

20th February 1938

THE
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY DEBATES
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NINTH SESSION
OF THE
FIFTH LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY,
1939



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1939

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Legislative Assembly.

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Monday, 20th February, 1939.

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.

STARRED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

(a) ORAL ANSWERS.

OPENING OF THE BROADCASTING STATION AT TRICHINOPOLY.

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

- (a) whether Government have come to a conclusion over the matter of proceeding with or stopping the erection of the radio station at Trichinopoly;
- (b) whether they have received any representations from the Madras Government in this matter; and
- (c) if so, what has been the result of these representations?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: (a) and (b). Yes.

(c) Government have decided to open the Trichinopoly Station and took the views of the Madras Government into consideration in reaching this decision.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: When is this station expected to be put into working order?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: That occurs in answer to a later question, and I shall give the information later in the morning.

NEWS REGARDING A TRAIN ROBBERY PUBLISHED IN THE *TRIBUNE*.

510. *Mr. Abdul Qaiyum: Will the Honourable Member for Railways please state:

- (a) if he has read the news "Daring train robbery" in the *Tribune* of Lahore, dated the 13th January, 1939;
- (b) whether Miss Andrey Saunders was thrown out of a moving train by dacoits;
- (c) whether the train did not stop after she had pulled the communication cord;
- (d) whether these cords are tested before the departure of the train, and whether this was done in this case; and
- (e) whether Government propose to take steps to secure regular and frequent examination of such communication cords?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: (a) and (b). Yes.

(c) It is understood that the lady did not pull the communication cord. The preliminary police report states that she was prevented from doing so by one of the dacoits.

(d) No.

(e) Regular and frequent examination of communication cords is made.

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum: May I know whether it is a fact that a policeman in the next carriage actually pulled the communication cord and yet the train did not stop for half a mile?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: I have no information as regards that.

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum: May I know if this attack took place at seven o'clock in the morning?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: That is the information contained in the newspaper report.

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum: May I know if Government have satisfied themselves that in this case the communication cord was in perfect working order?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: Yes, Sir.

Mr. K. Santhanam: May I know what was the statement made by Miss Audrey Saunders herself as to whether she pulled the communication cord?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: I have not been able to get a *verbatim* statement from the lady in question, but a preliminary police report states that she was prevented from doing so by one of the dacoits and presumably that report is based on what the lady herself has said.

Shrimati K. Radha Bai Subbarayan: May I ask whether Government will examine the whole question of the safety of women passengers and take into consideration whether it would be possible to have a corridor bogey with a special conductor in charge of that carriage?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: The Honourable Member's question raises a very wide issue and if she would put down a question on the notice paper, I shall be glad to answer it.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: May I know if there was a scheme for the provision of communication apertures in third class carriages to provide safety for these occasions? Are those now in use?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: I am not aware that this question refers to third class carriages and amenities thereto.

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum: May I know if this lady was actually thrown out of this compartment into the bed of a river?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: I am informed that she was thrown out of the compartment, but I do not know where she landed.

JIRGA SYSTEM AND SARDARI SYSTEM IN BRITISH BALUCHISTAN.

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

- (a) what the *Jirga* system and *Sardari* system in British Baluchistan are;
- (b) whether he is aware that the people are dissatisfied with both, and have urged for their abolition; and
- (c) the reasons why these systems are being retained?

Sir Aubrey Metcalfe: (a) The phrases are loosely used for the administration of customary law through the Frontier Crimes Regulation and the control of the tribes through their recognised leaders.

(b) and (c). It is believed that the great majority of the people are satisfied with these methods of administration. They have certainly not urged their abolition.

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum: May I know how Government have ascertained that a great majority of the people are satisfied with this system of administration?

Sir Aubrey Metcalfe: That is the report received from the local administration and I have no doubt that the local administration are in close touch with public opinion.

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum: This is merely the opinion of the local administration and the views of the people were not ascertained.

Sir Aubrey Metcalfe: I do not know what the Honourable Member wants an answer to. He has made a statement which I think is incorrect.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Who established this system and when was it established?

Sir Aubrey Metcalfe: The system has been in force long before the British administration was established in Baluchistan.

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum: May I know if in case of complaints by ordinary people against their Sardars, the procedure adopted by Government is that these complaints are referred back to the same persons against whom the complaints are made.

Sir Aubrey Metcalfe: That is a question of detail on which I require notice.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Are the people there obliged to make any payments to these Sardars either legally or illegally?

Sir Aubrey Metcalfe: That, again, is a question on which I require notice.

DISTRICT BOARD AND MUNICIPALITIES IN BRITISH BALUCHISTAN.

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

- (a) the number of District Boards in British Baluchistan;
- (b) the number of municipalities in British Baluchistan;
- (c) whether the system of election has been introduced in any local body; and
- (d) the programme of the Government about setting up elected local bodies in the said province?

Sir Aubrey Metcalfe: (a) and (b). There are no District Boards or Municipalities in British Baluchistan.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) It is not considered advisable to establish local elected bodies in British Baluchistan. The system is not regarded as being suitable to a country of immense distances populated by a nomadic people mainly pastoral in occupation.

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum: May I know if it is not possible to set up municipal committees at Chaman, Sipi, Quetta and Fort Sandeman?

Sir Aubrey Metcalfe: Anything is possible, but it is not advisable.

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum: What is the policy of the Government? Is it not the policy of the Government to introduce Provincial Autonomy at some stage or other in this province?

Mr. Prsident (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): That is going much further.

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum: But the Honourable Member got up to reply, Sir.

Sir Aubrey Metcalfe: When the Honourable Member talks about the province, I think he is meaning the whole of what is called Baluchistan. I may point out that British Baluchistan is only a very small portion of the province, the area is some 9,000 miles and the total number of inhabitants is 136,000. That does not give a very good groundwork for an autonomous province.

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum: May I know the reasons why after so many years have elapsed, Government have not even introduced the system of local self-government in this province to train the people for self-government?

Sir Aubrey Metcalfe: That I answered quite clearly in reply to the original question.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: In the absence of any of these local boards, who is the authority which carries on the usual civic and municipal functions?

Sir Aubrey Metcalfe: There is probably some kind of Notified Area Committee, but if the Honourable Member wants accurate information on that point, I want notice.

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum: Is it not a fact that there is a municipal committee at Quetta, which is entirely a nominated body?

Sir Aubrey Metcalfe: Yes, but Quetta is not in British Baluchistan.

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum: Whatever the region be in which Quetta is situated, I want to know why Government have not introduced an elective system in Quetta municipality so far?

Sir Aubrey Metcalfe: That goes outside the terms of the original question and I shall require notice.

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum: That was absolutely covered by my question which I had originally sent. I charge Government with deliberately not introducing local self-Government in this area?

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member may charge the Government or do anything he likes. But the question as it is on the order paper has been answered. The question relates to British Baluchistan and the Honourable Secretary for the External Affairs Department has just now told the House that Quetta is not in British Baluchistan.

Sir Aubrey Metcalfe: That is so, Sir.

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum: May I know from the Honourable Secretary for the External Affairs Department what is the name given to that part of the country which includes Quetta so that I can frame the question according to his particular designation?

Sir Aubrey Metcalfe: That is known as a leased area.

EXECUTING BONDS OF GOOD BEHAVIOUR BY MALIKS IN VILLAGES IN BRITISH BALUCHISTAN.

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

- (a) whether "Maliks" of villages in British Baluchistan where members of the "Anjumane Watan" exist, are being asked to execute bonds for the latter's good behaviour; and
- (b) how many members of this body have been arrested and convicted during the last three years; how many have been bound down to keep peace?

Sir Aubrey Metcalfe: (a) No.

(b) It is not known if any member of this organisation has been convicted for any criminal offence during the last three years, but none has been convicted for any offence committed as a member of the organisation or has been bound over to keep the peace on account of his membership.

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum: There is an organisation styled *Anjumane Watan*?

Sir Aubrey Metcalfe: Presumably the Honourable Member knew that when he put down the question.

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum: What is the professed aim of this organisation?

Sir Aubrey Metcalfe: That surely must be within the knowledge of the Honourable Member himself, who put down the question relating to the organisation.

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum: I should like to know what is the information of the Government regarding this question. What are the objects of this *Anjumane Watan*? What does it stand for? What does it demand from Government? I should like to know what information Government have, as I have not got much information on this point. Otherwise I would not have put down the question.

Sir Aubrey Metcalfe: If the Honourable Member wants to know details about this organisation he may put down a question on the paper and I will give him the information.

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum: Sir the question itself deals with the *Anjumane Watan*, and I want a ruling from the Chair whether or not I am entitled to ask questions with regard to a body which is specifically mentioned in my question.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member asked a particular question and he has got the answer. As regards the rest the Honourable Government Member says he has not got any information and he has asked him to give notice.

TRAIN DISASTER NEAR HAZARIBAGH ON THE EAST INDIAN RAILWAY.

514. ***Mr. Brojendra Narayan Chaudhury:** Will the Honourable Member for Railways please state regarding the Dehra Dun Express accident near Hazaribagh:

- (a) how long after the derailment the fire broke out, the cause of the fire, and the damage to life and property caused by the fire;
- (b) whether the Associated Press of India report, dated 13th January, 1939, from Patna, 'Police officials on the spot are understood to have found the fish plates intact', is correct; if so, how it is reconcilable with the Railway *communique* that sabotage has been established;
- (c) whether his attention has been drawn to the report given by Messrs. B. Chowdhury and C. K. Sarkar, engineers and higher class passengers of the ill-fated train, to *Amanda Bazar Patrika* of 28th Paus—that in the brake van they found a fire extinguisher but it was *out of order*;
- (d) whether this is correct;
- (e) whether the same gentlemen's report that a train which was passing after the accident did not stop although it slowed down at the shouting to stop, is correct;
- (f) whether it is a fact that the guard of the Bombay Mail, which arrived later, used saws to save life and property; and
- (g) what instruments and appliances are carried by the guard to meet such emergencies; whether the Dehra Dun Express carried them?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: (a) to (e). Government have no information further to that contained in the Senior Government Inspector's report, a copy of which was distributed to Honourable Members.

(f) Yes.

(g) A list showing the articles carried by guards of passenger trains is laid on the table. The answer to the second part of the question is in the affirmative.

List of articles carried in the Brake-van.

(1) Tool Box :

Contents—

- 1 Axe.
- 1 Canvas Bucket.
- 1 Chisel.
- 1 Crow Bar.
- 1 Drift.
- 1 Hammer.
- 1 Saw.
- 1 Screw Driver.
- 1 Tommy Bar.
- 1 Hack Saw Frame and Blade.
- 1 Chisel (Wood).
- 1 Pipe—Diameter $1\frac{1}{2}$ inch.

(2) Fire Extinguisher.

(3) First Aid Box.

(4) Alarm Signal Adjusting Rod.

TRAIN DISASTER NEAR HAZARIBAGH ON THE EAST INDIAN RAILWAY.

515. *Mr. Brojendra Narayan Chaudhury: Will the Honourable the Railway Member please state regarding the Dehra Dun Express accident near Hazaribagh Road :

- (a) whether the Associated Press of India news of New Delhi, dated the 13th January, 1939, 'that the Senior Government Inspector of Railways and the Bihar Police have accepted the cause of the accident as sabotage', is correct;
- (b) whether the Associated Press of India news that driver Sergeant is reported to have found the rails removed is correct;
- (c) whether the Associated Press of India news that one sheet (length?) of rail which was supposed to have been removed has been recovered and that it does show any signs of the Express passing over it, is correct;
- (d) whether the Chief Operating Superintendent, East Indian Railway, has issued any press *communiqué* stating that 'it has been established that the accident was due to malicious tampering with the track';
- (e) whether a case under section 126 of the Railway Act has been started against unknown persons for malicious tampering and whether a reward of Rs. 5,000 has been offered for detection of the culprits; and

- (f) whether Government contemplate further detective punitive and preventing methods similar to what the Bengal Government did since 1906 to stamp out political terrorism?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: (a) to (d). I would refer the Honourable Member to the reply just given to parts (a) to (e) of his starred question No. 514.

(e) Government have no information. The reply to the second part of the question is in the affirmative.

(f) This is a matter which concerns the Provincial Government.

Mr. Brojendra Narayan Chaudhury: Is the Honourable Member aware that the railway authorities or the Provincial Government first announced a reward of Rs. 5,000 and then increased it to Rs. 25,000?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: No, Sir; I am not aware of the announcement of a reward of Rs. 25,000.

Mr. Brojendra Narayan Chaudhury: Is the Honourable Member aware of the announcement of Rs. 5,000?

(No reply.)

REPRESENTATIONS FOR AN ENQUIRY TO ASCERTAIN THE CAUSES OF RAILWAY ACCIDENTS.

516. ***Mr. Brojendra Narayan Chaudhury:** Will the Honourable the Railway Member please state:

- (a) whether representations have been received from the Marwari Chamber of Commerce and the Indian Chamber of Commerce, Calcutta, or other associations or individuals urging the institution of a public inquiry to ascertain the causes of repeated accidents and recommend suitable measures for safety, and what Government propose to do in the matter; and
- (b) whether the same demand has been voiced in the Calcutta dailies, the *Patrika*, the *Hindustan Standard* and the *Ananda Bazar Patrika*?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: (a) Yes.

(b) Government have no information.

TRAIN DISASTER NEAR HAZARIBAGH ON THE EAST INDIAN RAILWAY.

517. ***Mr. Brojendra Narayan Chaudhury:** Will the Honourable the Railway Member please state:

- (a) whether the Railway Inquiry on the Dehra Dun Express disaster has been completed and report submitted;
- (b) whether the inquiry was directed to the following points discussed by Mr. K. N. Chatterjee of 1, Wood Street, Calcutta, in a communication to the *Hindustan Standard* of the 16th January, 1939:
- (i) "Presuming that the wheels of a train leave marks on steel rails what tests the inquiry committee did apply to distinguish the marks left by the Bombay Mail passing at about 1-20 A.M. or preceding trains, from the marks the Dehra Dun Express might or might not have left?"

- (ii) how does the Committee prove that the piece of unmarked rail did not receive an *end-on* impact from coach wheel that was sufficient to shear its bolts, etc., and fling it out bodily without marking or distorting its upper surface to any appreciable extent?
- (iii) whether it is possible that a heavy engine at high speed could jump the gap made by the removal of a rail;
- (iv) whether it is not more impossible for the tender which is not rigidly coupled to the engine to go the gap without sideways movements and whether this is not still more impossible for the first coach;
- (v) the track must have been intact one hour before the accident when the Bombay Mail passed. The probability of track being sabotaged in an hour in cold wintry night far away from habitation and its possibility without the assistance of *highly skilled group of men* equipped with *regular track-laying tools*. The powerful searchlight of the Bombay Mail could not disclose anything unusual at this spot only an hour earlier;
- (vi) whether the theory adumbrated by Mr. Chatterjee that the cause of the fire was *hot axles* or *defective brakes*, that the fire remained at first *unnoticed* by *sleeping passengers* with windows shut, that the fire in its turn must have affected the air-brakes, causing jamming of the brakes that caused a violent *skid*, which was helped by the unevenness of the rail joints. This theory of sudden jamming of the brakes is supported by the statement of Mr. K. R. Khondker in the *Ananda Bazar Patrika* of the 13th January, 1939”;
- (c) how the above factors have been dealt with in the Railway report;
- (d) if all or any of the above have not been considered, whether Government intend to order further inquiry touching the above points; and
- (e) whether there was immediately before the accident any strong dissatisfaction and disaffection of the railway employees in that section of the Railway?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: (a) to (e). I would refer the Honourable Member to the reply just given to his starred question No. 514 and to my speech on the adjournment motion in this House on the 3rd February, 1939.

RESULTS OF THE TALKS WITH THE AFGHAN TRADE MINISTER.

518. *Mr. S. Satyamurti: Will the Secretary for External Affairs be pleased to state:

- (a) the results of the talk the Afghan Trade Minister had with him; and
- (b) whether any results have been achieved, and, if so, what they are?

Sir Aubrey Metcalfe: (a) and (b). Attention of the Honourable Member is invited to the answers to parts (a) and (b) of question No. 292 asked by Mr. Abdul Qaiyum on the 10th February, 1939.

MEETING OF THE SECRETARY OF THE EXTERNAL AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF THE FRONTIER CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

519. ***Mr. S. Satyamurti:** Will the Secretary for External Affairs be pleased to state:

- (a) whether recently representatives of the Frontier Chamber of Commerce met him;
- (b) whether he told the delegation that its views would be conveyed to the Afghan Government, if they were found to be in the interests of Indian traders;
- (c) whether those views have since been examined, and how many of them have been communicated to the Afghan Government;
- (d) how many of them were considered to be in the interests of Indian traders and what they were; and
- (e) whether the difficulties confronting Indian traders in Afghanistan have been considered and redressed and, if not, when they will be redressed?

Sir Aubrey Metcalfe: (a) Yes.

(b) No.

(c) and (d). Do not arise.

(e) The difficulties experienced by Indian traders in Afghanistan, and the steps to be taken to alleviate them, are under consideration.

Mr. S. Satyamurti: May I know if my Honourable friend conveyed to the delegation an expression of the action likely to be taken by the Government of India in this behalf?

Sir Aubrey Metcalfe: No decision can be come to as to any action to be taken by the Government of India with regard to the treatment of Indian traders in Afghanistan.

Mr. S. Satyamurti: I am asking about the action which the Government of India will take on the representation made by the Frontier Chamber of Commerce to this Government. I do not say that they can take any final action, but did this Government give any kind of undertaking to this deputation as regards the action they would take in this matter to get these grievances redressed?

Sir Aubrey Metcalfe: The conversations with the representatives of the Frontier Chamber of Commerce were informal, but so far as I remember, I certainly assured them that the Government of India would do what they could to secure removal of the disabilities under which they at present suffer.

Mr. S. Satyamurti: Are Government in a position to give any indication of the time when they hope to finish these talks and come to some arrangement with the Afghan Government in respect of this matter?

Sir Aubrey Metcalfe: As soon as possible; that is all I can say.

CONSULTATION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA IN RESPECT OF THE PALESTINE CONFERENCE IN LONDON.

520. *Mr. S. Satyamurti: Will the Secretary for External Affairs be pleased to state :

- (a) whether the Government of India have been consulted in respect of the proposed Palestine Conference in London; and
- (b) whether the Government of India have represented to His Majesty's Government the views of Indians with regard to the future of Palestine and, if so, what they are?

Sir Aubrey Metcalfe: (a) No.

(b) The views of Indians, as expressed in this House, in the Press and at public meetings, have been communicated to His Majesty's Government from time to time. The Honourable Member is presumably acquainted with these views and it hardly seems necessary for Government to explain them to the House.

Mr. S. Satyamurti: I am not asking my Honourable friend to give us his appreciation or my appreciation of these views. But I want to know whether the Government of India have communicated to His Majesty's Government the views of Indians, and if so what those views are which my Honourable friend has communicated.

Sir Aubrey Metcalfe: I have already explained that they conveyed the views of Indians as expressed from time to time in this House, in the Press and in public meetings.

Mr. S. Satyamurti: Are the Government of India being kept in touch with the proceedings of the Palestine Conference now going on in London?

Sir Aubrey Metcalfe: They read the press reports.

Mr. S. Satyamurti: Have they no other means of communication except what I have?

Sir Aubrey Metcalfe: No; I should think not.

Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad: With reference to part (a) of the question, may I know whether the Government of India were consulted either before or after the formation of this Palestine Conference?

Sir Aubrey Metcalfe: I gave a categorical reply when I said "No".

†521*.

FORMATION OF ADVISORY COMMITTEES FOR BROADCASTING STATIONS.

522. *Mr. S. Satyamurti: Will the Honourable Member for Communications be pleased to state :

- (a) at what stage the proposal to form Advisory Committees for all Broadcasting Stations stands;

†This question was not put by the questioner.

- (b) the reasons for the delay in the formation of these Committees; and
- (c) when Government propose to set up these Committees, and with what main functions?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: (a) and (c). The attention of the Honourable Member is invited to the reply given by me on the 10th February, 1939, to part (b) of Mr. Mohan Lal Saksena's starred question No. 297. With reference to the second part of part (c), the main functions of the committees will be to advise the Controller of Broadcasting in regard to provincial requirements in the matter of programme construction, the most appropriate language medium, the proportion of service to different linguistic areas and such other matters as may be referred to them.

(b) The matter has been under correspondence with Provincial Governments for some time and the consent of the members to serve on the committees is now awaited.

Mr. S. Satyamurti: May I know when these advisory committees will be formed for Madras and Trichinopoly?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: My answer to part (b) of the question covers Madras. The question of Trichinopoly will be taken up in due course.

Shrimati K. Radha Bai Subbarayan: May I ask, Sir, if Government will make it a rule to include women on these committees because of the educational value of broadcasting?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: My recollection is that the representation of women has received consideration.

Shrimati K. Radha Bai Subbarayan: My question was whether Government will make it a rule to include women in these committees.

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: It is not a question of our making a rule; we abide very much by the advice of the Provincial Governments in selecting these committees.

Sri K. B. Jinaraja Hegde: May I know whether it will include Bombay also?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: Yes, Sir, Bombay is included.

**BOARDING BY CERTAIN KISANS OF THE SOUTH BIHAR PASSENGER TRAIN
WITHOUT TICKETS AT GAYA.**

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

- (a) whether on the evening of 16th January, 1939, about 500 kisans boarded the 'South Bihar passenger train at Gaya without tickets with the exception of their leader, Swami Sahajananda, who provided himself with a ticket, and whether the railway authorities in spite of the assistance of the Magistrate, were obliged to cancel the train, collect tickets of *bona fide* passengers and refund their money and to send others by bus; and

- (b) the special measures, if any, the railway authorities propose to take to prevent breakdowns like the above and those that happened at Byculla and Matunda recently?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: (a) Yes. The statement made is partly correct, but understates the numbers. It is not known whether the leader had bought a ticket.

(b) Measures to deal with situations such as had occurred are outside the scope of Railway Administrations. With reference to the second part of the question, I would refer the Honourable Member to the reply given to Mr. Abdul Qaiyum's starred question No. 175 on 7th February, 1939.

Mr. Sri Prakasa: How did these gentlemen get admission to the platform without tickets?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: I understand that they walked on to the platform.

Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad: May I ask whether the Government of India have devised any method to meet such a situation which has occurred according to this question and which has, I think, occurred elsewhere also?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: No. It is not the business of the Government of India to devise methods to prevent such an occurrence.

Mr. Brojendra Narayan Chaudhury: Are there any arrangements at stations to prevent strangers from getting on to the platform and get into trains?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: There are arrangements at the stations: there are police posted at stations; but one or two constables could not possibly cope with a body of several hundreds of men.

