of the entire railway policy, it is open to any Member to bring in any aspect of our railway administration and to say "for this reason I want to condemn the Railway Board." It means that if we subsequently debate the specific motions dealing with specific points, we shall be travelling over the same ground again and again and again and really there will be a great waste of time. Now, I do not propose to reply to what Mr. Chetty said as regards the wagon building industry to-day, and my reason is this. Does my Honourable friend seriously urge that, whatever the rights and wrongs of the action taken by the Government of India and the Railway Board about wagons and locomotives may be, that they contribute sufficient ground for saying that the entire railway policy

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is bad? I think it is very difficult to take that line, and if so it is unnecessary for me to reply to it at this stage. If it is not in itself a sufficient reason for passing a vote of censure on the whole railway administration, then on that matter I have nothing more to say to-day.

My Honourable friend, Mr. Sesa Ayyangar, with an ingenuity which I could not sufficiently admire, seemed to me to be trying to use this motion as a means by which he could get the better both of the rules of his own Party and of the rules of this House, because in the first place, he seemed to me to be working off a good deal of a speech that might have been prepared—I do not know whether it was—but might have been prepared for the general discussion on the Railway Budget; and then he also proposed to utilise the opportunity to obtain replies to supplementary questions which I understood him to say he would have put, had the discipline of his Party permitted him to be present to put them in person. I am sure, Sir, that you would not permit me to act as his accomplice in either of these purposes.

I listened with great interest to my Honourable friend Mr. Nilakantha Das who spoke first on the resumption of the debate after lunch. I can readily understand that, holding the views he does as to Indianization and the particular meaning he attaches to it, he cannot approve almost anything in our present system of administration. What he is after, I suppose, is, what I may call, the one rupee standard of administration. Whether my Honourable friend Mr. Jamnadas Mehta who also expressed his willingness to run the Railway Board for one rupee a year holds exactly the same views as my Honourable friend Mr. Nilakantha Das, I am not quite sure. Possibly, when that time comes, they may be colleagues in the same administration and will be able to settle the matter between them.

But I was greatly interested to learn that my Honourable friend Mr. Jamnadas Mehta was prepared to run the Railway Board for one rupee a year, and I presume he would pay therefrom the salaries of the 100 assistants, the 18 stenographers and the 74 servants who are provided for in the Budget

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: I am prepared to find the money.

The Honourable Sir George Rainy: I think, Sir, that disposes of most of what I might call comparatively minor matters to which I intended to refer.

I come now to what is after all the big question raised again and again by speaker after speaker, namely, the appointment of an Indian member on the Railway Board. I find the greatest difficulty in saying anything at all on that subject. It seems to me that if any member of the Government of India in the past has opened his mouth on that subject, he has always been accused year after year of having broken his promise and of having given pledges to which he has not adhered. Sir Charles Innes spoke pretty strongly about this last year and repudiated and resented the charge of broken faith, and it seems to me that the only lesson I can learn from the past history is that I had better be very careful what I say. Indeed if some of my friends are really as suspicious as they say they are about the *bona fides* of the Government of India, what does it matter what I do say? It may be that I ought

take these suspicions in a strictly Pickwickian sense, that they are uttered only for the purposes of the debate and do not accurately convey what is in the Honourable Members' minds. But nevertheless I do think that I am justified in saying as little as I can until I see my way clearly. I should like to say here that every speaker, who has referred to me personally, has been extraordinarily kind, and I hope that Honourable Members on the other side will understand that on my part there is no sort of feeling of resentment to me. It would be absurd indeed if I were to entertain any such feeling. Nevertheless I feel that the best thing I can do is to say as little as possible. I will therefore confine myself to the assurance that I regard this matter as exceedingly important which ought constantly to be kept under consideration in the hope that in one way or another something may be done to meet what is obviously a very strong wish among many Members of this House.

My Honourable friend Mr. Neogy asked for a definite declaration of policy on this point. My reply to what he asked is this, that as long as I am in charge of the Railway Department, I will try to get the best men I can get as members of the Railway Board. Let there be no ambiguity about that. As the Board is now constituted, as our system of railway administration is now constituted, it is necessary, if it is to work properly, that the members of the Board should be fully qualified by expert knowledge and experience for the duties they have to perform, and they must be the very best men we can get, because the responsibilities of the railway administration of India are steadily growing and we cannot afford to carry on with anything except the very best.

