

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY DEBATES

WEDNESDAY, 2nd MARCH, 1932

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OFFICIAL REPORT



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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Wednesday, 2nd March, 1932.

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

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

DETENTION OF A TELEGRAM SENT BY SARDAR SANT SINGH.

597. ***Sardar Sant Singh:** (a) Is it a fact that a telegram sent on the 18th February, 1932, by Sardar Sant Singh, M.L.A., to the *Daily Telegraph*, Lucknow, regarding the ex-Maharaja of Nabha, who is required to reside at Kodaikanal, was detained by the New Delhi Telegraph Office on the ground that it was objectionable?

(b) Does the telegram contravene any provision of law including the Ordinances? If so, what?

(c) Is it a fact that the contents of the telegram had nothing to do with the civil disobedience movement or the terrorist movement?

(d) Do Government propose to take any steps to prevent such a suppression of the right of freedom of speech?

Sir Evelyn Howell: (a) Yes.

(b) The telegram was rightly withheld under rule 13 of the Indian Telegraph Rules as objectionable.

(c) Yes.

(d) Government do not propose to take any steps.

*A DEFECTIVE RAILROAD SUBWAY BETWEEN BADAMI BAGH AND LAHORE RAILWAY STATIONS.

598. ***Mr. Lalchand Navalrai** (on behalf of Mr. B. R. Puri): (a) In connection with starred question No. 265, dated 2nd February, 1931 (regarding defective railroad subway between Badami Bagh and Lahore Railway Stations) put by me, will Government be pleased to state whether any reply has been received from the Agent of the North Western Railway to whom the matter embodied in the said question was referred for consideration?

(b) If so, what reply has the Agent, North Western Railway sent?

(c) Are Government prepared to issue necessary instructions to remedy the defects stated in the above question?

Sir Alan Parsons: (a), (b) and (c). Yes. The Agent explains that the subway in question is intended for cattle only and that there are two underways both of which take vehicular traffic not far away from it. Improving and widening the subway would be very expensive, and as there are no connecting roads on the side of the railway remote from the city, there is no justification for the work being carried out.

DEPUTATION OF INDIANS TO STUDY SUGAR MANUFACTURE.

599. ***Mr. S. C. Mitra** (on behalf of Mr. Nabakumar Sing Dudhoria): Will Government be pleased to state:

- (a) whether they have deputed to Java or any other sugar manufacturing country any qualified Indians to study the cultivation and manufacture of sugar at the spot during the last 12 years;
- (b) If the answer to part (a) is in the affirmative, will Government please state:
 - (i) the number of such Indians;
 - (ii) the names of such Indians with their qualifications;
 - (iii) the amount spent on each;
 - (iv) how those who have already returned have been employed;
 - (v) how those who have not yet returned are proposed to be employed;
 - (vi) the names of sugar mills or companies that have employed such experts from abroad?

Sir Frank Noyce: I place on the table a statement giving the required information so far as the Government of India and the Imperial Council of Agricultural Research are concerned. Local Governments have been asked to supply similar information and on receipt of their replies a further statement will be placed on the table of the House.

Statement showing the number of Indians deputed abroad by the Government of India and the Imperial Council of Agricultural Research during the last 12 years for the study of sugar cultivation and manufacture.

Rao Bahadur T. S. Venkataraman, B.A., Indian Agricultural Service, Sugarcane Expert, Imperial Cane-breeding Station, Coimbatore, was deputed by the Government of India to Java for a period of 2 months in 1929 to attend the Convention of the International Society of Sugar Technologists and to study problems connected with the sugar industry. The cost of the deputation amounted to about Rs. 1,400, exclusive of the officer's pay during the period.

Mr. R. C. Srivastava, B.Sc., previously Deputy Director of Industries, United Provinces, now Sugar Technologist to the Imperial Council of Agricultural Research, was deputed by that body to Europe and America for a period of 4½ months in 1930 to study the latest development in sugar machinery, sugar manufacture and sugar technology. The cost of the deputation which was met by the Council amounted to Rs. 12,666.

ALLOWANCES OF CERTAIN DETENUS.

600. ***Mr. S. C. Mitra** (on behalf of Mr. Nabakumar Sing Dudhoria): Will Government be pleased to state the respective amount that has been sanctioned in the case of (1) Mr. J. M. Sen Gupta; (2) Mr. Subashi

Chandra Bose; and (3) Mr. Sarat Chandra Bose; detained under Regulation III of 1818 as their (a) monthly personal allowance, and (b) monthly family allowance?

The Honourable Sir James Orerar: Allowances totalling Rs. 50 a month have been sanctioned for Mr. Subash Chandra Bose, in addition to a lump allowance of Rs. 60 to meet the cost of necessities and for the purchase of clothes.

In regard to the two other State prisoners, the Government of India are awaiting a report from the Local Government which they have been asked to expedite.

ALLEGED ABUSE BY THE STATION MASTER, AMRITSAR, OF THE ASSISTANT STATION MASTER.

601. ***Mr. Lalchand Navalrai:** (a) Has the attention of Government been drawn to the news published on page 22 of the *Partab* of Lahore, dated 12th February, 1932, regarding the filthy abuses made by the Anglo-Indian Station Master, Amritsar, to his Indian Assistant Station Master while in uniform and on duty? Is it a fact that these abuses are alleged to have been given on a public platform and within the hearing of a big crowd of passengers?

(b) Is it a fact that the Indian Station Master has reported the matter to the Divisional Superintendent and has asked for permission to vindicate himself in a court of law? Has such permission been given? If not, why not?

(c) Is it a fact that an official enquiry was made into the case without suspending the Anglo-Indian Station Master?

(d) Have Government received any complaint to the effect that this Anglo-Indian Station Master at Amritsar is of a quarrelsome nature and very unpopular at his station? If the reply is in the affirmative, why has such a Station Master been allowed to remain at such an important station like Amritsar?

(e) Is it not a fact that charges of bribery and corruption have often been brought against him? If the reply be in the affirmative, what action did the officers take on such complaints?

Sir Alan Parsons: Government have seen the article referred to by the Honourable Member. The matter is one with which the Railway Administration is competent to deal and Government do not propose to interfere. I am, however, sending a copy of the Honourable Member's question to the Agent of the North Western Railway who, no doubt, will take such action as he considers necessary.

TRANSACTIONS IN GOLD OF THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.

602. ***Haji Chandhury, Muhammad Ismail Khan:** Will the Honourable the Finance Member be pleased to lay on the table of this House a statement showing:

- (a) the principal transactions in gold held by the Government of India as Paper Currency Reserve, i.e., acquisition, releases and the net balance added or taken off annually since 1921;

- (b) the supply of sovereigns in India since 1921;
- (c) the gold bullion absorbed or released by mints; and
- (d) the gold held by the Bank of England in India since 1921?

The Honourable Sir George Schuster: (a), (b) and (c). The Honourable Member is referred to the annual reports of the Controller of the Currency and on the Administration of the Mints and also to the weekly accounts of the Currency Department.

(d) Government have no official information regarding the location of the gold holdings of the Bank of England but, so far as they know, the Bank has not held any gold in India since 1921.

NATIONAL WEALTH, REMITTANCES, INCOMES, PAY AND ALLOWANCES, ETC.

603. ***Haji Chaudhury Muhammad Ismail Khan:** Will the Honourable the Finance Member be pleased to state:

- (a) the aggregate national wealth of India, both held by Indians and foreigners since 1921;
- (b) the remittances by foreigners since 1921;
- (c) the agricultural and non-agricultural income of India since 1921; and
- (d) the pay and allowances, Central Government, for civil, military and railways since 1921?

The Honourable Sir George Schuster: (a), (b) and (c). Accurate information is not available.

(d) Presumably the Honourable Member asks for the total amounts disbursed in pay and allowances since 1921. The collection of these figures would involve very considerable labour and expense. The Government of India, therefore, are not prepared to supply them.

LEVY OF INCOME-TAX ON RENTS OF UNOCCUPIED HOUSES.

604. ***Rai Bahadur Lala Brij Kishore:** (a) Is it a fact that Government are realizing income-tax on residential houses even when such houses are yielding no income in the form of rents to the owners?

(b) If the reply to part (a) above is in the affirmative, will Government be pleased to state under what law or rule this is being done?

The Honourable Sir George Schuster: (a) I am not sure whether the question refers to property in the actual occupation of the owner or to property intended to be let to tenants but actually vacant. The annual value of property in the actual occupation of the owner is included in his total income, but the sum so included is limited to 10 per cent. of his total income.

In regard to property intended to be let to tenants, an allowance is given on account of vacancies.

(b) The procedure followed is in accordance with the provisions of the Income-tax Act.

ADDITIONAL REVENUE FROM INCREASED INCOME-TAX.

605. ***Rai Bahadur Lala Brij Kishore:** Will Government be pleased to state what additional amount of income-tax over the previous year they will obtain in their 1932-33 Budget estimate from the United Provinces by their increasing the income-tax rate?

The Honourable Sir George Schuster: I would ask my Honourable friend to await the statements which will be circulated with the Budget.

INCOME-TAX ON DUES RECEIVED BY ZAMINDARS.

606. ***Rai Bahadur Lala Brij Kishore:** (a) Is it a fact that Government are realising income-tax on Zamindary-sewai and dues such as Bhusa weighing charges received by the zamindars from their tenants?

(b) If the reply to part (a) above is in the affirmative, will Government be pleased to state under what rule or law this is being done?

The Honourable Sir George Schuster: (a) and (b). The Privy Council has held that under the Income-tax Act the tax is leviable on miscellaneous non-agricultural income derived by Zamindars from their tenants such as I understand the Honourable Member to refer to, though I am not actually aware of the exact nature of the weighing charges to which he refers or whether the Income-tax Department include these in the Zamindar's total income.

Rai Bahadur Lala Brij Kishore: Will the Honourable Member kindly inform his income-tax officers that they should not include those *sewai* incomes of Zamindars in assessments for the purposes of income-tax for which they pay revenue to the Government.

The Honourable Sir George Schuster: I am afraid I must ask the Honourable Member to repeat his question.

(The question was not repeated.)

Kunwar Hajee Ismail Ali Khan: Do the Government take the income-tax on the income from agricultural gardens?

The Honourable Sir George Schuster: I am afraid I must ask for notice of that question.

HOLDING OF THE SUMMER SESSION AT NEW DELHI OR SIMLA.

607. ***Rai Bahadur Lala Brij Kishore:** (a) Is it a fact that the opinions of the Members of the Legislative Assembly were asked in the matter of holding the Summer Assembly session at New Delhi or at Simla? If so, how many members gave their opinion in favour of holding the session at New Delhi and how many for holding the session at Simla?

(b) Will Government be pleased to state whether the New Delhi session will be cheaper than the Simla session so far as travelling, conveyance and halting allowances are concerned?

The Honourable Sir George Rainy: (a) Presumably the Honourable Member is referring to the questionnaire by the General Purposes Sub-Committee of the Retrenchment Advisory Committee appointed by the Government of India asking for the opinion of Members of the Legislative Assembly on the question as to whether the Central Legislature should hold its sessions at Delhi or at Simla or at both these places. On that question altogether 88 Members have expressed their opinions which may be classified roughly as follows:

- (i) 39. Members are in favour of the existing arrangement;
- (ii) 32 Members are in favour of holding both the sessions in Delhi;
- (iii) 9 Members are in favour of holding both the sessions in Delhi subject to certain conditions; and
- (iv) 8 Members have adopted a neutral attitude on the question

(b) The average cost per day is greater for holding a session in Delhi than in Simla.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: Is that the only reason for not stopping going to Simla, namely, that the cost at Delhi is greater?

The Honourable Sir George Rainy: I have merely answered a question as actually put down. I was asked wherein would lie the greater cost and I have given the answer. That is all.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: Of course the opinions of the Members were those mentioned, but my question is, what are the reasons for Government not agreeing to stop the exodus to Simla?

The Honourable Sir George Rainy: We are following an arrangement that has been in force for a prolonged period, and no special reasons, I think, for doing so are necessary. The onus of proof I think rests on those who wish to change the present arrangements.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: Will you wait till the introduction of the new constitution to enforce it?

The Honourable Sir George Rainy: Yes, possibly, Sir. (Laughter.)

RESOLUTION RE HIGH COURTS.

608. ***Rai Bahadur Lala Brij Kishore:** With reference to Mr. Amar Nath Dutt's Resolution, which was adopted in this House, *viz.*, that the High Courts in India should be a Central subject in the future constitution of India, will Government be pleased to state whether steps will be taken to get it incorporated in the new constitution?

The Honourable Sir James Crerar: A copy of the Resolution and of the debate was duly forwarded to the Secretary of State for transmission to His Majesty's Government.

ELECTION OF MEMBERS TO THE STANDING COMMITTEE FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, HEALTH AND LANDS.

Mr. President: I have to inform the Assembly that up to 12 Noon on Thursday, the 25th February, 1932, which was the time fixed for receiving nominations for the Standing Advisory Committee for the Department of Education, Health and Lands, only two nominations were received. As the Standing Committee will consist of three members, and only two have been nominated, I declare Rai Bahadur Lala Brij Kishore and Raja Bahadur G. Krishnamachariar who were duly nominated as elected to the Committee and I appoint a further period up to 12 Noon on Thursday, the 3rd March, within which nominations for the third vacancy only will be received. The election, if necessary, will take place in this Chamber on Tuesday, the 8th March, 1932.

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

DEMAND No. 1—RAILWAY BOARD—*contd.*

Conveniences of the Travelling Public.

Mr. M. Maswood Ahmad (Patna and Chota Nagpur *cum* Orissa: Muhammadan): Sir, I beg to move:

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

Sir, if I were to give a whole catalogue of the inconveniences in travel which are experienced by the travelling public, especially the third class passengers, I would be depriving other Honourable Members of the claim which they have on the attention of the House. I shall be content at present to bring forward only a few of such inconveniences.

Mr. President, by seeing the long list of cut motions for inconveniences, it becomes clear that dissatisfaction prevails in every corner of this House in this connection. Many of us feel that there are inconveniences of the travelling public. Some of them are of the character which may be removed easily without spending a single pice from the railway purse if the department do not take an obstinate attitude. Some of which are of the character for which very little money is required. Such inconveniences also should be removed. I do not suggest that we ought to undertake big schemes in times of depression and deficit Budgets, but I am perfectly right when I suggest that we should stop doubling of the line between Tundla and Cawnpore or Tundla and Etawa and suggest spending that money for removing the inconveniences of the public. When the traffic has gone down, there is less pressure of work. When there is less pressure of work, there is no justification in doubling a line. Saving of Rs. 12,80,000 is also possible by stopping the building of new quarters for staff. When thousands of your employees have been turned out of employment, for whom do you require new quarters? Spend that money also for removing the inconveniences. Money for the sweet will of the heads of departments is available; but money to spend for removing inconveniences is not available, which is a deplorable fact.

[Mr. M. Maswood Ahmad.]

In this connection, I shall take the question of inconvenient timings, first. So far the question of railway timings for the two capitals of Bihar and Orissa, Patna and Ranchi, has not been solved. The result of the last year's promise was that after eight months I received a reply from the railway authorities and that too was unsatisfactory. My Honourable friend Sir George Rainy is a Bihar civilian and Bihar has a claim upon him. I hope my Honourable friend Mr. Amar Nath Dutt will excuse me for saying this. I request the Honourable Sir George Rainy through you, Mr. President, that he should see that a longstanding grievance of Bihar is removed before he leaves this country, so that one of the four passenger trains running between Patna and Gaya is converted into an Express train, and the timings from Patna to Ranchi are so arranged as suggested by me in my last year's speech. Another example of inconvenient timings was brought to my notice only this morning, and with your permission, Sir, I would like to mention it. For the last few years the 16 down E. I. R. Express used to give connection with the Agra-Bareilly up passenger at Aligarh. That was the only and most convenient train for third class passengers especially who wanted to go to Bareilly from Delhi after finishing their day's work. But according to the new time table, which came into force on the 1st March, the 16 down Express, which is timed to leave Delhi at 22.50, will not give connection with the Agra-Bareilly up passenger at Aligarh and thus it will be a source of very great hardship to the third class passengers. Do the railway authorities expect to get money by providing inconveniences to the travelling public? Are so many time table experts engaged on such fat salaries simply to give trouble and cause hardship to those who contribute to pay them? Is it fair, I ask? To my mind, the amenities to the travelling public should be the first object of railways, and if they will neglect it, I am certain that they will be miserably failing in their duties. Sir, on many sections there is only one up and one down train. The inconvenience caused is obvious. Not only is the revenue lost to the railways, but the travelling public is put to much trouble and inconvenience. I take a particular example to illustrate my point. There is only one train in the up direction and one in the down direction running between Burwadih and Gomoh Junction on the Sone East Bank Gomoh sec. E. I. Ry.—a distance of 155 miles.

Mr. G. Morgan (Bengal: European): May I ask the Honourable Member whether the Railway Board exercises supervision over all the time tables of various railways?

Mr. President: The Honourable Member cannot be expected to give an answer to that question. Please go on.

Mr. M. Maswood Ahmad: My Honourable friend, Mr. Hayman, may say again that I am incorrect and so I shall refer him to page 59 of the E. I. R. time table. If a passenger wants to go from Sone East Bank to Gomoh or from any intermediate station to another intermediate station in the morning, he has no train in which to travel. He can only travel by the solitary train, No. 2-G. S. Down, which leaves Sone East Bank at an inconvenient hour of 1.49 A.M. Similarly if any body wants to travel in the evening from Gomoh to Sone East Bank, he is debarred from doing so. There are many other sections on which this state of affairs exists, but I shall not tire the patience of the House by giving a list

of them. What I want is that there should be at least two passenger trains in every direction on all the sections. If traffic necessitates the running of more trains, Express trains should be provided. Express trains must run over those sections which require more than two trains.

Sir, I have also to draw the attention of the Railway Board to the quality of food that is supplied to the passengers at the railway stations. The necessity for the improvement and preservation of the health of the Indians is such an important question that it should attract the attention of all. Adulterated food supplied at railway stations is really undermining the health of Indians. The Railway Administrations ought to see that the supply of bad articles of food is forthwith stopped. There are many stations where there are no vendors for the supply of food. A very large section of the Muslim community called the Shias does not eat anything except when it is prepared by a Muslim. Muslim vendors should be appointed and Muslim tea stalls should be opened on every big station. This sect corresponds to the orthodox community amongst the Hindus.

Mr. S. C. Mitra (Chittagong and Rajshahi Divisions: Non-Muhammadan Rural): We have two hundred sects. Do you want as many amongst you?

Mr. M. Maswood Ahmad: I do not want that, but our religious sentiments too should not be disregarded. Now, Sir, the contract for betel supply should be given to the Muslims also. Mr. President, the licence for the supply of betel by a Muslim at Gaya was recently cancelled by the Divisional Superintendent of Dinapore on the ground that there is no other Muslim betel-seller on any other station of the Dinapore Division and hence there was no necessity at Gaya too of a Muslim betel-seller. What a satisfactory ground is that on which the licence was cancelled? I myself addressed the Divisional Superintendent of Dinapore in this connection, and his reply was so absurd that I shall not place it before this House. Then, Sir, I wrote a letter to the Railway Board and the reply was that this was a local matter.

Sir, the question of overcrowding is brought to the notice of Government every year, but there seems to be no improvement in this connection. The railway authorities should not treat those who pay the largest amount of money to them like flocks of sheep. Then, Sir, there is the question of water supply at stations. Though much has been done in this connection, still much more remains to be done and I urge upon the railway authorities to further improve the supply of water at various stations. I have personal knowledge between Bareilly and Ranchi, where I have seen many water tanks labelled not for drinking purposes, but when I asked the station staff where I could get water for drinking, I could not get any reply.

Third class passengers, Sir, are put to much inconvenience owing to the absence of waiting sheds at many important stations. They are forced to face all sorts of inconveniences such as the chill of the winter and the sun of the summer and still nothing seems to have been done for the provision of these sheds at many stations. This should be done without losing any more time wherever possible.

Mr. President, to sum up, what I ask is to make improvements in the water supply, provision of more waiting sheds, avoiding of overcrowding,

[Mr. M. Maswood Ahmad.]

improvements in the inconvenient timings of the trains and the appointment of Muslim vendors and betel-sellers at stations.

Mr. President, the list of inconveniences of the public travelling to and from Patna, the capital of Bihar and Orissa is very long. Luckily its own man is in charge of the Railway Department. I remind him as an officer of my province that if in his reign these troubles are not removed they will not be removed for a long time.

The first grievance is that the Indian refreshment room in Patna is far off from the platform. Small rooms should be built for this purpose or one or two rooms should be vacated for this purpose. I am ready to help the Divisional Superintendent of Dinapore if he visits Patna Junction with me.

The second suggestion is that a first and second class composite bogie should be attached from Patna to Delhi and *vice versa*. There is no trouble in accepting this suggestion. At present two bogies run between Sealdah and Delhi by 13 up and 14 down express trains. One of the two bogies may be attached at Patna. As many trains leave from Howrah the public will not feel it.

