

26th February 1935

THE

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY DEBATES

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(20th February to 8th March, 1935)



FIRST SESSION

OF THE

FIFTH LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY,
1935



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1935.

Legislative Assembly.

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Tuesday, 26th February, 1935.

The Assembly met in the Assembly Chamber of the Council House at Eleven of the Clock, Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim) in the Chair.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

WITHDRAWAL OF CONCESSIONS ENABLING THE VILLAGERS IN RAYALASEEMA TO MANUFACTURE SALT.

543. *Mr. M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: (a) Have Government withdrawn the concessions enabling the villagers in Rayalaseema to manufacture salt? If so, why?

(b) Have Government received any representations from any *ryots* of Uravakonda in the Ananthapur district, asking for the revival of the salt concessions?

(c) Are Government prepared to restore, in general, the salt concessions in Rayalaseema, and if not, at least during the famine period?

The Honourable Sir James Grigg: (a) On account of breaches of the conditions attached to the concession, it was withdrawn in some cases in the middle of 1932 and in others in September, 1933, from the following areas in the region which I understand to be that described by the Honourable Member as Rayalaseema:

- (1) Cuddapah District.
- (2) Anantapur District.
- (3) Bellary, Seriguppa, Allur, Adoni and Royadrag Taluks of the Bellary District.
- (4) Kurnool, Koilkuntla, Cumbum, Markapur, Sirvel, Nandyal, Dhona, Pattikonda and Nandikonda Taluks of the Kurnool District.

(b) No such representations have been received by the Government of India or reported to them.

(c) Applications for the restoration of the concession should be made to the local officers, who will dispose of them in consultation with the Government of the Province concerned.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Is the Honourable Member aware of the fact that some ordinary peasants and also workers in some villages in Anantapur applied for permission to manufacture salt and they have been refused permission?

The Honourable Sir James Grigg: I am not aware of that.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: In view of the fact that Mr. F. W. Stewart, who is the officer who has refused this permission, is now in Delhi as a Member of the Council of State, would the Honourable Member be prepared to make inquiries from him whether this is a fact?

The Honourable Sir James Grigg: If I make inquiries I shall make them from the Local Government, for, as I said, this matter of the restoration of the concession is to be dealt with by the local officers in consultation with the Local Government.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Does an appeal against their decision lie to the Government of India?

The Honourable Sir James Grigg: I must have notice of that.

Seth Haji Abdoola Haroon: May I know if the Government revenue is suffering on account of this concession to manufacture salt?

The Honourable Sir James Grigg: As in most of the cases the concession was withdrawn in order to protect the revenue, I do not think there is any loss of revenue.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: In view of the famine conditions there and those people are suffering and Government have seen fit to establish relief measures and also famine relief centres, and so on, does he not think that there is a real necessity for waiving the usual objections and permit those people to manufacture salt?

The Honourable Sir James Grigg: Local officers have full discretion to restore the salt concessions, provided they are satisfied that the restoration can take place under conditions where they will not be abused.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Is there no appeal against their decision to the Government of India?

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member has already answered that.

Seth Haji Abdoola Haroon: Some fishermen are getting fish from the sea and they find some salt lying on the shore of the sea. If they dry the fish in that salt, is that an offence?

The Honourable Sir James Grigg: The Honourable Member had better put down that question. I am not an expert in these revenue matters.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Ohttiar: Is there any appeal from the decision of the Local Government to the Government of India, in case they refuse the concession?

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member has already answered it.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Ohttiar: We did not hear his reply.

The Honourable Sir James Grigg: I said that if the Honourable Member will put down a question, I will give an answer, but I wish to make it clear in advance that it is my firm intention to leave the widest possible discretion to the Local Government and the local officers.

STATE PRISONERS DETAINED IN THE RAJAHMUNDRY CENTRAL JAIL AND IN THE MADRAS JAIL.

553. *Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: (a) Will Government please state the names of the State Prisoners now detained in the Rajahmundry Central Jail and in the Madras Jail?

(b) Have Government received any representations from the State Prisoners in Rajahmundry Central Jail, regarding the following matters:

(i) that for some time past they have not been allowed facilities for exercise, diet, etc.; and

(ii) that their allowances have been recently curtailed and are insufficient?

(c) Have Government given them any reply? If so, what?

(d) Is it a fact that all facilities for exercise and recreation have been withheld from them?

(e) Is it a fact that State Prisoners are asked to pay for the medical treatment undergone by them in Jail, and recently Pratul Chandra Bhattacharjee was asked to purchase a nasal douche and a bottle of Cod Liver Oil at his own cost?

(f) Is it a fact that State Prisoners are given family allowances, and Pratul Chandra Bhattacharjee has not been given family allowance in spite of repeated representations?

(g) Is it a fact that Suresh Chandra Das' eyes were examined as far back as November, 1934, and glasses have not yet been supplied to him, though they were presented as urgent?

(h) Is it a fact that for the last few months Pratul Chandra Banerjee was complaining to the Madras Government against the vindictive treatment meted out to him by the Superintendent, Central Jail, Rajahmundry? If so, what are the facts, and what have Government done in that matter?

The Honourable Sir Henry Craik: (a) There are only two State Prisoners in the Rajahmundry Jail, namely, Pratul Chandra Bhattacharjee and Suresh Chandra Das. There are no State Prisoners in the Madras Jail.

(b) to (e), (g) and (h). I would refer the Honourable Member to the answer given by me yesterday to Mr. Chattopadhyaya's starred question No. 541.

(f) No family allowance has been granted in this case since the State Prisoner's detention did not affect the income of the family.

PERSONS THROWN OUT OF EMPLOYMENT IN AUDIT AND ACCOUNTS OFFICES.

554. *Mr. D. K. Lahiri Chaudhury: (a) Will Government be pleased to state the number of men that were thrown out of employment in each Audit and Accounts Office as a result of general retrenchment on re-amalgamation of Audit and Accounts in the year 1931?

(b) Will Government please state what amount of gratuity and leave as compensation were awarded to these men at the time of their discharge?

(c) Will Government be pleased to state how many of these men have been specifically delegated by the Agent, is competent to pass an order of *in their service*, taking into consideration the period spent on leave?

(d) Are Government prepared to accord full benefits of the past service to such men who have been re-employed in service without any break either before or immediately after the expiry of their leave, if they refund gratuity? If not, why not?

(e) Do Government propose to allow such re-employed men who have no break in service and who are prepared to refund the amounts of gratuity paid to them, the benefits of the *old scales of pay and old leave rules*? If not, why not?

The Honourable Sir James Grigg: The information is being obtained and will be laid on the table in due course.

Mr. D. K. Lahiri Chaudhury: How long will it take to get the information?

The Honourable Sir James Grigg: I cannot answer that offhand.

POWER TO PASS AN ORDER OF DISCHARGE BY A SENIOR SCALE OFFICER ON STATE RAILWAYS.

555. ***Bhai Parma Nand:** (1) Will Government please state the extent of the power to pass an order of discharge by a senior scale officer on State Railways?

(2) Will Government please state whether a senior scale officer on State Railways, can pass an order of discharge irrespective of pay and appointment held by the subordinate?

(3) Will Government please state whether a senior scale officer on State Railways, serving in a division under the Divisional Superintendent, can pass independently an order of discharge of a subordinate on a scale of pay exceeding Rs. 80 per mensem?

(4) Will Government please state the number and the circumstances under which the employees in the Moradabad Division on East Indian Railway were discharged during the period 1st November, 1934 and the 31st January, 1935 as per term of their agreements?

Mr. P. E. Rau: (1) to (3). A senior scale officer, to whom power has been specifically delegated by the Agent, is competent to pass an order of discharge on a non-gazetted railway servant.

(4) The number of employees discharged in terms of their agreements is two. Government are not prepared to state the precise reasons for the discharge.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: May I know what powers have been delegated to the senior officers?

Mr. P. E. Rau: To what railway does the Honourable Member refer?

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: The N. W. Railway.

Mr. P. B. Rau: I shall get him the information if he wants it.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: May I know if the senior officers can pass orders directly and independently without consulting the Divisional Officer?

Mr. P. B. Rau: The rules provide that the Agent can delegate powers to the senior officers. Beyond that, I have no information.

CONTROL OF THE GOVERNOR GENERAL IN COUNCIL OVER THE EXPENSES INCURRED BY THE EAST INDIAN RAILWAY.

556. ***Bhai Parma Nand:** Is it a fact that the Governor General in Council has no control over the expenses incurred by the East Indian Railway Administration?

Mr. P. B. Rau: No.

POWER OF THE GOVERNOR GENERAL IN COUNCIL TO REVERSE, MODIFY OR ANNUL THE ORDERS PASSED BY THE GAZETTED OFFICERS OF THE EAST INDIAN RAILWAY.

557. ***Bhai Parma Nand:** Is it a fact that the Governor General in Council cannot and never does reverse, modify or annul the order passed by the gazetted officers of the East Indian Railway Administration under powers delegated to them?

Mr. P. B. Rau: No.

DISMISSAL OR DISCHARGE OF AN EMPLOYEE BY A SENIOR SCALE OR ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER ON STATE RAILWAYS.

558. ***Bhai Parma Nand:** Will Government please state whether a senior scale or administrative officer on State Railways can at his discretion dismiss or discharge an employee as per term of agreement?

Mr. P. B. Rau: The rules authorise an Agent to delegate powers of dismissal of all non-gazetted Government servants to an authority not lower than the Head of a Department or a Divisional Superintendent and powers of discharge to an officer not lower than an officer of the senior scale. But in the case of an employé on a scale of pay not exceeding Rs. 30 per mensem who has rendered less than ten years continuous service he is authorised to delegate powers to an officer of Assistant grade to discharge or an officer of the senior scale to dismiss such an employé.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: Is the delegation in all these State Railways equal or is there any difference in the delegation of these powers to the senior officers?

Mr. P. B. Rau: I must ask for notice of that question.

Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad: In the case of the delegated power, may I ask whether the Divisional Superintendents, to whom the power has been delegated, are authorised to delegate to their subordinates? Is this delegation transferable?

Mr. P. E. Rau: No, Sir.

Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad: We know that in practice they have transferred it.

SPENDING OF RAILWAY REVENUES ON HIS PRIVATE SHOOTING OR EXCURSIONS BY A SENIOR SCALE OR ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER ON STATE RAILWAYS.

559. ***Bhai Parma Nand:** Will Government please state whether a senior scale or administrative officer on State Railways at his discretion can spend the Railway revenues on his private shootings and excursions?

Mr. P. E. Rau: No, Sir.

Mr. Ahmed Ibrahim Haroon Jaffer: Is the Honourable Member aware that the Divisional Superintendent at Lucknow spends his time fishing at Phapund?

Mr. P. E. Rau: No, Sir.

HAULING OF AN INSPECTION CARRIAGE ON HIS PRIVATE SHOOTING EXCURSIONS AND TRAVELLING ON PRIVILEGE PASS BY A SENIOR SCALE OR ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER ON STATE RAILWAYS.

560. ***Bhai Parma Nand:** Will Government please state whether a senior scale or administrative officer on State Railways can at his discretion haul an inspection carriage on his private shootings, excursions and travelling on privilege pass, proceeding to or returning from leave, etc., either within or outside his jurisdiction?

Mr. P. E. Rau: No. An officer can use an inspection carriage only with the approval, general or special, of his administrative superior. I may remind the Honourable Member that it is a very important part of an officer's duty to tour within the limits of his jurisdiction, as often as possible, and Government have no reason to believe that there is any abuse of the privilege.

TREATING OF PERIOD SPENT BY RAILWAY EMPLOYEES ON CASUAL LEAVE AS ON DUTY.

561. ***Bhai Parma Nand:** Is it a fact that Government have informed this House on the 16th February, 1984, in reply to starred question No. 139, that the period spent on casual leave is treated as on duty? If so, are Government prepared to make inquiries and state why average mileage allowance is not being paid to the running staff in Moradabad Division, East Indian Railway while on casual leave?

Mr. P. B. Rau: Yes. It is because casual leave is treated as on duty that they are not entitled to average mileage. While on duty they are entitled only to allowances based on the mileage actually performed.

Mr. V. V. Giri: Did the Railway Board reconsider their decision on this point?

Mr. P. B. Rau: No, Sir, there seems to be no reason to reconsider it.

MANUAL OR OTHER BOOK OF REFERENCE ON MATTERS PERSONAL TO THE SUBORDINATE RAILWAY STAFF.

562. ***Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali:** (a) Will Government please state whether the administrations of the various State-managed Railways or the Railway Board have published in a concise form for the edification of the subordinate staff any manual or other book of reference on matters personal to them? If not, do Government propose to compile, or have compiled, any such book of reference so that the staff might readily know what rights, privileges, concessions, penalties, punishments and restrictions they are liable to? If not, will Government please state what objection they have to the publication of such a book?

(b) Is it a fact that the Government of India in the Railway Department (Railway Board) notified the classification, control and Appeal Rules for class I and II Services of Superior Establishment? If so, are these rules applicable to subordinate services also?

Mr. P. B. Rau: (a) A Manual consolidating general rules relating to Railway Establishments is under preparation.

(b) The reply to the first part of the question is in the affirmative. Similar rules for subordinate staff framed under the direction appended to the Railway Services (Classification, Control and Appeal) Rules will issue shortly.

CONCESSION TICKETS ISSUED TO EMPLOYEES ON THE AUTHORITY OF PRIVILEGE TICKET ORDERS ON THE EAST INDIAN RAILWAYS.

563. ***Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali:** (a) Do the East Indian Railway Administration observe the practice of issuing to their employees concession tickets on the authority of privilege ticket orders? If so, what is the extent of the concession conveyed thereby?

(b) Are these privilege tickets issued for all classes of travel?

(c) Do these privilege tickets, irrespective of class, carry the same rights to the holder as fully paid tickets? If not, in what respect do the rights differ?

(d) Is the privilege of travelling by mail trains and 7-Up and 8-Down Express Trains applicable to the holders of privilege tickets of all classes ordinarily carried by these trains? If not, do Government propose to grant the same rights to privilege ticket holders as ordinarily applicable to holders of fully paid tickets? If not, will Government please state where the privilege lies?

Mr. P. B. Rau: (a) Yes. One-third the ordinary fares.

(b) Yes, the class of privilege ticket admissible to an employee is the same as the class of pass to which he is entitled under the pass rules.

(c) There are several points of difference, the most important being that a privilege ticket:

(i) cannot be exchanged for a ticket of a higher class by payment of the difference in the fares of the two classes.

(ii) is not transferable.

The use of a privilege ticket is also subject to the condition that the Railway is not liable for loss of life, injury, delay or loss of or damage to the property of the holder.

(d) Government have no information as regards the trains by which holders of privilege tickets are not permitted to travel. The grant of these privilege tickets is a concession which may be properly subjected to such restrictions as the Administration may consider necessary in the public interest.

RAILWAYS OWNED, WORKED AND CONTROLLED BY THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.

564. ***Mr. Muhammad Ashar Ali:** (a) Is it a fact that Burma, Eastern Bengal, East Indian, Great Indian Peninsula and North Western Railways are owned, worked, and controlled by the Government of India?

(b) Is it a fact that these five Railways in India are termed State Railways?

(c) Is it a fact that the employees on these five Railways are the servants of Government?

Mr. P. B. Rau: The reply to all the parts of the question is in the affirmative, except that it is perhaps more accurate to term these "State-managed Railways" in order to distinguish them from State-owned, but Company-managed Railways.

POSITION OF THE INDIAN RAILWAY CONFERENCE ASSOCIATION.

565. ***Mr. Muhammad Ashar Ali:** (a) Is it a fact that the Indian Railway Conference Association is owned, worked and controlled by the Government of India?

(b) Is it a fact that the employees of the Indian Railway Conference Association are the servants of the Government of India?

(c) Is it a fact that the Honourable the Commerce Member of the Government of India holds the charge of and responsibility for the Indian Railway Conference Association in the same manner as he holds that of the Railway Department (Railway Board) of the Government of India?

(d) If the replies to parts (a) to (c) be in the negative, will Government please state:

(i) whether the Indian Railway Conference Association is a private concern, not controlled and owned by the Government of India;

- (ii) whether the employees of the Indian Railway Conference Association are subject to the Government Servants Conduct Rules, the State Railways Provident Fund and Gratuity Rules, the Fundamental Rules and the State Railway Leave Rules; and
- (iii) the law under which it is incorporated?

Mr. P. E. Rau: (a), (b) and (c). No.

(d) (i) The budget of the Association and certain proposals for expenditure are subject to the sanction of the Government of India.

(ii) The Government Servants' Conduct Rules do not apply to employees of the Indian Railway Conference Association. The State Railway Provident Fund and Gratuity Rules, the Fundamental Rules and the State Railway Leave Rules have been applied to these employees by the Association with the approval of Government.

(iii) The Association is not a registered corporation.

Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad: May I know whether Government give a subsidy to this Conference?

Mr. P. E. Rau: Sir, the Conference is supported by subscriptions from all the railways that are parties to the Conference.

Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad: The funds of these railways are Government funds, are they not?

Mr. P. E. Rau: The funds of the State-owned Railways are Government funds,—not the funds of all railways.

Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad: You put the subsidy given to the Conference in the list of the Demands. Is it a votable item?

Mr. P. E. Rau: It is a votable item.

Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad: May I know whether the Association have any other funds besides the Government subsidy and the subscriptions of the Railways?

Mr. P. E. Rau: Yes, subscriptions from such railways as are parties to the Conference, but are not owned by the Government of India.

RECRUITMENT OF SUBORDINATE STAFF ON THE EAST INDIAN RAILWAY.

566. ***Mr. Muhammad Ashar Ali:** Is it a fact that the recruitment of subordinate staff on the East Indian Railway in general, and Moradabad Division in particular, is not governed by the Rules for the recruitment and training of staff, issued by the Railway Board as circularized by the Agent under his No. 548/A.E.-2460, dated Calcutta, the 1st October, 1932?

Mr. P. E. Rau: No, Sir.

CLASSIFIED LIST OF SUBORDINATE STAFF ON THE EAST INDIAN RAILWAY.

587. *Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali: Is it a fact that in 1934 the East Indian Railway Press, Calcutta, had printed for official use only a classified list of subordinate staff of all Departments of the East Indian Railway administration on scales of pay rising to Rs. 250 and above? If so, will Government please place a copy of it in the library of this House and state:

- (a) the authority under which it is published;
- (b) the number of copies printed;
- (c) the total expense of its printing;
- (d) whether subordinate staff, who formed the bulk of the list, are supplied with a copy; if not, why not;
- (e) whether they are aware of the inaccuracies in the print; and if so, who is responsible therefor;
- (f) what the *nota bene*: 'Nothing in this list is to be taken as conveying any sanction or authority' signifies; and
- (g) what purpose the list is supposed to serve?

Mr. P. R. Bau: The reply to the first part of the question is in the affirmative. A copy of the publication is in the Library.

- (a) The list is published under the authority of the Agent of the Railway.
- (b), (c) and (d). Government have no information, but they do not consider it essential that subordinate staff should be supplied with copies.
- (e) If my Honourable friend has discovered any inaccuracies I shall be glad if he will bring them to the notice of the Agent.
- (f) It signifies exactly what it says. The information given in the list cannot, for example, be an authority for an Accounts Officer to pay a man the rate of pay shown in the list.
- (g) It is considered the list gives useful information about the particulars of service of the staff in question.

SENIORITY OF INDIVIDUALS ON THE EAST INDIAN RAILWAY.

588. *Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali: Is it a fact that Government informed this House on the 19th July, 1934, in reply to starred question No. 629 asked on the 4th April, 1934, that the relative seniority of individuals would be decided in their substantive grades? If so, will Government please state:

- (a) the date from which this procedure is observed on the East Indian Railway;
- (b) the persons, and appointments, who are governed by this rule on the East Indian Railway;
- (c) the grades from which the officiating Transportation Inspectors are recruited;
- (d) the names, grade, rate of pay and date of entering in the grade of officiating Transportation Inspectors from the 1st July, 1925 (date of amalgamation) to the 31st January, 1935;

- (e) the names, grade, rate of pay and the date of entering in the grade of the staff, who are superseded by and the reasons of supersessions, preferential treatment and accelerated promotions;
- (f) the names, grade, and rate of pay of officiating Transportation Inspectors, who were reverted to their substantive appointments and reasons for such reversions; and
- (g) whether the reverted Transportation Inspectors lost their place of seniority in their officiating and substantive appointments?

Mr. P. R. Rau: The reply to the first part of the question is in the affirmative. As regards the second part:

(a) If my Honourable friend will read the answer again he would realise that the Agent, East Indian Railway, has given a hypothetical decision.

(b) The reply refers definitely to Transportation Inspectors.

(c) The information is contained in the rules for the recruitment and training of subordinate staff, a copy of which is in the Library of the House.

(d), (e), (f) and (g). Government have no information and do not consider that any useful purpose will be served by collecting it.

Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad: Sir, a copy is not in the Library of the House. I tried to find it this morning.

Mr. P. R. Rau: Possibly it is such a popular publication that copies have been taken away by Honourable Members to study.

Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad: Sir, the Librarian told me this morning only that the Railway Board never sent him a copy for the Library.

Mr. P. R. Rau: If that is so, I must apologise. I shall send a copy.

RULES REGARDING APPEALS FROM THE SUBORDINATE STAFF ON STATE RAILWAYS.

569. ***Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali:** Will Government please state:

- (a) whether any rules (other than rules regulating discharge and dismissal) have been framed regarding appeals from the subordinate staff on State Railways against the orders on: (i) censure; (ii) withholding increments; (iii) withholding promotion; (iv) reduction to a lower post or to a lower stage in time scale or to a lower grade; (v) recovery from pay of the whole or part of any pecuniary loss caused to Government by negligence or breach of orders or otherwise; (vi) suspension and (vii) other causes; if so, whether they are prepared to lay a copy of such rules on the table of this House;
- (b) whether the appellate authority is required to record the decision in writing on each ground of appeal *et seriatim*;
- (c) if the answers to parts (a) and (b) be in the negative whether they are prepared to frame rules consistent with those already in force for superior services on State Railways, if not, why not?

Mr. P. R. Rau: (a) and (b). No other rules have been framed by the Railway Board.

(c) The question is under consideration.

OPTION GIVEN TO THE STAFF UNDER THE EAST INDIAN RAILWAY COMPANY TO ELECT STATE RAILWAY RULES FOR THE GRANT OF TRAVELLING ALLOWANCE.