In conclusion, Mr. President, I would like to say this. What the Honourable the Mover is asking the House to do is to condemn the railway administration of India out and out, and root and branch. In giving notice of his motion he referred to the entire railway policy of the Government of India and it struck me as somewhat extraordinary that neither he nor any other speaker has even referred to what I regard as the primary point of that policy, namely, cheap and efficient transportation. That it should actually have been possible to discuss this motion for 4 or 5 hours without, as far as I could hear, even one speaker mentioning the fact that this is the obvious policy for every railway administration, struck me as more unusual than anything else even in this debate. My reply to the charge that our railway administration has failed, and that it is deserving of severe censure is this. Honourable Members have had an opportunity of examining the budget papers that we have placed before them and of comparing the results of the railway administration now and as it was 5 or 6 years ago—a period within the memory of every Member of this House—and I challenge any Member of this House to say that the administration of our Railways has failed during that period. I challenge them to say that it has not steadily improved and far from deserving censure, I claim that in many respects, if not in all, it deserves the very highest praise.

(At this stage Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya and Mr. V. V. Jogiah rose to speak.)

Mr. President: Order, order. There can be no further debate now. We just had the final reply of the Honourable Member from Government. The debate on this motion is therefore closed.

Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya (Allahabad and Jhansi Divisions: Non-Muhammadan Rural): The practice has been that we have been allowed to speak after hearing the Government Member.

Mr. President: The Honourable Member should have risen in time if he wanted to speak. I called on the Honourable Sir George Rainy to reply to the whole debate and he

Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya: But we wanted to know what Sir George Rainy had to say before speaking. I have been waiting the whole day to hear Sir George Rainy speak and then speak myself.

Mr. President: Order, order. I regret very much that the Honourable Member often gets up late in the debate. However much I might like to give the Honourable Member an opportunity to speak, I am bound by Rules and Standing Orders which are against him.

Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya: I have given you my reason.

Mr. President: The Honourable Member (Pandit Malaviya) did not rise for the whole day, and ultimately, as no one else rose, I called upon the Honourable Member to reply.

Mr. Varahagiri Venkata Jogiah (Ganjam *cum* Vizagapatam: Non-Muhammadan Rural): I stood up, Sir.

Mr. President: The Chair did not see the Honourable Member.

(Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya again stood up.)

Mr. President: Does the Honourable Member wish to say anything on the point of order?

Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya: Exactly. We have had this debate year after year. We want to know what the Government have to say before speaking upon it. We do not want to waste our breath and repeat our arguments. I have been here at the sacrifice of other work in order to know what the Government have to say on this question of the admission of an Indian into the Railway Board and I waited until I found the earliest opportunity now to get up. I am sorry I did not know that you would not have thought it right to allow me an opportunity to speak. If I had thought that that would be so I assure you, Sir, I should have taken an earlier opportunity to speak.

Mr. President: There is no obligation on the part of Government to state their policy at an early stage of any debate though ordinarily they do so.

The Honourable Sir George Rainy: I would say that I should not have risen to speak unless I believed that I was entitled to bring the debate to a close.

Mr. President: The original motion was:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 11,70,000 be granted to the Governor General in Council to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1929, in respect of the 'Railway Board'."

Since which the following amendment has been moved:

"That the demand under the head 'Railway Board' be reduced to Re. 1."

The question I have to put is that that amendment be made.

The Assembly divided :

AYES—40.

Aney, Mr. M. S.
 Ayyangar, Mr. K. V. Rangaswami.
 Ayyangar, Mr. M. S. Sesha.
 Badi-uz-Zaman, Maulvi.
 Belvi, Mr. D. V.
 Bhargava, Pandit Thakur Das.
 Birla, Mr. Ghanshyam Das.
 Chetty, Mr. R. K. Shanmukham.
 Chunder, Mr. Nirmal Chunder.
 Das, Mr. B.
 Das, Pandit N'lakantha.
 Dutt, Mr. Amar Nath.
 Dutta, Mr. Srish Chandra.
 Gour, Sir Hari Singh.
 Haji, Mr. Sarabhai Nemchand.
 Iswar Saran, Munshi.
 Iyengar, Mr. S. Srinivasa.
 Jayakar, Mr. M. R.
 Jogiah, Mr. Varahagiri Venkata.
 Kartar Singh, Sardar.
 Kelkar, Mr. N. C.
 Kidwai, Mr. Rafi Ahmad.