The third suggestion is that one of the four passenger trains running between Patna and Gaya should be made an express train. The Agent of the East Indian Railway wrote to me that as it was a 57 miles run only, there is no need of an express train. I say Lucknow is only 37 miles off from Cawnpore where four expresses and one mail train run at present. The other point is, Sir, that it takes fully three hours to travel this short distance of 57 miles only. If we can save one hour, or even half an hour, it will be a saving to the Railway Department also on coal and allowances to guards, etc. For this suggestion also not a single pie is required.

Then, Sir, the fourth suggestion is that the bogie which is attached from Howrah to Dehra Dun in the 1 up and 2 down mail trains is not of much use when from Howrah an express train runs to Dehra Dun. The mail train passes at night from Asansol to Patna Junction having four stoppages—Madhupore, Jhajha, Keul and Mokamah only,—and up to Asansol the Dehra Dun express runs on the same line. The 1 up mail passes very early in the morning from Patna, and so it is very difficult to catch the train. At the same time, Mr. President, when passengers use the bolt from inside it becomes very difficult to awaken them. Sir, on some occasions in trying one compartment after another the time is over, and the train runs away. Sir, the bogie from and to Dehra Dun should be attached to the mail train at Patna Junction. Sir, the fifth trouble is this, that there is no inter class waiting room on the platform. There is one shed which may easily be converted to such waiting room without much cost.

Mr. President, if the Railway Department are really solicitous about the comforts and conveniences of the travelling public, I would commend these few suggestions for their consideration, and with these words I move my motion.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai (Sind : Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I rise to support this motion, and my grievance is with regard to there being no direct train between Karachi and Lahore *via* Dadu. Sir, it is well known

that there are two routes to reach Lahore from Karachi. One *via* Pad-Idan-Rohri; another that connects Rohri *via* Kotri-Dadu. This line *via* Dadu was the original main line. There was no line *via* Pad-Idan and this Dadu line was the only line by which all trains ran. Then subsequently a line was constructed *via* Pad-Idan and since then this Dadu line is considered by the Railway authorities as a loop line and the conveniences on this line are far from satisfactory. So far as a direct communication is concerned through that part of the country there ought to be a direct train which should take to Lahore within as much time or a little more than *via* Pad-Idan. At present there is no train at all which takes direct *via* Dadu. One has to start from Dadu at about 1 o'clock in the day, reach Rohri at 11 o'clock at night and then wait to catch the Karachi mail at 4 o'clock in the morning. Sir, this is a great inconvenience and it is not the first time that I complain of it, but as a last resort I have been forced to mention it in this House. Sir, there is an advisory local committee for the Karachi division. I do not propose at present to enter into the functions of the Advisory Committee or as to whether the opinions of that Advisory Committee are accepted or not. That is the question which I will deal with separately later on on an appropriate cut, but my point at present is to bring to the notice of this House that that Advisory Committee has also cried itself hoarse over this question, but the Agent stands stiff as an autocrat does. It has been brought to his notice—and he knows full well—that there used to be actually a train directly running between Karachi and Lahore *via* Dadu. That was stopped for no reason and subsequently they provided some kind of convenience by running certain carriages direct to Karachi to avoid transshipment at odd hours at Kotri, but that convenience too has been snatched away and the reason that they give is that there is not a sufficient number of passengers travelling first and second class on that side to merit a direct connection. Sir, as a matter of fact a large number of passengers does travel by that route, but granting and assuming that they do not in a large number, yet the railway is bound to meet the conveniences of even a few. The way in which they make the calculation is not satisfactory. They send an officer to take a census of people travelling. He finds a smaller number of travellers on some days, larger on the others but he totals up to strike an average and reports the paucity of passengers. That is not the proper criterion for refusing a convenience. The railways are not only to increase the rates and fares, but they are bound to give convenience. It may be that the income on some lines may not be commensurate with the amount of convenience needed, yet it must be given. That question however does not arise with this line which is very productive. Therefore I ask that the Agent should give way now and provide us with a direct convenient train. I know that in the time table which is coming into force from the 1st March 1932 a train has been provided for *via* Dadu to run direct to Lahore, but it will be a useless train. It will be a train taking 48 hours, or even more, to reach Lahore. It will run like a snail. That is not the sort of a train that is wanted . . .

Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney (Nominated Non-Official): Does a snail run?

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: As Anglo-Indian trains they do. (*Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney*: "Then they must be good and fast trains.") My point is that that train will not be useful at all. My suggestion is that

[Mr. Lalchand Navalrai.]

the up and down trains Nos. 43 and 44 should be diverted *via* Dadu. Sir, this is a great inconvenience and that is my justification for asking this House to pass this motion in order to press the railway authorities to remove this inconvenience.

Sir Hugh Cocke (Bombay : European): Sir, I have noticed that Honourable Members are discussing inconveniences of the travelling public which does not seem to be the heading on the paper. But conveniences and inconveniences are very closely associated. My particular point is in connection with the running of trains, that the Railway Board should try and influence railway lines to stop their main line trains at one suburban station outside the big cities. Some main line trains do stop on approaching Bombay at Dadar and some do not; and the inconvenience of the travelling public in having to go into Bombay, and then driving six or eight miles out, is a great one. Although I live outside Bombay and it would be a great convenience to me to get down at Dadar, I am, like other Members who speak on railway matters, not thinking at all of myself but of others. I am thinking of all those people who find it very hard to take a gharry six or eight miles, with perhaps 50 bundles of gear, and I do suggest that, as far as possible, in addition to being convenient to the public, this would also help to develop suburban Bombay, and presumably suburban Madras and suburban Calcutta.

Mr. B. V. Jadhav (Bombay Central Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Would it not be better to stop the train at Bandra?

Sir Hugh Cocke: That is a very good suggestion—that the trains should stop at Bandra, because I live about a mile from Bandra station; so that if the railway authorities make Bandra and not Dadar the stopping station it would help some of us. But this question of suburban development is a very important one. There have been tremendous strides made in suburban development in Bombay in the last twenty years, and I think in other places also; and in so far as the Railway Board can influence Agents to stop their trains at important places outside the city, it would be a very great convenience to the travelling public.

Kunwar Raghubir Singh (Agra Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I wish to join in the chorus of congratulations to the Honourable the Railway Member on the skilful handling of difficult and sometimes delicate situations. If the Budget could not be balanced, it was no fault of his, but because of the general depression the condition of finances all over the country being bad this could not be done.

As to the motion before the House, I support the cut which has been moved by the Honourable Shah Maswood Ahmad. The inconveniences of passengers are very many, and they have been described by two Honourable Members in connection with the Bombay Presidency. But I wish to take up the inconveniences of all the classes of passengers. I have knowledge of the E. I. R., the B. B. and C. I. R., G. I. P. R., and R. K. R. which run in my constituency. The inconveniences described are not felt only by the lower class passengers, but also by the higher class passengers. When the management of the East Indian Railway was taken over by Government from the company, it was expected that

the management would be more efficient; but I am sorry to say that the condition has not improved. In a way it has gone down. When the company was managing the railway, there was smooth running of trains. But now we see that that convenience has disappeared after being handed over to the State. Now the trains start with a jerk (Laughter) and people feel this inconvenience which was not known during the company days.

As to the second class berths, they were better formerly; but now they are very uncomfortable to sleep on. Then there is, I should say, a plague of T. T. I.'s. Formerly there were T. T. I.'s, but now we find at every third or fourth station he comes and wants to see the ticket, then another comes, and we are put to very great inconvenience. I do not think that the State has gained much by that. On the other hand I think it must have been losing on account of the employment of so many T. T. I.'s.

Then the third complaint, which I have and which is very general, is the rude behaviour of the subordinate railway employees. The fourth is want of water supply at some stations. There are stations in which there are Hindu watermen and there are some in which there are Muhammadan watermen but no Hindu watermen. If the waterman is a Hindu, everybody can take water from him; but if he is a Muslim he can be utilised only by the Anglo-Indians and Muslims. So I would suggest that there should be Hindu watermen at every station as was the case formerly.

An Honourable Member: Does my Honourable friend know the Shia community?

Kunwar Raghubir Singh: Yes; we have got Hindu watermen and Muslim watermen.

An Honourable Member: What about Christian watermen?

Kunwar Raghubir Singh: But how can there be Muslim water and Hindu water? Water is water. There is the Anglo-Indian water jug put on at every station; that we know; and that can be used by Muslims.

Then there is the case of refreshments. On the O. and R. R. there were Hindu refreshment rooms at Lakhsar, Moradabad and other stations. But on the E. I. R. main line proper there are very few Hindu refreshment rooms. There is one at Moghal Sarai; and in my province I think there are very few except perhaps at Cawnpore, the newly built station, or perhaps at Lucknow.

The sixth inconvenience is the uncleanness and dirtiness of the third class carriages. They are not cleaned properly and there is a lot of dirt in third class carriages as well as in latrines; and similar is the case with inter class. There is very little difference between a third class carriage and an inter class carriage, except for a very thin cushion for the latter; there is no other difference. Neither the employees of the railway nor the police give any help to the passengers; and whenever help is required, one man says, ask the other man; and if you ask the other man, he says, ask a third man, and so on; nobody hears or cares to redress the grievances of passengers of even the second or first class—not to say anything of third class passengers. Then, Sir, the food supplied at stations is very bad. At least I have experience of Hindu food, and I will particularly mention the Allahabad Station where the food supplied is exceedingly

[Kunwar Raghubir Singh.]

bad; it is uneatable I should say. So, Sir, in view of these inconveniences, I wish to put forward the following suggestions for the consideration of the Railway Board. As I said, the behaviour of the subordinate employees is not very good, and for that I would suggest that candidates who have passed the Matriculation or Intermediate examination alone should be employed instead of those who have perhaps passed the 5th or 6th class, who do not know manners and do not know how to behave properly

Sir Abdullah Suhrawardy (Burdwan and Presidency Divisions: Muhammadan Rural): Do the Matriculates and Intermediate passed men behave properly?

Kunwar Raghubir Singh: I think they would behave properly if they have had good education.

Then, Sir, along with other technical training, they should also receive training in humane and courteous treatment.

Mr. H. P. Mody (Bombay Millowners' Association: Indian Commerce): Kindergarten for manners.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: That will be done under the new constitution.

Kunwar Raghubir Singh: As to the untidiness of carriages and latrines, the work of the sweepers should receive better supervision than hitherto. Then the accommodation Instructors should be made to take more interest in their work and worthless men should be removed. These are a few of the suggestions that I wish to make on the inconveniences of the travelling public, and I hope they will receive the attention of the Railway Board and the authorities concerned.

Mr. B. V. Jadhav: Sir, the inconveniences and grievances of the travelling public on our railways have been aired so far, and I am going to add my quota to the list of grievances. One of them is that on the Bombay local trains especially beggars and sweetmeat sellers and also persons engaged in collecting subscriptions for so-called charitable institutions are allowed to take season passes and they ply their trade and begging campaigns in the trains, to the great annoyance of the travelling public. So I think the Railway Board should issue instructions that season passes should be allowed only to persons who are *bona fide* travellers and not to hawkers and beggars and others. There are also other inconveniences which have been brought to the notice of this House which require immediate attention, and many remedies have been suggested. I would also suggest one more remedy; that is, the Members of the Railway Board, whenever they go out, should not be allowed their saloon cars, but they should be obliged to travel third class (Hear, hear), so that they may see for themselves what inconveniences actually are borne by the third class travellers

Mr. C. C. Biswas (Calcutta: Non-Muhammadan Urban): They should travel in Indian dress.

Mr. B. V. Jadhav: Because in that case the inconveniences of the third class passengers will be removed automatically, as their servants will see that the Bara Sahib gets an opportunity to see these things and has to suffer inconveniences. But I do not think the Members of the Railway Board will be willing to sacrifice so much. At all events, I may call upon them to do a little thing, and it is that between stations they should get into third class carriages and sit for about an hour or so. That will be quite enough. And I need not ask them to give up their saloon cars. Now that our Leader of the House is shortly retiring, I cannot ask him to follow any of my suggestions, but his successor should certainly take a ride in the third class between stations and see for himself what inconveniences are experienced by third class passengers.

As regards polite treatment, I do not think that any special training for railway servants is required, but if the Station Masters and other higher officials will treat their subordinates properly, then these subordinates on their part will be taught a very good lesson and they will treat the passengers more politely. So I think if any training in politeness and civility is required, it is required more for the higher officers. When the higher officers are polite themselves to their subordinates, then these subordinates naturally mete out the same treatment to the travelling public and it goes on right down the chain to the bottom. And therefore the best way of teaching politeness and civility to the downmost man is for the higher official to be polite himself. If the Station Masters and other higher officers treat their subordinates more politely than they have been doing up till now, then this complaint which has been aired here by my friend who spoke last will not long survive. I think, Sir, the grievances of the third class passengers have been sufficiently explained many a time, but it is very unfortunate that they have been very rarely redressed. In fact they have been a hardy annual in this House, because although they are expressed almost every year, nothing effective has been done by the Railway Board.

Mr. Uppi Sahib Bahadur (West Coast and Nilgiris : Muhammadan): Sir, I very rarely take part in debates in this House, but the oppression of the travellers by the South Indian Railway authorities compels me to bring to the notice of the Railway Board certain facts. Sir, no other Railway Company has taken advantage of its being away from the Railway Board as the South Indian Railway Company which runs throughout South India. For the last several years we have been crying ourselves hoarse to introduce the intermediate class on the broad gauge lines run by the S. I. R. Company, but they have been adamant, nay, they have even flatly refused to introduce it. It has been said in this House, and it is a fact, that 1st class carriages are uneconomical, second class is a self-dependent carriage, and third class feeds others. This inter class will perhaps pay a little more towards its maintenance than second class, but the S. I. Railway, in spite of repeated demands from the public, have not cared to introduce that class in their broad gauge lines. That is one thing.

Secondly, the South Indian Railway Company has taken advantage of its being away from the Railway Board in several other ways. In many places the railway stations are either a mango tree or a banyan tree. The Station Master is put in a small cabin from where he distributes tickets, and the passengers have to wait for the trains either under a tree exposing themselves to the hot sun or drenching themselves in the rain.

[Mr. Uppi Saheb Bahadur.]

Recently in some places they have placed a few old wagons, and they too are meant only for officers. They do not care for the travelling public at all. Even in towns like my place, Tellicherry, they have got only one waiting room for upper class passengers—for men, women and children, and they all have got to use only that waiting room. Sir, Tellicherry is a very important station on the West Coast. The result is that when ladies come in, the men have to stand out sometimes in the drenching rain. You know Malabar has very heavy rain, and in the monsoon season gentlemen have to stand in the drenching rain. The third class passengers also, when they are let in into the platform, have no place to take shelter in in the drenching rain or in the burning sun during the summer season. Then, Sir, you will find here and there arrangements for drinking water; it is only done for name's sake. Very often we cannot get water on the platform in small stations.

The third class compartments on the South Indian Railway are always congested, and it was on one of their wagons that the famous train tragedy occurred, and it is a wonder that more train tragedies are not occurring on the South Indian Railway. They do not care not only for those who travel in their trains, but even for pedestrians. If you take into account the number of accidents which occur at level crossings, you will find that on no other railway in India have accidents of such a very serious nature taken place as on this railway. Sir, in the city of Calicut the train runs across the main bazaar, and they keep the gate closed for 20 or 30 minutes at a time, with the result that both sides of the gate are congested with ordinary carriages and men, and very often accidents occur there. The public of Calicut have been crying for an overbridge but the railway has so far turned a deaf ear to it. Sir, the traffic along that road is the highest in Calicut, nay, in Malabar. The gate is very near the railway station. They not only close the gate when the trains are expected, but they keep the gates closed when shunting is going on and that may take an hour or two. In this way, I am forced to bring these grievances to the notice of the Railway Member and the Railway Board, and I hope they will redress our grievances who are far away from their sight and who very rarely bring any grievances to their notice. Sir, I support the motion.

Rai Bahadur Lala Brij Kishore (Lucknow Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, in supporting this cut, I want to confine my speech to the inconveniences felt by third class passengers. The Railway Administrations are dependent on third class passengers for their earnings, and in spite of the fact that they are their best customers, the railways do not care for their comforts. Let me give the number of passengers who travelled in the different classes of accommodation and the income derived from them.

Class.	No.	Income. Rs.
1st class	744,200	92 lakhs.
2nd class	8,323,900	1.64 lakhs.
Inter class	16,196,600	1.38 lakhs.
3rd class	539,544,400	28.72 lakhs.

These figures show that 90 per cent. of the income is derived by sale of tickets to the 3rd class passengers, but we ignore the comforts of these persons who pay us the most. This is a hard lot, though they are the

greater taxpayers and the main pillars of the administration on which the railways of India stand. Sir, I had on several occasions to observe that the third class passengers are treated no better than sheep in a fold. Compartments which can hardly accommodate 20 persons are often packed up with treble that number, and their condition will surely remind one of the historic tragedy of the Black Hole. I submit that the benefits of the system of administration should descend to the masses and should not be the monopoly of a few. I also bring to your notice that the income derived from second class passengers is about double that derived from 1st class passengers, and therefore the accommodation for second class passengers may be increased and 1st class accommodation diminished to that extent and the bogies should be refitted.

Sir, according to the statement of the Honourable the Railway Member, out of the total deficit of Rs. 9½ crores, Rs. 2 crores are due to the loss of earnings on the strategic lines. But, Sir, strategic lines are mainly meant for military purposes, and therefore it will be quite justifiable to include them in the Military Budget instead of adding them to the Railway Budget.

Mr. E. F. Sykes (Bombay: European): If the Honourable gentlemen who find inconveniences in railway travelling were to go with me into the part of the country I live in, they would find out for themselves the amount of inconvenience endured by the people while travelling by road. Sir, last Sunday when I went down to my place, I met a very large number of bullock carts, each containing 10 or a dozen persons, men, women and children,—all of them very happy, singing their homely songs, and as gay as any one can be. Later in the day I came to the railway station and the train came in, and I noticed the demeanour of the passengers and compared it with that of the travellers by bullock carts. Now, this is an important matter in which our Indian Members can be of great assistance, because I am quite sure that if they can tell why travellers by bullock carts without any shelter for sun, wind or rain, are happy and contented, while those by trains are miserable, it would be a great advantage to the railways concerned. I had myself once endeavoured to do something in the matter. I consulted a very experienced traffic officer, and my view was that the inconvenience is mainly because they are called upon to sit on unaccustomed and inconvenient benches and are not able to arrange themselves in family groups in the same manner as they do in bullock carts. I suggested that in all third class carriages we should remove the benches and plaster the floor with some of the new flooring compositions which are not damp or cold. Unfortunately, he met me with the objection that owing to the diversity of passengers and the variations in sanitary habits it would not be possible to do so. Sir, nothing can be done without the assistance of my Honourable friends. I remember in the last century I was supervising the construction of a new railway station. I was rather young then, and I had the standard plan of the quarters for the Station Master and the Assistant Station Master. I did not consider them comfortable, and I asked the overseer whether he thought they were comfortable. He did not consider them comfortable, and I asked him, why don't you help me to produce a design which will be comfortable? I got no suggestions from him. Subsequently my direct connection with railways has been rather intermittent, but I believe that things are still not very different.

12 Noon.

[Mr. E. F. Sykes.]

What I would like to emphasize is that the superior officers in the railways being for the present mostly Europeans, none of these questions can be properly solved without the assistance of experienced and thoughtful Indians, and if Members of this House could form themselves into a committee and study these questions and put forward suggestions based on their joint study, instead of reiterating the same complaints, I think things would be a good deal better for all concerned.

Mr. S. C. Mitra: I support the motion of my friend Mr. Maswood Ahmad who is trying to better the lot of the travelling public on railways. From the general standpoint, I find that the finances of the railways are going from bad to worse. I further appreciate that during the last few years there has been some improvement in the condition of the travelling public, but I still contend that there is room for further improvements. I find that the reserve of 18½ crores has been exhausted and it is evident that there may not be sufficient money now to improve the condition of the travelling public owing to financial stringency. The reserve is meant for lean years and the Honourable Member said that they had exhausted it to meet the exigencies of the occasion, but I am afraid he cannot justify the depletion of the Depreciation Fund. The amount set apart every year in the Depreciation Fund is necessary to put the railways in proper repairs. When you encroach on the Depreciation Fund, it is not like payment out of any reserve funds but really you are borrowing the amounts which must be paid off in future. The Honourable Member cannot hold out hope of larger earnings in the next three or four years, and so if we drain off this money in the Depreciation Fund it will be a serious matter. This 14 crores which is accumulated now will be exhausted within two or three years and with its disappearance the rolling stock will go from bad to worse, having no money for repairs and replacement. That is a point to which I draw the attention of the Honourable Member, who will I trust explain what will happen in the future if the Depreciation Fund, which is meant for a particular purpose, is employed to serve a different end.

As regards third class passengers, my friend Mr. Brij Kishore has just now said that the third class passengers pay 90 per cent. of the income of the railways and their convenience should be the special concern of the railway authorities. As regards Mr. Ahmad's suggestion that there should be arrangements for drinking water for all the different communities, I think that is impracticable.

Mr. M. Maswood Ahmad: I said only at big stations.