Mr. S. Satyamurti: Are not the Government of India interested in preventing any loss of railway revenues and will they take steps to prevent these unauthorised persons entering railway premises?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: We should have to enlist the assistance of the Provincial Governments.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Is there any method in the armoury of the Government of India by which they can prevent successfully these peasant marches at their railway stations?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: I have already suggested that it is not the business of the railway administration to maintain law and order.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: Was any action taken against anybody in this matter?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: I think I should have to refer the Honourable Member to the Provincial Government, whose responsibility it is.

Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad: In view of the Niemayer Award that the profits derived from the railways will go to the Provincial revenues, may I ask the Government whether they have drawn the attention of Provincial Governments that this loss of revenue will be debited to their accounts?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: No. That would not necessarily follow.

Mr. Brojendra Narayan Chaudhury: Is the railway looking on helplessly in the face of such attacks on them?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: I do not think that the railway authorities had any other option.

FINANCES OF THE VIZAGAPATAM PORT.

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

- (a) the present condition of the finances of the port of Vizagapatam;
- (b) what is the extent of the deficit for the current year;
- (c) whether there is any set-back in the development of the trade in that port; and
- (d) when Government expect it to pay its way?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: (a), (b) and (c). Excluding interest charges on capital, the estimated deficit in the current year is Rs. 1,00,000 but mainly due to a fall in the export of manganese ore and the financing of certain capital works from revenue, it is likely to increase to about Rs. 4,89,000.

(d) Government are at present engaged in a detailed review of the finances of the port with a view to effecting economies in expenditure. If trade conditions remain normal, the port should be able to meet out of its revenues all expenditure except interest charges on capital. The trade of the port must, however, increase considerably before it is able to pay these interest charges.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: What is the amount of the interest charges on this?

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

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Are Government examining the value of this particular port from the strategic point of view also?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: That is a relevant consideration.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: May I point out, Sir, that I asked about the condition of finances of the port of Vizagapatam, and the Honourable Member says "Except for the interest charges, it is so much." He is bound to have this information, and if he does not have it, it is rather wrong of him.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Chair has no information whether they have any information or not.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: Is it not up to you, Sir, to see that all questions should be answered properly?

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member need not ask the Chair any questions.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Have Government decided to hand over the administration of this port to the Provincial Government?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: No.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: May I ask, Sir, as regards the way in which these questions are answered, that you should direct the Government to answer questions that are put to them?

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member knows very well that the Chair has got no such function at all. If the Honourable Member finds that an answer is not satisfactory, it is up to him to find out any remedy he can. The Chair has no authority in the matter.

Mr. M. Thirumala Rao: In view of the top-heavy nature of the administration of this port, have Government considered any scheme of retrenchment to bring down the charges?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: I have said that Government are at present engaged in a detailed review of the finances of the port with a view to effecting economies in expenditure.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Will they keep this consideration in mind also, that is, retrenching the number of useless officers and offices at the top, when they carry on this particular review?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: I cannot accept the Honourable Member's statement that there are useless officers at the top.

STAFF EMPLOYED IN TRAIN CONTROL OFFICES AT HOWRAH AND SEALDAH.

525. *Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Communications be pleased to state:

- (i) the different staffs employed in Train Control Offices at Howrah and Sealdah and their strength;
- (ii) the duties and responsibilities of each category of staff in each of the two offices; and
- (iii) the scale of pay of each category of staff, both old and new?

(b) In the case of categories having the same and similar duties and responsibilities on both Railways, are the staff placed on same footing as regards their scale of pay? If not, was there any special reason which necessitated the introduction of different scales of pay for same category

of staff having same and similar duties and responsibilities on the two State-managed Railways? If so, what is the reason for this differentiation?

(c) Is it a fact that the volume of work on the Eastern Bengal Railway is larger than that on the East Indian Railway?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: (a) (i) and (iii). I am placing on the table a statement giving the information required.

(ii) This will need the preparation of a special pamphlet which I do not think can be justified.

(b) There are differences in the scales of pay which have been determined by each Administration with regard to the conditions obtaining on their respective systems.

(c) It is impracticable to make a comparison of the volume of work as this would necessitate a detailed analysis of the various factors which affect the normal as well as the peak conditions of work obtaining in the two offices.

Statement showing staff employed in Train Control Offices at Howrah and Sealdah, their strength and the scales of pay of each category of staff, both old and new.

HOWRAH.

| Designation of staff employed. | Strength. | Scale of pay. |
|--|-----------|---|
| Chief Controller . | 1 | Rs. 430—20—530 (old E. I.). Rs. 400—20—500 (revised 1928). Rs. 350 (revised 1934). |
| Dy. Group Controllers . | 3 | Rs. 355—20—475 (old E. I.). Rs. 310—10—350 (revised 1928). Rs. 260 (revised 1934). |
| Section Controllers, Grade I . | 12 | Rs. 300—10—400 (old E. I.). Rs. 200—10—300 (revised 1928). Rs. 160 (revised 1934). |
| Section Controllers, Grade II . | 3 | Rs. 85—10—155 (old E. I.). Rs. 85—10—145 (revised 1928). Rs. 140 (revised 1934). |
| Clerks . | 3 | Rs. 50—5—70 (old E. I.). Rs. 55—3—70 (revised 1928). Rs. 30—3—5—60 (revised 1934). |
| SEALDAH. | | |
| District Train Controller, Grade I . | 1 | Rs. 400—20—500 (old scale). Rs. 400 (new scale). |
| District Train Controllers, Grade II . | 2 | Rs. 300—10—300 (old scale). Rs. 350 (new scale). |
| Section Train Controllers . | 18 | Rs. 130—10—170 (old scale)— (i) Rs. 160 (new scale). (ii) Rs. 140. (iii) Rs. 100—10/2—120. |
| Telephone clerks . | 4 | Rs. 30—4—70 (old scale). Rs. 30—3—45—5—60 (new scale). |

Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad: Is it not a fact that the East Indian Railway always shows a profit and the Eastern Bengal Railway always shows a loss?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: I submit that that question does not arise out of the answer I have given.

Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad: It does arise: when they want to give special concession they say that the East Indian Railway can afford it and the Eastern Bengal Railway cannot.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member can draw his own inferences.

Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad: The object of the question is not that I should know, but that the public should know.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member can bring that out.

LEVY OF HOUSE-TAX ON RAILWAY QUARTERS.

526. *Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad: Will the Honourable the Railway Member please state whether the railway quarters situated in Railway premises are required to be charged house-tax levied by local authorities? If so, why?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: This matter is regulated by the provisions of section 135 of the Indian Railways Act, 1890 and of section 154 of the Government of India Act, 1935, to which the attention of the Honourable Member is very earnestly invited.

PURCHASE OF ANY RAILWAY BY GOVERNMENT.

527. *Mr. C. N. Muthuranga Mudaliar: Will the Honourable Member for Railways please state whether Government have under consideration proposals for the purchase of any Railways in India in the near future; and, if so, what these Railways are and on what terms?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: I invite the attention of the Honourable Member to the information I gave on this subject in paragraph 18 of my recent budget speech. He will find further details in the memoranda submitted by the Railway Board to the Standing Finance Committee, which are reproduced on pages 1 and 2 of the Proceedings of the Standing Finance Committee for Railways, dated the 10th December, 1938, Volume XV—No. 3, a copy of which has been furnished to him.

Mr. C. N. Muthuranga Mudaliar: May I know whether the Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway and the South Indian Railway will be taken over by the State as soon as their contracts terminate?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: I am unable to make a forecast.

Mr. K. Santhanam: May I know whether Government will consult the Standing Finance Committee for Railways before they decide to renew any contract?

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

Mr. C. N. Muthuranga Mudaliar: May I know whether the South Indian Railway has been continuously working at a loss?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: I refer the Honourable Member to the statements which have been made available to him recently.

OPERATION OF ROAD MOTOR SERVICES BY THE MADRAS AND SOUTHERN MAHRATTA RAILWAY.

528. *Mr. C. N. Muthuranga Mudaliar: Will the Honourable Member for Railways please state :

- (a) whether Government have under consideration any proposal from the Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway asking to be permitted to participate in road motor services; or whether they are independent of any request from the Railway Administration considering this matter;
- (b) if so, the reasons why this proposal is being considered;
- (c) whether any decision has been reached, and if so, what it is; and
- (d) the areas where the railway-motor service will operate?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: (a) to (c). The attention of the Honourable Member is invited to the proceedings of the meeting of the Standing Finance Committee for Railways, held on the 10th December, 1938, a copy of which is in the Library of the House.

(d) Throughout the Madras Presidency. The first services will probably operate in the Nellore and Chittoor Districts.

Mr. K. Santhanam: May I know whether the Railway Board consulted the Provincial Government of Madras as to the manner in which this railway should take part in the road service?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: So far as I am aware, no such consultation was made.

Mr. K. Santhanam: May I know whether it will not prejudice any understanding between the Provincial Government and the railways regarding rates and fare policy if they allow the companies to run motor services without the approval of the Provincial Government?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: In view of the very wide powers which will be exercised by the Local Governments under the new Motor Vehicles Bill, I do not share the Honourable Member's apprehension.

Mr. T. S. Avinashlingam Chettiar: May I know whether the Railway Board has laid down any lines of policy within which alone these motor transport services can be run by railway companies?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: I do not know what the Honourable Member means by laying down policy. He will remember, I dare say, that it was one of the recommendations of the Railway Enquiry Committee that railway administrations should extend their activities to the roads.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: May I know whether Government have gone into the matter to see how much money should be invested by the company in these services?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: I think I gave the Assembly an estimate: my estimate was one lakh.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Have the requisite licenses been obtained from the local boards?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: I am afraid I cannot answer that without notice.

Mr. C. N. Muthuranga Mudaliar: May I know whether where the local boards are taking up the running of these transport services by road, the Government will issue instructions that these companies should not compete with these local boards?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: The question of competition will be looked after by the Provincial Government.

COST OF FITTING FANS IN INTERMEDIATE AND THIRD CLASS CARRIAGES ON RAILWAYS.

529. ***Mr. C. N. Muthuranga Mudaliar:** Will the Honourable Member for Railways please state :

- (a) whether Government have enquired or propose to enquire into the cost of fitting intermediate and third class carriages on Railways (i) under their management and (ii) company management, with electric fans;
- (b) the cost of working these fans over the several Railway systems during (i) all the year round and (ii) during only the hottest part of the year;
- (c) the cost of fitting fans in carriages only which are meant for long distances; and
- (d) whether in respect of part (c) Government propose to consider the question of making the passengers contribute towards the additional cost involved?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: (a) The Honourable Member is referred to the answer given in this House to starred question No. 374 asked by Mr. Mohan Lal Saksena on the 15th September, 1936.

(b) and (c). The Honourable Member is referred to the answer to starred question No. 1089 asked in this House by Mr. Satyamurti on the 16th September, 1938.

(d) The Honourable Member is referred to the answer to part (c) of starred question No. 1569 asked in this House by Mr. Satyamurti on the 29th November, 1938.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Are we to understand then that Government do not propose to make any experiments at all in regard to the introduction of electric fans and to also find out the cost of such an experiment?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: I cannot see that any question of experiment arises. They either are installed or are not.

Mr. K. Santhanam: Why can't Government make the experiment in the same way as they are doing with air-conditioned carriages?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: That is a suggestion which I am considering.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Have Government got accurate information in regard to the cost of the introduction of these electric fans if they decide to instal them?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: I have on several occasions given estimates of what the cost will be.

Mr. O. N. Muthuranga Mudaliar: Are Government aware that these facilities are now given in the Mysore State Railways?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: That I have heard.

PROVISION OF CYCLES TO VILLAGE POSTMEN.

530. ***Mr. C. N. Muthuranga Mudaliar:** Will the Honourable Member for Communications please state :

- (a) whether Government are aware that in South India most villages are reached by the postman only twice or thrice during a week;
- (b) whether they are aware that there is great demand for the quickening of this service in the interior of the country;
- (c) whether they are aware that the postman concerned is not able to reach more villages or effect more frequent deliveries of the post, because he does his work on foot and has to trudge many miles a day; and
- (d) whether Government are prepared to consider the desirability of equipping the postman who serves villages with a cycle so as to enable him to increase the number of his visits?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: (a) and (c). Yes.

(b) I am prepared to accept the Honourable Member's statement on the point.

(d) Due to the absence in rural areas of suitable roads which could be used throughout the year, Government do not consider it practicable to provide village postmen with bicycles for delivery work.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Ochettiari: May I know, Sir, whether Government will consider the advisability of supplying cycles where the roads are suitable for their use throughout the year?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: Government are not aware that in such localities there are any inconveniences to the public.

Mr. K. Santhanam: May I know, Sir, whether the supply of cycles to postmen will not relieve them of a good deal of drudgery and facilitate their work wherever possible?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: No, Sir.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Is it not a fact, Sir, that several complaints have been made that these village postmen and runners do not go to the villages allotted to them at regular times, because, they don't wish to take all the trouble and there is no one to examine or see whether they have gone to those villages or not?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: Such complaints have not been brought to my notice.

Mr. M. Thirumala Rao: Have the Government got any definite policy in regard to opening post offices in rural areas every year?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: There is a question later which deals with it.

TAKING OVER BY GOVERNMENT OF THE TELEPHONE SYSTEM IN MADRAS.

531. ***Mr. C. N. Muthuranga Mudaliar:** Will the Honourable Member for Communications please state whether Government have reached any decision on the question of the acquisition of the telephone lines now operated by the Madras Telephone Company, and if so, what it is?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: No, Sir. The question is under the consideration of Government.

Mr. C. N. Muthuranga Mudaliar: May I know, Sir, for how long will the matter be under consideration and when will they come to a decision?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: I am afraid I can give no forecast.

Mr. Sri Prakasa: Have the Madras Telephone Company the same rules regarding the supply of telephones as operate in the rest of the country under the Honourable Member's Department?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: I submit that does not arise out of the answer I have given.

ENQUIRY INTO THE CAUSES OF FREQUENT ACCIDENTS ON THE EAST INDIAN RAILWAY.

532. ***Sardar Mangal Singh:** Will the Honourable the Railway Member please state:

(a) whether Government contemplate appointing a Committee consisting of officials and non-officials to enquire into the causes of frequent accidents on the East Indian Railway; and

(b) whether Government have considered the proposal of running a pilot engine before every passenger train?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: (a) No. I would refer the Honourable Member to my speech on the adjournment motion in this House on the 3rd February, 1939.

(b) I would refer the Honourable Member to the reply given to **Manjana Zafar Ali Khan's** supplementary question arising out of **Seth Govind Das'** short notice question of the 23rd August, 1938.

Mr. Mohan Lal Saksena: When do Government expect to come to a decision with regard to the appointment of this Committee?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: Very shortly, Sir, I hope.

BAN AGAINST THE CONGRESS COMMITTEES OPENING ACCOUNTS WITH THE POST OFFICES IN THE UNITED PROVINCES.

533. *Pandit Sri Krishna Dutta Paliwal: Will the Honourable Member for Communications be pleased to state :

- (a) if there is a ban against the Congress Committees' opening accounts with the local post offices in the United Provinces;
- (b) if it is a fact that the Postmaster General, Lucknow, (United Provinces), did not allow the President of the Kiraoli Congress Committee, District Agra, to open accounts in the local post office; and
- (c) the reason or reasons for this disallowance?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: (a) There is no ban against Congress Committees as such.

(b) Yes.

(c) Because the account did not come within the purview of rule 42 of Post Office Savings Bank Rules.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Are we to understand that any of the office bearers of the Congress Committees can open a Savings Bank account in a post office?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: As individuals they can open Savings Bank accounts, certainly.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Is it not permissible for a Congress Committee as such to open a Savings Bank account?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: No, Sir. Perhaps it may clarify matters if I read the rule in question.

"The following special conditions govern the opening of 'Public Accounts' and their transactions :

- (a) Public accounts may be opened by Secretaries, Treasurers, Managers or other responsible office bearers of the funds of any dispensary, church or other religious institution, school, orphanage, asylum, or library or any other funds of a properly constituted association for the encouragement of thrift and for the mutual benefit of its members. Race, racquet, billiard, mess and similar funds, the objects of which are of a private or personal nature, cannot be allowed 'public accounts'."

PROVISION OF POSTAL FACILITIES IN RURAL AREAS.

534. *Pandit Sri Krishna Dutta Paliwal: Will the Honourable Member for Communications be pleased to state:

- (a) the number of the rural post offices opened in the last four years, year by year;
- (b) whether the Government have got any scheme to provide post office facilities to the rural areas in the coming year; and
- (c) the number of post offices intended to be opened in each Province during the next year?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: (a) The figures for the last three years only are available. They are 290 in 1935-36, 650 in 1936-37 and 1,236 in 1937-38.

(b) and (c). The number of post offices to be opened in rural areas in any year is not fixed in advance. As I have already stated in reply to part (c) of Mr. Mohan Lal Saksena's starred question No. 299 in this House on the 10th February, 1939, the policy of the Department is generally to provide postal facilities in rural areas where they are considered justified.

INSTITUTION OF AN ENQUIRY INTO EVERY MAJOR ACCIDENT ON RAILWAYS.

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

- (a) whether the Central Advisory Board for Railways has recommended that Government should institute a public enquiry in every major accident on the Railways involving losses of life and property;
- (b) whether Government have considered the recommendation; and
- (c) if so, with what effect?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: (a) Yes.

(b) and (c). The attention of the Honourable Member is drawn to the Summary of the Proceedings of the Central Advisory Council for Railways held at New Delhi on the 26th February, 1938, a copy of which is in the Library of the House.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: I want to know, Sir, if Government have accepted that recommendation?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: Not so far.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Have they finished consideration of that recommendation?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: No, Sir.

MANUFACTURE OF EMBOSSED ENVELOPES BY A GANG OF MEN.

536. *Sardar Mangal Singh: Will the Honourable Member for Communications please state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that a gang of men has been found to have been carrying on the manufacture of embossed envelopes for a considerable time;

- (b) whether any loss has been caused to the revenues of the Department and, if so, what its estimate is; and
- (c) what steps have been taken to prevent a recurrence of similar offence in future?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: (a) Two persons were arrested last September on suspicion of being concerned in a conspiracy to manufacture and sell counterfeit embossed envelopes. The case is still under police investigation.

(b) It is not possible yet to estimate the loss, if any.

(c) There are standing instructions to the postal staff to guard against the use of counterfeit stamps and envelopes and further instructions enjoining stricter vigilance were issued in November last.

COMPLAINTS AGAINST THE ALL-INDIA RADIO.

537. *Mr. S. Satyamurti (on behalf of Mr. Manu Subedar): (a) Will the Honourable the Communications Member please state whether Government have received complaints or representations that the All-India Radio Department is giving preference to, favouring, or encouraging the sale of the radios of the make of Messrs. Phillips?

(b) Is it the policy of Government to discriminate between dealers and manufacturers of one kind of machine with another? If not, have instructions been given by Government that all forms of preference or special advocacy should be dropped?

(c) With regard to the permission given to Messrs. Phillips for the publication of a brochure on "school broadcasts", in Bombay what was the exact position? Was the permission sought by them? Why was it not extended to other manufacturers?

(d) How did it come about that an official publication giving an account of a scheme of school broadcasts was put forward not by the All-India Radio Department, but by a private firm?

(e) Have Government taken any steps to rebut the presumption and complaint arising out of such permission that the All-India Radio wish to give preference or prominence to the Phillips radio?

(f) Are Government prepared to instruct the Controller of Broadcasting to meet groups of dealers in several important centres in India at the time of his next visit to these centres in order to elicit any complaints of preference, or undue publicity to one firm and in order to give them a reassurance in this matter?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: (a) No.

(b) No. Government do not consider it necessary to issue any instructions of the nature suggested by the Honourable Member.

(c) The permission was to publish three school broadcast talks which had been given over the microphone, at the request of Messrs. Phillips. Other manufacturers did not ask for similar permission.

(d) The Honourable Member is under a misapprehension. The All-India Radio issued an official publication giving a programme of school broadcasts.

(e) and (f). Do not arise.

Mr. S. Satyamurti: I take it, with reference to the answer to clause (b) of the question, that Government do not propose to issue instructions, because it is not the policy of Government to discriminate between dealers and manufacturers of one kind of machine and another?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: No, Sir, it is the policy of Government that there should be no discrimination.

Mr. Mohan Lal Saksena: Am I to understand, Sir, that if any other dealers had asked for permission, such permission would have been granted to them?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: Yes, Sir.

CERTAIN STAFF IN THE CIVIL AVIATION DEPARTMENT AND QUALIFIED AIR PILOTS IN INDIA.

538. *Mr. S. Satyamurti (on behalf of Mr. Manu Subedar): (a) Will the Honourable the Communications Member please state the personnel in the Civil Aviation Department that was carrying a salary of more than Rs. 200 per month, on the 1st of April, 1937, 1st of April, 1938, and the latest date for which this information is available? How many Indians and how many non-Indians were there in such posts?

(b) What was the total number of civil aviation crafts registered in India on the dates indicated in part (a), respectively?

(c) What steps have Government taken to increase the number of qualified air pilots in this country?

(d) What was the total number of such pilots holding "A" certificate and "B" certificate, respectively, on the dates mentioned in part (a)?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: (a), (b) and (d). Three statements giving the required information are laid on the table.

(c) The Honourable Member is referred to the reply given to parts (a), (b) and (d) of Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar's starred question No. 1345 on the 21st November, 1938.

Statement showing the number of personnel (Indians and non-Indians) in the Civil Aviation Directorate who were or are in receipt of a salary of more than Rs. 200 per mensem on the 1st April, 1937, 1st April, 1938, and 16th February, 1939.

| Date. | Indians. | Non-Indians (Europeans). | Total. |
|-------------------------------|----------|-----------------------------|--------|
| 1st April, 1937 | 36 | 16 | 52 |
| 1st April, 1938 | 40 | 13 | 53 |
| 16th February, 1939 | 44 | 15 | 59 |

(Latest date for which information is available).

Statement showing the number of Aircraft holding current Indian Certificates of Registration.

| Date. | No. |
|-------------------|-----|
| 31-3-37 | 129 |
| 31-3-38 | 145 |
| 16-2-39 | 156 |

Statement showing the number of Pilots holding current 'A' and 'B' Licences on the dates mentioned.

| Date. | Total number current. | |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----|
| | 'A' | 'B' |
| 31-3-37 | 229 | 57 |
| 31-3-38 | 223 | 70 |
| 31-1-39 | 247 | 86 |

Mr. S. Satyamurti: What is the proportion of Indians to non-Indians?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: On the 1st April, 1937, there were 36 Indians and 16 Europeans; on the 1st April, 1938, there were 40 Indians and 13 non-Indians; and on the 16th February, 1939, there were 44 Indians and 15 Europeans.

NON-PUBLICATION OF QUESTIONS PUT IN THE LEGISLATURE RELATING TO BROADCASTING IN THE INDIAN LISTENER.

539. *Mr. S. Satyamurti (on behalf of Mr. Manu Subedar): (a) Will the Honourable the Communications Member please state how many questions and answers given during the calendar year 1938 in this House and in the Council of State with regard to radios, were reproduced in the *Indian Listener* and what percentage they constituted of the total number of questions and answers put?