Kunzru, Pandit Hirday Nath.
 Lahiri Chaudhury, Mr. Dharendra
 Kanta.
 Lajpat Rai, Lala.
 Malaviya, Pandit Madan Mohan.
 Mehta, Mr. Jamnadas M.
 Mitra, Mr. Satyendra Chandra.
 Moonje, Dr. B. S.
 Mukhtar Singh, Mr.
 Murtuza Saheb Bahadur, Maulvi
 Sayyid.
 Nehru, Pandit Motilal.
 Neogy, Mr. K. C.
 Pandya, Mr. Vidya Sagar.
 Ranga Iyer, Mr. C. S.
 Sarfaraz Hussain Khan, Khan
 Bahadur.
 Singh, Kumar Rananjaya.
 Singh, Mr. Gaya Prasad.
 Sinha, Kumar Ganganand.
 Tok Kyi, U.

NOES—52

Abdul Aziz, Khan Bahadur Mian.
 Abdul Matin Chaudhury, Maulvi.
 Abdul Qaiyum, Nawab Sir Sahibzada.
 Ahmad, Khan Bahadur Nasir-ud-din.
 Alexander, Mr. William.
 Allison, Mr. F. W.
 Anwar-ul-Azim, Mr.
 Ashrafuddin Ahmad, Khan Bahadur
 Nawabzada Sayid.
 Ayangar, Mr. V. K. Aravamudha
 Bajpai, Mr. G. S.
 Blackett, The Honourable Sir Basil.
 Bray, Sir Denys.
 Chalmers, Mr. T. A.
 Chatterjee, Revd. J. C.
 Chatterji, Rai Bahadur B. M.
 Coatman, Mr. J.
 Cocke, Mr. H. G.
 Cosgrave, Mr. W. A.
 Couper, Mr. T.
 Courtenay, Mr. R. H.
 Crawford, Colonel J. D.
 Crerar, The Honourable Mr. J.
 Dalal, Sardar Sir Bomanji.
 Ghazanfar Ali Khan, Raja.
 Ghuznavi, Mr. A. H.
 Gidnev, Lieut.-Colonel H. A. J.
 Graham, Mr. L.

Irwin, Mr. C. J.
 Ismail Khan, Mr.
 Jowahir Singh, Sardar Bahadur
 Sardar.
 Kabul Singh Bahadur, Captain.
 Keane, Mr. M.
 Lamb, Mr. W. S.
 Lindsay, Sir Darcy.
 Mitra, The Honourable Sir Bhupendra
 Nath.
 Moore, Mr. Arthur.
 Mukherjee, Mr. S. C.
 Parsons, Mr. A. A. L.
 Rafique, Mr. Muhammad.
 Rainy, The Honourable Sir George.
 Rao, Mr. V. Pandurang.
 Roy, Mr. S. N.
 Sams, Mr. H. A.
 Shamaldhari Lall, Mr.
 Shillidy, Mr. J. A.
 Sykes, Mr. E. F.
 Taylor, Mr. E. Gawan.
 Willson, Sir Walter.
 Yakub, Maulvi Muhammad.
 Yamin Khan, Mr. Muhammad.
 Young, Mr. G. M.
 Zulfiqar Ali Khan, Nawab Sir.

The motion was negatived.

Representative Control over the Railway Administration.

***Mr. N. M. Joshi** (Nominated: Labour Interests): Sir, I move:

"That the Demand under the head 'Railway Board' be reduced by Rs. 1,000."

The object of my amendment is to draw the attention of this House to the fact that the control of the Legislature as well as of the people of this country over the Railway administration is not much. The control as exercised to-day consists

The Honourable Sir George Rainy: On a point of order. I should like to submit that the question whether a greater degree of control should be exercised by this Assembly over the Railway Board was one of the matters to

*Speech not corrected by the Honourable Member.

[Sir George Rainy.]

which a good deal of attention was devoted in the motion we have just disposed of.