Mr. S. C. Mitra: As regards big stations, there may not be much difficulty as regards the Muslim community, because they are broadly divided into Shias and Sunnis, but if you take the Hindus it will be a hopeless task to provide for every sect of the community which may demand food prepared by a member of the particular sect and no other. For instance, my Honourable friend Mr. S. C. Mukherjee comes from such an orthodox family and he will not take any food or drink supplied by anybody, even by the purest Brahmin in a railway station unless he gets a chance to have a bath in the Ganges or the Jumna and the food is prepared by his own people. In such cases, it will be necessary for the railway authorities to provide a haltage and cooking accommodations, at every 200

miles; but the main point still remains that there is need for adequate water supply for passengers, particularly in the summer season. The point has been brought out before. Things have improved to a certain extent. That must be admitted. The other point is about the insanitary and unclean conditions of the latrines, particularly in the third class compartments.

Then another point is about the provision of fans in third and inter class compartments. Some people will think it a luxury, but those who travel in summer in up-country, in the U. P. and Delhi, know how essential it is to have a fan in the mid-day. I do not say that like first class passengers you should have a fan for every passenger, but in a big bogey you can certainly fit up one or two fans for the convenience of a large number of passengers. As the electric installation is there, there will not be much cost to provide a few extra fans.

Then another point is about the booking rooms for third class passengers. In big stations there is a big crowd, and sometimes these people have to bribe the police officers to purchase tickets. In big stations, there ought to be better arrangements for selling tickets to third class illiterate people. As regards waiting rooms at junctions, especially where there are steamer connections, I find that my friend Mr. Anwar-ul-Azim has given notice of a motion, and I think he will explain the inconvenience we in Eastern Bengal feel in the Goalando and Chandpur Stations for want of waiting rooms.

The treatment by the lower class railway officials is often rude. I do not think that the mere issue of rules and instructions would help very much in this matter, but if there are general instructions that railway servants like other public servants should cultivate the habit of treating everybody politely and look after the conveniences and comforts of railway travellers, that will help to effect a great improvement in the present condition of affairs. Nowadays the number of trains has been curtailed. There is overcrowding in third and inter classes. The authorities must retrench as much of course as they can but they should not forget that the third class and inter class passengers contribute the largest earnings and they should not be crowded like cattle. Well, if there is no room for sleeping, let them have at least sitting room or at least standing space. These are the different heads to which I think the attention of the railway authorities should be drawn, and they should try as much as possible, even in these days of great financial stringency of the railways, to meet the primary wants of the lower class travelling public.

Mr. Jagan Nath Aggarwal (Jullundur Division: Non-Muhammadian): Sir, I look upon the question of the conveniences of the travelling public from a different point of view to that of some of my friends. They seem to think that we should appeal to the charitable instincts or kindness of my friend, the Honourable the Commerce Member, and thus move some sympathetic chord in his heart. I look upon the matter, Sir, as a business proposition. Last year we heard it said that if you raise the fare of the first class man, he quietly goes down to the second class, and that if you raise the fare of the second class man, he goes down to the inter or third class, but what does the third class man do? (*An Honourable Member*: "Let him travel without tickets.") That he often does. Sir, if you want to keep your railway earnings, you have a serious rival in the field, viz., the road transport motor bus, and the providing of conveniences for the travelling public is therefore a mere business proposition, and you must

[Mr. Jagan Nath Aggarwal.]

face it in a business-like manner. A person with a rival in the field should see to it that his custom does not go away from him, and from that point of view, a few suggestions would certainly not be out of place, because, in the first place, either they would attract more custom or keep that with the railways which they have already got, or at any rate put their rivals in difficulties. From that point of view, the interests of the third and the inter class passengers must come first because they provide the largest amount of earnings for the Railway Budget. From that point of view—and my experience is confined to the North Western Railway about which only my friend, Mr. Lalchand Navalrai, spoke and nobody else—I submit that a few improvements are possible in a good many directions. First and foremost, during the hot summer months they need really more air and water. Sir, in some parts of the Punjab and Sind in the summer months, travelling becomes a very great trial during the day, and overcrowding is not an unknown or infrequent phenomenon in that part of the country. If that is so, you can very well imagine the state in which people have to travel when overcrowding goes hand in hand with the terrible heat, when moreover the stoppages are few and far between and the supply of water scanty. Sir, it is within the experience of all of us that various charitable societies sometimes take the trouble of sending their volunteers for supplying water, but such supply should only be additional supply and the railways should not divest themselves of their responsibility for supplying good clean water in ample quantities to all trains which stop at these stations and this is a matter to which the attention of the Railway Board should be drawn not as a formality but as a serious matter of public convenience.

The other difficulty of providing more air in these carriages is a matter of some importance. Previously the first and second or inter class carriages used to have fans. Sir, electric energy is not a matter which is very costly, because the railways can produce their energy on the train, and if in these third class carriages a fan or two fans are installed, that will keep these carriages much more clean and healthy and make them comfortable. In this connection it would be well to look to comforts of the travelling public because, apart from adding to the comforts and conveniences of the travelling public, it would make the railways more attractive and so more paying. **This principle should not be observed only in the case of the higher-class travelling public.**

Then with regard to the cleaning of these carriages, one sometimes is amused to find the great efforts made by the cleaning staff to clean the outside of the railway carriages. You have a brush and the scrubbing goes on very beautifully from the top downwards, but, alas, all the filth and dirt is hidden away inside below the cushions on the floor and no attempt is made to clean it. (*An Honourable Member*: "Third class carriages have no cushions.") No attempt is made to clean the lavatories which are in an awful condition in the third and inter class carriages, although from outside the carriage is very clean.

Then there is another trouble of the travelling public in connection with these long journeys. The first and second class carriages are duly detached from one train and attached to another for long journeys, but the poor third class man has to get out at all sorts of unearthly hours and change from one train to another, and he goes from one platform to another inquiring of everybody without there being anybody on the station to help

him. Sir, when large sections of people have to change from one train to another, it is certainly expected of the railway people that they should provide simple conveniences for these journeys. Previously we had a large number of third and inter class through trains running corresponding to the mail trains, but recently these facilities have been withdrawn. This matter, I submit, requires looking into.

Then, very often at booking windows you find huge collections of people, the reason for that being not that people arrive late; oh, no, there are places where people arrive in the mornings while the trains are to leave in the evenings; but the booking windows will only open 15 minutes before the starting of trains. These booking clerks have developed a way of their own. They think it is having too much of a worry to dispose of more than six people within an hour. They will take their own time, and if anybody comes and asks them to dispose of the huge collections of waiting people, they look upon that as a sort of unnecessary burden. They think ten or twelve people are the utmost to dispose of in an hour. Then if you ask them for changing a note for Rs. 10, they think it is a nuisance, not to speak of a note for Rs. 100. Compare all this, Sir, with the state of affairs in Western countries. There you will find the booking office business has almost become a fine art, and only such people are employed there as can meet the wants of the travelling public smoothly and with convenience to them. But here, however lazy and inefficient and indifferent a booking clerk may be, he is all right in his job. Here people who can show an aptitude for handling passengers should be selected and put in charge, especially at places of great rush. Sir, at places like Hardwar, where thousands of people ought to be disposed of quickly on occasions of fairs, you will find a booking clerk who does not do more than 10 or 20 bookings in an hour. Then people have to pay porters heavy tips for getting anything done or carrying their loads. Then there is a matter of more personal interest which I wish to mention. Large numbers of my friends like myself have always felt that because of the odious charge for reservation of first and second class berths, one cannot successfully book seats on the phone, because you cannot pay the reservation fee on the phone and you must travel $5\frac{1}{2}$ miles, for instance, to the Delhi Railway Station or a mile or so to the Lahore Railway Station for the sake of having your seat reserved because the 8 annas fee cannot be sent by phone.

Sir, if you are charging so much for your first and second class, perhaps eight annas might be deemed to be included in the charge. If you can give the number of the ticket on the telephone that should be deemed enough. But the station staff says no, and asks us to send our servant along with eight annas. I submit that so far as the convenience to the travelling public is concerned, I respectfully put it that this is a matter which requires looking into, and that reminds me of the Members of the Railway Board and the Financial Commissioner that they should sometimes take to travelling like ordinary people. I do not say that they should travel in third class compartments; that would be rigorous imprisonment, but I want that they should travel like ordinary first and second class passengers. If they phone to the station, they will get the reply that there is no room, and they could travel the next day. If they go to the railway station without having booked a seat, they will then see if there is overcrowding. If they are in difficulties and if I happen to be in the train, I will certainly make room for the Members of the Railway Board. And I promise that even if I may have to keep awake the whole night.

[Mr. Jagan Nath Aggarwal.]

Sir, the least they can do is that they should travel as ordinary passengers unnoticed and unknown. With these words, I support the cut proposed.

The Honourable Sir George Rainy (Member for Commerce and Railways): Sir, I suppose this is the fifth occasion on which I have had to deal with this topic in connection with our annual Budget discussions, and I do not doubt that my successor will have to deal with it at least as often.

Mr. S. C. Mitra: Till the grievances are removed.

The Honourable Sir George Rainy: Because, Sir, whatever we may be able to do at present in the way of improving the conditions, I think that man would be a great optimist who supposed that we shall ever arrive at a time when all the railway passengers would be thoroughly satisfied and pleased. I think that would be an unduly optimistic view. To begin with my Honourable friend, Mr. Maswood Ahmad, (I have forgotten who was the author of the phrase perhaps it was Mr. Amar Nath Dutt) tried to find his way to the "soft spot". Well, Sir, though it would undoubtedly give me great personal pleasure if, before vacating office, I could do something for my old province, I have to remember the oath that is taken by Members of Council and the words "without fear or favour". Therefore, in trying to execute my duties as the Railway Member, I am to be impartial and not show special favour to special localities. One of the points taken by my Honourable friend was this. He put it in a particular form that between two particular stations which he named—Sone East Bank and Gomoh—there was only one through train each way during the day and at a very inconvenient time. Other similar cases, if not identical, were brought to notice by other Members, like my Honourable friend Mr. Lalchand Navalrai and by others whom I need not name. Now, in so far as it is merely a question of the absence of trains on a particular line between particular stations, I think all Honourable Members would agree that that is not a matter which we can possibly settle up here, and that it must be left to the Railway Administrations, subject of course to the pressure which their local Advisory Committees may be able to bring to bear.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: If that fails?

The Honourable Sir George Rainy: I recognise, however, that there is a general question, and it is this, that owing to the necessity of retrenchment, it has undoubtedly occurred that within the last year we have had to reduce the number of through trains. Personally, I do not see how, if economy was to be observed, that necessity could be avoided, and for the time being until things improve, passengers are likely to be exposed to greater inconvenience than they were a year or two ago. But we have to regulate the facilities we provide in accordance with the traffic offering. Sometimes I do not doubt mistakes will be made and in course of time this will be found out and rectified. But undoubtedly this period of depression and retrenchment does mean this, that in matters like the number of through trains that are run from one place to another, the facilities will be less than they were two or three years ago.

Every Member of the House who has spoken has drawn attention to a very large number of matters affecting the convenience and comfort of

passengers generally, and of third class passengers especially. I have listened with care to everything that has been said, and there was hardly a matter mentioned—I certainly could not name one at the moment—which I have not personally discussed with Members of the Central Advisory Council in the effort to devise means by which we could gradually effect improvements. The conclusions of the Advisory Committee—and I think in nearly every case we were able to accept those conclusions—were communicated to the Agents, and I believe that, we had begun to make a real advance as my Honourable friend, Mr. Mitra, admitted. It is one of the tragedies of the period we are passing through that, just when it seemed that we might be getting a move on, the trade depression comes along, and in so far as the provision of increased amenities involves larger expenditure in the railways, all our hopes for the time being are very nearly frustrated. That does not apply to all the matters which have been mentioned, but I am afraid it does apply to at least one mentioned by two speakers, namely, the provision of fans in third class and intermediate carriages. That is, by no means, a cheap business, and I am afraid to incur the expenditure that it would involve could not at present be contemplated. On the other hand, there are things like the quality of the food supply, and the provision of an adequate supply of drinking water at the stations, which do not necessarily involve expenditure. Sometimes the provision of water, it is true, might involve expenditure, but on the whole these two things are matters where there is not much expenditure involved. What is required is closer supervision and a real desire to see that the food supplied is eatable and that the drinking water supplies are adequate. These are the two matters I will certainly bring to the notice of the Agents again, because they are not questions that you can solve once for all, and it is only by continuous pressure that you can effect improvement or even maintain the standard to which we have already reached. As for most of the other questions, I think the best thing I could do would be to circulate the debate to Agents and ask them to consider the various suggestions which have been made by Honourable Members in consultation with their local Advisory Committees, and let us know in due course what the opinions of those Committees are, and how far they have been able to give effect to them. That I think would be the most practical thing I could do. But as it is only about 12 months since our discussions with the Central Advisory Council terminated, I rather doubt whether any particular purpose would be served by bringing it before the Council. But if any individual Member of the Council thought that a particular matter could usefully be discussed there would be no objection to that on the part of Government.

Now, Sir, I turn to one or two of the minor points that were raised. I am not sure that I agree with my Honourable friend Sir Hugh Cocke that he made out a very strong case for stopping through trains at suburban stations, on the ground apparently that it would encourage suburban development. I should have thought myself that an adequate provision of suburban trains was more important in that connection, because I doubt whether a man's choice of residence would very often be determined by the consideration,—let us say if he was living in Bombay—by the consideration whether the trains from Delhi ordinarily stopped at Bandra. Also I might point out that it may not be necessary to go by car to your home if you have to go to the terminus. If there is an adequate supply of suburban trains it may be possible to go in one of those trains. Finally,

[Sir George Rainy.]

it has to be remembered that on crowded sections of the line, such as the main lines running into Bombay, the time table requires very careful arrangement if the traffic is not to be delayed, and there is a limit to the number of stoppages that can be made.

I was interested in what fell from my Honourable friend Kumar Raghubir Singh, and particularly in the fact that he attributed the jerkiness of the trains to the substitution of State-management for Company-management. (Laughter.) I must say, Sir, that was to me a new light upon the subject (Laughter) because it had never occurred to me that amongst what my Honourable friend Sir James Crerar would call the "anfractuositities" of State-management, the jerkiness of the trains was not one of those which I had noticed. He also complained apparently that another result of the substitution of State-management was that people came and asked to see his tickets much too often. I have often had that feeling myself, not in this country so much as in Great Britain, where they are pretty strict about looking at your ticket and demanding to see it, and then turning you out if you have not got it. But after all it is surely the duty of any administration to see that people do not travel without tickets and without paying and thereby defraud the railway; and I cannot admit that this is a very serious grievance.

Then, Sir, there is another matter that I should like to allude to and that is the question of the attitude of the railway staff to the third class passengers, and of the great desirability of according them considerate and courteous treatment. I have the greatest sympathy with the complaints that are made on that score. I have always done what I could in the way of taking that matter up and sending down suggestions and so on. I remember I dealt with it rather fully in one of my Budget speeches, I think perhaps two years ago, and I entirely agree with what fell from one Honourable Member, namely, that courtesy and polite attitude from all superior officers to their subordinates is a very admirable example, and if that attitude is adopted in the hope that it will gradually pass down from one grade to another, a general improvement will be effected. I have always felt extraordinary admiration for the British railway servants in that respect, the amazing combination of efficiency and courtesy with which one is treated when one travels in Great Britain. I do not doubt that whatever deficiencies there may be in that matter in India, we shall, as time goes on, see a continuous improvement; but I should like to make it plain that there are already in existence standing instructions on all railways requiring their staff to give all assistance that they can to the third class passengers, and this is a matter to which, as a result of this debate, I am quite prepared to address the Agents. It is not merely a matter of issuing circulars or suitable instructions, however. If things could be put right in that way then we could all of us do a great deal of good in this world. But it is a matter in which you can only effect improvements gradually and by harping on the same string again and again. It is that which makes this annual debate a really useful institution, because it does give an opportunity of drawing attention to matters where improvement is possible, and gives Government an opportunity of passing on what Honourable Members have said.

I have also great sympathy with what has been said about improved arrangements for booking, although I am not quite sure where I am to find

those persons with particular aptitudes whom I am told I ought to appoint as booking clerks. Unless we hold some sort of selection committee, such as the selection committees for the navy, asking very subtle questions and trying to find out this natural aptitude, I am not quite sure how we are going to get them. But that again is a matter which was very fully considered by the Central Advisory Council. Of course we all recognise its importance and I am afraid that it may be one of the things which on account of retrenchment we have rather had to put on one side.

I do not know, Sir, that there is very much more that I can usefully say; but I should like to make it very plain that we are fully conscious of the importance of these matters which have been brought to notice and that, subject to the financial exigencies of the moment, we shall be very glad to do what is possible to effect improvements in the directions indicated in the course of the debate.

Mr. M. Maswood Ahmad: Sir, I do not want to make a long speech in reply but I wish to say this, that I do not want any favouritism from the Railway Board in the case of Bihar province. I do not want any partiality, I want bare justice; and my case was that the case of Bihar has always been overlooked and my Honourable friend also should not overlook its claims. If he thinks that to do justice is partiality or begging of favouritism then I cannot say anything more about it.

I did not raise the question of the Shia community to raise any communal bitterness but only to draw attention to the fact that there is a sect amongst ourselves also who observe religious strictness and generally do not take things unless prepared or given to them by Muhammadans only. If there is any doubt about my motives, I hope this explanation will remove it.

Sir, the question of inconveniences of the travelling public is very general and very common, as you have heard from the speeches from all quarters, and so I do not want to withdraw that point or add anything to my previous speech. Sir, I press my motion.

Mr. President: The question is:

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

The Assembly divided:

AYES—33.

Abdul Matin Chaudhury, Mr.
 Abdur Rahim, Sir.
 Anklesaria, Mr. N. N.
 Anwar-ul-Azim, Mr. Muhammad.
 Azhar Ali, Mr. Muhammad.
 Badi-uz-Zaman, Maulvi.
 Chinoy, Mr. Rahimtoola M.
 Dutt, Mr. Amar Nath.
 Gidney, Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry.
 Ismail Khan, Haji Chaudhury
 Muhammad.
 Isra, Chaudhri.
 Jadav, Mr. B. V.
 Lahiri Chaudhury, Mr. D. K.
 Lalchand Navalrai, Mr.
 Liladhar Chaudhury, Seth.
 Maswood Ahmad, Mr. M.
 Mitra, Mr. S. C.

Mujumdar, Sardar G. N.
 Murtuza Saheb Bahadur, Maulvi
 Sayyid.
 Pandit, Rao Bahadur S. R.
 Patil, Rao Bahadur B. L.
 Raghubir Singh, Kunwar.
 Reddi, Mr. T. N. Ramakrishna.
 Sadiq Hasan, Shaikh.
 Sen, Mr. S. C.
 Shah Nawaz, Mian Muhammad.
 Singh, Kumar Gupteshwar Prasad.
 Sitaramaraju, Mr. B.
 Subrawardy, Sir Abdullah.
 Sukhraj Rai, Rai Bahadur.
 Thampan, Mr. K. P.
 Uppi Saheb Bahadur, Mr.
 Wajihuddin, Khan Bahadur Haji.

NOES—42.

Abdul Qaiyum, Nawab Sir Sahib-
 zada.
 Acott, Mr. A. S. V.
 Allah Baksh Khan Tiwana, Khan
 Bahadur Malik.
 Allison, Mr. F. W.
 Azizuddin Ahmad Bilgrami, Qazi.
 Bajpai, Mr. R. S.
 Banerji, Mr. Rajnarayan.
 Bhore, The Honourable Sir Joseph.
 Brown, Mr. R. R.
 Clow, Mr. A. G.
 Cocke, Sir Hugh.
 Cosgrave, Mr. W. A.
 Crerar, The Honourable Sir James.
 Dalal, Dr. R. D.
 Fox, Mr. H. B.
 French, Mr. J. C.
 Graham, Sir Lancelot.
 Gwynne, Mr. C. W.
 Hayman, Mr. A. M.
 Heathcote, Mr. L. V.
 Howell, Sir Evelyn.

Jawahar Singh, Sardar Bahadur
 Sardar.
 Macqueen, Mr. P.
 Misra, Mr. B. N.
 Moore, Mr. Arthur.
 Morgan, Mr. G.
 Mukherjee, Rai Bahadur S. C.
 Noyce, Sir Frank.
 Parsons, Sir Alan.
 Rafiuddin Ahmad, Khan Bahadur
 Maulvi.
 Rainy, The Honourable Sir George.
 Rama Rao, Diwan Bahadur U.
 Ryan, Mr. T.
 Sahi, Mr. Ram Prashad Narayan.
 Schuster, The Honourable Sir George.
 Scott, Mr. J. Ramsay.
 Seaman, Mr. C. K.
 Studd, Mr. E.
 Sykes, Mr. E. F.
 Tait, Mr. John.
 Yamin Khan, Mr. Muhammad.
 Young, Mr. G. M.

The motion was negatived.

Railway Retrenchment Policy.