(b) Was the debate on the resolution relating to All-India Radio in this House reproduced either as a whole or as a summary?

(c) Have Government given instructions not to print questions put in the Legislature, which may be of interest to the listener?

(d) What arrangements do Government propose to make in order to give reasonable publicity to the views, as expressed in questions, of Honourable Members in the Legislature through this official publication?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: (a) None. The second part does not arise.

(b) and (c). No, Sir.

(d) None.

Mr. S. Satyamurti: Is it because they thought that readers of the *Indian Listener* were not likely to be interested in the proceedings of this House, that they decided not to publish the proceedings of this House with regard to radios?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: No, but because they believed that there were other vehicles of information which would be more expeditious.

TAKING OVER BY GOVERNMENT OF PRIVATE TELEPHONE SYSTEMS.

540. *Mr. K. Santhanam: Will the Honourable Member for Communications please state:

(a) the number of private telephone companies operating in India;

(b) the total number of their telephone connections;

- (c) the total number of connections of the telephone system operated by the Postal Department of the Government of India; and
- (d) whether any policy has been decided upon regarding the taking over of the private telephone systems under State management?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: (a) Three.

(b) 46,806 on 31st March, 1938.

(c) 30,348 on 31st March, 1938.

(d) I would refer the Honourable Member to the reply I gave to his starred question No. 1196 on the 10th November last. The matter is still under consideration.

TAKING OVER BY GOVERNMENT OF THE BENGAL TELEPHONE COMPANY.

541. *Mr. K. Santhanam: Will the Honourable Member for Communications please state:

- (a) whether Mr. Rooney, the Manager of the Bengal Telephone Company, came to Delhi and discussed with the officials of the Government of India the question of the acquisition by the State of the privately managed telephone systems in this country;
- (b) what is the number of telephone connections supplied by the above company;
- (c) when the licence of this company expires; and
- (d) what is the amount payable to the company for taking over the business of the company on the expiry of the licence?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: (a) Mr. Rooney came to Delhi and saw some of the officers of Government. I am not prepared to disclose the subject of discussions.

(b) 19,469 on the 31st March, 1938.

(c) I would refer the Honourable Member to the reply I gave to Mr. Manu Subedar's starred question No. 434 on 15th February, 1939.

(d) I would refer the Honourable Member to clause 8 (c) of the license, dated the 29th July, 1910, granted to the Bengal Telephone Corporation, of which a copy is in the Library of the House.

Mr. K. Santhanam: May I know what is the period of notice required for terminating the contract?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: Twelve months.

Mr. K. Santhanam: What is the earliest date on which notice could be given?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: I should say 1st January, 1942.

Mr. K. Santhanam: May I know if this House will be given an opportunity to consider the matter before a final decision is come to on the subject?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: No. I could give no such undertaking.

PROJECT FOR CONSTRUCTION OF A BRIDGE OVER THE BRAHMAPUTRA AT
PANDUGHAT RAILWAY STATION.

542. *Maulvi Abdur Rasheed Chaudhury: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Communications please state the stage at which the project of constructing a bridge over the Brahmaputra at Pandughat Railway Station is at present?

(b) Has the project been finally decided upon?

(c) If so, what kind of bridge has been decided and whether there will be provision for wheeled traffic on it?

(d) When will the construction be commenced and when will it be finished?

(e) What will be the total cost of this bridge?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: (a) and (b). The project is under the consideration of the Government of India.

(c) The first part does not arise, and the reply to the second part is that this matter is under consideration with the Assam Government.

(d) and (e). If the project is ultimately sanctioned, the construction will probably take three years. The cost is estimated at about Rs. 70 lakhs for a purely railway bridge. With the addition of a roadway this figure would be enhanced.

Maulvi Abdur Rasheed Chaudhury: What is the length and breadth of the bridge?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: I could not possibly give the dimensions of the bridge.

Mr. Kuladhar Chaliha: May I know if any contribution has been asked for from the Assam Government by the railway authorities for the bridge?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: If it is made a road bridge as well as a railway bridge, naturally the Provincial Government will have to contribute towards the cost.

Mr. Kuladhar Chaliha: May I know if any contribution was asked for for the Jumna bridge at Delhi when it was built, or for any other bridge at any other place?

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

NEGOTIATIONS FOR RENEWAL OF AGREEMENT WITH THE TATAS AND THE INDIAN NATIONAL AIRWAYS.

543. *Maulvi Abdur Rasheed Chaudhury: Will the Honourable Member for Communications please state:

- (a) the stage at which the negotiations for renewal of agreement with Tata Sons and the Indian National Airways are at present; and
- (b) which of the Mail Services of the Empire Air Mail scheme will be worked out by these companies and for what remuneration?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: (a) and (b). The Honourable Member is referred to the reply given in the Council of State on the 15th September, 1938, to question No. 121 by the Honourable Raja Yuveraj Dutta Singh.

ASSISTANT STATION MASTERS AND LOCO. FOREMEN, ETC., QUALIFYING FROM THE WALTON TRAINING SCHOOL.

544. *Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Railways please state how many men there are on the list of those who have qualified in course T-5 (Senior Assistant Station Masters) and T-13 (Loco. Foremen, Loco. Inspectors) from the Walton Training School?

(b) Is it a fact that the number of qualified men is about 100 and 28, respectively?

(c) Will the Honourable Member please state how many vacancies are expected to occur every year in each category, and in how many years these men are going to be absorbed?

(d) Are Government aware of the facts that certain men who had qualified in T-13 and T-5 at Government expense have since refused to work as such as Assistant Station Masters and F. O.'s and Loco. Inspectors? If so, why were they not consulted before being sent to school to avoid waste of Railway money?

(e) Are Government aware that the average cost of training a person for Course T-5 and T-13 is Rs. 400 and 600 respectively?

(f) Will the Honourable Member please let the House know why extra expenditure is being incurred on training more men in these courses when the number of men already qualified will take about ten years to be absorbed?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: (a)—(c). I am seeing if the information can be obtained without undue labour and will place a further reply on the table of the House in due course.

(d) A driver who had passed Course T-13 was promoted to officiate as Loco. Inspector, but was allowed to revert to his previous post for financial reasons. Drivers are now being consulted before being nominated for this Course.

Two guards who had passed Course T-5 were unwilling to work as Assistant Station Masters as their emoluments would have been appreciably reduced. One of these had been nominated for this course in accordance

with the general policy of training men and the other because his further advancement as a guard would have been restricted if he did not pass the Course.

(e) The approximate cost of training per individual is Rs. 260 for Course T-5 and Rs. 240 for Course T-13.

(f) It is necessary to have a ready supply of trained men available to take over working posts at short notice and to deal with abnormal conditions arising from time to time.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: Is it the policy of Government to take these people into the Walton Training School even though there are so many surplus candidates?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: I have said that it is necessary to have a surplus supply in cases of emergency.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: When there are so many on the list already, is it necessary to admit more people into the school every year?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: I submit it is a matter of opinion whether the supply is excessive or not.

ADVERTISEMENT FOR POSTS OF FOREMEN FOR THE NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY MECHANICAL WORKSHOPS, MOGHALPURA.

545. ***Mr. Lalchand Navalrai:** (a) Will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to state whether the posts of about a dozen Foremen for the Mechanical Workshops, North Western Railway, Moghalpura, were advertised in England about three months back?

(b) Was a similar advertisement published in India later for the same posts?

(c) What is the object in advertising the posts in India and inviting applications up to the 1st February, 1939, when an interview in response to the applications in England was held in England in about the third week of December 1938?

(d) Will Government state the number of men already in Upper Sub-ordinate Mechanical Engineering Service in North Western Railway Workshops, and who have already been or are still working against the very posts advertised and are intended to be replaced by the new incumbents proposed to be recruited in response to the advertisements referred to in parts (a) and (b), above?

(e) Will Government state the objections on the grounds of which they have not filled up these posts by promotions of the men who have already worked against the posts advertised?

(f) Are Government prepared to effect the above recruitment through the Public Service Commission?

(g) Are Government prepared to consider the cases of men referred to in part (d) above for these posts? If not, why not?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: (a) Yes.

(b) Yes, but the number of posts advertised for was ten.

(c) The object is to ascertain whether candidates possessing the requisite qualifications can be obtained in India on the same scales of pay as are being offered to candidates from the United Kingdom. Those recommended for appointment by the High Commissioner will be considered only for posts for which recruitment in India has not been found practicable.

(d) Four. The other posts are being created to meet requirements.

(e) and (g). Those already in service are not considered as having the necessary qualifications for these posts.

(f) Does not arise in view of the action taken above.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: Will there be any distinction between those who are recommended from England and those that are taken up here?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: I am afraid I do not understand what difference or distinction is in the mind of the Honourable Member.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: Distinction between European and Indian, that is what I am asking. Those that are taken or suggested from England may be Europeans and those that are taken here may be Indians. Will there be any racial distinction in taking them, or will the Europeans be given any preference?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: If the Honourable Member asks me whether there will be any discrimination on account of race, I say no.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: What is the object in advertising in England also without knowing that Indians will not be available here?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: From the information that was at our disposal it appeared highly unlikely that suitable material would be available in India.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: Were any Indian candidates available?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: I think I mentioned some time ago that we advertised two years ago and got no satisfactory response.

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

EXAMINATION OF TICKETS AND LUGGAGE OF WOMEN PASSENGERS ON THE MADRAS AND SOUTHERN MAHRATTA RAILWAY.

546. *Shrimati K. Radha Bai Subbarayan: Will the Honourable Member for Railways state:

(a) if it is a fact that male railway officials are prohibited from entering compartments reserved for women for the purpose of examining tickets and luggage;

(b) if this rule applies only to trains in motion or also to trains when they are standing at a station;

- (c) if different railways have different rules in this behalf, and if so, what are the rules;
- (d) if he is aware that on the Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway, male officials enter women's compartments for this purpose, causing harassment and annoyance;
- (e) the number of women ticket collectors employed by the Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway for the purpose of examining and checking tickets and luggage of women passengers; and
- (f) the rules of the Madras and Southern Mahratta Railways regarding the examination of luggage and tickets of women passengers *en route*?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: (a) Yes.

(b) To trains in motion, and while standing at stations.

(c) Rules are practically identical, except that the Great Indian Peninsula Railway permit entry on vestibuled trains.

(d) An instance has recently occurred and suitable action is being taken by the Railway Administration against the offender. There has not been any previous complaint of this kind.

(e) Women ticket collectors are not employed on the Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway.

(f) The rule reads:

"Travelling Ticket Examiners must not enter reserved compartments or carriages or compartments reserved for women. The checking of tickets in such cases must be done from the platform only".

This applies equally to examination of luggage.

Shrimati K. Radha Bai Subbarayan: May I know, Sir, why women ticket collectors are not employed by the M. and S. M. Railway?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: Apparently, in the opinion of the Administration, women are not suitable for that particular work.

Shrimati K. Radha Bai Subbarayan: Did Government enquire why they came to that conclusion? May I ask for an assurance from Government whether they will ask the Railway Board to examine the whole question of the safety and security of women passengers on the Railways at the earliest possible opportunity?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: I do not think there is any necessity for such an inquiry. The safety of women travelling on the railways is always a pre-occupation of the railway administrations.

Mr. Mohan Lal Saksena: Is it not a fact that women ticket collectors are employed on the E. I. Ry.?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: I could not give a categorical answer on that point.

Mr. Mohan Lal Saksena: Will the Honourable Member take it from me that they are so employed. As there have been no complaints about their work, there is no reason why they should not be employed on other railways?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: If the Honourable Member says that they are so employed, I have no desire to contradict him.

Shrimati K. Radha Bai Subbarayan: May I ask, Sir, if Government have any definite rules with regard to this matter of employing women ticket examiners on the railways?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: As regards the existence of a definite rule, I must require notice.

Mr. Sri Prakasa: Has the Honourable Member's attention been drawn to the fact that despite the rule he has referred to, men ticket collectors have entered women's compartments, much to the annoyance of the women passengers.

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: In reply to part (d) of the question, I admitted that an isolated case had occurred.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Has it been brought to the notice of the Honourable Member that, on the M. and S. M. Railway, male ticket collectors always enter women's compartments, when the trains stop at various stations?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: I know only one instance of such an occurrence.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: May I tell him that I have myself seen this on several occasions.

Mr. Sri Prakasa: May I know what action has been taken by Government in that isolated case?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: I would refer the Honourable Member to one of his colleagues who will no doubt show him the entire correspondence in this matter.

Shrimati K. Radha Bai Subbarayan: The Honourable Member called it an isolated case. Is it isolated with regard to the information of Government?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: Isolated in the sense that it is the only case of which notice has been given to me.

MAINTENANCE OF TELEPHONE LINES IN CALCUTTA BY THE GOVERNMENT TELEGRAPH DEPARTMENT.

547. ***Mr. K. Santhanam:** Will the Honourable Member for Communications please state:

- (a) whether the Government Telegraph Department maintains its own telephone line in the Calcutta area;

- (b) the number of its connections; and
- (c) whether the telephone connections of the Howrah station and other premises of the East Indian and other Railways in Calcutta belong to the Government branch, or the Bengal Telephone Company?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: (a) Yes.

(b) 882 on the 15th December, 1938.

(c) The East Indian and the Bengal Nagpur Railways have taken most of their telephone connections from the Bengal Telephone Corporation's system while the Eastern Bengal Railway has taken most of its connections from the Government telephone system.

Mr. K. Santhanam: May I know why the railways should be allowed to have connections from a private company when Government themselves have got their own agency there?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: That is a matter of tradition. These railway companies have always had connection with the Bengal Telephone Company.

Mr. K. Santhanam: In view of the saving that would result, may I suggest that it is high time that this practice is altered?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: No, Sir, Government do not wish to go into competition with the Telephone Company.

Mr. K. Santhanam: Are not Government anxious to increase their own telephone revenues?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: Yes, Sir, but we are not anxious to damage the business of people who are our own licencees.

EXPULSION OF CERTAIN INDIANS FROM FRANCE.

548. ***Mr. K. Santhanam:** Will the Secretary for External Affairs please state :

- (a) whether the attention of Government has been drawn to the reply of Mr. R. A. Butler in the House of Commons on the 6th February, 1939, that he had received reports from the British Ambassador in Paris concerning the expulsion of three Indian subjects during the past six months;
- (b) whether the Government of India have received these replies and if so, when they received them; and
- (c) whether copies of the replies will be placed on the table of the Assembly?

Sir Aubrey Metcalfe: (a) Yes.

(b) and (c). The Government of India have only received the gist of these reports which cannot, therefore, be laid on the table. The information now received is that the expulsion orders were definite and precluded the return of the persons concerned to France until the orders are rescinded.

ENQUIRY FROM INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS OF THE POSTAL UNION BY THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF POSTS AND TELEGRAPHS.

549. *Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani (on behalf of Maulana Zafar Ali Khan): (a) Will the Honourable Member in charge of Communications state whether it is a fact that a few months ago the Director General of Posts and Telegraphs called for a list of members of the Directorate Provincial Branch of the Indian Posts and Telegraphs Union?

(b) Is it a fact that the list of members furnished by the General Secretary of the Indian Posts and Telegraphs Union in response thereto was verified by the Director General, Posts and Telegraphs, by an enquiry from each member individually?

(c) Will Government also kindly state whether under the rules of Recognition of Service Associations, the Director General of Posts and Telegraphs is authorised to make enquiries about Union matters from individual members?

(d) If the reply to part (c) be in the affirmative, will Government kindly quote the relevant paragraph of the rules in question?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: (a) and (b). Yes.

(c) There is nothing in the rules to prohibit such an inquiry.

(d) Does not arise.

CUT IN THE COMPENSATORY ALLOWANCES OF THE OFFICIALS OF THE POSTS AND TELEGRAPHS DEPARTMENT.

550. *Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani (on behalf of Maulana Zafar Ali Khan): (a) Will the Honourable Member for Communications please state whether it is a fact that compensatory allowances granted to the officials of the Posts and Telegraphs Department have been cut to such an extent as has given rise to acute hardship?

(b) Is it a fact that compensatory allowances were fixed several years ago after a very careful consideration by Government?

(c) If the replies to the preceding parts be in the affirmative, will Government kindly state the reasons for such drastic cut at the present moment?

(d) Do Government propose to reconsider the decision relating to compensatory allowances?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: (a) They have been revised after careful consideration but I am not aware that they have led to any acute hardship.

(b) Yes.

(c) Because circumstances have changed since these compensatory allowances were fixed several years ago.

(d) No.

Prof. N. G. Banga: When were they revised and what is the approximate saving that Government expect to derive?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: If the Honourable Member wants details of these matters, I must ask for notice.

ENQUIRY INTO THE ADEQUACY OR OTHERWISE OF THE STAFF OF THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF POSTS AND TELEGRAPHS.

551. *Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani (on behalf of Maulana Zafar Ali Khan): (a) Will the Honourable Member for Communications please state whether it is a fact that Mr. Ghulam Muhammad, now Finance Officer, Communications, was asked in 1937 to investigate into the adequacy or otherwise of the staff of the office of the Director General of Posts and Telegraphs?

(b) If the reply to part (a) be in the affirmative, will Government kindly state whether it was within the scope of his investigation to recommend the formation of a separate cadre of Accountants in the Directorate as well as in Circles?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: (a) Yes.

(b) The question of the formation of a separate cadre of accountants in the Directorate as well as in the Circles was the subject of a separate enquiry which was conducted by Mr. Ghulam Muhammed at the same time as the enquiry referred to in part (a) of the question.

EXPENDITURE IN THE PERSIAN GULF AND MUSCAT.

552. *Mr. Manu Subedar: (a) Will the Secretary for External Affairs please state the outcome of the negotiations with His Majesty's Government regarding the burden to the Indian exchequer in the Persian Gulf and Muscat?

(b) Has a representation been made to His Majesty's Government in respect of charges payable to Nepal?

(c) Are there any financial obligations incurred by Indian revenues through the new treaty between Muscat on the one side and the United Kingdom and India on the other?

Sir Aubrey Metcalfe: (a) and (b). The Honourable Member's attention is invited to the reply given to question No. 436 asked by Mr. C. N. Muthuranga Mudaliar in the present Session.

(c) No.

FORMATION OF ADVISORY COMMITTEES FOR BROADCASTING STATIONS.

553. *Mr. Manu Subedar: (a) Will the Honourable the Communications Member please state in connection with how many broadcasting stations there are Advisory Committees now formed?

(b) In each case where there is an Advisory Committee how many meetings of such Committees have been held since the 1st April, 1938?

(c) Are any fees paid to the members of the Advisory Committee?

(d) At what interval is there a re-appointment?

(e) Have Government got any principle or policy in making selections for these Committees?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: (a) The attention of the Honourable Member is invited to the reply given by me on the 10th February, 1939, to part (b) of Mr. Mohan Lal Saksena's starred question No. 297.

(b) No meeting of the Advisory Council at Delhi has been held since 1st April, 1938.

(c) No.

(d) No term of office was fixed for the non-official members of the Advisory Council at Delhi, but Government are now considering the question of reconstituting the Council on the basis of a more restricted membership. As regards the Advisory Committees, at the other centres, it is proposed to lay down that two members should retire every two years and make room for two others.

(e) Yes. The aim of Government has been to secure as far as possible suitable representation of education, Indian classical music, Indian light music, European music and the European side of the programmes generally, and a woman member to advise on matters of special interest to women and children.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: With regard to clause (d), may I know why no meeting of the Advisory Council has been called since 1st April, 1938?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: Presumably there was no work to put before them.

VALIDITY OF TICKETS BETWEEN BENARES CANTONMENT AND ALLAHABAD BOTH BY THE EAST INDIAN AND BENGAL AND NORTH WESTERN RAILWAYS.

554. *Mr. Sri Prakasa: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Railways state if it is a fact that railway tickets to and from stations between Barabanki and Cawnpore are valid by both the East Indian and the Bengal and North Western Railways regardless of the railway from which it was purchased?

(b) How has this system worked? Has there been any loss to any railway in consequence?

(c) Is it a fact that a similar system does not operate between Allahabad and Benares Cantonment, though both the stations are touched by both these railways?

(d) Have the fares by both the railways between Allahabad and Benares Cantonment been equalised?

(e) Are Government prepared to consider the desirability of recommending to the railways concerned to have a similar system between Benares Cantonment and Allahabad also?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: (a) Yes. The metre gauge link between Cawnpore and Burhwal is owned by the East Indian Railway, the Bengal and North Western Railway merely exercising running powers.

(b) No representations have been received that the system has not worked satisfactorily. The answer to the second part of the question is in the negative.

(c) Yes; but, in this case, the metre gauge link belongs to the Bengal and North Western Railway.

(d) Yes.

(e) I will convey the Honourable Member's suggestion to the Railway Administrations concerned.

FITTING OF A TELEPHONE IN THE RAILWAY ENQUIRY OFFICE AT BENARES CANTONMENT.

555. *Mr. Sri Prakasa: Will the Honourable Member for Railways state :

- (a) the number of enquiry offices the East Indian Railway has at its stations ;
- (b) the number that are fitted with telephones ;
- (c) the principle according to which some offices are and some are not fitted with telephones ;
- (d) if the Benares Cantonment enquiry office is not so fitted ; and
- (e) if Government are prepared to recommend to the East Indian Railway to fit the Benares Cantonment enquiry office also with a telephone ?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: (a) and (b). I would refer the Honourable Member to the information given in paragraph 3 on page 105 of the East Indian Railway Time Table & Guide, October 1938, a copy of which is in the Library of the House.

(c) Telephones are fitted where considered necessary.

(d) Benares Cantonment is not so fitted.

(e) I will convey the Honourable Member's suggestion to the East Indian Railway Administration.

INCONVENIENCES AT THE AJODHYA RAILWAY STATION.

556. *Mr. Sri Prakasa: Will the Honourable Member for Railways state :

- (a) if it is a fact that at the Ajodhya railway station on the East Indian Railway, the platform is much higher than the main railway station itself ;
- (b) if there is one narrow flight of steps leading from the platform to the station hall below ;
- (c) if Ajodhya is not a very busy place of pilgrimage visited by tens of thousands of pilgrims every year ;
- (d) if Government are aware that passengers are greatly inconvenienced by the arrangements ; and
- (e) if Government are considering the desirability of recommending to the Railway Administration to improve the railway station there ?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: (a), (b) and (d). Government have no information.

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

(e) The matter is within the discretion of the Railway Administration, and it can be brought to the notice of the General Manager, East Indian Railway, either direct or through the Local Advisory Committee. I will, however, send him a copy of this question and answer.

TREATY WITH MUSCAT.

556A. *Pandit Sri Krishna Dutta Paliwal: Will the Foreign Secretary be pleased to state:

- (a) if it is a fact that a new treaty of friendship, commerce, and navigation has been signed between His Majesty in respect of the United Kingdom and India and the Sultan of Muscat replacing the treaty of 1890; and
- (b) the terms of the treaty as regards India?