570. *Mr. Muhammad Ashar AH: Is it a fact that Government informed this House on the 3rd August, 1984, in reply to starred question No. 133 asked on the 16th February, 1984, that the staff under the East Indian Railway Company's Rules were given the option to elect State Railway Rules for the grant of travelling allowance? If so, will Government please state:

(a) under what rules the staff is paid travelling allowance when no option to elect State Railway Rules is given by the staff;

(b) whether Travelling Ticket Inspectors under the Accounts Department, now Travelling Ticket Examiners under the Operating Department, are included as a part of the staff under the East Indian Railway Company's Rule; if so, whether they also asked to give their option; if not, why not;

(c) whether it is a precedent or a rule that whenever a change is made in the emoluments of the staff, they are asked to give their option; if so, why the Travelling Ticket Examiners, who are transferred to new emoluments were not asked in a similar manner; and

(d) whether Government now propose to rectify the error; if not, why not?

Mr. P. R. Rau: The reply to the first part of the question is in the affirmative. As regards the second part:

(a) When the option is not exercised, the staff in question continue under the old Company's rules, but I must point out that, so far as compensatory allowances and other allowances which are not mentioned in the agreements of the staff are concerned, Government are entitled to alter the old rates as they consider reasonable.

(b) Government are not aware that Travelling Ticket Inspectors in the Accounts Department, who were employed before the East Indian Railway was taken over by the State, were not given this option.

(c) If the Honourable Member refers to the introduction of the revised scales of pay, the usual rule is that staff are generally given the option to continue on existing scales subject to limits if necessary. Government have allowed the old Travelling Ticket Examiners to retain their old rates of pay.

(d) I am not aware what error my Honourable friend is referring to which remains unrectified.

CONNECTION OF A BRAKESMAN AND A ROAD VAN CLERK.

571. ***Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali:** Is it a fact that Government informed this House on the 3rd August, 1934, in reply to my starred question No. 212, asked on the 19th March, 1934, that a road van clerk, in some cases, is "connected with the charge of a moving train"? If so, will Government please state the nature of the connection of a brakeman and a road van clerk?

Mr. P. B. Rau: The reply to the first part is in the affirmative. A brakeman is required to assist the guard generally and to apply brakes as and when required. A road van clerk assists the guard in dealing with packages required to be loaded into and unloaded from road vans.

WITHDRAWAL OF MILEAGE ALLOWANCE FROM THE TRAVELLING TICKET EXAMINERS ON THE BURMA RAILWAYS.

572. ***Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali:** Is it a fact that Government informed this House on the 3rd August, 1934, in reply to my starred question No. 212, asked on the 19th March, 1934, that the question as to the withdrawal of mileage allowance from the Travelling Ticket Examiners is now being referred to the Agent of the Burma Railways? If so, will Government please place on the table the correspondence passed between them with the final orders; if not, why not?

Mr. P. B. Rau: The reply to the first part of the question is in the affirmative. As regards the second part, the Agent, Burma Railways, has been told that Travelling Ticket Examiners should not be paid mileage allowance in future and that this should be replaced by a daily allowance or a consolidated monthly allowance. Government regret that they cannot place the correspondence on the table of the House as it is of a purely departmental nature not intended for publication.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: As similar questions are being considered by the Agents of the other railways—for instance, the N. W. Railway—with regard to the allowances being withdrawn, will the Honourable Member ask the Agent of the North Western Railway to expedite the matter and to come to a certain conclusion on that point? The Travelling Ticket Examiners are very anxious to know the result.

Mr. P. B. Rau: Sir, if my Honourable friend is referring to the memorials received from the Travelling Ticket Examiners of the North Western Railway I can only say that I shall do what I can to expedite the decision.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: Thank you.

Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali: Is this not connected with the allowances of the Travelling Ticket Examiner's and is not that matter of sufficient importance so that they may rightly wish to know the final orders of the Railway Board?

Mr. P. B. Rau: As regards the Burma Railways?

Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali: Yes.

Mr. P. B. Rau: I have given a reply to the question.

MILEAGE ALLOWANCE OF TRAIN DESPATCH CLERKS, ETC., OF THE OLD OUDH AND ROHILKUND RAILWAY.

573. ***Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali:** (a) Is it a fact that Government informed this House on the 3rd August, 1934, in reply to an unstarred question No. 213, asked on the 19th March, 1934, that Train Despatch Clerk, or Free Service clerks or clerks who travel in trains, taking and delivering Railway Dak of the old Oudh and Rohilkhand Railway, are not paid mileage allowance? If so, will Government please (i) lay on the table of this House the pay bills of the following Despatch clerks of Moradabad Division for the months of January, February, March, April, May, June, July, August, September and October 1934:—Messrs. A. R. Haya, Ibn-i-Hussain, Babu Lal Sharma, Raghubar Dayal and Fiazud-Din; (ii) state how far the report of the Agent is correct; and (iii) what disciplinary action has been taken against the Agent for suppressing the true and correct information, if none, why not?

(b) Is the Agent's report being scrutinized before being communicated to this House? If so, how and who scrutinized it; if not, why not?

(c) Do Government propose to prosecute the Agent under section 124 of the Government of India Act; if not, why not?

Mr. P. B. Rau: Government are making enquiries.

GRANT OF EUROPEAN LEAVE RULES TO CERTAIN STAFF ON THE EAST INDIAN RAILWAY.

574. ***Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali:** Will Government please state the circumstances under which certain staff on the East Indian Railway Administration, appointed to service after the 31st December, 1924, are granted European Leave Rules admissible to the staff engaged by the late East Indian Railway Company?

Mr. P. B. Rau: With your permission, Sir, I shall reply to questions Nos. 574 and 575 together. Government are not aware that the facts are as stated, but are making enquiries.

GRANT OF EUROPEAN LEAVE RULES TO CERTAIN STAFF ON THE EAST INDIAN RAILWAY.

†575. ***Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali:** Will Government please state the circumstances under which the staff on the East Indian Railway Administration, re-appointed to service after the 31st December, 1924, are granted Company's European Leave Rules?

ACCELERATED PROMOTIONS OF THE STAFF ON THE EAST INDIAN RAILWAY.

576. ***Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali:** Will Government please state the circumstances under which certain staff on the East Indian Railway Administration are given accelerated promotions?

†For answer to this question, see answer to question No. 574.

Mr. P. E. Rau: I am not aware of any general rules framed to govern such cases. Each obviously must be considered on its merits.

APPOINTMENTS OR PROMOTIONS OF CERTAIN RAILWAY STAFF MADE BY SELECTION.

577. ***Mr. Muhammad Ashar Ali:** Will Government please state the circumstances, rules or regulation, under which the appointments or promotions other than to Transportation Inspectors, Station Superintendents, Assistant Running Shed Foremen and Controllers, are made by selection?

Mr. P. E. Rau: I would invite the Honourable Member's attention to rules 57 to 61 of the "Rules for the recruitment and training of subordinate staff on State-managed Railways", a copy of which is in the Library of the House.

CREATION OF SPECIAL GRADES IN TIME SCALE OF PAY ON THE EAST INDIAN RAILWAY.

578. ***Mr. Muhammad Ashar Ali:** Will Government please state the circumstances under which special grades in time scales of pay are created on the East Indian Railway Administration?

Mr. P. E. Rau: If my Honourable friend will inform me what special grade he refers to, I shall endeavour to see if I can give him an answer.

Mr. Muhammad Ashar Ali: Should I inform the Honourable Member here in the House, or should I send him a private note?

Mr. P. E. Rau: Just as he pleases, Sir.

POWERS OF AN AGENT AND HIS SUBORDINATES IN RESPECT OF DISCHARGE, DISMISSAL, ETC.

579. ***Mr. Muhammad Ashar Ali:** Will Government please state the powers of an Agent, a Deputy Agent, Heads of Departments, Divisional Superintendents, Superintendents (Senior Scales), Assistant Superintendents (Junior Scales) in respect of discharge, dismissal, punishments, fine (extent), reduction (extent), demotion (extent), promotion (extent), and other matters, concerning the personnel or establishment?

Mr. P. E. Rau: The extent of the powers delegated by the Governor General in Council to Railway Administrations, in financial matters, will be found in the Book of Financial Powers, a copy of which is in the Library. These allow re-delegation to subordinate officers. Such delegations are made by Agents, as circumstances necessitate, and do not require to be communicated to the Railway Board.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: Are these rules made by the Agents also in the Library?

Mr. P. E. Rau: No, Sir, they do not require to be communicated to the Railway Board.

PAY OF STATION MASTERS AND ASSISTANT STATION MASTERS.

580. ***Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali:** Will Government please state the rate and scales of pay (old, co-ordinated and revised) of Assistant Station Masters (Lower Grades), Station Masters (Lower Grades), Assistant Station Masters (Higher Grades) and Station Masters (Higher Grades)?

Mr. P. E. Rau: I have placed in the Library of the House a statement showing the revised scales of pay for Station Masters and Assistant Station Masters which were introduced on the East Indian Railway in 1984. I shall see whether similar information about the old scales of pay has been compiled in a handy form, or is otherwise readily available.

PROMOTIONS OF ASSISTANT STATION MASTERS AND STATION MASTERS.

581. ***Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali:** Will Government please state the normal channel of promotions of an Assistant Station Master (Lower Grade) and Station Masters (Lower Grades) to an Assistant Station Master (Higher Grades) and Station Masters?

Mr. P. E. Rau: I would invite the Honourable Member's attention to rules 10 and 15 of the "Rules for the recruitment and training of subordinate staff on State-managed Railways", a copy of which is in the Library of the House.

SYLLABUS, BOOKS AND INSTRUCTIONS OF REFRESHER COURSE.

582. ***Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali:** Will Government please state the syllabus, books and instructions of Refresher Courses referred to in Rules 14, 19, and 84 of Rules for the recruitment and training of staff?

Mr. P. E. Rau: With your permission, Sir, I propose to reply to questions Nos. 582, 583 and 584 together. Government have no information regarding these details, which have been left to be settled by each railway administration according to its needs. If, however, there are any published documents relating to them I shall endeavour to obtain copies and place them in the Library of the House.

SYLLABUS, BOOKS AND INSTRUCTIONS OF PROMOTION COURSES.

†583. ***Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali:** Will Government please state the syllabus, books and instructions of promotion courses referred to in Rules 14, 19, 24, 29, and 84 of Rules for the recruitment and training of subordinate staff?

PLACES AND THE PERIOD OF PROMOTION COURSES.

†584. ***Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali:** Will Government please state the places and the period of promotion courses given to staff referred to in Rules 14, 19, 24, 29, and 84 of Rules for the recruitment and training of subordinate staff?

†For answer to this question, see answer to question No. 582.

PERSONS APPOINTED DIRECT TO THE HIGHEST GRADE OF GUARDS.

585. ***Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali:** Will Government please state the number of persons appointed direct to the highest grade of guards and the reasons for such appointments during the period from the 1st January, 1934 to the 31st January, 1935?

Mr. P. R. Rau: The information is not readily available and its compilation will involve an amount of labour and expenditure which in the opinion of Government is not likely to be justified by results.

RENT-FREE QUARTERS OR HOUSE ALLOWANCE IN LIEU OF FREE QUARTERS FOR THE NON-GAZETTED STAFF ON STATE RAILWAYS.

586. ***Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali:** With reference to Note 2 to paragraph 2 of section I of Chapter II of State Railway Code (Revised) will Government please state:

- (a) the classes of non-gazetted staff on State Railways who held a post, which carried the privilege of rent-free quarters, or house allowance in lieu of free-quarters, prior to the 1st August, 1928;
- (b) the posts and the classes of non-gazetted staff on State Railways which carried the same concession after the 1st August, 1928;
- (c) the posts which carried the same concession prior to the 1st August, 1928;
- (d) whether non-gazetted staff are exempted from the payment of District Board, municipal or local taxes on houses or buildings occupied by them while serving at a station where they had no personal property except pay and allowances; and
- (e) the posts which carried the privilege of rent-free quarters or house allowance in lieu of free-quarters after the 1st August, 1928?

Mr. P. R. Rau: (a), (b), (c) and (e). I am afraid my Honourable friend has been referring to an uncorrected copy of the code in question. The rule has since been revised and a corrected copy of the code has been placed in the Library of the House. If my Honourable friend has any further difficulties after perusing the revised rule I shall endeavour to get the information he wants if it is readily available.

(d) I would refer the Honourable Member to paragraph 22 of chapter II of the code in question.

Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad: I think there is some kind of dissatisfaction among the staff due to the absence of rules about the free house rent which is given to the subordinate staff. Will Government consider that these rules should be framed and made available to all the members of the staff so that they may know which class of people are entitled to house rent free?

Mr. P. R. Rau: The rules are available and they have been published.

Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad: Are these rules available to the Members of the Legislature also?

Mr. P. B. Rau: A copy of the rules is in the Library of the House.

Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad: Is the Honourable Member sure about it?

Mr. P. B. Rau: Yes.

Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad: Sir, I would like to take this opportunity of pointing out that before a Government Member says that such and such thing is in the Library of the House, he must assure himself that the thing in question has been supplied to the Library. Only the other day, the Honourable the Commerce Member said that certain figures about January, 1935, were available in the Library, but I am sure they have not yet come to the Library.

NON-GAZETTED STAFF ON STATE RAILWAYS ENTITLED TO CERTAIN ALLOWANCES.

587. ***Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali:** Will Government please state:

- (a) the classes of non-gazetted staff on State Railways who are entitled to travelling and daily allowances;
- (b) the classes of non-gazetted staff on State Railways who draw the mileage allowance;
- (c) the classes of non-gazetted staff on State Railways who are paid consolidated allowance?

Mr. P. B. Rau: (a) All railway servants, except those in receipt of mileage allowance or consolidated travelling allowance, are entitled to draw daily allowance, when travelling on duty, subject to the conditions stated in Supplementary Rule 82 (b).

(b) Generally speaking, mileage allowance is drawn by classes of non-gazetted staff who are directly connected with the charge of moving trains such as drivers, firemen, guards, brakesman, etc.

(c) Consolidated travelling allowances on State-managed Railways are drawn by staff to whom they are specially granted, such as:

- (i) Staff employed on a construction or survey work; and
- (ii) certain travelling ticket examining staff.

HOURS OF EMPLOYMENT OF THE RUNNING STAFF ON STATE RAILWAYS.

588. ***Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali:** Will Government please state the hour of employment of the running staff on State Railways?

Mr. P. B. Rau: The information is contained in page 109 of the Memorandum placed by the Railway Board before the Royal Commission on Labour, a copy of which is in the Library.

NON-GAZETTED STAFF ON STATE RAILWAYS TERMED AS RUNNING STAFF.

589. ***Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali:** Will Government please state the classes of non-gazetted staff on State Railways termed as Running Staff?

Mr. P. B. Rau: I am afraid it is not possible for me, without making detailed enquiries, to give an exhaustive list of the classes termed as running staff. I may explain that generally those who are directly connected with the charge of moving trains, such as drivers, firemen, guards, brakemen, etc., are so termed.

THE RAILWAY BUDGET—LIST OF DEMANDS—*conold.*

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The House will now resume discussion of the Demands for Grants for Railways. Honourable Members who do not belong to any Group will, the Chair believes, move certain motions for the reduction of the Grant. The Chair understands that an arrangement has been arrived at among them, and it finds that Mr. Joshi has a number of motions in his name to discuss labour grievances. One of them is No. 2 and the others are under different heads. The Chair does not know under which head the Honourable Member wishes to move his motion.

Mr. N. M. Joshi (Nominated Non-Official): Whichever you please, Sir.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): No. 2.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: All right, Sir.

Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad (United Provinces Southern Divisions: Muhammadan Rural): There are two motions given—one relates to the grievances of labour and the other to grievances of the railway employees. Which one does the Honourable Member wish to move?

Mr. N. M. Joshi: Both come to the same thing.

Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad: They are not the same, because all the employees do not come under the category of "labour".

Mr. N. M. Joshi: That is not my meaning.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): There is also a similar motion under Demand 6-E, No. 291. Perhaps it will be more convenient if the Honourable Member moves that.

Labour Grievances.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: All right, Sir. I move:

"That the demand under the head 'Working Expenses—Expenses of the Traffic Department' be further reduced by Rs. 100."

Mr. President, my object in giving notice of this motion was to protest against the policy of the Government of India in respect of the treatment of the railway employees, as I feel that the Government of India are following a very wrong policy. They generally give better conditions of work as well as of life to their superior officers or employees and they go on reducing the facilities offered to their employees in proportion to their salaries or wages. They make this distinction, not only as regards their salaries and

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wages, but even as regards other conditions of work. I can understand the Government of India paying larger salaries to their superior officers, although I feel that the difference between the salaries paid to the superior officers and the wages paid to their lowest paid workers is extremely great and unjustifiable. Still, I do not propose to discuss that question today at all. I feel that, although the Government of India may make a difference between the salaries and wages paid to their superior services and to their subordinate services and to the services which are known as inferior services, yet there is absolutely no justification for making any differentiation as regards other conditions of service, such as, the leave rules applicable to the different services, the rules as regards the passes, the rules as regards the provision of provident fund, etc. My feeling is that the men belonging to the superior services do not need as much leave as the poorest classes of the employees. If a man belonging to the superior service has some domestic work to be done, he has got either the servants to look after that work, or his wife, who generally does not do much work, can look after his business. Moreover, the men belonging to the superior services do not work as hard as the lowest class of railway employees do. (*Honourable Members from Official Benches* : "Question".) You may question, but you will have to get your lowest paid employees to agree to your view, and they do not agree with your view.

Then, Sir, take the question of passes. Men belonging to the superior services are given passes; some of them are given saloons; and the number of passes is reduced according to the service. The superior services get the largest number of passes and the people, who are at the lowest rung of the ladder, get no passes at all.

The same is the case with the provident fund. The poorest classes of railway employees are not entitled to be members of the provident fund while people getting even Rs. 1,000 and more are entitled to get the benefit of the provident fund. I do not know why this distinction should be made, and if any distinction is to be made, it should be made in this particular case in favour of the lowest paid employees. A man who gets Rs. 2,000 a month can easily save some money for his old age, but the man who gets Rs. 10 a month cannot certainly save any money for his old age. Unfortunately our railway authorities provide provident fund and gratuity for people who get higher salaries and people getting lowest salaries are excluded. I feel that this is a very wrong policy and the House should enter an emphatic protest against this policy.

The conditions of work of the railway services were investigated by the Royal Commission on Indian Labour and they made their recommendations. The recommendations are before the Government of India for the last four years. The Government of India, in the Department of Industries and Labour, have published three reports on the action taken by the Government of India on the various recommendations of the Royal Commission. This morning, Sir, I propose to deal with some of the recommendations of the Royal Commission made to improve the conditions of work of the railway employees. I shall, first of all, deal with the recommendation of the Royal Commission, namely, that when workers are required to undergo a medical examination, after they are confirmed, they should have the benefit, if they like, of an independent specialist. Let the railway medical officer examine him, if he likes, but if the employee is not satisfied with the decision of the medical officer of the railways, he should have the assistance of

an independent specialist. The Government of India have not yet accepted and given effect to this recommendation. They say that this recommendation is under consideration. I would like to know why four years are necessary to come to a decision on a simple matter like this.

Then, Sir, I shall come to another important recommendation made by the Royal Commission. The Royal Commission has stated as regards racial discrimination that steps should be taken in order that this racial discrimination should be completely wiped out within a fixed limit of time. I would like the Government of India to tell me what is the fixed limit of time which they have fixed in order to wipe out completely racial discrimination. The reply of the Government of India is that, in principle or in theory, there is no racial discrimination. That does not, however, satisfy the railway employees. You may in principle not make any racial discrimination, but in practice you may continue to do so. What the Royal Commission, after knowing the fact that the Government of India do not make any racial discrimination in principle, but make it in practice, recommended that this practice should be stopped within a certain fixed limit of time. The Government of India do not do so. What the Government have done is this. In order to be able to practise racial discrimination, without accepting the theory or principle of racial discrimination, they have divided certain categories of railway workers into classes. Take the guards. They have divided the guards into "A" class, "B" class and "C" class. Certain classes of people like the Anglo-Indians are recruited directly to higher grades. Other Indians generally are not. According to the rules, they are not prevented from being appointed, but they are not generally appointed, with the result that there is in practice racial discrimination, while in theory the Government of India abjure racial discrimination. Then, the Government of India say that they do not make any racial discrimination as regards promotions. If you appoint a certain class of people to higher grades and tell us that afterwards you do not make any discrimination as regards promotion, you are not quite honest. Those people who are already appointed to higher grades have become senior to those who are appointed to the lower grades, with the result that people who are appointed on the lower grades, although they may be senior in service to those who are appointed in the higher grades, can never rise to some of the higher posts open to that class of people. I would like the Government of India to tell me. . . .

Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad: Does the Honourable Member advocate that every person in the railway service should begin from the lowest rung of the ladder and there should be no direct recruitment to higher posts?

Mr. N. M. Joshi: I am suggesting that there should be no racial discrimination. If certain classes of people alone are appointed on the higher grade, I object to that.

Then, Sir, I will take another recommendation of the Royal Commission. The Royal Commission has recommended that the Government of India should revise the leave rules. I have already stated that the leave rules of the Government of India are such that people who are highly paid get more leave. The Government of India have unfortunately revised the leave rules in such a way that the result is that people who were getting longer leave are now given shorter leave. People who get the lowest salaries and wages get the shortest leave. The daily rated workmen and the workmen belonging to the inferior service are not allowed to accumulate the leave

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which they have not used during a particular year. Then, the inferior service people as well as the daily rated service people do not get the benefit of leave on full pay and sick leave for the first three years of their service. I should like to know why this distinction should be made. Why people should not be treated equally in this matter?

Then, the Royal Commission has recommended that people who are considered to be daily rated should all be made monthly rated after a year's continuous service. The Government of India have not accepted this recommendation, and they say it is still under consideration.

Then, there is the question of the provident fund. The railway employees getting a salary of Rs. 15 and less are not eligible to the provident fund at all. I have already stated that it is this class of people, people getting the lowest salaries and wages, who have the need for provident fund more than people who get higher salaries. Therefore, the Royal Commission recommended that this lowest class of railway employees should be given the benefit of the provident fund. But the Government of India have not accepted this recommendation. They say that the recommendation is rejected.

Then, the Royal Commission made a recommendation as regards the payment of gratuities. There is at present a restriction, namely, that people who have not put in 15 years' service or less service do not get gratuities. The Royal Commission recommended that this restriction should be removed. The Government of India have rejected this recommendation. I should like to know why the Government of India should have rejected this recommendation and why the recommendation of the Royal Commission could not be accepted?