Mr. M. Maswood Ahmad: Sir, I move that the Demand under the head 'Railway Board' be reduced by Rs. 100, in order to discuss the railway retrenchment policy, Sir, there are two aspects of this case; first is the general aspect and secondly the aspect which has affected my community only. Sir, I do not want to discuss this point on communal lines at all. But as my Honourable friend, Mr. Hayman has referred to it in his speech yesterday I will also refer to it only by way of reply. Discussing the first aspect, i.e., the general aspect, I would point out that we have been consistently hearing on the floor of this House and outside that instructions have been issued by the Railway Board in this connection and in that connection. But what is the result? My Honourable friend, Sir Alan Parsons, in reply to my question No. 83 (a) says that the principles laid down by the Railway Board for retrenchment were that men should be discharged who were inefficient, least efficient and who have short service and those who were nearing the age of superannuation. I maintained last year that these instructions of the Railway Board carry no weight at all with the subordinate officers, and these instructions generally find their place in the waste-paper basket, and I still maintain that this year too. Now, Sir, in support of my allegation, I quote here the very words of a Divisional Personal Officer of the N. W. Railway, who discussing the retrenchment with an officer of the Railway Board, said:

"Retrenchment started on this division on 25th March 1931, and the principle adopted in effecting it was to discharge men on the basis of service. No one has been discharged on the ground of inefficiency or the least efficiency, or because he is nearing the age of superannuation. There are 87 men over the age of 52 employed at present on the Division.

The principle that was adopted in discharging men was also adopted when demoting staff and accordingly the juniormost men were demoted."

Mr. President, does it not show that I am correct in my allegation against the Railway Board? They know to issue circulars only, and after

that they do not care to see what is happening on the spot. If they do much, they issue another circular, which is again thrown into the waste-paper basket in Divisional Superintendent's offices. Thousands of efficient and energetic men of all communities were thrown out of employment on account of lack of supervision by the Railway Board. Old, inefficient and less efficient men have been retained in service, while young, energetic and efficient servants have been turned out of employment.

Mr. President, do you know what happened when these poor helpless employees of all the different communities of our mother country appealed to the higher authorities? In 95 per cent. of cases which I could see, the replies were quite unsatisfactory. After trying for months and months, a Court of Inquiry was appointed, and it was a great surprise to me when I heard the day before yesterday that the help of a lawyer on high pay was taken to defend the railway authorities and there was a big staff to help them. The poor helpless employees who were out of employment for a long time, who are half-naked and have starving children of the mother country could not defend their case. How was it possible for them to defend their case? How would it be possible for them to engage lawyers, or to see the files of others to whom favouritism was shown? Instead of inquiry by some sympathetic officers, a grand play was played and thousands of rupees were wasted in this way.

Sir, I will fail in placing the case correctly if I do not appreciate Mr. Young, Divisional Superintendent, Lucknow Division, who took a keen interest himself in going through the cases of such persons, but what great satisfaction would it have been to me and to my Honourable friend, the Commerce Member, if Mr. Young's example had been followed by others as well?

There would have been no trouble at all if the Railway Board had held written examinations, and after that they could have turned out inefficient or less efficient persons. In that case, none would have had any complaint to make. By retrenching old persons, the Railway Board could have saved more money, because old people get higher salaries than young persons. At the same time young persons are more energetic than old people. Naturally the energy which my Honourable friend, Mr. Hayman had ten years ago is not possessed by him now.

Sir Abdullah Suhrawardy: Question, question. It is increasing every day.

Mr. M. Maswood Ahmad: Nor will he maintain the same amount of energy which he has now ten years after. (Laughter.) I admit, Sir, that for mental work of office old persons are good, but for executive work done by people like guards, ticket collectors, ticket checkers, station masters and others, old people are not at all fit. I hope the Staff Member of the Railway Board will keep this question in mind for future guidance.

The other point to which I wish to draw the attention of the Railway Board is that retrenchment in number of persons or cut in pay is not a sound policy. The sound policy would have been either to declare the staff surplus and to absorb them in future vacancies, or if the Railway Board considered that retrenchment was quite necessary and could not be avoided in any circumstances, then they should have given forced leave for two or three more days in a month without pay to every employee, and I think that would have compensated them better than the retrenchment.

[Mr. M. Maswood Ahmad.]

Now, Sir, I will deal with the communal aspect of this question. Unfortunately my community has suffered much in this economy campaign as well, and Sir Alan Parsons in his reply to my unstarred question No. 82 says that:

"The orders issued to Agents of State-managed Railways in connection with the reduction of superfluous staff included an instruction that all practicable steps should be taken to see that the unfortunate necessity for reducing staff did not operate to the detriment of communities not at present adequately represented in railway services."

Now, I shall quote the very words from a minute of the proceedings of a meeting of the same Divisional Superintendent, North Western Railway, and an officer of the Railway Board:

"No steps have been taken when discharging or demoting staff to safeguard the interests of communities not adequately represented. It will be seen from statement A that those who have suffered most in retrenchment are Indian Christians and Moslems and in demotions Moslems only."

Does it now show, Sir, that my allegations against the Railway Board are quite justified? Am I not right in my inference and that which is gaining ground in the Muslim India that it is Government and not merely Hindus who are responsible for the absence of Muslims in Government administration? To authenticate my above views, Sir, I shall now proceed to show how inadequate Muslim representation has been maintained on the N. W. Railway. Sir, I will refer to the case of the N. W. Railway in this respect. The representation of Europeans, Anglo-Indians, Hindus, Muslims and others on the staff of this railway on 1st March, 1931 was 58 per cent., 87 per cent., 34.46 per cent., 56.16 per cent., and 7.93 per cent., respectively. As my friend, Mr. Hayman wants reference generally, I will refer him to his own letter, dated the 2nd November, 1931, and there these figures can be found. After reduction was over, i.e., on the 10th July, 1931, the representation was 63 per cent., 92 per cent., 34.71 per cent., 55.71 per cent., and 8.03 per cent., respectively. In other words, the percentage of Europeans, Anglo-Indians, Hindus, and other classes during a period of only six months has been increased by .05 per cent., .05 per cent., .25 per cent., and .1 per cent. and that the percentage of the unfortunate Muslims, the inadequacy of which I quoted in the words of Mr. Hayman himself yesterday, decreased by .45 per cent. Now, Sir, I will ask the Honourable the Railway Member or Mr. Hayman himself if in this way their instructions to keep intact the percentage of the communities not adequately represented have been maintained. Is the Railway Board only responsible

1 P.M. for issuing instructions to their subordinates? If the Railway Board is also responsible for seeing that their instructions are carried out, I would like to ask Mr. Hayman, Sir, if he took any action against the officers who are responsible for this. In this connection, Sir, I will quote one or two cases from the Dinapore Division. Several Muhammadan gentlemen, A. T. X. R., were retrenched there on the ground that they had passed the Asansol training examination in the third division. But it is quite a surprise to me that I have found that several A. T. X. R. gentlemen belonging to other communities were retained in service though they had passed the same examination in the same division and even then in the second chance, while these Muslims who were retrenched passed in the very first chance. Passing in the third division was considered as less efficiency in the case of the Mussalmans, whereas in the case of other

communities it was considered as efficiency. At the same time, the personal files of those men who have been retained I understand are not clean. They were fined two or three times, while the personal files of the Muslims who have been retrenched are clear. Now, what happened in the Howrah Division? Samiullah, Nazir Ahmad Khan, R. A. Siddiqi, Anwar Hussain, etc., crewmen of Howrah Division, mostly having about 5 years' service at their credit, having flawless personal files, have been discharged, whereas juniors who had only about 9 months' service to their credit, and who had no good personal files have been retained in service.

Now, Sir, I will also urge that as the ticket checking staff has already suffered the most as admitted by my Honourable friend, Mr. Hayman, I would request that no more share of retrenchment be inflicted on this unfortunate department. I will here request the Honourable the Railway Member to appoint any officer of the Railway Board to see to the two things I have just said above.

I also understand that the Railway Board is still contemplating a further reduction in the establishment, and if this unfortunate necessity occurs, I request that no more men be turned out of their job. They may be declared as surplus where they are not required until such time as they are absorbed anywhere else as vacancies occur. If the Railway Board consider that further retrenchment in railways is entirely necessary and cannot be avoided in any circumstances, I would ask them that, instead of discharging men from their employment, they should give forced leave for two or three days without pay to every employee every month, and I think that it will more than compensate what they would get by further retrenchment. This should be the last resort, and I shall prefer the former suggestion.

I would also like to say that the cut in the salaries of the railway staff is too a great hardship. The minimum grade of a clerk on the North Western Railway is Rs. 33—3—60. After deducting the provident fund instalment, viz., one-twelfth of the pay and one anna per rupee salary cut, he only gets something about Rs. 29. Now, Sir, if the unfortunate clerk happens to be in the vicinity of places such as Delhi, a large sum of his pay goes to the pockets of house owners in whose houses the clerks live. What happens is this. They try to extort money from passengers and thus inconvenience and trouble the travelling public. In the interests of the railways I would request them to reconsider the case of clerks' pay and stop the inconvenience to the public. It becomes quite clear that it is the railway which teaches its staff to trouble and tease the travelling public.

Now, Sir, I will not go into further details, but I hope that my Honourable friend, Colonel Gidney, who has had experience of the Court of Inquiry at Calcutta and Bombay, will be able to explain the situation at greater length when his turn comes. With these words, I move my motion.

Mr. President: Motion moved:

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

Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney: Sir, I accept the invitation of my Honourable friend to join in this debate, and though I support the motion, I feel I must dissociate myself from the views he has expressed as regards the policy which he has enunciated of driving out the old and

[Sir Henry Gidney.]

reinstating the young. If that policy were applied to this House, I do not think that many of us would be in the position in which we are to-day. Also I do not intend to raise any communal issue, although I am prepared to state that the retrenchment policy, as carried out within the last year, has seriously affected the economic condition of my own community. I shall, however, leave that alone, and I propose to-day to discuss the policy of retrenchment as it has been operated on the various railways.

The House may not possibly be aware of the retrenchment policy the Railway Board ordered to be carried out by the various State Railway Administrations. And I think it might interest the House if I were briefly to say what the various items in that policy were. The priority order, which was issued to the Agents of the State-managed railways by the Railway Board, gave the following. Retrenchment must be started, first with those who are inefficient, next with those who are least efficient, then those who have short service, including temporary and permanent, and then those who are nearing the age of superannuation. That, Sir, was briefly the order that was given to all the Railway Agents in March, 1931.

How have these orders been carried out? Yesterday I had occasion to refer to that very valuable Report of Mr. Hassan in which he outlined the flagrant way in which certain Railway Agents had violated the orders of the Railway Board regarding Muslim recruitment. The same story has to be repeated to-day regarding retrenchment. Let me analyse the manner in which the various State Railway Agents have carried out these orders—I shall confine my remarks to the four State railways on which Mr. Hassan has based his Report, the Great Indian Peninsula Railway, the East Indian Railway, the Eastern Bengal Railway, and the North Western Railway. This order of retrenchment was dated the 3rd March, 1931. Before that, the Railway Board had clearly foreseen the terrible financial catastrophe that was facing the country and the world in general, and they very wisely adopted certain retrenchment measures which are being operated from 1929 but more in a piecemeal manner than in the mass formation as was done last year. But the intensity of that campaign dated not with the order that was issued but earlier than that in certain of the railways. The Great Indian Peninsula Railway was the first one to introduce its retrenchment policy, and before the other railways started their retrenchment, the Great Indian Peninsula Railway had almost completed its work regardless of the orders of the Railway Board as far as communal inequalities were concerned after retrenchment was completed, and also, regardless of many of the other terms imposed in this order of the Railway Board. I say that the G. I. P. started its retrenchment earlier in the year 1931. They did not take 12 months as the period denoting whether a man was to be considered temporary or permanent. They took 5 years service as their standard. Men under five years were retrenched. They did not pay any attention to the specific orders given by the Railway Board that reductions should not operate to the detriment of communities not at present adequately represented in railway service. Now, the Mover of this motion has brought positive evidence before the House that his community has been considerably reduced as a sequel to retrenchment.

I have told you that my community has also suffered, but I am now dealing with the broad issue. The G. I. P. Railway carried out its retrenchment policy regardless of this order and I go further and tell this House that of the total Anglo-Indian retrenchment on all the railways, the G. I. P. retrenched more than 50 per cent. That shows you how that railway carried out the orders of the Railway Board.

Now, I come to the Eastern Bengal Railway. This railway carried out its retrenchments about April. They were not so severe. They did find that certain of their workshops had to be closed down out of dire necessity. I have no complaint to make about that. But I have a very serious charge to make against the Eastern Bengal Railway and that charge relates to the treatment meted out to the T. T. Is. Now, Sir, the *summum bonum* of my complaint is this. I have presented this matter in an exhaustive memorandum to the Railway Board and as far as I know, no action has been taken on it. I, however, hope this memorandum along with similar memoranda I submitted regarding T. T. Is. on the E. I. & N. W. Railways have been presented along with others to the Court of Inquiry for their information and action. I await this report, but I understand that the Court of Inquiry has already decided,—I speak subject to correction—after hearing official evidence that the case of T. T. Is. is not a retrenchment policy, in that although the pay and allowances of these employees have been reduced in most cases by 50 per cent., they have been placed in other appointments and so have not been deprived of employment. In other words these permanent employees have been retrenched and as a *meherbani* they have been provided with temporary appointments on much lower salaries. The Agent of the Eastern Bengal Railway has given these men a year's notice of discharge. I would like to know under what rules and authority this was done. That order still holds good and the Railway Board has taken no action. This I submit in itself is a violation of the orders of the Railway Board on such matters. The Railway Board may say that this has nothing to do with its retrenchment policy. That is a policy of economy and that it was the result of the Moody-Ward Report. That Report, Sir, is not worth the paper on which it was printed.

Now, I come to the East Indian Railway. This railway started its retrenchment, I speak subject to correction, in July 1931. Mr. Hayman will correct me if I am wrong. I must admit that the East Indian Railway have in the main been very generous in carrying out the orders of the Railway Board. They did not proceed so ruthlessly and they did not apply this retrenchment axe as did the G. I. P., a fact that redounds to the credit of that railway. But while I am desirous of giving credit to them, I am equally emphatic in condemning the treatment they have meted out to their T. T. Is. These T. T. Is. are a very experienced class of men, holding permanent employment some of them for years and years. Suddenly, this fever of economy is evidenced in the form of an epidemic and these men some of whom were drawing Rs. 400 and Rs. 500 per mensem were demoted and are paid to-day Rs. 150 and Rs. 125. Many of these employees are Anglo-Indians, and one must remember the fact that the education of an Anglo-Indian child costs from Rs. 50 or Rs. 60 per mensem. Do you call that a reasonable wage and a just measure of retrenchment? I say it is a starvation wage. I say the Agents of the railways who have practised this kind of retrenchment have absolutely no conception of what they have done. They have set

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aside all considerations of humanity. Now, I come to the North Western Railway which I believe is justly praised for having the best system in force so far as its personnel is concerned. This railway has certainly been more considerate, but look at the treatment it also has meted out to its T. T. Is. or Examiners. Many of them were getting salaries of from Rs. 200 to Rs. 250 per mensem *plus* an equal amount in allowances. The Agent has retrenched this allowance and instead a daily rate has been given which works out to about 15 or 20 rupees a month as compared with 200 rupees. That is the way the retrenchment axe has done its work. In addition to this retrenching of salaries, demotion was also put into operation. "Demotion" to me is an ugly word to use. Demotion would be a better and more appropriate word. These men were reduced from a higher to the lower grade of status and pay. Furthermore other allowances have been considerably curtailed. In addition a number of these men have been made to go on compulsory leave on half pay. Add to this the present rate of income-tax, the high cost of living, the increased customs duties on articles of food and you have a very sad picture indeed. And on the top of this add the ten per cent. cut. I do not complain against this 10 per cent. cut because it applies to all. I do not blame the Railway Board in this matter but I must admit it took the Railway Board a long time and a great deal of pressure from the Federation of Railway Unions and other Associations to enable them to realise that their policy of retrenchment was not being strictly operated by administrations, that it was a one sided one and that the railway subordinate was being made to bear the financial burden of the whole of the Government of India. My point is this. No action was taken as regards retrenchment of officials until pressure was brought to bear on the Board and this action was taken later in last year. The date of retrenchment of officials did not synchronise with the retrenchment of the subordinate staff. The Honourable Member in his Budget speech said that a total number of 169 posts had been retrenched. But how could construction jobs be abolished when no constructions were being undertaken? The Deputation Reserve of 4 per cent. and the Training Reserve of 41 were retrenched, these were all potential jobs to be made so as to establish the strength of the official cadre. That 28 posts were held in abeyance. "Abeyance" is a very elastic word, almost as elastic as the words "generally", "usually" and "ordinarily", used by the Railway Board in all new appointments to afford it a loophole of escape when it is criticised and only 37 posts were actually abolished. Now, if you refer to the explanatory Memorandum of the Railway Budget, this is what the Railway Board says:

"A large number of superior posts have been abolished in the course of the year and others held in abeyance during the absence on leave of permanent incumbent or otherwise. On State-managed railways, following the recommendations of the Retrenchment Committee, it has been decided to abolish the 36 construction posts that were added in the last revision, the deputation reserve of 4 per cent. and the training reserve of 41 posts. These account for the reduction of the cadre by 104 posts. In addition, the working posts in the cadres have been reduced and as a result of the rearrangement 37 posts have been abolished and 28 more held in abeyance. On company-managed railways, similarly 24 posts have been abolished and 44 more left unfilled."

Compare this total of abolished, unabolished, about to be abolished and the thought of being abolished jobs with the thousands and thousands of

subordinates who have been retrenched and actually abolished and you have an idea and a comparative valuation of the way in which Agents have applied the retrenchment policy of the Railway Board as between subordinates and officials. The Railway Board in their orders to Agents stated specifically that certain points had to be considered in their order of priority. Have Railway Agents carried out those orders? In my opinion, they have not. Sir, on the floor of this Honourable House I have already charged Railway Agents with flagrant disobedience of the Railway Board's orders, and to prove this let me tell you what Railway Agents have done in the filling up of the vacancies in the lower gazetted service. I was a member of the Railway Central Advisory Committee when the Lower Gazetted Service was created, that Service, Sir, was meant entirely for deserving and worthy upper subordinates. The creation of this service was the outcome of years of agitation to abolish the Local Traffic Service and in which the Secretary of State for India has acquiesced. Various Associations, Federations and Unions approached the Railway Board as to the manner of filling up of the posts in this service. It is well known that for years and years railway subordinates have been utilized to perform the work of higher officials at one-third of their salaries and have been made a convenience of in order to fill up the leave reserve for these higher officials. The Railway Board then very wisely considered the formation of a lower gazetted service and that service was meant for no one else but worthy subordinates. Now, Sir, I asked a question in this House the other day and I was told by Sir Alan Parsons that it was not meant entirely for subordinates and that it was open to Local Traffic Service and the Engineering Department. Now, Sir, the Engineering Department is a very big department and consists of a provincial department too and Sir Alan Parsons would have been correct had he said the provincial Engineering Department. But what have Railway Agents done? When they were asked to recommend names for the Lower Gazetted Service; the then G. I. P. Railway Agent attempted to press the claims of a number of his temporary Assistant Engineers who should have been axed to fill up vacancies in the lower gazetted service allotted to his railway and which he must have known were meant for subordinates. There was of course a loophole for him to use in acting as he did—viz., the "lower gazetted service" is to be "ordinarily" recruited from subordinates. Now, Sir, we have heard a lot about such words as "ordinarily", "usually", etc., and I think it is time the Railway Board issued specific orders to the railways so as not to give them these loopholes. The then G. I. P. Agent has used temporary Assistant Engineers, who should have been retrenched, as were temporary subordinates without exception to fill up appointments in the lower gazetted service. That, Sir, is the way the then Agent has carried out the prescribed orders of the Railway Board. Having illustrated the difference between retrenchment of subordinates and the retrenchment of higher officials, I shall now say a few words about the comparison between retrenchment on railways and retrenchment in other Government services. Sir, for some few years we have had deficits in our Budgets but it was only year before last and last year that the Government realized it had to reduce expenditure. The Railway Department however for reason best known to itself considered it right and proper that they should take upon themselves the burden of this retrenchment long before other Government Departments commenced to retrench, though I believe the Honourable the Commerce Member made some observations on this subject in his Budget speech last year in which

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he said that it was not fair to call upon the Railway Administration to bear the burden of this retrenchment or words to that effect; I was not in the House then so I am speaking from memory. Now what has actually happened? The whole of last year not a single Government Department, with a few scattered exceptions of course, took upon themselves the burden of this retrenchment policy and began to operate it only since the 1st January of this year, i.e., by a 10 per cent. cut in the pay and a few reductions in allowances. Railway officials had a 10 per cent. cut in their pay, their compensatory allowances were reduced (that is, their house-rents), certain mileage and other allowances have been reduced or stopped, but, yet, they have retained the Lee concessions. Sir, I say the higher railway officials and other Government officials can more easily and better afford to live on even a 50 per cent. reduction of pay than railway subordinates. (Applause.) Sir, there is a line of living which everyone must maintain, but there is a line of extravagance which only the higher official can and do maintain, the dividing line being the luxury line. When my friend Senior Mussolini Biswas yesterday laid down certain extraordinary dogmas regarding Anglo-Indian railway employment, he attempted to draw a line between the favoured and the deserving employee—or between democracy and socialism as he saw it. Similarly there is a line dividing these two sets of employees—Officials and subordinates—i.e., between autocracy and democracy, a line which might aptly be called the line of hypocrisy. (Laughter.) Sir, that is how the present retrenchment affects the railway official. I ask this House, are they prepared to subscribe to this operation by Agents of a policy of retrenchment such as I have outlined. I may not be right in my detail criticisms, but on the broad question of policy I maintain I am right in what I have said and I put it before this House for its serious consideration. Sir, I shall now refer to certain other matters which will take some time, about half an hour I think.