Sir Aubrey Metcalfe: (a) Yes—presumably the Honourable Member refers to the old Treaty of 1891.

(b) The Treaty has only recently been concluded and it is regretted that no spare copies are available at present. A copy will be laid on the table of the House in due course.

TREATY WITH MUSCAT.

556B. *Pandit Sri Krishna Dutta Paliwal: Will the Foreign Secretary be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government of India were consulted as regards the treaty with Muscat;
- (b) the commercial implications of this treaty to India;
- (c) whether Government intend to lay a copy of the treaty on the table; or
- (d) whether it is a secret treaty?

Sir Aubrey Metcalfe: (a) Yes.

(b) The Honourable Member is invited to study the Treaty, which will shortly be laid on the table of the House.

(c) Yes.

(d) No.

 THE INSURANCE (AMENDMENT) BILL.

PRESENTATION OF THE REPORT OF THE SELECT COMMITTEE.

The Honourable Sir Nripendra Sircar (Law Member): Sir, I present
 12 Noon. the report of the Select Committee on the Bill to amend the Insurance Act, 1938.

 THE RAILWAY BUDGET—LIST OF DEMANDS.

SECOND STAGE.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The House will now discuss the Demands for Grants. The Chair understands that the Parties have given a list of the cut motions which they wish to move. Has that been communicated to the Member of the Government?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart (Member for Railways and Communications): I have had a list.

Mr. S. Satyamurti (Madras City: Non-Muhammadan Urban): May I request the Honourable Member then to move that Demand, so that I may move my cut motion?

DEMAND NO. 1.—RAILWAY BOARD.

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: Sir, I move:

“That a sum not exceeding Rs. 9,40,000 be granted to the Governor General in Council to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1940, in respect of the ‘Railway Board’.”

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

“That a sum not exceeding Rs. 9,40,000 be granted to the Governor General in Council to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1940, in respect of the ‘Railway Board’.”

Long-range Policy regarding Railway Finance.

Mr. S. Satyamurti: Sir, I beg to move:

“That the demand under the head ‘Railway Board’ be reduced by Rs. 100”—(To censure the Government for their failure to evolve and follow a long-range policy regarding Railway finance).

Sir, I take it that my Honourable friend has full notice of the purposes of this motion. Perhaps this is the last Railway Budget which may come before this House, if the claims of the “astrologers” ever bear fruition but it is possible that Federation may not come and the Federal Railway Authority may not come. However, according to the sponsors of those schemes, if and when the Federal Railway Authority begins to function, the Railway Budget will not be before this House, and, therefore, this is the ultimate or penultimate opportunity for this House to lay down its policy and ask the Government to accept the same. Sir, we are often told with regard to the Railways in this country that they are a commercial concern, but the joke of the matter is that the Railways want to have the best of both the worlds. When it comes to the question of expenditure and the impatience of audit and other control, they are a commercial Department, but when it comes to the question of salaries and privileges of their servants they are all Government servants and they must get all the concessions of Government service.

Now, this question of railway finance has a long history. The idea of separation started with the Acworth Committee, who wanted that there should be a separation from general finances of railway finances, but the Acworth Committee made one definite recommendation—which I think ought to be remembered by this House in view of later developments. That Committee said that “the Railway organisation should not become an *imperium in imperio*.” They said that “the Indian Government owns the Railways and, therefore, the Indian Government must control them”. But later, theories have developed and the Wedgwood Committee have coolly said that we should become debenture-holders in Indian Railways, and Indian Railways ought to become an *imperium in imperio* and they should raise their own loans in the open market; and there is also the anomalous position that my Honourable friend for Railways becomes Finance Member for Railways, but he has no control over the salaries of his own servants.

Sir, the other day he told us that the Home Member ought to be consulted with regard to that matter. Nor has he any responsibility for the general finances of the country. I want the House to consider that half the revenues of this country are in the hands of a gentleman who has no responsibility for the general finances of this country. The object of this separation, to which this House agreed in 1924, was that the Railways should have the benefit of a separate Budget altogether, but Sir Basil Blackett in that speech made it perfectly clear that the Railways had the benefit of Government credit and, in so far as they are not company-managed, they do not pay income-tax and very low rates and taxes to municipal authorities. Constantly—Honourable Members will find in speeches, in reports and elsewhere—a comparison is made between the Railways of this country and the Railways of other countries, and they pat themselves on their back and say that they are doing as well, if not better than other Railways, but I want to remind Honourable Members that the State Railways pay no income-tax whatever and they pay very low rates and taxes, and this as also the low labour wage bill in this country must be taken into consideration. Sir Basil Blackett in that speech also said that there is a sound reason for asking the Railways to pay something over and above their expenses and their interest charges, and the whole idea of the separation was that the Railways should make a regular yearly contribution towards the general revenues. That has not been done, except for the first few years when they paid forty-eight crores of rupees, and the first object of this convention was that there should be a stabilized railway revenue. I do not think that has been secured. "The Railways ought to be given an incentive to economise and to work on commercial lines"—They have not economised. They constantly say so. The other objectives—"and the provision of the right conditions for maintenance of continuity in Railway policy and enabling rates and fares to be reduced the moment the opportunity arises and facilities to be increased without cost to the taxpayer." I am quoting this from the speech of Sir Basil Blackett. Sir, all these objects have been unfulfilled. Moreover, this Assembly laid down, when it agreed to the convention that after three years the convention ought to be re-examined. It was never re-examined, and, till the 1934-35 accounts came before the Public Accounts Committee, the matter was completely lost sight of; and the convention laid down very deliberately that:

"This Assembly recommends to the Governor General in Council that in order to relieve the general budget from the violent fluctuations caused by the incorporation therein of the railway estimates, and to enable railways to carry out a continuous railway policy based on the necessity of making a definite return to general revenues, on the money expended by the State on railways:

- (1) The railway finances shall be separated from the general finances of the country and the general revenues shall receive a definite annual contribution from railways which shall be the first charge on the net receipts of railways."

Now, the facts of the case are that, for the first forty years after the Railways were opened in this country, the taxpayer paid to the Railways to the tune of fifty-eight crores of rupees. From 1898 to 1924 no doubt the Railways paid one hundred and three crores as profit, but since the separation they have paid only forty-two crores and they owe us now on the whole sixty-two crores and a half,—thirty-one and a half crores to the Depreciation Fund and thirty-one crores as arrears of contribution to general revenues. Therefore, the conditions which were sought to be created by

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the convention have not been fulfilled, and, taking the *pluses* and *minuses* together, I claim that the general taxpayer is entitled to get now one hundred and twenty crores and a half as arrears of contribution to the Depreciation Fund and to general revenues and as compensation for the earlier losses they have paid on the whole one hundred and forty-five crores ever since their beginning, but making allowances for the contributions since the calculation has been made, the *pluses* and *minuses* practically cancel themselves out.

Now, what is the policy of the Government with regard to railway finance? They now have come to this position that the Railways should be congratulated if they are able to pay their interest charges and if they do not ask the taxpayer to bear the interest charges. Whereas, the opinions of all relevant authorities—the Acworth Committee, the Assembly when it passed the Convention, Sir Basil Blackett, the then Finance Member, Sir P. R. Rau, the then Financial Commissioner for Railways, the Auditor General, the Public Accounts Committee and the Government of India—was that railways cannot be considered solvent, unless they pay over and above their depreciation and interest charges at least five crores of revenues a year either as a contribution to the general revenues of the country, or towards amortization of capital, or towards reduction of freights and fares and more amenities to passengers. None of these things has been done and the railways today, thanks to the Wedgwood Committee and thanks to the Government of India Act, 1935, are looking forward to the time when they will escape from the control of this Legislature and become an *imperium in imperio*. They can snap their fingers at us and say: “We cannot pay anything to the general exchequer. We do not want your money. If we want money, we will raise it in the open market”. That is a dangerous precipice towards which the railways are now heading. Sir, the Honourable Member for Railways was congratulated by almost every speaker on the “surplus budget”. I deny it. It is not a surplus budget but a bankrupt’s budget. The Railway Board have refused to pay their dues. They do not pay their income-tax or adequate rates and taxes, and they have repudiated their other liabilities. In this way, they have produced a surplus budget of two crores odd. I do not think any Member of this House, who has studied the railway finance, will accept the position that it is a surplus budget. Then, Sir, they constantly claim that their freight rates are very small as compared with the freights of other countries. I have not got the time to compare the rates, but I do put it to the House that there is an ample case for freights being reduced in this country in order to develop our internal trade and our industry and commerce, especially when we have got to compete with foreign goods from other countries, where they are subsidised in various forms by the Governments of those countries.

We, in the Public Accounts Committee, recommended in 1936 that an expert should be brought out in order to produce schemes which will give at least three crores of extra revenue to the railways, apart from any trade improvement or normal improvement in railway earnings. But a Committee came out, and they came to the conclusion that the railways should no longer be looked upon as a source of contribution to the general revenues, and they should be left merely to make both ends meet. The Wedgwood Committee only made one constructive recommendation that a sum in

the neighbourhood of five crores should be provided from revenue for amortization of capital. This they considered to be a wise and prudent course and they also wanted a reserve of 50 crores. Before I say a word expressing my ideas on this reserve fund, I want to draw the attention of the House to this volume in which the Railway Board have summarised their conclusions on the Wedgwood Committee's report at page 17. When they come to the crucial recommendation about finance, they come to this very inspiring conclusion :

"The railway reserve funds at the end of 1937-38 amounted, however, to only 19½ crores, and the need of the railway contribution to general revenues in present circumstances precludes any decision or action in regard to these matters or to amortization of capital at present, beyond the existing basis of the annual contribution to Depreciation Fund."

The Railway Board are bankrupt not only in money, but also in ideas. A Committee comes and makes specific recommendations and the Railway Board come to this very inspiring conclusion that they can do nothing because they have got no money, and they will not pronounce anything one way or the other, on this recommendation till things improve. It seems to me that they have not faced this problem; and, in the Railway Board report which has been circulated to all the Honourable Members, the working expenditure has not been reduced at all, it has remained practically at the same figure.

If Honourable Members will turn to page 80, they will find that the working expenses in 1934-35 were 51.6 crores and in 1937-38 also about the same and the net traffic receipts have been reduced from six per cent to 4.2 per cent. It seems to me that the Railway Board cannot congratulate themselves on having produced any economies, although the Chief Commissioner and the Railway Member constantly say that their search for economy is "relentless", so relentless that there is no result whatever. There is another matter to which I should like to draw the attention of the House that some railways have been continuously yielding losses to the Government. There was a loss of 26½ crores on the strategic railways of the North Western Railway; there was a loss of 17½ crores in the case of the Bengal Nagpur Railway; there was a loss of six crores in the case of the Assam Bengal Railway; the Eastern Bengal Railway met with a loss of 5½ crores and the Great Indian Peninsula Railway incurred a loss of 1½ crores. I want to know whether the Railway Board follow any line of discrimination with regard to the railways which are paying and those which are not paying. I only suggest to the Railway Board that they ought not to content themselves by hoping that they will somehow pay interest charges. They must accept and carry out certain definite recommendations of this House made from time to time. They must economise in works expenditure. I see that they are constructing wagons and carriages and are buying locomotives. The Wedgwood Committee said that wagons, carriages and locomotives in this country are not being used to the maximum limit, and they were not in favour of further manufacture until their use was maximised. Yet, the Railway Board have done very little in this direction, and they go on manufacturing fresh wagons and carriages. Then, they must have a graded cut on salaries above a certain limit. They must also revise their policy of stores purchase and also their policy or non-policy of the manufacture of locomotives. All these must be radically changed, with a view to improving the railway finance. They must amalgamate the railways in this country. I do not see why the

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Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway and the South Indian Railway, the Eastern Bengal and the Bengal Nagpur Railway, and the Bombay, Baroda and Central India and the Great Indian Peninsula Railways cannot be amalgamated. They must acquire them from the companies and manage them themselves. They do not produce any measures of economy whatever, and they take no steps whatever in that direction.

But, coming back to the problem of finance with which I am mainly concerned, I want to ask the Government what is their policy with regard to the contribution to the Depreciation Fund. I am of opinion that it ought to be meant only for renewals and replacements. Is there any other country in the world in which railways pay so much towards the Depreciation Fund? You are only building up a reserve fund and calling it a Depreciation Fund. I am for only renewals and replacements from the Depreciation Fund. If you want anything more, bring up your facts and figures and tell us what your assets and liabilities thereon are. But, if you continue to operate upon the Depreciation Fund, as you are doing at present, no amount of reserve can ever meet it. I think we must have a definite policy towards the Depreciation Fund. This reserve fund of 30 crores or 50 crores is merely to postpone the payments to the general revenues, and to allow the Railway Board to be a kind of authority to itself. Moreover, I want to know the principle on which you want to build up these reserve funds. If you build up a huge reserve to cover lean years, as you call it, and in order to encourage the railways to pay interest charges, you at once put down all incentive to economy and retrenchment and the railways become a self-sufficient concern. They have got a reserve from which they can pay the interest charges, and, therefore, they need not make any progress whatever in the retrenchment of their services, or in other ways of increasing revenue and reducing expenditure.

Then, as regards the amortization, I want the House to notice one thing. The reduction of the capital of railways will not relieve the general taxpayer. India has got a national debt of 1,200 crores, of which 800 crores are attributable to the railways. Unless the capital is redeemed by payment, the mere reduction of capital will transfer the charges to the general budget. I am not in favour of that. I suggest, on the other hand, that the railways ought to pay five crores every year, and this sum ought to be funded for redemption of debts or to be used for the reduction of interest on further loans raised in this country. But, merely to repudiate debts as it has been suggested or "reduce your capital", is not going to be of any financial benefit to the country. Moreover, you must reduce your rates for goods and provide more amenities to passengers. I suggest that Government should evolve and follow a long-range financial policy; but, unfortunately, Sir, there is no brain behind the Railway Board. I am saying that with all respect and in no spirit of anger or resentment against any Member of the Railway Board. What happens is this. I believe the Railway Board is a commercial concern, but it gets rid of its most competent Financial Advisor, Sir Raghavendra Rau, the moment he is able to stand up to the Agents and advise them. They have some wretched Government rule fixing tenure for some posts, and out he goes. My Honourable friend, Mr. Staig, comes. I have great respect for him. He begins to learn and I think he is learning now at our expense and by the time he has finished learning, he will be sent to some other place. Have you heard of any Board of Directors who dismiss their Financial Adviser, the moment he becomes competent and

yet the Railway Board goes on doing that? There is no calm consideration. I have seen four or five Railway Members on the Treasury Benches, during these four or five years I have been in the House. Who is the man who takes a long-range view and who studies the problem? Has anything been done? You do not think about it at all. I submit, Sir, the question of relation between railway and general finance ought to be settled once and for all. I think, Sir, this railway separation convention has done no service whatever, and it has grossly failed and must go, and must be replaced by another and sounder financial convention. As for the future, as far as I can see, it is very dark. With the Federal Railway Authority in the offing, which will have its own policy and which will be able to raise its own loans, if the Wedgwood Committee recommendations are to be accepted, it seems to me that, unless this House puts its foot down and compels the Government to adopt a long-range financial policy in regard to, firstly, the depreciation fund, secondly, the liability of interest charges being borne by them from their revenues year after year, thirdly, their being compelled to pay five crores a year towards the general revenues for any one of the three purposes I mentioned. And, last, but not least, unless we compel them to carry out a relentless policy of retrenchment, unless all these means are adopted, we shall be handing over to the Federal Railway Authority a bankrupt railway concern on which we have lost a lot of money and from which we shall get nothing. I merely want to finish on this note, that this question of railway corruption must also be dealt with. It is "bilateral" but it means loss to the railways and they must, therefore, deal with it.

This motion is intended to bring to the notice of the House and to the notice of the Government their want of thought in dealing with these problems, their want of policy and to express the desire of the whole House that Government must now accept and lay down a long-range financial policy, with regard to the future of railway finances. We have been wandering about in the dark with this burden on our back and it is time the railways were made to realise that they must pay their way and also pay something definite and every year to the general revenues. Sir, I move.

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

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

Mr. K. Santhanam (Tanjore *cum* Trichiripoly: Non-Muhammadan Rural): The Honourable the Mover of this motion has pointed out that the convention on which this budget is based has broken down. The object of that convention was based on the necessity of making a definite return to the general revenues on the money expended by the State on the railways. For the last seven years, this contribution has not been paid and neither in the speech of the Honourable the Railway Member nor in that of his lieutenant, in the other House, do I see even an expression of regret that railways have not been able to pay their due contribution to the general revenues. Both of them have more or less assumed that it is not an obligation at all, that it is more or less a matter of charity to pay this general contribution. But, Sir, this was the corner stone of the convention and the convention has broken down. Therefore, it logically follows that that convention is to be replaced by another convention, which will stand

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the test of time and which will not break down just as the 1924 convention has broken down. Now, Sir, before we can define the scope of the next convention, it is necessary to know why this convention has broken down and what is the present state of railway finances. If we determine these two factors, it is possible to frame a better and wiser convention. It may be that depression came down upon us and, therefore, the convention could not be worked. It is no doubt partly true. I want to point out that in spite of the depression this convention could have been successfully worked out, but for the faulty policy of the Railway Board. Soon after the convention the Railway Board thought that they were like the younger sons of a Zamindar after partition and they embarked upon a rake's progress. I find from the Railway Board's Report for 1937-38, page 26 :

"... the real expenditure during these 14 years is 171 crores since stores balances have been reduced by 12 crores in the period."

As a matter of fact it is only in the first eight years that capital increased by practically the entire amount. One hundred and seventy crores were spent between 1924-25 and 1931-32 and as a result of that interest charges have permanently increased by four or five crores. But for this enormous increase and the large expenditure on the capital programme, the Railways would have withstood the depression and, in spite of the depression, would have paid the usual one per cent. fixed for contribution to the general revenues. It is almost the incredible extravagance of the Railway Board which has brought about the break down of the convention. Therefore, the first element of the new convention should be that besides the Railway Board which will assume another name as the Statutory Railway Authority, there shall be a more effective check on expenditure, and without such a check it is quite likely that another period of extravagance might take place. From that aspect, I view with alarm this depreciation fund. It will be 30 crores at the end of this year. Of course, it has been built up by very careful scrutiny of the railway expenditure in recent years. I know, as a Member of the Railway Standing Finance Committee, that during the last three years capital and replacement expenditure has been cut down to the bone and in some instances I am afraid it has been even unwisely cut down. In some railways like the Bengal and North Western Railway the rolling stock are becoming so over-aged that they will have to embark upon a programme of heavy purchase of rolling stock with the consequent increase in prices and the other consequences. In other respects also the expenditure on track renewals and other replacements are not based on any long range policy. One year they spend eight crores, another year, they spend six crores, and yet in a third they spend ten crores and so on. As a result thereof, they have to employ superfluous staff because, if you require a certain amount of staff on track renewals for three crores, obviously you will have to increase the staff, if you increase the track renewals to six crores next year. If you have got a plan for the next ten years, you can spend regularly four or five crores on track renewals. Therefore, in every railway, you find that superfluous staff is maintained unnecessarily. I will give the House one instance. In the Assam Bengal Railway, for instance, there is a Superintending Engineer and an Assistant Engineer for construction. There has been no construction work for the last three years in the Assam Bengal Railway, but they have to keep their staff in the expectation that they will have to start work. Therefore, in this way, every railway has got sinecure posts and we have to pay for all

of them. I suggest that this increase in depreciation fund which will be over thirty crores at the end of 1939-40 is a matter which is to be viewed with alarm. If it is allowed to swell further, then it seems to me that the present economy campaign will stop and another set of officials will start another rake's progress and, therefore, there will be a permanent circle, as it were, of extravagance and economy which does no good to the railways.

The second point I should like to deal with is the present state of railway finances. No doubt the Honourable Member for Railways has said that we have got two crores surplus but out of that over a crore of rupees represents interest from the depreciation fund and, certainly, it is not real surplus. In fact, if the depreciation fund had been necessary and had been spent this money would not have been there. It is only as a sort of past savings that you have got this 125 lakhs. Another point to be noticed is that the railways have not been paying any interest on the amount due to the general revenues. If they had paid this interest of course this surplus would have vanished, and, therefore, it is not a satisfactory state of affairs. Then, we have to remember that the depression which started in 1931-32 spent itself out and slowly a recovery took place and 1937-38 was the peak year of recovery. We are again on the downward grade. From the figures of the last three years you find the expenses increasing and the revenue falling and the percentage of interest receipts falling also in the railways. Therefore, we are again in another downward grade. Probably this may not be so steep as the depression between 1929 and 1932, but, at the same time, we are in a period of depression and it is a matter of concern and alarm that the working expenses, though we are in a depression period, are not decreasing but are actually increasing. Again, Sir, it is no use saying that the railways, as a whole, had a surplus of two crores. As my Honourable Deputy Leader has pointed out, there are two big railways which have been under deficit budgets for all these 14 or 15 years, from 1924-25 to 1938-39; and the budget for 1939-40 also may be expected to be a deficit budget. It should be the policy of the Railway Board to see that every railway administration should be a commercial concern. We have already lost more than 17 crores on the Bengal Nagpur Railway. The company-management of State Railways is a curious management. If they lose, the State alone loses; if there is a gain the gain goes partly to them. Out of these losses not one pie will be met from the capital contributed by the companies; everything will have to be met from the capital contributed by the State. Therefore, the company-management system is a vicious thing. If there is a loss the companies are guaranteed; they get at least 3½ per cent. interest, and so they do not lose. It is only the Indian people who will lose. If there is a gain they will get a share of the profits. Is this a reasonable system? If there is a loss they must also bear it out of their own capital. But every company is guaranteed a certain percentage on its capital. Not only that; when the companies are handed over these losses will not be taken into account and the entire par value will have to be paid; if there are profits you will have to pay an increased share. For instance, in the South Bihar Railway we had to pay a little more than the nominal value of the shares because such were the terms of the contract. In fact somehow or other these contracts have been made most disadvantageously for the people of India and the sooner they are cancelled and all the railways taken over the better will it be for the people of India.

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Again, Sir, the Railway Member has not recognised the chief cause of the present fall in earnings. Goods earnings have more or less come to the 1924-25 level, but passenger earnings have gone down by over six crores. This has become more or less a permanent state of affairs. Partly of course this is due to motor competition but I do not think that it is wholly responsible. It is because the railways have not recognised the lower purchasing power of the Indian masses and have not recast their rates according to that fact.

