

23rd March 1938

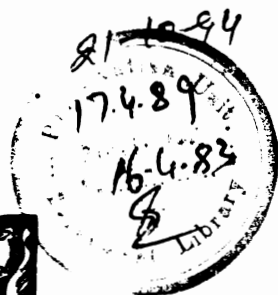
THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY DEBATES

(Official Report)

Volume II, 1938

(23rd February to 23rd March, 1938)

SEVENTH SESSION OF THE FIFTH LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY, 1938



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M77LAD

Legislative Assembly.

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Wednesday, 23rd March, 1938.

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

MEMBERS SWORN.

Mr. James Cochran Highet, M.L.A. (Government of India: Nominated Official); and

Mr. Dharendra Nath Mitra, M.L.A. (Government of India: Nominated Official).

STARRED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

(a) ORAL ANSWERS.

SEATING AND SLEEPING ACCOMMODATION FOR LOWER CLASS PASSENGERS IN TRAINS.

916. ***Mr. Brojendra Narayan Chaudhury:** Will the Honourable Member for Railways please state:

- (a) if the accommodation allowed for lower class passengers in long-distance night trains provides for sufficient space for reclining;
- (b) if Government are prepared to consult experts whether the space allowed in such trains is not so small as to be injurious to the health of passengers; and
- (c) if Government are prepared to consider the question of provision of sleeping carriages for intermediate class passengers charged at slightly increased fares, say, fifty per cent.?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: (a) No. Sleeping accommodation is not provided in lower class coaches. In modern long distance coaching stock, luggage racks upon which passengers may recline when the racks are not occupied by luggage are, however, provided.

(b) No. The scale of accommodation provided for passengers has been considered from all aspects and Government have no reason to believe that the scale now laid down is inadequate to the extent of being in any way injurious to the health of passengers.

(c) No. Examination of similar proposals in the past has shown that economic considerations prohibit the provision of guaranteed sleeping accommodation for passengers paying less than second class fares.

Mr. Brojendra Narayan Chaudhury: The Honourable Member has not replied to my question. My question is not about the accommodation for sleeping but the accommodation for reclining?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: I cannot say what is the difference in the space required for a man sleeping and that for a man reclining.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: May I ask if the first and second class passengers pay an economic price for the accommodation they receive for sleeping?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: I should require notice of that question.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: May I ask what is the calculated space for an ordinary third class passenger according to this calculation?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: I believe it is 19 inches.

Seth Govind Das: Is it not a fact that in foreign countries sleeping accommodation is provided to third class passengers on paying some extra fare?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: In certain cases, yes.

Seth Govind Das: Is it not desirable, under the circumstances, to introduce the same system in India?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: That is a question which has already been examined as I have said in my answer.

Seth Govind Das: The Honourable Member knows that in this country the distances are great and the passengers have to travel for a long time. In these circumstances, does not the Honourable Member consider it desirable to introduce the same system in India?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: The Honourable Member is asking for an expression of my personal opinion.

Mr. K. Santhanam: Will the Honourable Member consider whether the width of the seats is sufficient for comfortable travelling during nights?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: If there are any such defects in the railway carriages, it is open to the local Advisory Committees to make representations to the Administrations concerned.

BAD CONDITION OF LATRINES OF LOWER CLASS RAILWAY CARRIAGES.

917. ***Mr. Brojendra Narayan Chaudhury:** (a) Will the Honourable the Railway Member please state if Government are aware that:

- (i) in certain types of lower class carriages the latrine is ill-lighted or not at all lighted;
- (ii) ill-lighting is one of the causes of the complaint that the latrines become dirty;
- (iii) the position of the water tap, which when opened wets the shoes, is one cause of complaint; and
- (iv) insufficient flushing due to the taps closing as soon as hand pressure is released is another cause of complaint?

(t) Are Government prepared to look to the above complaints?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: If the Honourable Member will let me know to what railway or railways the complaints relate, I will make enquiries.

PAUCITY OF ASSAMESE IN THE POSTAL DEPARTMENT IN ASSAM.

918. ***Mr. Brojendra Narayan Chaudhury:** Will the Honourable Member for Communications please state:

(a) if in the territory comprised within the Province of Assam there are in the Postal Department the number of appointments as stated below:

Gazetted rank 4—including one Railway Mail Service Postmaster (grade Rs. 250—350) 2; Postmaster, Deputy Postmaster, Sub-Postmaster (Rs. 160—250) 13; Inspector and Clerk to Superintendent 12;

(b) how many of these appointments are held by people of Assam, including Surma Valley; whether the number is not only 2; and that they are in the last grade mentioned in part (a);

(c) the reasons for such low representation of the people of Assam in appointments in their own area;

(d) if any examinations are held for these posts; if so, who are the examiners and if they are non-Assamese;

(e) if the grade Rs. 160—250, Postmaster, Deputy Postmaster and Sub-Postmaster in appointments in the City of Calcutta is reserved for the people of Calcutta; and

(f) if Government propose to apply the reservation rule in Calcutta to Assam also; if not, why not?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: (a) Yes.

(b) I have no information.

(c) and (d). The posts of Superintendents of Post Offices are on an all-India cadre and are filled up to the extent of 50 per cent. by direct recruitment of candidates through an open competitive examination held by the Federal Public Service Commission, the remaining 50 per cent. being filled by departmental promotion. The posts of Postmasters in the grades of Rs. 250—350 and Rs. 160—250 are filled by promotion. The posts of Inspectors and Head Clerks to Superintendents are filled by selection on the basis of a departmental examination held by the Heads of the Circle from the Circle cadre. The examiners are departmental officers.

(e) These posts are filled by promotion of clerks working under that General Post Office only, but they are not necessarily natives of or domiciled in Calcutta.

(f) No, Sir, because it would be administratively inconvenient and against the interests of clerks serving in Assam.

Mr. Brojendra Narayan Chaudhury: With regard to part (d) of the question, is it not a fact that the departmental examiners are always non-Assamese?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: It depends entirely on the people who happen to be in the Circle at the time.

Mr. Brojendra Narayan Chaudhury: I am asking what is the actual fact? Is it not a fact that the examiners have not been Assamese?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: I take it that it is highly probable that this is the case.

TRAIN SERVICE BETWEEN SYLHET AND SILCHAR ON THE ASSAM BENGAL RAILWAY.

919. ***Mr. Brojendra Narayan Chaudhury:** Will the Honourable Member in charge of Railways please state:

- (a) when the through train service between Sylhet and Silchar on the Assam Bengal Railway (train Nos. 263 Up and 266 Down) was started;
- (b) if these trains are intended for court passengers and others who want to return on the same day;
- (c) if these trains were put to meet bus competition between Sylhet and Karimganj;
- (d) the train fare between Sylhet and Karimganj for third class;
- (e) if the bus fare for the same is less than annas twelve only;
- (f) if the administration has calculated the additional cost of running these trains and the additional income from them; if these two trains by themselves are a paying or losing concern, taking into consideration the depreciation of stock and permanent way;
- (g) if he is aware that it is usual for passengers to travel from Silchar to Karimganj by train and thence to Sylhet by bus;
- (h) the time taken by these trains from Sylhet to Karimganj and in the opposite direction; and
- (i) if the time taken by buses to cover the same distance is within one and half hours and by private cars less than one hour?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: (a) From the 1st June, 1935.

(b) Yes.

(c) The Agent, Assam Bengal Railway, states that these trains were introduced on a proposal made by a member of his Advisory Committee.

(d) Re. 1-5-9.

(e) The usual fare is twelve annas.

(f) The Agent states that the matter was examined, and it was decided to continue running these trains.

(g) A considerable number of passengers so travel.

(h) Two hours and 37 minutes, and two hours and 54 minutes respectively.

(i) By bus about two hours and by private cars in less time: particulars regarding the latter are not available.

Mr. Brojendra Narayan Chaudhury: With regard to part (b) of the question, I have not yet been told whether there is an actual loss on the working of that train?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: The Agent has inquired into the matter and considers that it is worth while to continue the running of the train.

Mr. Brojendra Narayan Chaudhury: My question is whether the train is paying or not and I want a specific reply to that question?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: If the Agent has decided to continue the running of the trains, I think it may be assumed that there is no loss.

Mr. Brojendra Narayan Chaudhury: That is a matter of opinion and inference. I want facts?

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

AIR-CONDITIONED CARRIAGES ON RAILWAYS.

920. ***Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar:** Will the Honourable Member for Communications state:

- (a) what percentage of accommodation actually provided in air-conditioned carriages has been utilised in traffic;
- (b) what percentage of the first class traffic has taken to the air-conditioned carriages;
- (c) if Government have considered whether the cost of air-conditioned carriages can be reduced further; and
- (d) whether there is any chance of introducing these carriages for the lower classes?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: (a) About 34 per cent. of the accommodation provided in air-conditioned coaches was utilised in the months of December, 1937, and January, 1938.

(b) The Honourable Member's attention is invited to the reply given to part (b) of question No. 725 asked by Mr. Mohan Lal Saksena in this House on the 9th March, 1938.

(c) This question is under investigation.

(d) The Honourable Member's attention is invited to the reply given to part (c) of question No. 467, asked by him in this House on the 24th February, 1938.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: May I know whether the first class traffic has lessened as a consequence of these air-conditioned coaches?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: I shall require notice of that question.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: May I know what percentage of first class traffic is necessary to make the air-conditioned coaches profitable?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: Of that, too, I shall require notice.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: May I ask whether the recent statement made in the press that the air-conditioned coaches are running at a profit and that within a few years they will get back the capital invested on them is true?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: I have no information as to whether it is an authoritative statement or not.

Mr. B. Das: May I enquire whether it is a fact that the air-conditioned passengers after they leave the coach catch cold?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: Our object is to air-condition the coaches and not the passengers.

Mr. K. Santhanam: With reference to part (a), may I know whether the Railway Board have evolved any definite percentage which they consider reasonable for running air-conditioned coaches?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: The process is at the present time in an experimental stage and, therefore, no definite percentage has been evolved.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: In the meanwhile will the Government consider the advisability of limiting the making of fresh first class carriages?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: Yes, Sir.

RADIO LICENCE-HOLDERS AND PROGRAMMES.

921. **Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar:** Will the Honourable Member for Communications state:

- (a) what is the ratio of Indians to Europeans in the number of radio licence-holders in Bombay, Delhi and Calcutta;
- (b) what is the ratio of money spent on Indian as opposed to European music spent in Bombay, Delhi and Calcutta; and
- (c) whether there is a great deal of difference in the two ratios; if so, whether Government have considered arranging programmes to suit the large number of licencees?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: (a) The attention of the Honourable Member is invited to the reply given by me on the 3rd February, 1938, to part (b) of Mr. Manu Subedar's starred question No. 121.

(b) and (c). A statement giving the required information for the three months ending 31st January, 1938, is laid on the table of the House. All-India Radio are constantly endeavouring to arrange programmes which will suit the tastes of the largest possible number of listeners in India.

Statement showing Expenditure on Indian and European Music during the three months ending 31st January, 1938, at the Bombay, Calcutta and Delhi Stations of the All-India Radio.

Name of the Station.	Amount spent on Indian music.	Amount spent on European music.	Ratio.
	Rs.	Rs.	
Bombay	12,393	8,375	3 : 2
Calcutta	10,235	5,160	2 : 1
Delhi	15,459	5,145	3 : 1

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: If I remember aright, the figures were not given on that date.

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: For the very good reason that I was not in a position to give the number.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: Will the Government collect the figures, please?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: No, Sir.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: Why not, Sir?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: Because the trouble and expense of collecting the figures will be wholly disproportionate to the purpose which it will serve.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: Are the Government satisfied that the number of Indians is by far greater than the number of Englishmen?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: I am prepared to take the Honourable Member's word for it.

EXTENSIONS OF THE ASSAM-BENGAL RAILWAY LINE FOR CONNECTING CERTAIN STATIONS.

922. ***Mr. Kuladhar Chaliha:** (a) Will the Honourable Member in charge of Railways please state whether there is any proposal to connect the Khowang station of the Assam Bengal Railway with the Dibrugarh town (in Assam) by an extension of the Assam Bengal Railway line to Dibrugarh?

(b) Have Government received any representation from commercial interests to that effect? If so, do Government propose to take the matter up and connect the line?

(c) Has the Honourable Member in charge of Railways been considering the advisability of connecting Badulepar station with Jakhalabandha station on the Assam Bengal Railway?

(d) If not, are Government now prepared to consider the proposal and connect the two stations as it will facilitate the transport of commercial commodities in that area?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: (a) Not at present. A survey was made in 1917 but the project was dropped in 1920 in view of its unattractive prospects.

(b) Not in recent years. There does not appear to be any demand for this line.

(c) No.

(d) The prospects of a railway close to and parallel to the river are not likely to be good, and such a line would almost certainly require a subsidy from the Provincial Government. Should the Provincial Government be prepared to pay a subsidy, they will, no doubt, approach the Government of India.

FINANCIAL FAILURE OF THE BOMBAY BROADCASTING STATION.

923. ***Mr. Manu Subedar:** Will the Honourable Member for Communications state:

- (a) whether he has seen in the *Statesman* of the 27th February, 1938, a statement by the Controller of All-India Radio to the effect that "the Bombay station is, in fact, a losing proposition";
- (b) the number of licencees in Bombay City and what is the number in the territory served by Bombay Station, and the percentage of these to the total number of licencees in India;
- (c) whether the All-India Radio is helped by a financial adviser;
- (d) the nature of the financial control exercised over the activities of the All-India Radio, and whether any responsible official of the Finance Department has given the opinion that Bombay is a losing station;
- (e) whether the statement made by Mr. Fielden was sanctioned by Government, or approved by them subsequently, and whether that is the official view;
- (f) if the reply to part (e) be in the negative, what steps Government propose to take to prevent unauthorised statements being made on financial issues by the Controller; and
- (g) whether Government have considered the advisability of appointing a committee to suggest measures for overhauling the finances of the All-India Radio and to see whether any greater results could be obtained from the money spent?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: (a), (e) and (f). I have seen the article in the *Statesman* of the 27th February, which is a comment on an article from the pen of the Controller of Broadcasting which appeared in the *Times of India* of the 16th February. The Controller's object was to emphasise the fact that in the long run broadcasting must depend upon receipts from licences which, taking the Bombay Presidency, are not sufficient to cover the cost of programmes and programme staff of the Bombay station. The article referred to was not seen by Government before publication, but they do not see any reason to take exception to it.

(b) The number of wireless licencees in the Bombay Presidency at the end of December, 1937, was 16,500, a little over 33 per cent. of the total number in British India. Of these, about 12,000 were in Bombay City.

(c) No.

(d) The accounts of All-India Radio are checked by the Audit Officers and proposals for fresh expenditure are examined by the Department of Communications in consultation with the Finance Department in the ordinary way. The reply to the second part of the question is in the negative.

(g) Government do not consider the appointment of such a committee to be necessary.

Mr. Manu Subedar: Which centres in India are fulfilling the requirements as to returns by way of licence which Bombay has failed to fulfil according to the Controller whose opinion the Government of India have now accepted?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: No area is at present fulfilling the condition of paying for its programme through licence fees.

Mr. Manu Subedar: Then why was Bombay singled out?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: If it were possible, I would refer the Honourable Member to the writer of the article.

Mr. Manu Subedar: May I take it then from the Honourable Member that the all-India Radio, as a whole, is not fulfilling the requirements of covering its cost by means of fees receipt? Is that so?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: I do not think that arises out of this question.

Mr. Manu Subedar: If no other centre has fulfilled

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable the Government Member need not answer, as it is a matter of inference to be drawn.

Mr. Manu Subedar: In order that these vague and unjustifiable charges may not be flung about in the Press by the Controller would the Government appoint a small departmental committee to look into the matter and give us an authoritative statement on the subject?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: I cannot say that any charge has been made.

Mr. Mohan Lal Saksena: Are Government officials permitted to make contributions to the Press without the approval of the Government?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: The rules governing contributions to the Press by Government servants are set out in the Government Servants' Conduct Rules to which the Honourable Member may refer.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Has the Honourable Member satisfied himself that the Controller of Broadcasting who is contributing these articles to the Press is not paid for his contribution that he is making?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: I have no information on the subject.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Will the Honourable Member enquire?

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

Prof. N. G. Ranga: This is a very important question, Sir. The Controller of Broadcasting is a Government servant and I want the Government to make enquiries whether he is paid for his contributions to the Press.

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

RAILWAY FREIGHT RATES ON CEMENT, MATCH AND COAL.

924. ***Mr. Manu Subedar:** With reference to his remark in the House, in introducing the Railway Budget, that material assistance had been given by the Railways in respect of rates to the cement, match and coal industries, will the Honourable Member for Communications state:

- (a) when the rates were reduced (along with a statement of the old and new rates in each case);
- (b) whether this was done at the request of the trade; and
- (c) whether the Railways lost any revenue by doing this?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: Reference was not made in my speech introducing the Railway Budget to the point to which the Honourable Member refers, but in my reply to the debate on a cut motion relating to railway freight policy, cement and matches were referred to as some of the commodities for which Railways had reduced their freight rates. In regard to the specific point to which the Honourable Member now refers:

(a) The special rates quoted by Railways appear in their respective tariffs, but the compilation by each Railway concerned of the particulars required by the Honourable Member will involve a considerable amount of labour incommensurate with any use to which the information could be put.

(b) I have no doubt that this was the case.

(c) Without a detailed investigation of each case, it is not possible to answer this part of the Honourable Member's question.

Mr. Manu Subedar: My object in asking this question was to see what are the general principles on which requests for reduction of rates could be made which requests would be granted by Government and to what extent the railways would go to assist the industries. This was the claim made by the Honourable Member in his speech the other day. May I ask the Honourable Member whether he can throw any light on those general principles either now or by a subsequent communication to the Chamber of Commerce?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: If there is any industry which requires special consideration in regard to freights, I suggest that it should make direct reference to the administration concerned.

Prof N. G. Ranga: Will it not be a repetition of the reply that was made by the Railway Board to the cotton trade interests?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: Not necessarily.

†925*.

ASSISTANCE TO INDIAN INDUSTRIES BY RAILWAYS.

926. ***Mr. Manu Subedar:** With reference to the statement of the Chief Commissioner for Railways in his speech, introducing the Railway Budget, as follows:

"Apart from the advantages the Railways obtain from standardisation in the form of reduction in first cost and maintenance charges, the industrial development of the country has been greatly assisted".

will the Honourable Member for Communications state what industries have been established and where, and what orders such industries have received from the Railway Board during 1936-37 and 1937-38 (up to the end of December)?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart. Government are not aware of any new industries connected with the standardisation of railway equipment that have been established in India during the periods referred to by the Honourable Member. Evidence of the development of existing industries is provided by the additions to the firms registered as approved contractors to the Indian Stores Department for the supply of different classes of standardised railway equipment and by the value of such equipment of Indian manufacture purchased through the Indian Stores Department for State-managed Railways between April 1st, 1936, and December 31st, 1937. A statement giving this information is laid on the table.

Statement.

Firms registered since April 1st, 1936, as approved contractors to the Indian Stores Department for the supply of standardised railway equipment.

Vacuum brake fittings, metallic.

1. Messrs. United Engineering Corporation, Bombay.
2. Messrs. Howrah Engineering Company, Howrah.

Permanent-way fittings.

1. Messrs. National Iron & Steel Company, Limited, Belur.
2. Messrs. Steel Equipment & Construction Company Limited, Howrah.
3. Messrs. Howrah Engineering Company, Howrah.
4. Messrs. Gobindo Sheet Metal Works, Calcutta.
5. Messrs. Singh Engineering Works, Cawnpore.
6. Messrs. Yule Engineering Company, Calcutta.

Track Tools.

- Messrs. Indian Tool Manufacturers Limited, Bombay.

India Rubber Fittings.

Messrs. Indian Rubber Manufacturers Limited, Calcutta.

Value of purchases of standardised railway equipment of Indian manufacture made by the Indian Stores Department between 1st April, 1936, and 31st December, 1937.

	Rs.
Vacuum brake fittings, metallic	2,62,698
Permanent-way fittings and track tools	33,36,082
India rubber fittings	4,69,231
Points and crossings	13,15,808
Signal and interlocking (materials) equipment	4,28,973

†This question has been postponed to be answered on the 8th April, 1938.

Mr. Manu Subedar: Will the Honourable Member give us some particulars of any negotiations which may be on for the production of standardised articles for railways for new articles which have not been hitherto produced?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: The question of negotiations, I take it, does not arise out of this question.

CONTROL OF THE ALL-INDIA RADIO.