Mr. President: The House will now adjourn till 2-35.

The Assembly then adjourned for Lunch Till Twenty Five Minutes to Three of the Clock.

The Assembly re-assembled after Lunch at Twenty Five Minutes to Three of the Clock, Mr. President in the Chair.

Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney: When this House rose for lunch I was attempting to make a comparison between the method of retrenchment of subordinates and officials. In my remarks before lunch I find there is one point which I should like to clarify and to correct and that is as regards the imposition of income-tax as an additional burden on the shoulders of railway subordinates. What I meant was this. In addition to this cut of 10 per cent. and reduced allowance, they had to pay income-tax. I did not mean additional income-tax. I tried to explain the way in which the burden was borne by the Railway Department and how the other Departments of the Government of India escaped this hardship and I hope I have convinced this House that for nearly a

year railway subordinates were carrying the entire burden of this all India financial stringency in Government's attempt to reduce expenditure. The Railway Board was aware of the way in which retrenchment had been carried out. I believe I am right in saying that though they were not absolutely convinced of the charges that were being made against the various Agents about the unjust way in which retrenchment was being carried out by the Federation of Railway Unions and the Anglo-Indian and Domiciled European Association of which I have the honour to be the President and various other bodies, yet the cumulative effect of these representations impelled the Railway Board to consent to the appointment of a Court of Inquiry. Now, that Court of Inquiry has sat and before it cases were presented and I understand their report is now in the possession of the Railway Board. It is distinctly unfortunate that this House has not got an expression of opinion from the Railway Board as to what that report is. But there are various rumours afloat and rumours are not always devoid of truth. But besides this I have in my possession certain facts in connection with this Court of Inquiry which I am prepared to lay before the House. The contents of the report of that Court of Inquiry are not known but I hope I am right in saying that the report will prove that some of the charges that have been levelled against railway administrations are correct. Now, on what matters did that Court of Inquiry take evidence? Among other things it enquired whether retrenchment had been correctly or incorrectly operated, certain witnesses, both employees and officials, appeared before them to place their respective view points and on their evidence the Court of Inquiry has I understand based its report. Various matters such as the principles underlying retrenchment were also considered. Another question was that relating to efficiency, another referred to demotion and yet another to superannuation. All these points were considered by the Court of Inquiry. There is no doubt that the total number of employees ordinarily retrenched comes in the neighbourhood of 50,000, while the total number of officials retrenched or posts actually abolished is only 34. But the posts that have been done away with, formed, unformed, or deformed, are said to be 169. Although it may be proved that a higher proportion of official posts have been abolished as compared with the posts of subordinates actually abolished yet, this House has to determine whether 50,000 employees who have been retrenched is sufficiently countered by the abolition of only 34 official posts. Again, what are the jobs said to be kept in abeyance? And for how long will these jobs be held in the state of abeyance? Before I quote from certain statements made and opinions expressed by official witnesses before the Court of Inquiry I should like to state that it cannot be denied from my information that almost every case of retrenchment presented to this Court was justified under the cloak of "least efficient", a weapon which I believed was aimed at 95 per cent. of the retrenched men.

Now, Sir, the question of efficiency has been discussed on the floor of the House and I should like to ask Honourable Members on the Government Benches to give us, if they can, a correct interpretation of the words, "efficient" and "inefficient". From what Honourable Members on the other side have said I am led to conclude that by efficiency they mean literacy and by literacy they mean the possession of degrees. But surely the House does not require to be told that the degree does not make the man, the man makes the degree. If a degree is a *sine qua non* of efficiency I ask how many Agents and Members of the Railway

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Board possess a degree. (Hear, hear.) Of Members of the Railway Board, outside Members of the Indian Civil Service, how few if any of them possess a degree and yet we have in the present Railway Board one of the ablest administrators of Labour sitting there. I ask this House, what is the use of a B.A., or a B.Sc., in case of a collision or a communal riot in a workshop? Absolutely useless and yet efficiency is supposed to be one of the points that the Court of Inquiry had to enquire into. Sir, I opine that the day, the Railway Board decides that a degree is not a *sine qua non* for employment in railway services, it will kill all this communal unrest and scramble for appointments and it will work more harmoniously. I shall now show the House a few cases that were presented to the Court of Inquiry which will go to prove that the charges that have been made against the Railway Administration, not the Railway Board mind you, have some truth in them.

There was a case of a Mr. Martin who was alleged to be inefficient but when the witness officer was confronted with his evidence that he had no inefficient men on his Railway he calmly said it was "least efficiency". All Mr. Martin wanted was his leave and this was obtained for him through the representations of the Anglo-Indian and Domiciled European Association and the National Union of Railwaymen.

There is another case of a Mr. Andrews who was a senior Guard and was demoted on the plea of least efficiency. In this case it was proved that Mr. Andrews was a very senior Guard and in spite of an extraordinarily clear record of nearly 20 years he was the only man selected on the whole of the E. B. R. for demotion from Rs. 210 to Rs. 100. It was also proved beyond doubt that there were some who had only four years service and these too with very serious entries against them yet they were retained. Their records were challenged and it was found that they were bad.

There is yet another case, one which showed to the Court the unjust way in which an unfortunate lady was discharged. This lady who was employed at Chandausi, E. I. R. was discharged and another man, much junior to her, was retained. The officer giving evidence when examined told the Court that she was discharged for being junior. When this was disproved he tried to excuse himself by giving two other causes. These were also repudiated and I hear the lady has since been reinstated.

I will not keep this House much longer and I will cite only one more case. Six Indian Guards were either discharged or reduced—I am not sure—but they were brought under the axe. All these men had over 20 years service, one man had 29 years. When the railway official was examined by the defence, he said that all these men were "least efficient", but the history sheets of their service were produced and to the surprise of the Court it was discovered they had not a single black mark against them. I ask the House, are these not glaring cases of injustice, victimisation and hardship due to a misapplication of the policy of retrenchment.

Sir, these are some of the cases out of many that I have and I hope they show how officials in the Railway Administrations have operated the Railway Board's policy of retrenchment.

Now, Sir, I shall deal with another point to illustrate how Railway Agencies interpret the orders of the Railway Board. I have with me excerpts from the evidence given by a large number of Railway officials before the Court of Inquiry. I shall not weary the House by reading them—I am, however, prepared to show these to any one who wants to see them. The substance of these official opinions expressed before the Court of Inquiry proves to the hilt that no two officers were of the same opinion as to what the Railway Board really meant by its policy of retrenchment. The D. T. S. Katihar said it was so indefinite as to give him freedom to act as he thought best. Another said the Railway Board's instructions had been communicated to all Shed Foremen,—his subordinates,—with instructions to act according to the orders; that is to say, he left the matter in the hands of his subordinates. Another District Officer operated this retrenchment by fixing the number of men in each category and then demoting them on a new scale. Now what does demotion really mean? It means that after you have reduced your number of employees, as a measure of retrenchment, you not only place extra labour and responsibility on those you retain, but, in addition, you reduce their salaries by demoting them to a lower grade and on the top of this you cut all their lowered emoluments by a 10 per cent. cut—Sir, this is not "demotion" but "demolition".

Now, I come to another official witness. The D. T. S. of Katihar stated he had his own extraordinary system of retrenchment and assessment of efficiency. He divided the number of bad marks in the service sheets of an employee by the number of years service, the quotient being the index for comparison with similar indices of others in the same class of employment, subject to his personal judgment of the man's case, irrespective of the gravity of such remarks or the differences in responsibility of duty involved in the duties of the employees concerned, *e.g.*, the responsibility of a S. M. of a crossing station as compared with that of a flag station or the duty of a S. M. of a Junction with that of a road side station. The whole of the evidence that I have before me shows, beyond the shadow of a doubt, that however sincere and considerate the Railway Board was in its policy of retrenchment and the application of the retrenchment axe, the Railway Administrations did not follow out those orders. The result has been that acute dissatisfaction and restlessness exist among the Railway staff. The Railway Member paid a great compliment and tribute to the Railway subordinate staff for their devotion to duty, and the patriotic way in which they have borne this burden of retrenchment, and I am sure every Member of this House will join in that praise. But rumours are afloat that an additional 10,000 men or more are to be retrenched. The Railway Board I understand gave a promise to the Federation of Railway Unions that no further retrenchment would be resorted to until the Report of the Court of Inquiry had been received and considered.

The Honourable Sir George Rainy: Sir, I must correct that statement at once. No such promise was given.

Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney: I accept the Honourable Member's denial of that. If I am wrong I withdraw it. But I understand that the last Deputation that waited on the Railway Board was given this impression.

Mr. A. M. Hayman (Government of India: Nominated Official): No, Sir.

Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney: I am sorry; my information must apparently be wrong. Anyhow whatever it be, it does not effect my point very far nor help the Government Benches very much. The fact however remains that rumours are afloat that further retrenchment is about to be carried out. Rumours are also afloat that there is to be a further cut in pay. I frankly admit if you have no money you cannot keep a staff. But surely the Railway Board or the Railway Agencies when cutting their coat according to their cloth should see to it that even if the size of the cloth is lessened, the shape of the coat is still a fit and not a mis-fit, in other words create grave unrest and discontentment in their lower staff. I should like the Railway Member to deny the truth of these rumours because such a denial will considerably ease the present feeling of tension in the staff.

Then we have the question of superannuation. The Railway Board's orders on superannuation, as a measure of retrenchment, are very explicit. But how those orders have been interpreted by Agencies is clear from the official evidence given before the Court of Inquiry. One officer, the D. T. S. of Calcutta, said that he accepted of 54 years as the date for nearing superannuation; another the D. T. S. Katihar took the age of 52 as the lowest limit, while the D. T. S. Dacca fixed the age-limit as 50 years. According to the D. L. O. of Dacca, superannuation was decided on after examination by the Medical Board, and so on. It will thus be seen that the various ways in which superannuation has been and is being interpreted and operated as a measure of retrenchment by the various Agencies proves that they are not acting in accordance with the Railway Board's instructions on the matter.

Then with regard to demotion. In paragraph 4 of the Railway Board's letter of 3rd March 1931 it is said that employees whose posts are abolished have a better claim to retention than others holding posts on lower scale of pay. This principle, as was shown to the court, had been violated in Dacca, Katihar and Paksey Traffic Districts. The D. T. S. Paksey admitted before the Court of Inquiry that the retrenched men were not only fit for their respective jobs but were not fit for any other jobs under him. These admissions from the mouths of Railway official witnesses go to prove conclusively the charges I have made against Railway Agencies of disobedience of orders to the detriment of subordinates. Although these statements may not be in complete agreement with the report of the Court of Inquiry that is in possession of the Railway Board, yet they support in substance my charge against the Railway administrations, i.e., violation and disobedience of the Railway Board's orders on retrenchment.

Sir, I feel I have wearied this House by quoting these detail facts to support what I have said but this was necessary. I have no doubt the Railway Board will take shelter under the plea that with a reduced income from revenues they cannot maintain their present staff which they must correspondingly retrench. I entirely agree; but the point the Railway Board has to face and decide today is, are they going to have the Railways running or not, in other words are they riding for a fall by these retrenchments. Sir, I find myself in a very difficult position in my desire to bring home to the Railway Board the grave dangers ahead of them if their present policy is pursued. There is an under-current of grave restlessness

among all classes of Railway employees. They feel that they have been made to bear a financial burden which from the onset should have been shared by others. They feel, rightly or wrongly, that there is a disparity in the systems of retrenchment between the subordinates and officials and that subordinates have been and are being sacrificed to prop up officials. They also feel that they have come to the end of their tether and that their loyalty and devotion to duty have been strained to breaking point. There is a school of thought which holds that all retrenched men should be re-engaged, that railway extensions should be gone on with, that we should not curtail our railway programme, that fares and rates should be increased so that the burden is shared equally by the general public and its public servants and that the Railway Board should float a loan and so maintain a living pulsating Railway administration and not encourage the storing away of hundreds of locomotive engines to decay with the rust of inactivity. Possibly such a policy in the long run is fraught with less danger than this ruthless application of the retrenchment axe. But whatever may be the best course to pursue the Railway Board must appreciate and squarely face these facts and their implications. The whole substance of my speech has been to prove to this House that, though the Railway Board has been considerate and has been genuine in its desire to treat its subordinate employees fairly, Railway Agencies have lamentably failed in their duties and the present grave discontent is the result. Now, what is the remedy? The remedy is very obvious. If the Railway Board is to control the Railway Administrations of this country, they should see to it that their agents obey their orders, otherwise they must take the responsibility of what may happen. If they will take my advice and the advice of this House, they would at once inquire into some of the cases I have today brought to their notice as also the cases the Court of Inquiry has no doubt brought to their notice, and sack those Agents who have disobeyed their orders the same as the Agents would sack their subordinates for such an offence. Sack one of these defaulting Agents and believe me, you will find it will lead to a great improvement of affairs. It is time that Heads of Departments were brought to a clearer sense of their responsibility. Sir, Government have only recently taken State control of certain Railways, but even today on some of these Railways the joint-family system exists among officials and you will still find in several Railways a large number of officials all related to each other doing just as they please with their staff and Railway Board's orders. The Railway Board however have a sacred duty to perform. With all respect I call upon them to perform that duty today. I call upon this House to press this motion to a division unless the Railway Board gives a satisfactory explanation and an assurance that action will be taken against Railway Administrations should the charges of injustice be proved by the Court of Inquiry. In other words, I call upon the Railway Board to sack any Railway official who is found to have violated their orders after they have considered the Report of the Court of Inquiry and the cases presented to them in today's debates.

With these remarks, I support this motion.

Mr. A. M. Hayman: Sir, I think it only fair that I should speak at this stage so as to convey to the House a correct impression of how the Railway Board approached this most difficult question of having to make discharges of its employees. I think when I have placed the facts before

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the House I shall carry almost every Member of this Assembly with me in thinking that the Railway Board has acted most considerably towards its employees

Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad (United Provinces Southern Divisions: Muhammadan Rural): Question.

Mr. A. M. Hayman: It is very difficult for me to deal with so difficult a subject if, before I place my facts before the House, I am questioned concerning them. Sir, in the summer of 1929 when it first became apparent that the railway earnings were decreasing to a very alarming degree, the Railway Board wrote to the Agents of the Railway Administrations and gave them a lead as to how they were to effect economies in their working expenses. Railway Administrations were told in a letter which we addressed to them then to make special investigation into the methods by which expenditure could be curtailed, and reports were called for regarding the results of their investigations. In this letter the main directions in which it might in the opinion of the Railway Board be found possible to reduce the working costs were indicated. These included reduction in the passenger and goods train mileage of railways owing to the drop in traffic, reduction in shunting hours and mileage for the same reason, reduction in coal consumption by reducing to a minimum detentions to locomotives in steam, a vigorous campaign for the more economic use of consumable stores, reduction in the annual charges of ordinary maintenance and repairs, reduction in working departmental trains, closer supervision with possible reduction in permanent way gangs. I have read out this list because I wish to place before the House this point, that in all those measures which we first indicated to our railways, we set out those measures which would affect the staff the least; that is to say, that although early in 1930 we found it imperative to reduce our working expenses, we thought out and placed first all possible measures that we could introduce which would reduce expenditure but at the same time affect the staff to the very lowest degree. But towards January 1931 we became convinced, with the continued fall in earnings, that we had to attack this problem even more seriously, and that inevitably measures would have to be taken which, while reducing the working expenses of the railways, would seriously effect the numbers of employees that we had in our services. At that stage we did not desire to move all on our own. Accordingly the Railway Board summoned the Agents of Railway Administrations to Delhi, discussed the matter very fully with them, and asked them to reduce their expenditure drastically and keep it within certain limits that the Railway Board then found it necessary to prescribe for each of them. At that meeting I made a most earnest appeal to the Agents to endeavour to reduce expenditure again first in those directions which would affect the staff the least. But we were not satisfied that we should let matters rest even there.

In March 1931 the Railway Board issued orders to Railway Administrations stating the principles which they desired that should be followed in dealing with the discharges of staff who became surplus to requirements. Both my Honourable friends, Mr. Maswood Ahmad and Sir Henry Gidney, have referred to those orders. I am not going to enter into any very great

defence of the principle of those orders, because a large part of them have been placed before the Court of Inquiry on a complaint of the All-India Railwaymen's Federation on behalf of the railways' subordinate employees. The Court in investigating the complaint has heard the Federation representing the employees and has heard the Railway Administrations. It was not a case in which the Railway Board were called upon to defend anything that they had done; it was a dispute between the Railway Administrations and their employees. But to the extent, Sir, that anything has been placed before that Court concerning these matters and on which that Court is going to report I think it would be wrong of me to express an opinion or to anticipate the findings of that Court. To that extent I pray that Honourable Members will excuse me if I do not answer certain criticisms that fell from Sir Henry Gidney.

I would like to summarise the principles contained in those orders of the 3rd March and the 6th March. They both dealt with the discharge of employees; but we had to have a separate set of orders for the workshop employees who serve under somewhat different conditions from the other employees, and that is why we issued two letters, one on the 3rd March applying to all except workshop employees, and another on the 6th March embodying similar conditions, etc., which applied to our workshop employees. The main principles embodied in those letters were (1) that they laid down the order in which individuals should be selected for discharge; (2) the avoidance of victimisation, (3) the instruction that special regard to be paid to the interests of communities not adequately represented in the railway services, (4) the grant of leave to staff discharged, (5) the drawing up of a waiting list for employees discharged to secure their reappointment with the return to normal conditions, and lastly the adoption of other methods as an alternative to the discharge of employees who are surplus in their own grades but could be utilised elsewhere or would be likely to be required back for work in the near future.

With your permission, Sir, I shall make a rapid survey of the instructions issued by the Railway Board from time to time on each of these six principal points.

(At this stage Mr. President vacated the Chair which was taken by Mr. Deputy President.)

First, as regards the order in which individuals were to be discharged, it was laid down that those who were inefficient or least efficient were to be the first to go. Next men with short service; and lastly those nearing the age of superannuation. It was suggested to the Railway Board that the Railway Administrations would find it extremely difficult to work the first instruction, namely, the discharge of employees for inefficiency or those who had only a very small degree of efficiency. It was suggested to us that there would be victimisation. We at once took action on this suggestion; we instructed Agents to take suitable steps to eliminate the possibility of victimisation. Their attention was drawn to the rules which we had issued in 1929, under which in the case of men to whom those rules applied with not less than ten years' service at their credit they were not ordinarily to be discharged for inefficiency unless a clear case of inefficiency was made out against them. The Agents were further advised to consider the application of similar methods to employees who had even less than ten years' service. Further when a complaint was made to the

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Railway Board at a meeting with the All-India Railwaymen's Federation in June 1931, the Agents were instructed to examine any case that was brought up to them on representation by recognised Unions or on appeal, where it was claimed that favouritism had been exercised or victimisation practised; and we went so far in this matter that we offered the President of one of the Unions that the Agent of the Railway himself would meet the President of the Union and examine all cases in which the Union represented that there had been victimisation or favouritism practised in the application of this order of the Railway Board

Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad: Will you please name the Agent?

Mr. A. M. Hayman: The Agent of the North Western Railway.

Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad: But what about the East Indian Railway? He refused to listen to anything.

Mr. A. M. Hayman: I will answer the Honourable Member's question in a few minutes. Sir, I will tell the House what our State-
 3 P.M. Railways did in this matter. The North Western Railway issued instructions that before any employee was discharged on grounds of inefficiency or least efficiency, his case had to be examined by two officers working as a sort of committee. On the Eastern Bengal Railway, district officers were instructed to refer all doubtful cases to the heads of department and heads of departments were instructed to refer all doubtful cases to the Agent. The cases of employees brought under reduction were carefully examined by the heads of departments, and in certain cases by the Deputy Agent himself. The district officers concerned were in some instances called upon to justify their action and their orders reversed in cases where it was considered that the spirit of the Railway Board's orders had not been carried out.

On the East Indian Railway the orders of discharge were in each case passed by a senior scale officer. Appeals were dealt with by the Divisional Superintendent himself and where necessary carefully examined either by the heads of departments or by the Agent. I am advised that appeals were carefully examined, and it was generally held that orders were passed on a fair basis.

On the G. I. P. Railway the powers to discharge were reserved to heads of departments alone.

Now, Sir, I will say this, that there have been representations that in the application of this part of the orders of the Railway Board, there has been victimisation and favouritism, and Colonel Gidney has quoted a few instances which he has perhaps got from newspaper accounts

Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad: I think I can quote instances ten times as many if I get a chance.

Mr. A. M. Hayman: That is not for me to say. Now, Sir, we have in the Railway Board been following also the evidence given before the Court

of Inquiry, and one of our officers, who assisted the Railway Administrations in placing the case so far as the railways were concerned before the Court of Inquiry, had my distinct instructions that if at any stage of those proceedings he felt in any way that any employee had been unfairly treated, he was to ask the Agent of the railway that his case should be re-examined and that if any injustice had been done to him, that he should receive justice at once

Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad: On a point of personal explanation, Sir. In many cases these appeals were sent back to the Superintendents and nothing was done.