Sir, I have made some calculations from the 1937-38 report. For a thousand passengers in the Third Class there are 20 passengers in the Inter Class, six passengers in the Second Class and one in the First Class. As against that see the number of seats which the railways have provided. For a thousand seats in the Third Class they have provided a hundred seats for the Inter Class, 60 seats for the Second Class and 30 seats for the First Class. For a thousand passengers in the Third Class only one passenger goes by the First Class; while for a thousand seats in the Third Class there are 30 seats in the First Class. Of course if you calculate the traffic charges, maintenance, etc., this 30 will have to be multiplied by five or six. I think if you calculate it according to the maintenance charges, it takes as much as half the cost of maintaining third class coaches to maintain First and Second Class coaches but the revenue is only one-tenth. Is this an economic proposition? I think this matter should be scientifically studied and the Railway Member should be able to tell us how much loss he is incurring on the maintenance of First, Second and Inter Class carriages which has to be met by the fares which he collects from the poor third class passengers. If he thinks that these losses cannot be made up he had better abolish these classes and have only one class in railways. Nowadays, First class passengers travel by cars for short distances and it is only for long distances that they use these First class carriages, and, therefore, all short distance traffic has been destroyed. Sir, it is a mistake to think that the buses have taken away more than the private cars. The reduction in First class passengers is from ten lakhs in 1924-25 to five lakhs in 1937-38 while in the Second class it is from ten million to four million. The Inter class is practically the same. Therefore, Inter class traffic has not declined. The third class has declined by 2½ per cent. On the other hand I think the number of seats and the number of coaches have been increasing. Every year we have been building; in fact whenever a railway programme comes before the Standing Finance Committee, in order to enable us to sanction Third class carriages they put in a combined coach, First, Second and Third class.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member has only two minutes more.

Mr. K. Santhanam: I am finishing, Sir. Therefore, I say that the main principles of the Convention should be, that the contribution to the general revenues should come even before depreciation and should not be postponed or thought as an act of grace or charity but should be a first charge on the revenues. Secondly, every railway administration should be treated as an individual commercial concern. Not only should the whole thing not be combined together and made one business and all the losses pooled, but if a railway administration does not pay its way there should be a reduction

in salaries for that concern. In fact I do not see why the staff of a railway should not share in the prosperity and adversity of each railway. I do not even mind giving a bonus to the staff of those railways which yield profits; on the other hand there should be an automatic cut on railways which make losses. The administration should feel that they have to make it a paying concern, that they are a commercial concern and that the staff of a railway, like the Bengal Nagpur Railway which makes losses, should not automatically compare itself with the staff of the East Indian Railway and complain of less pay. In fact every railway servant should feel that unless he makes it paying he will suffer. So long as there is no connection of that kind between the losses of the railways and the losses to the staff, these continuing deficits on the Bengal Nagpur and the Assam Bengal Railways will continue.

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

Mr. K. Santhanam: I will finish in one sentence.

Lastly, Sir, all the excess over 30 crores of the depreciation fund should go towards reduction of capital, and I think an absolute limit of 30 crores should be put to the depreciation fund so that in future the railway administration may not embark on a rake's progress. Sir, I whole-heartedly support this motion.

Mr. T. Chapman-Mortimer (Bengal: European): Sir, my Honourable friend, who moved this motion, has asked this House to condemn Government for their failure to evolve and follow a long-range policy in regard to railway finance. As I listened to my Honourable friend, Mr. Satyamurti, I could not but reflect how right was that criticism of this budget which I saw in more than one newspaper, namely, that it was a colourless railway budget; in other words, that all the railways had done jolly well, because if they had not done well, we may take it as pretty certain that the budget would not have been colourless and would have been colourful. As I listened to my Honourable friend, as I say, I felt more strongly every moment how right this was. I did not hear from him one single real charge against the railway financial administration in recent years. He confined himself largely in the beginning and spoke about it very well—he explained how very wrong this separation agreement was and how unfairly it worked. We on these benches and also people in other parts of the House have condemned this railway convention before. But it does not seem to me a reason for condemning Government on this occasion.

In the first place, I would remind this House that when one of our Members spoke in September or October, 1937, on the motion for postponing railway debts, giving them a moratorium for four years, the Government spokesman, my Honourable friend, the Finance Member, indicated that he quite agreed that the time would come when the whole question of the separation agreement would have to be re-examined. In these circumstances, it does not seem to me that this is an occasion to condemn Government on that ground. Also I failed to find anything in the speech of my Honourable friend, the Mover of this motion, in which he really distinguished as to what he meant exactly by policy, especially a long range policy. It seems to me that one can analyse policy into a

[Mr. T. Chapman-Mortimer.]

number of different things: policy, pure and simple which would include such very general matters as the separation of railway from general finance—that is one thing. Another is the general attitude of Government towards railways as laid down under the Government of India Act; and there, I think, we come to the chief burden of my friend's charge. He spent a great deal of time in talking about what he called the creation of an *imperium in imperio*. He said a great many things which I found extraordinarily difficult to appreciate at all. In the first place, it indicated very clearly that either he had not understood what is proposed in the Government of India Act in regard to railways or, if he had understood it, that he was certainly not giving that interpretation on this occasion. (Interruption.) He complained that it had been taken out of the responsibility of this House and the responsibility of the Government. He said so very definitely: if he did not, I stand corrected, and I will withdraw: but he did say so—that we had created an *imperium in imperio*. Those were his words.

As I understand the Government of India Act, it is quite clearly laid down that the Government of India and the Legislature will continue to be, as they are now, responsible for the general policy of the railways. There is no possible argument about that; and yet I was very surprised to hear my Honourable friend, the Mover of this motion, giving a different interpretation. What the Act does say is that for the ordinary administration,—day to day routine and detail,—the railways will have created for their management a new railway authority. But that railway authority itself will be under the Government of India . . .

An Honourable Member: Will there be a budget debate?

Mr. T. Chapman-Mortimer: My Honourable friend, the Railway Member, will doubtless deal with that point when he rises to speak.

Then, it is said that we have proof of this—Mr. Satyamurti's interpretation—in the Wedgwood Committee's Report. My Honourable friend said that the Wedgwood Committee had recommended that the Government should simply be in the position of debenture holders and the railways would not be expected to do more than meet their interest charges. That is perfectly true; and if he had condemned the Wedgwood Report for saying that, I should have agreed with him; but when I seek what the Government have done about the Wedgwood Committee's report, I find that *they* have not done anything of the kind: they have not accepted this recommendation, and, I am perfectly certain my Honourable friend, the Finance Member, speaking for his Department, would not accept it: nor would Government as a whole. I feel sure, accept the position recommended by the Wedgwood Committee whereby the railways would cease to contribute anything in any circumstances to general revenues. In the first place, under the whole scheme of the Government of India Act, and under the Order in Council which gave effect to the recommendations of Sir Otto Niemeyer, it is clearly laid down that the provinces can only share in the income-tax in circumstances in which income-tax revenues *plus* railway contribution will equal an amount of more than 13 crores. If that is so, surely that is the policy of the Government and in so far as my Honourable friend is speaking of policy in that sense, it seems to me that it is extremely unfair and not correct to charge the Government with having failed in their duty. He also said that the railways were

being put in a privileged position in regard to such matters as non-payment of income-tax and payment of absurdly low amounts of local rates and taxes. We all know why that provision was made: it was made because if you submit the Federal Railway Authority to income-tax, then they would not be able to make their contribution under the ordinary scheme whereby they would contribute to Central Revenues: Yet that would be one of the means whereby the Government would control railway policy and railway finance. It seems to me, therefore, illogical to say that because a provision has been made which is going to enable the Government more effectively to control railway finance, they are doing something which is tantamount to an evasion of that responsibility. The mover further went on to argue a good deal from what Sir Basil Blackett had said in regard to railway contributions, and so on. As far as I know, the Government of India today adopt the same view as the Government of India of Sir Basil Blackett's time, namely, that the railways should contribute, as far as possible, to Central Revenues. We, therefore, come to this question of the separation convention.

I do not propose to take up the time of the House on this occasion by repeating what I said on behalf of the European Group in October, 1937. Suffice it to say that at that time when we agreed to the moratorium for which the Government had asked the sanction of this House, we made it perfectly clear that in doing so we reserved our right to criticise in the future this whole question of the revision of the separation agreement when it again came up before the House. The moratorium itself will come to an end next year, and it is clear, therefore, that the time is fast approaching when the Government and, later on, this House will have to consider this very question. Are we going to go on with the old arrangement of 1924, or are we going to consider and consent to a new arrangement which will operate more fairly from the railway point of view? We all know that under the working of the old scheme, in good years the railways were inevitably forced to spend rather more than they might have done if they had not realised that failure to spend in good years meant that they would still get nothing in bad years. It is, therefore, necessary that in any agreement which is to take the place of the old agreement, provision should be made to enable railways to spread their expenditure over a number of years, if that is the desirable thing to do; enable them also to make their contribution as far as possible in bad years as well as in good years. The exact nature of the scheme which will be necessary to give effect to such a policy is not one which I propose to raise at this stage. But, I would, Sir, say this, that I think we are all in agreement with what the Government say at page 17 of their statement showing the action taken on the recommendations of the Indian Railway Inquiry Committee's Report. When I say agreement, I mean, of course, general agreement,—the actual detail is not given here, and naturally this House would reserve its right to criticise that detail as and when the time comes,—but I think we all are in agreement that the railways, in addition to having an adequate depreciation fund, should also have an adequate reserve fund which would take the place of what would be called in company management an equalisation of dividend reserve. That is to say, in a bad year the railways will, we hope, in future still be able to contribute something to the Central Revenues by drawing on some reserve or other. If that is not possible, it is going to have a very serious effect, not merely on the Central Revenues, but also on the Provincial Revenues

Prof. N. G. Ranga (Guntur *cum* Nellore: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Oh, Oh.

Mr. T. Chapman-Mortimer: It is no good my friend saying Oh, Oh,—whether he thinks it is a fact or not, it does not matter . . .

Prof. N. G. Ranga: It is not.

Mr. S. Satyamurti: Only for the next two years . . .

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member has got only two minutes more, and he ought to be allowed to continue without interruptions.

Mr. T. Chapman-Mortimer: It was further argued by those who spoke in support of this motion that Government should be condemned because they had not provided that the railways should reduce their rates in certain circumstances and so encourage industry. The same Honourable Member who made that suggestion also said that the railways must be compelled to produce substantial contributions each year to the Central Revenues. Well, it seems to me, you cannot have your cake and eat it too. You cannot, on the one hand, ask the railways to reduce the rates, and then expect them to fork out year after year from the only certain revenue which cannot be increased beyond present levels without doing serious harm to the industries concerned, and presumably my friend does not desire to discourage some of the industries, however much he may want to encourage others. It was, however, suggested by my friend, Mr. Satyamurti, that the railways should be strongly condemned and that, therefore, the Government should be condemned because they had failed to carry out one of the recommendations of the Wedgwood Committee,—the recommendation in question being the one in which it had been suggested that the wagon supply was already more than adequate and no further wagons need be constructed. I would remind my friend that it was only about 15 or 18 months ago that there was a serious shortage of wagons,—so serious that Government had very great difficulty in fulfilling the needs of the ordinary requirements of trade.

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

Mr. T. Chapman-Mortimer: Sir, I oppose the motion.

Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad (United Provinces Southern Divisions: Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I followed the speech of the Honourable Member with some interest, and I agree with him in some of the points he made, but certainly I do not agree with the wordings of the motion: I first take the points on which I do not entirely agree with the speaker. I had always been in favour of State-management,—I delivered a number of speeches from 1930 up to 1938 in favour of State-management, but as I pointed out in the course of my observations on the general discussion, the position has now changed. The State is not the same State as we

understood it then. In future, the administration will be in the hands of a company consisting of seven Directors, and no shareholders: I was reminded that there is no shareholder and the only shareholder will be the Governor General at his discretion, because it is he

The Honourable Sir James Grigg (Finance Member): He is a debenture holder, and not a shareholder.

Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad: He has the power to appoint Directors. Sir, the time has now arrived when we should cry halt to this policy and we should not acquire any more Railways until we have seen the working of this new railway authority

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Till we abolish it.

Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad: Then the second point I want to refer is the question of the convention of 1924. The Honourable the Mover pointed out, and I agree with him, that there is a provision in sub-clause (8) in that convention that this arrangement shall be subject to periodical revision, but it should be provisionally tried for at least three years. This is really a part of the Resolution. It is certainly open to any Honourable Member of this House to move a Resolution if they are not satisfied with the continuance of that convention. In fact, I myself thought that the time had not come to change that convention, and, therefore, I did not bring forward another motion to that effect. My friend, Mr. Satyamurti, can move either in this or in the next Session a Resolution asking the Government to substitute another convention for the convention of 1924, and, therefore, in this case, the blame does not rest entirely in the Government.

Mr. S. Satyamurti: Government must bring it up.

Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad: You and I can move a Resolution; nobody can stop us from doing it.

Then, as regards the other point raised regarding the contributions to be made by the Railways to general revenues. We are not badly treated. From the year 1858 till 1900, the Government of India paid out of the general revenues 51½ million pounds, the balance by which the income fell short of guaranteed profit. The Government however recovered 44·7 million pounds during the next 19 years, and, therefore, at the time they acquired the Railways, they still had to receive a sum of 5½ million pounds, that is about 7½ crores but we find that after the separation of Railway Finance the Railways had been paying something to the general revenues, and during these years they had paid 48½ crores to the general revenues which was more than the debt which was due by the Railways to the central revenues. In addition, they have paid the bill of the general revenues with reference to strategic lines to the tune of 32 crores. So, altogether, they had paid about 80 crores to the general revenues since 1924, and, therefore, we cannot say we are badly placed.

As regards non-payment, they do not say they are not going to pay the contribution; they acknowledge their obligation, and at page 3 of this explanatory memorandum, they have clearly shown that they have to

[Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad.]

pay 35.2 crores which they could not pay during the last few years. So the Railway authority are not going to wash their hands off this responsibility. They acknowledge their obligation and they agree to pay whatever is left over and I think they will honour these obligations imposed on them by the convention of 1924 till the convention is changed.

Now, with regard to the depreciation fund, this is a point which I have been raising year after year, and I laid very great stress in my speech on the general discussion that we are putting too much into the account of the depreciation fund. Following the example of other countries in this matter, you can take as much for renewals, replacements and other things as the necessities demand, but do not go on building up a depreciation fund for an unlimited time and to an unlimited amount. I think Government should seriously consider this matter, and my request to Government is that they should follow the practice of other countries of the world. You cannot say that all other countries are fools and we alone are wise people, and I think you will be able to save at least four crores every year if we change this practice of putting too much in the depreciation fund. All this amount will be practically available for general revenues and for the payment of all other obligations. I entirely endorse the point which was made by an Honourable Member that it is time that Government changed their policy of putting in huge sums in the depreciation fund.

Again, the question of amalgamation is also one which we ought to consider very carefully. As regards the question of State *versus* company management, I have already expressed my opinion, but as regards amalgamation of lines managed by the same authority the position is different, and I think there was a time when we suggested that the East Indian Railway and the Eastern Bengal Railway should be combined and that similar combinations should be made among other Railways. The Honourable Sir Muhammad Zafrullah Khan, when he was the Member for Railways, brought out some kind of tentative schemes and suggested various possibilities, but the Government had not come to any definite conclusion. This is a scheme which we ought to start now before the new Federal Railway Authority comes into existence. If we cannot do it, it will be made difficult for the Authority to take up this particular question. Mr. Santhanam raised the question about first class passengers. This is also a question which requires consideration. I said on one occasion that the railway company will gain if they tell first class passengers, please take first class fare from us and travel free in the third class. If they adopt this policy the railway will gain and the solution which was suggested—and I know that at one time it was seriously considered by the management of the Great Indian Peninsula Railway that instead of four classes there should be two classes, and those who want to travel first class can reserve the whole of the coupe and pay double second class fare. I think the point raised by Mr. Santhanam is a sound point and that must be considered. The point which I should like to emphasise very much is that the Government and the railway administration should put the whole system on a sound basis before handing it over to the new Railway Authority. This is a point with which I am quite confident that even the Railway Member would be in agreement, because, after all, if we could not do it, we cannot expect the new Railway Authority to be able to do it. So, we ought to settle definitely

these points before the new authority comes into existence. First, we should decide once for all what contribution the railways should and ought to make to the railway revenues. The second is, that we should settle definitely before handing over the railways to the new authority, whether there will be any reduction in debt. If there is a reduction of debt it really means a gift by the general taxpayer to the railway administration. This is a point in which we are vitally interested. Thirdly, we should consider the policy of the depreciation fund. Why not follow the practice of other countries? Why take the whole odium on yourself of starting a new policy in the matter, which does not exist anywhere else and sink four crores for nothing? Again, we ought to have equalisation fund. That is a thing with which nobody will disagree. It is a reasonable proposal and it was also recommended by the Wedgwood Committee—that 60 crores should be set aside for this equalisation fund. So, if we only pay back our obligation to the depreciation fund, that is to say, the 30 crores we have borrowed, then the equalisation fund 60 crores will be built up. Our obligations at present are that we pay the debt to the general revenues to the extent of 35.2 crores, and the debt to depreciation fund amounting to about 30 crores. After paying those debts the general revenue will have nothing to complain of. The depreciation fund will be changed into an equalisation fund which will be to its credit 61 crores.

The next point is the one relating to borrowing. The question of borrowing should not be left to the new authority; it should be the privilege of the Government of India alone who are really the owners of these railways. The Government of India alone should be authorised to borrow and not the new railway authority. Then, we ought to see that the railways are able to help industry and trade, because, after all, the object of these railways is not only to get more money, but also to help business. In this connection a question was raised about the reduction of rates and fares. But as this question will be raised substantially on one of the cut motions, I do not want to discuss it now in detail, but I can say this, that it does not always follow that increase income by diminishing the rates. The proposition and its reverse are not universally true. By diminishing the rates we sometimes increase the income; sometimes by diminishing the rates we diminish the income. Therefore, the question of raising or diminishing the rates is one that should be determined on the merit of each case and not as a general policy.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member has two minutes more.

Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad: I just remember my school days when, whenever the invigilator said, two minutes more I used to get nervous for the rest of the time.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member himself was a party to this arrangement.

Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad: Not to be reminded two minutes earlier. I would rather continue and be stopped abruptly in the middle of the sentence than being told, only two minutes more, and remain nervous for the rest of the time.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Chair said two minutes more in order to give the Honourable Member time to finish his sentence.

Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad: So, the important issue is the necessity of placing the finances of the railways on a sound basis with respect to the points which I have just mentioned. These are very important points and nobody can deny that the necessity exists of placing the finances of the railways on a really sound basis . . .

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

Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad: I resume my seat, but I may state that, unfortunately, I do not quite agree with the form in which the motion is put down although I agree with some of the points raised by the Mover.

Mr. B. Das (Orissa Division: Non-Muhammadan): I was rather a little pained when I heard my Honourable friend, Mr. Champan-Mortimer. He seems to have forgotten the warning which his Leader, Sir Leslie Hudson, gave on the floor of the House about the mismanagement of the Indian railway finances. My Honourable friend quoted from his speech of 1937. I could do the same and tell him that on the same occasion or on another occasion I reminded my Honourable friends of the European Group that the present muddle of the railway finances was due to the appeal of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to the Government in 1921 that they should have extravagant capital expenditure over which 150 crores were merrily spent after the Acworth Committee had reported and after the separation of Railway Finance from General Finance. An apology came when eight crores of that capital were written down on the plea of stabilisation of exchange at 1-6d. My Deputy Leader, Mr. Satyamurti, has done well to point out the lines on which the Government must investigate if they want to have a solvent railway concern. It is no use raking up the past. My Honourable friend, Sir Ziauddin Ahmad, was an ardent supporter of the Federal Railway Authority in London and also here, but today he has advocated a different policy. I find today that Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad and I are at one in our suspicion of the Federal Railway Authority.

Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad: I was always in favour of the Federal Railway Authority provided it is responsible to the Indian Legislature.

Mr. B. Das: Unfortunately, this does not find place in the report which was produced in London and which is incorporated in the Government of India Act. I am glad that two of the gentlemen (Sir Ziauddin and Sir Yamin Khan) who signed that report are now of opinion that we must compel the Government, if at all the Federal Railway Authority comes, to give the House supreme control over it and not only foot the bill when the Railways are incurring losses and that the Assembly must not pay quietly and blindly such losses without discussing the policy and the administration of the railways.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan (Agra Division: Non-Muhammadan-Rural): On a point of explanation. What I said was that the Government is not going to adopt the report of the Committee which met in London and that if they accept the unanimous recommendations of the committee, then it will be a different thing altogether.

Mr. B. Das: I leave the Federal Railway Authority at that! The criticism that we are levelling today is that the Railway Board and the Railway Department should mend their manners and reduce extravagant expenditure. Since the days of restoration of salary cuts, the warnings of the Railway Retrenchment Committee were forgotten, reduction of expenditure was not followed up and old extravagance again became the practice. Since the Government of India Act was passed, there has been a tendency on the part of the General Managers including the bosses of the Railway Board to run into extravagance, knowing fully well that the Legislature will have no control over them in future and somehow the money will be found. Then there was that spirit of opposition and hostility that they should not contribute anything to the general revenues, over which my Honourable friend, Mr. Chapman-Mortimer, was pleading so much, until Sir James Grigg's bludgeon came on the Railway Board and they had to show a little surplus.

I always raised this question in the Public Accounts Committee and I raise it again. In the Explanatory Memorandum, pages 40 to 41, where the profit and loss of the different railways are given, it is shown that some of the railways, particularly the Eastern Bengal Railway, the Assam Bengal Railway, the Bengal Nagpur Railway, the Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway and the South Indian Railway are all running at a loss for the last so many years. What special measures has the Financial Commissioner applied to these railways, so that their extravagance will stop? I will take the instance of the Bengal Nagpur Railway in which I frequently travel, unless I come to this part of the country. Somehow, I find the working expenses of that railway are going up. Is there no halt? If the receipts are not going up, why should there be an abnormal increase in the expenditure of that railway? Being company-managed railways, I know they are extravagant and they don't obey the behests of the Railway Board. The other day my friend, Pandit Nilakantha Das, pointed out that they do not carry out the accepted policy of the Railway Board as regards purchase of stores and they defy the Railway Board and the Government of India, because they are company-managed.