927. ***Mr. Manu Subedar:** Will the Honourable Member for Communications state:

- (a) whether Government consider the All-India Radio a commercial department of Government;
- (b) whether there is a single official in the department, or in control thereof at the top, who can claim to have had any business experience;
- (c) whether Government have considered the necessity of having a businessman in control of this department; and
- (d) if the reply to part (c) be in the negative, whether Government will state the reasons?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: (a) It is a commercial department in the sense that Government expect that in due course the income from license fees and other receipts will cover the cost of the department.

(b) Yes.

(c) and (d). No. Government consider that experience of broadcasting, especially of programmes is the most important qualification for the post of Controller.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: At present what percentage of the expenses is met by the licence fees?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: I shall require notice of that question.

Mr. Manu Subedar: With reference to the answer to clause (b), will Government be pleased to give the name of the official who claims to have any business experience in the department?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: It is the Editor of the *Indian Listener*.

Mr. Manu Subedar: Is he in charge of the business arrangements of this All-India Radio?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: No, Sir; he is in charge of the business arrangements of the *Indian Listener*.

Mr. Manu Subedar: How does the business experience of a man who is in charge of nothing except a journal affect the business administration of the whole department?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: I never suggested for a minute that it affected the business administration of the whole department.

Mr. Manu Subedar: Do I take it then that there is nobody . . .

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): That is a matter of argument. The Honourable Member can draw his own inference.

Mr. N. M. Josni: When Government say "in due course", can they give any estimate of the period?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: No, Sir; I can give no accurate estimate of the period.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: Can the Honourable Member give a rough estimate?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: If the Honourable Member will give me notice of the question I shall attempt to make an approximation.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: May I know if the All-India Radio is now doing better work, commercially and financially, than the company from which Government took it over?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: We do believe that matters have improved.

RADIO PROGRAMMES.

1928. ***Mr. Sami Vencatachalam Chetty:** Will the Honourable Member for Communications state:

- (a) whether, in view of the fact that the majority of licencees are Indians, Government have considered the proposal for giving four evenings (after dinner) out of seven at every broadcasting station in India to Indian music; and
- (b) whether Government are prepared to appoint a committee to fix the general categories of programmes and particularly to fix the distribution between Indian and English music at all stations?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: (a) The demands of listeners are not the same everywhere, and it is not, therefore, possible to adopt a uniform policy for all stations. Indian music is usually broadcast after the dinner hour from Delhi, Lahore and Peshawar every day, and there are Indian items on most days in the programmes broadcast from Calcutta and Bombay up to 9 P.M. With the improvement of studio accommodation it is hoped that it will be possible to increase Indian programmes.

(b) There is already an advisory council for the Delhi Station of the All-India Radio and Government are considering the question of establishing similar councils for other stations.

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

INDIA'S PARTICIPATION IN THE TRADE NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN THE UNITED KINGDOM AND THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

929. ***Mr. Badri Dutt Pande:** Will the Secretary for External Affairs state:

- (a) whether Government are in communication with His Majesty's Government in regard to the participation of India directly or indirectly in the provisions of the Trade Treaty now being negotiated between the United Kingdom and the United States of America;
- (b) whether Government have at all written to His Majesty's Government with regard to the disabilities of Indian businessmen in the United States;
- (c) whether Government have received any representations regarding such disabilities; and
- (d) whether Government are considering the desirability of participating in the Trade Treaty?

Sir Aubrey Metcalfe: (a) and (d). The Government of India have received information from His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom in regard to that Government's proposals for a Trade Agreement with the United States of America, and their effect on India's trade is being examined.

(b) Yes.

(c) Yes.

Mr. Mann Subedar: With regard to the answers to clauses (a) and (b), after the examination is concluded, will Government take this House into their confidence and tell us the main provisions of the treaty and how Indian trade is being affected?

Sir Aubrey Metcalfe: I am not in a position to answer that at present.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: What is the answer to part (d)?

Sir Aubrey Metcalfe: That is included in the answer to part (a).

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: May I know whether Government propose to have a separate treaty with the United States of America or propose to have it as a part of the present negotiations between Great Britain and the United States of America?

Sir Aubrey Metcalfe: I have not said that the Government of India propose to have a treaty at all.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: May I know how they mean to attempt to remove the disabilities of Indians in America?

Sir Aubrey Metcalfe: That is a matter which is now under consideration. I am not in a position to give any further information about it.

RADIO PROGRAMMES OF INDIAN MUSIC.

980. ***Mr. Badri Dutt Pande**: Will the Honourable Member for Communications state:

- (a) whether Government are aware that Mr. Fielden, the Controller of Broadcasting, is unacquainted with Indian music altogether; and
- (b) whether Government have considered that Indian music is getting a fair deal in the programmes at present?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: (a) No.

(b) Yes.

Mr. Manu Subedar: Are not Government aware that Mr. Fielden knows nothing of Indian music and that he has publicly declared that Indian music is piffle?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: That seems to suggest that he has some acquaintance with it.

Mr. Manu Subedar: When Government put such a man at the top of the administration of the department, did they consider whether he can do proper justice to the requirements of good Indian music?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: The fact that this particular individual is Controller of Broadcasting does not affect the question at all.

Seth Govind Das: Does he at all understand any song in Indian music?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: I have replied to the question in part (a), where I said, "No". The Honourable Member may draw his own deduction from that answer.

Mr. Badri Dutt Pande: Does he know Hindustani?

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The question deals with Indian music.

Mr. Manu Subedar: Will the Honourable Member himself take a little interest in this subject in order to see that the genuine grievances of lovers of Indian music are rectified in the programme which are being given?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: Does the Honourable Member suggest that I am not taking interest in a subject in my portfolio?

Mr. Manu Subedar: May I suggest that he should deepen and widen that interest and put a little more of it?

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I am sure the Honourable Member's suggestion will be considered.

MUNICIPALITIES AND NOTIFIED AREAS IN BALUCHISTAN.

931. ***Mr. Abdul Qaiyum:** Will the Foreign Secretary please state.

- (a) the number of municipalities and notified areas in Baluchistan;
- (b) when the Quetta Municipal Committee was first set up;
- (c) whether any elective element has been introduced in the local bodies in Baluchistan; if not, why not; and
- (d) whether Government propose to introduce such elective system; if so, when?

Sir Aubrey Metcalfe: (a) There is only one Municipality in Baluchistan, viz., that of Quetta town. Precise information with regard to the number of notified areas is not readily available.

(b) In 1896.

(c) No. So far as Government are aware, there is no local demand for the introduction of any such elective element.

(d) Government are willing to consider the introduction of an elective system when a local demand for it manifests itself.

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum: May I know if Government will introduce the elective system on their own initiative?

Sir Aubrey Metcalfe: No. If there is no local demand for it, there is no reason why Government should themselves move in the matter.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: May I know whether the local demand has not been made up to now or whether representations have actually been made and rejected?

Sir Aubrey Metcalfe: My information is that no such demand has manifested itself at all.

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum: Is it the policy of Government to train these people in local self-government in Baluchistan or will they wait till Doomis-day for a demand which may never be forthcoming?

Sir Aubrey Metcalfe: It is not their policy to disturb a system which gives general satisfaction to the local people.

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum: Is the Honourable Member aware that the local authorities always discourage people from coming forward with these demands?

Sir Aubrey Metcalfe: Certainly not.

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum: Is the Honourable Member aware

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I do not think the Honourable Member can carry it any further. Next question.

ABOLITION OF SECOND CLASS ON THE ASSAM-BENGAL RAILWAY.

932. ***Mr. Kuladhar Chaliha:** (a) Will the Honourable the Railway Member please state if there is any increase of revenue on account of the abolition of second class on the Assam Bengal Railway and the reduction of the first class fare by creating an upper class from the date of abolition of the second class?

(b) If not, will Government please state what the reason was for the abolition of the second class on the Assam Bengal Railway?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: (a) I would refer the Honourable Member to the reply I gave to Mr. Brojendra Narayan Chaudhury's question No. 295 on the 16th February, 1938.

(b) The Honourable Member's attention is invited to the reply given to his unstarred question No. 99 on the 19th March, 1937.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: As a consequence of the abolition of the second class on the Assam Bengal Railway, has there been any appreciable reduction in the fares charged for first class travel?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: No, Sir. The first and second class were abolished and an upper class was instituted the fare for which was roughly an average of second class and first class fares.

Mr. Kuladhar Chaliha: Has the revenue increased by the abolition of the second class?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: If the Honourable Member will refer to the reply to which I referred him he will find the figures given therein.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Is there any proposal to follow up this practice on other State Railways?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: The question of amalgamating the two classes is, I believe, being considered by other administrations.

Mr. Kuladhar Chaliha: Will the Honourable Member think of restoring the second class now?

(No reply was given.)

APPOINTMENT OF OFFICERS TO THE MILITIA AND THE SCOUTS.

933. ***Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar:** Will the Foreign Secretary state:

- (a) the authority that appoints officers to the militia and the scouts;
- (b) whether the advice of military authorities is taken in the matter of these appointments; and
- (c) why no Indians have been appointed till now to these offices?

Sir Aubrey Metcalfe: (a) The appointments are made by the Local Administration concerned in the case of the North-West Frontier and Baluchistan Corps and by the Resident in Kashmir in the case of Gilgit Scouts.

(b) Yes.

(c) Only four Indians have applied for such appointments. Of these three were not selected. The fourth was selected but subsequently refused the appointment.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: May I know how many Indians and how many Europeans are there in the militia and the scouts?

Sir Aubrey Metcalfe: I do not understand the question. Does the Honourable Member mean in the ranks or among the officers?

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: Among the officers.

Sir Aubrey Metcalfe: There are no Indians.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: Why is there not even a single Indian officer.

Sir Aubrey Metcalfe: I have already explained that only four Indians have ever applied for such appointments. Of these the first two applied in 1923 and were not selected presumably because they were not senior enough for selection. The other two applied in 1936, of them one was not selected and the other was selected but refused to take up the appointment.

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum: How many officers were selected who did not apply?

Sir Aubrey Metcalfe: Every officer has to apply for this appointment before he can be selected.

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum: Is it the policy of the Government to keep out Indians from the militia and the scouts?

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): That does not arise.

RAILWAY CONCESSION DURING THE *URS* AT PIRAN KALIAR SHARIF, ROORKEE.

934. ***Mr. H. M. Abdullah:** Will the Honourable the Railway Member please state:

- (a) whether a concession was given at the *Urs* of Dargah Khwaja Saheb, Ajmer, to passengers from the Punjab and the North-West Frontier Province last year; and
- (b) whether Government are prepared to consider the feasibility of extending the same during the coming *Urs* of Piran Kaliar Sharif (Roorkee) as well?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: (a) I would refer the Honourable Member to the information published in the Legislative Assembly Debates of the 24th September, 1937, in connection with the reply given to part (e) of Mr. Abdul Qaiyum's unstarred question No. 39 on the 31st August, 1937.

(b) The matter is one for consideration by the Railway Administration concerned to whom the Honourable Member's suggestion will be communicated for such action as may be considered necessary.

SLOW SPEED OF THE GRAND TRUNK EXPRESS.

935. ***Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar:** Will the Honourable the Railway Member state:

- (a) the average speed per hour of the Grand Trunk Express compared with the East Indian Railway, Great Indian Peninsula Railway and the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway trains;
- (b) whether they have recently considered the matter of speeding up the train; and
- (c) what are the obstacles, if any, to this train being speeded up?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: (a) The through speed per hour, including the time taken for booked stoppages, averages approximately as follows:

Grand Trunk Express—	
Madras to Delhi	28 miles
Delhi to Madras	29 miles
East Indian Railway—	
7 up and 8 down Express between Howrah and Delhi.	38 miles
Great Indian Peninsula Railway—	
197 Down Express Bombay to Delhi.	31 miles
198 Up Express, Delhi to Bombay	30 miles
Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway—	
19 Up and 20 Down Express between Bombay and Delhi	27 miles

(b) and (c). I would refer the Honourable Member to the reply given to Dr. T. S. S. Rajan's starred question No. 1211 on the 30th March, 1935. Railways have recently been asked to examine the question of speeding up trains generally.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: I know the reference, Sir. May I know if Government have taken up this matter and seen if these difficulties cannot be overcome?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: I have said that Railways have recently been asked to examine the question of speeding up trains generally.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: In view of the fact that the up journey is done at an average of 28 miles per hour will Government see that the journey from Delhi to Madras is also speeded up from 25 to 28 miles per hour?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: The figures from Madras to Delhi and from Delhi to Madras are 28 and 29 miles respectively.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: May I know whether it is a general circular to speed up trains or whether they have sent a special circular to the railways concerned to speed up the Grand Trunk Express?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: Speeding up trains generally.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: Will Government address the railways concerned to speed up particularly this train, because it is the only direct connection between Madras and Delhi?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: There is no reason to believe that this particular train will not receive the consideration of the railways concerned.

Seth Govind Das: What are the reasons for the great difference between the speed of one train and that of another? One train runs at 28 and another at 38 miles.

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: Without being a railway expert, I should suggest that the number of stops between the terminals of a train is an important consideration.

Mr. Thirumala Rao: Is the Honourable Member aware that between Madras and Bezwada the train runs as a passenger, and that between Bezwada and Balarshah it is a mixed train stopping even at places where there are no stations.

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: I shall endeavour to corroborate the Honourable Member's statement from the time-table. When I can expect to get a reply from the administration I can give no idea.

MONEY SPENT ON AND TIME GIVEN FOR EUROPEAN AND INDIAN MUSIC IN BROADCASTING.

936. ***Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar:** Will the Honourable Member for Communications state:

- (a) the amounts of money spent on European and Indian music in broadcasting at Delhi, Bombay and Calcutta;
- (b) the amount of time given to European and Indian music in the above stations after 7 P.M.; and
- (c) the proportion of Indians and Europeans among the licencees of receivers at the above three stations?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: (a) and (c). The attention of the Honourable Member is invited to the replies given by me today to his starred question No. 921.

(b) The attention of the Honourable Member is invited to the fortnightly issues of the *Indian Listener*, which are available in the Library of the Legislature.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: May I know if the time allowed is uniformly the same on all days and weeks in the year?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: If the Honourable Member will refer to the *Indian Listener* he will get all the information he requires.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: Government have to supply the information.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): In the case of a publication like that it is just as easy for the Honourable Member to find the information he wants as it is for the Government Member.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: I must submit this, Sir. We must go through the whole of the *Indian Listener* to find the information whereas Government have got their Secretariat and officers to help them, and they are here to supply information to us.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Where information is available quite easily I do not think there is any need for quoting even.

Mr. Manu Subedar: Will the Honourable Member please tell the House whether Government have reached any decision on the question of giving at least four evenings a week at every station in India to Indian music. The Honourable Member a little while ago said in reply to a supplementary that the matter was receiving consideration.

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: The Government of India will see that there is a reasonable distribution of the programmes but I cannot commit myself to any particular proportion at this moment.

Mr. Manu Subedar: The question was about four evenings after 9 o'clock.

REBUILDING OF THE COIMBATORE RAILWAY STATION.

†937. ***Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar**: Will the Honourable the Railway Member state:

- (a) whether the Coimbatore station is being rebuilt, and an overbridge is also constructed to facilitate traffic;
- (b) what is the estimate of this rebuilding and overbridge; and
- (c) when the rebuilding is expected to be completed?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: (a) Coimbatore station is being rebuilt and an under-bridge provided.

(b) The estimate for the work at present sanctioned is Rs. 8.43 lakhs. The detailed estimate for the second stage has not yet been received, but the further improvements to the station will probably cost about Rs. 2 lakhs

(c) Work already sanctioned is expected to be completed in 1938-39.

CONSTRUCTION OF THE BRIDGE ON THE BRAHMAPUTRA NEAR PANDU IN ASSAM.

938. ***Mr. Kuladhar Chaliha**: Will the Honourable Member for Communications please state:

- (a) whether the scheme for the construction of the bridge on the Brahmaputra near Pandu (Assam) has been approved by the authorities;
- (b) if so, what will be the approximate cost of the bridge, and when it is likely to be completed;

†Answer to this question laid on the table, the questioner having exhausted his quota.

- (c) whether Government have received any representation from the public that the bridge should be sufficiently wide to allow other wheeled traffic to pass;
- (d) whether the Government of Assam have given any suggestion on the above representation; and
- (e) whether the Railway authorities have asked the Provincial Government for any monetary help for constructing the bridge; if so, why?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: (a) Approval of the scheme will depend on the results of the survey now in progress.

(b) An estimate of the cost is now being made. It is not yet possible to say when the bridge will be completed.

(c) No.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) It is understood that the Eastern Bengal Railway and the Assam Government are discussing the question of a combined road and rail bridge. Should a combined bridge be built, the Assam Government will be asked to bear such part of the cost as is usual in these cases.

Mr. Kuladhar Chaliha: May I know from the Honourable Member when the bridges at Delhi and Allahabad on the Jumna were constructed whether any contribution was received by the Railway authorities from any other fund?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: I must ask for notice of that question.

Mr. Abdur Rasheed Chaudhury: May I know when the construction of the bridge commenced?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: I cannot tell you that. The survey is not even completed.

RAILWAY FREIGHT ON CERTAIN COMMODITIES ON THE DIBRU SADIYA RAILWAY.

939. ***Mr. Kuladhar Chaliha:** Will the Honourable Member in charge of Railways please state the railway freight charged per maund per mile for the following goods on the Dibru Sadiya Railway? Are the rates about the highest in India? If so, are Government prepared to see that the rates are reduced to facilitate internal trade:

- (A) (a) paddy;
- (b) rice;
- (c) flour;
- (d) pulses;
- (e) ghee;
- (f) milk;
- (g) vegetable;
- (h) piece-goods; and

- (B) (a) bamboo (please state per maund and also per wagon load);
 (b) thatch (please state per maund and also per wagon load);
 (c) ikra (please state per maund and also per wagon load);
 (d) timber:
 (i) fuel;
 (ii) sawn timber?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: I am placing on the table a statement showing the rates for the articles referred to. Higher rates than those shown in this statement are charged for the same commodities on the Jorhat Provincial Railway and on certain Hill Railways. I will communicate the Honourable Member's suggestion for a reduction in the existing rates to the Railway Administration for consideration.

Statement.

The rates per maund per mile (except where otherwise specified) ordinarily chargeable over the Dibru-Sadiya Railway are as follows:

(A) Paddy	} 1.15 pie.
Rice	
Pulses	
Flour and Vegetables	1.25 pie.
Ghee, Milk and Piecegoods, in bales, presspacked or in boxes or cases, at owner's risk	1.88 pie.
(B) Bamboos	1.73 pie.
	Rs. 12 per wagon between any two stations.
Thatch and Ekra	1.15 pie.
	1/3 pie, subject to a minimum of 250 maunds per wagon.
	½ pie, subject to a minimum of 200 maunds per wagon.
Timber, both wrought and unwrought	1.15 pie.
	Two annas per maund between any two stations, when in wagon loads.

NEW SCHEME OF WORK IN THE RAILWAY CLEARING ACCOUNTS OFFICE.

940. ***Sardar Sant Singh:** (a) Will the Honourable Member for Railways please state whether it is a fact that in the Railway Clearing Accounts Office, Delhi, with the introduction of a new scheme of work called 'the Grand Summary Method' the volume of work for the Clerical staff has greatly increased?

(b) Is it a fact that the staff is made to sit late hours and attend office on Sundays and other holidays without being compensated for it?

(c) Will Government please lay on the table a statement showing the number of clerks who had to work late hours, showing at the same time the last hour in the evening up to which each clerk worked, during, say, the last 15 days ending with the 7th March, 1938?

(d) Is it a fact that in some of the Goods Sections of this office the staff has been made to work continuously for weeks without a single off day?

(e) If the answers to the above parts be in the affirmative, do Government propose to increase the staff, or revert to the old system of work?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: (a) The answer is in the negative except for a purely temporary increase during the first month of the change-over.

(b) No. Compulsory attendance on holidays is invariably compensated for by extra casual leave.

(c) No order was issued asking the clerks to work late hours, and no record is kept as to the time when each clerk leaves office. The Director has personally observed that very few clerks are present in office when he leaves at about 5 P. M. daily.

(d) The answer is in the negative but three clerks are reported to have attended office of their own accord during holidays to overtake their own arrears.

(e) Adequate arrangements have already been made to cope with the extra work during the transition by sanctioning such extra staff as was found necessary.

Mr. K. Santhanam: With reference to the answer to part (c), may I know whether the clerks are allowed to take records home for completing their work?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: I am unable to answer that without notice.

CANCELLATION OF ARRANGEMENTS FOR BROADCASTING THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS.

941. ***Mr. Manu Subedar:** (a) With reference to his reply to starred question No. 662 on the 5th March, 1938, will the Honourable Member for Communications state whether the political character of the Congress was one of the reasons, which induced Government to cancel the programme for broadcasting the Congress proceedings at Hariipura?