Then, Sir, there is the question of the regulation of the hours of work. The Government of India ratified a Convention passed at the Labour Conference at Washington. They also ratified another Convention passed at Geneva. The first of these Conventions provided for the limitation of the hours of work and the second provided for the weekly rest day. The Government of India took no action, or very little action, on this Convention, till the year 1930. In 1930, they passed legislation providing for regulating the hours of work. The Government of India have applied these regulations only to State Railways. I do not know why Company-managed Railways should be excluded from these regulations. In the matter of labour legislation, there cannot be a difference made between private concerns and Government concerns, and, so far, all labour legislation was applied to Government factories and private factories equally. Here, as regards the hours of work, the Government of India have applied them to the State-managed Railways and not to the Company-managed Railways. Perhaps the argument of the Government of India is that the application of these regulations costs some money and they plead the general argument of present depression. Now, Sir, there are some Company-managed Railways, like the Bengal and North-Western Railway, the Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway, the South Indian Railway, etc., who have not made very much losses during the last few years, and, in any case, they have not made losses as large as the State-managed Railways; and I do not know why the Company-managed Railways should be excluded from the benefit of these regulations. I hope, Sir, the Government of India will apply these regulations to the Company-managed Railways without any loss of time. Under this legislation of 1930.

the Government of India have appointed labour supervisors and labour inspectors. These labour supervisors and labour inspectors are, in the present circumstances, placed under the control of the Railway Board. I feel that this policy is a very wrong policy. The labour supervisor and the labour inspectors are appointed to see that the legislation is given effect to. The breaches of labour legislation are to be punished with fine. May I ask whether a labour supervisor or a labour inspector, who is placed under the control of the Railway Board, will ever prosecute either a Member of the Railway Board, who is responsible for the management of the railways, or even an Agent of a railway who is directly responsible for the management of the railway? It is wrong to place an officer in such a wrong position. I feel, Sir, that the labour supervisors and the labour inspectors, who have to perform some statutory duties, should not be placed under the Railway Department of the Government of India.

Then, Sir, the Royal Commission has made certain recommendations as regards those railway employees who are discharged or dismissed. The Royal Commission recommended that whenever a man is about to be discharged or dismissed, he should be provided with a charge-sheet. The Commission recommends that his case should be investigated by a superior officer, and if, after going through his case, the superior officer decides that the man should be discharged or dismissed, that superior officer should personally meet that railway employee, and, during the interview, the railway employee should have the benefit of being accompanied by an officer of a trade union or by any other railway employee. I want to know why the Government of India should have taken four years to consider this recommendation. This recommendation is not likely to cost anything to the Government of India.

Then, the Royal Commission made recommendations as regards appeals in cases of dismissals and discharges. They provided a similar procedure, namely, that the worker should be personally heard by a superior officer and that the worker should be accompanied by a representative of the union or by any other employee whom he chooses to take with him. The Royal Commission has made certain recommendations also as regards railway employees who are punished not so seriously as by discharge or dismissal but by a lighter punishment. Those recommendations too have not been given effect to by the Railway Board.

Then, Sir, the Royal Commission recommended that the Railway Authorities should follow a more generous policy as regards the recognition of trade unions. They also said that a stage has been reached in the development of some unions where facilities might with advantage be conceded to these unions. I feel, Sir, that the Government of India is following a very wrong policy as regards the treatment of the trade unions. At present, there are numbers of railway unions which are not recognised. There is no recognised union on the East Indian Railway, on the Great Indian Peninsula Railway, on the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway, on the Burma Railway or on the Bengal and North Western Railway. On most of these lines, there are already existing registered unions. Unfortunately the Government of India are not following the recommendation of the Royal Commission inasmuch as they are not recognising these unions. Neither is the Railway Board giving any facilities as recommended by the Royal Commission. Then, there is another matter as regards the policy of the Government of India in the matter of these unions. There was a

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time when the Government of India insisted that the officers of railway unions should not be outsiders. I find that now the Government of India are following a sort of dual policy. On some railways they insisted that it is only the railwaymen who could approach the railway Agent; but there are other railways who insist that the railway employees shall not be the general secretaries of the unions. On the Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway the Agent has made a rule that no railway employee shall become the general secretary. Now, Sir, let the Government of India give serious consideration to this question and come to a right decision. When you permit your employees to have trade unions or an organisation of their own, it is their business whom they should appoint as their president or secretary. It is not the business of the Agent or of the Railway Board. If the railwaymen have confidence in one of themselves, let them appoint one of themselves: let them appoint their president or secretary from the ranks of the railway employees. If the railway employees have confidence in an outsider, let them be free to elect whomsoever they please. I would like the Government of India to follow the right policy in this matter.

Then, the Royal Commission recommended that the Government of India should establish a joint standing machinery for the settlement of disputes between the railway authorities and the railwaymen. They recommended the establishment of a central board: they recommended that there should be also a board on each railway and they recommended the appointment of various committees. The Government of India is still considering this question—"under consideration" they say.

The Government of India are trying to establish some welfare committees on some railways. The Royal Commission recommended that generally they should not start these welfare committees in rivalry to the trade unions, but there should be co-operation between the welfare committees and the trade unions, and, for that purpose, they recommended that even where these welfare committees consist of railway employees, those members of the welfare committees who belong to a railway union should have a right to be accompanied at the meetings by an officer of the trade union. The Government of India have not given effect to this recommendation and they are still considering that recommendation.

Then, there are one or two other matters to which I should like to refer. The Royal Commission recommended, that, as far as possible, the practice of employing contract labour for departmental work should be stopped. The Government of India have not given effect to this recommendation. They say they leave this matter to the Agents—if the Agents find that it is better to get certain work done by certain private firms instead of in railway workshops, they should be at liberty to do so. The Royal Commission considered this question and came to the conclusion definitely that it is much better that the Government of India should do these kinds of works departmentally instead of by contractors. As a matter of fact, not only in their workshops they give work to private firms, but on railway stations the Government of India have started the practice of employing contractors to control their porters. The Government of India control 700,000 railway employees, and they find themselves incapable of controlling porters at some stations. In most of the stations they control their own porters but it is only at some stations that they find it difficult to control

them and they employ contractors there. I think this practice of employing contractors for controlling porters is a very wrong one. Once I had occasion to ask many questions about this practice of porters, especially at Howrah, and I came to the conclusion that the whole practice was not due to the incapacity of the Railway Board to manage the porters, but the practice was due to the fact that the Railway Board was anxious to benefit certain individuals who were the contractors. I consider that this is a very wrong thing, and the sooner the Government of India put a stop to this practice, the better.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member has only one minute more.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: There are many grievances: they are really numerous, and I cannot deal with them all. But, before I conclude, I would like the Government of India and this House to give very sympathetic consideration to the conditions of life and work of the railway employees. The grievances, which I have narrated, are real grievances, and unless the Government of India show real sympathy, there will be great discontent among the railway employees. I suggest to the Government of India that they should have on the staff some officers who will deal specially with labour questions—and, if I may venture to suggest, I would like this officer not to be drawn from the railway service at all. I would like this officer to be drawn either from the Indian Civil Service or the Indian Educational Service or some service of that kind: but I would really like the Government of India to have one officer in the Railway Board—not as a Member of the Railway Board—I am not suggesting he should be paid Rs. 4,000 although I should think the job was worth it—but I would suggest that this officer should not belong to the railway service, but to some other service, and his services should be asked on loan from some other service. I hope the Government of India and this Legislature will show some sympathy with the railway employees, and will earn the gratitude of these 700,000 employees. I hope the House will accept my motion.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Cut motion moved:

“That the demand under the head ‘Working Expenses—Expenses of the Traffic Department’ be further reduced by Rs. 100.”

Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney (Nominated Non-Official): Sir, I rise
12 Noon. to support the motion before the House and more or less for similar reasons as have been advanced by the Honourable the Mover. The Honourable the Mover very rightly attacked the Railway Board in that it has not complied with the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Labour. He has referred to many such omissions. I propose to confine my remarks to just one or two.

The Honourable the Mover has stressed the question of railway unions and the—I will not say neglect, I would prefer to use a more correct term—apathy displayed by the Railway Board towards this matter. To my mind, if I were to sum up the attitude of Railway Agents *qua* the Railway Board in their attitude towards railway unions, I would say that it is one of distinct and purposeful opposition; and I have very cogent reasons for making this statement. Railway Agents have not appreciated the fact that they cannot, from their holy of holies, impede

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the growth of railway unionism or stem the tide of democracy that is spreading the world over. Living as they do in their water-tight compartments, they think that they can do any thing they like, having had blazoned on their office doors: "Brutus has spoken: let no dog bark". The fact is—Railway Agents, although they have been pointedly and repeatedly told by the Railway Board that they must encourage the development of railway unions, have turned a deaf ear to it and, instead, they have in their efforts—I would say assumed efforts to placate their employees—introduced what is called for want of a better term "Welfare Committees". I would rather call them "Farewell Committees". These welfare committees consist mainly of officials one of whom is always the President and the subordinate members are chosen from those who think alike with the officials; and I submit that these welfare committees are more or less official committees who do not listen to or remedy the grievances of railway employees. The result is that Railway Agents have been foisting on their employees committees which are not popular and which they do not want. The Labour Commission distinctly said that, in the event of welfare committees being necessary, they should work in unison and in co-operation with the railway unions. Railway Agents have evidently made up their mind that they are not going to do this, with the result that there are always conflicts between the Railway Agents and the railway unions, and these conflicts are accentuated by his omnipotent power due to the fact that the Railway Board have issued instructions that it is at the discretion of Railway Agents to refuse or to recognise labour unions as they wish. Attempts have been made by various communities to form associations to protect and improve the position of their own members employed on railways, but which have not been recognised by the Railway Board. I do believe that communalism is wrong when introduced in a labour union that represents employees as a whole, but this does not mean to imply that Railway Agents should be given such unbridled discretionary powers to say "Yes" or "No" without any reasons in regard to the recognition of a railway union. I would draw the particular attention of the Honourable the Railway Member to the attitude of the Railway Administration in Burma. The railways in Burma, for reasons best known to themselves—some of them, at one time, reasonable,—have refused to recognise the National Railway Union of India and Burma, but it has recognised a union which is almost of their own creation and growth. The E. I. Ry. has refused to recognise certain unions for their sins of omissions of many years ago; the E. I. Ry. Agent even refuses to recognise the right of interview or discussion on certain matters of great importance with heads of associations. I have had this experience myself. Many railway unions and communal associations have had serious differences of opinion with the Agents of Railways, but the Railway Board, in giving this unlimited and unquestionable power to the Railway Agents, has certainly not helped railway employees in securing just representations of their grievances or amelioration of their troubles. The Railway Board must alter its policy in this matter. It should not give to the Railway Agents this power. As to whether it is right or wrong that outsiders should be accepted as office bearers and Presidents of these unions, I have my own views, but I do believe that if you allow the free admission of outsiders, especially extreme politicians, to control railway unions, they are likely to tamper

with the loyalty of employees and use them as their political powers. I am speaking from experience of many years when some outside political railway union leaders were instrumental in fomenting trouble and strikes, and I do believe that this is the chief reason why the Railway Board has given such autocratic powers to the Railway Agents, and I share this potential apprehension, but that is beside the point. India and trade unionism have progressed very rapidly since then, and I do think the tune has come when Railway Agents should be made to appreciate the value of railway unions, their utility and that the properly organised unions of their railway employees should be recognised.

The next point I desire to refer to is the serious question of indebtedness. I believe I am stating a fact when I remark that over 50 per cent of railway employees, and in some grades nearly 80 per cent, are in debt today. My remarks refer mainly to subordinates, though officials are certainly not free from this disability. Sir, the ease with which railway employees, indeed all Government employees, can get money in India today, and the ease with which moneylenders can legally recover their money at exorbitant rates of interest from these debtors is a positive scandal in the administration of the country. You have only to visit any railway station on pay day, when you will see four or five or half a dozen strong well-belt fellows with big sticks present there, they are the Pathan moneylenders. I do not know why they take their sticks, but if they do not get their dues there, they will be found inside the houses of the railway employees forcibly demanding payment.

An Honourable Member: They are not non-violent.

Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney: Possibly, but they are very sticky. Well, Sir, these men are really the curse of railway employees. Sir, what do we find: railway employees, when in need usually get as much money as they can from their Credit and Loan Societies. When they can get no more, they go to the *kabuli* or *bania* money-lender who readily loans them money at exorbitant rates of interest. Suppose such a railway employé is transferred to another station. The money-lender promptly files a suit for recovery in the local Courts, gets an *ex parte* decree and the employé's pay is attached to the extent of 50 per cent without any question or protest being made by the Railway Agent. Sir, this is a positive scandal, and need I tell the Railway Board that a man who is steeped in debt cannot possibly be an efficient servant. His family worries, his liabilities, his lack of home comforts are so great a strain on his mind that his efficiency is sure to be affected as a whole. A few years ago, after closely studying this subject, I placed a practical scheme before the Railway Board for their consideration. The Railway Board are still wearing their cap of consideration. Sir, I ask, when are they going to take off these caps and give me an opinion? I do not know. It was a very simple scheme. I have repeatedly reminded them, and every time I was told that it was under consideration or it would be discussed at the Conference of the Railway Agents, but I have heard nothing further, except repetitions of assurances of consideration. Sir, I would ask the Railway Board to give this matter its careful and immediate consideration. The Lee Commission made very definite recommendations in this matter

The Honourable Sir Frank Noyce (Member for Industries and Labour): My Honourable friend is doubtless referring to the Labour Commission, not to the Lee Commission.

Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney: Quite right, I am thankful for the correction. I mean the Labour Commission; I am afraid I have been rather belabouring the Lee Commission. I really meant the Labour Commission. Now, the Labour Commission stated very clearly that this was a very serious evil on all railways in fact in all departments of the Government. Sir, I had the pleasure of being an Associate-Member of that Commission. I had also the pleasure of discussing this problem with the late Mr. Whitley who was the Chairman of that Commission, and he told me he had left with the Government two draft clauses of a Bill which he suggested should be passed by this Legislature, and that Bill was to this effect that Government should enact legislation preventing the attachment of salary of any of their employees. When that solution was first suggested to me, I looked upon it almost as an attempt at commercialising dishonesty, but, on a closer analysis, I had good reasons to agree with it, because, as Mr. Whitley said, if you stop the attachment of pay, you will stop the money-lender from lending money, and so you will eradicate the root cause of the trouble. The Government of India have a Bill before this House in which they ask the House to pass legislation preventing the attachment of the salary of any of their servants who is in receipt of Rs. 100 or less. I think it would be much better if the Railway Board concentrated more attention on this very serious problem of indebtedness, which is like a canker in the lives of its administration, both officials and subordinates.

Sir, the other question that I should like to advert to is the question of provident fund, but my time is short and I agree with what my friend, Mr. Joshi, has said.

There are other points that I could enumerate, indeed the grievances and complaints that come to me in my daily public life are so numerous that I could occupy this House a whole day and longer if I were to mention them, but these are matters which are better dealt with by personal representation to the Railway Board. The motion before us refers mainly to larger and more general matters concerning the interests of employees. Let me refer to just one or two. The Railway Board, in consultation with the various Local Governments, has decided to reduce all salaries. This Legislature also demanded economy in salaries. A Retrenchment Committee was appointed which drew up certain reduced rates of salaries, which are now in operation. I wonder if the Railway Board has realised what effect this has had especially on the poorest paid men in the railways. I do not refer to any employé who is in receipt of more than Rs. 200 a month, I speak of those low, poorly paid men, who are employed today as engine cleaners on Rs. 10, Rs. 12 and Rs. 15 a month, and I particularly refer to members of my community, not with a view to introducing any communal distinction, but merely to illustrate my point. Sir, there are members of my community who are today employed as engine cleaners on Rs. 10, Rs. 12 and Rs. 15 a month, young lads who have no relatives to live with or help them, and who really find life absolutely impossible. Now, Sir, this refers to subordinates, but when you come to look at those who receive higher salaries, what is the position? Their position is in every way better

for they are not hit so hard, they can economise. The Railway Board, in reducing the salaries of their staff, have in addition, reduced or withheld many privileges, *e.g.*, the number of passes, in addition it has reduced many allowances and over-time, it has reduced many other privileges in vogue before, *e.g.*, it has reduced the educational grant to children of their employees, free quarters and increased house rent, income-tax, etc. In addition, it has introduced new house rent rules which have deprived those people who, when they entered Company-managed Railways, were guaranteed such privileges. The recent N. W. Railway house rent charges are a cruel imposition on its employees who for decades have had free quarters. And what makes the cruelty worse is that the arrears in house rent are being paid back in large instalments which the men are unable to pay. I consider this is not only an injurious and bad policy, but it is certainly a great hardship. My Honourable friend over there, Mr. Rau, is shaking his head. I suppose I shall have to explain myself more clearly to him, but I can assure my friend in all sincerity that while I agree that economy should be effected, I ask, why, in your lust for economy, have you deprived your servants of many of the privileges that they enjoyed before, privileges which they are entitled to as members of the old Company-managed and even State Railways?

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member has only one minute more.

Ident.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney: Thank you, Sir. There is one other matter. The Railway Board have had many cases before them, many cases whose actual age certificates are in conflict with the age of superannuation, *i.e.*, 55 years. Evidence beyond doubt, evidence that no one can deny, has been produced before the Agents by aggrieved employees to show that their ages are not what have been put down in their service sheets and railway records, and yet Railway Agents, with their autocratic power, refuse to allow any correction of dates of birth and refuse to allow an extension of service, even when the age entered in the railway records has been proved to be increased. They do not care-tuppence for baptismal certificates or the registration of birth certificates. Sir, it all boils down to this. When one realises the big catalogue of grievances we have heard today, when the Railway Board is daily faced with 30 to 40 questions regarding railway grievances, surely it must be obvious to them that some at least of these are genuine, and that Members of this House are sincere when they present what are, in their opinion, genuine and serious grievances of their constituents—the humble railway employees. The Railway Board must appreciate the fact that the time has come when it must establish a complaints or grievances committee in every railway, or establish a department in the Railway Board exclusively for such work. Grant that, encourage the establishment of railway unions on your railways, and believe me, as one who has closely studied the work of railways, you will have a return to your benefit—a hundred-fold. Moreover, the time of this House will be spared the wastage of about half an hour every day in asking the Railway Board questions regarding railway grievances. I speak with great feeling, I speak with greater conviction, and I speak with indisputable evidence, when I ask the Railway Board immediately to rise to the occasion and to grant its railway employees, over 700,000 on whom in a large measure the whole

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of India's trade and commercial development and tranquility depend—a greater sense of security of service, greater facilities for presenting their grievances,—and receiving justice—freer access to their officials, that Railway Agents should show greater sympathy to the humblest employee with a human touch in it, rather than encourage with aloofness the autocracy under which they are administered today. It is all very well to say that discipline must be observed on railways, but, Sir, discipline can be carried to a dangerous limit and that dangerous limit comes when autocracy is the forerunner to a strike. And, I ask, what have the previous railway strikes been due to.—almost entirely to the absence of sympathy from Railway Agents and their unbendable autocracy and unapproachability. I cannot talk in too strong terms of the absence of sympathy of Railway Agents and some of their higher officials, heads of departments, especially the E. I. Ry. towards their subordinates. And, Sir, on behalf of over 700,000 railway subordinates of all communities—for all communities now come to me with their grievances—I want to make a fervent appeal to the Railway Board to insist on Railway Agents recognising and encouraging well-organised labour unions and so deprive Agents of their autocratic powers. I want the establishment of a grievances or complaints department such as has been suggested by the Labour Commission or I warn the Railway Board of the consequences. Sir, with these remarks, I support the motion.

Mr. N. V. Gadgil (Bombay Central Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural): I rise to support the cut motion moved by my Honourable friend, Mr. Joshi. I have listened very patiently for the last four days to the various grievances ventilated on the floor of this House, and today a long catalogue of grievances against the Railway Board has been detailed by my Honourable friend, Mr. Joshi. My Honourable friend, Dr. Gidney.....

An Honourable Member: Sir Henry Gidney...

Another Honourable Member: Colonel Gidney.

Mr. N. V. Gadgil: Which would you like?

Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney: Call me anything you like provided you do not call me too early in the morning.

Mr. N. V. Gadgil: My Honourable friend wants sympathy from the Railway Board. I think the position of the Railway Board has been made sufficiently clear by the Honourable Member in charge of the Railways the other day. He said that he has somebody whose behest has to be carried out so far as the policy of the Railway Board is concerned. The other day, when he spoke in a very apologetic manner about coal contracts being given to mines owned by Indians, I was reminded of a story, or rather a practice that was in vogue in the Maharashtra years ago. He spoke like the old style Hindu daughter-in-law afraid to speak before strangers to her husband. I would request the Honourable Member to speak out and not be afraid of these nine Europeans who occupy only a small portion of this House, and tell that somebody, who is 5,000 miles across, is nobody with us and nobody to the Government of India. If the Government of India are not strong enough, I shall just prescribe one remedy

for the Government of India to follow. The Government of India have got in their possession the antecedents, the tastes and temperaments of those Congressmen who happen to be here, and if, by this time, they have not learnt the technique of civil disobedience, I shall just request them to try it so far as the Home Government or that somebody is concerned.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Will the Honourable Member address himself to the motion before the House?

Mr. N. V. Gadgil: The relevancy of my remarks is this, that request after request has been made, grievances after grievances have been ventilated, and the reply is that somebody dictates policy, and I want the Government of India, and the Railway Board in particular, to take courage in both hands and say for once that it is for India that they stand, and not for the benefit of that somebody. Then, it is not sympathy that I claim on behalf of the railway labourers. My fundamental proposition is that the labourer is an asset, is a factor of production, it is not sympathy that he wants, it is justice, it is his right to live, it is his right to have work, and it is his right to live decently. On those grounds, I wish to support this motion.

As regards the various grievances that have been catalogued by my Honourable friend, Mr. Joshi, from the report that has been published recently, what action have the Government of India taken with respect to the recommendations of the Labour Commission? All they say is that it is "under consideration". Years have passed and what the Government of India have done has never come up to the expectation of the labour party or the labour organisations in India. And the reason is this. It is the basic ideology that accounts for this. If the Government of India only realise that it is labour alone that produces wealth; not the capitalist, not the bureaucracy, nor the hierarchy in the railway services, but the pointsmen, the coaching clerk, the booking clerk, the goods clerk—that they are the primary producers of wealth, I think that they will soon recognise that it is their duty to give effect to the recommendations of the Whitley Commission as early as possible. There are so many grievances which have been ventilated on the floor of this House, but I will confine my remarks hereafter to one particular grievance. This House probably knows that there was a strike on the Great Indian Peninsula Railway in the year 1930, and the strike was not declared illegal. It was a strike which was undertaken after giving due notice under the Public Utility Services Act. There was a sort of compromise with the Railway Board arrived at through the good offices of the Railway Federation, but unfortunately, the terms of the compromise were not implemented and the result is that today there are nearly 5,000 Great Indian Peninsula Railway strikers out of employment. I do not want to catalogue all the grievances, but certain grievances are such that they cannot be neglected even at this stage. There was a scheme for keeping a waiting list. Of those who, on or before the 17th March, 1930, applied to the various officers for being taken on the service, a separate list was prepared. Then, there was another list, but whatever may be the intentions of the Railway Board, the Agents do not carry out the policy, as has been suggested by Sir Henry Gidney. I may just tell here that I happened to be on the strike committee then. I learnt that such a settlement was arrived at, and I went to Poona station and asked one of the station officers whether it was a

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fact. The moment the officer heard that such a settlement was arrived at, he immediately dropped his glass on the ground and said: "Oh, is that so?" That is the spirit in which the lower railway officials act. I do not want to detail how some of them were very wrongfully refused to be taken and entered on the waiting list on the pretext that quarters had not been vacated, although that was not one of the terms of the agreement arrived at with the Railway Board. Then, those who were taken, were taken on the understanding that it was not re-engagement, but it was re-employment. The old privileges had gone. Further, there is another sort of victimisation so far as these persons, who have been taken from the waiting list, are concerned. They were taken and retrenched and then came in, with the result that those who were not strikers but retrenched were taken on the old scale. The new scale did not apply, as far as these persons were concerned, till the year 1936; but so far as the strikers who have been re-taken are concerned, they are not exempted. I will illustrate this by giving a concrete example. One man was drawing Rs. 120 as a guard. He was a striker. After three years, he was taken on Rs. 70, then retrenched and again taken on Rs. 60, and the new scale has been applied in his case. There are other grievances, and these have been ventilated on three occasions, first in June, 1930, when the half-yearly meeting took place between the Railway Board and the All-India Railway Federation and on two subsequent occasions, and yet nothing has been done. According to the figures supplied by the Agent in 1932, 438 persons from the proper waiting list were out of employment, and 3,638 from the other list. I do not think that these figures have decreased, but possibly some increase must have taken place in these figures.