Mr. President: If I were to uphold the contention of the Honourable the Commerce Member I should have to rule out a large number of amendments on the paper. Mr. Joshi.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: I will not make a long speech, Sir. The control at present consists of six days' discussion in this House. Then, Sir, there are the Central and Local Advisory Councils. As far as the Advisory Councils are concerned, as Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas has already pointed out, the Central Council did not meet this year even once. The Local Advisory Councils did meet some times. But as regards these Councils I may say that the public does not know much about what they do. We would like the Railway Board to publish a report of the work done by the Central and Local Advisory Councils. Then, Sir, I would suggest that the Railway Budget should be taken in a separate Session, so that more days may be allotted to the discussion of railway policy. It is only then that the Legislature and the people of this country will exercise a greater control over the railways. If we do not get a sufficient number of days to discuss the details of railway policy the control of the Assembly over the railway administration will only be nominal. I therefore, hope, Sir, that my amendment will be carried.

The Honourable Sir George Rainy: I only wish to say a few words about this motion for a reduction, but it gives me an opportunity to say one or two things about the Central Railway Advisory Council which I had intended to say at the general discussion of the Budget in reply to the remarks of the Honourable Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas. It is perfectly true that the Central Railway Advisory Council has not met during the current year, and I should like to say that this is a matter in which the Railway Board have no responsibility whatever, for the responsibility rests solely with the Railway Member. Now I do not think my Honourable friends on the other side will attribute to me an inveterate distrust of them, or an obstinate refusal to listen to anything they may have to say. I will tell the House quite frankly that the Railway Department is not an easy Department to take over for one who has not had any previous experience of Railways, and I was anxious that before I put any questions before the Central Advisory Council to feel pretty sure that I myself understood the previous history of those questions and all the relevant circumstances bearing on them. There are two or three which I think may be ready for reference to the Council before very long. One of them is the question of the expenditure of the various Railways in the country on education. Another is the question of amenities for third class travellers,—for there are points on which it might be desirable to have a general discussion with the Central Advisory Council in order to ascertain what were the most promising lines of development which would be most appreciated by the travelling public. My Honourable friend, Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas, asked me to go a little further and to promise to refer to the Council the question of reductions in rates and fares and which were the reductions which it was most advisable to make. This is a matter about which I feel a good deal of difficulty at present, I am not prepared to say what my final attitude may be, but I shall certainly consider the suggestion, although, as I say, I have a good deal of difficulty about it. As regards the other points taken by my Honourable friend, Mr. Joshi, the only point I wish to refer to is the question of Local Advisory Committees. He said that he hoped that greater publicity would be given to their proceedings. Now from time to time I see accounts in the newspapers

of the proceedings of these Committees, and I honestly think that they get more publicity that way than they would get by being incorporated in a Railway Board Report, and I am not sure that, even though copies of that report were sent to every Member of the House, the proceedings of the committees would become better known in that way than they are at present. Possibly, however, I am holding an unworthy pessimistic view of the extent to which Honourable Members study the voluminous publications we place before them, and I will promise to consider that suggestion, which originally came from my friend, Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas. As a matter of fact we actually place in the Library every year the proceedings of these Committees, but I am quite prepared to consider and see whether we can make something of a pamphlet of them, as the Honourable Member suggested. I trust that my Honourable friend, Mr. Joshi, after what I have said, will not press his motion.

Mr. President: The question is:

“That the demand under the head ‘Railway Board’ be reduced by Rs. 1,000.”

The motion was negatived.

Racial Distinctions in Subordinate Establishments.

Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru (Agra Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural):
Sir, I beg to move:

“That the Demand under the head ‘Railway Board’ be reduced by Rs. 10,000.”