(b) What is the policy of Government with regard to the reporting by broadcast of important statements of great interest to the country by His Excellency the Viceroy or other high officials or by Mahatma Gandhi and leaders of the people at important functions?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: (a) The special arrangements made were cancelled because they conflicted with the declared policy of Government not to allow the microphone to be used for purposes of political propaganda.

(b) Statements of the nature referred to are treated as items of news and are broadcast as part of the ordinary news service of the All-India Radio.

Mr. Manu Subedar: Was the broadcasting by His Excellency the Viceroy in defence of General Baden-Powell political or not? Did it come within the restrictions of Government policy not to allow political use of the microphone?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: No; it did not come within the four corners of the prohibition.

Seth Govind Das: Do the Government not consider certain resolutions passed by the Congress as part of news?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: That does not arise out of this question.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Has any action been taken against the authorities who were responsible for committing this mistake of first agreeing to broadcast in contravention of Government's policy and subsequently forcing the Government to cancel it?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: Any action that it was necessary to take has been taken.

Mr. K. Santhanam: May I know what action has been taken and against whom?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: The broadcast was cancelled.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: I wanted to know what action Government had taken against the officer concerned who was responsible for committing that mistake and then causing so much of discontent in the country: why he forgot the established policy of the Government and in contravention of it accepted this contract with the Congress Reception Committee and afterwards forced the Government to cancel it.

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: I am unaware that any contract was entered into with the Reception Committee.

Mr. Mohan Lal Saksena: Are the Government aware that in view of the announcement of the Broadcasting Department that the Congress proceedings would be broadcast a number of persons did not go to Haripura?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: I am unaware of that.

INSTITUTIONS IN INDIA FOR THE TRAINING OF GLIDER PILOTS.

942. ***Pandit Krishna Kant Malaviya:** Will the Honourable Member for Communications please state:

- (a) whether there is any institution in India for the training of glider pilots as are prevalent in Western countries;
- (b) if so, the number of such institutions and the extent to which Government subsidise them; how many of these are Indian; how many are not getting any subsidy; which are these;
- (c) whether he is aware that the British Government in England is spending five to ten thousand pounds annually on the training of glider pilots and to make flying popular; and
- (d) whether he is aware that the French, Italian and German Governments are spending lakhs annually in their countries to popularise gliding and flying in the air?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: (a) No.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) I understand that the British Government have allocated a subsidy up to a maximum of £ 5,000 annually for five years to the British Gliding Association to assist gliding clubs.

(d) I have no precise information.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Is there any proposal that the Government should adopt the same practice as is being adopted in England which is mentioned in part (c) of the question?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: If the Honourable Member will wait a little longer until I have finished my answers to the series of questions that are being asked, he may not require to ask this question.

Pandit Krishna Kant Malaviya: With regard to part (a), may I know if there is a gliding association in Bombay?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: I am informed so, but I do not regard that as an institution.

SCHEME FOR ENCOURAGING FLYING AND GLIDING.

943. ***Pandit Krishna Kant Malaviya:** Will the Honourable Member for Communications please state:

- (a) whether Government propose preparing a scheme for making the youngmen of this country air-minded; and
- (b) whether it is a fact that gliding is cheaper and at the same time instructive?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: (a) Government have spent nearly 11½ lakhs during the past ten years in subsidies to Flying Clubs which are intended to provide facilities for flying to the people of this country.

(b) Gliding and soaring are cheaper than power flying and are, within their limits, instructive.

Pandit Krishna Kant Malaviya: With regard to part (a), is the amount spent on aerodromes and wireless and all that sort of thing, or merely to encourage flying?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: No; the amounts to which I referred were paid as subsidies to flying clubs.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: May I ask whether the Government of India propose to take any steps to make the Members of the Assembly air-minded?

Pandit Krishna Kant Malaviya: Will the Honourable Member please tell the House whether the money paid as subsidy is spent on purchasing aeroplanes or getting instructors to train them for flying?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: The subsidy is expended by them in providing machines for training and in employing instructional staff.

Mr. Sri Prakasa: Do the Government realise the danger of allowing air-minded young men to go about gliding cheaply all over the country?

(No answer was given.)

MANUFACTURE OF GLIDERS AS A COTTAGE INDUSTRY.

944. ***Pandit Krishna Kant Malaviya:** Will the Honourable Member for Communications please state:

- (a) whether Government have considered that the manufacture of gliders can be started as a cottage industry;
- (b) whether it is a fact that to learn gliding is easier than flying and that one who is a good glider could be good in the art of flying also; and
- (c) whether he is aware that school children in western countries partake of flying instructions on gliders?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: (a) No. Government do not consider that gliders can be manufactured as a cottage industry.

(b) This is a matter of opinion, but it is generally recognised that training as a glider pilot is an advantage for the training of a pilot of power aeroplanes.

(c) I am prepared to take the Honourable Member's word for it.

Pandit Krishna Kant Malaviya: With regard to (a), what are the difficulties in the manufacture of gliders here in this country? Are the materials not available here?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: I am unaware whether the materials are available in this country, but a glider is a rather delicate hydro-dynamic instrument and I do not believe, nor do I think any one with any knowledge of it believes, that it is an instrument that can be constructed in a cottage.

Pandit Krishna Kant Malaviya: May I know what are the materials needed for the manufacture of a glider?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: I must have notice of that.

TRAINING OF INDIANS IN FLYING AND GLIDING.

945. ***Pandit Krishna Kant Malaviya:** Will the Honourable Member for Communications please state:

- (a) whether he is aware that the institution known as *Osaviachim* in the U. S. S. R. which is intended to give training both in flying and gliding, and the chemical defence of the country provides for the admission of all youths of the country on their attaining the age of 14 and that children of 7 to 14 years of age are admitted as friends of the association;
- (b) whether Government have considered that some 20,000 youths of this country could be trained in gliding and made air-minded at an expense of, say, ten lakhs of rupees; and

(c) if not, the approximate estimate of expenditure to make 20,000 Indian youths trained in gliding and making them air-minded in this country?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: (a) Government have no information.

(b) and (c). Government have made no investigation and are unable to say what the cost of training 20,000 youths in gliding would be if they had to meet the whole cost. I may, however, add that training in gliding will not in itself enable them to fly power machines.

Pandit Krishna Kant Malaviya: Will the Honourable Member kindly make an inquiry and find out what would be the cost of training about 20,000 young men?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: In view of the answers I have given and propose to give, I think it would be an entire waste of time and money to make an inquiry.

TRAINING OF INDIANS IN GLIDING.

946. ***Pandit Krishna Kant Malaviya:** Will the Honourable Member for Communications please state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that gliders can be had at a cost ranging between Rs. 800 and Rs. 3,000;
- (b) whether Government propose preparing a scheme for training sufficient number of Indian young men in this country in gliding; and
- (c) if not, what are their difficulties?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: (a) Gliders and soarers can be purchased in Europe at prices ranging from Rs. 1,500 to Rs. 4,000.

(b) and (c). No, Sir. Government consider that the funds available are spent to much better advantage in providing the facilities for training which are now being provided, but if voluntary organisations for gliding were established on a sound basis as in other countries, Government would be prepared to consider in what manner they might be encouraged.

Mr. M. S. Aney: Are the Government aware that in other countries Governments themselves are making some efforts to train young men and boys in gliding?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: I have already said that in the case of the United Kingdom a subsidy is paid.

NON-RECRUITMENT OF THE MEMBERS OF DEPRESSED CLASSES AS AERODROME CLERKS.

947. ***Pandit Sri Krishna Dutta Paliwal:** (a) Will the Honourable Member for Communications please state whether the attention of Government has been drawn to a letter entitled "Anomalous Recruitment in the Civil Aviation Directorate" published in the *National Call* of the 3rd May, 1937?

(b) What was the number of vacancies of Aerodrome Clerks filled in by selection in April 1937?

(c) Is it a fact that several candidates from the Depressed Classes also applied for the posts of Aerodrome Clerks?

(d) Is it a fact that while the claims of the minority communities were duly considered, the claims of the Depressed Classes candidates were absolutely ignored?

(e) How many of the candidates from the Depressed Classes were called for interview? What was the number of Depressed Classes candidates who were not even invited for interview by the authorities, and why?

(f) Is it a fact that the candidates from the Depressed Classes possessed the minimum standard of qualifications expected of them in accordance with the terms of the Supplementary Instructions to the Home Department Resolution of the 4th July, 1934, relating to communal representation in Government services? If so, what were the reasons for not appointing them to the posts of Aerodrome Clerks?

(g) What steps do Government propose to take to ensure that duly qualified members of these classes are not deprived of a fair opportunity for appointment, as required by the Home Department Resolution of the 4th July, 1934?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: (a) Yes.

(b) The Selection Committee drew up a list of approved candidates in April, 1937, from which 22 appointments have so far been made.

(c), (e) and (f). Only one of the candidates mentioned in his application that he belonged to the depressed classes. He was not called for interview as he did not come up to the standard of qualifications required of candidates selected for appointment.

(d) No.

(g) I invite attention to the answer given yesterday by the Honourable the Home Member to part (b) of question No. 901 asked by my Honourable friend.

REPRESENTATION *RE* PROMOTIONS IN THE RAILWAY CLEARING ACCOUNTS OFFICE.

948. ***Syed Ghulam Bhik Nairang:** (a) Will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to state if there is any association known as Clerk, Class I Association in the Railway Clearing Accounts Office, and if so, whether any representations were received from that body by the Director, Railway Clearing Accounts Office, on the subject of out of turn promotions?

(b) If the answer to both parts of part (a) be in the affirmative, will the Honourable Member be pleased to state what action the Director, Railway Clearing Accounts Office, has taken on the said representations?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: (a) Yes.

(b) The Director, Railway Clearing Accounts Office, has told the Association in reply that he has made these promotions after careful consideration and in accordance with the rules for promotion laid down by the Financial Commissioner of Railways.

OFFICIATING PROMOTIONS TO THE SUB-HEADS GRADE IN THE RAILWAY
CLEARING ACCOUNTS OFFICE.

949. ***Syed Ghulam Bhik Nairang:** (a) Will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to state what basis is adopted in the Railway Clearing Accounts Office for giving officiating chances in sub-heads grade?

(b) Will the Honourable Member be pleased to state whether the basis of promotion in the sub-heads grade now in force in the Railway Clearing Accounts Office is the same as was in force in the year 1928 to 1936? If not, under whose orders was the new basis adopted, and what is the basis for similar promotion in other Accounts Offices?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: (a) The basis adopted is that of merit, due regard being also paid to seniority.

(b) The reply to the first part of the question is in the affirmative. The basis of similar promotion in other Railway Accounts Offices is the same as given in reply to part (a) of the question.

GRIEVANCES OF CERTAIN CLERKS IN THE RAILWAY CLEARING ACCOUNTS OFFICE

950. ***Syed Ghulam Bhik Nairang:** (a) Will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to state if it is a fact that the memorials submitted by the senior selected candidates for sub-headship in the Railway Clearing Accounts Office have been rejected by the Controller of Railway Accounts? If so, on what grounds?

(b) Is he also aware that the rejection has created a great resentment amongst the senior men in particular and the other staff in general?

(c) Is the Honourable Member prepared to take suitable steps to examine the cases personally and redress the grievances of these men? If not, why not?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: (a) Yes. The request of the memorialists that promotions should be made strictly in order of seniority could not be accepted.

(b) and (c). As promotions have been made strictly in accordance with the orders on the subject, no further action is considered necessary.

CHOLA POWER HOUSE OF THE GREAT INDIAN PENINSULA RAILWAY.

951. ***Mr. K. Santhanam:** (a) Will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to state the total cost of the Chola Power-house of the Great Indian Peninsula Railway?

(b) How many turbines and boilers does it consist of?

(c) How many turbines and boilers at a time have been steaming?

(d) What is the average cost per unit?

(e) Is it proposed by the Great Indian Peninsula Railway to take power from the Tatas?

(f) What is proposed to be done to the Chola Power-house?

(g) What is the expected saving from taking power from the Tatas instead of working the Chola Power-house?

(h) What is the number of the staff now employed in that power-house?

(i) What arrangements will be made to absorb that staff when the power-house is closed?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: Enquiries are being made from the Railway Administration and a reply will be laid on the table in due course.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE ASSAM FLOOD INQUIRY COMMITTEE RE RAILWAY EMBANKMENTS.

952. ***Mr. Brojendra Narayan Chaudhury:** Will the Honourable Member for Railways please state:

(a) if his attention has been drawn to part (c) of the statement laid on the table on the 3rd April, 1935, referred to in the reply to starred question No. 720, dated the 9th March, 1938, particularly to the following portion:

“Observations made during the years 1931—1934 go to show that no openings are required at these places”;

(b) if the Honourable Member's attention has been drawn to recommendations Nos. (7) and (10) at page 6 of the report of the Assam Flood Inquiry Committee, 1929, and also to the chart at the end explaining the level of normal high flood (not 'normal rainfall');

(c) if it is the recommendation of the Committee that water passages should be provided for "normal high flood" and not merely for "years of normal rainfall" as stated in part (d) of the statement of the 3rd April, 1935;

(d) if the fact that 'normal high flood' was not reached during a course of twelve continuous years 1917 to 1928, attracted the attention of the Honourable Member in the chart;

(e) if the 'observations' referred to in part (d) of the statement were stopped after 1934, or continue till now; if so, what are the findings on those observations between 1934 and now; and

(f) if Government propose not to close this matter of opening further water passage and continue the observations at least for twelve years?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: Enquiries are being made from the Railway Administration and a reply will be laid on the table in due course.

Mr. Brojendra Narayan Chaudhury: My question asks whether the Honourable Member had read a portion of a certain report, namely, the report of the Assam Flood Inquiry Committee and there is no need of a reference to the Railway Administration. If the Honourable Member had read the report he could have answered my questions.

An Honourable Member: He has not read the report.

Another Honourable Member: The Honourable Member is flooded!
(No answer by the Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart.)

Mr. Brojendra Narayan Chaudhury: May I expect an answer or at least an explanation?

Prof. N. G. Ranga: The Honourable Member has not answered.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member can form his own idea. Next question.

APPOINTMENT OF AN INDIAN AS DIRECTOR OF RAILWAY FINANCE.

953. ***Mr. Thirumala Rao:** (a) Will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to state if it is a fact that the present Director of Railway Finance is going to retire shortly?

(b) Is it a fact that Government intend to fill up the vacancy of the Director of Railway Finance, which is now filled up by an Indian, by a European?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: (a) No.

(b) Does not arise.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: May I know how long the present incumbent is officiating? Is the present incumbent retiring very shortly?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: No.

LICENCE FEE FOR TOY RADIO SETS.

954. ***Mr. Ramayan Prasad:** Will the Honourable Member for Communications be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that a large number of students make toy radio sets—known as Crystal sets—as scientific experiments;

(b) whether Government are aware that this set is capable of receiving only local programmes on a medium wave length with the head phone;

(c) whether Government are aware that considerable doubts exist in the minds of the holders of these sets—regarding the payment of licencing fees for those sets;

(d) what Government's policy in this matter is; and

(e) if Government are imposing the usual licencing fee on all sets, and whether they are prepared to exempt it from the holders of the Crystal sets?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: (a) and (c). No.

(b) Yes.

(d) and (e). Government's present policy is to charge the same licence fee for all kinds of receiving sets, including crystal sets.

CONDUCTOR GUARDS ON THE BENGAL NAGPUR RAILWAY.

†955. ***Mr. K. S. Gupta:** (a) Will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to state how many Conductor Guards are there on the Bengal Nagpur Railway? How many are Europeans, Anglo-Indians and Indians?

(b) What is their duty?

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

- (c) How many hours do they work at a stretch?
- (d) What is the initial pay for each?
- (e) What allowance does each get while on duty?
- (f) What are the special qualifications for these passenger Guards?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: (a) to (f). These are matters of detailed administration on which Government have no information. I may add for the information of the Honourable Member that the staff employed on this railway are not Government servants but are the servants of the Bengal Nagpur Railway Company.

APPOINTMENT OF TRAVELLING SCAVENGERS ON RAILWAYS.

†956. ***Mr. K. S. Gupta:** (a) Is the Honourable Member for Railways aware that no scavenger is available to the third class passengers on the trains running from Calcutta to Madras?

(b) Is it a fact that scavenging is only attended to in first and second class compartments on the Bengal Nagpur Railway and Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway?

(c) Does the Honourable Member propose to see that travelling scavengers like Travelling Ticket Inspectors are appointed on all Indian Railways, and that third class carriages and lavatories are kept clean?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: (a) and (b). No. I would refer the Honourable Member to the reply given to Professor Ranga's question No. 579 on the 19th February, 1936.

(c) I have no reason to believe that the existing arrangements for ensuring cleanliness in carriages and lavatories are inadequate. Local Advisory Committee, on each one of which there is a member of the Central Advisory Council for Railways, can bring to the notice of the Administrations they are concerned with, any condition indicating the need for special attention.

INCONVENIENCES OF THE TRAVELLING PUBLIC ON THE VIZIANAGRAM RAIPUR BRANCH OF THE BENGAL NAGPUR RAILWAY.

†957. ***Mr. K. S. Gupta:** (a) Is the Honourable Member for Railways aware that the lavatories in the third class carriages on the Vizianagram Raipur Branch of the Bengal Nagpur Railway are not spacious enough for free ingress and egress of the passengers?

(b) Is it a fact that carriages used on the Vizianagram Raipur Branch are generally old, dirty and dingy to the great discomfort of the travelling public?

(c) Is the Honourable Member aware that cushions in the intermediate compartments are very old, torn and dirty? If so, is he prepared to see to the good keeping of them on this Branch?

(d) Is it not a fact that ladies compartment of the intermediate class is generally used for both males and females for want of sufficient accommodation on this Branch?

(e) Is the Honourable Member aware that the overbridge at Vizianagram station is so very steep, slopy and slippery, that it is very dangerous for old people, pregnant ladies and children to ascend and descend?

*Answer to this question said on the table, the questioner being absent.

(f) Is it not a waste of energy and time to cross the overbridge for passengers who entrain and detrain from the City side? If so, will it be remedied?

(g) Is the Honourable Member aware that both up and down mails and several passenger trains and shuttles arrive and depart between 10 A.M., and 4 P.M., at Vizianagram station and that the passengers feel it most troublesome to go up and down the overbridge in summer, since there is no cover to the overbridge?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: The information is being collected and will be laid on the table of the House in due course.

PAY OF LOWEST GRADE STATION MASTERS ON THE BENGAL NAGPUR RAILWAY.

†958. ***Mr. K. S. Gupta:** (a) Will the Honourable Member for Railways please state whether it is a fact that the highest grade Assistant Station Master gets more than the lowest grade Station Master who is senior in service on the Bengal Nagpur Railway?

(b) Is the Honourable Member aware that there is discontent and disharmony existing at a station where the Station Master gets much less salary than the Assistant Station Master on the Bengal Nagpur Railway?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: (a) and (b). Government have no information. The staff referred to are not Government servants but are the servants of the Bengal Nagpur Railway Company.

NON-ISSUE OF PASSES TO DEPENDANTS OF SUBORDINATE STAFF ON THE BENGAL NAGPUR RAILWAY.

†959. ***Mr. K. S. Gupta:** Is the Honourable Member for Railways aware that there is a lot of discontent and dissatisfaction prevailing amongst the subordinate staff on the Bengal Nagpur Railway due to non-issue of passes to their dependants like parents, widowed sisters and dependent unemployed brothers? If so, is he prepared to make necessary arrangement to see that the grievance is redressed?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: The reply to the first part of the question is in the negative. The question of what pass rules should apply over the Bengal Nagpur Railway is one for determination by the Railway Administration. I will, however, send a copy of the Honourable Member's question and of my reply to the Agent of that railway for such action as he may consider necessary.

WORKING HOURS OF CLERKS IN THE BENGAL NAGPUR RAILWAY OFFICES.

†960. ***Mr. K. S. Gupta:** (a) Will the Honourable Member for Railways please state if there is any time limit to work for a clerk in the Bengal Nagpur Railway offices?

(b) Is Sunday a holiday for the clerical staff on the Bengal Nagpur Railway?

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

(c) Is the Honourable Member aware that 'A. E.'s office of Bengal Nagpur Railway, Vizianagram was working on the 1st January, 1938?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: With your permission, Sir, I will answer questions Nos. 960, 961 and 962, together.

Government have no information. I may add that the staff employed on this railway are not Government servants but are the servants of the Bengal Nagpur Railway Company.

NON-PROVISION OF QUARTERS TO CLERKS ON THE BENGAL NAGPUR RAILWAY.

†961. ***Mr. K. S. Gupta:** Will the Honourable Member for Railways please state if, it is a fact that all clerks are not provided with quarters on the open line of the Bengal Nagpur Railway?