Then, there is the policy of retrenchment. Even today I understand that, on the East Indian Railway inquiries are being made as to how they can retrench the key-men. There are about 1,500 key-men on the East Indian Railway and the present beat is three miles of double line and six miles of single line and the inquiry is being instituted to find out whether the beat can be increased to six miles of double line and twelve miles of single line, so as to bring 500 to 600 men on the unemployed list. The reason is that the railways are having deficit every year. The deficit is bound to be there, when the administration is top heavy and the money, which is the result of the effort of the labourers, is practically usurped by those who do not do as much labour as the primary producers do.

Then, the other grievances, which have also been ventilated by Mr. N. M. Joshi, relate to the recognition of unions. I am now the Vice-President of the Great Indian Peninsula Railway Workers' Union. It is not recognised. The Railway Board says that it is left to the discretion of the Agent. The Agent, under one pretext or other, would not recognise it and the pretext is: "You include outsiders as President, Vice-President or General Secretary and that you pass some brave and bold resolutions at your annual conferences". The fact of the matter is this, that the Agents do not want these unions, because they think they are a sort of hindrance in the administration. What I want to urge is this. They have not yet recognised that but for these labourers they would not be able to secure one farthing of earning for these 40,000 miles of the railway. It is the basic attitude that I want to attack. Nobody connected with a railway

union is allowed to go into the railway yard if he happens to be an outsider. Not only this, but the railway officials and other executive officers work in constant co-operation to see that the railway union does not even get lodging to have its headquarters. That is my experience in Poona. This is the way the Agents and the railway officials look at railway workers. Therefore, I submit that it is not sympathy that I want for the labourers. It is not a sort of patronage that I want. I want a clear recognition of the fact that the workers and the workers alone are the producers of wealth. I stand on the ground of right, on the ground of justice, and what is really due to them. With these words, I support the motion.

Maharaj Kumar Vijaya Ananda Gajapatiraj (United Provinces: Landholders): Sir, I, a new player on the public field, a freshman in the game of politics, playing my first innings, and even if I make a duck, I crave the indulgence of the House for a few minutes. I feel I owe it to the House to acknowledge that I have learnt much during the last few days from the speeches of my Honourable seniors on both sides of the House. My impression is that a hard and tough constitutional fight is going on. I must modestly admit that I cannot contribute any weapon or ammunition for any of the parties to the fight. But I must not be grudged the opportunity to put forward my views, as a representative, about what my difficulties are in discharging the duties of my position here.

Sir, railways are now a part and parcel of our lives. As a product of progressive civilisation of the age, there are certainly larger and smaller issues involved in its day to day administration. Those who are fit to deal with the larger issues have dealt with them. But we, the beginners, are anxious about smaller issues—about grievances. There is something very embarrassing to understand why 28 crores of the Depreciation Fund is shown as a temporary loan. I have pondered over why this is loan and not expenditure—why this is temporary, when there is no prospect of its repayment in the near future.

Why is it not a proper disbursement of the Depreciation Fund, and if not, why should it not be added to the capital at charge? I do feel disgust and even anger on station platforms when I see people huddled together like cattle in a railway carriage. Certainly I do not bless the railway people when my friend sends a basket of Muzaffarpur *lichis* and I find brick-bats in the basket. I cannot blame the abusers of the railways when the stones equalise the weight entered in the railway receipt of a mango parcel. I have got instances where risk-notes of consignors have been construed by Courts extinguishing instead of "limiting" the liabilities of railways as carriers. I have come across complaints of helpless, friendless, resourceless and disorganised dealers of goods, who cannot make both ends meet in their business owing either to delay of delivery, or heaviness of rate, or loss on transit, or all of these causes. But what I seriously feel is that there must be somebody to whom we can go for a fair deal, and who will, on hearing us, say, "This shall cease".

I may be allowed to say, as both sides of the House have testified, that we have got such men in the Honourable Mr. Rau and the Honourable Member in charge. I have heard the Honourable Mr. Rau giving answers to the questions and, I feel that he tries to give correct and satisfactory replies to the points raised, (*Mr. Lalchand Navalrai*: "Sometimes evasive also") and I need not give a certificate to the Honourable the Commerce

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Member's attempts to pass through rainy days and stormy weather. The Honourable Members, who are playing at high stakes for some radical change by means of cuts and votes, are unquestionably giving expressions of popular opinion. These are grave constitutional questions and in face of these questions, his position is not an enviable one. But the daily work depends more on the human element in the situation. Votes and principles must be respected and translated into change in the system, change in the routine, change in outlook, all of which depend on the change of heart. I believe in human and responsive outlook of the two Honourable Members on behalf of the Government and in view of the solemn promises made by them in this House every day, I appeal to all my friends to rely on them, and I appeal to the authorities to make up their minds that when people go to them with a grievance, they will see it through in such a way that people may feel that that state of things is going to be improved. I plead for mutual friendliness, co-operation and service between men of heart in matters of daily routine, of railway travellers and railway transport. Constitutional struggle may, in the opinion of politicians, quicken the advent of a happier day. But race is not always to the swiftest. (Loud Applause.)

Mr. D. K. Lahri Chaudhury (Bengal: Landholders): Mr. President, I am thankful to my friend, Mr. Joshi, who put forward this motion and has very ably and lucidly criticised the state of affairs concerning labour and the sort of treatment that is meted out to labourers by the Railway Administration, and no better man than he can express in a better way the general grievances of labourers and others employed on the railways.

Now, I for myself, at this stage want to confine myself to one single grievance, and that is as it affects the crewmen and the crew in charge on the Eastern Bengal Railway, and, as for the other aspects, I would leave it to my other friends to approach them from their different angles of vision. I can only say at the very outset that the Railway Department ought to make a definite policy of extending similar privileges enjoyed on other railways to all employees of railways that are concerned in similar duties, at any rate on the State Railways. Now, so far as I have come to learn, I believe the case of the crewmen and the crew in charge has already been represented to the authorities time after time, but without effect; and even an Honourable Member, like Mr. Giri, as the General Secretary of the Labour Association, drew the attention of the Establishment Branch of the Railway stating the grievances of the E. B. Ry. crewmen and the crewmen in charge, but no effect was given to that particular demand; and I stand up today, Sir, and say firmly that the grievances are legitimate and they ought to receive sympathetic consideration, and, from that point of view, I can tell the House that the men concerned already approached the authorities, but first of all the reply was like this that the matter was under consideration and has gone up for investigation, but after the investigation it was found out that the case which they put forward was very legitimate and the case was this that they wanted some sort of allowance over and above their pay, because, on the East Indian Railway, the crewmen and others get an allowance called the consolidated allowance; some of those who are senior in service get Rs. 20, and some of them who are junior in service get Rs. 15. Now, this treatment should also be extended to those gentlemen who do similar

work and the same kind of work. That is a thing to be considered,—namely, that on one railway they have got these allowances. Now, why should not these be extended to the other railways where the men concerned perform the same amount and same kind of work?

That is a very important point to be considered.

Another grievance is this that, in regard to these appointments of crew inspectors and other appointments, outsiders intrude. That should not be the policy. I think those gentlemen, who are already in the service, joined that service with the definite purpose of proving their efficiency. If so, they ought to have preference in comparison with outsiders. I do not know how it happened like that. Now, crew inspectors are a cadre of the service which draws a salary of Rs. 200 a month. There has been a rule with the Railway Board that decisions concerning services carrying a pay of Rs. 200 and upwards must receive the sanction of the Railway Board. But, in the particular case of the Eastern Bengal Railway, that rule has not been observed, and I tell you how. There are certain posts created in the Eastern Bengal Railway as crew inspectors, and I will tell you how outsiders creep in. There are certain savings from that crewmen's budget, and, out of those savings, these posts have been created and given to them. By that, they escape the usual criticisms and thus do not receive any attention from the Audit Department, and they are also saved from the criticism of the Railway Board. Now, that is very unfair. I think if anything is sought to be done, that ought to get the sanction of the Railway Board, and this principle should be maintained that these crew inspectors ought to be recruited from the crewmen and the crew in charge.

Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad: By promotion.

Mr. D. K. Lahiri Chaudhury: Exactly.

Another thing I want to say at this stage is this, that I welcome the suggestions just made by my Honourable friend, Sir Henry Gidney, and that is that a Grievances Committee ought to be set up. It is really a pity that the Railway Board is run in such a way that there are thousands and thousands of grievances of different sorts which are not remedied, which are not even ventilated, and which are not listened to when ventilated, but which are absolutely turned down without any rhyme and reason, and that is a thing which is growing and growing and arousing strong feelings in the country against the administration. It is a pity, Sir, that while we on this side of the House come here deliberately to move our motions in order to ventilate individual or general grievances of the public, these railways, which should take up the matter in their own hands, fail even to consider these grievances. My Honourable friend, Mr. Gadgil, with whom I sympathise very much, made a very learned speech in the sense that he made a very important point, namely, that the railways pay little attention to all these railway unions. That is a very important point, and it must be looked into. The railway unions ventilate the grievances of the railway employees and they have a legitimate right to get a good hearing from the railway authorities. Sir, I appeal to the Government that they will make it a point to look into the matters of these poor and helpless crewmen who are on their legs from morning till evening. I am further supported in my remarks by the speech which was delivered, I think, by my Honourable friend, Sir Leslie Hudson, at the

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time of the general discussion of the Railway Budget, in which he said that there ought to be a sufficient check of tickets, and these crewmen do a great deal of work in that direction. I appeal to the Government that they will take up this matter in right earnest and will redress their grievances without any loss of time. With these remarks, I whole-heartedly support the motion which has been moved by my Honourable friend, Mr. N. M. Joshi.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai (Sind: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I think the grievances of the railway employees are so many, that not only a book, but volumes can be written about them. In the first place, the important question that arises is this: How are these disputes or grievances to be redressed? We know that the present machinery is too slow, and it leaves the whole thing to the Agents who are callous to recognise the grievances brought to their notice.

Sir, I am in full accord with the expression of my Honourable friend, Sir Henry Gidney, when he said that the railway administration is in opposition to the railway recognised unions. Sir, it cannot possibly be said that the railway recognised unions, which stand for ventilating the grievances of the railway employees, are being listened to or any consideration is given to the points which they place before the railway officers. In view of this opposition, what is the remedy open to them for getting the grievances of these railway employees redressed? I submit, that there ought to be, as has been suggested, a conciliation machinery. When we see that the grievances are not complied with and they are not listened to, what is the other course left? There ought to be an umpire and that umpire should be a conciliation board. There are at present staff councils and there are also recognised unions. They do meet and their proceedings do take place. But with what result? The Agents are more or less prejudiced against these unions and they do not give them any sympathetic hearing. Besides that, it is well-known that it takes a long time to arrive at a decision, and, therefore, it is necessary that there ought to be some machinery to which reference could be made and which could get the grievances redressed.

Now, with regard to that, I will give the instance of the Travelling Ticket Examiners whose memorials have been lying with the Government for a long time. Have they been considered? Whenever I put a question about them, the Honourable Mr. Rau says every now and then, that they are not yet considered. I hope he will now arrive at a decision as early as possible. Sir, they used to draw a large amount of money in the shape of allowances which were due to them. Now, those allowances have been reduced to Rs. 30 a month. That is a case which requires looking into at an early date.

Then, with regard to the other grievances. I may take up the grievance with regard to leave. As the House knows, there are certain stations which are called third class stations and there are other small stations where there are only two or three men working. For instance, there are stations where only three persons work—the station master, the assistant station master and a signaller. How do they work? They work the whole week without any relief. The station master works during the whole day and the assistant station master works the whole night and the signaller works for the day with a relief given to him by the assistant station master at night. They

also suffer from other disabilities. These small stations are at out-of-the-way places where these people cannot get even proper foodstuffs. They have, therefore, to go to some other place at some distance. Now, how can they go? Is there any relief for them? Therefore, there ought to be some relief given to them, so that they may be able to leave the station. At any rate, some relief should be given to them on Sundays or on some other days when they can leave the station and attend to their domestic work as well. They are more or less prisoners there. Therefore, the rules with regard to leave ought to be revised.

Then, Sir, I come to the second question which is still more important, and that is with regard to the medical aid to these subordinates. Now, what medical aid do they get? There are sub-assistant surgeons at certain stations and they have a very long beat such as they are not able to travel on and give the necessary medical help. There have been many cases where a sub-assistant surgeon has been called and he has not been able to go. Therefore, there ought to be travelling sub-assistant surgeons. Only then it will be possible to give proper medical aid. Sir, instances can be cited where the employees have called for medical aid, which has not reached them and they have died. Who is responsible for all this? Therefore, the number of these travelling sub-assistant surgeons should be increased.

Then, I come to the question of the guards. Now, these guards are waiting in class II for a very long time, and, I think, many guards have retired from class III, but their places have not been filled up. Whenever questions are asked in this House about them, the reply makes it clear that whenever there are vacancies in class III, the posts are abolished. Now, is that fair to the guards in class II? Is it fair that there ought to be no rise to these men at all? Therefore, the policy of the Government that whenever there are vacancies in class III the posts are abolished should cease, otherwise it is causing a great injustice to the guards of class II.

Then, with regard to appeals. When appeals are made, they are generally or mostly withheld by the very officer against whose order the appeal is lying. Not only are they withheld, but the applicants are never informed that their appeals have been withheld. The result is that when any questions are put anywhere or in this Assembly, the reply is given that it is the business of the local officer. Then, what is the Railway Board for? Therefore, with regard to these appeals also, the rules should be changed and should be revised and it should be the duty of the officer who withholds it on certain grounds to give those grounds and inform the applicant, so that he may find his own remedy and not remain content with no redress having been given to him. Then, with regard to the question of the railway unions, I would submit that there is one thing in which there ought to be no discrimination with regard to passes to these men who go and attend conferences or meetings of the Agent or the Divisional Superintendents. At present there are councils and the members of the staff councils are given passes, whereas the members of these unions are not given passes at all. Why do the Government people alone get passes? Why is it that the representatives of the employees do not get passes? This is invidious distinction. In that respect also, the rules should be changed.

With these words, I support the motion.

Mr. Frank D'Souza (Government of India: Nominated Official): Sir, if I may refer first to my Honourable friend, Mr. Lalchand Navalrai's speech, he spoke about the grievances of railway employees being so many as to fill a volume enumerating them. This is scarcely surprising considering the large number of railway employees in India, the number being over 7,00,000. The wonder is that the grievances are not more numerous than they actually are. Some of these grievances are what might be called genuine cases of hardship which obviously require redress by departmental heads. There are others which involve matters of policy, and those obviously would not be in the power of the railway administration to deal with. The Honourable Member for Railways will deal with questions of general policy, and all that I am concerned with today is just to refer to those few items of grievances of which I have personal knowledge.

The first of these is as regards passes. It was said that the lowest class of employees do not get passes. The conditions vary on the different railways, but so far as we are aware, there are very few classes of railway employees who do not get passes after about two years service. All permanent employees get passes under the rules of the railway. Temporary employees and perhaps daily rated men are the only people who do not get passes.

Another point that I may refer to is in connection with the Great Indian Peninsula strikers to whom reference was made by my Honourable and gallant friend, Colonel Gidney. According to a report received by the Railway Board from the Agent of the Great Indian Peninsula Railway, the position on the first of this month was as follows: On the first waiting list, the number of men who had not been reinstated was 154. On the second waiting list, the number was 2. The men on the second waiting list are those who were on the first waiting list, but refused to accept particular posts when such were offered to them. The total number of men, therefore, who are waiting to be reinstated, on the 1st February, was 156. The number on the register for employment is 3,188 and the number of ex-strikers retrenched after re-employment is 2,184. On the 17th March, 1930, the number of persons who were on the waiting list for employment was approximately 5,000. These are the men who complied with the terms of the Government of India communique of the 1st March, 1930. As an indication of what has been done to give these men employment, the mere fact that we have today come down to 156 shows that the efforts made by the administration to get these men back to work have not been unsatisfactory. The position might have been better in this respect, were it not for the fact that the re-employment of strikers has been somewhat retarded owing to preference having to be given to the men who were retrenched in the course of the economy campaigns of 1931 and 1932.

Then, Sir, my Honourable and gallant friend, Colonel Gidney, supported my Honourable friend, Mr. Joshi, in his remarks on unions, particularly as regards the recognition of unions, although, I believe, he did not quite agree with him on the question of having outsiders to run these unions. In this connection, Sir, it seems to me that some reference to my personal experience in this respect would be of interest to the House. I may claim that I have as much experience and perhaps as much right to speak as regards railway labour as many labour leaders of today. My credentials in this matter are not patent to those concerned, and so, I may be forgiven if I make some reference to them. I was a member of the National Union of Railwaymen of India and Burma from the time when it was known as

the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants of which my Honourable and gallant friend, Colonel Gidney, is the Advisory President today. I was on the Board of Trustees of this Union, now called the Executive Committee, for 25 years, and, if any proof were needed of my work with that Union, I have it here in a Certificate of Merit that was sent to me two months ago by the Union. With your permission, Sir, I will read it:

“Certificate of Merit awarded to Mr. Frank D’Souza as a mark of appreciation and deep esteem for long and faithful service rendered to the National Union of Railwaymen of India and Burma for a period extending over 25 years.”

C. W. GIDNEY, President.

Dated 22nd December 1934.

F. CURRIEON, General Secretary.”

What makes this tribute all the more remarkable is the fact that seven years ago, under instructions from my then superiors, I had to sever my connection with the Union. The fact that after seven years they should have thought of sending me this certificate shows what they thought of my services when I was with them.

Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney: It is not my signature.

Mr. Frank D’Souza: It is the signature of your brother who is the President. I believe, Sir, I am the only trustee of the National Union of Railwaymen who has also been given as a memento a gold chain in recognition, as they put it, of valuable services rendered. I, therefore, think, Sir, that I can claim to be one who has rendered as good and faithful service to the labour cause as many representatives of labour in India today. It may be my good fortune, or misfortune, according to the point of view of an individual, that I am today a Government servant, but I have first hand experience of railway labour, apart from such experience as may have been gained in an official capacity. I started from the bottom of the railway ladder. I know exactly what a guard does,—I did it myself for four years. I know what an assistant station master does,—I did that for another four years. I know what a clerk does, I was the chief clerk of a district office. So that, from the bottom I have got, I will not say to the top, but not very far from the top; and, therefore, I think I can speak as one who has had diversified experience both of a subordinate’s life and career and of an officer’s. Now, Sir, it surprised me when I heard one of my Honourable friends, I think it was Mr. Joshi, say that officers do not work hard and it is only the subordinates who work hard.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: No; I said the officers do not work as hard as the subordinates.

Mr. Frank D’Souza: I stand corrected; but that merely emphasises what I was going to say in more moderate language. My point is that in my 16 years’ service as a subordinate, I had an easier time than I have had as an officer. The majority of subordinates generally have fixed hours of duty, but most guards have not. Still the work is easier than that of an officer. As officers, many of us have to work frequently 14 hours a day, and not eight. There is no question of applying to us the

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hours of employment regulations, no question of granting overtime. On the other hand, it may be said that officers are better paid than those on the lower rungs of the ladder. I accept that, and pass on to the subject I was getting on to when I digressed to present my credentials to speak on this matter. The point is the recognition of unions and the association of outsiders in advisory capacities in those unions. Well, Sir, if I may say so, my experience of the Great Indian Peninsula Railway strike of 1912-13 has warned me, as it has warned others who had experience of that strike, that the most dangerous man an union can have is the outsider. I know that that sentiment will not appeal to the majority in this House

Mr. N. M. Joshi: Preach that to the Agent of the Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway who does not like railway employees to be the secretaries.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): If the Honourable Member wants to make a personal explanation, he ought to rise and make it.

Mr. Frank D'Souza: The position is this, that in the case of the strike of 1912-13 on the Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway, which subsequently extended to the Great Indian Peninsula Railway, the Board of Trustees of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants, the only labour union in India at the time opposed the strike *in toto*. They had then an outsider to lead them, one Mr. Harry Rogers. This was in the days before J. A. Balfour, whom labour leaders have perhaps met, became the Union's Secretary—Rogers was a demagogue of the forceful type, one able to talk over men, who—or, at least, majority of whom—could not think for themselves. That class has practically disappeared, and we have a much better class of subordinates today. Well, Sir, Rogers persuaded the men to believe that there was only one method of obtaining redress from the railway authorities, and that was by going on strike. That strike, Sir, ruined the Union. The National Union of Railwaymen today, which might have taken the place which the All-India Railwaymen's Federation occupies, lost its funds to the extent of one lakh and 25 thousand rupees and got into debt to the extent of another 25 thousand rupees, merely because of a strike forced on them by an outsider. Profiting by the lessons of that strike, the committee of the Union promptly arranged to modify their rules so as to make a strike impossible unless it was voted for by 3-4ths of the total number of members in the union. Their position now is so satisfactory that although occasions have arisen, within recent years, for the executive committee of the union to consider the declaration of a strike to support strikes elsewhere, they have never, I believe, considered it possible to obtain 4ths of the votes in favour of a strike.

Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney: I believe that is a model union.

Mr. Frank D'Souza: I quite agree it is a model union. And what that union has done now is to see that on its executive committee there are none but railwaymen and ex-railwaymen, that is, men who are really interested in the welfare of the railwaymen of India and Burma.

Sir, that completes what I have to say about my personal experience of establishment matters. General questions of policy, I believe the Honourable Member for Commerce and Railways will deal with.