This House, Sir, has devoted a great deal of attention to the question of Indianization, but in this connection it has thought more of the higher than of the subordinate services. I propose to direct the attention of the House to-day to this matter which it seems to me is not less important than the other one which has engaged its attention so far. In regard to the higher posts the Railway Administration Report for 1926-27 tells us that while 78·8 per cent. of the posts are occupied by Europeans and Anglo-Indians, the people of this country, or I had better say the Hindus, Muhammadans and other classes in India, occupy only 21·2 per cent. of them. Now if we take the subordinate appointments, we find pretty nearly the same state of affairs existing. When I deal with the subordinates I refer only to subordinates drawing Rs. 250 per mensem or over or who are on scales of pay rising to Rs. 250 and over on Class I Railways excluding the Nizam's Guaranteed State Railway and the Jodhpur Railway. Now, we find here, Sir, if we consult the Report for 1926-27, that on the 1st April, 1927, while Europeans and Anglo-Indians occupy 70·4 per cent. of the posts, Hindus, Mussalmans and other classes occupy only 29·6 per cent. of them. We thus see that in the inferior posts Indians do not get much greater chance than they do in regard to the superior posts. Some of the Railways, Sir, show even a lower percentage of Indians than is implied in this average. It is natural, Sir, if you take an average of percentages, that some should be higher and some lower than the general average. But what is surprising is that among those Railways where the percentage of Indians is lower than the general average are two State Railways, the East Indian Railway and the Great Indian Peninsula Railway. Now, in the East Indian Railway the percentage of Hindus, Mussalmans and other classes is only 20·6 per cent. and on the Great Indian Peninsula Railway the corresponding percentage is 24·2 per cent. There are some company-managed Railways also in regard to which a similar complaint can be made. But I will mention only one of them, the Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway, the Agent of which delivered a speech as President of the last

[Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru.]

Railway Conference Association, which has roused a great deal of apprehension with regard to the sympathy of the Company-managed Railways with the policy of Indianisation whether in the higher or in the lower grades. In the Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway, Europeans and Anglo-Indians occupy 83·2 per cent. of those subordinate posts with which I have dealt so far and Hindus, Mussalmans and other classes occupy only 16·8 per cent. of them.

But this is not, Sir, the only points where racialism in filling up posts comes in. The statement in the Railway Report deals only with what I may call the upper subordinates. But there are a number of posts which do not figure in the list of subordinate establishments published by the various Railways. Now, I find that racial considerations enter as much in appointing men to these posts as in filling up the other posts which might be called the superior and the upper subordinate posts. And here I will deal specially, Sir, with the East Indian Railway. In 1926 Babu Ambica Prasad Sinha put a question drawing attention to the existence of racial distinctions on the East Indian Railway. Mr. Sim replying to his question said that Government was aware of it and that the question of removing racial discrimination on the East Indian Railway was under consideration. I do not know, Sir, what consideration Government have given to this subject; but the figures that are at our disposal show that racialism flourishes as much now on the East Indian Railway as it did two years ago. I put some questions the other day in this House with regard to the manner in which guards are appointed on the East Indian Railway. Mr. Parsons admitted that there are two grades of guards and that as a rule only Europeans and Anglo-Indians are appointed to Grade I. I will not therefore dwell on that point any more, except to point out that the inequality in regard to the initial and maximum salaries between the two grades will be found also in regard to the scales of allowances applicable to them. In so far as I have been able to look into the matter, guards of Grade II, who are generally Indians, get from 25 to 50 per cent. only of the allowances admissible in the case of guards of Grade I who are generally Europeans and Anglo-Indians.

The next case I should like to deal with is that of ticket collectors. Mr. Parsons, replying to my questions in regard to ticket collectors, yesterday said that, while there were four grades among them, the information at his disposal did not enable him to say that any racial considerations guided the authorities in making appointments. May I say, Sir, that the information at my disposal does not dispose me to accept that statement? My Honourable friend Mr. Parsons has shown himself as possessing an open mind when questions of fact are concerned and has generally been willing to accept corrections when compelled to do so. I trust that in this matter also he will find that the statements that I made are more correct than those which he made on behalf of Government yesterday.

The third class to which I should like to draw attention is that of drivers. People are not appointed as drivers straight away. I understand they are first appointed as firemen. Then they become shunters and last of all drivers. Now, I have been told that there is a great difference between the starting salaries of Indian and European firemen. Apart from that, I understand that, while it takes an Anglo-Indian or a European fireman about 5 years to become a driver, it takes an Indian anything from 10 to 15 years to reach the same position.

Lastly, I should like to draw attention to the case of the technical services. One would have thought that in this matter, at any rate, racialism would have no place and that merit alone would be considered in making appointments. But in regard to the apprentices who are sent to the Technical School at Jamalpur, to be trained as chargemen, while Indians, I understand, are required to have passed the Matriculation examination (I believe, in the first division), no such condition is insisted on in the case of Europeans and Anglo-Indians. There is, I understand, an examination for selecting recruits. But the recruitment does not take place on an entirely competitive basis. I have not been able to find out whether Indians on the one hand and Anglo-Indians and Europeans on the other compete separately or whether, in addition to examination, a certain amount of nomination also comes in. But I understand that pure competition is not allowed to determine the selection of apprentices and that the number is fixed on racial grounds. The same thing takes place in regard to electricians, permanent way inspectors and the engineering department inspectors who also are trained at Jamalpur. They, it seems, are selected in the same manner—either by means of separate examinations or by competition and nomination. In any case, the complaint is that preference is given to Europeans and Anglo-Indians. There are other cases also of racialism which I can bring to the notice of the Government, but the instances that I have given will, I hope, be sufficient to convince the House of the large, the incredible extent to which the East Indian Railway is guided by racial considerations in making even lower grade appointments.