NON-FIXATION OF GRADES OR SCALES OF PAY FOR CLERKS ON THE BENGAL NAGPUR RAILWAY.

†962. ***Mr. K. S. Gupta:** Will the Honourable Member for Railways please state if it is a fact that several permanent clerks are kept in service without grade or scale for several years on the Bengal Nagpur Railway?

SHORT NOTICE QUESTION AND ANSWER.

AEROPLANE CRASH NEAR DATIA.

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum: Will the Honourable Member for Communications please state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that a plane of the Air France crashed near Datia on Monday, the 7th March, 1938;
- (b) what is the total loss of life;
- (c) whether Government are satisfied that the necessary rescue measures were available in good time;
- (d) what is the cause of the crash;
- (e) whether any timely warnings were given to the ill-fated plane before it started on its last journey; and
- (f) whether Government will hold an enquiry into the causes of this air disaster?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: (a) Yes.

(b) The number of lives lost was six, three passengers and three crew.

(c) No rescue measures were possible. The aeroplane burst into flames immediately on impact with the ground. The most prompt steps for all subsequent necessary action were taken by the Datia Durbar in co-operation with the Government of India.

(d) So far as can be ascertained the primary cause of the accident was the failure of one engine. The pilot apparently decided to land on a suitable piece of ground. On the approach to land the aeroplane lost flying speed, fell to the ground and burst into flames on impact.

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

‡For answer to this question, see answer to question No. 960.

(e) Does not arise.

(f) In accordance with invariable practice an investigation under the Indian Aircraft Rules was put in hand immediately. The investigation is being concluded jointly with the representatives of the French Air Ministry and the Company.

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum: May I know if the Honourable Member has seen the first Press report that the cause of the disaster was an air pocket brought about by the stormy weather then prevailing between Allahabad and Jodhpore?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: I have endeavoured to give the Honourable Member the story of the crash as it appears after investigation.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Why have the Government of India not appointed their own representative on that Enquiry Committee which is investigating?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: The investigation is being carried out by a member of the Civil Aviation Directorate.

UNSTARRED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

TRAVELLING ALLOWANCES OF MEMBERS OF TRADE UNIONS.

104. **Maulvi Syed Murtuza Sahib Bahadur:** Will the Honourable Member for Railways please refer to the replies given to starred questions Nos. 989, 990, 991, 992, 993 and 994, asked in this House on the 9th October, 1936 and state the reasons for the differential treatment amongst the members of the trade unions of employers and employees in respect of travelling allowances and duty?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: Presumably, the Honourable Member is referring to the Indian Railway Conference Association which is not a 'Trade Union of Employers' as would seem to be implied in the question. The question of differential treatment, therefore, does not arise.

COLLISION OF SPECIAL MELA TRAINS AT KALAT RAILWAY STATION, NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY.

105. **Maulvi Syed Murtuza Sahib Bahadur:** Will the Honourable Member for Railways please refer to the replies given to starred questions No. 1050, asked in this House on the 10th October, 1936 and No. 411 on the 16th September, 1936 and state the result of the judicial trial and whether the Assistant Station Master was exonerated from the charges by the judicial court of an offence under section 47 (e) of the Indian Railways Act, 1890 and, if so, why he was removed from service?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: I have called for the information required by the Honourable Member and will place a reply on the table when it has been received.

RULES GOVERNING SENIORITY OF NON-GAZETTED STAFF ON STATE-MANAGED RAILWAYS.

106. Maulvi Syed Murtuza Sahib Bahadur: Will the Honourable Member for Railways please place on the table of this House a copy of the rules governing seniority of non-gazetted (superior and inferior) staff on State-managed Railways?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: With your permission, Sir, I propose to reply to unstarred questions No. 106 and No. 107 together.

Agents of railways have full powers to deal with questions of seniority and promotion of non-gazetted staff. Government have laid down no rules regarding these but general orders regarding normal channels of promotion for various categories of subordinate staff are contained in the rules for the recruitment and training of subordinate staff on State-managed Railways, a copy of which is in the Library of the House.

Increments to non-gazetted staff are governed by rules 24 to 27 of the Fundamental Rules, a copy of which is in the Library of the House.

RULES GOVERNING PROMOTIONS AND INCREMENTS OF NON-GAZETTED STAFF ON STATE-MANAGED RAILWAYS.

†107. Maulvi Syed Murtuza Sahib Bahadur: Will the Honourable Member for Railways please place on the table of this House a copy of the rules governing promotions and increments in time scale of pay of non-gazetted (superior and inferior) staff on State-managed Railways from one grade to another grade, from one class to another class, from one branch to another, from one group to another, from one post to another, both normal channel and abnormal channel of promotion and increments?

ALLOWANCES PAID AND AMENITIES GIVEN TO THE GAZETTED STAFF ON RAILWAYS AND OF THE POSTS AND TELEGRAPHS DEPARTMENT.

108. Maulvi Syed Murtuza Sahib Bahadur: Will the Honourable Member for Railways please place on the table of this House a comparative statement of the allowances paid to the gazetted staff on Railways and to the same class of staff of the Posts and Telegraphs Department and the amenities given to them by the Departments?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: I am afraid I am unable to reply to a question couched in such general terms. If the Honourable Member will specify the particulars of allowances and the amenities regarding which he requires information, I shall consider his request.

DISCHARGE OF LUGGAGE PORTERS IN THE DELHI DIVISION OF THE NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY.

109. Maulvi Syed Murtuza Sahib Bahadur: Will the Honourable Member for Railways please state:

- (a) whether the North Western Railway discharged 27 luggage porters of Delhi Division in October 1937 on reduction of establishment;

†For answer to this question, see answer to question No. 106.

- (b) whether their work is now being performed by watermen;
- (c) whether the passengers go thirsty from station to station;
- (d) why those luggage porters were not provided in vacancies of peons, Station Masters' porters, shunting porters, van porters, instead of gang men; and
- (e) what were the good and reasonable grounds for their reduction?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: (a) to (c) and (e). I would refer the Honourable Member to the reply given to starred question No. 830 asked by Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali in this House on the 18th March, 1938.

(d) Government have no information. This is a matter within the competence of the Agent, North Western Railway, to whom I am sending a copy of the question for such action as he may consider necessary.

DISCHARGE OF VAN PORTERS IN THE DELHI DIVISION OF THE NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY.

110. **Maulvi Syed Murtuza Sahib Bahadur:** Will the Honourable Member for Railways please state:

- (a) whether the North Western Railway summarily discharged nine van porters of Delhi Division in February, 1938;
- (b) whether their offence was that they claimed rest after 16 hours of work;
- (c) whether they asked for an inquiry by the Supervisor of Railway Labour;
- (d) why this inquiry was denied to them;
- (e) whether they perform duty generally more than 60 hours a week on the average; and
- (f) whether Government propose to cancel the order of discharge of those nine van porters and institute an inquiry by the Supervisor of Railway Labour into their hours of work; if not, why not?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: Government are informed as follows:

(a) Nine van porters were discharged from service from the forenoon of the 20th February, 1938.

(b) They claimed rest at Doraha station while working 501 up of 23rd January, 1938, which left Saharanpur at 1.29 hours and reached Doraha at 15.30 hours.

(c) Yes.

(d) The enquiry asked for was not agreed to, as van porters do not come within the scope of the Hours of Employment Regulations.

(e) The duty hours of van porters employed on Delhi-Saharanpur-Ludhiana section vary generally from 12 to 17 hours a day and average from 63 to 70 hours a week.

(f) In view of the replies to parts (b) and (d) above this does not arise.

DISCHARGE OF WATCHMEN IN THE DELHI DIVISION OF THE NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY.

111. **Maulvi Syed Murtuza Sahib Bahadur:** Will the Honourable Member for Railways please inquire and state:

- (a) whether the North Western Railway summarily discharged several watchmen of Delhi Division during January 1938;
- (b) whether they were discharged on an adverse report by the police;
- (c) whether the police failed to bring a charge against them in a court of law;
- (d) whether the adverse report against them was signed by the Superintendent of Police, or by the Assistant Inspector General of Railway Police;
- (e) whether it is a fact that the Inspector, Watch and Ward, Delhi Division, North Western Railway, recorded their statement at the police station under coercion; if not, whether he will lay on the table the telegram and petitions of these watchmen to the Divisional Superintendent; and
- (f) whether these watchmen applied to the Divisional Superintendent, for copies of charge sheets; if so, whether they were supplied with them; if not, why not?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: (a) Five watchmen were discharged.

(b) The police reported against two watchmen who were discharged after a departmental enquiry held by the Inspector, Watch and Ward, who found them guilty. The other three were found guilty on a departmental enquiry made in a different case.

(c) The police reported the matter to the Divisional Superintendent, Delhi, as it was considered that departmental action would meet the case.

(d) The police report, against the two watchmen, was signed by the Station House Officer, Government Railway Police, Delhi, and was received through the Assistant Inspector General, Railway Police, Lahore.

(e) The reply to the first part is in the negative.

As regards the second part, the documents mentioned by the Honourable Member are for departmental use only and are not intended for publication.

(f) The reply to the first part is in the negative. The latter parts do not arise.

SYSTEM OF ASSESSMENT AND LEVY OF LICENCE FEE ON INDIAN REFRESHMENTS ON THE NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY.

112. **Maulvi Syed Murtuza Sahib Bahadur:** Will the Honourable Member for Railways please refer to paragraph 11 of the Report by the Railway Board on Indian Railways for 1936-37, Volume I, and state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that the North Western Railway has adopted a system of *assessment and levy of license fee* on Indian refreshments;
- (b) whether the said system was suggested by the Central Advisory Council for Railways;
- (c) what amount the North Western Railway expects to realise from the said system;

- (d) whether European refreshments are assessed in the same manner as the Indians; if not, the reasons for this discrimination;
- (e) whether the Agent, North Western Railway, decided the adoption of the said system before the reply to starred question No. 877, given in this House on the 29th September, 1937;
- (f) whether the said system has the approval of the Honourable Member; if so, when the approval was given; and
- (g) whether the Honourable Member will consider the desirability of cancelling the system; if not, why not?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: (a) No.

(b) The general view of the Council was that stallholders should be charged a reasonable licensing fee.

(c) to (g). Do not arise, in view of my reply to part (a) of the Honourable Member's question.

AUTHORITY COMPETENT TO FORFEIT THE PAY OF RAILWAY STAFF FOR BREACH OF CERTAIN RULES.

113. **Maulvi Syed Murtuza Sahib Bahadur:** Will the Honourable Member for Railways please refer to section 134 of the Indian Railways Act, 1890, and state:

- (a) who is the competent authority to award punishment of forfeiture of one month's pay for committing a breach of any rule made under clause (e) of sub-section (1) of section 47 of the said Act; and
- (b) the notifications required under section 134 of the said Act empowering the Railway Administrative officers to try such offences and to constitute a court of law; if none, whether Government will prevent the Railway officers from exercising such authority; if not, why not?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: (a) I would refer the Honourable Member to the reply given to Mr. Ram Narayan Singh's unstarred question No. 134 on the 21st September, 1937.

(b) The notifications contemplated in section 134 have reference to the place of trial of offences and not to the conferring of powers on any officers.

FLOOD LEVEL GAUGES PUT UP ON THE KULaura-SYLHET BRANCH OF THE ASSAM BENGAL RAILWAY.

114. **Mr. Brojendra Narayan Chaudhury:** Will the Honourable Member in charge of Railways please state:

- (a) if any flood level gauges have been put up between mile 230 and 232, Sylhet Kulaura Branch of the Assam Bengal Railway; if so, when; whether they are still there; what their number is; and
- (b) the readings of all these gauges from the time they were put up till now during the monsoon months?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: Enquiries are being made from the Railway Administration and a reply will be laid on the table in due course.

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT.

ATTACK ON A TAXI DRIVER BY BRITISH SOLDIERS IN DEHRA DUN.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Order, order. With reference to the notice of adjournment motion that stood over till today, I have received an order from His Excellency the Viceroy and Governor General by telegram disallowing the motion on the ground that the motion cannot be moved without detriment to the public interest. The authenticity of that order is certified by Mr. C. M. G. Ogilvie.

THE MOTOR VEHICLES BILL.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The House will now resume further consideration of the motion relating to the Bill to consolidate and amend the law relating to motor vehicles.

Babu Baijnath Bajoria (Marwari Association: Indian Commerce): When the House adjourned last evening I wanted to ventilate some grievances of the general public against motor vehicles. I make these observations not with a view to cripple the motor industry, but to improve it and make it run on sound lines. The first grievance is about the absolute lack of cleanliness. The buses are, as a rule, very shabby and dirty. I want that something should be provided to see that the buses are clean. The passengers in a bus are overcrowded to such an extent that the rush beats hollow even the third class passenger rush which we find on the railways. Another thing is that a bus owner will not drive his bus until and unless he gets the full complement of passengers; it is only when the bus is thoroughly overloaded that the owners drive their vehicles. I think that is unfair and there should be some regularity of time table. When a passenger goes to a bus stand sometimes he finds that there is no bus available, on other occasions he has to wait for a considerable time before he can proceed on the vehicle as it is only when the bus owner gets a full number of passengers that he will start the bus. Both these things require considerable attention by us. The third thing is about the misbehaviour of the drivers and conductors. I do not make a general charge against all the bus drivers or conductors, but there are a sufficient number of instances which warrant our taking action in this direction. At present an aggrieved passenger has got no person to whom he can complain against the activities or misactivities of these conductors and drivers. He has nobody to appeal to but is at the mercy of these drivers and conductors. (Interruption by Mr. K. Ahmed) I think we must provide that there should be somebody at the motor bus stand to whom passengers can complain when necessity arises. At the present moment there is great racing between buses and buses. In Calcutta you will see that they race against the tram also. It is almost an hourly occurrence in Calcutta to find a bus cut across a tram just to pick up passengers at the next junction. It is very dangerous and leads to several accidents. The motor buses run a go-as-you-like race that we see in some of the athletic sports meetings. There should be some regulation about this.

I mentioned yesterday about double deckers or two storied buses which run in Calcutta, and I think also in other big cities like Bombay. They must be absolutely prohibited; they are positive dangers to society. (Interruption). If persons like my friends, Mr. Kabiruddin Ahmed or Mr.

[Babu Baijnath Bajoria.]

Abdul Qaiyum, were to board on the upper storey, the roof is bound to fall. These double deckers are very very risky and I know 12 Noon. of some accidents which were very dangerous and loss of life resulted. I would like some provision to be made prohibiting these double deckers. Another thing is about body building. The body of the buses should be built to certain specifications approved by some authority. I know of a certain accident in which a roof fell as a result of over-loading and several very respectable persons were killed. So, in my opinion, the bodies of these buses should be thoroughly examined by the licencing authority before permits are issued.

Again, in my opinion, drunkards should not be given licences for motor driving. I know that provision is made that if any driver is in a drunken state he is liable to punishment, but I would suggest that those who are drunkards should not be given licences at all. Those who drink wine, cocktail and other kinds of wine can be intoxicated. As regards railway drivers also, those who are habitually drunk should not be allowed to be in charge of trains. I also make this suggestion on behalf of the cause of prohibition. My friends on the right and also on the left want that prohibition should be enforced in this country and I also heartily endorse that and I think that if we stop the issue of licences to drunken drivers, that will help the cause of prohibition. Then Government must provide inspectors at the different halting places of the motor buses so as to have general supervision of the passengers who go into the buses and they should also see for the comforts of passengers. Then there is cut-throat competition among the bus owners themselves. This can be checked in my opinion if licencing is regulated and the number of buses on a certain route is just according to the requirements of that route.

I come now to compulsory insurance. I mentioned something about it yesterday, that in my opinion compulsory insurance cannot be brought into being and will not be a practical proposition until the cost of insurance is considerably reduced. I think the improvements which I have suggested about motor traffic just now will help in the avoidance of overloading and it will regulate the service in such a way that the number of accidents will be reduced to a minimum and this will reduce the insurance charges as well. I would request the insurance companies that they, in their own interest, should unite together and evolve a new basis of insurance charges, so that compulsory insurance may be within the purse of every motor car owner and become an accomplished fact.

Now, Sir, I will say something about the rules and regulations. In this Bill, ample provision has been made which gives the power of making rules and regulations to the provinces and I think that every Member of the House will agree with me that a good deal of the utility of this Bill, the success or failure of this Bill depends on these rules. These rules can make or mar the provisions of this Bill. I know that complete unanimity of rules is not practicable, because different conditions prevail in different provinces but, at the same time, our aim should be to obtain uniformity as far as possible and for that purpose I would suggest that a joint conference of Provincial Ministers in charge of roads with the representatives from the Central Government should meet and frame rules in consultation with themselves. I find that power has been given to the

Provincial Governments and the Regional Transport Authorities to disqualify persons from holding or obtaining a licence to drive a public service vehicle in the province; and also the Regional Transport Authority is empowered to grant permits for transport of vehicles under Chapter IV. At the present moment when the wave of provincialism is running high in several provinces and I regret to say, also in my province of Bengal, these Regional Transport Authorities might like to curb licenses and disqualify drivers and may not grant permit to run transport vehicles to persons, who are not born or domiciled in the province. I would like that this Bill should make provision that no provincialism would be tolerated and that there would be no discrimination on this score and that the only test should be qualification of the drivers and whether the prospective bus owner has got the necessary respectability and financial status and other necessary requirements. What I plead for is that there should be fair field and no favour to anybody. For political reasons or for any other reasons nobody should be debarred from getting these licenses and permits for motor vehicles, if otherwise he satisfies the test which is prescribed in the rules.

Then there is a comparatively minor matter but I would like to draw attention to it. That refers to the registration marks as provided in the Sixth Schedule. It is provided that for Bengal the marks will be BLA, BLC and so on and for Bengal 8 groups of these letters are provided. If it is not more than four figures in 8 groups, not more than 8,000 cars can be registered. I know that in Bengal there are many more than 10 or 15 thousand cars and then again if there are three letters, the policeman on duty or any other officer who wants to take note of the number will be in a great puzzle. At the present moment only five figures are given and I would suggest that there should be only one letter for each province, and if that is not possible, not more than two letters, and five figures should be adopted. Sir, I quite realize that unanimity in a measure of this nature, with a diversity of interests, cannot be expected but our motto should be "the greatest good of the greatest number". On the one hand, we must provide for the opening out of new roads, the development of motor traffic on sound and healthy lines for the benefit not only of the motor industry and their employees but also of the general public,—the passengers, who after all by their patronage made this service possible. On the other hand, we must protect the interest of our greatest national asset, I mean the railways, in which we have sunk Rs. 750 crores and which are the largest employers of labour in this country. Both should develop for the good and betterment of this country. Sir, in my opinion this Bill is an honest effort for a good cause and I support the motion.

Mr. Sri Prakasa (Allahabad and Jhansi Divisions; Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I must confess quite candidly at the very outset that I am generally suspicious of all laws; and when we have a voluminous measure like this before us, my suspicion becomes all the more acute. Laws that are not based on the limitations of human nature, that do not take into consideration the social and psychological conditions of the people among whom they are to operate, are bound to remain dead letters. My Honourable friend who has moved this Bill should have known during his long experience in India that we are not like his own people, a law-abiding people; that we do not like standing like so many stupid idiots in long

[Mr. Sri Prakasa.]

queues waiting for their turn to get into the pit where they are playing a melodrama. The popularity of the legal profession in India as well as the success of the non-co-operation movement should have told him that laws such as he envisages are more or less useless. If he should require personal proofs, he has only to walk up to the head of his own King Edward Road and he will find that cars, tongas and other vehicles coming up the Man Singh Road do not take the unnecessary circular road despite the imperative "turn left" signal, but get quickly into his road when they see no police-man about.

Sir, so far as the drafting of this Bill is concerned, it is perfect. As I read clause after clause of the Bill, I felt that there must be some Milton's Satan sitting in his bad eminence somewhere in the Secretariat who has the capacity of throwing out such huge Bills at a moment's notice. Sir, there is not a single detail of the whole technique of the motor business that has escaped the searching eye of the draftsman. I find there a mention of the left-hand steering control—which I believe only exists in about half a dozen motor-cars in this country. I have seen only one and that belonged to an enthusiastically patriotic American who had brought that car with him. I also see a mention of driving down hill with disengaged gear, and I must confess it is a pastime in which I have myself indulged in order to save my petrol and endanger my own life. Then there is mention of pillion riding and even of speed governors. Sir, when the Bill has gone into such vivid details, I do not think any person can find any defect in it. (*An Honourable Member*: "What about pictures"?) The pictures are perfect in their ugliness; and though my friend, Mr. B. Das, thought they are beautiful because he has only the experience of art in Puri and Bhuvaneshwar, I come from the better traditions of Agra and Benares, and know what beauty means. The difficulty about this Bill is that it does not touch the fundamentals of the problem. It does not go to the root of the evil and it tries to apply medicines at the wrong end.