Khan Sahib Nawab Siddique Ali Khan (Central Provinces: Muhammadan): Sir, the Maharaj Kumar of Vizianagram has just played his innings here on the floor of this House, and, now, I, as a Member of the Central Provinces team and the Cricket Club of India deem it proper to play my first innings and speak a few words about the grievances of the railway employees.

Sir, I speak for those who cannot speak for themselves and who are ordained by "All-mighty" to keep quiet under the penalty of dismissal or discharge, which is really a death sentence for them. The sad story is so voluminous that it would require several days to relate, but I shall relate a few things.

The Railway Board has got great fascination to appoint persons of super-annuated age. They have, in this very year, recruited a youngman of 68, who is now in his second childhood, as he retired from the service of the Railway Board itself, 18 years ago. The other two persons appointed are 56 and 49. The Government of every country, including the Government of India, pressed compulsory retirement at the age of 55 years, or even before that, but the Railway Board, which, according to our Resolution, has ceased to exist, follows the other course.

The second grievance of the railway employees is the Subordinate Railway Accounts Examination, which is conducted by the Controller of Railway Accounts. In this examination, the candidates are required to obtain 50 per cent. marks in each paper, 66 per cent. in each subject and 75 per cent. in the aggregate. May I ask the Financial Commissioner, whether there is any other examination under the sun, besides this one, where 75 per cent. marks are necessary for qualification? Is it not a fact that this examination for Subordinate Service is more stringent than the examination of Indian Audit and Accounts Service?

I now draw attention to the revised scales of pay. These revised rates of pay are not applicable to those employees who were not in service on the 15th July, 1931. I request the Railway Board that the persons, who joined the training school on the prospects of the old scales of pay, may also be excluded. This will apply to journeymen apprentices on the State-owned railway. This class of men have recently been given the benefit of old leave rules and it is reasonable to demand that they may also be given the old scale of pay.

The next thing I should like to point out is, and to which the attention has already been drawn by Mr. Jajna Das Mehta in his representation, that it is a common practice in the railways that gratuity and even provident fund is forfeited on a very trivial cause. I mention one case for your consideration. A certain railway employee booked his luggage on his pass. The luggage was lost and he claimed Rs. 230. The Inspector of Claims asked him to withdraw his claim, but he refused to do so. Then the Traffic Inspector came to him and he also induced him to withdraw the claim, giving him future hopes of promotion in his own department. Instead of getting any reward for setting aside his claims of the loss, the Divisional Superintendent dismissed him, forfeited his gratuity and

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provident fund for attempting to cheat the railway. The case of this kind can only happen in the Railway Department of India. No appeal lies in this case. No person would read his appeal. May I ask, is this a case for forfeiture of gratuity and provident fund? I take this opportunity to press on the Railway Board that no officer should be entitled to forfeit the provident fund and gratuity without the explicit permission of the Railway Board, and they should set up a Special Officer for this purpose.

The next thing I should like to draw the attention to is the case of the Travelling Ticket Inspectors. The Railway Board has been performing experiments after experiments at the expense of tax-payers, and it is high time that they should come to some definite decision and stick to it. Sir Guthrie Russell, the Chief Commissioner of Railways, in his speech in the Council of State, and the President of the Railway Conference expressed the desire to amend the Railway Act and make travelling without ticket a cognizable offence. The Chief Commissioner in support of his arguments mentioned that three million people travelled without ticket, but Dr. Ziauddin, in the Assembly, pointed out that these three millions were less than three quarters, or more accurately 65 per cent. of the passengers, and this small percentage is not so alarming as to justify a change in the Act. The chief cause of this disease is the experiment of the Railway Board itself. Make travelling without tickets impossible by your rules and practice as is done in European countries. May I ask the Member of the Railway Board, who has done extensive travelling in Europe, whether it is possible for any person to enter the platform without a ticket or to travel even to one station without a ticket? But here in India the stations are so built that on side-stations it is only the kindness of the passengers that they purchase tickets or handover their tickets to the railway authorities. The system of ticket-checking is wrong in principle and objectionable in practice. They think out schemes after schemes, but they never think out the manner in which those schemes can be put into practice. One person devises a scheme, the other person who does not like it makes every effort to make it a failure. There is a fight between the higher officers, but the poor people who work these schemes become the victims of circumstances and they are tossed about from one place to another, sometimes in audit, sometimes in traffic, sometimes in the running duty and sometimes on the station staff, sometimes here and sometimes there. They have no place of residence and they are treated like unclaimed persons by every department of the railway, there is no one to press or look after their interests. They have now got a person of great experience in the Railway Board, and I hope that this grievance which has now become almost chronic will soon be redressed and justice will be done to these persons, who have been knocked about from place to place and from door to door.

I also like to draw the attention to the manner in which the individual cases of railway employees are attended to. If any person is prejudiced against any subordinate, he discharges him. He is authorised to approach the Divisional Superintendent only on paper, to go to the Agent and even to the Railway Board, but nobody ever reads his papers. For this reason, there is a very great dissatisfaction among the staff. If you want economic and efficient running of railways, then you should satisfy the subordinate

staff and keep them contented. With these words, I support the motion of my Honourable friend.

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

The Assembly re-assembled after Lunch at Twenty Minutes Past Two of the Clock, Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim) in the Chair.

Mr. R. S. Sarma (Nominated Non-Official): I move that the question be now put.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Mr. Joshi may want to reply.

Mr. V. V. Giri (Ganjam *cum* Vizagapatam: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, the Honourable Mr. DeSouza, who intervened in the debate this morning, has lost the great reputation he made yesterday. Mr. DeSouza referred to a certificate of merit granted to him by the National Union of Railwaymen, India and Burma. I do not know if it is a certificate of merit or a certificate of release. I am sure, if the National Union of Railwaymen and their leaders had heard the speech of Mr. DeSouza today, they would have said: "God save us from our friends, and God save us from the Honourable Mr. DeSouza". I am bound to say, and the members of the National Union of Railwaymen are bound to say that the Honourable Mr. DeSouza has kicked the ladder on which he has risen. Sir, I claim, though humble, some experience of the trade union movement in this country, specially the railway trade union movement, the only difference between me and the Honourable Mr. DeSouza is that I have never been a paid officer, not that I mean to say that Mr. DeSouza was a paid officer of that union, but he has been in the service of the railway and he rose from position to position, and he now occupies the position of a Director in the Railway Board. My experience generally is that those who rise from the ranks in the railway services and go to bigger offices are generally connected with people who have not done much service to the railway union, and I do hope that the Honourable Mr. DeSouza is not one of them.

Sir, restriction of time compels me only to deal with a few subjects relating to the grievances or demands of the railway workers. I would, therefore, confine my attention only to two subjects which I consider very important, and those subjects are, the question of unemployment and the question of establishing a joint machinery for preventing strikes, for maintaining peace in the industry in the Railways. I need not refer to the action taken by other Governments in civilized countries who consider that unemployment is a great bane to the country, whether that Government is a Fascist Government, a Socialist Government, a Capitalist Government or a Communist Government. I feel, Sir, that in this country the Government have not done all that it ought to have done with respect to these questions. The complaint generally in this country is that the workers demand extravagant things, that they ask for more wages, that they ask always for the best conditions of service which finances would not allow, but, Sir, what is the attitude of the Railway Administrations, when the

[Mr. V. V. Giri.]

workers demand of them things which do not involve any financial commitments? I desire, Sir, to deal this afternoon with those subjects which do not require any financial commitments and yet the Railway Administrations have failed to satisfy.

I may refer to the question of unemployment and the disputes that arose with respect to the retrenchment during the last four years. I speak especially from the knowledge that I have of the two unions of which I was and am still the President. Let me first refer to the Bengal and North Western Railway Indian Labour Union. In the middle of May, 1933, the administration of that railway wanted to retrench 400 workers, and the Union, when it was informed about the fact, placed before the Administration alternative proposals, and one of those alternative proposals was the introduction of short time which has the effect of spreading work among a greater number of men. I want to tell the Honourable Mr. DeSouza that his experience most probably related to one union, but I shall now refer him to the experiences that the whole of India has in this matter, I shall refer my friend to the other side of the question and convince this House and convince you, Sir, that there are unions which are always ready and willing to put up the most constructive, the most practicable measures when disputes arise. Speaking about the Bengal Nagpur Railway Union, when the question arose, the Union placed certain proposals before the authorities, and I think I would do well to read a few paragraphs from the letter that the Union addressed to the Railway Administration with reference to the question of retrenchment:

"Paragraph 9. Without prejudice to the Union's contention that more work for the staff can be made available not only in the interests of the employees but also in the interests of efficient management of the Railway, the Union maintains that there is no necessity to compulsorily discharge any staff under retrenchment in view of the existence of various other alternative methods of reduction of expenditure.

Paragraph 11. The Administration being a commercial undertaking should be willing to consider any proposals designed to help the staff provided that no financial liability is thereby incurred.

Paragraph 17. In the present retrenchment about 400 hands are declared to be surplus constituting 5 per cent. of the existing labour force in the shops. The easiest method of absorption would be to introduce short time which has the effect of spreading work among a greater number of men.

Paragraph 19. An argument advanced against increase of short time to absorb surplus is that the proportion of surplus in the various categories being different, a uniform reduction of work would result in unbalancing of the categories causing thereby dislocation of work.

Paragraph 20. The Union submits that in such cases the system of leave by rotation can be introduced. By this method the scheduled workshop operations will not suffer any break and at any time the number of staff on compulsory leave by rotation in each category would be the number of staff who would be otherwise discharged in the corresponding category.

Paragraph 23. It will be agreed on all sides that a system of Unemployment Insurance is a *sine qua non* of any organized industry in advanced countries and without entering into a controversy as to the reasons or causes of such a system in this country, the Union feels that a way out of the difficulty can be found.

Paragraph 25. What the Union submits is a modified proposal which ought to be acceptable. The number of surplus staff in the present case is comparatively so small that a voluntary contribution by the retained staff in various departments through the salary bills for the relief of those under compulsory leave without pay should suffice to meet the situation."

The staff, Sir, were prepared to contribute throughout the length and breadth of the railways for the relief of those who were under compulsory leave without pay.

We applied to the Administration, we wanted a court of enquiry or a conciliation board in this matter, and I am sorry to say that the Honourable Member in charge of Industries and Labour and his Department would not hear what we demanded. We were prepared to suffer financial loss. We never wanted the Administration to suffer financial commitments, and, in this connection, I would like to refer to an application that we had made to the Chief Mechanical Engineer on this matter:

"Sir, with reference to the proposed retrenchment of staff in our category, I beg respectfully to submit that I am quite willing—(*this is the employee's application*)—to go on leave in rotation, without pay if necessary, till the absorption of the surplus to the necessary extent. I am prepared to bear any loss of wages, great or small, incidental to the working of this method, in order that my fellow workers may be saved from the calamity of compulsory discharge from service in these hard days. I am perfectly aware that the prospects of revival of trade conditions are very uncertain.

I beg to request you to be good enough to introduce this expedient without any further hesitation, in view of the fact that bloc retrenchment of staff is bound to adversely affect our morale and create a serious feeling of insecurity of service, notwithstanding any assurances to the contrary."

Sir, this is the application that 20,000 workers had made to the Railway Administration, and, without any financial commitments, retrenchment could have been avoided and 400 workers and their families could have been saved from starvation and in course of time they would have been absorbed. So also, on the Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway, there was retrenchment, and, unfortunately, a strike happened because the Department of Industries and Labour would not accede to our request to have a conciliation board under similar circumstances. Therefore, if strikes have happened, if disputes have happened, I say that it is the Government that is more responsible than the unions or outsiders connected with the unions.

My Honourable friend, Mr. Clow, stated the other day that the workers in this country employed in industries are not really prepared to contribute towards any unemployment insurance. If a test is wanted, if an instance is wanted, there cannot be a better example than the 20,000 forms that were submitted to the Bengal Nagpur Railway Administration for this purpose. Therefore, I say that it is not the outsider that is responsible for spoiling the organisations as has been stated by my Honourable friend, Mr. DeSouza; it is the policy adopted by the Railway Administration, by the Government of India, that is responsible, by not creating the ground for good unions in this country. The Royal Commission on Labour have stated that unions should be recognised; that was in the year 1930-31. At page 166, they say:

"We believe that a more generous policy in respect of recognition would be to the advantage of all concerned in railway work, and we commend this matter to the careful consideration of administrations and unions."

As has been already stated, it is now four or five years since the Royal Commission made their recommendation. The Royal Commission became a royal omission and their recommendations have not been carried out today. If, during the last two or three or four years, there was unrest in the railways due to retrenchment, if only the joint standing machinery that has been proposed by the Commission were in existence, all these strikes,

[Mr. V. V. Giri.]

all these disputes, would and could have been avoided. The Royal Commission on Labour went throughout the country, took evidence from various employees and employees' organisations on the railways, from the employers, from the Railway Board and from the Agents, and they came to the conclusion that there must be a joint standing machinery, especially because in India section 15 of the Trade Disputes Act makes it compulsory for the railway worker to give notice. I would like to quote two sentences from the report. This is what the Commission say at page 346.

"In our view the weakest point of the Indian provision is that, while it restricts the powers of workers in public utility services to coerce their employers, it gives in return no assurance that their grievances will receive a hearing."

So that, there are two proposals that I have put forward. In order to avoid unemployment, we did not demand of the Government to spend more money. We stated that the workers had agreed that the principle of leave in rotation should be introduced to the highest extent and that the workers took the responsibility

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member's time is up.

Mr. V. V. Giri: I do not wish to dilate more on this point except to say that the Government of India and the Railway Board should give their attention to the proposals that I have put forward and that the Railway Board should see that all the Agents do recognise the various unions that are in existence. Unless all these matters are carefully looked into, unless a joint standing machinery is immediately established, there shall not be peace, and if the administration is interested in the workers of this country, it should see that the joint standing machinery is introduced at the earliest possible opportunity.

The Honourable Sir Joseph Shore (Member for Commerce and Railways): Sir, we have been charged with great delay in considering and giving effect to the recommendations of the Whitley Commission. I realise my Honourable friend, Mr. Joshi's impatience, and in a measure I have some sympathy with him, but I do hope that he will see that before these very far reaching recommendations can be given effect to or accepted they must be considered very carefully. They have to be referred to various authorities and interests concerned and their effects and consequences on the general administration of the railways have to be most carefully examined. So far as legislation consequent on the Whitley Commission's recommendations and giving effect to those recommendations are concerned, considerable progress has been made. Honourable Members will be able to realise the progress that has been made by referring to the annual reports which, I think, are already in their hands. May I, Sir, pay my testimony to the studied restraint with which my Honourable friend, Mr. Joshi, stated his case and which I think made his case all the more impressive? I cannot take up every grievance that was voiced by Mr. Joshi as those grievances cover a very wide field, but I shall endeavour to take up, what I consider, some of the most important of them which are of a general character. Mr. Joshi firstly laid emphasis on what he claimed was the racial discrimination existing in practice in regard to appointments to the higher grades of certain categories of posts and he cited, I think, in this connection the

case of guards. Let me read to the House the orders which have been passed by the Board, and I think these orders should satisfy the House that we have absolutely set our face against any such thing as racial discrimination. I shall read the relevant portion of those orders:

“No branch of the railway services should be reserved for any one class or community, that members of all classes or communities possessing the necessary qualifications should be eligible for appointment to any branch. Whatever method may be employed to redress communal inequalities or to prevent an undue preponderance of any one class or community, the efficiency of the services must be maintained and no candidate should be admitted who does not possess the qualifications laid down as the minimum necessary for the work to be done.”

So far as actual practice is concerned, I have endeavoured in the short time, since Mr. Joshi made his speech, to ascertain what it is, and one of my officers who has himself served on the Eastern Bengal Railway assures me that in actual practice, so far as he is aware, Indians other than Anglo-Indians have, as a matter of fact, been appointed and are being appointed direct to the higher grades of this particular category of appointments.

Then, Sir, let me take the question of the extension of provident fund benefits to the lowest paid subordinates of the railways and let me assure the House that the decision of the Board is not absolutely and definitely final in this matter. The following are the terms of its conclusion: “The Railway Board estimate that this recommendation, if applied to all railways, would involve additional annual expenditure of not less than half a crore and in present economic conditions its acceptance is impossible”. I lay stress on the qualification there. Honourable Members will realise that with so many competing claims on the financial resources of the railways it is impossible for us to do justice to everybody. Reduction of third class fares, the provision of greater amenities to third class passengers, reduction of freight rates all ask for our consideration, and Honourable Members will realise that there is not enough money in the till to go round and meet all claims at once.

Then, Sir, let me next turn to the question of the hours of employment regulations. These are the considered recommendations of the retrenchment committee:

“In view of the present financial stringency and the fact that there is a possibility of the revision of the convention being taken up at Geneva in the near future and finally that the Whitley Commission's report which has an important bearing on this problem has not yet been considered, we recommend that further action be suspended and that no efforts be made to introduce these rules, where they are not at present in existence.”

I would point out, Sir, that we have really gone very much further in applying the Convention than under the strict letter of its terms we were forced to do, but I would like it to be understood that we have every desire and every intention to go further and I hope that it will be some consolation to my Honourable friends to know that we are doing our best to see whether we cannot extend the action, which we have taken in connection with the State Railways, during the course of the next year to the Bombay, Baroda and Central India and the Madras and Southern Mahratta Railways. My Honourable friend, Colonel Gidney, complained of those, whom he described as the autocrats of the railways, namely, the Agents. He emphasized, I think, the difficulty of unrecognised unions in the matter of appeals.

[Sir Joseph Bhore.]

Here, again, let me remind him that the Board has already dealt with this matter and it has given the following assurance:

"The Railway Board will consider an appeal if submitted by a labour union in the event of the Agent of a State-managed railway refusing to grant recognition to it."

Then, Sir, my Honourable friend, Sir Henry Gidney, laid great stress on the difficulties experienced by the low paid staff of the railways because of attachments for debt. I hope that that complaint will soon be a thing of the past when this House has dealt with the legislation which is now before it. So far as the recommendations are concerned, which specially concern the railways, I do not think that there are any which are calculated to result in any material direct increase in monetary benefits to the staff, so that, I submit, it is not a matter of any very special importance that effect should be given to these recommendations immediately or very hastily. I do submit that having regard to the fact that these proposals are very intimately bound up with large questions of administration that every care should be taken to consider their effects and consequences before we commit ourselves finally to their adoption. The House will, I think, realise that in these matters a step hastily taken may land us in trouble because of the difficulty of retracing our steps subsequently. Despite the fact that delay has taken place, I would submit to the House that the workers are not adversely affected, for the simple reason that machinery exists already which enables them to bring forward their grievances, to ventilate their complaints and to see that measures are taken to alleviate the conditions of which they complain. I would like to give to the House a very short sketch of what the existing machinery is and more especially so, because my Honourable friend, Sir Henry Gidney, was, I think, a little unfair when he referred to the staff committees. I have had a note prepared on this subject, and perhaps the House will bear with me while I give extracts which I hope will put the matter in a somewhat different light from that which he threw upon it:

"In several workshops, e.g., at Moghalpura, Jamalpur, Lilloah, Lucknow and Kharagpur, an employment or establishment officer is specially provided, whose duty it is to look after the interests of the employees, and who ordinarily interviews workmen who have any grievances to represent. A further link between the administration and the workshop employees is supplied on the North Western Railway by the establishment of Labour Bureaux in the Locomotive and Carriage and Wagon shops. All workmen have access to the Bureau and an enquiry office is provided where workmen can make inquiries regarding their pay, gratuity, etc. Personnel or liaison officers are also provided on most railways who deal with questions connected with Staff Council, appeals and welfare and with representations from Unions regarding particular matters. Another means of contact between the staff collectively and the administration is provided by Staff or Welfare Committees which have been formed on several railways in the last few years under a variety of names (and, I think, here I may point out that my Honourable friend's suggestion that they consist entirely of nominees of the administration is not quite correct). The North Western Railway have Area and Divisional Councils and Workshop Committees consisting entirely of elected members. The East Indian Railway have Welfare Committees in Workshops, Regional Area Committees and, above them, Divisional Welfare Committees consisting partly of elected and partly of nominated members. On the Great Indian Peninsula Railway, the organization of Staff Committees consists of a Railway Council, Divisional Committees, Station Committees at certain selected stations and Workshop Committees. Members of these are partly elected and partly nominated. On the Bengal Nagpur Railway, District Welfare Committees have been established primarily, to afford individual employees facilities to bring personal grievances in a suitable form to the notice of the higher authorities. They consist of nominated members representing the Indian subordinate staff in the various branches."

Mr. M. S. Aney (Berar Representative): Who nominates them?

The Honourable Sir Joseph Bhoré: The Administration, in that particular case—that I think is the only such case:

“The South Indian Railway have staff committees, with a majority of elected members representing all classes including persons in inferior service. The Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway have district staff committees, central staff committees and a general staff committee consisting of elected members to confer with district officers, heads of departments and the Agent, respectively. The Bengal and North Western Railway and the Rohilkhand and Kumaon Railway have staff welfare committees consisting of elected members representing the various classes with district officers as *ex-officio* members. These committees are chiefly concerned with two aspects of the labour problem—the extension of welfare work and the removal of grievances. Meetings are held periodically and proceedings forwarded to the competent authority whose orders are communicated to the Committees.”

Now, Sir, these committees are organizations the object of which is to establish better relations between employers and employed and they owe their origin to the initiative of the employer.

Then, Sir, there are, as the House is aware, the trade unions. These are the creation of the staff themselves and their object is primarily and essentially to protect the interests of the staff. Behind and beside these agencies, there is the Trade Disputes Act, the provisions of which are, and can be, invoked if these other agencies fail to secure a settlement of disagreements and disputes. I venture to submit, Sir, that, even as things are, the machinery which exists is not inefficient: it is still capable of providing a valuable means for settling disputes and disagreements, but it is in the interest of all parties, that it should be improved and that we should be able to have something which will ensure, as far as possible, what we all desire to have, namely, industrial peace and industrial co-operation.

Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney: Hear, hear.

The Honourable Sir Joseph Bhoré: Now, Sir, coming specifically to the recommendations of the Whitley Commission, I think they fall naturally under three heads. Firstly, there are the recommendations for a more generous treatment of trade unions; secondly, there are those recommendations which deal with welfare committees and a central council for each individual railway; and, thirdly, there are those proposals which deal with the setting up of a central, permanent machinery for the settlement of disputes. Now, as I have pointed out, time has inevitably had to be taken for consideration, not because of any want of sympathy with the workers, but because administrative problems of considerable magnitude and complexity are involved. We all know, for instance, that my Honourable friends, Mr. Joshi and Mr. Giri, are doughty fighters in the cause of labour, but I think I am doing them no injustice when I say that, when it comes to binding labour, they will not always be able to deliver the goods. We might, in many cases, go far to meet labour, provided we felt that there were those who could guarantee that labour would, in its turn, be able and be prepared on certain occasions to take a certain course and act in a certain manner. However, Sir, I need only say that we have practically completed our examination of the recommendations of the Whitley

[Sir Joseph Bhoré.]