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. B. Das: Sir, before the recess I was discussing how expenditure on the company-managed Railways is mounting up and the Railway Board are incapable of exercising any control over the General Managers and as to how they can reduce expenditure on them. I cited the case of four Railways which are the most mismanaged Railways and which have done very little in spite of the criticism levelled at them on the floor of this House and in the Public Accounts Committees. Sir, I may point out that in the case of the railway administration that they almost agree with the criticism regarding financial control and accounting control that are levelled by the Members of the House or in the Public Accounts Committee. Unfortunately, there is something in the policy of administration which the House do not understand why the Railway Board cannot

[Mr. B. Das.]

apply a stricter control over the management of these inefficient Railways. Sir, I am sure that if the Financial Commissioner can compel the company-managed Railways—one or two or three which I have cited to purchase through the Indian Stores Department or the London Stores Department, and if they can regulate their purchases, then there will be lots of saving, but that has never been done. Probably, out of racial considerations or it may be other considerations which we do not know of, the company-managed Railways are permitted liberties which they should not be given. Sir, already reference has been made to the point and I think that if there is a co-ordinated policy regarding the manufacture of railway appliances and railway locomotives in India,—not on the lines as the Wedgwood Committee suggested but on lines suggested by the Raven Committee and others, there will be a saving and there will be more employment in this country. Probably then the Railways may not make adequate profits, but the indirect return to the Finance Member through the larger circulation of money and the larger employment in the country is a problem which the Railways have never tackled nor do they want to tackle it because their policy is to remove the Railways from the control of this Legislature. Sir, amalgamation is a problem which has been already referred to by my Honourable friend, Mr. Satyamurti, and that ought to be done. There will be a saving in the salaries of Agents and Deputy Agents, the different Commercial Managers, Traffic Managers, etc., but that will never be done as long as the railway bosses go on exploiting Indian resources and go on providing employment for unemployed Europeans at home, and that phase is a permanent feature on the company railways. Sir, it is true that my Honourable friend, Sir Thomas Stewart, will not think of Railways again after this Budget is over and he so thinks complacently that the budget is a surplus budget but he knows how that surplus has been secured: the low rate of interest is not due to any effort of himself or his subordinates, the members of the Railway Board; it is an accidental circumstance,—the flight of three hundred crores of rupees of gold from India has stabilised finance and has brought low rates of interest for which neither his colleague, Sir James Grigg, can take the credit nor in the least he himself or the Railway Board. Sir, what is it that we want? We want, not today only but for the last few years we have wanted it, that the Railways should have a definite policy, a policy by which this so-called national concern of India, these national assets, should be run on completely national lines and it should be run on sound financial and economic principles, and this House must lay down that policy by which the Railways are to be administered. A few minutes ago we heard the two gallant Knights from the United Provinces saying that the Federal Railway Authority incorporated in the

Mr. Deputy President (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta): The Honourable Member has got two minutes more.

Mr. B. Das: Government of India Act is not what they designed in the dark dingy rooms of the India Office in London. That might be so. Unfortunately, the House has never raised a debate on the constitution of the Federal Railway Authority as incorporated in the Government of India Act, nor can this Government be made to bring out that Bill which was promised to be brought out on the floor of this House.

Probably it is due to the presence of the solid phalanx of opposition that we are here today. My friend, Mr. Satyamurti, does not want to tinker, as my Honourable friend, Mr. Chapman-Mortimer, suggested; the policy must be laid down by this House and then Sir Thomas Stewart's railway bosses can tinker with it. Even the General Managers are trying to just repudiate the control that my Honourable friend, Mr. Staig, has. I think some of them already have done so, for example, the two Railways, the Great Indian Peninsula and the North Western Railways, but the railway bosses do not want to have a financial adviser because the financial adviser wants them to spend money according to stricter financial principles. That stricter financial policy has never been applied in the control of railway expenditure. That is my experience during the last fifteen years.

Honourable Members: The question may now be put.

Mr. M. S. Aney (Berar: Non-Muhammadan): Sir, I rise to support the motion which has been moved by my Honourable friend, the Deputy Leader of the Congress Party. The motion does not raise any specific point, but it raises the entire policy pertaining to finance of the Railway Department and demands that the policy, hitherto pursued and characterised by him as shortsighted, should be abandoned. The issue raised is the necessity of pursuing a long-rangé policy.

Sir, in the course of the discussion of this motion, it was but natural that the main anchor-sheet of the railway policy, *viz.*, the separation convention, should come under discussion. It has been stated, I believe rightly, that the separation convention has, through inexperience, broken down. I do not know whether the break-down of the separation convention was due to defects inherent in the convention itself or was due to some other influences which have come to bear upon it. I was one of those who were Members of this House when this convention was passed by this House, and I am very glad to find my Honourable friend, the Leader of the Muslim League Party, who is here today, is also one of those who took a very prominent part in bringing about this convention at that time and in insisting upon some of the conditions which are really of a very salutary nature. In fact, one condition in that convention, which proved a source of temptation to us to accede to the question of separation at that time, was a promise or a kind of guarantee implied in that convention of securing a certain definite contribution to the general revenues on a fixed principle. It was stated in defence of that separation convention even by the Government that the entire appropriation of revenues towards the general budget and its ups and downs in the expenditure make it a fluctuating and a disturbing factor altogether in the railway finance. Therefore, it is something better that a definite guaranteed income accrues to the general revenues, so that we can rely upon that as a possible source of income to the general revenues, and there is no serious disturbance in that method on account of the railway revenues. The convention in that way worked on for some years all right. We used to get some contribution, sometimes five crores and sometimes a little less than that. But during the last seven years, as you all know, we are deprived of our share. Not only that, last year we passed a Resolution which amounts, in my opinion, not merely to a declaration of the moratorium but probably a prelude to the repudiation of all the debts arising on account of the provincial contributions and the Depreciation Fund.

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi (Dacca cum Mymensingh: Muhammadan Rural): That Resolution was passed by this very House.

Mr. M. S. Aney: This House was made a party to it later on. The House agrees to everything that ultimately becomes a matter of necessity. It was not that the House gave its consent very willingly to part with 32 crores of rupees which was in arrears, but it found that there was no use asking for a thing from a Government which declares itself insolvent.

Now, I want to say this that calculations have been made on a very careful accounting of the railway budgets for a number of years from the beginning of the railway system to the year 1924. All those items have been several times summed up and several times calculations were made, and ratios and figures were based upon these calculations. How is it that these calculations and estimates which were made then have suddenly been found to be entirely incorrect after having worked the scheme for a few years? That is a question which really requires to be answered. There was one thing in that convention itself which will show that those who subscribed to that convention felt that, after all, we are all human beings liable to err and can only make calculations in a human way on the understanding that certain conditions will continue to exist for some time to come. Therefore a provision was made in that convention that at the end of three years, if necessary, it should be revised. It was not compulsory. Provisionally, the arrangement was accepted for three years meaning thereby that it was open to the Government as well as to anybody else to open the question here for revision. My Honourable friend, Mr. Satyamurti, is right when he says that no attempt was made to seriously revise the convention either at the end of three years or at any subsequent period at all. The matter drifted on. Ultimately, to our discomfiture, we find that we have to record an opinion today that the convention has broken down. The position has come to this. Some of the reasons which occur to me as important in this connection are these. When this convention was passed, one of the grounds which was urged in its support was that it would enable the railway authorities, after making this little contribution to the Government revenues, to think out of broad plans of railway construction and railway improvement which will extend over a number of years and so on. That was one of the idea in their mind, because they could then think of distributing their surplus and income over expenditure for a number of years for useful work. Therefore, they immediately took up the plans of railway construction and railway improvement in many ways. You will find that from the year 1924-25 down to a number of years there used to be a constructive programme involving a capital expenditure of something like 30 crores of rupees. For a number of years, it went on. I do not blame the railway authorities simply for that, because, let it be said to their credit, that every bit of the new constructive programme or new improvement which they wanted to make in regard to the permanent way and other things used to be put up before the Railway Standing Finance Committee for sanction.

The Honourable Sir James Grigg: Hear, hear,—and also before this House.

Mr. M. S. Aney: And this House was ultimately called upon to give its vote, because it was supposed to have been very seriously considered by the members of the Railway Standing Finance Committee and also

by the experts on whose advice the railway authorities had to act in these matters. That is the point which I want to bring to the notice of this House. Schemes of railway construction were placed before us: schemes of station buildings were placed before us: schemes of improvement of permanent ways were placed before us involving crores of rupees. It was not a question of a few lakhs here and there, because in those days a crore or two crores was considered to be a matter of no consequence at all. Considering the scope of the railway budget, the sum of a crore was considered by us to be a paltry sum. It used to be mentioned seriously that this particular project was bound to give us a yield of seven per cent. on the capital sunk. We were not responsible for making those estimates, nor was my Honourable friend, the Finance Member, who is likely to leave us very soon and whom we will miss here very much for more reasons than one. He will recognise the fact that as regards these estimates it is not possible for lay Members of the House to say whether the estimates prepared by the experts as regards expenditure on a particular line are all right or not. There, we have to go on the word of the experts.

The Honourable Sir James Grigg: May I ask the Honourable Member whether he can say from his recollection whether, in the case of the scheme regarding the Bombay station which was put up before the Railway Standing Finance Committee, it was said that it would yield an income of seven per cent?

Mr. M. S. Aney: Probably my Honourable friend is not aware that there was a good deal of correspondence going on over that matter, and I myself put up a very long note. Ultimately, the matter was postponed twice or thrice, and, later on, the expenditure was reduced and ultimately it was sanctioned. Even then we found that we had committed a mistake. However, I am not talking now of those minor details. My point is this.

The Honourable Sir James Grigg: It is a matter of a crore and a half.

Mr. M. S. Aney: Even for a small station near Trichinopoly, called Erode, a scheme of something like a crore of 75 lakhs of rupees was placed before us, and there was a regular inquiry held and the members of the Standing Finance Committee were taken by a special train to investigate that problem. I protested about it in the Committee. I then said that we were as good to examine the scheme here as we would be at Erode. I could not see that any knowledge was likely to be added to our brains, because we travelled by a special train. We are not individually competent to examine the Station Master and other gentlemen there upon the various technical aspects of the scheme for which expenditure was provided there. Anyhow, some of us thought that it would be better to have a local inspection, and so we went there. My point is this. Big schemes were placed before us and a promise was held out that they were likely to yield something like six per cent.

The Honourable Sir James Grigg: Is that true about the Erode station? Did the Railway Board put up to you the contention that it would yield seven per cent.?

Mr. M. S. Aney: I do not know whether they gave us seven per cent. but I am talking now of the general schemes put up before us.

My point is this. We now find that the schemes are now actually in work, and the capital invested is not yielding any profit at all. The point is, who is to blame? In a way, technically, all those who took part in that must share the blame. But my specific request to the Railway Member is this. That he should not remain satisfied with the mere fact that the technical responsibility is likely to be shared by everybody. He must try to find out what sort of men he has got in the so-called expert department on whose advice he is to act and on whose advice he is to call upon Members of this House now and then to pass schemes involving enormous expenditure. The piling up of crores and crores of capital debt is adding to our annual liability in the form of interest also. Whatever is likely to be got for the general revenues by way of contribution is more than taken away by the enormous addition to the interest charges which we have to incur on account of expenditure we have made in these matters on the mistaken advice of or on the incorrect data supplied to us by the experts. That is one reason which I feel of great importance. The second thing is this. These were bumper years. We were always coming here to hear the fascinating story of surpluses. Nowadays, surplus budgets become a matter of nine days wonder. Year after year, we were presented with surplus budgets, and, therefore, the idea was that in this enormous gain which the railways were making in those days out of the money paid by third class passengers, the Government were led to think by those, who had control over these matters then, that they could distribute so much money among the staff in the form of additions to salaries, and so on. In that period, the salaries were increased enormously. After the Lee Commission report, there was also an attempt made to add to the salaries of railway servants also. That has added to the annual bill of pay which they had to pay. This also will have to be taken into consideration. Therefore, there are many reasons for the breaking down of this convention for which the responsibility of this part of the House is infinitely smaller than the one that can be fastened on the shoulders of the Railway Board. Therefore, without touching the other points, and adhering to the time limit which has already been fixed to which I was also a party, I say that the censure which is implied in this token cut that is being moved is well deserved, and I, therefore, support it.

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: Sir, when I saw the form of the motion which has been moved by my Honourable friend, Mr. Satyamurti, I was somewhat at a loss to understand exactly what was meant by long range policy. Indeed, after listening to the debate today, I am still at a loss. I have heard nothing today which would suggest what was a long range policy or what indeed was policy at all. I quite agree that it is probably a very difficult thing to put in words. I hope I shall not be accused of cowardice if I endeavour to show what our policy has been not so much by mere analysis as by showing what actually we have done. I would ask the House to judge not by our theories but by our practice.

The convention of 1924 came into being at a time when hopes ran high. It was a boom year. I am sure all the contributors to that convention were fully confident that the railways would be able to live up to it and, true it is, that for six years they did. Then came the trade recession and for another period of years railways failed hopelessly to comply with

the terms of the convention. This brought about a re-examination of the position of the Government of India in regard to their railway policy and that re-examination is contained in the review of the appropriation accounts for railways in India for 1934-35 which was written by Sir Raghavendra Rau. As a result of his analysis of the situation he formulated certain concrete propositions. In the first place, in order to reduce or rather to prevent over-capitalisation, he suggested certain changes in the method of allocation of expenditure. Thereafter, he went on to make the following further concrete propositions. He recommended that a provision from revenue of about one-sixth per cent. of capital should be made to cover the cost of minor improvements and additions on unremunerative works and, secondly, he recommended that the contribution to the depreciation fund should not be changed for the present. Thirdly, that when the railway revenues improved sufficiently they should be expected to provide a minimum of two-thirds per cent. of capital for amortisation. Now, Sir, I claim that these concrete proposals do represent a long range view of the railway position. The Government accepted those views, and they put up

Mr. F. E. James (Madras: European): And also the Finance Committee accepted them.

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: I accept the correction. They were certainly placed before the Public Accounts Committee which included my Honourable friends, Mr. Satyamurti and Mr. B. Das. This is what the Public Accounts Committee said. After having accepted these proposals of Sir Raghavendra Rau as eminently desirable, this is what they said. Having accepted them as desirable, they were somewhat taken aback at the fact that their acceptance in full would rather widen the gap between revenue and expenditure. They say:

"This is an alarming prospect and in our view things cannot be left where they are now and we would urge that the Government of India should immediately obtain the services of an acknowledged expert in railway management to conduct an examination of the whole field and recommend steps which will secure definite. improvements in railway finances to the extent of something like three crores, immediately and ultimately of such magnitude as is required to maintain full solvency on a strict accounting basis."

Mr. S. Satyamurti: Have you done that?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: From that extract, I deduce that the Public Accounts Committee regarded the adoption of Sir Raghavendra Rau's proposals as meaning that we were going on a strict accounting basis. In pursuance of that recommendation of the Public Accounts Committee, there was appointed the Railway Enquiry Committee.

Mr. S. Satyamurti: That was not our recommendation. We wanted a Railway expert, not boobies who would write to the dictation of the Chief Commissioner of Railways.

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: I must regard that committee as a committee of experts. They made certain recommendations and we have been putting into effect those recommendations from time to time, and the action that has been taken has been exhibited to Honourable Members in two publications. Amongst the recommendations of the

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committee there were two, one in respect of the depreciation fund and one in respect of the reserve. There may be, I grant you, varying opinions as to how the depreciation fund should be calculated and how it should be constituted; but we have here the recommendations of a body of men, expert, perhaps not in theoretical accountancy but certainly experts, in the advanced working of modern railways. On an examination of our position they have said that at least 30 crores should be accumulated as the depreciation fund; and it is towards that figure that we are now approaching. We hope that that figure will be reached at the end of the forthcoming year.

Mr. S. Satyamurti: May I ask a question? Have Government accepted 3 P.M. the recommendations of the Wedgwood Committee that we should build up a depreciation fund of 30 crores?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: That is what we are working to at the present moment.

Mr. S. Satyamurti: It is not stated here.

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: Let me go on. Now, Sir, I should like to point out that there is every necessity for having such a considerable depreciation fund. It is well known to every one that as measures of economy fresh purchases of locomotives and wagons were delayed some years ago. The result is that there is now coming forward a considerable replacement programme. And I would also point out with regard to the embarrassment which we managed to acquire in the boom years between 1924 and 1929,—I refer to the very large capital expenditure that was incurred in those years,—that we shall, in the near future, have to meet from our depreciation fund charges arising from the replacement needs of that programme.

Now, Sir, with regard to capital expenditure our policy is that every demand of any magnitude is the subject of the most strict scrutiny in the Railway Board before sanction is given to the carrying out of the relevant project. There has also been increased control over the lump-sum grant that is given to Agents for the carrying out of minor works. We have carried out since 1931 a very considerable measure of economy on our working. There are on page 30 of the Explanatory Memorandum comparative figures showing the changes in the working expenses from year to year. These as a matter of fact are not strictly comparable from year to year. In some years there was the cut in pay. There have also been accountancy changes, but I have had prepared a statement the figures of which are strictly comparable from year to year. Our ordinary working expenses were probably the most extravagant in 1930-31, the year in which the economy campaign started. In that year they represented 59.18 of the traffic receipts. They have been reduced to 52.19 in the present year.

Mr. S. Satyamurti: That is not in the Railway Board's report.

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: I have said that I had to prepare this table on a strictly comparable basis.

Mr. S. Satyamurti: What is the basis?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: That, Sir, represents an improvement of seven per cent. since 1930. I would also refer Honourable Members to the figures set out in the Table on page 8 of the Railway Board's report which shows what have been our savings as a result of the process of job analysis. The total since 1933-34 is considerably over a crore.

Sir, I have endeavoured to show briefly that we have had a policy which has tended towards improvement, and I believe that I have established that that policy has succeeded. But I have listened with some care to see whether the Mover of the cut motion could make any further suggestions that would aid us further on the way. Incidentally, he made a complaint that no attempt has been made to revise this Railway Convention. Now, I am informed that Sir George Schuster, in 1929, did make a real effort to get the Leaders of Parties together with a view to considering a revision. In fact there was a committee appointed but the committee never met.

An Honourable Member: Whose fault was it?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: I am informed that it was due to the reluctance of the Leaders of Parties. At any rate an effort was made. I have endeavoured to note down, Sir, what are the contributions of the Opposition to the long-term policy. One suggestion is that the contribution to Central revenues should take precedence over every other charge. On that suggestion I cannot do better than quote my Honourable colleague, the Finance Member:

"Well, Sir, on that I do agree very definitely with the European Group that it would be a wise thing for the railways to accumulate reserves. There is in my mind too a certain fear lest the process of building up reserves, which is after all taking a long view of railway finances, should be abandoned for the short view of extracting the greatest possible benefit to the Central exchequer."

Another suggestion to help us on our way was that we should lower the rates and fares. I do not quite understand how that is going to facilitate the payment of surplus profits to Central revenues for further distribution to the provinces. Another suggestion was to build locomotives. I do not think that anybody has demonstrated that the building of locomotives, however worthy it might be as a national activity, is a cheap proposition; and there again I feel that the contribution made by the other side is not very helpful. We were asked to revise our stores policy. It was not suggested in what way we should do so. But the railways are following out not a policy of their own but the stores purchase policy that has been laid down by the Government of India for all its departments and that policy we have been following loyally.

After listening to the debate the conclusion I have come to is that this censure motion is not really a censure motion on the Government which is now administering the railways. It is rather a censure motion of that Government, and indeed of that Assembly that brought into being the railway separation convention, and this has been said in so many words by more than one speaker. In these circumstances I think it would be inappropriate that this House should accept such a motion, the more so because the moratorium expires on the 1st April, 1940, and it will be necessary for Government, before that time, and indeed very shortly, to apply themselves to the consideration as to whether the

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moratorium should be extended or whether it should not be extended or, if it is extended, on what terms. In fact the question may be so open as to make it possible to have a complete revision of the separation convention. The House will have a full opportunity of considering that at a later date and I suggest therefore that the present motion should not be supported.

Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad: May I ask one question, whether these changes will be laid before the House in the shape of a Resolution and whether the Government will accept the decision of the House?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: I say that the Government of India will have to apply themselves to a consideration of what they will have to do, but certainly that must be put before the House.

Mr. S. Satyamurti: May I ask, if he will permit me, Sir, whether Government undertake here and now to place before the House before the 1st April, 1940, a considered Resolution on the future of railway finance, and will they undertake to abide by the verdict of this House?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: I can go no further than what I have said.

Mr. M. A. Jinnah (Bombay City: Muhammadan Urban): May I ask one question to enable me to decide how I should vote? The question was put in double-barrelled fashion. I want to know whether the Government are going to put their proposals in regard to this convention before the expiration of this moratorium. I am not dealing here with whether they will abide by the decision of this House or not.

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: Yes, Sir.

Mr. Deputy President (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta): The question is: "That the demand under the head 'Railway Board' be reduced by Rs. 100."

The Assembly divided:

AYES—46.

Abdul Qaiyum, Mr.
 Abdur Rasheed Chaudhury, Maulvi.
 Aney, Mr. M. S.
 Ayyangar, Mr. M. Ananthasayanam.
 Bajoria, Babu Baijnath.
 Banerjee, Dr. P. N.
 Basu, Mr. R. N.
 Chaliha, Mr. Kuladhar.
 Chaudhury, Mr. Brojendra Narayan.
 Chettiar, Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam.
 Chetty, Mr. Sami Vencatachelam.
 Das, Mr. B.
 Das, Pandit Nilakantha.
 Datta, Mr. Akhil Chandra.
 Deshmukh, Mr. Govind V.
 Gadgil, Mr. N. V.
 Gupta, Mr. K. S.
 Hans Raj, Raizada.
 Hegde, Sri K. B. Jinaraja.
 Hosmani, Mr. S. K.
 Jedhe, Mr. K. M.
 Jogendra Singh, Sirdar.
 Kailash Behari Lal, Babu.

Lalchand Navalrai, Mr.
 Maitra, Pandit Lakshmi Kanta.
 Malaviya, Pandit Krishna Kant.
 Mangal Singh, Sardar.
 Misra, Pandit Shambhu Dayal.
 Mudaliar, Mr. C. N. Muthuranga.
 Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi, Qazi.
 Paliwal, Pandit Sri Krishna Dutta.
 Pande, Mr. Badri Dutt.
 Parma Nand, Bhai.
 Raghunir Narayan Singh, Choudhri.
 Ranga, Prof. N. G.
 Rao, Mr. M. Thirumala.
 Saksena, Mr. Mohan Lal.
 Santhanam, Mr. K.
 Satyamurti, Mr. S.
 Sham Lal, Mr.
 Sheodass Daga, Seth.
 Singh, Mr. Ram Narayan.
 Sinha, Mr. Satya Narayan.
 Som. Mr. Suryya Kumar.
 Sri Prakasa, Mr.
 Subbarayan, Shrimati K. Radha Bai.

NOES—65.

Abdul Ghani, Maulvi Muhammad.
 Abdul Hamid, Khan Bahadur Sir.
 Abdullah, Mr. H. M.
 Ahsan, Maulvi Muhammad.
 Aikman, Mr. A.
 Ayyar, Mr. N. M.
 Azhar Ali, Mr. Muhammad.
 Bajpai, Sir Girja Shankar.
 Bewoor, Mr. G. V.
 Bhutto, Mr. Nabi Baksh Illahi Baksh.
 Boyle, Mr. J. D.
 Buss, Mr. L. C.
 Chanda, Mr. A. K.
 Chapman-Mortimer, Mr. T.
 Dalal, Dr. R. D.
 Dalpat Singh, Sardar Bahadur Captain.
 DeSouza, Dr. F. X.
 D'Souza, Mr. Frank.
 Essak Sait, Mr. H. A. Sather H.
 Fazl-i-Haq Piracha, Khan Bahadur Shaikh.
 Ghiasuddin, Mr. M.
 Ghuznavi, Sir Abdul Halim.
 Gidney, Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry.
 Gorwala, Mr. A. D.
 Greer, Mr. B. R. T.
 Griffiths, Mr. P. J.
 Grigg, The Honourable Sir James
 Hardman, Mr. J. S.
 Ismail Khan, Haji Chaudhury Muhammad.
 James, Mr. F. E.
 Jawahar Singh, Sardar Bahadur Sardar Sir.
 Jinnah, Mr. M. A.
 Kamaluddin Ahmed, Shams-ul-Ulema.