The Honourable Member in charge of the Bill said that the principles governing this measure are the codification of the law regarding motor vehicles and the co-ordination of transport. Now, the codification of the law regarding motor vehicles can only mean that there should be better control of motor vehicles ensuring the safety of passengers and others. Sir, I would like in this connection to say that the law as it exists today on the subject would be enough to ensure safety for which he and all of us are naturally very anxious, if only it were properly worked. The mere fact that this Bill contains about 150 clauses and the old Act of 1914 contains only a few sections, will not and cannot by itself improve matters. We must go to the root of the evil. And what is the evil? The evil is that there is always an unholy alliance between the police-man and the motor man, and as long as provisions are not made for the breaking up of this unholy alliance by measures stronger than the Sarda Act, we shall never get rid of the evil. The policy which I am sorry the Honourable Member himself pursues, though to the kindness of his nature I must pay my tribute, is that a Government servant can do no wrong; that at best his mistakes when there are any, are *bona fide* mistakes and mere errors of judgment. Whenever we make a complaint against anyone, he says there are two sides to a bribe, there is the bribe-giver and there is the bribe-taker, and that, after all, they are all human; and that

specific instances must be brought to his notice before he is prepared to do anything. This indifference on the part of our highest authorities towards a pressing evil enables that evil to persist; and I have looked in vain through the clauses of this Bill to find any provision by which those in authority are to be punished if they do not fulfil their duties properly. All the punishments are for persons in the motor trade; but if the Transport Authority is not following the rules that are laid down for its guidance, and if it is licensing vehicles that ought not to be licensed, and if policemen are permitting things that ought not to be permitted, where is the provision for punishing them? A couple of provisions making it penal for men in authority to misuse that authority may help to remove the evils that we see. It is an unfortunate thing that in our country the non-official is punished for his own faults as well as for the faults of the official. The official is always excused for one reason or the other, but the non-official can never escape. As long as that mentality persists, no amount of legislation in this House or in any other place can save the country or better the trades and industries which the laws are intended to improve.

I will give you some instances by which my Honourable friend, the Communications Member, and other Honourable Members of this House will know how exactly things go. Once I boarded a bus in the neighbourhood of Benares. The bus came up and stopped near a police station. A big burly *Thanedar* came out of the police station. I had got a seat by the side of the driver as also another gentleman who was going out the same way that I was. The *Thanedar* wanted the front seat. I asked this gentleman to stick on, but he was nervous. It is the old old plea of not quarrelling with the alligator, as we say in Hindi, when you have to live in the water, and the gentleman got down to occupy a seat behind. Sir, I must confess that I myself was a little nervous but I stuck fast; but the other gentleman hastily left his seat. The *Thamedar* never thanked him for it and he sat himself down comfortably or in as much comfort as I was willing to allow. I was waiting to see if he paid his fare. He never did. After making a 12 mile run, he got off and never even thanked the driver for the free ride. I asked the driver: "Why did you not charge your fare from him?" But he dared not. When the driver is allowing his vehicle to be used day after day by a responsible police official free of all cost and when the police official himself is using that vehicle in that manner, do you expect the police official to complain to any authority if that man was violating any of your regulations? It would go against human nature if he did so. I will give another illustration and this was a more dangerous one. I was coming down from Almora to Ranikhet. The night came on. I asked the driver to stop somewhere because the roads are very narrow and dangerous and it had become quite dark. I became nervous again but the man drove on. I said: "Your rules do not allow you to go on these mountain roads at night". The man did not have even lamps but he was used to the roads and he drove along. I said: "Suppose somebody catches hold of you and prosecutes you". I wanted to frighten him so that he may stop because there is nothing less than certain death if you tumble down those high mountain sides. He said: "Every second day I take out the *Patwari*"—the police officials there are called *Patwaris*—"free of all cost and how dare he catch hold of me?" Now, Sir, I should like some provisions to be made in the Bill so that these *Thanedars* and these *Patwaris* may be punished severely if they use these vehicles without paying their fares. Even if they can

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be punished under some other law, the presence of such clauses in a Bill like this will warn them that they are being watched and that their secrets are being known and that they cannot play the fool any longer. In any case, it will prove the *bona fides* of the Government that it is not going to punish the non-officials only but it is also going to punish the official who misuses his authority.

The most important thing in our country is that the Government at its headquarters must make up its mind to weed out all corruption from its services; and unless it does that, it will never succeed. It is all very well to say that everybody in India is dishonest. It is all very well to excuse men in service if they are dishonest because men out of service are dishonest. But we cannot forget the fact that when the Government recruits for its services it takes care or it ought to take care that it recruits the best and most desirable men, men who are under its discipline. Though you cannot make a code of morals for all mankind, you can at least make it for those who are under you and who are in subordination to you and who are bound to follow your discipline at the risk of losing their jobs. Therefore, I should like that the Honourable Member opposite should consider very seriously the desirability of putting some such provision. When a Motor Bill was introduced in the Assembly some two years back and which was later on dropped, I spoke to my Honourable friend's predecessor in office, Sir Frank Noyce, on this subject; and he said that it should not be difficult to have some such clause. I hope that if the draftsmen agree and if it does not go against the prestige of the Government, who would naturally like us to believe that everyone in their service is perfect, then some such clause should be added. If Government were strict in this behalf, then even the old Act would have done.

I will now give the House a couple of illustrations from the Imperial City of Delhi itself where policemen and others function under the very nose of the Honourable gentleman. Last year I hired a taxi to take me out for purposes which the Honourable Member may not like, *viz.*, Congress propaganda in a neighbouring district. The Government and the taxi seemed to have conspired on that occasion, for, by the time I got to Ghaziabad, one wheel was flung off and I was almost flung out. Then, Sir, only the other day I hired another taxi for the self-same purpose. I saw the driver fumbling with the gear and using the hand-break, constantly. I asked him: "What is all this? Have you not got your foot-break?" He said it is all right. I said: "You try the foot-break and let me see whether everything is really all right". He put both his feet on the foot-break and pushed as far as he could, but the car did not stop. I said: "Well, this car will never take me to my destination though it might take me to my ultimate destination rather early". He said: "Don't be afraid, I shall take you safely to your destination". But we had not proceeded far when the car crashed over a cyclist; the man was saved, but his cycle was destroyed; and strange to say the policeman standing there did not even move a muscle. Well, Sir, if it had been my province, I might have spoken to the policeman. I would have been assured if matters went further, the Prime Minister would not regard me as a liar. Here, I dare not speak to the policeman. So I left the car, hired a tonga and came back.

Now, Sir, as long as the taximan and the motor-man know that the policemen are indirectly in their pay, the brakes will not work, the gear will be out of order. In such circumstances, to all those who use or want to use a motor, I should like to tell a story that might have a useful lesson to teach. The story is that a philosopher got into a ferry boat and as the boat passed along smiling fields, the philosopher asked the boatman if he knew any botany. The boatman said that he had never even heard the word. The philosopher said: "I am sorry for you, for you have wasted a third of your life". As the boat proceeded further, and the darkness of the night descended and stars began to shine in the firmament, the philosopher asked the boatman if he knew any astronomy. The boatman again replied in the negative and wondered what the word meant. The philosopher then said, "I am very sorry for you, for you have wasted another third of your life". Later on as the boat proceeded a little further a storm broke out, and the waters rose high and the boatman asked the philosopher: "Do you know how to swim". "No", said the philosopher, whereupon the boatman exclaimed, "You have wasted the whole of your life". So, Sir, those who want to use motors must know something about motor mechanism, otherwise they are in constant danger of losing the whole of their lives. I have often caught taximen and motor-men fumbling at their gears and handbrakes and as soon as I find them doing that, I ask them to stop the car and let me get down. My other friends who do not know what gears or brakes or other things mean, blissfully continue their journey and endanger their lives greatly. Therefore, Sir, not all your knowledge of every section of this law, not all your admiration for the pictures that are printed at the end is going to save you when the taxi or the motor vehicle you are in, is not in good working order. It is better to know how to drive or to check reckless drivers than to know the whole of this Bill.

Sir, if laws are broken; if life is endangered; if brakes and other accessories go wrong; if lorries are dirty—and they are very very dirty; if speed is exceeded; what is wanted is constant inspection and constant inspection by honest men, men who will be as hard as steel when they are performing their duties and men who will insist on the law being fulfilled; and unless you do that and unless you make full provision for all these necessities, not all your laws will be of any avail. Therefore, Sir, so far as the principle is concerned, namely, the codification of the law regarding motor vehicles, however important it may be, the most important thing to do is to go into the very fundamentals of the problem and to tackle the root of the evil and to see where exactly the shoe pinches and to make provisions that the law will be really followed in practice. It is no use being wise after the event. I find a provision, for instance, for punishing a man who is found in a drunken condition while driving a vehicle. Drink, I submit, is a habit that is not acquired in a single day. When a man wants to take out a license, he must have been a bit of a drunkard already. You do not give licenses to any one much before the age of 18; and all bad habits—and even good ones—are acquired before that time. Therefore, Sir, drunkards must be stopped at the start. Though one or two of my honourable friends were against an investigation into the character of a person applying for a license, I am all for that investigation. If that man were to endanger his own life, I would not care,—I am not very much against suicides as many people are—but

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when he endangers the life of other passengers in his vehicle, when he endangers the lives of the passers-by or the lives of those who are using other vehicles on the same road, then I submit a strong check has got to be put.

The method of granting a license is very simple at present and I do not know what rules the Provincial Governments are going to make in tightening up the system. Just as there is the system of *khushamad* (flattery) and *sifarash* (recommendation) in Government service, so is there also a great deal of all these things in the matter of obtaining a license. As this Government system is run, the man on the top is usually a signing machine. I have often felt that if rubber stamps were placed in the place of these high officials, things will go on as well or as bad as they are today and effect much saving besides. When a clerk brings up a heap of papers for signature, the officer simply asks: "Is everything all right?" and because the clerk has been properly tipped beforehand, the clerk says: "Yes, everything is all right"; and the officer simply signs his name at the place pointed out by the clerk, without looking into the contents of the document.

I should insist upon the licensing authority certifying that he has personally examined the man who is to be granted the license. Two young boys, near relatives of mine, got licenses while I was absent in Delhi. I do not know by what simple process they got the license. When I got back to Benares, I found them driving a car. I asked: "How did you obtain a license, you are not yet 18". They said: "We have obtained a license all right". When I asked them how they managed it, they simply said: "We managed it all right". Well, Sir, if young boys of 15 and 16, near relatives of a legislator to boot, are able to get the license on the sly, others who are professionally inclined must find things easier. I, therefore, like that this important provision should be incorporated in the Bill at once, and we should not leave the matter to be thought out by the Provincial Governments. If we have a provision that a man issuing a license should himself verify every particular required under the law, then I think things will be better. A mere recommendation from a driver can get a license for another man today who does not know the distinction between a brake and a gear, who does not perhaps know what a steering wheel is! While such things are prevalent, it is time we took some serious steps to put an end to them. I say all this because I am myself anxious that we should have a proper law on the subject and also see to it that the law is followed in every particular properly. It is because I find that though we have heaps of laws they are not followed out in actual practice, that I am particularly suspicious of all laws, as I said in the beginning.

Then, Sir, I come to the second principle which my Honourable friend enunciated: and that was about the co-ordination of transport. With the frankness that characterises him, he confessed that he was out for the safety of the railway system. Though the railways are not mentioned anywhere in the Bill, he still did say that he did not want this great national asset to be destroyed because of unfair competition. Now, Sir, as he has mentioned that, I hope it will be relevant for me to speak something about the railways also and the way in which railways are not deliberately co-ordinating their services. If my Honourable friend will give me only ten minutes of his valuable time in the lunch interval

and study with me the time table of the East Indian Railway between Moghulsarai and Benares, I shall be able to prove to him that despite all the pretensions of the railways, they seem deliberately to be helping the motor trade. There are few convenient connecting trains with the main line from Moghulsarai, which is an important junction on the East Indian Railway, to Benares which is one of the most important places in the world.

An Honourable Member: Because Mr. Sri Prakasa lives there!

Mr. Sri Prakasa: No, not because Mr. Sri Prakasa lives there but because some of the greatest men have lived there at all times and some of the best brocade is produced there, as the Honourable President himself said in a famous speech at Aligarh many years ago. Now, Sir, trains that should be connecting trains leave the station ten or fifteen minutes before the important expresses and mails arrive. There is a ten miles nice stretch of the Grand Trunk Road between Moghulsarai and Benares; and therefore the motor people have a merry time. Those who are in charge of the railway time tables seem to be less anxious about this co-ordination than my Honourable friend is; and whenever we put any questions in this House about railway timings the invariable reply is that the matter is within the competence of the local authorities; that Government at headquarters are satisfied that the time tables are the best that human ingenuity can draw up. In the face of such facts it becomes rather difficult for us to accept the statement that one of the main principles underlying this Bill is the co-ordination of transport and the ensuring of the safety of the railway system. I personally think that railways, if they were properly run on a business footing, can take care of themselves. I thought, Sir, that with the coming in of the present Finance Member of the Government of India we were in for a period of *laissez faire*, of free competition of the days of John Stuart Mill and Adam Smith. But I see when it comes to any private trade or industry seriously competing with a State trade or industry, this principle is not much in evidence; and we have proposals about the maxima and minima rates and all such things. But I can say that this will not help unless the railways themselves are run on proper business lines. When the top-heavy administration of the railways is abolished; when men serving the railway will serve in much the same spirit as men who run the motor vehicles serve; when the servants of the railways will be as polite, as inviting, as accommodating as these motor men are, then the railways will certainly get the benefit of all the provisions that we may make for them; but not till then.

Then, Sir, the Honourable Member also mentioned the subject of roads; and with your permission I shall take a few minutes of the time of the House in discussing the problem of roads as well. How did this motor transport really come into existence? It came into existence because some very high officials of Government,—a Governor in my province,—were more fond of motoring than going by trains. And when a Governor of a province takes it into his head to motor about the country, you may be sure that the roads are going to improve; and the roads immediately started improving. And now we have come to a position where a certain amount of "deprovement" is necessary because all our roads are now being made fit only for motor traffic. Horses cannot go safely on them; bare-foot people find it difficult to negotiate these roads; the side-paths

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are not taken care of at all. We are getting almost everywhere long stretches of roads as hard as stone for the sole purpose of enabling motors to travel on them in comfort. When you want to go by motors yourselves; when you make the roads fit only for motors; it ill-becomes you to propose a law in order to prevent other people from doing the same. Example is always better than precept. If high officials of Government decide to travel by the railway and not unnecessarily by motors, then a lot of other people, who are always anxious to imitate men in authority in manners and dress and food and everything else, will also be tempted not to invest their money in motors but will go by railways. And humble folk who also like to imitate—and having only two annas to spare get into a motor lorry for they cannot hire a taxi—will also use the railway thinking that it is just as respectable to go by railways as by motor cars. First of all you encourage motor journeys; then you make roads fit for motors; and then you come out with a complaint that there is unfair competition! This is scarcely fair and reasonable. Sir, this so-called improvement of roads has had its revenges also because it is known to all that the iron shoes of horses cannot stand these roads and they are dropping off much quicker than they used to when I was a boy. The result is that motors going at an enormous speed get one of these cast-off shoes into their tyres, and then something happens which makes people inside jump and people outside think!

I suggest, Sir, that a problem like this should not be seen only from one angle; nor only should a part of that problem be examined; the problem should be seen in all its aspects. If from now Government were to decide to have softer roads and not these hard roads

Mr. M. Asaf Ali (Delhi: General): Soft roads!

Mr. Sri Prakasa: My Honourable friend only knows Delhi, and so cannot realise our difficulties. If we have only concrete roads as we have in many places instead of ferro-crete and cement roads, we shall be much safer. You will not be killing out the horse trade and the other vehicular trade; you will be ensuring safety for the motor cars; and you will not be unnecessarily encouraging motor transport. (*Mr. M. Asaf Ali:* "What about cruelty to animals?") It is more cruel to drive horses on roads like those that you have in Delhi than it is to drive them on softer roads that I am recommending. This can be proved by the fact that the high and mighty have a separate fine riding track made for them here, but such tracks are not available everywhere; and surely, Sir, it stands to reason that it is not only the high and mighty who should be given facilities in every possible way so that they may both motor and ride in comfort: but that humbler folk like myself and others who live in the country should also have some facilities. I propose a *via media*, namely a concrete road, good both for motors and horses.

Mr. M. S. Aney (Berar: Non-Muhammadan): Is there any provision?

Mr. Sri Prakasa: There is no provision, but I want some provision to be made, and I thought I might just as well tell my Honourable friend what I think about the matter, so that if he thinks it right—and that Department is also within his jurisdiction—he might take proper steps to right a great wrong. If, Sir, we have better railway timings, better treatment of passengers on railways, cheaper and more comfortable travel, if we have

Maulana Shaukat Ali (Cities of the United Provinces: Muhammadan Urban): If we are not carried in wagons.

Mr. Sri Prakasa: Wagons may suit my Honourable friend: they do not suit me. And if we have proper rates and fares, then only we can have co-ordination. The replies my Honourable friend gives in the Assembly about railways are not very assuring. Only this morning, Sir, when there was a question about inclination and sleeping, my Honourable friend said he did not know the difference; but I may say for his information that at the present moment he is inclining and not sleeping. If my Honourable friend had seen Dr. DeSouza yesterday afternoon, he would have known what is sleeping: that is the difference between inclining and sleeping. My Honourable friend from this side wanted that inclining room should be provided for third class passengers, and I suggest they should have the amount of room that my Honourable friend is occupying just now. In the lorries we have inclining room, even sleeping room; and we are given other facilities and conveniences; and that is why the motor has become so popular. All sorts of persons are using the motor for all sorts of purposes. If my Honourable friend will only go to the roots of the matter it would not be difficult for him to find out the remedies that are necessary.

Then, Sir, I should like to refer to the class of persons that go in for this motor trade. They have not got a lakh of rupees to spare to hand over to the Accountant General. They cannot honestly pay as much as they will now be required to pay under this law. What happens is this. Poor men borrow some money from friends and others and go in for the motor trade. They are not such keen mathematicians as the Vice-Chancellor of the Aligarh University, and they do not make proper calculations. They do not take into consideration the interest and the depreciation costs nor the necessity for replenishing their machines from time to time. They borrow Rs. 3,000 or so, buy a bus and put it on the road. They are satisfied with the day to day income and suffer serious losses at the end. I have a letter here that I received from a friend of mine only three days back. It was a curious coincidence. This friend of mine belongs to Benares. He went into the motor trade by borrowing money from some of us. We discouraged him from going into that trade, but he said he would be all right. His original idea was to run his bus from Peshawar to Calcutta. When he got to Peshawar something happened, and he decided to run the bus from Peshawar to Bombay instead. He tells me, Sir, that nearly Rs. 400 had to be paid to the policemen on the way before the bus was through. There is another letter also with me. These may be called "unsolicited testimonials". It speaks of a demand for Rs. 50 in the town of Cawnpore—unfortunately in my own province—and as that Rs. 50 was not forthcoming, a prosecution followed, and the man has been put to many difficulties. I can hand over these letters to my Honourable friend if only he can read them. Now, Sir, these things deserve the consideration of Government and my Honourable friend in particular.

I am all for railways, I am their friend; but we cannot enthuse about the railways as a national industry unless it really becomes national. And so far as the motor transport trade is giving some employment to a large number of persons we are bound to support it, with proper safeguards of course: not the safeguards of the type provided in the Government of India Act, but reasonable and equitable safeguards so that there

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may be safety to those in the trade and those they seek to serve. Sir, I have a proposal to make regarding speed control, for instance. The Honourable Member is envisaging in his Bill the possibility of speed governors—of course a speed governor is a different thing from a provincial Governor. But just as we do not need Governors in the provinces so we do not need speed governors at all, if only we make it unlawful for any one to import into this country or make in the country—if that day should ever dawn—a motor car that can be driven at a rate higher than is desirable. (*The Honourable Sir Nripendra Sircar*: “What is desirable?”) If my Honourable friend, the Law Member, will look into the schedules he will find the desirable rates for the various types of motor cars given in detail. Ordinarily a car can be run upto, I believe a 100

1 P.M. miles an hour, at least the speedometer says so. I have myself tried only up to 52 miles. But that is dangerous enough; for, when you are going at that rate and a cast-off horse shoe gets into one of the tyres, the car almost invariably topples over. Now, why not have some such provision that no car should be brought into the country that can possibly be driven at a higher speed? You will eliminate the speed governor and you will eliminate also the possibility of any driver manipulating this speed governor in order to suit his own whims. Anybody who has driven a car knows very well the natural desire to go faster and faster and your foot presses further and further on the accelerator before you know where you are. Why not eliminate the possibilities of such temptation if really our friends are serious?