Commission and that we hope to be able very shortly to announce our conclusions. I hope, Sir, that at any rate not later than the date at which the All-India Railwaymen's Federation has its next meeting with the Board, we shall be able to state quite definitely what our conclusions are in this matter.

I hope my Honourable friend, Mr. Joshi, will not press his motion. Once again let me assure the House that it is in no spirit of antagonism that we have examined these recommendations of the Labour Commission. Rather have we done so with the full knowledge that contented railway employees are the greatest possible asset of any Railway Administration, and, if we, Sir, are not able to accept every recommendation, it is only because we have also to keep before us other needs and requirements *viz.*, those of a sound Railway Administration. (Loud Applause.)

Mr. N. M. Joshi: Mr. President, I do not propose to detain the House for more than only a few minutes. Sir, the Honourable Member, Mr. D'Souza, while opening the case for Government, gave the history of his own rise from a guard to the top of the ladder, as he said. It is a rule, Mr. President, which I generally follow in dealing with permanent officials of the Government, that I do not criticise the careers of individual permanent officers of Government. I shall only refer to one remark which he made, namely, that the outsiders are the most dangerous people in trade unions. Mr. President, I am not in that happy position of irresponsibility in which the Honourable Member is. But let me tell him that his opinion is not shared by the Royal Commission on Indian Labour, nor, may I say, even by the Government of India. It is true that the Royal Commission did not have the benefit of the advice of such a distinguished officer. Mr. President, I shall not deal with him any more.

The Honourable Member in charge of Railways admitted, at first, that the Government of India did take a fairly long time to consider the recommendations of the Royal Commission, but he said there were administrative difficulties. But, Sir, I do not think there is any one here who will charge the Government of India with having acted hastily. (Laughter.)

Mr. M. S. Aney: With acting at all!

Mr. N. M. Joshi: Now, it is almost four years since the Royal Commission made its recommendations, and there are several recommendations which, I am sure even the Honourable Member will not say, will create administrative difficulties. Take, for instance, the first grievance which I mentioned, *viz.*, that, whenever railway employees, after they are confirmed, have to be medically examined, they should have the right of being examined by a specialist. I wonder what administrative difficulties will be caused by the acceptance of this recommendation.

Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney: None at all.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: Well, Sir, the Royal Commission made recommendations regarding the right of being properly heard by people who are discharged or dismissed. I do not know what administrative difficulties

that will create. A large number of the recommendations of the Royal Commission neither involve any expenditure nor do they create any administrative difficulties. I, therefore, feel that the Government of India was not justified in delaying the consideration of these recommendations. The Honourable Member said that the Government of India have issued orders for the removal of racial discrimination. Well, Sir, you may issue the orders but perhaps there are people who do not obey your orders. That may be one of the reasons why my Honourable friend, Mr. DeSouza, rose from the guardship to the top of the ladder. But let me tell him that today on the Great Indian Peninsula Railway there is not a single permanent Indian guard who is in charge of a passenger train on the main line.

Mr. S. Satyamurti (Madras: Non-Muhammadan Urban): Is that so?

Mr. N. M. Joshi: That is a statement which I make. Let anybody come forward and say that my statement is wrong. Of course, there are many guards, but none of them is an Indian. But, Sir, these things do not happen unless there are some people who prevent the Government orders from being carried out. Then, the Honourable Member said that if the recommendation of the Royal Commission with regard to the provident fund is given effect to, it will cost half a crore of rupees. Let them give effect to that recommendation partially. Let them begin to spend, say, a lakh of rupees every year more to give effect to that recommendation. Let them go step by step, but let them make a beginning. Why reject the recommendation altogether? What they have done is to reject the recommendation.

Then, Sir, with regard to the Convention of hours of work, the Honourable Member did not reply to my criticism that the labour supervisor should not be under the Railway Board. You cannot ask your officer to undertake prosecution on behalf of Government of those people who are responsible for the management of railways and yet keep the labour office under the control of the Railway Board. The Act provides for a penalty for the breach of regulations. It is the duty of the labour supervisor to find out the breaches of these regulations. How can you place that officer under the Railway Board? I have got a copy of the report of that labour officer. That poor man cannot point out the breaches of the law, because, if the breaches of the law are pointed out, naturally the question will arise why were not those Agents prosecuted? I want the Honourable Member to give a reply to that question.

Well, Sir, the Honourable Member referred to the staff committee. A large number of these staff committees are brought into being as rivals to the trade unions. The Royal Commission has recommended that every effort should be made in order that there should be co-operation between these staff committees or staff councils (whatever you may like to call them) and the trade unions. They also recommended that some kind of representation should be given to all the trade unions on these committees to the extent to which their membership entitles them. I quoted a recommendation of the Royal Commission that those members of the staff committees who belong to the trade unions should be permitted to be accompanied during the meetings of the staff committees by the officers of the trade unions. What have Government done to that? Moreover, it is wrong for Government to start welfare committees in rivalry to the trade unions. I will give you one instance. Up to last year, there was no trade union on the Burma

[Mr. N. M. Joshi.]

Railways. So there was no welfare committee. The trade union was started last year and so was the welfare committee started. May I ask whether this is a right policy? Mr. President, I do not wish to go into the details of these questions, but I do want the Government of India to hasten their pace a little more. Four years is a long period, and if they hasten their pace, they will be doing a great amount of good to the railway employees. Before I conclude, I wish to repeat the suggestion which I made that the Government of India should appoint a Special Officer on their staff whose duty it should be to look after the interests of labour and that officer should not be drawn from the railway services. He should either belong to the Indian Civil Service or to any other service of that nature. I hope I have convinced the Legislature that the Government of India have failed in their duty and they will join me in my protest.

Mr. President: The question is:

"That the demand under the head 'Working Expenses—Expenses of the Traffic Department' be further reduced by Rs. 100."

The Assembly divided:

AYES—75.

Aaron, Mr. Samuel.
 Abdul Matin Chaudhury, Mr.
 Abdullah, Mr. H. M.
 Aney, Mr. M. S.
 Asaf Ali, Mr. M.
 Azhar Ali, Mr. Muhammad.
 Ba Si, U
 Bajoria, Babu Baijnath.
 Banerjee, Dr. P. N.
 Baqui, Mr. M. A.
 Barda'oi, Srijut N. C.
 Bhagavan Das, Dr.
 Bhagchand Soni, Rai Bahadur Seth.
 Bhutto, Mr. Nabi Baksh Illahi Baksh.
 Chattopadhyaya, Mr. Amarendra
 Nath.
 Chettiar, Mr. T. S. Avinashilingum.
 Chetty, Mr. Sami Vencatachelam.
 Das, Mr. B.
 Das, Mr. Basanta Kumar.
 Das, Pandit Nilakantha.
 Datta, Mr. Akhil Chandra.
 Desai, Mr. Bhulabhai J.
 Deshmukh, Dr. G. V.
 Essak Sait, Mr. H. A. Sathar H.
 Fakir Chand, Mr.
 Fuzlul Huq, Mr. A. K.
 Gadgil, Mr. N. V.
 Gauba, Mr. K. L.
 Ghiasuddin, Mr. M.
 Ghulam Bhik Nairang, Syed.
 Gidnev, Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry.
 Giri, Mr. V. V.
 Govind Das, Seth.
 Gupta, Mr. Ghanshiam Singh.
 Hosmani, Mr. S. K.
 Iswar Saran, Munshi.
 Jedhe, Mr. K. M.
 Jogendra Singh, Sirdar.
 Joshi, Mr. N. M.

Khan Sahib, Dr.
 Khare, Dr. N. B.
 Lohiri Chudhury, Mr. D. K.
 Lalchand Navalrai, Mr.
 Maitra, Pandit Lakshmi Kanta.
 Mangal Singh, Sardar.
 Mudaliar, Mr. C. N. Muthuranga.
 Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi, Qazi.
 Murtuza Sahib Bahadur, Maulvi
 Syed.

Nageswara Rao, Mr. K.
 Paliwal, Pandit Sri Krishna Dutta.
 Pant, Pandit Govind Ballabh.
 Parma Nand, Bhai.
 Raghubir Narayan Singh, Choudhri.
 Rajan, Dr. T. S. S.
 Raju, Mr. P. S. Kumaraswami.
 Ranga, Prof. N. G.
 Saksena, Mr. Mohan Lal.
 Sant Singh, Sardar.
 Satyamurta, Mr. S.
 Sham Lal, Mr.
 Shaukat Ali, Maulana.
 Sheodasa Daga, Seth.
 Siddique Ali Khan, Khan Sahib
 Nawab.
 Singh, Mr. Deep Narayan.
 Singh, Mr. Ram Narayan.
 Sinha, Mr. Anugrah Narayan.
 Sinha, Mr. Satya Narayan.
 Som, Mr. Surya Kumar.
 Sri Prakasa, Mr.
 Thein Maung, Dr.
 Thein Maung, U
 Umar Aly Shah, Mr.
 Varma, Mr. B. B.
 Vissanji, Mr. Mathuradas.
 Ziauddin Ahmad, Dr.

NOES—46.

Abdul Aziz, Khan Bahadur Mian.
 Ahmad Nawaz Khan, Major Nawab.
 Allah Baksh Khan Tiwana, Khan Bahadur Nawab Malik.
 Ayyar, Rao Bahadur A. A. Venkatarama.
 Bajpai, Mr. G. S.
 Bhole, The Honourable Sir Joseph.
 Buse, Mr. L. C.
 Chatarji, Mr. J. M.
 Clow, Mr. A. G.
 Craik, The Honourable Sir Henry.
 Dalal, Dr. R. D.
 D'Souza, Mr. F.
 DeSouza, Dr. F. X.
 Drake, Mr. D. H. O.
 Gajapatiraj, Maharaj Kumar Vijaya Ananda.
 Graham, Sir Lancelot.
 Grigg, The Honourable Sir James.
 Hockenhull, Mr. F. W.
 Hossack, Mr. W. B.
 Hudson, Sir Leslie.
 James, Mr. F. E.
 Jawahar Singh, Sardar Bahadur Sardar Sir.
 Kirpalani, Mr. Hiranand Khushiram.

Lal Chand, Captain Rao Bahadur Chaudhri.
 Lindsay, Sir Darcy.
 Mehr Shah Nawab Sahibzada Sir Sayad Muhammad.
 Metcalfe, Mr. H. A. F.
 Milligan, Mr. J. A.
 Monteath, Mr. J.
 Mukerjee, Mr. N. R.
 Mukherjee, Rai Bahadur Sir Satya Charan.
 Nayyar, Mr. C. Govindan.
 Noyce, The Honourable Sir Frank.
 Owen, Mr. L.
 Raisman, Mr. A. J.
 Rajah, Rao Bahadur M. C.
 Rau, Mr. P. R.
 Sarma, Mr. R. S.
 Scott, Mr. J. Ramsay.
 Scott, Mr. W. L.
 Sher Muhammad Khan, Captain Sardar.
 Singh, Mr. Pradyumna Prashad.
 Sircar, The Honourable Sir Nripendra.
 Sloan, Mr. T.
 Swithinbank, Mr. B. W.
 Tottenham, Mr. G. R. F.

The motion was adopted.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Two Honourable Members who do not belong to any group have given notice of motions which they want to move today, one is from Captain Lal Chand and the other is from Mr. Sarma. The notice of the motion from Captain Lal Chand was given at 11-50 A.M. on 28rd February and the other from Mr. Sarma was given at 12-25 P.M. on 23rd February. Therefore, the motion of Captain Lal Chand stands first in the list unless he is prepared to waive his right in favour of Mr. Sarma.

Mr. R. S. Sarma: Sir, in the conference yesterday between yourself and ourselves, it was decided that the motions would be taken today in the following order, first Mr. Joshi's, then my motion, and afterwards, Captain Lal Chand's. It was only an accident that to make his motion formal, Captain Lal Chand gave notice of his motion a little earlier than me, and it is a matter of no concern as to when he gave it, as the order of procedure had already been settled.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): If there was any such arrangement, that was between the Honourable Members themselves.

Mr. R. S. Sarma: You, Mr. President, gave out this morning that these will be taken in this order, *i.e.*, first Mr. Joshi's, then the one on wagons, and then about agricultural produce.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Chair's attention was not drawn to the fact that the two Honourable Members might not agree among themselves. (Laughter.) In the absence of such agreement, the Chair must follow the ordinary practice and take up the motions in the order as they stand. The Chair, therefore, calls upon Chaudhri Lal Chand to move his cut motion.

Excessive Rates and Insufficient Facilities for Transport of Agricultural Produce and Live Stock.

Captain Rao Bahadur Chaudhri Lal Chand (Nominated Non-Official):
Sir, I move:

"That the demand under the head 'Working Expenses—Expenses of the Traffic Department' be still further reduced by Rs. 100";

to discuss the excessive rates and insufficient facilities for transport of agricultural produce and live stock. So far as the actual rates are concerned, the matter was fully discussed yesterday on the European Group's cut. Mr. Bajoria, who carries on a large and extensive business and is an expert in these matters, gave detailed figures to show how railway rates were unfair to the agriculturists as well as to the industrialists. We expected some concession figures from the Honourable Member, Mr. D'Souza, who very eloquently put the Government case before this House yesterday, but we were sadly disappointed when he did not even touch on that question. As a matter of fact, one portion of my motion would have been out of order if he had utilised the opportunity of giving details of concessions, if any, that they have been earmarked for agricultural and dairy products and also for live stock. The few variations that were suggested and discussed yesterday were due to competition between waterways and railways.

Sir, the subject is very wide, and I confess that it is not my special subject, and the reason why I do not propose to tackle the actual rates is that I am not an expert in figures and thus leave them for experts like my Honourable friend, Dr. Ziauddin, and others. I will, therefore, argue my case as a layman simply to ask for concessional rates for the transport of agricultural produce, including vegetables, fodder, fuel, fertilisers, dairy products, agricultural tools, machinery and live stock. I base my claim on two points: firstly, India is purely an agricultural country, and, as agriculturists and the largest consumers of goods, their contribution to the treasury should not be measured from the land revenue figures and the cesses they pay, but the bulk of all indirect taxes also should be credited to their accounts. All the high tariff walls impose fresh taxes upon them, as by those walls they are debarred from buying in the cheapest market. Secondly, the principle of giving concessions to industries has been in practice for a number of years and every year large sums are given away to one industry or another. There is no such direct contribution to agricultural concerns and Government should welcome suggestions which may give some relief of a similar nature to the agriculturists as well. That however, is a side issue, and my claim for concessions for agricultural products by railways rests, not only on general grounds, but also on some special grounds. All State-managed railways have the guarantee of the general revenues of the country to meet their liabilities in times of stress. In the case of all railways, the executive help them in acquiring lands, in keeping their lines safe, and most of the provisions of the Railway Act give special protection of the railways, whether State-managed or otherwise. This is all at the expense of the people's other rights. With rights there must be liabilities as well, and we are justified in asking for concessions for the agriculturists who are the greatest sufferers. To take one simple case, do Honourable Members realise how much inconvenience is caused to a peasant when his land is cut into two pieces by a railway line? I hope we realise that crossing a railway line from one part of the field

to another alone would amount to trespass. But that is not all. Agricultural produce is transported in such large quantities that, even in consideration of this large use, there should be a concession for them.

In regard to cattle, my case is simpler, and even on economic considerations of the country as a whole, we need concessions. Every year thousands of cattle are exported from up-country to big towns like Bombay, Calcutta, Madras, Poona, Benares, etc., and also to Burma. To give Honourable Members an idea of how many cattle are exported from up-country to these big towns, I have the authority of the Veterinary Department of the Punjab. An inquiry was held into this matter and it was found that from one station, *i.e.*, Rohtak alone, 112 milk cattle (cows and buffaloes) were exported daily on the average. This comes to about 40,000 cattle annually from one railway station alone. There are many stations of that nature, and Honourable Members can realise how many cattle are exported every year from this tract which is known as Haryana. This does not include transport of cattle by roads. Now, all these milk cattle are imported into big towns, and they never return to their place of birth. It is a well-known fact in Bombay that as soon as a cow ceases to give at least three seers of milk, *i.e.*, when the quantity of milk that it gives is less than three seers a day, it is at once auctioned and sent to the slaughter-house. The best material is thus wasted. If the railways had any responsibility in this matter and felt their responsibility to this country, they would at once give concession rates say one-fourth the usual rate for these cattle to be returned to their homes. They could be given away to agriculturists here at a nominal price to be sent back next year for the benefit of those big towns. Sir, in an agricultural country like India, where the proverb was that milk was in plenty, the conditions are becoming hopeless. I shall here quote Mr. Kothawalla, the dairy expert to the Government of India. In his paper read before the Cattle Conference on the 23rd January, 1924, he said:

"The price at which milk is sold in Bombay is thirteen times dearer than in the United States of America and twelve times dearer than in the United Kingdom."

The *per capita* consumption, therefore, is much less, and this has a very bad effect on the health of the people and accounts for the heavy child mortality in those big towns. He further says:

"The *per capita* consumption of milk in Bombay is 3.1 ounces, while in the United Kingdom it is 10 ounces and in the United States it is 20 ounces."

Sir, the only remedy for all this is cheap rates of transport of milk cattle and a bigger supply than is at present available in the country. This is only possible if dry cows and buffaloes, that are wasted every year, are returned for further lactation to their old homes. The Royal Commission on Agriculture considered this point, and, at page 379, we have details of their findings. In para. 315, they say (and with your permission, Sir, I will read the whole paragraph, because in that paragraph are contained most of the difficulties under which we are labouring):

"There is, however, one point in connection with railway transport which, in our view, calls for immediate examination by the railway authorities. It appears that, owing to the high rates which are charged for the transport of cattle by passenger or parcel express trains, they are usually sent by slow goods trains and frequently in badly ventilated and unsuitable trucks. The only provision on the subject at present is a railway rule that at the request and risk of owners, cattle, after travelling for 200 miles, may be unloaded at a junction or other first class station and allowed to break journey for not more than 24 hours. We think that this rule in its present permissive

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form is probably an insufficient safeguard. We, therefore, recommend that the Railway Board should investigate its working and make suitable amendments, if it appears that cruelty to cattle, if not permanent injury, may result from present conditions. We should ourselves see no objection to its being made a definite responsibility of the owner that cattle should be rested and fed at fixed intervals *en route* provided that the railways on their part supply reasonable facilities. We would further suggest that the feasibility of transporting all milch cattle, by passenger or parcel express train at the rates at present charged for their carriage by goods train, and also of improving the type of wagon used for the transport of all cattle, should be investigated. In existing conditions, large number of good milch cows are imported into Calcutta and Bombay by milk vendors who sell them for slaughter at the end of the lactation period as they cannot afford to stall feed them until they calve again or to send them back to the districts. In such circumstances, any measures which facilitated the rapid transport of cattle at reasonable rates would furnish a valuable contribution to the solution of some of the problems connected with animal husbandry.

I was told the other day by a cattle dealer, who takes cattle regularly to Calcutta by train, that the number of casualties in the way is not negligible. I will give one more interesting fact and that too from the report of the Royal Commission on Agriculture: this appears at page 378, para 818:

"A point raised by the Imperial Dairy Expert was that the railways charged the same amount for the carriage of a newly born calf by passenger train as is charged for a full grown cow and that this constituted a hardship to the Indian cattle trade as Indian cows are useless as milkers unless accompanied by their calves. Newly born calves can take up but little space and we consider that a calf aged one month or under should not be charged for when travelling with its dam."

I make no comments. Of course, in the case of human beings, the rule is that up to the age of three no charge is made, and between three and twelve they charge half rates. I do not know why they charge double rates for a cow and a calf.

Mr. P. R. Rau (Financial Commissioner, Railways): The calf is not carried in the arms of the cow. (Laughter.)

Captain Rao Bahadur Chaudhri Lal Chand: A child of 12 years of age is also not so carried, Sir. While on the subject, I wish to point out that we cannot take full advantage of big forest reserves both in hill sides and in the plains if we do not get these transport facilities by railways. Fodder is scarce in some parts of the country and goes waste in another. Similarly, we cannot utilise green grass of forests unless our cattle are taken there at cheap rates. I have myself seen large areas in Rajputana where thousands of cattle can be fed for nothing. Not only this: I can quote a case where the railway authorities are guilty of unequal treatment between the rich tea planters and poor agriculturists. Oil seed cake is used by tea planters as fertiliser, while the same thing is used to feed cattle by up-country cattle breeders. If we examine the railway rates, we find that tea planters of Assam get them at very cheap rates as a concession, while we do not get any such mild treatment.

I hope I have made my case clear for a concession; and it is hoped that the Honourable Sir Joseph Bore will do us a good and kind turn by making some provision before he leaves charge of his high office. All of us here are anxious for rural uplift: but Government should understand that mere digging of pits for night-soil, putting some ventilation in our huts or the like will not help us. Raise our economic condition, and that will be the real uplift. I would, in this connection, make the following suggestions for the consideration of the Railway Board. These suggestions

are of a constructive nature, and I do so because generally the remark that is made from the Government-side is "Well, this is all criticism: no constructive suggestion has been made". My suggestions are:

- (1) Give concession rates for return of milk cattle from big towns at quarter the usual rate.
- (2) Give vendors passes to bring milk products to towns by entitling such people to travel on third class tickets with one and a half maunds of such produce.
- (3) Give a general concession for dairy products including ghee.
- (4) Give fodder concessions throughout the year and particularly during the lazy season.