Mr. A. M. Hayman: The Honourable Member can state his case when he has an opportunity.

Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad: I know I will not have an opportunity to do so.

Mr. A. M. Hayman: Well, Sir, I am speaking on the authority of this officer who went about from place to place watching the proceedings of the Court of Inquiry, that in many instances where there was some evidence that a man had not been properly treated, he had brought those instances to the notice of the Agent of the Railway or a responsible officer of the railway who told him that action would at once be taken

Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad: Name the officer who went about from place to place.

Mr. A. M. Hayman: It was Major Wagstaff. Well, Sir, when the Railway Board receive the Report of the Court of Inquiry, there is one thing which they will promptly set themselves to do. They will issue instructions that in every case in which there is evidence that a man has been badly treated (I am speaking so far as our State-managed railways are concerned), immediate steps should be taken to see that justice is done to the individual concerned because, Sir, we do feel this that when we entered upon this campaign of retrenchment, when we had to discharge a very large number of employees, more than 40,000 employees, that as this large discharge had to take place in a very short space of time, it would have been idle for us to suppose that here and there there would not be some cases of injustice, and we shall see, Sir, that all cases of injustice, as soon as they are brought to our notice, are suitably dealt with and that justice is done in every case. (Applause.)

Now, Sir, I ought to say a word or two on the question of what is described as demotions. Colonel Gidney tries to make out it was demolitions and not demotions. Well, Sir, that is just what it was not. If in this matter we adopted what we might call the line of least resistance and took the lowest in seniority in a grade or class where posts were abolished and told these men "You must not go", we should then have had no demotions and probably no complaint from Colonel Sir Henry Gidney that we

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had handled this matter badly. It would have been an easy thing for us, Sir, to take all the men at the bottom of those grades to send them away, but that, Sir, would not have been the right thing to do. Sir, employees rise from one class to a higher class on the basis of seniority, merit and good conduct, and it would have been an act which we really could not justify if we adopted the course, I have just referred to. And so very clearly in the orders of the 3rd March, we told the Agents of Railway Administrations that when men became surplus in a higher grade, efforts should be made to employ them in the next or still lower grade, that is to say, we desired to keep in our service those who, by reason of length of service and on account of their good work and good conduct, had risen to the higher grades. And, Sir, I am surprised that anybody who has the interests of the railway employees at heart should say that, while adopting this principle in making demotions we have been doing anything but what was reasonably expected of us in fairness to the men.

Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney: On a point of personal explanation, Sir. I did not say that I objected to the principle of demotion. My complaint was that demotion was not practised among officials.

Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad: It is a fact.

Mr. A. M. Hayman: I did not catch what the Honourable Member said. Will he please repeat his remark?

Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney: I want to tell the Honourable Member that when I criticised the application of demotion, I did not say it was badly carried out. All I said was that you did not similarly demote officials.

Mr. A. M. Hayman: I shall deal with that aspect of the question later on.

Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad: You have simply turned out poor people in order to find more money for the increment of pay of higher officers.

Mr. A. M. Hayman: I emphatically deny that. Then, Sir, it will interest the House if I at this stage just read out some figures showing the total number of subordinates and inferior servants discharged from our railways, classified as those who were discharged under the first category, viz., being inefficient or least efficient and those under the category of superannuation. The remainder represents those discharged on the basis of short service.

Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad: Will you please give the number of the officers and men separately?

Mr. A. M. Hayman: I shall deal with the officers' question quite frankly later on.

	Total No. of employees discharged.	Discharged for inefficiency.	Discharged on account of superannua- tion.
N. W. Ry.	9,253	1,263	268
E. B. Railway	1,463	796	129
E. I. Railway	11,695	926	147
G. I. P. Railway	8,739	29	10
Burma Railways	1,927	(I have not been able to get the details.)	
B. N. Railway	1,620	10	19
B., B. & C. I. Railway	2,190	58	81
M. & S. M. Railway	1,120	232	25
S. I. Railway	1,458	10	9
Assam Bengal Railway	412	11	0
B., N. W. and R. & K. Railways	625	(I have not been able to get the details.)	

The point I want to make is that out of a total of 40,500 and odd employees that have been discharged, only 3,335 men have been discharged on the ground of inefficiency, that is to say, the majority (it excludes this number, *viz.*, 3,335 and the 688 discharged on account of superannuation) were discharged on the basis of length of service.

Mr. M. Maswood Ahmad: What about the Clearing Accounts Office? Will the Honourable Member quote figures about this office?

Mr. A. M. Hayman: Only 688 on account of superannuation and 3,335 on account of inefficiency were sent away, and the remainder were all dealt with on the basis of their short service with one reservation, namely, that we took steps to see that the interests of communities inadequately represented in the service were protected. On that subject, Sir, I gave the House figures yesterday.

Nawab Sir Sahibzada Abdul Qayyum (Nominated Non-Official): May I enquire whether the removal of Mr. Mehta, who served on the Khyber Railway as a temporary engineer for a long time and whose services are, I hear, being dispensed with after nearly 14 years of service, is due to inefficiency or short service, or on what other grounds?

Mr. A. M. Hayman: Sir, I must say that I am unable to give a direct answer to my Honourable friend Nawab Sir Abdul Qaiyum, but as soon as we receive the records of this discussion, I shall have enquiries made into that particular case and communicate the result to the Honourable Member.

Nawab Sir Sahibzada Abdul Qaiyum: May I remind the Honourable Member that the gentleman's case was referred by the Railway Board to the Agent of the North Western Railway for some such consideration as was explained by my Honourable friend, and no regard was paid by the Agent to the recommendation of the Railway Board?

Mr. A. M. Hayman: I can only say at this stage that I will have the matter fully looked into, bearing in mind also what the Honourable Member has just said.

I think I had better at once pass on to deal with the question of discharges made in the superior establishments of our railways. Now, Sir, I must first explain to the House, and this is no new thing that I am telling the House because the House should be aware of it if it has read the memorandum that was discussed at the Central Advisory Council for Railways on the subject of the reorganisation of the superior cadres of our railway services. For more than nine or ten years the superior cadres of our railways were neglected, and as a result, the number of officers employed on our State-managed railways fell very short of what was required for the proper management of the railways, making due allowance for leave and deputation reserves. There is one other important matter to which I shall devote a little time. That important matter is this. The cadres of the superior establishments of railways in the past were framed on a basis which made no allowance for carrying on projects of new construction or big open line projects, with the result that when railways were called upon at any time to handle a big programme of railway construction or of open line works, they had to take away a fair proportion of their experienced officers from the open lines and fill their places by temporary engineers, and they also employed a fair proportion of temporary engineers on the new lines and for new works. This was not a very satisfactory arrangement. If we want to get the best out of those we employ, we should have some hold upon them. Now, Sir, it was not right, we thought, to employ temporary engineers who came in for a year or two and went away, on works of responsibility and on works where expenditure of large sums of money was involved. So, when we did consider the question of revising the cadres of the superior establishments of the State railways (and when that revision was taken up, I should like to say that we were not faced with the position with which we are now faced, viz., that we cannot go in for new construction or new works for want of funds), we decided to remedy this defect. In framing those cadres we made allowance for a certain minimum number of posts which we thought would always be required to carry out new construction programmes and new open line works programmes as we might call it. Thus our new cadre was expanded first to provide a certain number of officers who were absolutely necessary to bring the strength of the establishment up to the minimum necessary to deal efficiently with the open line work of management, maintenance and operation. Next an addition was made of a reserve for leave and deputation purposes.

By putting such a reserve into the permanent cadre you have permanent and experienced employees to take up the work of permanent employees who proceed on leave or on deputation. Lastly, we made the addition I referred to previously in order to have permanent employees to take up responsible work of new construction involving large expenditure of money. The result of the revision was that the number of posts in the cadres of the superior establishments of the state-managed railways was increased from 942 to 1,078. (*Mr. B. Das*: "In which year?") The examination began soon after I took up my post, which was about April 1929, but the subject was of such intricacy and required such careful handling to see that while correct principles were adopted there was no extravagance that actual sanction was accorded some 12 or 15 months afterwards, by the authorities concerned.

After these cadres had been revised and sanction had been obtained to the revised cadres, the next step was to complete the cadres by bringing the actuals, i.e., the number of officers in each service or branch, up to the sanctioned strength of the cadres. Now, by that time we had come into the period of financial depression and we had to realise that with the fall in our railway earnings we would have to curtail our construction and new works programme, and cut down open line expenditure too and that consequently it would not be fair to bring our actuals up to the full strength of the sanctioned cadre. So, the Railway Board refrained from filling in a large number of the posts which were on the sanctioned cadre. Sir, if we have discharged a smaller number of officers proportionately as compared with the number of subordinates that we have discharged, I want to make it clear that it is due to three causes, one, that we had a number of officers' posts in our superior establishments not filled up at the time that we began the economy campaign, secondly, that we had a large number of temporary officers who were filling posts in our permanent cadre who were brought under reduction and discharged, and lastly, I want to make this point, that at a time when we had to reduce our subordinate establishments to a very minimum required, so to speak to cut down the number to the very bone—we had to take good care to keep our supervision at that point which would enable us to conduct our business efficiently. (*Mr. S. C. Mitra*: "Less men, more supervision!")

No only the minimum supervision required. Sir, we had increased our cadre from 942 posts to 1,078. Soon after we took up the retrenchment campaign we made it our business to consider the reduction of the cadre, and here while we were still investigating the matter we received the help of the Report of the Railway Retrenchment Sub-Committee. Finally, we reduced the cadre from 1,078 to 933. Now, Sir, immediately we had decided upon reducing our cadre to 933, the first step that the Railway Board took was to see that the number of officers we had on duty was not more than 933. We have satisfied ourselves that that is the case. We had temporary officers on short term agreement and by having discharged them we brought the actuals down to the sanctioned cadre.

Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney: Camouflage!

Mr. S. C. Mitra: What was the actual strength? It was not 1,078.

Mr. A. M. Hayman: The actual strength was 933 *plus* 53. I give this figure 53 a little reservedly because I have not had an opportunity to check it, but it may lie between 53 and 60.

I have just one word to say in connection with the discharge of temporary officers in reply to a point made by Colonel Gidney. The principles that we laid down for the discharge of subordinates were applied by us to our officers in that we said that if we actually make discharges then those who are inefficient must go and then those of short service. Now, if the Railway Board had not been far sighted and had not seen that it would be necessary to reduce the actual strength of the officers serving in the department, had not examined the claims of the temporary officers who were serving on short term covenant, I think it would be clear to the House that a very large number of young Indians who had been recruited on the 75 per cent. basis of recruitment in recent years would have been discharged under this economy campaign. If I may strike a personal note, it would have broken my heart if that had occurred, for in the few years immediately preceding we have been doing every thing possible to expand our recruitment, so that by our 75 per cent. recruitment of Indians we should bring in an adequate number of Indians.

I am glad that the challenge that we have treated officers better than men has been raised because there seems to be an impression in the House as well as outside that we have been treating our officers better than our subordinates. If ever there is a general order, which has to be applied to officers and subordinates alike, I made it a point of duty to tell my Chief that it must first apply to officers and next to the subordinates. But inasmuch as we did not fill up our expanded cadres and inasmuch as we discharged surplus officers even before we reduced our cadres to 933 we did in a way apply the orders fully and timely to the superior establishment.

Now, Sir, I would like to say a word about our temporary engineers. We have temporary engineers in our service who had ten years or more service in 1920, at a time when we introduced the provincial services. At that time these temporary engineers were told that for the purpose of retention in the service their claims would be considered *pari passu* with men who were in the permanent service, and that is why some temporary engineers in the state-managed railways have not been discharged. That answers, though only partly, the criticism made by Colonel Sir Henry Gidney. There is another answer and that is this. When we were doing some temporary work and we had temporary engineers employed in that work and the work was about to be completed in six or nine months, say, the construction of a bridge or a new line, it would have been wrong on our part to discharge the engineers employed on the work. They know exactly what they have got to do to complete the job and they have got the contractor's accounts to complete. This is why we are still employing some temporary engineers even though they have not very long service. Again, Sir, Sir Henry Gidney said that we filled posts in the lower gazetted service with people who are not entitled to be put into that service and he particularised some of the temporary engineers promoted to this service. Now, Sir, when we placed our recommendations on this subject, *viz.*, the creation of the lower gazetted service, before the Central Advisory Council, I think I am repeating the exact words of the relevant portion, we said, that the service is reserved essentially for the promotion of subordinates, with no outside recruitment. Now, Sir, we regard our temporary engineers as much entitled to promotion to the lower gazetted

service as men in the subordinate service and that is our justification for selecting here and there a temporary engineer who has done very good work to fill a post in the lower gazetted service.

My Honourable friend Mr. Maswood Ahmad referred to certain discussions between the Divisional Officers of the North Western Railway and somebody else, and he appeared to think that Divisional Officers did not pay proper attention to the instructions of the Railway Board and that when retrenchments were made they were done in a manner which reacted to the detriment of the communities which were inadequately represented in the railway services. He also quoted some figures from a letter which we wrote to him in November 1931, in which we gave the total number of employees discharged in the North Western Railway and the number of Muslims discharged. The figures as quoted by Mr. Maswood Ahmad are quite correct. But I said yesterday that the North Western Railway had come very close to retaining for every community a percentage of representation after retrenchment which corresponded with what it held before retrenchment. In one instance, however, we found that a certain number of Muslims had been discharged, when by a proper application of these orders they ought not to have been discharged. I told the House that we had already taken action and written to the Agent to adjust this as quickly as possible as vacancies occurred. Now, this question whether the Railway Administrations have properly interpreted this order will come up again for the consideration of Government when they receive the Report of the Court of Inquiry. Government will then take measures to rectify anything wrong that has been done. I can give my Honourable friend Mr. Maswood Ahmad that assurance.

Sir, I am sorry that I have taken so long to put my case before the House. In concluding I wish to say that there is no interest to which I pay greater attention than that of the subordinate staff and there is no work to which I attach greater attention than to see that the interests of the subordinate staff, to which I had the honour to belong for many years, are adequately safeguarded.

Mr. M. Maswood Ahmad: Will my Honourable friend say if he is thinking of retrenching more staff?

Mr. A. M. Hayman: That is a very difficult question to answer precisely at this moment. We in the Railway Board are charged with the primary duty of managing the railways of India without a loss. If the earnings of the railways continue dropping as they have been doing in the last few weeks, viz., by 20 lakhs to 25 lakhs, we shall be compelled to reduce expenditure further and if we reduce expenditure, i.e., our working expenses, it necessarily follows that we shall be compelled to discharge staff surplus to requirements.

Mr. B. Das (Orissa Division: Non-Muhammadan): Sir, it seems that we have been discussing the grievances of the railway employees of the railways from yesterday morning up till now. Sir, when I read the agenda paper and this particular motion by my friend, Mr. Maswood Ahmad, I thought he and his supporters would bring out facts and figures for compelling the Railway Board to devise ways and means for further retrenchment in the cost of the present administration of the railways, and, instead, we have from my Honourable friend, Mr. Maswood Ahmad and from his

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great supporter, the gallant Knight, Sir Henry Gidney, the ventilation in meticulous detail of the particular grievances of particular employees whom possibly they had the opportunity to meet somewhere, on the floor of the House. Sir, the result is that we have wasted precious time on the floor of the House. (Hear, hear.) Sir, I thought it was useless for me to intervene in this debate and to focus before the House the main question of retrenchment in the cost of railway administration, but my Honourable friend, Mr. Hayman, rather drew me into the field. He attracted the attention of the House, I may say, to what was the underlying policy of the Railway Board about retrenchment when he referred to the retrenchment policy of the Railway Board about the superior staff. Sir, I have said before, and I again state it here, the Railway Board have not faced the problem squarely and honestly, nor has even my Honourable friend, the Leader of the House and Member for Railways faced the problem squarely. My Honourable friend, Mr. Hayman, mentioned certain circulars to which the gallant Colonel, Sir Henry Gidney, referred also and which the Railway Board circulated last year to the Agents of different railways. Sir, that did not satisfy us in the main Retrenchment Committee of which my Honourable friend, Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad, is still a Member. The Railway Retrenchment Sub-Committee has reported, and we will hear later on from my Honourable friend, Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad, the disadvantages that that Sub-Committee went through and how that Sub-Committee was deprived of their inherent right to go into the administrative problem concerning the different railways and into the working expenses of the different railways. Sir, for a Committee of this Legislature not to be allowed by the Railway Board or by the Government to discuss problems that vitally affect the very terms of inquiry of the Committee concerned was the most surprising thing, and, Sir, that was one of the bitterest pills which had to be swallowed by Members from this side of the House. (*An Honourable Member*: "Did you swallow it"?) Sir, if I am to give my opinion on the retrenchment policy of the Government and the retrenchment policy concerning the railways, I say they have not so far only tinkered with that problem. For friends on my left, then, to come forward and ask, why was a particular person deprived of his appointment, and why this particular retrenchment took place at all, and so on and so forth, takes my breath away. Sir, my friend, the Honourable the gallant Knight, Sir Henry Gidney, when speaking in the general discussion, said that there was a time when there was a deficit of something like 18 crores on the railways, and why, he asked, are the Railway Board afraid of the present deficit of 7 crores to 8 crores? Why not, he asked, take it from general revenues, or get it somehow or other? Why not, he asked, increase the rates and the freights? Sir, my gallant friend forgot that there is such a thing as the last straw on the camel's back; and probably the number of passengers would have immensely increased but for the fact that the passenger fares are too high. Then, if there is not sufficient amount of goods moving about on the railways, it is probably because the freights are already too high.

Sir, if we take back the railways to the year 1920-21 and thereafter, just after the war, when the Government could not balance their Budget, when millions were squandered away by the policy of the then Finance Member through the then exchange policy, when the rupee went up to 2s. 8d., what happened? The rates and freights went up; and then today to hear from such a well-informed Member as my Honourable and gallant

friend, Sir Henry Gidney, why not raise the rates, why not raise the freights, what does it matter, let the services be paid, Sir, is indeed shocking! Does he plead for all the services? No. He pleads for the few that he represents on the floor of this House. Sir, if the whole industries are ruined, if trade and traffic are ruined, if the railways pay no dividends, all that does not matter a jot to my Honourable and gallant friend as long as the particular class he represents gets adequately and more than adequately paid. Of course he holds a brief on their behalf, and he is their representative here. But I want to know when my Honourable friend will speak on behalf of India! (*Voices: "Never."*) He says he is a statutory Indian. But does he speak and does he feel for India? Has he ever spoken a single word here to show that he feels for India? Never.

Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney: You did not hear my speech today; otherwise you would not have questioned my attitude.

Mr. B. Das: Yes, he gave some advice to the Honourable the Railway Member how to increase the rates and freights. Sir, the Government, at the suggestion of the Railway Retrenchment Committee, wanted to postpone all consideration of retrenchment by appointing an expert Committee, but we know Government have their own ways: they could not appoint that expert Committee because the experts could not be found this cold weather. So easily they postponed it for another 12 years. (*Laughter.*) (*An Honourable Member: "12 months"*.) Yes, 12 months and 12 years are the same with the Government. Sir, that means that the Government have not yet realized the gravity of the situation, the gravity of the mismanagement, the gravity of the mistakes, of the accumulating blunders that have been piled up higher and higher like the Himalayas—as my friend, Mr. Ramakrishna Reddi reminds me, like the Kangra Valley scheme, which have forced up the height of the Himalayan blunders of the railways. Sir, for any Government or any Legislature to plead incompetence because there are no experts available in India or inside this House or to fail to suggest ways and means is, Sir, a situation that I cannot accept and I think something is radically wrong. Probably the cold atmosphere that my friends from the Round Table Conference have brought here has brought that depressing atmosphere on the floor of this House (*Hear, hear*) so that nobody wants to face the situation. Sir, if everybody here, my friends of the European Group and even the Government, talk of the railways being commercial concerns, what does, I ask, a commercial management do? When a commercial concern does not pay its way, it applies drastic retrenchment and it even sacks the Manager and in the case of railways, pray, sack the Chief Commissioner, sack the whole lot of the Railway Board. I do not mean anything personal to my Honourable friend Mr. Hayman. Sack the whole lot, and as my Honourable friend Sir Henry Gidney said, sack the whole lot of Agents for their mismanagements, which have accumulated from generation to generation. Are we going to wait till certain experts come from Canada, from London, from Germany or from France and then are we going to be guided by their Western ideas, Western doctrines of efficiency and Western ideas of payment of high salaries to a certain number of Engineers as my Honourable friend Mr. Hayman pointed out their numbers being 933 *plus* 53 for leave reserve? Are we to see efficiency in every officer even in the Railway Member and the Financial Commissioner and other Members of the Railway Board, or are we to see that the commercial concern must pay its way? The Railway

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Board has not faced the problem. The Government of India have not faced the problem. My own suspicion is that since last year we heard murmurs that the railways are going to be made into a statutory body and probably the idea of Government is, let it go wrong till we bring it out under the management of a statutory body, something like the Port Trust of Calcutta. But as I want to raise a debate on that particular topic later on, I do not want to dilate at present on that particular aspect. I want to know whether Government cannot themselves apply their mind to further retrenchment. Why is my Honourable friend so partial to his Chief Commissioner, Mr. Russell? He said, when you want to shoot a tiger, better have a friend like Mr. Russell as the right companion. I know my Honourable friend went to shoot tiger in the Orissa jungle during the Christmas season, but I do not know whether Mr. Russell accompanied him. But if my Honourable friend means there are tigers sitting on the side of the Opposition and Mr. Russell is the right companion to take him through this band of tigers to the other side into the lobby

The Honourable Sir George Rainy: On the whole I prefer that tigers should be in the other lobby, for they are not convenient neighbours.