The motion was negatived.

Kushalpal Singh, Raja Bahadur.
 Lillie, Mr. C. J. W.
 Mackeown, Mr. J. A.
 Maxwell, The Honourable Mr. R. M.
 Menon, Mr. P. A.
 Menon, Mr. P. M.
 Metcalfe, Sir Aubrey.
 Miller, Mr. C. C.
 Mukerji, Mr. Basanta Kumar.
 Murtuza Sahib Bahadur, Malvi Syed.
 Nauman, Mr. Muhammad.
 Nur Muhammad, Khan Bahadur Shaikh.
 Ogilvie, Mr. C. M. G.
 Rahman, Lieut.-Col. M. A.
 Raza Ali, Sir Syed.
 Row, Mr. K. Sanjiva.
 Scott, Mr. J. Ramsay.
 Shahban, Mian Ghulam Kadir Muhammad.
 Sher Muhammad Khan, Captain Sardar Sir.
 Siddique Ali Khan, Khan Bahadur Nawab.
 Sircar, The Honourable Sir Nripendra.
 Sivaraj, Rao Sahib N.
 Spence, Mr. G. H.
 Staig, Mr. B. M.
 Stewart, The Honourable Sir Thomas.
 Sukthankar, Mr. Y. N.
 Sundaram, Mr. V. S.
 Thomas, Mr. J. H.
 Umar Aly Shah, Mr.
 Yamin Khan, Sir Muhammad.
 Zafrullah Khan, The Honourable Sir Muhammad.
 Ziauddin Ahmad, Dr. Sir.

Indianisation of Higher Services in Railways.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar (Salem and Coimbatore cum North Arcot: Non-Muhammadian Rural): Sir, I beg to move:

"That the demand under the head 'Railway Board' be reduced by Rs. 100."—
 (The matter of Indianisation of the higher services in Railways.)

It is indeed an irony, Sir, that there should be necessity to move a cut like this. This is India and this is the Indian Legislature, and yet every year we have to move a cut like this

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Member has to move his motion first.

Mr. Deputy President (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta): He has already moved it.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: As I was saying, Sir, it is really a pity that year after year we have to move a cut motion for the Indianisation of the superior services in the Railways. The Honourable the Railway

[Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar.]

Member in replying to the last cut motion said that the Railway Department ought to be judged from what they have done. I hope that this House will judge them on the facts before it with reference to what the Railways have actually done. As regards the policy of Indianisation which the Railway Administrations are following it was stated by the Honourable Member last year, and that was that recruitment for the future would be made on the basis of 75 per cent. Indians and 25 per cent. non-Indians. May I know, Sir, what is the necessity for retaining this 25 per cent. of recruitment to non-Indians every year? No doubt, that policy was formulated in 1925, but since then much water has flowed down the bridge, and further recruitment of Europeans cannot be justified on the ground that suitable Indian talent is not available. Every year, for any appointment, we are able to get a very large number of applications from fully qualified Indians and, therefore, there does not appear to be any justification for still sticking to the policy which was formulated in 1925 for the recruitment of non-Indians. I would strongly urge, that that policy should be done away with and recruitment, in future, should be confined only to Indians. May I point out to the House what has been the effect of 75 per cent. recruitment of Indians and 25 per cent. non-Indians for the last few years? In 1925 there were 75.6 per cent. Europeans, while in 1938, 14 years later, it has been reduced to 51 per cent. namely, a reduction of nearly 1½ per cent. per year in the number of Europeans in the superior services. At this rate, may I know how many years will it take for the complete Indianisation of the superior services in our Railways? Perhaps such a hope will not be materialised at all. After 13 years there has been a reduction in the European element of only 24 per cent.!

If you refer to the cost of payment to the staff, you will observe that in 1938 the gazetted officers were paid three crores four lakhs, that is nearly 153 lakhs are paid today after fourteen years of this policy of Indianisation which has been followed by this Government. Nearly 153 lakhs were paid as salaries of Europeans in 1938, and there has been no effective Indianisation at all in the true sense.

Here I would like to mention a few specific points about which this House has agitated many times before, that is I wish to refer to the question of Indianisation of the General Managers, as they are called, or Agents as they were called previously. The Honourable Member for Railways in answer to a question put by my Deputy Leader the other day laid on the table of the House a statement showing the number of Indians who ever acted for all time as Agents or Deputy Agents, according to that statement nine Indians have acted as Deputy Agents, of whom two have been styled as permanent provisional, which I am not able to understand. I refer, Sir, to page 2889 of the Proceedings of this House, dated the 10th November, 1938, from which it will be found that—'four have acted as Agents, of whom one has been permanent, and he has acted only for nine months'. That is the extent of Indianisation.

Some years ago the Standing Finance Committee for Railways were asked to sanction a new post of a Deputy Agent to the South Indian Railway. The Standing Railway Finance Committee rightly demanded that this appointment should go to an Indian, and on that distinct understanding they voted the grant, but after having secured the vote of the Standing Railway Finance Committee, the Railway Board gave the appointment of Deputy Agent not to an Indian but to a European. I should like to

read the question and the reply of the Honourable Member in this connection—I am reading it from the proceedings of this House appearing at page 819, dated the 11th September, 1936. The question put by my Deputy Leader was: "Will Government be pleased to state whether it is a fact that the post of the Deputy Agent on the South Indian Railway was sanctioned on the distinct understanding that an Indian would be appointed to the same",—and the reply of the Honourable Sir Muhammad Zafrullah Khan was: "Sanction to the creation of the post was given subject to the condition that an Indian officer should be appointed to the post if a qualified officer was available". Then they go on to say that no Indian officer, with the necessary qualification, was available. I hope even when they made the promise they made sure that no Indian officer was available. Even when posts are created with a definite promise that they will be given to Indian officers, they have not been given to Indian officers. I am told again that the Deputy Agent's place of the South Indian Railway to which this question referred is shortly falling vacant, and that senior Indian officers are being passed over, I do not know for what reason. In this connection I should like to refer to the statement made by Sir Thomas Stewart in the last Budget Session. My Honourable friend, Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan, who usually supports Government, on that day, in a bright mood, put an inconvenient question. He said about the appointment of Indian managers:

"If there are two officers, one Indian and one non-Indian, preference should be given to the Indian."

This was highest remark when the Honourable the Railway Member was making his speech. The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart said:

"I mean nothing of the sort: I mean, Sir, that a judgment will be taken as to who is the better suited for the job. I cannot conceive of a situation arising in which the claims of two officers will be so evenly balanced, and to make any such statement would only create embarrassment for the Honourable Member and for myself in future. But my position is perfectly clear: there is no discrimination, there has been no discrimination in the past, and there will be no discrimination in the future either against Indians or against Europeans."

They always disclaim discrimination so far as words are concerned! We cannot conceive of a more impartial judge, but the only difficulty is Sir Thomas Stewart cannot get over the colour of his skin, and in most cases, things being equal, or even without being equal, the Englishman is regarded superior.

Now, I would refer to the appointment of an Indian to the Railway Board. The very day after the posting of Sir Raghavendra Rau to a different job we asked the Honourable Member and he said he will appoint an Indian—he said, the gentleman behind Sir Muhammad Zafrullah Khan will be appointed for a vacancy. He then said that when the next permanent vacancy occurs in the Railway Board the position of an Indian will be considered. In the course of last year that position did occur. There was a vacancy in the Railway Board, there was, if I remember, Mr. Highet who retired, and in his place—that was a permanent place—an Indian could have been appointed. I am also told that an Indian gentleman's name was suggested but the appointment, later on, really went to a man who was not in the service of the Railway Board, who was not in the service of the State-managed railways but a man who was in a company-managed railway was brought out and he has been put in the

[Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar.]

position of the man who has retired. I hope these facts are correct. Government declare often that there is no racial discrimination, but every single act of theirs has tended to show that there has been racial discrimination, and if an Indian has been appointed to a place of influence in the higher services of the Railways it has been in spite of them and not because of them. They had to give some reply to this House, they had to meet public opinion, and for that reason and that reason alone, as far as I could see, they bring themselves to appoint an Indian. The two cases I have mentioned are two flagrant examples—the creation of the post of Deputy Agent in the South Indian Railway, with a specific promise given that an Indian would be appointed but no Indian has been appointed so far. The question was put in 1936 and the creation of the post must have been one or two years previously. I would like to add one word more before I sit down and it is this. I refer to page 87 of the Proceedings of the Standing Finance Committee for Railways, 16th and 17th January, 1939. It relates to the appointment of a Chief Mechanical Draughtsman on the South Indian Railway. The memorandum contained in that book has stated the facts, and in that memorandum they say that in India there is no man with the necessary qualifications. The appointment that is sought to be made is of a Chief Mechanical Draughtsman. There have been many workshops working in this country for aught I know, for more than scores of years, and one Member suggested that this proposal should not be sanctioned. I read from page 88:

“One member suggested that this proposal should not be sanctioned until a note was furnished regarding the position on other railways in respect of the availability of trained mechanical draughtsman and until all means of recruiting the draughtsman of the required qualifications in India from railways or private engineering firms were more fully explored.”

But this was not accepted. Government thought it fit to advertise then in England and get a man without even proper enquiries as to whether such suitable men were available in India. With a hundred years' service of the Indian railways, with so many years of all these workshops here if the railways have not got ready at hand trained men, even for these jobs, may I know when the time will come when Indian railways will be able to train Indian officers for themselves? I say that Government are arranging things in such a way that they want to be permanently importing certain officers from England. Otherwise, there is no reason why these people would not have been trained by this time in this country? May I also point out that these special jobs are not covered by the 25 per cent. of the recruitment which they are bound to be recruited from England? I do say apart from the figures—I do not want to go in detail into the figures of how many Indians and how many Europeans have been recruited—I do say that this policy of reserving 25 per cent. for Europeans even today is totally wrong and should be rejected, and that hereafter a even per cent. Indianisation should be followed and an arrangement made to train Indians for all future mechanical and other services on the railways. If circumstances require that an expert should be brought out from outside, by all means, let that be done on a contract basis with a condition that he should train Indians before the period of his contract is over. But I submit that the policy which the Government have been following in the matter of Indianisation has been lacking in sincerity, in honesty, and the speed with which they ought really to go. Sir, I move.

Mr. Deputy President (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta): Cut motion moved:

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

Mr. Muhammad Nauman (Patna and Chota Nagpur *cum* Orissa: Muhammadan): Mr. Deputy President, speaking on this motion, I really find myself in some difficulty as there is a question on which, if I really give out my feelings, I am afraid I might be misunderstood. It reminds me of a Persian line.

*“Marā darda-ast under dil agar goem zabān sozad,
vagar dar dam kasham tarsam ke megze ustekhan sozad.”*

“I am pained at heart, which if I reveal, I am afraid, will burn my tongue and if I keep silent, I am afraid, the bones of my body will burn to ashes.”

The position is this. I certainly appreciate the question of Indianisation and the earlier it is brought about the better, but we want an assurance that the question of Muslim partnership in this country will be recognised by the party moving it and by the Government of the day sitting on the other side. Unless that position is secured to us, unless the Muslims are given an assurance that by Indianisation is meant actually Indianisation for Muslims as well in the same proportion as Muslims inhabit this country, it is no use; we would not like to have the same experience as we had in the past unfortunately.

Mr. S. Satyamurti: There is the communal G. O. now.

Mr. Muhammad Nauman: We do realise and I think Government also realises that the race which is going on in this country between the different communities, especially between Hindus and Muslims, is coming to a stage where probably a halt will have to be called either by good will or by certain other tests; that will be a matter for the future. I think the Government should try to pacify us and make us feel that we are not thrown to the majority community tyranny. It is probably the worst kind of tyranny in any democratic constitution unless due safeguards are provided, either on the basis of good will of the people concerned, or by the sovereign power who sits above everything with special powers, with powers which the Viceroy and his advisers will have when the Federation comes. The unfortunate experience of the Muslims has been that the officers of the majority community have been behaving more ruthlessly than even the European officers have done. Pamphlets after pamphlets and comments after comments have been published by the different papers and they are sent to the authorities for their consideration. With your permission I want to read a few remarks which appeared in a pamphlet called ‘Is East Indian Railway a Hindu concern.’ This is what it says:

“Attempts made so far to overhaul the machinery of the office did not meet with success, due to the fact that the Hindu head clerk, the motive force of officers, cannot tolerate the idea of disturbing his satellites who, under his influence, have been so snugly placed in lucrative sections that they are always out of the range of any danger. Thus fortified, they conspire and manoeuvre against poor Muslims and victimise them freely.”

Papers and files are prepared in such a way that when we approach the General Manager or the authorities concerned they say that they have got a defence of 82 pages or something like that. I remember putting up this matter before Mr. Robertson, the Deputy Agent of the East Indian Railway and he said that he had a defence of 82 pages. When we wanted a special enquiry to be conducted, the General Manager and his subordinates refused to do it. Probably they knew where mistakes had been made,

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and who the real culprits were, but wanted to maintain good name of the administration. Again referring to pamphlet, another paragraph says this:

“The Establishment office was then ramified into following sections which were like so many temples where the entry of a Muslim amounted to sacrilege, and any attempt to remove Brahmans who were the caretakers of these temples would have been baffled by Kanti Chander Roy Choudhry, the “Lord High Priest” and the “Head Pujari” who was ever ready to shed his own blood for keeping intact the sanctity of his sanctuary. The true picture is reflected in the following chart :

E. G. Section no Muslim, E. H. section no Muslim, E. T. Loco. no Muslim, E. T. R. S. no Muslim, E. T. Engineering no Muslim, E. Miscellaneous no Muslim, E. H. Crews, no Muslim. A Muslim was posted there on 7th May, 1934, but was removed on 15th July 1935 (after having worked for a year and three months).”

Then Sir, there are many other cases. I do not want to go into all of them, because I have not got the time but I will give certain important cases from the pamphlet that I have:

“Abdul Subhan was removed from the Divisional Store Office and attached to the Store section of the Station Superintendent, Howrah’s office. As required by the directions received from the Agent, he was not replaced by another clerk. The poor fellow entreated the Divisional Superintendent, Howrah, that he may be absorbed in any of the vacancies of clerks in the office, but how was it possible in the regime of the heartless Hindus that he should get any job in the sacrosanct office and the Hindu sanctuary maintained by the Divisional Superintendent, Howrah. The poor fellow was mercilessly removed from the office after he had incurred a loss of Rs. 120.”

Then, there is the case of Mr. M. Chirag. He is a graduate and a graduate of eminence. He was placed on a salary of Rs. 40 and even that the Hindu officers would not tolerate and have been trying to harass him by all means possible.

Then there is a cutting from one of the papers, the *Mazdoor* of the 30th April, which said:

“Certainly we do not believe the said alliance. And we, therefore, earnestly pray that Messrs. Kitchen and Kaul be pleased to enquire into this unholy alliance between Kanti and Messrs. Haridas Dutta, A. S. M., P. K. Sen Gupta, A. S. M., U. C. Chakerberty, Relieving A. S. M.”

Mr. M. S. Aney: On a point of order. Is the Honourable Member in order in attacking certain individual officers by name. They are not here to defend themselves. I am not objecting to the general charge he is making against Hindu officers but I am objecting to his mentioning names of people who are not here to defend themselves.

Mr. Muhammad Nauman: I am reading from a cutting in the newspapers.

Mr. Deputy President (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta): The Honourable Member can mention one or two instances to illustrate his point, but he should not go into the details of individual cases.

Mr. Muhammad Nauman: I am only giving one or two instances.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: On a point of order. The question before the House is the Indianization of higher services, but my Honourable friend is giving the names of individual clerks. This has nothing to do with the subject matter of the motion.

Mr. Muhammad Nauman: I am discussing the question of the Indianisation of the higher services, if the Honourable Member will have patience to follow what I am stating. I am drawing the attention of the House to the cases of clerks because they influence the higher officers. I was going to explain that. I am very reluctant to give any particular names. What I want to impress on the House is that the majority community with which we are living side by side with hopes of brotherly affection and feeling should take us into equal partnership and recognise our status as such and give us a due share in the higher services. Otherwise it will not be possible for us to give sanction to the Indianisation of the higher officers. I know this much that a European does justice between a black man and a black man, though not between a white man and a black man. When there is a dispute between Hindus and Muslims, he shows his sense of justice. I do not know whether I myself will be able to keep myself above favouritism but what I want to impress upon my Honourable friend, Sir Thomas Stewart, is this. This communal mentality has reached a limit. Pamphlets after pamphlets have been issued. I do not know whether these have been brought to his notice or not. Certainly something must have come to his notice because I discussed these matters with Sir Guthrie Russell and Mr. A. G. Clow in the last Simla Session. I contend that because the heads of sections belong to the other community, the claims of Muslims are overlooked as Hindu employees live in a state of "Sword hanging over their necks".

So far as this particular cut motion is concerned, I am certainly in favour of Indianisation. We want as many Indians as possible. In fact we want all of them to be Indians. In that case I would only request my friends and the Government that we must have our percentage in the higher services, at least 25 per cent. although our claim is for 33 per cent., and this should be made up by promotions as well. The percentage of Indians in higher services is not as yet adequate but whatever the percentage of Indians most of the men belong to the Hindu community in the higher services, and their communal mentality has been revealed by such cases of favouritism and nepotism as are simply disgraceful for the administration.

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

Hindu officers have revealed their prejudiced mentalities in their working when they were holding important positions. I do not want to make any mention of names, but I hope the Honourable Member does understand what I am referring to and will probably understand the facts more fully if inquiries are made on the data I am giving on the floor of the House; and for the purpose of putting forward my points, it would be better if I would request that these two reports be laid on the table and may be included in my speech. With these few words, I resume my seat.

Mr. N. V. Gadgil (Bombay Central Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I rise to support the motion moved by my esteemed friend, Mr. Avinashilingam Chettiar. I was somewhat sorry to hear the speech of my friend, Mr. Nauman. He wanted an assurance from our Party that when the time comes for distribution and it must come after one hundred per cent. acquisition

Mr. Muhammad Nauman: It comes every day!

Mr. N. V. Gadgil: that the Muslim community which he represents must have its due share. In all humility I may point out to him that if he only were to read the resolutions and various statements made by the Congress Party and the Congress Working Committee, he would find that in all matters of services, a just and due and proper proportion will be given for every minority community.

Mr. Muhammad Nauman: Is there any percentage fixed for us in the Congress resolution?

Mr. N. V. Gadgil: It says, "in proportion to the population of the minority community".

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: Pious hopes!

Mr. N. V. Gadgil: Sir, the question that has been raised in this motion is not the question as to what percentage should be granted to the Hindus or the Muhammadans but it has been put on the higher ground that the percentage of Indianization has not been satisfactory and the policy that was accepted in 1925 is not even carried out to the best possible advantage of the majority community, the Hindus and Muhammadans, who seem to be God-forsaken under British rule. I do not accept the policy of 1925 that the European recruitment must be twenty-five per cent. In fact I am putting my argument on higher public grounds. It is my considered opinion that the content and colour of any policy are largely determined by the outlook of the members of that particular class which runs the administration and if we refer to the statistics available in the report for 1937 and 1938 we find that the higher posts to the extent of fifty-one per cent. are held by Europeans and, naturally, the colour and contents of the policy will be determined by the outlook of the European element. I believe that it is impossible for a few people controlling the whole administration to do it and direct it in the interests of the vast masses which populate this country. It cannot escape the sub-conscious class bias and we have found it in the actual administration of the Railways. Thus, when we come to the passenger accommodation, it will be always the first-class and the second-class passengers who will be looked after more; if it is a question of refreshment rooms, it will be always the European refreshment rooms which will be looked after more; if it is a question of rates and freights, it will be the European concerns that will be looked after more. Therefore, my proposition is more amply illustrated when I say that I do not want the thing to be considered in terms of communities but I want the thing to be considered in terms of the class-conscious bias if the whole control is in the hands of a very small minority of officials, as is the case at present. I am pleading for complete Indianization because only under those circumstances the real, abiding interests of this country will be served. If you refer to the statistics you will find that in the course of the last thirteen years the percentage of Europeans has gone down to only fifty-one; and if you want complete Indianization, as I said the other day, it will require another forty years to achieve it. But there is the very peculiar circumstance which I have noticed in this report that just as the Europeans, who are one in two thousand in this country, have occupied fifty-one percentage in the higher services, another community, the Anglo-Indian community, which I should say for political purposes has been

God-fathered by the Englishman, has secured advantages much beyond what is justified by its strength or even by its ability. I am not looking at it from the racial standpoint

Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney (Nominated Non-Official): What do you know about the engine-driver?

Mr. N. V. Gadgil: Your antecedents have shown that you have never cast your lot with the Hindus and Muhammadans, but if you can assure us that it will not be so, then we will revise our opinions about it. But today, if you take every class of service in lower grade scale rising up to Rs. 250 and more, you will find that forty-three per cent. is allotted to this Anglo-Indian community, and I may point out one example how the thing works out in actual administration. There is a centre for apprenticeship at Jamalpur and every year twenty apprentices are taken. Out of these twenty apprentices from Jamalpur twelve are from the Anglo-Indian community,—and the poor Muslims get four and the poor Hindus—of course it is a crime to say anything about Hindu claims in this House—get only four

Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney: I challenge you to prove that.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member must address the Honourable Member through the Chair. He must not address him direct.

Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney: Mr. President, I challenge the Honourable Member to prove that.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member must address the Chair from his own seat.