My Honourable friend, Mr. Bajoria, was mentioning the dangers from double deckers in Calcutta. I rather like them because they make you air-minded and there are all these double deckers safely running in the streets of London without any danger to any one; that is so because the policemen on duty there are strict and know their duty; and the men at the wheel also know what is expected from them. I remember an incident in London: I was going up for the law examination and started from home a little late: unfortunately the double decker in which I was going just happened to touch slightly the double decker in front, and both the double deckers had come to a dead stop: a policeman suddenly appeared as if from nowhere at that early hour and took down the names and numbers. I became fairly nervous lest I should be late for the examination—not that that would have mattered. Here, Sir, no policeman is available who knows his duty properly, no driver is available who knows his duty properly; and between the lack of knowledge of duties of these two individuals, all persons using not only these double deckers but other vehicles also are in danger. My friend, Mr. Bajoria, need really have no fear from double deckers: what he can legitimately fear is that the policeman may not be doing his duty and the driver may be drunk

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi (*Dacca cum Mymensingh: Muhammadan Rural*): They do their duty all right in Calcutta!

Mr. Sri Prakasa: They might have been all right when you were the Sheriff, but I know they are not all right now. I know from personal experience as a traveller that both the taxis and buses in Calcutta go too fast. I am glad not to see any Punjabi round here, so, I can safely whisper that the Punjabi drivers in Calcutta are a positive danger. (*Mr. M. Ghiasuddin*: “Danger!”) I do not refer to the beardless Punjabi variety of my friend, Mr. Ghiasuddin, but

to the venerable variety of my friend, Sardar Jogendra Singh. They go at a reckless rate and even in Harrison Road I have seen them touch 40 miles an hour. These Punjabis cannot be restricted: they have always been a danger to India; and the only way to restrict them and their activities is not to allow them to use motors that can possibly go at a rate higher than that prescribed in the rules.

The difficulty with this Government is that it suffers from the traditions of the East India Company. It cannot forget that it is a trading corporation; and I am sometimes much grieved to find such gentlemen as adorn the front Benches opposite speaking as if they were Bond Street traders. They should rise higher than the limitations and the requirements of mere trade and money-making. The tradition to make money seems to be so strong that they want a monopoly in everything; the East India Company was chartered, if my history is not wrong, to have a sort of monopoly in the pepper trade. (*An Honourable Member: "Pepper!"*) Yes, pepper, the stuff which makes the tongue smart when you put it in the mouth. They came to trade in pepper and remained to rule. We tried to drive them away with salt but we failed. Now, this tradition is so strong that whenever they are thinking and talking of the industries of the country, they always take into consideration only rupees, annas and pies, even *cowries*, that a particular trade may bring. Just as they had the monopoly of pepper then, they want to have the monopoly of everything now. When they find anybody competing with them in anything, they fight shy and make laws so that the competitor may be gagged. Sir, I recommend very strongly that instead of trying to make such laws with so many penal provisions, they should take a more paternal interest in the industries of the country, and they should show more concern for the unemployment and sufferings of the people over whom they are set to rule and so to manage things that the country may be happier and better. I propose that they should encourage the establishment of motor unions: they should establish these motor unions which should be taught the duties they owe to the drivers, as well as to the passengers. Men engaged in the trade can be encouraged to meet and discuss matters, they can settle equitable rates and fares; they can settle the timings and look to the comfort of the passengers. They can be made to understand the necessity of keeping their vehicles clean and to run punctually. All these civic virtues they can learn if only the Government will take steps to encourage the formation of these unions at the various centres so that they may be able to fulfil the duties that devolve upon them. And not till they are able to establish such trade unions, not till they are able to teach the generality of our people simple lessons in civic duties, not till they tell us how man should accommodate man and what our social obligations are towards each other—not till then can this Act or a thousand other Acts serve the purpose which my Honourable friend seeks to serve.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai (Sind: Non-Muhammadan Rural): My jovial friend, the last speaker, started by saying that he is suspicious of all laws. That is personal no doubt, and I think he has got experience of it. The law has dealt with him many a time

Mr. Sri Prakasa: I have dealt with it also

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: and found it too bad. So there must be justification from his point of view for suspicion. But I may assure the House that there is a real and genuine suspicion with regard to this Bill, and it is lurking in the minds of not only the motor drivers but also of the general public. That suspicion is that the object of this Bill is the ruination of the motor transport business and motor transport industry. Events have happened which give some support to this suspicion. It is well known that when this motor business came into existence there was nothing done by the Government or by the railways to checkmate it. On the contrary, I should think they realised that it was in the interests of the public that this motor transport business should go on and it was also recognised by the public that except for very long distances, for going into the interior and into the rural places it was very necessary that the motor service should come into operation. It was only when the motor transport business proved to be very useful and people began to travel by it rather than by rail that the Government thought of formulating this Bill and placing it before the House for being made into law. When the motor business began to prosper the railways became funky about their own railway traffic.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member can continue his speech after lunch.

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

The Assembly re-assembled after Lunch at Half Past Two of the Clock, Mr. Deputy President (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta) in the Chair.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: I submitted that there is a suspicion in the minds of the people that this Bill is intended to harm the motor industry. That is not my own suspicion. The Press also gives its own reasons and gives the events which have led to this suspicion. When the motor service came into existence it absorbed many young men and relieved a great deal of unemployment. If stringent laws like this are made, the result will be that people will be thrown into the streets and unemployment will become rampant. On that account it is necessary to think twice over to see whether this Bill is intended for the benefit of the railways or for regulating motor service. This Bill has been introduced by a rival party, namely, the railways. I want to put this question seriously whether the motor industry is or is not a serious rival to the railways? If the intention is to benefit the railways indirectly, then I say that this is bad law, but if the intention is that the motor people should be regulated, then I think the Bill should not have come from the Railway Department. It should have come from the Provinces themselves. Under the Police Acts, the Provinces are regulating somewhat but in the worst manner as has been described by my friend, Mr. Sri Prakasa. If it is the object to develop the motor industry, then everything should be done to encourage it. We should also see that the railways also put their own house in order. Our suspicion is this. This Bill has come in immediately after the complaint of competition has come in. Who would not think that this is merely to put the motor industry down? The railway finances went down and there is no doubt about it, but it is not solely and mainly on account of this

competition. It was the world condition that was responsible and at that time the competition also came in and for that purpose it would be wrong and indeed suicidal to enact a statute which puts so many restrictions and rigid limitations upon the motor industry, for the purpose of increasing the revenue of the railways. It is not by creating this kind of statute that you can impede the development of the motor industry. The first thing is to see why railways have lost their revenues and whether there is any good-will on the part of the people with respect to railways. I think three-fourths of the questions in this House relate to railway inconveniences. Why is it so? People feel that they are subjected to great inconveniences. (Interruption by Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi.) If you travel by train you know how they stop at any place they like and how much time they lose. When one guard hands over charge to another, they go on talking. (Interruption by Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi.) I think you might have known about the motors but not about the railways. The point is that the railways should do two things in order to increase their revenue. Their top-heavy services should be revised and their fat emoluments should be decreased. That is one of the ways of having more revenue and not disturbing the industry which has come in and which has proved very useful. It has become popular. It cannot be killed, I know, but it will be disturbed and discouraged. It may be that many of the motor people will stop their business but the service will not go away though I would not like that the railways should use their own motors and ply them in competition with private enterprise. Why? What is the necessity? They should stick to their own railways and they should not put out their own motor cars and other vehicles to compete with these people.

Sir, I would submit that the conveniences that are being given on the railways also require to be improved. If one were to go and see the third-class latrines, he would see how very dirty they are. Some one has said that the motor cars are dirty. That is true, they are dirty also, but what about the railway third-class latrines, and what do we find? When we stop at junction stations, what happens? The sweepers go to clean the first class and the second-class toilet rooms, but they do not go to the third-class latrines at all. And from whom are they having their greatest revenues? From the third-class passengers. But the third-class passengers are not cared for. Why then should people care for the railways? Why should people take to these railways unless and until that becomes very necessary and unless and until one has to perform very long distance journeys. Now, when the roads are improved, people will some day be running from Karachi to Delhi and from Delhi to Calcutta by motorcars. Therefore, the railways have to beware and to afford all conveniences, and to please people in that sense, and not to treat third-class passengers as chattel as they do at present.

Then with regard to the question of compulsory insurance, I submit that that question is at present premature. One has to wait and see, because at present one cannot say that the motor industry has got so very well-founded that they can put up with any and every condition or restriction that you impose. You have to wait. I would say, therefore, that this measure of compulsory insurance is a premature measure.

Then with regard to the question of regulating the motor service, I am in full agreement with those gentlemen who say that there is irregularity amongst them, and that there are many defects which require to be improved; but then at present there are some regulations also, these are the

[Mr. Lalchand Navalrai.]

police regulations, but they are not well utilised. Now, policemen go out of their way, give all sorts of conveniences to the motor people but you know for what they do it! Therefore, the point is that the police regulations require to be done away with and the Provincial Governments should be given powers to make their own rules, suitable to the conditions of their own provinces, and what is required will be remedied in that way, and not by making laws from here in order to see that the motor transport service is improved. Now, there ought to be an investigation into the manner in which these defects could be removed. For instance, one defect is with regard to over-crowding. There is no doubt that these policemen themselves are responsible for it as they take something and connive at that overcrowding, and that overcrowding can be tackled and some regulation made for it, and that is no doubt very necessary.

Mr. Sri Prakasa: Policemen themselves overcrowd, sometimes.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: I have seen that overcrowding also takes place sometimes because policemen themselves go into a motorcar, in numbers, without paying any fare. Tonga-drivers also are often called upon by these policemen to admit them, and the policemen are always given preference. Then with regard to rash driving, there are so many instances of that. They say "the motor skidded" or "that it struck a tree". Well, that can only be on account of rash driving or bad driving. There is no regulation for that. Now, there are accidents on the railway also. We see very horrible and pitiable accidents upon the railways, but there are some regulations there, and those regulations do exercise some control, and those drivers are under the charge of the Railway Department. Therefore, there is nothing to find fault with the railways for that. These motorcar people won't start their motors unless a certain number of people get there, and that may take two or three hours. No one knows when they will start. They will often say, "two more men are needed". Now, that sort of thing should be regulated by some suitable rules. Then with regard to rates, they charge rates at their own sweet will and pleasure and that is also not desirable. Then there is the question of the soundness of the motor vehicles. Sometimes the lorry is all right as it starts, but after going only a few miles the passengers are held up and then there is no other way but to walk or to go by bullock-carts. All these things require regulation. Of course, there is unequal fight. Government are making rules and regulations and making it hard for these motor enterprises which they cannot stand by, especially at this time when they are not yet fully established. I submit, Sir, that the suspicions of the people are well founded unless and until you take away all stringent provisions dominating motor service and leaving the kindred questions to the Provincial Governments. With these few words, I have done.

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: Mr. Deputy President, the criticisms so far levelled against this Bill that we have heard for the last two or three days (*Voices:* "Louder, please") have been largely born of the suspicion that this is an attempt to throttle the road competition rather than to improve the conditions of road transport and remove its defects. That suspicion arises because the Bill has been introduced by the Honourable the Communications Member. The Bill was long overdue, and we must realize that the Communications Department has to deal with roads as well

as railways. Therefore it is not purely in the interest of the railways that this Bill has been introduced. I shall presently show how motors ply and compete with the railways and how these matters could be dealt with . . .

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: Put it in the hands of Provincial Governments.

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: My friend says, "put it in the hands of Provincial Governments"—he can certainly say that only out of his colossal ignorance.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: That is the word you always use for everybody..

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: My friend, Mr. Sri Prakasa, has reminded me of a particular word but I shall not use it. Now I will give you concrete cases to show how motors ply and compete unfairly with the railways. The House must remember that a sum of rupees eight hundred crores is invested in our railways and we must call it therefore national assets. (*Voices: Question!*) Of course I will answer your question.

In the seven provinces today the Government is a national Government. You cannot deny it. In other provinces also you are very likely to succeed. There is no question about it. Then remains the Centres which will also be yours in a few years' time. So, I can say that the railways are a national asset.

Mr. Bhulabhai J. Desai (Bombay Northern Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Then we can do without these advisers.

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: Quite so. You have to bear in mind that the loss to the railways is the loss to the public revenues. Nevertheless, I am not one of those who say that the railways must earn money at the expense of road motors. What I say is this and I will demonstrate it by facts. Motors have been running at a tremendous loss to themselves. They do not know what they are doing and ultimately they find that they have lost everything. At the same time, they are injuring the railways in this sense that they are reducing the freights to such an extent that the railways cannot do so economically. Now, I will give you an instance. It is not often realised why transport by road is cheaper than that by rail. It is cheaper because of the existence of the railways. That is the first reason. Do away with the railways and the cost of the road transport will immediately rise. Take, for instance, the North Western Railway. The transport of pressed cotton in the Punjab is a well-known instance. The haul for 500 miles by a lorry licensed to carry 42 maunds costs Rs. 1/8/11 per maund of pressed cotton, which means 60 pies per maund or 2 annas and 1 pie for 42 maunds per mile. I worked out these figures last year and I have brought them out today to demonstrate my point. (*Interruptions.*) Interrupt as much as you like but these are the facts which you cannot deny.

Mr. Deputy President (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta): Honourable Member had better not take notice of these interruptions and not allow himself to be side-tracked.

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: A 42 maunds lorry service would ordinarily cost about 4 annas and 6 pies per mile. To work profitably, the load has to be increased to 6 tons, representing 300 per cent. over-loading. Therefore, the rates must be increased by 300 per cent. if the lorries are to make a profit. On this figure, the lorries could not compete with the railways although they are carrying pressed cotton which is a higher price traffic.

The next point which I wish to mention is this. The road service can select any traffic they like to carry and refuse others whereas under the Railways Act it is not open to the railways to do so. For instance, lorries would not carry coal because it will not pay them. I will illustrate this point also. The average earning of the North Western Railway for carrying one ton of coal per mile is 2.40 pies and for pressed cotton about 17 pies per ton per mile. The road service carries pressed cotton at a much lower rate of freight and refuses to have anything to do with the coal. That is the position.

Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali (Lucknow and Fyzabad Divisions: Muhammadan Rural): What is the position?

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: The position is this that the lorries by over-loading can earn; but if they do not overload, they cannot compete with the railways.

Now, Sir, what is this Bill? This Bill is to regulate the motor service. The Honourable Member for Communications will have to bear in mind that there is a suspicion in the minds of the people that this Bill is designed not to allow the motor traffic to go on with their legitimate purpose. Everyone here has acknowledged the dangers of the motor cars. My friend, Mr. Sri Prakasa, gave instances of corruption and bribery and he limited them to his own province. I am proud to say that Calcutta does not possess what U. P. possesses. Calcutta police is not so corrupt as the U. P. police as the Honourable Member himself has shown from the letters he produced. Then, my Honourable friend referred to the dangers of riding in a taxi driven by a Sikh. I agree with him that it is dangerous to ride in a taxi driven by a Sikh because he always remains intoxicated. Whenever I require a taxi, I never attempt to get into a taxi that is driven by a Sikh because life is not safe. Therefore, this Bill is quite welcome. (An Honourable Member: "What do you want?") I want that every province should be autonomous and we should be able to drive out from our province those people who do not belong to our province. That will be my proposition. Bengal is for every province and other provinces are for themselves. That has been the position. You have driven us out from all the provinces and you have posted yourself in Bengal. Who are the members of our police? The Biharis. Who are the motor and lorry drivers in Bengal? The Punjabi Sikhs. All the Bengalis have gone out of the province because the other provinces are going to establish themselves there. Men from other Provinces are having all the jobs. We have been cleared out of Central India, we have been cleared out of the Punjab and the United Provinces and now we have been driven out of Bengal too in the matter of employment. Even the *panwallas* and *biriwallas* and even the sweetmeat sellers are non-Bengalis.

Mr. Deputy President (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta): Let us now discuss this Bill.

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: The employment has been monopolised by others. In not even a single service is a Bengali taken now. The Government and the Honourable Member for Communications must bear this in mind. The Government should remove the apprehension in our minds that this Bill is intended to throttle motor service and establish that the Bill is really meant to improve the condition of motor industry. This industry is still in its infancy and you have to devise ways and means to put it on an economic basis. That is all we have to see when the Bill goes to the Select Committee. I personally welcome this Bill. I believe this Bill was long overdue. I have read this Bill and I am satisfied that very great pains have been taken in drafting this Bill. I hope when the Bill comes from the Select Committee, it will give satisfaction to everybody. Sir, I whole-heartedly support the Bill.

Mr. K. S. Gupta (Ganjam *cum* Vizagapatam: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, the other day the Honourable Member for Communications said that this Bill has got a national character. May I ask whose national character it has got? Is it the British or Indian? It has neither the features nor the character of Indian to say that it has a national character. It is devoid of everything that is Indian. It does not hold its long arm to protect the pedestrian, the passenger or the pedlar. It does everything else. For all outward appearance, it is good to say to the driver that he should be medically examined, that he should be of a certain age, that he should be this and that he should be that. He also says that the car should be of a particular pattern. That is all very good. But the Honourable Member does not look at things from the other stand point of view. The Honourable Member says that the Bill is intended for regulation and co-ordination. With a view to co-ordination, it is said that the railways should have a voice or should have a strong hand in the administration of this motor traffic. I can give two or three instances where the railway system offers a step-motherly treatment, when bread is asked, it offers a stone to the child. For instance, there is a station called Vizianagram in Madras Presidency. From Vizianagram one has to go to Salur, a distance of 40 miles. The passengers used to be carried for 12 annas by motor buses. At once the railway thought it wise to bring down the railway fare from 12 annas to six annas. Then what happened? The poor buses also had to reduce the fare from twelve annas to six annas, with the result that many of small owners, for whom so many people were shedding crocodile tears, were obliged to go into insolvency. One of my Honourable friends said the other day that many agriculturists became paupers because they mortgaged their lands, bought motor buses out of the sale proceeds of lands with a view to get daily income and in the long run owing to the acute competition from railways, several busmen lost their trade and went into liquidation.

Now, Sir, in this question of co-ordination in the regional arrangement, the railways have a voice to fix the maximum and minimum rates. I submit this is highly dangerous to motor traffic. As I already said about the railway fare from Vizianagram to Salur, a distance of 40 miles, it is six annas. There is an intermediate station called Bobbili which is about 30 miles from Vizianagram. One has to go to Bobbili and then to Salur. For Bobbili, the fare is 10 annas. So people thought it wise to purchase a ticket from Vizianagram to Salur and get down at Bobbili. But the busmen would not allow them to do so. There was trouble on this account. There was similar trouble in another place, called

[Mr. K. S. Gupta.]

Chipurapalli which has railway connection. Before the bus competition came, the train fare from Chipurapalli to Vizianagram was eight annas. Now, the railway has reduced the fare to four annas simply with a view to kill motor traffic which is plying for six annas from Chipurapalli to Vizianagram and back. Because of the recent shrinkage in the incomes of railways—I am talking with special reference to B. N. Railway—the railways are out to kill and stifle motor traffic. Not only is motor traffic in danger, but also bullock cart traffic. There is trouble with regard to carrying of goods from Vizianagram to Vizagapatam. About 3,000 carts were engaged to carry oil seeds from Vizianagram to Bimlipatam, at the rate of two annas per maund, whereas the railways were charging $2\frac{1}{2}$ annas per maund. So people took advantage of the cheaper rates by bullock carts. At once the railway administration came to know of this and reduced the rates to $1\frac{1}{2}$ annas a maund. Now, Sir, 3,000 carts are lying idle, 6,000 bullocks and several bullock cart drivers have been thrown out of employment. There is a great paucity of employment for these poor people. People are suffering and many representations have been made to the Local Government and also to the Central Government. I, therefore, submit that if the railways have a hand in determining the maximum and minimum rates of motor traffic, it is certainly injurious and deleterious to this traffic. What are the public needs and how are we to meet them? That should be the question. People talk of accidents, but accidents are due to several causes. It is often due to over-crowding. People sometimes hang on to the rods of these buses as flying foxes. The police also are responsible to a certain extent for this state of affairs.

Mr. M. S. Aney: Not the bus driver and owner.