Mr. B. Das: The tigers should be in the other lobby where Mr. Russell is, so that he may assist the Honourable Member to scare away all the tigers. I think Mr. Russell, as the Chief Commissioner, has not given my Honourable friend sound advice. I think if my Honourable friend Mr. George Morgan was made the Chairman of the Board of Directors of all the Indian Railways under a mandate from this Legislature, he would see that Mr. Russell and his friends are sacked for their inefficiency, year in and year out. What is the result? I will just quote from your (Mr. Deputy President's) own Report, Sir, the Railway Retrenchment Sub-Committee Report. I just refer to one statement showing the financial result of the State-owned railways from 1911 onwards, at page 133, appendix D. What does it reveal? In 1910-11, the capital charges were 482 crores, the gross receipts 45.94 crores, the working expenses were 24 crores and 48 lakhs. I may say that 1910-11 synchronized with the Minto-Morley reforms. Then I will give you the figures for 1920-21—the period of Montford reforms. The capital charges by that time had become 585 crores and the gross receipts were 80 crores and 98 lakhs, the working expenses 54 crores and 52 lakhs. That means that the working expenses had become doubled. Of course the gross receipts are about 170 per cent. Then I will take to the period just before the separation of railway finance from the general finance, 1923-24. The capital charges were 640 crores, the gross receipts 94 crores and 65 lakhs and working expenses 61 crores and five lakhs. Then let me take the present figure, in 1931-32. The capital charges were 795 crores, the gross receipts 101 crores and the working expenses 66 crores. I quote these three periods just to analyse the situation. Whenever the public demand more freedom and more constitutional rights and more control over Government, the Government on that side shape their machinery in such a way that the imaginary control for which we fight slips out from this side and more control goes to that side and money is spent in a reckless manner which no commercial concern will ever tolerate. In ten years from 1910-11 and 1920-21 the working expenses have increased by 125 per cent., which shows what the Railway

Board could do. In 1923-24 the working expense was 61 crores and since then it has gone on increasing till it has become 66.43 crores in 1931-32. At the same time Government went on increasing their capital charges by nearly two hundred crores and as you (Mr. Deputy President) were saying the other day, Sir, this has raised the interest charges. The total interest charges that were payable in 1910-11 was 18 crores and 43 lakhs. In 1920-21 it was 20 crores and 81 lakhs and in 1923-24 it was 27 crores and to-day it is 33 crores and 35 lakhs. So, the obligatory charges on the railways have gone up, the working expenses have gone up, and the picture that was so sweetly drawn by Sir Charles Innes—I do not know whether my Honourable friend Sir Alan Parsons was a Member then, my friend tells me that he was a Member and I am so happy to hear that—the picture that Sir Charles Innes drew was, “A new heaven will come the moment we separate railway finance from general finance, that there will be commercial management that Indians will be taken in large numbers that there will be 75 per cent. Indianisation and that there will be saving on account of the Lee concessions not having to be paid for the Indians”. I want to know whether there has been any real economy, whether there has been any real efficient management. The working expenses have gone up, the interest charges have gone up, and to-day the income has gone down to the tune of 86 crores, and as I said the other day it will go down still further to 80 crores in view of the political situation for which the Honourable Member of the front Treasury Bench are responsible.

Mr. S. O. Mitra: What about the extension of mileage?

Mr. B. Das: Extension of mileage does not mean perpetual loss, and who will bear the loss? My Honourable friend Mr. Mitra if he turns to the pages of the Ackworth Committee's Report will find that under the system of guaranteed dividend of the Company-managed railways the taxpayers paid crores and crores from the general revenues, and if I recollect rightly it was to the tune of 300 crores or more. That was written down as money paid from the general revenues, as interest charges of the Company-managed railways for their guaranteed interest. So it is no use. If my friend Mr. Mitra were Chairman of the Board of Directors of a particular railway, he would not listen to the plea that a thousand miles of railways have been increased and therefore the working expenses and interest charges have gone up; and on that ground he would not absolve his Agents and Chief Engineer, for running the railway at a heavy loss. That is not the proper way to do it. We must go to the root cause of all this over-expenditure on the railways. Why is it that the railways that are in the Indian States pay such high dividends? Of course it may be pointed out that they have not got those luxurious saloons to which not only my friend the Railway Member is accustomed, but my friend the Financial Commissioner and other Members of the Railway Board are accustomed and even the smallest officers like Traffic Superintendents and the Engineers are accustomed. They may point out that the Jodhpur Railways, the Bikaner Railways and the Railways in the Kathiawar States do not provide such luxurious saloons and modes of travelling. But they do one thing; they cut their coat according to their cloth, they always derive a profit on the capital invested. Why should not that be the Government policy? Unfortunately the Government policy is not a national policy. There is the real Indian interest and the British interest. We know wagons were ordered. Why were they ordered? Because

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certain canvassers from British firms that came here wanted orders for locomotives and wagons. And after the war every Englishman serving in India became more patriotic than he really was. So orders for locomotives and wagons were placed in England. They were not required at all for the railways.

(At this stage Mr. President resumed the Chair.)

Then other things happened. The electrification of the railway lines took place at that time. I do not know if there is any Member of this House who was a Member of the Standing Finance Committee, except Sir Hugh Cooke and my Honourable friend the Deputy President. They sanctioned these projects, but some of us felt very seriously over it. I would like to know whether this 5 crores of additional expenditure on the electrification of the G. I. P. and B., B. & C. I. Railways and also in the Madras Railways will have any effect on the earnings of companies. We were advised—and if the Honourable Member challenges me I can quote from his speech and from the speeches of his predecessors—that they were doing it for real efficiency of running and for saving time and coal cost, etc. And we know what happened. They could not trust the Tata Hydro-Electric Company and they spent a crore and more to instal a power house at Kalyan. And it was found that while Tatas were offering to give electricity at less than half an anna, the Government cost of production per unit is much higher. Of course my Honourable friend can say what is the present cost of generation of electricity at Kalyan power house. But this policy of railway electrification is due to the high-fangled ideas of your engineers. Whenever they read in an engineering journal or a railway magazine that a particular improvement has taken place in England or America or Canada, they think of transplanting it to India. But does the economic condition of India justify that transplantation? The Honourable the Railway Member cannot deny that his predecessors gave an assurance to this House that by electrification of railways there would be a saving and there would be more profit on the G. I. P. Railway or on the other railways. I want to know if it has been so. I want to know also whether the remodelling of railway stations like Bombay, Cawnpore and Lucknow and some places in Madras which was done on the ground that goods trains will be shunted in a lesser period of time than before and savings would accrue, has brought any apparent result on the income of these railways. I say it has not done so, and those of us who were doubting Thomases used to say that this would never happen, and it is only your extravagance which will drive the country to the verge of ruin. Sir, that is just what has happened; and only the other day during the general discussion one of my friends pointed out that when the estimates for these capital projects and so called extensions of thousand miles were submitted before the Standing Finance Committee, they were supposed to give an yield of 5 to 7 per cent. But after four or five years of running they are yielding '553 per cent., and some of them are running at a cost of minus so much per cent. Why is it so and who is to blame? Under your State service rules no engineer can be brought to book or be impeached before this House or before the courts of this country for bad estimates and wrong designs and for committing the country to crores of rupees on account of which generations unborn will have to pay heavier taxes or

heavier rates so that the interest on borrowed money can be paid. I know no experts can cure the disease which the Honourable Member has in mind. An expert Committee will think of efficiency and Western efficiency. What India requires is a Committee with such terms of reference that the railways must make both ends meet; they must make every year a regular contribution to the general revenues and must lay by every year so much for the Depreciation Fund. It must also every year transfer so much to the Reserve Fund. Is it a happy state of things that the Reserve Fund is washed away already and the Depreciation Fund that was carefully built up has now totally vanished? That is not a happy state of things

and then the Government allow one more year to pass and they tinker with retrenchment by the dismissal of 45,000 wage-earners and 53 men on the superior services. I do not know whether these men had 35 years service or 40 years service on the railways because it sometimes happens that in the railway service a man can work even for 50 years.

I do suggest to the Honourable the Railway Member to do something drastic. I want him to depute a railway official to all the countries of the world, not merely to sit in the Assembly Library and Railway Library to compile figures of working expenditure of different railways, but to find out where the real defect lies: I want him before he sends out such an officer to find out whether he has an Indian outlook or an European outlook, if he has got a high-fangled outlook of a European that every thing must be to the British standard where the *per capita* income is £100, whereas in India the *per capita* income is only Rs. 30 per annum—I want him to send a sympathetic official to find out and study railways all over the world: he has got six or seven months before this expert Committee comes in October or November next and this officer could in the meanwhile collect those statistics. Let him go to South America where people are not as extravagant as they are on the continent or in the United States or Australia. Let him go to those poor countries, like Brazil and other States in South America where people try to live within their means and are not always subjected to the tragedy to which we as a subject nation are subjected: owing to the pitiable condition that we are a subject people, the Government can go on multiplying taxation, multiplying rates and fares: and on whose advice? At the instance of my friend, Sir Henry Gidney, so that a few friends of his can draw their monthly wages. I hope that not only will my suggestion be accepted, but in the meantime let not he and his successor throw their hands up and say, "We cannot do anything: we have done enough; let those experts come; let them advise and then we will do something." Adopt a drastic retrenchment policy. Send away your high-salaried officials. The railways cannot afford to pay such high salaries to your engineers, to your foreign-recruited superintendents, to your Members of the Railway Board. That reminds me of one little recommendation of the Railway Retrenchment Sub-Committee. They asked that one Member of the Railway Board should be abolished. I want to know why that has not been done: a little sum of Rs. 60,000 would have been saved

Sir Alan Parsons (Financial Commissioner, Railways): If I may explain: at present we propose to do without two. This was shown in a statement presented last session.

Mr. B. Das: I am glad of the explanation: that shows the amount of extravagance on the railways: they knew two Members of the Railway Board were not necessary: yet they had increased the number to five. (Laughter.) I was the man in 1929-30 who first gave warning and asked the Government to retrench—while discussing the Railway Budget. It was unheeded. Last year also I gave the warning; but even then, the Railway Member, who was and is always in the confidence of his colleague the Finance Member, never gave us any idea that there was going to be such financial disaster in the country. But when the Honourable Member introduced his Finance Bill on the 28th February, 1931, then only this House grew more restive and pressed for the appointment of a Retrenchment Committee. I ask my Honourable friend the Leader of the House to point out to me one passage of his speech which he delivered last year in the Railway Budget that he was alive to the gravity of the situation and that he wanted to take drastic action. Of course one could understand. He has received such nice compliments from all sides of the House about his genial manner; and he probably thinks, "When I am going away why should I annoy the services?" Probably my friend, Colonel Sir Henry Gidney's men would not offer him a bouquet at the Bombay station when my friend the Railway Member bids good-bye at the Ballard Pier. The Honourable Member will be here a few months more and I appeal to him as there is no greater expert—economic and financial—than the Honourable the Railway Member. I ask him to separate his economic and financial conscience as the Railway Member from his political conscience as a Commerce Member, and then apply those tests which he applied always as the Chairman of the Tariff Board when giving protection to the various industries that came up before him. If he applies those tests which he applied as Chairman of the Tariff Board, I can say that whatever he writes this House will accept as the final decision and will accept them without asking him to bring out an expert Committee from abroad. Will he do that? I do not know whether he can do that or whether his colleagues on his right will allow him to do it.

I have only to reply to one point to my friend Mr. Hayman. Is it necessary that in this time of stress and strain you need so many high officials—933 engineers—in the railways?

Mr. A. M. Hayman: Did the Honourable Member say 933 engineers? 933 is the total superior establishment in all branches on State-managed railways.

Mr. B. Das: If my Honourable friend will see the statistics of the Mysore Railway, he will find how many superior officers there are. Take the Nizam's State Railway also; they have not got the same soft cushions that my Honourable friend provides in the Indian State-managed railways. Still those railways run to time, and I have never missed any train when I travelled in those parts or even in the Company-managed railways in my friend the Deputy President's part of the country. I think the time has come when you can do away with half the officials in these high posts. It can be done: but if my friend wants to obey the mandate of the political conscience of his *guru* the Honourable the Railway Member, then of course he cannot do it. because, was it not a fact that in the first Round Table Conference among the safeguards railways was one of the subjects and employment of Europeans and Anglo-Indians were part of those safeguards? If that be so, then my Honourable friend the Leader of the House cannot

advise his friend Mr. Hayman to apply a scientific test as to the number of higher officials that could be employed. At the same time when you want money, when the railways are so hard up, when the railways are running at a loss of about 11-crores, can't you do away with the leave reserve? Can't you do away with the Lee concessions that were given in 1924 and extended to everybody in India who said that his grandfather came from Damascus or Australia? (Laughter.) I remember, Sir, a case in the department of my Honourable friend, Sir Joseph Bhole. A gentleman who had never been abroad and whose colour was darker than mine put up a petition for the Lee concessions, and I think my Honourable friend will be able to unearth that case from the archives of his department. There are many such cases. But are we going to play with the money of the tax-payer when we are borrowing money to pay the interest charges? What right have the railway officers got to demand Lee concessions or special pay? It is all a question of supply and demand. They can demand any salaries they like, because the heaven born Civil Servants draw high salaries. But can the railways afford to pay those high salaries? Let us judge the question on merits. It is time that the Railway Board and the Honourable the Railway Member judged this question on merits; if not, Sir, the consequences will be that you will be committing not only me and my generation, but the generations to come to heavier expenditure and heavier taxation and heavier cost of living for which there will be a revolt in the country which will be unparalleled, and compared to which the Satyagraha movement and the Ordinance *raj* will be nothing.

Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad: Sir, I do not wish to detain the House very long, but I would just like to draw the attention of the Honourable the Railway Member to only one or two points. The Railway Retrenchment Committee examined the expenditure under Demands Nos. 1 and 2 particularly, and there they reduced the expenditure in the case of the Railway Board from 10.30 lakhs last year to 7.75 lakhs. There has been a definite saving. The same was the case under Demand No. 2, and I think it is rather unfair to the Railway Board themselves that their expenditure was reduced by 25 per cent., and nothing was done in the running lines. When I come back to the running lines I say under Demand No. 5 for the reduction in the working expenses of which Mr. Hayman has taken so much credit, I find there has been an actual increase in expenditure by 2 crores, 73 lakhs. Last year you demanded 34 crores, and this year your demands are 36.73 crores. Therefore, there has been an actual increase by about 2.73 lakhs in spite of all the steps you profess to have taken, and taking the total of all the expenditure, I find that the total expenditure last year was 94.12 crores and this year, after taking all the measures for economy, it has actually increased. It is 94 crores and 30 lakhs. That is, an actual increase of about 18 lakhs. That is retrenchment in the negative. Mr. Hayman gives us to understand that he has issued instructions, and we are thankful to him for it, to the Railway Agents concerned, but I should like to have a sort of definite assurance on behalf of the Railway Board from the Railway Member whether their instructions were carried out by the Agents and whether they are prepared to mention what steps they would like to take if their instructions are not carried out by the Agents, and I should also like to have an assurance that the instructions issued by the Agents to Divisional Superintendents, were carried out and if not, what disciplinary steps it is proposed to take. On these two points, Sir, I should like to have some sort of

[Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad.]

statement either now or at any time during the debate. My impression is that every one of those subordinate officers considers himself to be demigod and resents interference from above.

The Honourable Sir George Rainy: Sir, I do not think I need say more than a very few words, because my friend Mr. Hayman dealt very fully with what fell from the first two speakers on the subject of retrenchment. Since my Honourable friend Mr. Das began his speech, I have been spending my time trying to see him in the light of a tiger. I never thought of him as a tiger, and if he is a tiger, I am afraid I should describe him as a tiger in sheep's clothing and without the ferocity which is characteristic of the animal in question. One of the injunctions Mr. Das gave was that we must cut our coat according to our cloth. He also suggested that we *must* pay a very large contribution to the general revenues. That means rather a large coat, but will my Honourable friend provide us with the cloth from which to make that coat? I do not think **there his injunction was quite consistent with what has gone before.** I will not follow him into all the details of the matters to which he referred, extending back at least to 1910, and in one case, namely, the guarantee to all company-managed railways, going back I suppose to about 1852. All these are old matters, which I think at one time or another have all been discussed in this House. But we are always indebted to Mr. Das for the real interest he takes on the subject of economy and his genuine desire to see it carried out. He does not like the proposal of an expert Committee at all, and he seemed to think that, with the aid of my Tariff Board experience, **I was sufficiently qualified to prescribe for all the ills to which the railway system may be liable.** He may be right, but I cannot honestly say that I think so. My experience is that when you are ill, it is better to call in a doctor who has been accustomed to treat the disease before, and I must frankly say that on railway matters all my knowledge is really that of an outsider; I only see these questions at rather long range. I have every hope that we shall have the expert Committee next cold weather, and I have not the least doubt you ought to have a great deal of good from their services.

Then, Sir, with regard to what fell from Dr. Ziauddin about the increase of expenditure under repairs and maintenance in Demand No. 5, I think he will find that this is explained both in the notes on pages 10 and 11 of the Demand for grants and in the Railway Board's Memorandum. Paragraph 20 of the Railway Board's Memorandum is the relevant paragraph, which explains that there has been an increase under "operation", but that is balanced to a very large extent by a decrease under another head. That is really a matter of accounting.

Now, Sir, before I sit down, I should like to say one word as regards what fell from the first two speakers. Both the Government of India and the Railway Board regard it as of very great importance that in this matter of discharges, all possible consideration should be shown, and I can assure the House that the Railway Board, and especially Mr. Hayman, have given this aspect of the case the very closest attention and that they will continue to do so. For the rest, as regards some of the matters to which Colonel Gidney referred, he himself, I know, will recognise we must await the Report of the Court of Inquiry, and I hope it will not be long now before it is published. That, Sir, is all I have to say.

Mr. M. Maswood Ahmad: As stated by my Honourable friend Mr. B. Das, I did not discuss the individual cases; I have merely placed before the House the policy which I think should be followed for all sons of the mother country, whether white, brown, or black and which is the just policy in my opinion. I am not satisfied with the way in which the retrenchment policy has been worked out.

Mr. President: The question which I have now to put is:

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

The Assembly divided:

AYES—17.

Abdul Matin Chaudhury, Mr.
Anwar-ul-Azim, Mr. Muhammad.
Azhar Ali, Mr. Muhammad.
Badi-uz-Zaman, Maulvi.
Ghuznavi, Mr. A. H.
Gidney, Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry.
Ismail Ali Khan, Kunwar Hajee.
Maswood Ahmad, Mr. M.
Muazzam Sahib Bahadur, Mr.
Muhammad.

Murtuza Saheb Bahadur, Maulvi
Sayyid.
Patil, Rao Bahadur B. L.
Rajan Bakhsh Shah, Khan Bahadur
Makhdum Syed.
Reddi, Mr. T. N. Ramakrishna.
Shah Nawaz, Mian Muhammad.
Suhrawardy, Sir Abdullah.
Sykes, Mr. E. F.
Ziauddin Ahmad, Dr.

NOES—51.

Abdul Qaiyum, Nawab Sir Sahib-
zada.
Acott, Mr. A. S. V.
Allah Baksh Khan Tiwana, Khan
Bahadur Malik.
Allison, Mr. F. W.
Anklesaria, Mr. N. N.
Azizuddin Ahmad Bilgrami, Qazi.
Bajpai, Mr. R. S.
Banerji, Mr. Rajnarayan.
Bhore, The Honourable Sir Joseph.
Biswas, Mr. C. C.
Brown, Mr. R. R.
Clow, Mr. A. G.
Cocke, Sir Hugh.
Cosgrave, Mr. W. A.
Crerar, The Honourable Sir James.
Dalal, Dr. R. D.
Fox, Mr. H. B.
French, Mr. J. C.
Graham, Sir Lancelot.
Gwynne, Mr. C. W.
Hayman, Mr. A. M.
Heathcote, Mr. L. V.
Howell, Sir Evelyn.
Jawahar Singh, Sardar Bahadur
Sardar.
Macqueen, Mr. P.

Misra, Mr. B. N.
Moore, Mr. Arthur.
Morgan, Mr. G.
Mukherjee, Rai Bahadur S. C.
Noyce, Sir Frank,
Pandit, Rao Bahadur S. R.
Parsons, Sir Alan.
Rafiuddin Ahmad, Khan Bahadur
Maulvi.
Raghubir Singh, Kunwar.
Rainy, The Honourable Sir George.
Rajah, Rao Bahadur M. C.
Rama Rao, Diwan Bahadur U.
Rastogi, Mr. Badri Lal.
Ryan, Mr. T.
Sahi, Mr. Ram Prashad Narayan.
Sarma, Mr. R. S.
Schuster, The Honourable Sir George.
Scott, Mr. J. Ramsay.
Seaman, Mr. C. K.
Sen, Mr. S. C.
Singh, Kumar Gupteshwar Prasad.
Studd, Mr. E.
Sukhraj Rai, Rai Bahadur.
Tait, Mr. John.
Wood, Sir Edgar.
Young, Mr. G. M.