Sir, before I sit down I should also like to deal briefly with certain other matters in which Europeans and Anglo-Indians, on the one hand, and Indians on the other are differentially treated. I asked certain questions yesterday about the medical relief given to members of the East Indian Railway staff. Mr. Parsons said that so far as the gazetted officers were concerned they were treated by the same officer, I am not sure what he said in regard to subordinate officers, but I believe he said there was no fixed rule in regard to them.

Mr. A. A. L. Parsons: I replied, so far as my memory goes, that I had not got full information but was collecting it.

Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru: So he has still an open mind on the subject. I should like to emphasise that even in regard to the provision of medical relief distinctions are made between Indians and Europeans and Anglo-Indians. I have seen with my own eyes that separate blocks are provided for Indians and Anglo-Indians, and I know that while the senior officer attends to Europeans and Anglo-Indians, the junior officer attends to Indians. In regard to nurses, cases have come within my own knowledge in which nurses have refused to attend Indian patients. As regards provision for maternity cases, Mr. Parsons and Government ought to know that little or nothing has been done for Indians. I believe the Agent of the East Indian Railway was approached some time ago in connection with this matter, but either no decision has been arrived at so far or a negative has been returned to the request made to him by the Indian employees.

The last question which I should like to deal with in this connection is that of passes. On the East Indian Railway, Sir, Indians and Christians, or rather non-Christian Indians and Christians are treated separately in regard to the issue of X'mas passes. Mr. Parsons and I had a pretty tough fight on that point in the autumn Session of the Assembly. I will not, therefore, go into details in connection with this matter, but I must express my strong conviction that the attitude of the Railway Board is far from being a fair one. The statements to which I drew attention

[Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru.]

practically compelled Mr. Parsons to admit that his previous answers on the subject were wrong. I should be prepared to deal with the Honourable Member again on that point, should he deny the version I have given of the matter; yet the Railway Board stick to their original opinion that the instructions issued by the Agent of the East Indian Railway are right and are not based on racial considerations at all. In the autumn Session I put two questions also with regard to the differential treatment of Indians and Anglo-Indians in regard to the issue of passes on the North-Western Railway. As regards one of the questions my Honourable friend, Mr. Parsons, promised to inquire into the matter and also stated that the revision of the rules was under consideration. But he took up a more stiff attitude in regard to the other question. I asked Government whether they were aware that on the North Western Railway "cheque passes may occasionally be issued by Divisional Superintendents to ministers of religion to minister to the spiritual wants of railway employees at places where the services of a clergyman are not ordinarily available". I further asked whether similar facilities were given for the satisfaction of the spiritual wants of Hindus and Muhammadans. The Honourable Member admitted the accuracy of the first statement and with regard to the latter part of my question said that he would make inquiries and let me know the result. The reply I received from him ran as follows:

"The issue of occasional passes under the North Western Railway rules referred to in question (a) is limited to ministers of the Christian religion. The reason for the grant of these passes is that if these concessions were not granted numerous small Christian communities of railway staff, owing to the long distances by which they are separated from the nearest minister of their religion, would be bereft of spiritual ministrations altogether. This does not hold true of other religions in this country and there is not therefore the same necessity for granting the concession to their ministers."

Now, Sir, while it is perfectly possible for Hindus and Muhammadans to say their daily prayers in their homes, I suppose Government are aware that both of them want periodically to get such men as they have faith in, as they look up to in religious matters. Why in the case of these men the same facilities should not be provided as are provided in the case of ministers of the Christian religion, I do not see. I hope it is not laid down anywhere that a Christian may say his prayers only before a priest. A Christian may offer his prayers as much in private as a man belonging to any other religion; and if you offer concessions to members of one denomination to invite men who would minister to their spiritual needs, it is only fair that the same concession should be extended to members of other denominations also. I do not ask that the concession enjoyed by Europeans and Anglo-Indians in this respect should be taken away from them. All that I ask is that it should be extended to Indians. It should be enjoyed by Hindus and Muslims as well.