Mr. K. S. Gupta: The police are primarily responsible because they always have a free drive. They do not pay a single pie towards fare even if they are asked by the conductor. Very often no charges are demanded by the conductor for fear of being victimised by the police. The people who are already in the bus after paying the necessary fares are put to inconvenience. A policeman comes and says he wants a seat in the bus, so, one who is holding a ticket is asked to get down so that the policeman can get in. There is naturally over-crowding, and, thus, police are encouraging over-crowding in certain respects. On account of the police trouble—sometimes policemen travel with their families—there is a loss of revenue to these people. If the police who are responsible for so many misdeeds are now to have the power of regulation, the bus-owner or the driver or the conductor will be placed between the railway authorities on the one side and the police on the other, i.e., between the deep sea and the devil.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar (Salem and Coimbatore *cum* North Arcot: Non-Muhammadian Rural): Which is the devil?

Mr. K. S. Gupta: More often the railways. Sometimes accidents are due to the bad condition of roads (the inadequate and ill-kept roads). If after 150 years of British rule in India our roads are not fit for motor traffic it is no credit or congratulation to Government, and the sooner it gets out the better. Rash and negligent driving is certainly a penal affair under

the penal code, but this rash and negligent driving is not only of the driver engaged by the bus-owner. Sometimes I say the officers, specially police officers, military officers, medical officers, when they go on driving, if they find a bullock cart obstructs their passage, they get down and whip the bullock cart drivers. I know and I have seen this and have protested, but my protestations were of no avail. In this connection I would say no officer should be given a permit to drive. He must engage a driver. It is better that he should not be permitted to have a free licence or to have a licence at all to drive a car. Sometimes cartmen would ask these people not to sound their horns because some bulls are terrified by these horns, buses and cars, but in spite of that these people persist. The drivers must be well trained and well experienced, before they are given permits or licences to drive cars. Permits are granted to old, tottering and sometimes condemned cars. This should be immediately stopped.

About compulsory insurance of cars and buses, this is in a way advantageous to the third party, that is, the unfortunate victims of these accidents, but it would certainly be a burden to the bus-owner who is already overtaxed. He is paying something like Rs. 1,400 a year towards taxes and other charges, and if he is asked to pay Rs. 360 more towards insurance, that is a rupee a day, as the industry is in its infancy, this additional sum of Rs. 360 will be a great hardship, and it should be taken into consideration before it is made compulsory.

There are some matters connected with things like stage carriages, contract carriages and long distance travel and so on and so forth. These are terms which are inexplicable. These throw a suspicious light on this Bill. Not only should motor unions be formed, but schools should be established to train at least for six months young men of good character to enable them to get driver's licences. There are a few private schools, but they are not under the control of Government. Some people get driver's licences who are cleaners, they get training incidentally. There should be well organised training schools for the drivers to avoid many of the pitfalls and accidents that are a sad lot of pedestrians and also of passengers. So, before the Bill is passed into law, many things are to be amended with the best interests of these people at heart, that is the pedestrian, the pedlar and the passenger. The Bill ought to be made into law with the necessary amendments to safeguard the interests of the public and then only it would satisfy the needs of the small men for whom so many tears have been shed. With these words, I resume my seat.

Mr. Amarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya (Burdwan Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, on reading the Statement of Objects and Reasons we find that the rapid growth of motor transport, the safety and convenience of the public, closer control and co-ordination of transport are the main reasons for the introduction of this Bill. Sir, the previous Bill of 1914 and the amended Bill of 1936 were very small and were confined to a few sections. Undoubtedly the volume of this Bill consisting of 136 clauses and Schedules is a big jump. It is not commensurate with the stride the motor industry has done during this period.

An Honourable Member: Ten Chapters and 11 Schedules.

Mr. Amarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya: Ten Chapters consisting of these 137 clauses clearly point out the anxiety of Government about motor transport business and the industry that has grown up. Sir, since 1933, Government have been trying to find out the best means of bringing this under control. In 1933 Messrs. Mitchell and Kirkness emphasized the importance of early action. In the same year the Rail-Road Conference recommended control of public and goods motor transport. In 1935, we find, the Transport Advisory Council recommended the same. For the second time in 1936 they recommended a thorough overhauling of the Act of 1914. The object is all right and is laudable; but from the history of the desire of Government for control of the industry and the clauses in the Bill it seems that the intention of the Government is not what it should be. The real incentive to this Bill is to render help to the railways, as the railways have been losing for some time, and this loss is ascribed mainly to this growing industry of motor transport. But that is not true. The Honourable Member in his introductory speech said that it was for the benefit of India and for the common good that he introduced and laboured over this Bill. Whatever the British Government does, it does for the benefit of India, and India alone but the Indians, ungrateful as they are, do not appreciate it. There are hundreds of things to be done for the benefit of India by the Government and it is strange that the Government has taken up a matter which requires more care for its success than care for its destruction. The motor transport industry is an infant industry and no one can deny this: of course, every one will have to confess that this industry has come to stay and is growing healthier. Having introduced this Bill, the Honourable Member in the same speech has apologetically confessed that Chapter II was practically indicating an attempt on the part of the Government at regimentation, which means restriction and control, by bringing the motor transport industry under the control of the Government by some regulating laws. We have been accustomed to all sorts of restrictions in our lives that being the bane of subjugation, and therefore this comes not as a surprise to us but as a matter of course. We know that all the industries that we start require some care and if the Government really want to help this industry it has to take some care about it. That there is ample scope for improvement in the industry there can be no doubt. Really speaking, I fully endorse what my Honourable friend, Mr. Gadgil, said, that the way in which the motor transport business is now carried on requires overhauling, but not with an idea of crippling its scope or hampering its further progress, but to strengthen it by such steps as would enable it to grow from its present pigmy stage to the stage of a giant. The railways are now practically conducted and managed by the Government and if the railways think this small infant industry to be a competitor, I think there is something wrong with the whole management of the railways. It is a competition between a giant and a pigmy.

I do not understand why there should be any such anxiety on the part of the Honourable Member for Communications to bring out a Bill which on the face of it seems to be extremely complex and is difficult to be understood by ordinary men. In the first Chapter, in clause 2, he has introduced definitions of various types and classes of vehicles and also of authorities. I do not know why a man who has attained legal age and takes up the appointment of driver of a motor car, a man who has been found competent to hold a licence, should not be allowed to drive any car that he chooses. We have in this clause definitions of motor cars,

motor cycles, motor vehicles, private carrier, public carrier, public service vehicle, etc., etc. All these vehicles belong to the same category and a man who has earned the skill to know a machine and also the motor mechanism—why should he be asked to take out licences for driving different cars? The definition of vehicle is another vehicle of oppression. I, therefore, suggest to the members of the Select Committee to take into consideration this Chapter II—Licensing of drivers of motor vehicles—and particularly the clauses relating to issue and revocation of licences. Another peculiar clause is that with regard to the differentiation between driving of private cars and of cars belonging to the Central Government. I do not understand why there should be any such difference between the drivers and between the cars. The next thing that suggests itself to me is the different authorities created. I see here Provincial Government Authority, then Regional Transport Authority, and the Court, and also I find the difficulty created in the permit clause. We know that at present those who own cars and those who drive cars are small men, men of small means. Anyhow they get some money to purchase a car on the hire purchase system mostly and want to eke out their living out of that. So, to impose all these hindrances upon them in the shape of licences, in the shape of issue and revocation of licences, permits, different authorities to issue such licences or permits,—all these are really hardships. I would request the members of the Select Committee to see that laws which are intended to regulate the smaller transport business must be based on justice, equity and fairness and not on absurd restrictions legalised and licensed to create hardship to anybody.

The next Chapter is the Chapter on registration of motor vehicles. There is no question about the need for registration, but this registration must be made easy. So long as a car has been found to be in good condition I see no reason why the registering authority should not register it easily. But, Sir, one difficulty we have felt—and we have been approached by those who feel the difficulty—and that is that taxis which come to the stations from villages have to go to the district town or to Calcutta for registration, so far as Bengal is concerned. I think the same applies to other provinces too. It is a great difficulty. They cannot get a car registered on the day they go there. They have to go and come back and take their chance again and again and so they feel difficulty in getting the registration of their cars. Then, again, the man who certifies the car as to its efficiency has to be satisfied with some tips; otherwise the car will not be registered readily. So, it is necessary in the matter of registration that there should be vigilance on the part of superior officers over those who register. It is generally the drivers who go and get the cars registered and they should be able to do so without any worry and without being required to spend more than what is legal. I request the members of the Select Committee to consider this suggestion of mine. Those who are working in the district towns should be able to get their cars registered there, those who are in the sub-divisional towns ought to get the cars registered in the sub-divisional towns, and similarly for local areas, why should not the municipality be permitted to register cars in that area? This system can very easily be adopted, and those who want to go and work in other districts can get their cars registered in a certain place where registration for all India can be given. It may be the district or divisional or the Presidency town. For local purposes only the local *thana* and the municipality are competent bodies to register these cars. The registration will be sufficient for the purposes of work. Once a car is registered, in any place fulfilling all conditions, it will be good for all purposes.

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In that case the driver who gets the licence may not be a man who is a stranger, and a certificate from the local people as to his character, as to his habits, may be ample guarantee against any possible fault on his part with regard to driving a car which he gets registered. A car which will be declared unfit for use should be given a mark at the outset so that neither by bribery nor owing to the favour of any officer can that car be used as soon as that mark is given.

The Honourable Member has left the rule-making power to the provinces. Having made stringent laws, if the provinces are asked to make rules, they cannot make rules suited to their convenience; they will have to adapt themselves to the restriction already made and to the powers of the Central Government. This clause 39, which on the surface seems to be very tempting, will be of no avail. The best thing would have been for the Honourable Member to send out this Bill to the provincial Ministers and get their opinions first and then introduce this Bill here.

I have spoken already about the permits. When once a permit is given to a transport from the starting station, I do not see why there should be permits required at the end of a district or a province or just at the entrance of another district or province. That will be only harassing both the passengers and the drivers. So, the members of the Select Committee should pay attention to the clause regarding permits.

As regards clause 61, which refers to the restriction of hours of work of drivers, I agree with the author of this Bill that the hours of labour should be fixed. Railways have their rules regarding labour and hours of work although honoured in their breach. In the case of transport, the driver has not to work so hard at a stretch. He gets some time for rest and so he can be spared to work for six hours at a stretch.

As regards Chapter V, Construction, Equipment and Maintenance of Motor Vehicles, I believe if the driver or those who conduct the motor transport, if they are trained men, they can keep the machine going and if there is any difficulty on the way, they can themselves repair it. In other cases, there should be Inspectors on the way to look after these machines. With regard to speed limit I believe they used to have certain tests formerly in the route from Ballykhal to Howrah and a device to bind the speedometer with a tape and that device could be successful only if the police were vigilant. It is the police who allow the driver or the owner to indulge in all sorts of breaches of rules. He can take as many men as he likes. He can cut the tape round the speedometer and commit all sorts of breaches of the rules with the help of the police. With the best wishes of the Honourable Member in charge, nothing can be done if more power is not given to somebody to check the police. The more power is given to the police the greater is the possibility of corruption and in order to avoid that, there should be some means for supervising the action of the police. The Government can appoint suitable men to supervise this transport and control the police. (*An Honourable Member*: "Good men do not care to join that service.") I find good men can join the Government.

Then, Sir, I will say something about compulsory insurance. With regard to that, I will say that whatever is compulsory is bad. We should not compel these bus owners to insure twice. They insure their bus and are to insure again against third party security. This is not reasonable. Where is the security of life and property in railway travel? Accidents

have occurred during the last two years. What is the compensation that the railways offer for those who have been killed and injured? Why should the Honourable Member for Communications insist upon insurance of buses? All small men cannot afford to invest the money unless they borrow. So long as the public do not demand this insurance, I do not see why this Bill should give this clause so much importance. The Honourable Member has said that this will have effect after five years, but I would ask him not to insist upon this. Let things take their own course. With the development of this industry, if passengers and public want it, they can have it. But not at present. This Bill does not require this Chapter at all.

Sir, Chapter IX deals with offences, penalties and procedure. The offences as detailed are of various types,—disobedience to order, obstruction, etc. Once this industry is organized, just as the railways have been organized, there shall be regular rules and regulations which they themselves will make. I know, from my township to Calcutta, at the start, there were unorganized motor buses running and there was competition between them, but now-a-days we find they have, of themselves, framed their own rules and they have set times for starting whether they get passengers or not, and without any difficulty and inconveniences to passengers, they are plying their buses. So things, if left to themselves, naturally settle down and rules or laws come out of necessity. The Government have no reason at all at present for creating difficulties in the way of the natural evolution of this industry. This industry has already called for crores and crores of rupees,—belonging not to rich men but collected by men of slender means, and it is the duty of Government to see that they thrive and do not lose this enormous money that they have invested.

Sir, before the railways were introduced into India, India had her inland trade and commerce with the outside world, and India being a land of rivers, water-ways formed the means of transport, and there were also trunk roads before the railway route was started. There were feeder roads from the countryside and consequently there was not much difficulty in carrying men from place to place and doing business from the countryside to different places in the provinces. There was no such need of hurried business. India had maritime activities also. But even when the John Company came to India and started their trade and factories, they were using these waterways for their trade and commerce. The Company, however, found it necessary, particularly for the exploitation of India's raw materials, that railways should be set up. Really speaking, the Government felt the greatest need for changing the aspect of the whole country by constructing railways for administrative purposes,—thus, after the revolt of 1857, for the mobilisation of the army from one province to another, from north to south and east to west. The country was chained with railroads. Then all railways led to the ports. Today we find the starting-points of all railways,—Karachi, Calcutta, Bombay, and Madras, all port towns,—and they built the railways not only for administrative purposes but for carrying raw materials and importing manufactured goods—an easy means of exploitation. Sir, we cannot deny that railways have been useful asset to us. But it has become old. The new systems of transport are coming up one by one. The motor transport is one. Sometimes later on we shall hear aeroplanes flying over our heads not very high up and consequently the old will have to yield place to new and there is no way out of it,—just as an old man loses his strength, so all old systems

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will have to lose their strength and new ones will have to be accepted. So when this Bill wants to regulate the motor transport, I would like to ask the Honourable Member that he can do that by regulation, by all proper means, but not by bringing in hardships upon them by laws; it is only by proper supervision, proper inspection and by proper care, that, that can be done, and if he does that, he will find no necessity for what is now called co-ordination. Sir, co-ordination between an infant and an old man is impossible: co-ordination between railways and motor transport is not at all possible, unless the Government decide to nationalize all means of transport. I do not know if the British Government in India will take up this question of nationalization.

Mr. M. S. Aney: We will take it up.

Mr. Amarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya: Before we can do it, we should see Government do certain things, which will not destroy what we have. Without that a proper co-ordination cannot be possible. All transports have to be co-ordinated creed that is possible by nationalisation only.

Sir, I belong to Bengal and so I want to speak here generally for the conditions in Bengal. It is a land of rivers subject to inundation. Every year we find East Bengal is under water, and in many places. West Bengal also becomes flooded. Railway construction has changed the whole drainage system. Bengal Presidency is 77 million sq. miles in area, and its population is 50/51 millions. The total mileage of railway is 3,450/3,500 miles. In Bengal we have four railways—East Indian, Eastern Bengal, Bengal Nagpur and Assam Bengal. These are main railways, but there are several branch railways. With regard to roads we have got municipal roads covering 3,700 miles of which 3,000 are metalled. 1,234 miles of metalled road run parallel to railways within ten miles of them. There is a large tract of land served by waterways on which steamers ply. Metalled roads are unevenly distributed and there is a very great necessity for development of roads in Bengal. The countryside roads are not worth the name. Whatever roads have been made for motor transport are only due to the money that has accumulated out of petrol duty. Busowners and drivers have purchased motors at their own risk and started this industry and developed it, and these roads are therefore there made by themselves. In these circumstances, if in the way of this industry there are hindrances legalised, and it is forced to go down, under such pressure of restriction how can you expect further development of roads or further development of this industry. Sir, if we go into the details of this matter in Bengal, we shall be bound to come to the conclusion that at present within Bengal, if railways and motors have to compete, railways will find it difficult to continue because in the railways passengers or merchants have to suffer a good deal from various inconveniences. The motors go into the countryside. They get passengers on their very roads. Also we find that from Barakar, Asansol and Burdwan commodities are brought by motor to Calcutta and from Calcutta to these places. This is because not only it is cheaper, but because it is more convenient, because there is no delay there is no risk of loss, and things are delivered at the very doors of the merchants. If the railways want to compete with these buses, they will have to reorganise their whole system. I do not feel or think that this is a simple matter. Buses, no doubt, partly cause

loss of money and income to the railways. Railways work under a top-heavy administration. They work under a system which cannot avoid corruption, and it is growing or has grown to a shape and size which cannot be controlled by the organisation as it stands now. The difference between the topmost official of the railway and lowest man thereon is so great, that all the officers between the two cannot bring them together and cannot make it possible for the lowest man to put up his grievances before the topmost man without risk. That is another difficulty. In the case of bus, that is not the case. I am familiar with many of the complaints from educated workers on the railways who give stories of corruption which if the Honourable Member will care to see for himself, I can give him an opportunity, if he guarantees that railway staff will not be punished. With corruption and all this expensive administration and this distance between men on the top and those at the bottom, the railways will never be able to kill this growing infant industry unless Government make it a point of strangling it to death. With these words, Sir, I beg to suggest to the Select Committee that when they sit and discuss these clauses they might go very deeply and carefully and cautiously before they bring the Bill into the House again.

Babu Kailash Behari Lal (Bhagalpur, Purnea and the Sonthal Parganas: Non-Muhammadian): Sir, I rise to take part in this debate for reference of this Bill to the Select Committee. After the long speech of my Honourable friend who has just sat down, I think the patience of the House must have been taxed. I promise to be short. I am doubtful if I shall be able to give them something new because most of the things that could be said have already been said. I feel that the result of this discussion is a foregone conclusion and this Bill is sure to be referred to the Select Committee and, therefore, I also wish to add my views about this Bill. The description of the Bill as it has been given in this House leads me to compare it with the description of an elephant that was given in the country of the blind. Those who touched the elephant's leg said that the elephant is like a log of wood. Those who touched his trunk said that it is something like a thick bamboo. Those who touched his tusks said that it is something like a big stick and so on and so forth. I find that this is the attitude of most of the Members in this House towards this Bill. Of course, I was taken aback when I heard my friend, Mr. Gadgil, say that the railways are a national industry. I was also not a little surprised when I heard my friend, Mr. Sri Prakasa, speaking in the same vein about the development of the roads because of the encouragement given by big officials by driving their motor cars on them. Although I could not understand so clearly the sense of it, I think perhaps he meant that the roads have been given an impetus by the officials as they use them for their motor cars. Both these views are so conflicting in this House that one is bewildered and it becomes difficult to come to any conclusion regarding these matters. (Mr. M. S. Aney: "How will you vote?") As I have said, there is no need of voting now. The result of the discussion is a foregone conclusion and there is no need for vote. As the controversy about the description of the railways as the national industry and decrying the development of the motor industry has been going on in this House, I think that a *via media* can be found between the two.

Nobody can challenge the statement that the railways of a country are a national industry but in the present state of the railways in this country

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no man with any sense in him can say that they are our national industry. We have seen in this very House discussions going on as to how the money earned by the railways is being distributed amongst the foreigners. If it is a national industry in that sense, of course, I can join my friends in calling it a national industry. (*An Honourable Member*: "In that sense, the army is also national".) Just as my friend reminds me that we have got a national army in the country for our defence. In that sense everything can be said to be national. I hope I am not offending my friend, the Honourable Member in charge of this Bill, by saying this because so far as his personality is concerned. I regard him as a very honest man. I also mentioned during the Railway Budget that he feels that there are some persons who are inclined to call the railways the enemy of the country and I had told him that I was one of those who believed in that theory. I frankly admit that there is a large volume of opinion in this country which regards the railways as anything but a national industry or the friends of the people. It is quite a different thing that a large number of Indians are employed in the railways. It is simply due to the fact that so many men could not be imported from outside. But their first concern is to provide as many foreigners as possible and to give them as fat salaries as possible. It has been pointed out that Indians with much less salary can be found to serve in the place where Europeans with much more salary are being appointed. Under those conditions, perhaps it will be more proper for the Honourable Member to think whether in the name of co-ordination between rail and road he cannot say that it is a measure for the subordination of the road to railways. As has already been pointed out by several other speakers, so long as the railways are not run on economic lines and so long as they are not able to earn their profits by their own exertion, it should not be proper to look upon the road transport as the enemy of the railways. Whatever be the outward cloak in which to garb this Bill for the safety and the convenience of the people, the outstanding facts are that people feel a sort of suspicion regarding this Bill, that it is more for the help of the railways than for the safety and convenience of the people.