Now, Sir, having said this, I will give the House one small story (Laughter), and that story illustrates the difficulties of the poor and ignorant agriculturists. Sir, there is a tract of land between Rohtak and Panipat. The whole of that tract is well irrigated and densely populated. There was no railway line here, and we had been pressing hard and asking the Punjab Government to connect that tract of land by means of a railway line. At first, proposals were made to construct an agricultural tramway. I was then on the Communications Board of the Punjab, and a survey was carried out. But when it was discovered that the line would prove a very profitable proposition, Government agreed to have a broad gauge line, and that line has been opened since. The estimates received from the officer who was deputed to prepare the estimates showed a return of nearly 16 per cent. on the investment. . . . (An Honourable Member: "What is the story?") Please have a little patience, the story is coming presently. (Laughter.) Now, when the railway line was actually constructed, the Engineer, in order to show economy, took the line straight without touching any village or any *Abadi*. There is a *pucca* parallel road running along the villages, but this railway line runs through cultivated fields without touching any *Abadi* or village, and as a matter of further economy, the railway authorities did not acquire any land for any approach road from the intervening stations to the *pucca* roads, so that there is no way now leading to these stations by which goods could be carried for loading and unloading purposes. In 1927, there was scarcity of fodder in these parts, and the Punjab Government gave very liberal concession rates. An agriculturist belonging to a village near about one of these railway stations went to Montgomery and purchased four wagon loads of fodder and booked them to his place. It transpired then that in the intervening stations there were no second lines, nor was there any arrangement for either stopping the wagons or detaching them from the railways. So those four wagons were held up at the nearest junction station, that is, at Rohtak. The man went to the station master to ask for delivery of the fodder he had despatched. The station master telegraphed to the junction station and told the man that the wagons had been unloaded some days ago at Rohtak and that his fodder was lying at the station yard, and he could take delivery of his stuff from there. Of course, the Government were also interested in this, because three-fourths of the fare were paid by the Government, and the Deputy Commissioner was issuing certificates to the effect that it was properly delivered. Now, this man, I mean the man who had sent the fodder, came to the station and asked the station master when his wagon was going to be sent to the station of destination. The station master said: "Oh, no, it cannot be sent there, because there is no place

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to discharge it and he must take the delivery at Rohtak". The man said "I would not have brought it if I had known this. But as there is no facility for the delivery of my fodder at my village, I have to take delivery here". The result was, that there was a dispute between the two parties, and this man reported the matter to the Deputy Commissioner. The Deputy Commissioner asked the Tahsildar to see that justice was done to the poor man. In the meantime, the booking clerk or the delivery clerk, whoever was responsible for handing over delivery of the fodder, began to negotiate with the man and asked him to pay Rs. 50 as demurrage charge, and a bargain was struck for Rs. 20 after a long discussion. Mind you, the money went not to Government or to the railway, but it went to the pockets of common funds of the railway staff there. The poor man paid Rs. 20. (An Honourable Member: "Time, Sir.") Wait, let me finish this. The man paid Rs. 20. (Another Honourable Member: "Finish the story please.") The man paid Rs. 20 to the delivery clerk, and as is generally the case, after a bribe has been paid, they always become friends, and begin to trust each other. (Laughter.) The money was paid in the evening after the office had been closed, and the Chowkidar was asked to allow him to take delivery of the fodder. The actual taking of receipt was deferred, till next morning, as they never realised that goods will be despatched in one night. This consignor was very clever. He at once sold the fodder to a private dealer, and the fodder was removed that very night. The next morning the goods clerk wanted this man to produce the receipt, but the man demanded delivery of his fodder. There was a quarrel between the two parties. On the other hand, the Tahsildar was pressing for the delivery of goods saying that unless the goods were delivered that day, the goods clerk would be challanned. Railway people were in a fix, and they naturally came to me (Laughter), not to consult me as a lawyer (Laughter), but as an agriculturist and as a fellow Jat. They thought I should intervene and settle matters between them. (A Voice: "How much did you charge?") (Laughter.) I am coming to it presently. I did not charge anything for this, but I had taken good fees from him, when this man had been challanned in a murder case before. (An Honourable Member: "What did you charge?") (Another Honourable Member: "Did he get the fodder? Probably he got it.") Anyway, there was no occasion for charging anything. I asked the man to be quite frank and tell me whether he actually took delivery of the goods. He admitted having taken delivery of the fodder and having paid so much to the clerk. The other parties also admitted having taken the money from him, and the result was that, after these negotiations, the money was returned to the man and this man was asked to return the receipt, but he would not return it. He said he must have his Rs. 20 more. (Laughter.) He said: "I paid Rs. 20 at the other end to secure wagons, and they had to pay that amount also before they secured the receipt." This, in brief, is the story. I think, so far as the working of the line is concerned, this is a very good example. His Excellency the Governor of the Punjab, when opening the line, said that the agriculturist would benefit by the line, but as there are no facilities for transport of goods at those stations, the working is very defective. Then, there is another thing which is a source of trouble. . . .

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member's time is up now.

Captain Rao Bahadur Chaudhri Lal Chand: May I have two minutes more?

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Only one minute more.

Captain Rso Bahadar Ghankri Lal Chand: Sir, the working of the passenger traffic on this line is also unique. The train always leaves Panipat half an hour late and always reaches Rohtak half an hour late. My friend, Mr. Sham Lal, will bear me out, that the trains leave half an hour late and reach Rohtak half an hour late, and it is always shown as the right time. I was once coming from Karnal and this train was delayed beyond time at Panipat. I asked the railway people why they were delaying as there was no other train for which they had to wait. They said: "We can make good the delay in the way," and it started half an hour after the scheduled time. But what did I see? When the train was in motion, the guard held out his hand and shouted: "Right time," "Right time", and the response from the station also was "Right time". "Right time." This happened at every station, and the train, when it reached Rohtak was supposed to have arrived "right time". This is the sort of working of passenger trains we have on that section. The place is not far off, and I invite my Honourable friend, Mr. Rau, to have a look at the working of this line. To add to our difficulties, there is no ballast on this line. If the last year's floods did so much damage in Rohtak town, it was mostly due to the breaking of the line, as breaches were caused in the line, because water had accumulated on one side. Sir, this is Government line. When lines are constructed there, they do not build enough culverts for proper drainage. That was the chief cause of Rohtak floods last year. With these few words, I move my motion.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Cut motion moved:

"That the demand under the head 'Working Expenses—Expenses of the Traffic Department' be still further reduced by Rs. 100."

An Honourable Member: Let the question be now put.

Prof. N. G. Ranga (Guntur *cum* Nellore: Non-Muhammadan Rural). Although one gathers the impression from the speech made by the Honourable the Mover of the cut that, after all, it is not really a very difficult matter for the agriculturists to go on paying the freight and other charges that are being levied upon the conveyance of their grains, of their pulses and of their other agricultural produce and also cattle, it is a fact, a miserable fact, in this country that agriculturists are suffering and have been suffering to a very much greater extent than either the coal mine owners or the shipowners or the piece-goods merchants or any of the other big people who are able to make their profit in lakhs and crores of rupees and not by few rupees and annas as is the case with the agriculturists. It is a fact that the agriculturists in this country have been paying and were paying, during the year 1933-34, about as much as one-third of the total revenues that the Government of India were able to derive from the railways on goods traffic. Out of the Rs. 59.67 crores which it derived out of the goods traffic, as much as 20 crores were contributed by the agriculturists on the transport of their own commodities, such as rice, sugar, tobacco, oilseeds, etc. All these commodities have given them an increased revenue, more than they had given during the previous year. The Honourable the Commerce Member had the hardihood the other day to maintain that he would rather give measurable, direct and definite amount of assistance to any of these agriculturists or to any group of these agriculturists, than give indefinite, indirect assistance, that is, by not lowering the freight charges upon the transport of agricultural produce. He was prepared to devote more than twenty minutes of his reply on the first motion

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in order to satisfy and if possible to persuade the European Members of this House over their grievance about the transport of coal from one part of India to another part of India and so on. But he was not prepared to say anything definite, to say anything fresh, to say anything constructive as to what he proposed to do to help the agriculturists in this country either in their capacity as third class passengers or in their capacity as those interested in the transport of agricultural produce. All that he was prepared to do was to simply ask us to refer to his speeches, speeches made in 1934, 1933, 1932, and so on. And this reminds me of the Hindu priest, Muhammadan priest or Christian priest, who always respectably refer us to their religious doctrines as propounded in the Ramayana, the Koran, or the Bible. Similarly, if you go to Sir Joseph Bhore for his advice, or for his counsel, or for his view, about anything, he would refer us to Sir Joseph Bhore 1934, Sir Joseph Bhore 1933, Sir Joseph Bhore 1932, and so on.

Going into these freights in detail a bit, we find that so far as grains and oilseeds are concerned, the highest rate charged per mile per ton is 25 pies in one line, whilst the lowest is 6.46 pies in another line. Whereas Government charges for coal for home lines are the highest being 5.98 pies and the lowest 1.80 pies, as regards coal for foreign lines the maximum is 7.38 pies, while the minimum is 2.43 pies. For other commodities it is 23.9 pies and the minimum 7.47 pies. The Government of India have been prepared, and rightly, I dare say, to make concessions in railway freights for transport of coal, because Europeans and Indians who are well organised and who are rich and are able to make their voice felt on the Treasury Benches, are interested in it, and the Government are prepared to charge the maximum of 5.98 pies only per mile, whereas for grain and oilseeds, in which the unorganised and illiterate and poor peasants are interested, they are pleased to charge the highest rate of 25 pies whilst the lowest is as much as 6.46 pies. Therefore, I submit that it is time that this House took this matter very seriously and looked at it, not in the flip-pant fashion as my Honourable friend, the Mover of the cut, would have liked to look at it at the close of his speech, but looked at it seriously and tried to devise the best manner in which we can influence this Government to lower the railway freights on the transport of agricultural produce. But there is always this difficulty. We can only explain our difficulties here. We can only voice the feelings, the sufferings of the people here. But what is it that we can do after that, if the Honourable Sir Joseph Bhore does not think it fit to make the necessary concessions? In Southern India, the growers of paddy and other agricultural produce have been clamouring for a suitable reduction in the freight charged on agricultural produce, and the only answer that we have been able to get, the only concession that we have been able to gain from the Madras Government as well as the Railway Authorities has been a paltry concession in freights that are charged upon the conveyance of paddy from Trichinopoly and Tanjore to Ceylon and nothing else. What about the conveyance of other agricultural commodities all over India, between one station and another station? What is usually asked for is that the freight charges that are levied upon agricultural produce exported to places outside India should be lowered. But very few people have been at pains to explain to the Government of India as well as to the public that three-fourths of our agricultural produce really do not leave the shores of India, but is consumed in India by millions of people. From one part of India to another there is a tremendous amount of trade going on, a tremendous amount of conveyance of goods is going on, and it is on this that the major revenues of the

Government of India from railways are derived. Therefore, it is on this section of our trade that the Government should really lower the freights, and I suggest to Government, as well as to Honourable Members, that they should, at least from now, try to show some concession to the peasants, to show some consideration for the needs of the peasants, and not dismiss the question with a few stories, in a flippant fashion, and with a nice laugh, and then satisfy themselves that they have done all they can. One thing I can tell the Treasury Benches is that if the peasants' grievances are not redressed in time, whether long before Sir Joseph Bhore lays down the seals of his office before His Excellency the Governor General or a little later on,—if Government do not care to redress the grievances of the peasants, if this House does not care to concern itself about the sufferings of the peasants, there is bound to be a revolution in this country,—a revolution that will want to get rid of this sort of Government, you may call it Satanic, or something else, but this form, this sort of Government, with a view to getting, not the zamindari Government, not the oligarchical Government, not the Maharajahdiraja Government or the Maharaja Kumar Government, but the Government of the peasants and the workers, and that day will soon come, not by peaceful means alone, but by any means that may be available to the peasants if their grievances are not redressed in time properly and fully.

Mr. Frank D'Souza: I explained yesterday how we try to keep uniform 4 P.M. rates on the railways. Today the discussion has taken on another aspect, and I am glad of this, as it gives me an opportunity of saying something in reply to my Honourable friend, Chaudhri Lal Chand. I hope I will be able to satisfy him and the House that railways are doing what they can to assist in the free movement of agricultural produce. The term "agricultural produce" covers a very wide range of commodities, beginning with a cheap commodity like fodder and coming up to a valuable commodity like cotton. Now, it is obvious that if the rates for all agricultural commodities were on the same basis, they would have to be sufficiently high to produce adequate revenue, revenue at least equivalent to what the railways are earning at present. That would mean that the rates for fodder would be very much higher than they are at present and the rates for cotton would be substantially lower than what the railways now charge. Taking fodder as one of the commodities specifically referred to by my Honourable friend, Chaudhri Lal Chand, and particularly also as he comes from the North Western Railway area, and referred to movements on that line, I may say that the rates for fodder on that railway are about the lowest that are charged on any railway. I do not think I would be doing him an injustice if I were to say that he was not quite sure what the rate for fodder on the N. W. Railway is at the moment. The rate that the North Western Railway is authorised to charge for fodder is the first class rate, 38 pie per maund per mile. The actual rate that they charge is 20 or one-fifth of a pie for the first hundred miles, and as the distance increases, the rate per maund per mile decreases. This scale of rates is one of the lowest charged on any railway for fodder. It is definitely a concession rate, and, if my Honourable friend Chaudhri Lal Chand was aware of it, he would perhaps not have asked for a further concession to be given. Then, again, during periods of fodder scarcity, at the request of Local Governments, railways,—and by railways I mean not only the North Western Railway, the East Indian Railway and other State-managed lines, but also Company-managed railways,—introduce special rates which are

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on a wagon mile basis, something like $3\frac{1}{2}$ annas per wagon per mile. The consignee in these cases pays only a small proportion of the charge, the balance is paid by the Local Government. But the $3\frac{1}{2}$ anna rate which is charged is in many cases a reduction on the ordinary rates that railways allow for the movement of fodder. My Honourable friend, Chaudhri Lal Chand, also referred to the rates for manures. I wonder how many there are who realise that railways carry a maund of manure ten miles for one pie. This rate of one tenth of a pie per maund per mile is the minimum that railways are authorised to charge, and is definitely a concession, the rate which they could have charged being '38 pie per mile per maund. Here, again, is a concession which people are not generally aware of when they ask for a concession to be allowed for the carriage of manures.

Then, my Honourable friend referred to dairy products. That, again, covers a very wide field. Milk and butter are dairy products which are carried by passenger trains at half or a little over half the ordinary rates that apply for other parcels traffic. Railways have gone further, and, in some cases, charge even lower rates than those for dairy products.

To assist agriculture generally, several railways are now carrying all kinds of seeds, seed sugar-cane, seedlings, cuttings and plants, intended for agricultural purposes at rates that are one-fourth the ordinary parcels rate. If a wagon load were booked with this kind of traffic and carried at one-fourth the parcel rate, it would be carried at a rate below what it would cost the railway to haul the wagon. It is just because in practice the wagon contains other articles chargeable at higher rates that railways can afford to carry these seedlings and seeds at rates as low as one-fourth the ordinary parcel rate.

Then, Sir, my Honourable friend also had something to say as regards the carriage of live stock. He referred to the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Agriculture. Every one of these recommendations was examined very carefully. They looked simple enough as they appeared in the Royal Commission's report, but the consideration of some of them took, it may surprise the House, about two years before decisions were finally arrived at. Speaking from memory, I may indicate briefly the action taken on some of those recommendations. One referred to the desirability of holding up live stock wagons *en route* to enable cattle to be rested, fed and watered. Railways were asked to consider this recommendation and the Railway Board know that sympathetic consideration was given to it, but general opinion was against its acceptance. Railway journeys are long enough as they are, and it would be unfair to the owners of the cattle and might amount to cruelty to the animals to keep them longer on the road by holding up wagons at stations *en route*. Another recommendation of the Royal Commission had reference to improving the type of wagon used for the carriage of cattle. Normally, the type of wagon used for the carriage of cattle has wooden floors. To the extent to which those wagons are available, they are generally used for the carriage of cattle by goods trains. When, however, it becomes necessary to carry live stock by passenger train, the position is slightly different. Here the comparatively greater speed at which these trains run make it necessary to use a special type of vehicle called a horse-box. The number of animals that can be put into a horse-box is less than the number that can be put into an ordinary wagon carried by goods train. It is inevitable, however, that the charge for carriage by passenger train should be

greater than the charge for carriage by goods train. But the charge for carriage by passenger train is nothing very substantial. It is the same as for horses, it is true, but, for a whole horse-box occupied by cattle, the rate is for the first animal three annas a mile for the first five hundred miles and two annas a mile for the additional distance beyond five hundred miles, and one anna per mile for each additional animal after the first. But there is no such limitation for the carriage of animals by goods train. Here, irrespective of the number of animals that can be loaded in a wagon,—and a maximum is fixed only in order to prevent cruelty to animals in transit,—the rate generally is four annas per wagon per mile, when booked from stations on a broad-gauge line, and three and a half annas per wagon per mile when booked from stations on a metre-gauge line. Railways have always recognised the desirability of assisting in the transport of cattle, particularly to large centres such as Bombay.

The special point to which my Honourable friend, Chaudhri Lal Chand, referred was as regards dry cattle required to be returned to upcountry stations, which had also been considered carefully. Prior to this examination, there had been a reduction in the rate from five annas per wagon per mile to the existing rate of four annas per wagon per mile. It will be recognised that there must be some limit to the extent to which railways can reduce their rates, and, I submit, Sir, that a rate of four annas a mile, which approximates to a little above the average cost to railways of carrying a goods wagon per mile by goods train, is not an unreasonable rate in fact, it is a concession which those who advocate the grant of a concession would recognise as reasonable.

Another point, Sir, which my Honourable friend, Chaudhri Lal Chand, made had reference to the number of casualties amongst cattle when carried for long journeys. His information on this point, he said, was based on the report of one cattle-owner. Well, Sir, I have been sufficiently long in an office where information of this kind comes in quickly, and must confess to not having heard yet of a single case in which cattle have been killed *en route* owing to anything connected with railway working, (Mr. R. S. Sarma: "Unless they are run over")—barring accidents.

Another point he made was that it was unreasonable to charge calves as if they were full-grown animals. My Honourable friend was not quite right on the point. One calf not exceeding three and a half feet high at the shoulder when accompanying its parent animal is carried free of charge. (Hear, hear.)

Then, my Honourable friend, very kindly, before concluding his speech said he was going to offer some constructive suggestions. I was very interested, Sir, in hearing that constructive suggestions would be forthcoming, because it is not very often, Sir, that we get them from the non-official side. It may not be their business to make such suggestions, and it may be admitted that it is for the official side, if I may say so, to consider, with the comparatively wider sources of information they have and from their own experience, what line of action is the best to adopt, but constructive suggestions coming from any source are always very welcome. My friend's constructive suggestions, however, did not go beyond suggesting that we should give concessions. Well, that is scarcely constructive. I will take the first. He proposed that we should give concession rates at one-fourth the general rate. I take that to apply to fodder. As I explained just now, the ordinary rate for fodder is '88, but

[Mr. Frank D'Souza.]

the actual rate charged is substantially below that. The second constructive suggestion was that vendors should be given passes to bring milk. Now, my Honourable friend did not suggest between what points, at what stations and in what areas, such passes should be given. But we do know that for the carriage of market produce in some areas certain railways do allow a larger amount of luggage to be taken by a passenger holding an ordinary third class ticket. If this is what my Honourable friend suggested

Captain Rao Bahadur Chaudhri Lal Chand: Yes—that they should be allowed to take sixty seers on a third class ticket.

Mr. Frank D'Souza: I take his suggestion as meaning “not definitely sixty seers, but something more than what is normally allowed on a third class ticket, which is only 25 seers”.

Captain Rao Bahadur Chaudhri Lal Chand: It is fifteen.

Mr. Frank D'Souza: I beg your pardon—it is twenty-five.

Then, Sir, he asked for cheaper rates for agricultural produce, and my Honourable friend, Prof. Ranga, elaborated that point. He particularly stressed the need for cheaper freights for agricultural produce. But I must confess I was not able to follow the figures he gave. As far as I could gather, what he was saying was that railways carry their own materials and materials for other railways at rates that are substantially below those charged for ordinary public traffic. Well, Sir, there is nothing unreasonable or wrong in that. Railways carry their employees free of charge when they are on duty, even when this duty is not connected with the train. What is there wrong, therefore, in railways carrying their own materials free? But they do not, in point of fact, carry them free. In order to prevent abuses arising, railways have prescribed, for the carriage of their materials, charges that approximate to the actual cost of carriage, so that, from that point of view, my Honourable friend, Prof. Ranga, can have no grievance against the railways' policy in the matter of railway freight. But, Sir, I should imagine Prof. Ranga had more in mind the conditions on the South Indian Railway. He referred, rather deprecatingly, if I may say so, to what the South Indian Railway had done in the case of the freight rates for rice. Memories are short in these matters, but a little investigation would have shown that the South Indian Railway, when dealing with the question of a reduction in the freight rates for rice about two years ago, went a long way to meet the public demand in this matter. The Tanjore Rice Merchants' Association were not quite satisfied with what the South Indian Railway had been previously doing, and asked for the matter to be referred to the Railway Rates Advisory Committee for investigation. This was done. The Committee went to South India for their enquiry, but after one or two hearings the Rice Merchants' Association dropped further proceedings.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member has already exceeded his time.

Mr. Frank D'Souza: Thank you, Sir. Then I have nothing more to say.

Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad: May I know the reply of the Honourable Member to Captain Lal Chand's story? (Hear, hear.)

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Mr. Ebrahim Haroon Jaffer.

Mr. Ahmed Ebrahim Haroon Jaffer (Bombay Central Division: Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I rise to support the motion so ably moved by my Honourable friend, Captain Lal Chand. Before I proceed to fully support him and his arguments, let me first say, Sir, that I hope all those Honourable Members who are sitting on the other side of the House will realise, as I do, that in fact the nominated Members are not after all to be described as electrified dummies—a charge which was levelled against them the other day. After hearing the speech of Captain Lal Chand, you must have been convinced of the force of his arguments, and I congratulate him on the excellent speech which he has just delivered. Sir, we have been complaining from this side of the House for the last four years that Government have done nothing to raise the price level of agricultural products. They have done nothing to improve our trade. It is a characteristic fact that our exports and our volume of trade have conspicuously gone down. Our export last year was 146 crores compared with 311 crores in 1929. The volume of trade has also gone down. Last year, it was 361 crores compared to 552 crores in 1929. Both our exports and volume of trade cannot increase unless the Government give facilities for our raw products to move about freely in this country. There is a great handicap just now on account of heavy railway freight. Every agricultural country provides facilities for agricultural products to move on easy conditions to the port and to other markets in the country. These facilities do not however exist in India to the great misfortune of Indians. Our Railway Department thinks first and last of its own income and takes very little into account of prosperity and trades and the prosperity of the people. They forget that the prosperity of the people will ultimately affect the prosperity of the railways. People cannot travel if they have no money to pay the fare. It is, therefore, desirable that the railways in India should keep the free movements of the agricultural classes even if it is done at direct loss. I am confident this direct loss will soon be made up by the additional traffic which the railways will get when the people become more prosperous. In this connection, I wish to point out that the cost of transport of wheat from Australia to Calcutta is less than the cost of transport from Lyallpur to Calcutta. How will it then be possible for the Punjab to compete with the Australian market in Calcutta? Though I do not represent the Punjab, I am sure, this is a great grievance of the Punjab. Again, we are helping the sugar industry at a great sacrifice of the Indian tax-payers. Our income from sugar used to be in the neighbourhood of eight crores before protection was given. The income has now dwindled to insignificant figures. It is, therefore, desirable that our sugar should be able to move about freely, so that we may be able to establish ourselves and compete with Java even after the protection is withdrawn. The freight on raw hides is exorbitant as compared to other commodities, and this is a normal principle as the shipping companies do not make a huge difference in hides and skins with other raw products. The most surprising thing is that if you send 100 or 200 hides from Cawnpore to Calcutta, the rate charged becomes about the double of what it costs if you send a full wagon of 2,000 pieces. This means that the small merchants are ruined and small trade cannot exist at all. In the

[Ahmed Ebrahim Haroon Jaffer.]

case of the wet salted hides, this story is still more deplorable, as the charges on wet salted hides are double the charges on ordinary or air dry hides. Sir, with these words, I support the motion.