The motion was negatived.

Favouritism in the Railways.

Mr. M. Maswood Ahmad: I move:

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

I have shown in my previous speech and also others that there is favouritism in the matter of railway retrenchment and railway recruitment. The question of favouritism is very clear from the cases quoted by my Honourable friend Sir Henry Gidney and the cases I quoted. The action of the Railway Board was also not satisfactory in this connection. I therefore move my cut without any further speech.

Sir Hari Singh Gour (Central Provinces Hindi Divisions: Non-Muhammadan): On a point of order, Sir. We are in the second day of this discussion and as the House will observe we are still on Demand No. I and not finished with the amendments of my friend Mr. Maswood Ahmad. It was the practice in the first Assembly to limit the speeches to ten minutes.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Ibrahim Rahimtoola): A suggestion has been made by the Leader of the Nationalist Party that there should be a time limit of 10 minutes. Honourable Members are aware that in regard to procedure of this character the Chair has left it to the House itself to decide whether they wish to impose such a time limit upon themselves. The Chair has also declared repeatedly that it will not accept any change in the procedure unless the House is practically unanimous. I would therefore ask Honourable Members to say whether they desire to impose upon themselves a time limit of 10 minutes for speeches. (*Several Honourable Members:* "No".) Then there will be no time limit.

Rao Bahadur B. L. Patil (Bombay Southern Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural): It has been ruled in the past that when different motions are going to be moved, discussion on a particular motion should not be allowed if it has been already covered by previous discussion.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Ibrahim Rahimtoola): If it is the Honourable Member's contention that favouritism has been amply discussed already on other amendments, the Chair cannot accept that contention.

Mr. A. H Ghuznavi (Dacca *cum* Mymensingh: Muhammadan Rural): Sir, last Monday I had briefly referred to favouritism that prevails in the Railway Board's coal purchases and in the administration of railway collieries. I now desire to deal fully with this form of favouritism in the Railway Department. Before I do so, I desire to assure the House that when I made certain statements on last Monday, I did so with the fullest sense of responsibility.

The Honourable Sir George Rainy: On a point of order. The Honourable Member proposes to resume the subject which he discussed last Monday. May I ask your ruling, Sir, whether that is covered by the phrase "favouritism". It is clear that the Honourable the Mover did not include it in what he meant by that term, for he clearly referred to favouritism in the treatment of officers and subordinates in the railways.

Mr. President: Has the Honourable Member anything to urge against the point of order that has been raised?

Mr. A. H. Ghuznavi: Yes, certainly. I mentioned distinctly that favouritism was prevailing in the purchase of coal and in the management of collieries. Therefore it does come within the purview of this motion.

Mr. C. S. Ranga Iyer (Rohilkund and Kumaon Divisions: Non-Muhammadan Rural): I should like to point out that the statement that the Honourable gentleman made the previous day cannot come under favouritism as contemplated by the Mover of this motion, judging it from the Mover's own speech and therefore we cannot have a reiteration of that statement under cover of "favouritism."

Sir Alan Parsons: May I also point out that there is a motion standing in the name of Mr. Ghuznavi, that is No. 56 on the Order Paper, in which the specific subject which he is now proposing to discuss is raised.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Ibrahim Rahimtoola): The Chair has considered the point of order raised and it feels that it is rather far fetched to introduce this subject when discussing a motion dealing with favouritism in the railways. Favouritism in the railways, as explained by the Honourable the Mover, cannot be construed to cover the particular subject which the Honourable Member wishes to raise, and having regard to the fact that there is on the agenda a motion from the Honourable Member dealing with that specific grievance of coal purchases, he will have an opportunity to deal with it if it is reached. Therefore the subject which the Honourable Member proposes to raise cannot be held to be relevant on the present motion.

Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney: I rise to take part in this debate as I wish to associate myself with the remarks of the previous speaker. Sir, in addition to what has been said, I may inform this House, though it is extremely difficult to prove to the hilt, that favouritism does exist and this cannot be denied. Sir, I again repeat it is very difficult on the floor of this House to bring forward concrete evidence in support of the assertion. But when you have certain employees with 20 and 25 years' service, with clean previous records who unfortunately, in the early days of their service, came under the disfavour of some one of their superiors, retrenched and other men with two or three years service, with bad record, retained I would like to know whether you would call this 'favouritism' or not. I bring to my mind a well-known case with which the Railway Board is familiar, a case which I brought up before the Agent of the railway concerned. I repeatedly brought it up before the Railway Board and they sent a Member to inquire into it. That Member tried to adopt the attitude of the heavy father towards me and told me that if I brought such cases against the railways I was doing my community no good. I again pressed the case. The Railway Agent took no notice of it. The Railway Board said that they could not interfere. I am not surprised at their stereotyped reply to such cases. "The Railway Board regret they see no reason to interfere with the decision of the Agent," and why, because they have no time to inquire into all the malpractices on certain railways. I must admit on the floor of this House that the Honourable Member, who has a high sense of justice, has remedied many cases of injustice I and others have brought to his notice. What happened is this. I did not stop, I reported it to H. E. the Viceroy.

Mr. B. Das: Can private talks be mentioned here?

Mr. President: The responsibility rests on the Honourable Member.

Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney: Sir, I accept the responsibility. The result was this. An inquiry was made and the Railway Board, be it said to their credit, gave every assistance in that inquiry, and that subordinate was put back into his original appointment on which he had a lien, and I repeat this stands to the credit of the Railway Board but not to the credit of the Railway Administration. I could multiply instances. I know a case, a temporary Assistant Engineer now in the lower gazetted service, who is not qualified in engineering and who had only passed the Senior Cambridge Examination, being put into the lower gazetted service because he was the son of a railway official. If these are not glaring cases of favouritism, I would like to know what they are. Sir, favouritism does exist and to a serious extent on some railways and the Railway Board cannot do anything to check it. (Hear, hear.) But I would suggest two ways by which it can be stopped to a large extent. One is, do not give power to upper subordinates, and by upper subordinates I include Head Clerks and Superintendents of local offices. Deprive them of all such power of recommendations and selection and let every job be advertised. Secondly, let there be Selection Committee appointed on every railway for all subordinate jobs. Mr. Hassan's Report proves conclusively that there are railways on which vacancies are not advertised and there are railways on which no Selection Committees exist and all selections are made by individual officers.

Mr. S. C. Mitra: They all go to Anglo-Indians!

Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney: That is a wholly incorrect statement. If these two measures are adopted, they would certainly, in a large measure, kill this practice of favouritism and the whims and fancies of superior officers will be checked.

Mr. S. C. Mitra: Sir, I am very glad that my Honourable friend, Sir Henry Gidney, has taken up this very motion to support it because he and his community have the best experience and really are in the best position to tell as about the operation of favouritism. (Loud Applause.)

Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney: On a point of personal explanation, Sir. Will the Honourable Member please say . . .

Mr. President: That is not a personal explanation. The Honourable Member is asking a question.

Mr. S. C. Mitra: I am also glad, Sir, that my Honourable friend has quoted Mr. Hassan as his authority. Now I shall not only offer some remarks but I shall quote from that very report to show that the Moslem representation was really and, if you look into the figures closely, is worse than even what Mr. Hassan has brought out. Incidentally, I may say that I did not agree with my Honourable friend, Bhai Parma Nand when he gave figures for all sorts of people to show, taking into account the lowest services and even the menials—that the Moslems got nearly to their share of 25 per cent. Mr. Hassan did a public service by collecting figures in his Report for all the officers who get a salary of more than Rs. 150 per month.

Any salary less than Rs. 150 is not even a living wage, I think. Now if you will kindly see the figures supplied in this book, they will show you vividly how favouritism has got a prominent place in the Railway Administration. I am quoting from page 49 of Mr. Hassan's Report, and I take the Eastern Bengal Railway first. Sir, the percentage of each community in the posts on a minimum pay of Rs. 150 or more is as follows:

Traffic Department (Transportation):

	Total No.	Percentage.
Anglo-Indians	44	41·91
Hindus	32	30·48
Europeans	27	25·71
Indian Christians	1	·95
Muslims	1	·95

So that there is one Muslim only.

Then the following figures are given for men above Rs. 150: from the Locomotive Department (Power):

	Percentage.
Anglo-Indians	52·38
Europeans	47·62

Not a single Hindu, and not a single Muslim.

Then on the next page, the following percentages for each community are given of salaries over Rs. 150 per month in Traffic Department (Commercial):

	Percentage.
Hindus	45·45
Anglo-Indians	29·54
Europeans	9·09
Muslims	6·82
Sikhs	4·55
Indian Christians	4·55

Further below on the same page the percentage of each community of men on Rs. 150 and above is given, as follows: in Locomotive Department (Carriage):

	Per centage.
Anglo-Indians	52·63
Europeans	31·58
Hindus	10·53
Muslims	5·26

Then lower down as regards the Locomotive Department (Workshop) the figures are as follows for salaries over Rs. 150:

	Percentage.
Anglo-Indians	42·54
Europeans	39·55
Hindus	13·44
Indian Christians	1·49
Parsis	1·49
Muslims	1·49

[Mr. S. C. Mitra.]

Then on the next page, page 51, as regards the Civil Engineering Department, the following figures are given :

	Percentage.
Hindus	70.22
Anglo-Indians	13.48
Muslims	7.87
Europeans	5.06

and so on, but here the figures are higher because I am reading out the figures for the whole service. I shall just read out to you, Sir, the figures concerning people who get Rs. 150 or more in this Department :

	Percentage.
Hindus	62.77
Anglo-Indians	19.15
Europeans	9.57
Muslims	4.26
Sikhs	2.13
Indian Christians	1.06
Parsis	1.06

Then for the Stores Department the percentage of each community in the posts on a minimum pay of Rs. 150 or more is given as follows :

	Percentage.
Hindus	56.25
Anglo-Indians	31.25
Europeans	12.5

Then as regards the Medical Department (page 52):

	Percentage.
Hindus	46.15
Anglo-Indians	42.32
Muslims	7.69

Then take the North Western Railway (see page 54): Transportation (Traffic) of salaries of Rs. 150 and above per month:

	Percentage.
Europeans	42.86
Anglo-Indians	20.67
Hindus	19.45
Muslims	6.08

Mian Muhammad Shah Nawaz: In a province where the Muslim population predominates!

Mr. S. C. Mitra: Then the percentage of each community in the posts on a minimum pay of Rs. 150 or more is given as follows of Commercial Department:

	Percentage.
Hindus	43.24
Muslims	20.27
Europeans	14.87
Sikhs	10.81
Anglo-Indians	9.46
Indian Christians	1.35

Then for the Transportation Branch (Power) page 55, the figures are as follows :

	Percentage.
Europeans	43·02
Anglo-Indians	36·05
Muslims	9·3
Hindus	8·14

Then on the next page the figures for the Mechanical Engineering Department are given for men on Rs. 150 and above, and they are as follows :

	Percentage.
Europeans	40·64
Anglo-Indians	36·45
Muslims	7·88
Hindus	6·41

Then as regards the Medical Department on page 57 the following figures are given :

	Percentage.
Anglo-Indians	76·19
Hindus	14·29
Indian Christians	9·62

Muslims, nothing. (*An Honourable Member*: "Very fine.") Sir, I shall read every series of figures so that there may not be any complaint. Now on page 58, the following figures for the Great Indian Peninsula Railway are given for men on Rs. 150 and above for the office staff :

	Percentage.
Hindus	53·26
Indian Christians	14·56
Muslims	10·73
Europeans	10·34
Anglo-Indians	4·98

Then on page 59 the following figures are given : for Transportation Department :

	Percentage.
Anglo-Indians	43·74
Europeans	26·5
Hindus	13·16
Indian Christians	11·47
Muslims	2·97

Then for the Traffic Department (Commercial) the following figures are given :

	Percentage.
Hindus	61·04
Anglo-Indians	12·99
Indian Christians	11·69
Europeans	7·79
Muslims	5·19

[Mr. S. C. Mitra.]

Transportation Department (Power):

	Percentage.
Anglo-Indians	53.91
Europeans	35.52
Indian Christians	4.44
Parsis	3.38
Hindus	2.33
Muslims	2.21
Sikhs	2.21

Transportation Department (Carriage):

	Percentage.
Indian Christians	42.68
Hindus	28.05
Anglo-Indians	23.17
Europeans	4.88
Parsis	1.22

Workshops (Mechanical Engineering):

	Percentage.
Anglo-Indians	44.75
Europeans	28.17
Indian Christians	11.05
Hindus	9.95
Parsis	3.87
Muslims	1.98
Sikhs	2.26

Civil Engineering

	Percentage.
Hindus	32.03
Anglo-Indians	31.05
Europeans	13.08
Indian Christians	7.9
Parsis	6.32
Muslims	5.26
Sikhs	3.18

Watch and Ward Department:

	Percentage.
Europeans	46.14
Hindus	15.39
Muslims	15.39
Anglo-Indians	15.39
Parsis	7.69

Now about the East Indian Railway Office Staff:

	Percentage.
Hindus	63.09
Europeans	16.82
Anglo-Indians	15.91
Muslims	2.72
Indian Christians	1.46

Commercial Department :

	Percentage.
Hindus	33·82
Anglo-Indians	26·72
Europeans	25·00
Muslims	12·07
Sikhs	1·73
Indian Christians	·86

Transportation (Power) Department :

	Percentage.
Anglo-Indians	52·75
Europeans	46·52

Mechanical Engineering Department :

	Percentage.
Europeans	42·94
Anglo-Indians	42·37
Hindus	10·73
Muslims	2·26
Sikhs	·75
Indian Christians	·57
Parsis	·38

Stores Department :

	Percentage.
Anglo-Indians	35·82
Hindus	34·33
Europeans	25·37
Muslims	2·99
Indian Christians	1·49

Carriage Department :

	Percentage.
Anglo-Indians	48·27
Hindus	20·69
Europeans	12·07
Muslims	12·07
Sikhs	6·9

Civil Engineering Department (Ways and Works) :

	Percentage.
Hindus	38·24
Anglo-Indians	34·97
Europeans	18·3
Muslims	3·92
Sikhs	3·59
Indian Christians	·98

Mr. President: Need the Honourable Member read any more extracts?

Mr. S. C. Mitra: I think these figures will prove conclusively where the favouritism is. I am glad that my Honourable friend Sir Henry Gidney

[Mr. S. C. Mitra.]

is very much against favouritism today. I am also glad that I have got this opportunity to show conclusively that even about Muslim representation, they have got really no representation at all. It is only when you include the menials that the Muslims get nearly to their percentage, but so far as real posts in services are concerned, the Muslims do not get more than 5 per cent. Sir, favouritism obtains in the railways and I support the motion and feel that not only the Muslims but also the Hindus do not get their proper share in the railway services due to favouritism for Anglo-Indians and Europeans and I have quoted sufficient figures to prove my contention.

Sir Alan Parsons: Sir, the House would not, I think, thank me if I made a very long speech on this motion, and in particular, I do not propose to enter into the causes of the proportionate representation of different communities in railway services, with the details of which my Honourable friend Mr. Mitra has favoured us. The actual policy of the Government on this matter is well-known to the House, and I think I had better probably leave it at that, though if I might express without offence a personal opinion, my Honourable and gallant friend, Sir Henry Gidney, has asked for it, and he has got it.

Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney: Asked for what?

Sir Alan Parsons: I prefer merely to deal with what I think was in the mind of my Honourable friend the Mover when he brought forward this motion, that was the cases of individual favouritism on the railways. The Honourable Sir Henry Gidney mentioned one or two cases. In one, of which I think I have some recollection, he complained that a Member of the Railway Board had not taken action, on representations made by him. If I am thinking of the same case to which he refers it was the case of a guard, and so far as I am aware a very thorough investigation of that case was made by a Member of the Railway Board, and as a result thereof, all possible cause of grievance was removed. I am glad to hear my Honourable friend say, yes.

Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney: I did not say, yes, and I gave the credit to the Railway Board.

Sir Alan Parsons: If so, it is hardly a case to bring before the House in order to support an attack on the Railway Board. As regards the rest, I think I need say very little. When it comes to the matter of the discharge of between 40,000 and 50,000 men, no sensible person would imagine that there might not be some individual cases of injustice. That cannot be possibly avoided; but the question of individual cases of injustice is exactly one of those subjects which has been referred to the Court of Inquiry whose report is expected to be in our hands in the course of the next week, and any cases which are brought to our notice either through that report or otherwise will of course be considered. I must repudiate, however, entirely the idea that there is any general favouritism in this matter on the railways, though I do not pretend to consider that there may not be individual cases which ought to be examined.

Mr. C. S. Ranga Iyer: Sir, I am very glad that my Honourable friend Mr. Mitra who was hesitating to stand up and present the Honourable Sir Henry Gidney with facts and figures, after all got over his hesitation and yielded to the temptation of answering him. I have only one or two sentences in regard to favouritism of which the Honourable Member, so far as the asking for it is concerned, has been grossly guilty. I have before me a document, the Indian Round Table Conference, Appendix IX containing the memorandum by Sir Henry Gidney relating to fundamental favouritism to be incorporated in the new constitution for India for the Anglo-Indian and domiciled community. (Laughter.) I am astonished that a gentleman stands on the floor of this House and accuses others of favouritism,—magnifying the mote in other people's eyes but forgetting the beam in his own—for here is a statement from him asking for fundamental favouritism to be incorporated in the new constitution of India. I shall presently say in one sentence in what fundamental form he wants to perpetuate that favouritism. He says that "The number of Anglo-Indians and domiciled Europeans per centum of the total number of persons employed in such services as are employed on the date on which the new constitution comes into force shall continue for 30 years (Laughter) after the operation of the new constitution." Sir, this is asking for favouritism with a vengeance. (Hear, hear.)

Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney: Asking for a right.

Mr. C. S. Ranga Iyer: When the Honourable Member retires from this House, I would advise him to compose a dictionary in which he can interpret the word favouritism as right and right as favouritism, but from a common sense point of view, if he was rather serious in asking the Government, if he was really sincere in presenting to the Government his case of fundamental favouritism, he would not have talked on the rather astonishing and extremely unconvincing lines on which he just spoke today. What he wants according to this document is that in the new constitution preferment should go by letter and affection. That is the kind of favouritism he wants, but that is the kind of favouritism that no constitution which any Englishman or any Indians will be responsible for will give, for this fundamental favouritism would be unworthy of England to give or of India to assist in giving. (Applause.)

Mr. R. S. Sarma (Nominated Non-Official): Sir, I strongly oppose this cut motion, and that for a very simple and human reason.

5 P.M. It is not that I maintain that there is no favouritism; on the other hand I maintain that there is a good deal of favouritism. But I oppose it for a very simple reason, and I am surprised at the simple-mindedness of people who think that by passing a cut motion like that they can wipe out favouritism either from the railways or from the public services. Sir, favouritism is a sort of human weakness; in spite of Sir Henry Gidney, in spite of Mr. Maswood Ahmad, favouritism has existed in the past, is existing today and will continue to exist and go on for ever. And I oppose it simply for the reason that human nature being what it is, if the Members of this House who have not already acquired a high reputation for statesmanship pass this cut, we will not only not be achieving our object, because, it will never be done, but we will be looked upon with contempt and ridicule in that we are wanting in a sense of humour and understanding of human nature.

Mr. M. Maswood Ahmad: Sir, I am very thankful to Honourable Members who have supported this motion and I will only add two or three figures to those which my friend over there has mentioned. In the Accounts Branch the total subordinate staff is 5,858. The percentage of Hindus is 83.33 per cent., Muslims 9.63 per cent., Sikhs 2.70 per cent., Anglo-Indians 1.74 per cent., Indian Christians 1.47 per cent., Parsis .58 per cent., and Europeans .55 per cent. In the same Branch in the North Western Railway, the total number is 1,335 out of which the Muslims are 19.33 per cent. only, and of the other communities the Hindus are 71.39 per cent., Sikhs 8.31 per cent., Indian Christians .52 per cent., Anglo-Indians .37 per cent., and Europeans .08 per cent. The percentage of each community in the posts the minimum of which is Rs. 150 or more is as follows: Muslims, 12.5 per cent., Sikhs 9.37 per cent., Indian Christians 4.69 per cent., Hindus 73.44 per cent. On the Eastern Bengal Railway the figure is, Muslims 3.83 per cent., Anglo-Indians 1.84 per cent., Indian Christians .76 per cent., and Hindus 93.57 per cent. The percentage of each community in the posts the minimum of which is Rs. 150 or more, Hindus 79.4, Anglo-Indians 11.77, Muslims 8.82, in East Indian Railway Muslims are 3.59 per cent., in Great Indian Peninsula Railway 2.41 per cent., and on pay of 150 or more on this Railway, Muslims are *nil*

Mr. President: Need the Honourable Member read out all these figures?

Mr. M. Maswood Ahmad: Sir, it is clear from all this that favouritism exists, but with the permission of the House I want to withdraw this motion, and do not want to press it. My intention was only to draw the attention of the Railway Board to it.

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

(Leave was refused).

Mr. President: The question is:

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

The motion was negatived.

The Assembly then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Thursday, the 3rd February, 1932.