I am not oblivious to the fact that conditions regarding the motor transport also exist in the country which call for some action. Nobody can be blind to this side of the picture. We find that the main concern of the Bill, as has been given out in the Statement of Objects and Reasons, is that it should serve for the safety and convenience of the people and help in the co-ordination of the road and rail. But if it were so, I do not find why so many restrictions are put on motor transport business. It has been admitted on all hands that it is a baby industry. Whatever be its merits or its demerits, people have taken to this business and they are developing it and, under these circumstances, I do not think that in the name of catering to the convenience and safety of the people, so many restrictions and so many impediments should be placed in the way of the industry. As has been characterised by my Honourable friend, Mr. Abdul Qaiyum, the baby is being too much clothed so that it may be strangled to death. As my Honourable friend, Mr. Sri Prakasa, has said, I feel that the Bill has been so nicely and so thoroughly drafted that very little loophole can be found in it. It is true. I find that no objection can be taken to any of its clauses there. Although it requires some improvement, yet on principle little objection could be taken to the Bill as it has been drafted.

I am not concerned with the draft of the Bill so much as with the motive behind it. I feel that the motive behind it is not so pure as its language seems to imply. Even those who advocate that in the interest of the motor industry and in the interest of the safety and convenience to the public such a Bill is necessary, even they have not concealed the fact that it has not been brought forward with a clean motive. It is under those circumstances, I feel that whatever might be the good that is embodied in the Bill, it is quite clear that so long as the motive is there and so long as it is not pure, it will be very hard for the people to believe that it is mainly for the convenience and safety of the public that the Bill has been brought forward.

I think a bait is also given there. The bait is in the shape of delegation of rule-making powers to the Provincial Governments. It is urged that as the Provincial Governments are ours, there need be no apprehension of any kind. But I feel that even if the Provincial Government be ours, we should not place too much power in their hands lest they should be abused under circumstances which have been very nicely dealt with here by my Honourable friend, Mr. Sri Prakasa. There can be no doubt as to whether it be the Congress or the bureaucratic Government, they cannot do much now so long as the Central Government is irresponsible. We can claim to our satisfaction that there is Provincial Autonomy in the provinces, but it is not real Provincial Autonomy because there is the bureaucratic Centre controlling them. Under these circumstances, there is very little for us to enthuse over this Bill. If powers are given to the Provincial Governments, we should not be elated over it. We should never forge a law that is likely to be abused.

As things stand, I do not feel how people will be more safe and more inconvenienced by the enactment of this law. As a practical thing before us, I find that there are roads running parallel to railways and the motor traffic over that is beating down the railways in that respect. It has always been contemplated to curb the traffic on the road which is running parallel to railways. I can only understand by co-ordination that motor traffic will be diverted by some other road and free scope will be given to the railways. This does not mean in any way convenience or safety to the public. I have got in my mind two instances in my own district where the road runs parallel to railway lines from Bhagalpur to Bansi and from Bhagalpur to Monghyr. There, for all practical purposes, people experience greater convenience by taking the motor rather than the railway. I do not think that if this law is enacted and if such powers are given to the Provincial Governments and if the Provincial Governments in their wisdom think that such roads should be closed to motor traffic and should be given over to the railways alone totally, how can it be a convenience to the people. When people feel that it will be more convenient to travel by motor, any amount of logic regarding the safety and convenience cannot convince them. The reason behind all such special pleading is that it will benefit the railways. So, under the cloak of convenience and safety to the public, such measures are contemplated for the benefit of the railways. I submit the Government should think twice before embarking on such measures. I think perhaps that when the Bill becomes law and is actually put in working operation, it will show whether it will tend to the convenience of the public or to their disadvantage. As regards other restrictions, such as licensing regulations, overloading, insurance and other things, these are all high sounding words meant to be in the interest of the people and

[Babu Kailash Behari Lal.]

in the interest of safety and convenience to the travelling public, but I remain still unconvinced whether that is the real motive. I suspect that the real motive behind this measure is to help the railways. I can support this measure only if the Government could convince me and show me clearly that it will really do good to the people.

Mr. M. S. Aney: They have stated it there.

Babu Kailash Behari Lal: But the fact remains that the railways are going to benefit and the railways are not going to change their ways. We urged times without number that the railways should effect economy in their administration. They have turned a deaf ear to our requests. I submit the railways should first of all bring up legislation or issue administrative orders setting their house in order before they embark upon keeping at arms length any competitor with the railways. (Hear, hear.) They are not doing this primary duty. We know that large sums of money are being spent on foreigners in the shape of salaries and the work they do can easily be done by Indians on much less pay. Why should not the railways effect economy in this direction?

An Honourable Member: We get motors from foreign countries.

Babu Kailash Behari Lal: Yes, no doubt we pay foreigners for our motor cars. But the profits we earn in this industry remain with us. I have compared the two things. If the motors come from foreign countries, the railway materials such as engines and other things also come from foreign countries. In that respect perhaps both motors and railways stand on parallel lines. In case of motors, at least we have got the satisfaction that we are running the industry ourselves, that all the profits remain with us, whereas in the case of railways, all the profits go to the foreigners. I, therefore, submit that unless the Bill is improved and unless it assumes different form when it has emerged from the Select Committee, we cannot be elated over this Bill.

Maulana Zafar Ali Khan (East Central Punjab: Muhammadan): Sir, a more retrograde measure than this Bill was never placed on the legislative anvil. I remember a Hindustani song which has been immortalised by the gramophone which says:

*"Dhuen ki gari urae leo jai,
Jat nahin puchay jamat nahin puchay,
Aiki men sab ko bethai leo jai,
Dhuen ki gari urae leo jai."*

—and then there is one line which is the pith of the whole song:

*"Kaisa Feringhi paise ka lobhi,
Dhuen ki gari urae leo jai."*

The songster has indulged in a bit of character painting. He says that the *feringhi*, meaning the European, is covetous and is very greedy. I think he is right there. The Railway Department thinks in terms of millions, dreams in terms of crores; and it has earned and amassed a large amount of money. Out of this a pittance is earmarked for the provinces, but the balance goes into the pocket of the European himself.

May I remind the Honourable Member in charge of this Bill that this luckless land of ours is groaning under increasing impoverishment, that there is increasing unemployment, that thousands and thousands and thousands of undergraduates and graduates are starving. I have seen them in Madras selling betel, I have seen them in Bombay blacking shoes, I have seen them in Calcutta selling *rasgollas*, and I have seen them in the Punjab going about for a post on 15 or 16 rupees as a constable and they could not get that even and then they commit suicide

The Honourable Sir Nripendra Sircar: What is wrong with the *rasgollas*?

Maulana Zafar Ali Khan: There is one small industry left and that industry is motor transport. These people scrape some money together, invest it in a motor van or bus and then these graduates become motor drivers. Now, it seems to me that the Railway Department contemplates driving this industry out of the country by imposing upon it unthought of restrictions. The Railway Department must remember that a time is coming when a greater enemy than the road transport is going to drive it out of India and that is the airways, the aeroplanes: they are coming and then you will see how you amass money.

There are very few roads well-paved and macadamised. Go into the country and you will see that in the roads managed by the district boards and others there are pits and holes and piles upon piles of sand and dust, and the only vehicle that can traverse these roads is the motor. They say nothing new can be added to the discussion. My friend, Mr. Azhar Ali, will give me credit for introducing a new element. The elections, for better or for worse, have come to stay. I go to a gentleman and ask him to subscribe for Shahidgunj: he says to me "I am in straitened circumstances, I cannot give you even five rupees". But I know, this man, when he goes up for election, will spend a lakh or even two lakhs of rupees

An Honourable Member: Who is he?

Maulana Zafar Ali Khan: Go to Shahpur and you can find out. There are such men. How are they going to bring these voters to the polling booths? Not by *ekkas*, not by any other form of transport, not by foot, because in these days a man who can walk very well fifty miles a day, would not budge an inch on an election day. "Get me a sawari", he says and that *sawari* is the motor. The motor has come and you ought to make the motor-riding public a little more satisfied. But in this Bill I see no signs of that at all

Mr. M. S. Aney: No facilities for election?

Maulana Zafar Ali Khan: It is a necessary concomitant—this motor—to the *electionwalla*. So, if you believe in your Government of India Act and if you think that it is not a measure rammed down our unwilling throats at the point of the bayonet, then do something for the voter. You say in this Bill "We reserve to ourselves the right of fixing the rates. We will fix the motor car rates at four annas or three annas or two annas or even one anna a mile". But when there is competition between the road and the railway, competition between the engine and the motor van

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and you want to drive the motor van out of the field, how can we feel satisfied that you will not mete out stepmotherly treatment to it and kill it outright? So this Bill is defective in reserving for the Government the right of fixing maximum and minimum rates.

I have made up my mind not to contribute anything to the discussion in connection with this Bill, which is redundant or which has already been said by other Members; what I have said is, I think, something nice. With these words, I resume my seat.

[At this stage, Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim) resumed the Chair.]

Mr. Kuladhar Ohaliha (Assam Valley: Non-Muhammadan): Sir, the vice of uniformity is a British vice and wherever they go they carry this institution with them, we see it in the buildings in Delhi, this dull uniformity—there is an architectural dullness about it without any variety or beauty in construction. They have carried it to the roads—the level grasses have the same dull uniformity with nothing to relieve the dead level of dullness. Now, these little adventurous fellows, the Sikhs with beards like our friend Sardar Jogendra Singh, wanted to introduce a little variety and an aesthetic way of dealing with this matter, an artistic way of carrying people; but then we find the Communications Member who has combined railways with him and who is going to combine motor traffic along with him also, is going to kill that artistic variety of conveying passengers and make it a dead level for third class passengers and practically bring them back to the same position where they can neither recline nor sleep nor stretch nor sit comfortably. The buses used to pick up and set down passengers from their homes to their destination, but with these traffic regulations and control, the third class passengers will no longer enjoy those conveniences at all. Let us consider for what reasons it is considered that there should be public control of the industry. Let us consider whether it is desirable or practicable to impose public control, what methods are going to be adopted for that control, what gains will accrue to the people, and also what effect it will have on those who are engaged in that traffic.

First, let us see what are the reasons. It is said in the Mitchell-Kirkness report that they have found that the railway is losing and has made a loss of about Rs. 185 lakhs—that is their estimate. I should like to challenge the Honourable the Communications Member as to how this estimate has been arrived at. I find from the report itself that it is a conjectural estimate. They have not taken into consideration that these bus services, these taxi drivers have brought more traffic to the railways through feeder roads from places where there was absolutely no conveyance before. Therefore, taking that into consideration, I submit that the railways which are getting 29 crores out of an investment of 800 crores have been paying to the British investors more than 4½ per cent. leaving a surplus of more than one crore. So, the railways are not working at a loss, as no industry can make more than 6 per cent. nowadays and the suspicion will not be amiss if we say that your interest to safeguard the public is not so much for the people of India but for the British investors who are far away from here; it is more for the creditors and not for the safety of the people or for the convenience of the Indian public. The suspicion is deepened by the fact that you have never encouraged any roads,

you have never built any feeder roads to the railways. It is the bus that has improved the traffic of the railways by bringing commodities from out of the way places like Assam where there are indifferent and bad roads. I asked this morning whether the Honourable Member for Communications can build a line from Jakhalabandha to Badulipar station, a distance of eighty four miles, and he said that he will not do it as there are steamer stations or answered to that effect. He does not know the road condition at all of Assam. There is no public conveyance in that part of the country. It is the bus that has done something, there is not even a steamer ghat there except possibly one in an inaccessible place. The Honourable Member for Communications would not have replied in the way he has done if he would have been aware of the exact state of things. It is the bus that has done a little in the way of carrying commodities from Nowgong to Jorhat, Dibrugarh, and Upper Assam. If he had known the condition a little better he would have given a reply different from the one that he gave this morning.

By the creation of this Regional Transport Authority you are going to restrict the limit of activity the distance, the routes to be undertaken by the vehicles. The term long distance is a comparative term. It was a long distance thirty years ago to travel 30 miles, but by motor today even 300 miles is not a long distance. If you want to restrict in that way, you would be killing those very people who are engaged in bus business and have invested all their monies in it and have tried their best to serve the people who had no other conveyance, who had no other way of carrying their goods, who had no other way of carrying their produce to the nearest market. There are other parts of the country where similar conditions prevail. There is one reason which is assigned for introducing this Bill, and that is, that deaths from accidents in Assam, in the Punjab, and the North-West Frontier are about 160 to 200 per ten thousand vehicles. I can understand the anxiety but the other side of the question has been totally forgotten,—the road conditions in those places are so bad, the roads have been so neglected for many, many years, that the fault is due more to the state of the roads themselves than that of the taxi drivers. One of our Finance Ministers, Mr. Bothan when we wanted to have a Road Board in the province, said that if anybody deserved a Victoria Cross it was the taxi driver in Assam, because of the very bad roads that he had to negotiate and which he did so successfully. That gentleman was a very successful Minister. If such is the case, you ought to consider whether by the passing of this Bill you are going to expand the road traffic or you are going to curtail it. I can say for my own province, that as soon as you pass this Bill, the effect will be that in ninety cases the motor transport men will be thrown out of the business and there will be a standstill. The traffic there mostly consists of lorries of tea estates which are almost private, and there are a very few who serve from Sylhet to Shillong, from Shillong to Gauhati and from Gauhati to Nowgong and Upper Assam. If you put this Regional Authority to restrict the number of vehicles and to limit the distances to which the buses will go and to control it in the way you are going to do so that it may not compete with the railway in Assam, then I can say that the bus owners will not be able to serve the people as they did formerly. Who will be responsible for this? The railway train from Gauhati to Jorhat used to take about 18 hours, whereas the bus takes about 10 to 12 hours. The other day they have speeded up a little bit because the bus owners did it quicker. We

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know that we have in Assam the Assam Bengal Railway which is one of those railways that do not deserve praise. For a short distance from Golaghat to Jorhat it takes 2 to 2½ hours, whereas by bus you can do the same distance in an hour and ten minutes. Therefore, the real cure for this evil that the railway is losing money is not to kill the bus owners but to improve the railway service and speed it up and give the third class passengers, more comfort so that it can render the maximum service possible to the people and especially to the third class passengers.

As regards insurance I shall speak very shortly as it is getting late and I do not want to be long. You have tried to bring in insurance into India because it prevails in England. In 1931 the Road Traffic Act came into force in England. Before the Act was enacted 90 per cent. of the vehicles were already insured. There they helped the process. Here you are going to force an institution which is not wanted by the people or the bus owners. It is stated in the Motor Vehicles Insurance Committee's report that 50 per cent. of the vehicles in India are insured. That is a wrong statement. It may be true in the case of cities like Bombay, Karachi, Delhi, and Calcutta, but as regards vehicles outside these cities, they are not insured, and what will be the effect of the insurance on them? They say that it obviates accidents. Let us see whether it is so. The Punjab, Bihar and Orissa, and also, I think, the United Provinces, Baluchistan and the North-West Frontier Governments have spoken against it. The others support that insurance should be there, but the Punjab Government has pertinently asked the question whether insurance will obviate accidents, whether insurance will continue the life of a man who is dead. If it is not, why bring in insurance as a new institution which was not in existence before simply for the sake of uniformity. I think this is a new idea and it will be a very heavy burden on the people who own buses and lorries. The whole question should be looked at not from the point of view of whether the railways are losing. On the contrary the more traffic there is on the roads the more money it will bring to the coffers of the Indian exchequer. Import taxes and excise duties on motor goods have already brought 7½ crores and will bring in more and more revenue with road traffic expansion. As such why should you get jealous of a traffic in which Indians are concerned, for the sake of the safety of British investors? We are looking at it from the point of view as to how many men will be ruined and thrown out of employment. We find that numerous people have invested their money and they will be ruined and thrown out of employment. It is for the interests of British shareholders that this Bill has been framed. So, I think, this requires drastic changes before it can be supported.

Mr. M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar (Madras Ceded Districts and Chittoor Non-Muhammadan Rural): During these three days when the debate has been continued on this Bill, the discussion has centred round one idea and several Members including the Mover of this Bill have been obsessed with this idea of the importance of our national asset, namely, the railways and they have pointed out that it will be seriously affected unless the Bill is pushed through. I would ask Honourable Members to bear with me for a few minutes while I deal with this question of the motor industry. We are not the producers of motor cars or any of the accessories to it but it has been directly or indirectly contributing to the general revenues of the Central Government and also the revenues

of the Provincial Governments, besides giving employment to a large number of men in this country. The last may not be a matter which might be very important to the matter at issue. So far as the railways are concerned, the main point is that it contributes to the general revenues and it is also a national asset in which about 800 crores of the nation's money has been invested. If a similar calculation is made of the amount spent on the construction of roads, I do not think there is anything to choose between the one and the other. For the upkeep and maintenance of roads, it is necessary to get some source of income without imposing additional taxation on the taxpayers who have to contribute to various other purposes. To the extent that we lose on the railways, there will be, no doubt, to that extent additional imposition on the general taxpayers. Now, it is expected that the railways should contribute one per cent. to the general revenues. That might come to about eight crores. But the motor cars and accessories that are imported, between them they pay one crore of rupees in the shape of customs duty and then from the excise duty we get nearly $4\frac{1}{2}$ crores. In addition there is a special duty of two annas per gallon on petrol and that has to be distributed to the provinces. The Central Government gets to the extent of five to seven crores from motor cars and parts that are imported as excise duty. As regards the Provincial Governments, they get incomes by way of provincial taxation, that is, licence fees that are charged by the local bodies. Those are the two sources of revenue which are now available to the provinces. I am speaking with special reference to Madras. Then there is the contribution of 15 per cent. or nearly 15 lakhs from the special petrol tax. Barring that 15 per cent. from the Central Government the other two available sources of income are the provincial taxes and the local cesses.

Now, Sir, I shall take only the province of Madras. In Madras we have nearly 25,000 miles of metalled road. The broad gauge, the narrow gauge and the light railways, all of them taken together do not cover more than 4000 miles. I have read carefully the report of Messrs. Mitchell and Kirkness where it is said explicitly in some cases and in other cases in an indirect manner that it is idle to think that the railways should be extended in any part of India consistently with economic management and they even report that so far as light railways and branch lines are concerned, it might be desirable to close many of the branch lines and light railways and to give a monopoly of the roads which run parallel to these lines to the railway. If the railways take up a monopoly and work them, sooner or later the railways may be abandoned and the railways even if they continue may be used only to carry heavy transport from one place to another, which cannot be carried by the ordinary buses. That is the recommendation they make. Therefore it will be too much to expect that the railway should be extended throughout the length and breadth of the country, any more than what they have done already and, therefore, that mode of transport has shrunk or is going to shrink. I will take the statistics available so far as Madras is concerned. Madras has now one mile of railway line for every 50 square miles, whereas in Bengal, there is one mile of railway line for every 20 square miles and in Madras there is one mile of motor road for every $4\frac{1}{2}$ square miles. Therefore the road is more easily available and at the very door of the individual. The motor is available to take either the passenger or his goods to the nearest market and to the railway station. Besides there are many hilly places which are not covered by the railway line. Not only in Madras but in various other Presidencies,

[Mr. M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar.]

there is more and more scope for the extension of the motor transport roads. Addressing ourselves particularly to marketing facilities and other facilities that have to be afforded to the villagers, the need is all the greater. The same report also says that in six districts of the Madras Presidency where a calculation was made villages with more than a thousand population are far away from the roads and 1400 such villages have no communication to the nearest roads and no attempts have been made till now for want of funds to connect such roads to the nearest main roads. There are various other difficulties and on account of want of funds in the provinces it is impossible to get anything done. Now, the position in Madras is that from the general provincial taxation on motors, we get only 25 lakhs per year. From the license fees which the district boards impose we get not more than a lakh of rupees per district. This is about 26 lakhs. So, the provincial taxation as well as the licence fees give only 50 lakhs of rupees. The annual recurring expenditure for the maintenance of these roads is 60 lakhs and if any improvements have to be effected or new roads have to be laid, that comes on an average during the last six or eight years to nearly a crore. So, we are spending 2½ crores a year in the Madras Presidency.

Mr. F. E. James (Madras: European): My Honourable friend will recollect that the Madras Government threw away 30 lakhs when they abolished the toll for bullock carts.

Mr. M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: I think the Madras Government acted rightly in not throwing this into the hands of the capitalists. I would ask my friend in all modesty if the tolls were not taxing the poor agriculturist, when he does not benefit from any road. He knows it. At any rate he has now tried to acquaint himself with the conditions there,

5 P.M. but I would ask him to answer this question. Are there any decent villages there which are connected by road? Does he realize what difficulties there are? I would ask my Honourable friend, instead of standing for a European constituency for which there is no election, let him take steps to stand for my constituency if that is possible, and then let him see if he will find support. Sir, if he has to go to these villages for canvassing votes, it would be impossible for him to hold those opinions and I am sure he will break his neck

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member can continue his speech tomorrow.

The Assembly then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Thursday, the 24th March, 1938.