Captain Rao Bahadur Chaudhri Lal Chand: Sir, I am grateful to the House for the unanimity with which this motion has been received and Honourable Members who have spoken from different Parties have shown their full sympathy. As I said in the beginning, the subject is a very wide one, and, in fact, it needed a whole day's debate to discuss a subject of this type.

Now, Sir, before I come to the points raised by my Honourable friend, Mr. D'Souza, in his reply, I have, in justice, one thing more to add to the story of trains running late. The question was asked by an Honourable friend of mine as to why I did not report this matter when they were running late and at every station they said that they were running to time. I brought this matter to the notice of the guard at one of the halting stations, and, as it was getting very late, the man went to the station master and brought me a tumbler full of pure milk. After taking that milk, it could not be expected that I should report against that staff. Sir, one point has been brought out by the Honourable Prof. Ranga very eloquently. He said that if you did not do justice to the agriculturists, the agriculturists would do justice to themselves, and an example of this has been found on this line itself. People were feeling some difficulty in the beginning in the matter of getting into the trains: sometimes the stoppages were irregular: sometimes the trains stopped at a station for half an hour and at other times they stopped only for a few minutes, and so on, and so forth. Therefore, there was some disagreement between the people and the railway employees on the side stations, but all these differences have been squared up. The house of one of the station masters was burgled once, and he was deprived of all his property, and, after that, people are allowed to travel without tickets.

Sir, most of the replies that have been given by the Honourable Mr. D'Souza remind me of the story of a man who climbed up a tree and somehow or other fell down and broke his legs. The man, instead of trying to go to the hospital, began to offer prayers. There was a companion of his who said: "Is this the time to offer prayers? Your leg has been broken and you say that God is merciful." He said: "No, I am praying, because it was not my neck that has been broken; and it was only my leg that has been broken." So the Honourable Mr. D'Souza says that these are the concessions we have given you: we could have imposed higher rates which we have not done. Sir, this reply cannot satisfy us. My Honourable friend referred to fodder concessions. Well, that is one of our complaints. Most of the burden of fodder concessions is borne by the general tax-payer in the provinces. In one year alone, I remember, in my district, the Punjab Government paid 17 lakhs of rupees for this fodder concession to the railway authorities. Was it not fair for the Railway Department to give up this amount? After all, it was a Government railway and it could have well borne this burden which was placed on the head of the general tax-payer. My Honourable friend has said that the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Agriculture were fully examined by them. But what conclusion did they arrive at? They arrived at the conclusion that it was in the interest of the cattle and cattle owners themselves that they should not be given

the concessions that have been proposed by the Royal Commission on Agriculture and that they should reach their destination as early as possible and that it was for this reason that the recommendation had not been accepted. Sir, I have no quarrel with them. If they think that it is a business concern, let them not give concessions. But I want one thing. When a Royal Commission on Agriculture had gone round the country and had examined these questions thoroughly before they made this recommendation, then, for God's sake, do not say that you are doing this in our own interest. I say you are doing it in your interest and not in our interest.

Mr. Frank D'Souza: I rise, Sir, to a point of personal explanation I might have added when I spoke that there is nothing to prevent the owner of the cattle from asking that the wagon carrying the cattle should be cut off at any station to rest the cattle. Railways have done that very often.

Captain Rao Bahadur Chaudhri Lal Chand: That was the complaint of the Royal Commission on Agriculture that the burden should not be put upon the owner of the cattle to ask the railway authorities. The railway authorities should not wait for him to make a request. As a matter of fact, the Royal Commission says that the railway authorities should themselves, of their own accord, detach the carriage after every 200 miles and give the cattle rest. That is what they said. Those people who deal in cattle know very well how much strain it is upon the cattle to be kept inside a small wagon—eight cattle or as you now say 16 cattle with their calves to be confined in that small compartment for so many days, that is really very cruel. I have seen cases where wagons have been detached at way-side stations and cattle are not allowed to come out. They remain there, because the station staff would not inform the cattle owners as to how long that stay was to be, and, therefore, even while the cattle are not travelling to their destination, they have to be kept in that black hole. Sir, may I ask my Honourable friend, Mr. D'Souza, whether they ever issued a communiqué informing the country that for these two reasons, in the interests of the cultivators themselves and in the interests of the cattle breeders themselves, they were not acting upon those recommendations of the Royal Commission on Agriculture. Sir, so far as I am aware, I never saw any such communiqué that the railway authorities had decided this in our interests. If there is any such communiqué, it is a sealed book to us.

Mr. Frank D'Souza: Sir, I believe in a publication that has been issued by the Department of Education, Health and Lands, the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Agriculture have been summarised, and against each one of those recommendations, is noted the action taken by Government; I believe in the case, the Honourable Member is referring to, the action taken has also been recorded.

Captain Rao Bahadur Chaudhri Lal Chand: As regards the recommendation of taking live stock by passenger trains, they have decided to continue the old custom. I submit, Sir, these cattle owners are very poor people. They are not organised. May I ask my Honourable friend, Mr. D'Souza, whether he would take polo ponies in such a condition as he is taking these milch cows and buffaloes. For polo ponies, they give every comfort and they take them by the most speedy trains, but the charges for their transport are nearly the same as those for milch cattle. My Honourable friend seems to have misunderstood one point. I wanted one-fourth of the ordinary rates for cattle that are to be returned from

[Captain Rao Bahadur Chaudhri Lal Chand.]

big towns to their own homes. To that my Honourable friend did not give any reply. I want that only one anna instead of four annas should be charged for their backward journey, and, for the onward journey, let them have five annas. We do not mind this, and let them make good their losses. Sir, that is all I have to say. I do admit that in the case of some of the articles that have been pointed out there are concessions, and, on the assurance that Government will do all that is possible to secure more concessions, I beg leave to withdraw the motion. But if no leave is granted for withdrawing my motion, then, I will have no option but to vote with the Opposition Members and for my motion.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Does the Honourable Member wish to withdraw his motion?

Captain Rao Bahadur Chaudhri Lal Chand: Yes, Sir. I beg leave to withdraw my motion.

(Leave was refused by the House.)

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The question is:

"That the demand under the head 'Working Expenses—Expenses of the Traffic Department' be still further reduced by Rs. 100."

The Assembly divided:

AYES—72.

Aaron, Mr. Samuel.
Abdullah, Mr. H. M.
Anev, Mr. M. S.
Asaf Ali, Mr. M.
Azhar Ali, Mr. Muhammad.
Ba Sri, U
Badi-uz-Zaman, Maulvi.
Bajoria, Babu Baijnath.
Banerjee, Dr. P. N.
Baqui, Mr. M. A.
Bardaloi, Srijut N. C.
Bhagavan Das, Dr.
Blutto, Mr. Nabi Baksh Illahi Baksh.
Chattopadhyaya, Mr. Amarendra Nath
Chettiar, Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam.
Chetty, Mr. Sami Vencatachalam.
Das, Mr. B.
Das, Mr. Basanta Kumar.
Das, Pandit Nilakantha.
Datta, Mr. Akhil Chandra.
Desai, Mr. Bhulabhai J.
DeSouza, Dr. F. X.
Ebrahim Haroon Jaffer, Mr. Ahmed.
Essak Sait, Mr. H. A. Sathar H.
Fakir Chand, Mr.
Gadgil, Mr. N. V.
Ghiasuddin, Mr. M.
Ghulam Bhik Nairang, Syed.
Giri, Mr. V. V.
Govind Das, Seth.
Gupta, Mr. Ghansham Singh.
Hosmani, Mr. S. K.
Iswar Saran, Munshi.
Jedhe, Mr. K. M.
Jogendra Singh, Sirdar.
Joshi, Mr. N. M.
Khan Sahib, Dr.
Lahiri Chaudhury, Mr. D. K.

Lal Chand, Captain Rao Bahadur Chaudhri.
Lalchand Navalrai, Mr.
Maitra, Pandit Lakshmi Kanta.
Mangal Singh, Sardar.
Mudaliar, Mr. C. N. Muthuranga.
Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi, Qazi.
Muhammad Nauman, Mr.
Murtuza Sahib Bahadur, Maulvi Syed.
Nageswara Rao, Mr. K.
Paliwal, Pandit Sri Krishna Dutta.
Pant, Pandit Govind Ballabh.
Raghubir Narayan Singh, Choudhri.
Rajan, Dr. T. S. S.
Raju, Mr. P. S. Kumaraswami.
Ranga, Prof. N. G.
Saksena, Mr. Mohan Lal.
Sant Singh, Sardar.
Satyamurti, Mr. S.
Sham Lal, Mr.
Shaukat Ali, Maulana.
Sherwani, Mr. T. A. K.
Siddique Ali Khan, Khan Sahib Nawab.
Singh, Mr. Deep Narayan.
Singh, Mr. Ram Narayan.
Sinha, Mr. Anugrah Narayan.
Sinha, Mr. Satya Narayan.
Som, Mr. Surya Kumar.
Sri Prakasa, Mr.
Thein Maung, Dr.
Thein Maung, U
Umar Aly Shah, Mr.
Varma, Mr. B. B.
Vissanji, Mr. Mathuradas.
Ziauddin Ahmad, Dr.

NOES—41.

Abdul Aziz, Khan Bahadur Mian.
 Ahmad Nawaz Khan, Major Nawab.
 Allah Bakhsh Khan Tiwana, Khan
 Bahadur Nawab Malik.
 Ayyar, Rao Bahadur A. A.
 Venkatarama.
 Bajpai, Mr. G. S.
 Bhoré, The Honourable Sir Joseph.
 Buss, Mr. L. C.
 Chatarji, Mr. J. M.
 Chow, Mr. A. G.
 Craik, The Honourable Sir Henry.
 Dalal, Dr. R. D.
 D'Souza, Mr. F.
 Drake, Mr. D. H. C.
 Ghuznavi, Mr. A. H.
 Sidney, Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry.
 Graham Sir Lancelot.
 Grigg, The Honourable Sir James.
 Hockenhull, Mr. F. W.
 Hossack, Mr. W. B.
 Hudson, Sir Leslie.
 James, Mr. F. E.

Kirpalani, Mr. Hiranand Khushiram.
 Lindsay, Sir Darcy.
 Metcalfe, Mr. H. A. F.
 Milligan, Mr. J. A.
 Monteath, Mr. J.
 Mukerjee, Mr. N. R.
 Mukherjee, Rai Bahadur Sir Satya
 Charan.
 Nayar, Mr. C. Govindan.
 Noyce, The Honourable Sir Frank.
 Owen, Mr. L.
 Raisman, Mr. A. J.
 Rajah, Rao Bahadur M. C.
 Rau, Mr. P. R.
 Sarma, Mr. R. S.
 Scott, Mr. J. Ramsay.
 Scott, Mr. W. I.
 Sircar, The Honourable Sir
 Nripendra.
 Sloan, Mr. T.
 Swithinbank, Mr. B. W.
 Tottenham, Mr. G. R. F.

The motion was adopted.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Does the Honourable Member, Mr. Sarma, wish to move his cut motion? There are barely 14 minutes left.

Mr. R. S. Sarma: Sir, may I ask you one thing as a matter of information? The object of my cut is not so much to censure Government, as to raise issues for which I want to ask Government for a statement of their future policy in regard to this matter. As such, I beg to request you, Sir, to tell me whether it is possible to ask the Government Benches to reply if I state my case very briefly in five minutes. If others catch your eye and occupy the floor.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member may move his motion, and then it will depend upon the Chair to see what is to be done. The Honourable the Railway Member will first move his demand.

DEMAND NO. 6-G.—WORKING EXPENSES—MISCELLANEOUS EXPENSES.

The Honourable Sir Joseph Bhoré: Sir, I move:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 4,18,00,000 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, 1936, in respect of 'Working Expenses—Miscellaneous Expenses'."

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Motion moved:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 4,18,00,000 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, 1936, in respect of 'Working Expenses—Miscellaneous Expenses'."

Wagon Policy of Government.

Mr. E. S. Sarma: Sir, I move:

“That the demand under the head ‘Working Expenses—Miscellaneous Expenses’ be reduced by one rupee”;

to discuss the wagon policy of Government. Sir, I will not suggest for a moment that it is unfair that I should have been asked to move this important cut at the fag-end of this debate with barely ten minutes to make out a case, but I would say that it is extremely unfair to the importance of the case that I should attempt in ten minutes to make out that case. The immediate provocation for this cut is the inclusion in the Railway Budget of an amount of money for re-opening what is called the Peninsular Locomotive Works for the purpose of manufacturing wagon under-frames. (Interruption.)

I would like interruptions to come from people whom I can understand.

With regard to this locomotive works, it has a big history behind it. There are three clear principles involved in the re-opening of this Peninsular Locomotive Works this year. The first is the oft-discussed question of unfair and uneconomic State competition with private enterprise: we had a lot of discussion about it and we had the opinions of Members with socialistic inclinations who had something to say about it only yesterday. There is the other aspect that the re-opening of this locomotive works is not going to be economical to the railways and as such it is against the interests of the tax-payers. The third point and the most important point is that the re-opening of this locomotive works will deal a great blow to the existing wagon manufacturing industry in the country.

The history of the wagon manufacture in this country, though of recent date, has been chequered—a history which is not, I am afraid, very edifying to the Government of India. If I had the time at my disposal, I would have given briefly the history of the wagon industry in this country. In the year 1916, when we were in the midst of the War, the Government of India were cut off from all sources of supply from European countries. There was a great shortage of wagons and Government wanted a large number of wagons for the purposes of movement of goods. They immediately entered into a correspondence with the engineering firms and the Indian Engineering Association in 1916: the Indian Engineering Association were the official spokesman of those concerns, and, as a result of that correspondence, they had a conference between the Railway Board and the representatives of the Indian Engineering Association. The Railway Board put it to the Association that they should undertake the manufacture of wagons in this country and Government would support them. The Association said that wagons could only be ordered by railways, and, therefore, if they started new concerns or put special plant in the existing concerns, they could not do so until Government assured them of a steady and continuous flow of orders spread over a number of years, that the orders must be permanent: it must be a settled figure every year and it must be continued for a long period of years, so that they might stand on their feet and not continue as losing concerns. Government agreed, but the Indian Engineering Association, with a knowledge of how certain other promises in the past by Government were treated, said that unless Government issued a communiqué guaranteeing certain number of wagons every year, and that for a certain number of years, they would not be able to undertake this industry: and, as a result of that, the Government of India

issued a communiqué on the 18th March, 1918, in which they said that the Government of India had come to a decision that, if new industries were started for the purpose of manufacturing wagons in this country, the Government of India would give annually an order of three thousand wagons for a period of ten years. That guarantee was repeated very often. The Commerce Member, Sir George Barnes, reiterated it in many of his speeches in this Assembly. As a result of this communiqué, the Indian Standard Wagon Company was floated with a capital of about a crore of rupees, Indians and Europeans subscribing. It was floated solely on the strength of this guarantee. Along with this also another communiqué was issued by the Government which is, I think, of present interest to Members of this House, because there have been questions in this House only yesterday as to why the Government of India should not undertake to build locomotives in this country. Another communiqué was issued by the Government of India in which they said that if anybody started locomotive works in this country, they would guarantee to buy four hundred locomotives every year. On the strength of that guarantee and of that Government communiqué, the Peninsular Locomotive Works was started. . .

Mr. P. R. Rau Will my Honourable friend quote the date of that communiqué?

Mr. R. S. Sarma: Following the example which he often does at question time, I will supply the Honourable Member with the date afterwards (Laughter). . . .

Mr. P. R. Rau: May I suggest the reason is that there is no such communiqué?

Mr. R. S. Sarma: There is a communiqué: it has been quoted by Commerce Members in their speeches as the locomotive communiqué. On the strength of that communiqué, this locomotive works was started. After that was started, the Government of India issued another communiqué in 1924, in which they said: "We cancel the previous communiqués: we cannot guarantee the number of orders that we promised in the previous two communiqués." (Interruption.) We have lost so much time today in discussing cattle breeding and cattle feeding that I would like no further waste of time. I think my friends from Bombay who were interested at that time in the Peninsular Locomotive Works know all about it: I think Sir Cowasji Jehangir may know something about it. . . .

Sir Cowasji Jehangir (Bombay City: Non-Muhammadan Urban): Nothing at all.

Mr. R. S. Sarma: There are some Members of this very House who took part in this House in 1928 in a debate on this subject and one of them is sitting on my right—my Honourable friend, Sir Darcy Lindsay. When the Government found that because of their promises the Indian Standard Wagon Company and the Peninsular Locomotive Works invested capital and entered on that venture, the Government offered to the Peninsular Locomotive Works, as they were under a moral obligation to them: "On the strength of our guarantee, you put up the works, we are now prepared to buy it from you", and they paid half the price to the Company and they bought it. The Standard Wagon Company refused to be bought.

[Mr. R. S. Sarma.]

It is very difficult, within the space of these two minutes remaining, to give a history of this transaction or its implications. (Interruption.) I am not at all afraid of interruptions, and I am not going to appeal for courtesy: but I will ask your permission, Sir, to allow me to hit back when I am hit. This is a matter in which all of us are vitally interested, in pleading for the Indian wagon industry in which many Indians are shareholders; and now the opening of this Peninsular Locomotive Works, as it is found in the budget demands of the railways, will affect that industry and many people will suffer if they start manufacturing underframes as they threaten to do. There are four or five firms that are manufacturing wagons in this country—Burn and Co., the Indian Standard Wagon Co., Braithwaite and Co., and Jessop and Co. . . .

Mr. B. Das (Orissa Division: Non-Muhammadan): Now, we understand.

Mr. R. S. Sarma: Their total capacity is about 8,000 wagons a year and Government are now taking only about 4,000 wagons a year. Therefore, the only alternative means of keeping the plant employed, when they have not got sufficient orders from the Government, is to make underframes: and if Government start to prepare these underframes in railway workshops, the result will be that some of these works, at any rate, will suffer enormously. That is my point. . . .

Pandit Nilakantha Das (Orissa Division: Non-Muhammadan): Does the Honourable Member want the Government to stop their works?

Mr. R. S. Sarma: Yes. They have to stop because of the promises and pledges which they have given on the floor of this House and which I would have read out, if I had the time. In August, 1923, the Railway Board re-stated their attitude in clear language:

"It is the policy of the Government to restrict railway workshops to their primary function of dealing with the repairs and maintenance of stock and equipment of the railways.....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 the Government to keep the amount of such work to a minimum and particularly where it can be done by private firms."

The intention and language of this pronouncement is unmistakably clear.

But Government may say: "We have paid the money: why should we keep the works idle?" The Honourable Member, Mr. DeSouza, asked if we had any constructive suggestions to make. I will make a constructive suggestion which will not only keep this concern alive, but keep alive the capital Government have invested in this concern. There has been a demand on the floor of the House that locomotives required for use in this country should be built in India. I say, let the Peninsular Locomotive Works be used for the purpose of making locomotives, and not underframes.

(It being Five of the Clock.)

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Order, order. The Chair does not propose to put the cut motion that has just been moved, because there has been no discussion on it.

The question is:

"That a reduced sum not exceeding Rs. 12,49,990 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, 1936, in respect of 'Miscellaneous Expenditure'."

The motion was adopted.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The question is:

"That a reduced sum not exceeding Rs. 8,65,24,900 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, 1936, in respect of 'Working Expenses—Maintenance of Structural Works'."

The motion was adopted.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The question is:

"That a reduced sum not exceeding Rs. 10,74,19,700 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, 1936, in respect of 'Working Expenses—Expenses of the Traffic Department'."

The motion was adopted.

DEMAND No. 2—AUDIT.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The question is:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 13,85,000 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, 1936, in respect of 'Audit'."

The motion was adopted.

DEMAND No. 4—REFUNDS.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The question is:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 12,00,000 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, 1936, in respect of 'Refunds'."

The motion was adopted.

DEMAND No. 5—PAYMENTS TO INDIAN STATES AND COMPANIES.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The question is:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 3,46,25,000 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, 1936, in respect of 'Payments to Indian States and Companies'."

The motion was adopted.

DEMAND No. 6-B—WORKING EXPENSES—MAINTENANCE AND SUPPLY OF
LOCOMOTIVE POWER.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The question is:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 16,92,60,000 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, 1936, in respect of 'Working Expenses—Maintenance and Supply of Locomotive Power'."

The motion was adopted.

DEMAND No. 6-C—WORKING EXPENSES—MAINTENANCE OF CARRIAGE AND
WAGON STOCK.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The question is:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 5,99,50,000 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, 1936, in respect of 'Working Expenses—Maintenance of Carriage and Wagon Stock'."

The motion was adopted.

DEMAND No. 6-D—WORKING EXPENSES—MAINTENANCE OF FERRY STEAMERS
AND HARBOURS.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The question is:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 28,70,000 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, 1936, in respect of 'Working Expenses—Maintenance of Ferry Steamers and Harbours'."

The motion was adopted.

DEMAND No. 6-F—WORKING EXPENSES—EXPENSES OF GENERAL DEPART-
MENTS.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The question is:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 4,73,40,000 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, 1936, in respect of 'Working Expenses—Expenses of General Departments'."

The motion was adopted.

DEMAND No. 6-G—WORKING EXPENSES—MISCELLANEOUS EXPENSES.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The question is:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 4,18,00,000 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, 1936, in respect of 'Working Expenses—Miscellaneous Expenses'."

The motion was adopted.

DEMAND No. 6-H.—WORKING EXPENSES—ELECTRIC SERVICE DEPARTMENT.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The question is:

“That a sum not exceeding Rs. 1,22,75,000 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, 1936, in respect of ‘Working Expenses—Electric Service Department’.”

The motion was adopted.

DEMAND No. 7—WORKING EXPENSES—APPROPRIATION TO DEPRECIATION FUND.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The question is:

“That a sum not exceeding Rs. 13,28,00,000 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, 1936, in respect of ‘Working Expenses—Appropriation to Depreciation Fund’.”

The motion was adopted.

DEMAND No. 8—INTEREST CHARGES.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The question is:

“That a sum not exceeding Rs. 2,78,000 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, 1936, in respect of ‘Interest Charges’.”

The motion was adopted.

DEMAND No. 9—TEMPORARY WITHDRAWALS FROM DEPRECIATION FUND.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The question is:

“That a sum not exceeding Rs. 1,89,50,000 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, 1936, in respect of ‘Temporary Withdrawals from Depreciation Fund’.”

The motion was adopted.

DEMAND No. 11—NEW CONSTRUCTION.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The question is:

“That a sum not exceeding Rs. 26,00,000 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, 1936, in respect of ‘New Construction’.”

The motion was adopted.

DEMAND No. 12—OPEN LINE WORKS.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The question is:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 14,72,50,000 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, 1936, in respect of 'Open Line Works'."

The motion was adopted.

The Assembly then adjourned at Eleven of the Clock on Wednesday, the 27th February, 1935.