Before I sit down, I should like to make one suggestion to enable the House to judge what progress is being made with regard to the Indianisation of the upper subordinate grades. At the end of the annual Railway Report there is appended a statement showing the vacancies which have occurred in the course of the year in the superior grades and how they have been filled up. I propose that a similar statement should be appended to the Report with regard to the upper subordinate grades. I hope I have convinced the House that there is as much need for watchfulness in regard to the Indianisation of lower grades as there is in regard to admission of Indians into the higher services.

The Assembly then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Saturday, the 25th February, 1928.

APPENDIX A.*

List of Candidates who had applied for appointments in the Superior Services of Railways, but failed to obtain them.

		Post applied for.
Naga Bhushan Row.	Civil Engineer.	Temporary Engineer.
Admani D. Singh.	B.E.	..
R. V. Patel.	Trained on L. N. E. (England).	Assistant Traffic Superintendent.
Rao Bahadur S. R. Aiyar.
O. K. Madhavan.	Trained on S. W. Ry.	Assistant Traffic Superintendent.
S. M. Khamu.	B.Sc. (Engineering), M.S.P., F.P.S. (London).	Assistant Engineer.
Prasad Lal Sharma.	B.Sc.	Traffic Department.
Ram Chandra.	B.Sc. (Allahabad).	Assistant Engineer.
Kedarnath Bhosugaor.	B.Sc. (Allahabad).	Assistant Traffic Superintendent.
Harilal Mody.	B.A., L.C.E.	Chief Engineer.
N. N. Krishna Murti.	B.E.	Temporary Engineer.
K. L. Sheth.	B.E., B.Sc.	Executive Engineer.
S. R. Palsula.	B.A., L.C.E.	Assistant Engineer.
Nadir P. Cammissout.	B.Sc.	Traffic.
S. S. Vilvanthar.	Engineer with long term service in England.	Assistant Engineer.
N. Visvanathajin.	B.A., B.E. (Madras).	Ditto.
T. P. Ramchandra Iyer	M.A., and Diploma in Accountancy.	Accounts Branch.
B. Chandramani.	L.C.E., M.A.I.E.	Temporary Engineer.
A. D. Khan.	A.M.I.E.	Probationer Engineer.
H. Yesonath.	B.E.	Assistant Engineer.
Narayan K. Mirchandani.	Passed 10 examinations in Railway Service.	Traffic Department.
C. Vasudevam.	B.E., M.E.	Engineer.
Dalip Singh.	B.Sc.	Temporary Engineer.
E. W. P. Nadir.	Traffic Training, Midland Railway, England.	Traffic Department.
Mahadeo A. Dhona.	B.A., B.F., A.M.I.E., Member of Institute of Engineers.	Assistant Engineer.

* Vide page 734 of these Debates.

List of Candidates who had applied for appointments in the Superior Services of Railways, but failed to obtain them—concd.

		Post applied for.
K. V. Lalvani.	B.A., distinguished Railway Service in England.	..
S. M. Umar.	M.I.E.	Electric Engineer.
Nalini Basu.	Graduate, Civil Engineering.	Engineer.
S. R. Krishna Murti.	B.E., C.E., A.M.I.E.	Do.
Hoshang Rahadi.	B.Sc.	Traffic Department.
Gandhi.	M.B., B.S., D.L.O., F.R.C.S.	Railway Medical Service.
Arunings Ksviraj.	M.A., M.R.A.S. (London).	Probationary Traffic Superintendent.
G. Francis George.	B.Sc., Member of Radio Society (Great Britain).	Electrical Department.
M. B. Chandirsama.	B.Sc. (England).	Assistant Engineer.
V. M. Bhayan.	B.Sc. (Engineering).	Engineer.
D. N. Sanyal.	Sc. (Glasgow).	Assistant Engineer.
C. M. Parekh.	B.E., proposed for I.E. A.M.	Temporary Engineer.
K. A. Dastur.	B.A. and B.E.	Assistant Engineer.
P. N. Nariman.	B.E. and B.Sc.	Ditto.