Mr. N. V. Gadgil: Sir, that is a fact. Although in the Statistics given about the over all percentages it has been very quietly and innocently shown that they are only nine per cent., they have managed to secure that percentage only in the higher services and that is a fact which my friends will take into consideration also. I am citing all this but I say in all sincerity that I am not doing it on racial grounds but on the same ground that they are actuated by practically the same outlook which actuates the European element in the services. If, of course, they had the same national outlook which the Hindus and Muhammadans have, then I would not personally object to the whole service being entirely manned by the Anglo-Indian, but our experience during the last thirty years has been that wherever the Anglo-Indians have been, cases of incivility have persisted in very large numbers. I do not want to indict the whole community but my objection remains on the ground that the general tone and colour of the policy is determined by the outlook of the individual community. As I stated, they have not given any proof so far that the members of this community will learn to do it in the national interest, and, therefore, I object to this unheard-of weightage for a community which is less than one per cent. in the population. I say that this policy of Indianization is not even being satisfactorily worked, assuming that we accept for the present the policy of twenty-five per cent. of recruitment, I am only citing one example to show how things are so managed in promoting people from one grade to another as to frustrate the very aim for which this policy has

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been formulated. I will give an example of the drivers of the North Western Railway. For many long years promotion to higher grades was suspended and a few years after, recruitment was quietly made, and in the recruitment mostly Europeans and Anglo-Indians were recruited. I do not accept that this policy has been worked very satisfactorily as was stated by the Honourable the Railway Member in his last year's speech, replying to a similar cut motion moved by my friend, Mr. Abdul Qaiyum. I repeat that it is not being worked very satisfactorily, although, as I have stated, I do not accept the policy of 25 per cent. being reserved for the Europeans. Therefore, I submit that this cut motion which has been moved by my Honourable friend, Mr. Avinashilingam Chettiar, deserves the support both of the Hindus and the Mussalmans and also of the Anglo-Indians on the ground, if they are actuated by a sense of justice and fair-play, that if they want a particular percentage they must have it in all the grades and not take it in the best services, in the cream of the service so to say. I appeal to my Honourable friend, Sir Henry Gidney—I am not in the habit of giving out challenges—on the ground of fairplay and justice whether what his community is getting is just and fair to the proportion of their population? He must decide which way to cast his lot. If he is one of us, we will certainly consider his case, but if he is not one of us, we cannot help him. He always sits in the European Group. I have noticed this from the time I have come to this House, except on those rare occasions when he has stated something against the Government, he has always been voting with the European Group and with the Government. When I say this I want to make it perfectly clear that I have not put it on the ground of any racial consideration. I have put it on the ground that unless the representatives of the masses and of the major communities are in the direct control of this administration, the national interests and the highest interests of this country will not be served, and that is a proposition which is illustrated from the histories of other countries. In England the governing class controls the whole thing and it is incapable of thinking of any measures which will really benefit the masses in that country. That is the tragedy and we do not want to repeat it here. With these words, Sir, I support the motion moved by my friend, Mr. Avinashilingam Chettiar.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: Sir, it is really very amusing that year after year we hear the same story being repeated on the floor
 4 P. M. of this House. I have been here since 1921 and ever since I have been hearing this story of the Indianisation of services. I have also observed that they not only remain racial questions but they degenerate into communal questions also. When the question of the Indianisation came before the House, naturally it was divided into sub-questions, namely, how much each community was going to get if these services were to be given to the Indians as a whole. Naturally, each community or the representatives of each community, when the demand for the Indianisation of the services came up, felt that their community must also benefit. The result of all this has been that communal feeling has been aroused on account of the injustices that have been done either to the Indians or to the different communities by the other community. This result, which was a foregone conclusion, has now come to stay. The only thing which we can see now is that before we are in a position to decide the demand

for the Indianisation of the services, this House will be well-advised to come to a settlement and to compromise, either inside the House or outside it, how to adjust those services which may be transferred to Indians. For this purpose a kind of scheme was adopted which gave a certain representation to different communities. That settlement was arrived at by certain representatives of all communities. As Honourable Members, are well aware, formerly it was laid down that 33 per cent. posts would go to the minority communities. The result of the working of this scheme was a drastic one. My Honourable friends need not blame the Anglo-Indian community or any other community for this, but they have got to blame themselves for it because they insisted at that time that the words used must be 'the minority communities'. The result was that if one job fell vacant, it went to the Anglo-Indian community because the head of the Department happened to be an Anglo-Indian and he gave it to the members of his community. We have got a proverb which says:

"Andha bate rewri, apno hi ko de."

"When a blind man wants to distribute sweets, he generally gives them to his nearest relations". Therefore, it was found that this formula was not working properly and it was causing hardship really to the biggest minority community which got the lowest percentage being the biggest minority. This caused the re-distribution of the services. We found that only eight per cent. ought to go to the Anglo-Indian community and they have agreed to this figure. This percentage was allotted to the Anglo-Indian community because they had played a great part in building the Indian railways and they had been associated with the administration of the Indian railways for a long time and it was considered that it was not proper to oust them at once. Let them adapt themselves to other professions first because, at present, they are confined only to the railway services. So, that was conceded to them. I do not mind it as long as that proportion is kept strictly within that limit. But I would like to stress the point which has been made out by my friend, Mr. Gadgil, that if different communities are given any representation, full regard must be paid to two factors. It is not that so many persons have been taken in but what salaries they draw. If one community carries eight posts of Rs. 1,000 each, it means that that community is getting Rs. 8,000. Take another community which may be holding 25 jobs but carrying a salary of Rs. 50 each. In this way, this community, although holding more jobs, will be getting only Rs. 1,250 as against Rs. 8,000 of the other community. This thing has been pricking many persons and instead of a Resolution of this nature coming before this House every year, this settlement should be arrived at outside the House. Such questions never do any good to the country as a whole. Let there be once for all a final settlement of this question in which we may decide what share should go to the Europeans and to other communities.

Mr. S. Satyamurti: No share to the Europeans!

Mr. C. N. Muthuranga Mudaliar: How much do they give to the Germans in the United Kingdom?

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: The Germans may not get any share in the United Kingdom. I quite agree with my Honourable friend. But if the Germans went and took up a position in the United Kingdom, we will

[Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan.]

then see how many jobs they will hold there. We should not be sentimental. We must talk of hard facts. The Englishmen are here and they will remain here as long as the attitude of my Honourable friends remain as it is now. There is nothing which can turn out the Europeans, as long as the Congress Party do not rise above these petty things. That is the chief difficulty. My Honourable friend, Mr. Gadgil, speaking on behalf of his Party said that they passed a Resolution in the Congress that the Muslims must get due regard for their services and they should get adequate proportion. These vague things will never please me. You cannot camouflage in this manner. They will never satisfy anybody. Give concrete proposals. Say that you want to give so much percentage to the minorities and be finished with it. This question will never crop up again. There will be no quarrel and no bother. Do not try to hoodwink us by these vague promises. Now, the Congress is ruling in nine provinces. Let them show, in those provinces, that they could settle this question and then there will be no communalist left in India. That consummation entirely depends upon the statesmanship of those people in whose hands lie the destiny and the control of the administration of this country.

Mr. S. Satyamurti: And your goodwill.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: Goodwill will come at once. Let my Honourable friends see what happened in Gorakhpur. It was the hot bed of communalism at one time. The whole thing has vanished now. Let goodwill be shown by those who are stronger, not by people who are weaker.

An Honourable Member: Are you weak?

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: We are not physically weak. It is not merely a question of raising hands or walking into the lobby that proves one's physical strength or weakness but I am talking of voting strength. If there is a real solution of the problem, then neither you nor I will be the aggressor. What I submit is the Congress cannot blame the Government one way or the other. The Congress should set the example in the provinces ruled by them. The whole country is looking to the Congress, especially the minorities are looking to them for reaching a settlement on this question. Let us first of all know what they mean by Indianisation.

Mr. S. Satyamurti: Non-Europeanisation.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: Then we do not agree. If they mean by Indianisation that they as well as others will share in that Indianisation, if it means that it is not only Messrs. Satyamurtis but Dr. Ziauddin also that will be benefited, then I am one with the Congress.

Mr. S. Satyamurti: I cannot occupy all the posts. It will mean Yamin Khans also.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: I put it to the House that it will serve no useful purpose for an organised party like the Congress to come with a proposal of this kind. They should make it plain to the country what they mean and then they will carry the whole House with them. There will be no use of the kind of pamphlets that we just heard Mr. Nauman quote. I

was grieved to hear quotations from the pamphlet. I do not want all these things to be dragged on the floor of the House. These questions serve merely to excite people outside the House with results leading from bad to worse. What is required at the present time is statesmanship. The position is such that there can be no two different opinions on this subject. We all want Indianisation of services, we all want that Indianisation must come as quickly as possible. We all want that Indians must be given full rights to have their voice felt in the administration of their own country. No doubt these are happy ideas which every patriotic Indian has got in his mind. I say this is not the occasion to bring forward such Resolutions and press them before the House. Bring forward concrete suggestions for Indianisation in which all the communities will have their due share. With these words, I support the motion.

Mr. M. S. Aney: Sir, I had no mind to intervene in the debate but for the very interesting speech which my Honourable friend to my right has just made. Till his speech was over, I was all along under the impression that he was criticising the Congress policy. However, I hoped that good sense would ultimately prevail and that he would make up his mind to support the proposition.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: That is what I did. I supported the motion.

Mr. M. S. Aney: Then I have nothing more to say except this, that he talked about many irrelevant things which he could have very well avoided. With these remarks I support the motion.

Lieut.-Col. Sir Henry Gidney: Sir, I had no intention of taking any part in the debate, but the undeserved and uncalled for remarks made against my community employed on Railways by my Honourable friend, Mr. Gadgil, has forced me to reply, not in terms of anger, not in terms of reprisals, but to tell the House what the actual position is. When my Honourable friend, Mr. Gadgil, was talking on this motion I could not follow him. The original motion was as regards Indianisation of the superior services not subordinates. Sir, my Honourable friend, Mr. Gadgil, may or he may not know what is the percentage of Anglo-Indians in the superior services. When I say Anglo-Indians I mean sons of the country, I do not mean domiciled Europeans, I deny absolutely that Anglo-Indians occupy 43 per cent. of these jobs. This is travesty of fact. There are, however, a few of the older members of my community nearing superannuation who today are serving as senior officers in the railways. During the past decade the rules controlling admission of my community into the senior and subordinate services have been so rigid that I can almost count the names of recently appointed officers—Anglo-Indians—on the tips of my fingers. I must impress on my Honourable friend, Mr. Gadgil, that he is hopelessly wrong if he thinks that the members of my community are today being favoured in regard to admission to the superior or subordinate services. We are not given anything over our communal percentage as adumbrated in Government of India (Home) Circular of July, 1934.

Mr. N. V. Gadgil: Please see this book.

Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney: You may show me any book, blue, red or pink, for one can make statistics black into white, but I know the Honourable Member in charge of the Department will support me when I say that most of these Anglo-Indian men are senior men who are almost on the verge of their retirement and within the last decade there have been very few of my community who were promoted. Sir, I found it very difficult to follow my Honourable friend, Mr. Gadgil. My difficulty put me so much in mind of a story of an undertaker who once having made a fortune in his profession retired into the country and led the life of a country gentleman. He bought a house and a garden and settled on it. He then wanted to join the most conservative club in the country and when he was asked to name what his profession was. He wrote "I follow the medical profession", he, of course, meant he followed people from the death bed to the grave. My community and other minorities cannot follow Mr. Gadgil or the Congress policy. If we did we would find ourselves being taken from our death beds to our graves. The Congress policy was definitely laid down at the last conference i.e., they would protect the minorities so far as their education, their culture and their social standing are concerned. It makes no mention whatever of the protection of their economics. There is, therefore, no use your bluffing us by asking us to trust—or to join you. That is why the Muslims and I are afraid of—I mean, cannot trust—the Congress Party. I have my dearest friends in that Party, but I honestly tell them on the floor of the House that that is my fear. Once that fear is removed openly, honestly and squarely we are with them in all the constitutional advancement of India. But so long as that fear—that mistrust—remains, we cannot jeopardise our future or cut our nose to spite our face. And may I add as long as I represent my community in this House I will stand up for my community and work on the lines I have always taken and indicated for nearly 20 years in this Honourable House, i.e., aloofness from the Congress.

Now, Sir, there is a historical side of which my Honourable friend from Meerut, Sir Yamin Khan, reminded you. I will not recapitulate that history because the services my community has rendered to the railways in India are well-known to this House. It is unequalled, it is unparalleled. Let me ask my Honourable friends opposite, during the civil disobedience days who protected their lives and their properties when travelling on Railways? It was the Anglo-Indian Auxiliary Force men, who stood on all important Railway platforms behind sand bags and protected you. Let me take another wider aspect of the matter. You talk about giving Anglo-Indians preference on Railways. He has not got it. He is today given a paupers wage. He cannot live on the pay he is getting and he is going out, I mean the better class and genuine Anglo-Indian. May be that will please my friends on the opposite Benches to whom we are an eye-sore. Yes, Sir, he is being driven back to the land the same as your poor men are going back. May be that will please the Congress. May be it will please you to know that we have been driven from the posts and the services—Railways and Posts and Telegraphs which we created or largely helped to create and maintain. May be that will please my Congress friends. If so, you may gloat over your success, but I am not dead yet and I will fight you every inch of the way from the death-bed to the grave. May be you, in your pleasure, will be pleased to give me a generous sum of money to cut me away *en masse* and help me cultivate a plot of land in this country—my home—India. If you do I will accept it and bow my exit and build up my future on the soil of India and under Indians. Same as we are doing today at McCluskigunj. But to be told all this tosh on the floor of the House

after what we have recently witnessed in Cawnpore during the riots, is absurd. Let me briefly tell you in a few words what happened during the present Cawnpore riots. How were the telegraph and postal departments run? By these Anglo-Indians who were not afraid daily to come to their work, not by the many Indians who were afraid to leave their houses. This significant incident will show you the value of the Anglo-Indian in communal riots which are becoming of daily occurrence in India; and if such service is of no value I should like to know how these departments would have functioned. For this value alone I have a right to claim a weightage in these services and the time will come when you yourselves will value the worth of Anglo-Indians.

Mr. M. S. Aney: Every Government servant did that, not you alone.

Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney: Sir, I refuse to give way to any interruptions, because I am stating the undeniable truth. Sir, I am told by Congress if I were to be given my percentage of employment on the population basis that these would be very few because I am only one per cent. of the total population of India. That is a hopelessly wrong basis on which to make your employment calculations and percentages. Surely, every Member of this House knows that he is talking absolute tosh when he says that for instance: The sweeper is not in active competition with the Agent of a Railway for his job and *vice versa* and; surely the *paniwala* is not in competition with the skilled foreman of a Railway workshop. You have to take the educated part of the population and then only will you get the real basis on which you can work out your percentages. You cannot take it on the total population basis except, of course, in those forms of employments which demand the vernacular language or the menial forms of labour. Sir, I challenge my Honourable friend, Mr. Gadgil, to prove that 43 per cent. of the jobs in the railways either superior or subordinate, are occupied by the Anglo-Indians. You may have one department or one section of a department in which Anglo-Indians constitute 30 or 40 or 50 per cent. of the jobs. But let me give you a counter to this: the accounts and audit department where 95 per cent. of the jobs and more are occupied by Hindus. You are very silent about that. Why? What have you got to say now? You are still remarkably silent.

An Honourable Member: You cannot do that work.

Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney: That is absolute tosh and the Honourable Member knows it. The Anglo-Indian can do anything. If you had talked 30 years ago of Anglo-Indians mainly occupying one section of a department I would have admitted it. But today these employees are all old men on the verge of retirement and the Railway Member will support me in this statement. But the Congress will be glad to know that they will not interfere with you or stand in your way much longer. But why are you so silent about those departments where you have practically got a monopoly? Sir, I support every word of what Mr. Nauman has said about the treatment of Muslims. The Eastern Bengal Railway stands today as a living testimony of it. Read the analysis of jobs in that Railway; and you will find that in most of the upper subordinate departments there are no Muslims. Then take the South Indian Railway which is another sample. It is in charge of Rao Bahadurs and Rao Sahebs, mainly Brahmins who do their utmost to recruit their friends. But in your communal frenzy why do

[Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney.]

you attack a community—the Anglo-Indians—to whom you owe a deep debt of gratitude and who have come to the aid of railways in strikes and so kept them going.

Several Honourable Members: Blacklegs.

Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney: You may call me black or pinklegs but I have not got a white Congress cap on. Whatever you may say, it is unfair to attack a community which has done such service for Railways in India and which is today being practically driven out of the service. It is not fair to them and is discreditable to the Congress Party. If you had done this 25 years ago I would have remained more or less silent, but to do it today, when we are being absolutely kicked out of the railways, is not fair. It is base ingratitude. But, Sir, we have got a certain percentage of appointments on Railways which are statutorily protected by the Houses of Parliament and which you cannot attack, thank God. But I do ask you to be generous in your criticisms and not to attack me in the way you did and for no reason. It was undeserved, uncalled for and absolutely outside the terms of the motion.

Sir, I have nothing further to say about this motion except to express my deep regret that I was drawn into it by the undeserved, uncalled for and ungenerous remarks by an Honourable Member—for whom I have great regard—my Honourable friend, Mr. Gadgil.

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: Sir, I am afraid that from time to time the debate has wandered somewhat away from the subject under discussion, namely, Indianisation of the superior railway posts. The Honourable the Mover based his case on one or two incidents in which he claimed there had been discrimination against Indians. Well, we have only his personal opinion for this verdict of discrimination. He brushed aside figures; he said he had no interest in them. But I have, and I can conceive that other Honourable Members may be interested to know what the figures really are. This policy of Indianisation, which is now being followed, was set on foot as a systematic process in 1926. Before that in 1924-25 the percentage of Indians in the superior posts was 29·41; in 1937-38 the percentage had risen to 52·53. This represents in actual numbers an increase from 305 in the earlier year to 508 in 1937-38,—an increase of 66·6 per cent; and, simultaneously, the number of European officers decreased from 732 to 459. The recruitment figures are these: There are 185 officers who were recruited by direct appointment and by promotion of whom 45 were Europeans and 140 were Indians, representing percentages of 24·3 and 75·7 as against the 25 and 75 ratio at which we were aiming. In the last year, 1937-38, 21 officers were recruited of whom three were Europeans and 18 were Indians, the percentages being 14·3 and 85·7 as against 25 and 75 ratio which has been prescribed. . . .

Mr. Muhammad Nauman: On a point of information, may I know whether any regard was paid in these appointments to the question of minorities and how many of them were Muslims?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: That is my understanding, that recruitment is made in accordance with the 1934 Resolution.

Mr. Muhammad Nauman: But there is the question of promotions and not only the question of recruitment.

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: No. The proportions prescribed by the 1934 Resolution are proportions of recruitment. These figures that I have given have reference to State-managed railways. The company-managed railways have been under no compulsion to follow the policy laid down by the Government of India, but they have to a very great extent fallen in with our practice at our request. On company-managed railways the percentages were as follows. In 1924-25 the percentage of Indian officers in superior posts was 17.24. It has risen in 1937-38 to 44.39. In actual numbers this represents an increase from 143 in 1925 to 356 in 1938; and, in the latest year, the ratio of Indian recruitment direct to the company-managed lines was as high as 85 per cent. These figures, I think, demonstrate that both in the state-managed lines and in the company-managed lines there has been an honest endeavour to work up to the policy that has been laid down. But it may be that that is not enough. Perhaps the Mover of the Resolution is more concerned with the plums than with the rest of the cake. He has complained about our failure to appoint Indians to higher offices. He has glossed over the fact that there is at the present moment an Indian member of the Railway Board. I did not hear him mention that an Indian Agent had been appointed to one of the railways. I may point out for his information that on the Railway Board the administrative posts are divided almost evenly as between Indians and Europeans. In the face of these facts, I do not think that we can be convicted of any failure to carry out the undertakings which we have given to Indians in regard to recruitment to the railway service.

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

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

The motion was adopted.

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

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: Sir, I move:

“That a sum not exceeding Rs. 17,72,35,000 be granted to the Governor General in Council to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1940, in respect of ‘Working Expenses—Maintenance and Supply of Locomotive Power’.”

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

“That a sum not exceeding Rs. 17,72,35,000 be granted to the Governor General in Council to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1940, in respect of ‘Working Expenses—Maintenance and Supply of Locomotive Power’.”

Manufacture of Locomotives in India.

Mr. Mohan Lal Saksena (Lucknow Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I move:

“That the demand under the head ‘Working Expenses—Maintenance and Supply of Locomotive Power’ be reduced by Rs. 100’—(To censure the Government for not starting the manufacture of locomotives in India).

The object of making this motion is to press once again upon the attention of Government the need of starting manufacture of locomotives in India. The question has been raised in this House again and again since we have come here and also before that and has been carried by all sections of the House. Last year this question was raised by my friend, Mr. Santhanam and by facts and figures he proved to the satisfaction of the House that it was possible to start locomotive manufacture in India. Then he was supported by my Leader, Mr. Bhulabhai Desai, and the then Deputy Leader of the Independent Party, Sir Cowasji Jehangir, and also by Sir Henry Gidney. Almost all the sections of the House were of the view that the time had come when steps should be taken to start manufacture of locomotives in India. In England we find that almost all the big companies nay, even the small companies, manufacture their locomotives in their own shops and it is indeed an irony of fate that in India where we have got so many railways—company and State-managed—with such a big mileage of railways, we have not a single workshop *for the manufacture of locomotives for the broad gauge. We know that in Ajmer there is provision for the manufacture of metre gauge locomotives, and this year, Sir Guthrie Russell in his speech before the Council of State said:

“There has been considerable agitation that Indian Railways should build their own locomotives and thus extend a practice which has been in force at the Ajmere Shops of the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway for many years. The capacity of these shops is limited and they have in past years been fully occupied in building locomotives for their own railway. Last year the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway had to reduce their orders for locomotives, and they were faced with either the shutting down of their locomotive building shops with consequent retrenchment of staff, or the obtaining of orders from other railways for locomotives. It was then found that, under the Act of the British Parliament constituting the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway Company, there was a legal obstacle to the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway constructing locomotives for other railways. This obstacle has, however, now been removed by an amendment of the Act, and the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway have obtained an order for the construction at Ajmere during 1939-40 of 9 YB type locomotives for the Assam Bengal Railway, and it is hoped that, in future, it will be possible to keep these shops working to, or near their full capacity.”

At least, by this statement, it is admitted that it is possible to manufacture locomotives in India at prices not higher than that at which they are available outside India. After all, we find that orders have been placed by another company for the manufacture of their locomotives with the Ajmer workshops.

Then, Sir, it may be pointed out that the Railways have been working in India for nearly 100 years, and it is really painful to see that we have not got full equipment in this country for the manufacture of materials and other requisites of Railways. We find that other countries like Japan, whose resources are not as big as ours in India, where the Railway system has not been in vogue for a longer period than in India, are able to supply

not merely their own requirements, but also to supply the requirements of other countries. For instance, in Afghanistan when the Railway system was introduced, the contract for the supply of engines and other railway materials was given to a Japanese firm. Therefore, Sir, is it not a pity that in India where we have coal, iron and steel in abundance that we are not able to manufacture locomotives for our own use? In England even small companies which, when compared to ours, can only be put in the category of third class railways, manufacture their own locomotives.

Then, Sir, other considerations apart, I put it to the Honourable Member in charge of our Railways that we have to look to the world situation as it is today. We find this question was raised as early as 1918. Since then more than 20 years have elapsed, and during this period countries have grown, and countries which did not figure amongst the industrial countries of the world are now holding a predominant position. For instance, during this period we find that Russia has equipped herself, Germany too has made equipment in all directions, Italy has not lagged behind, in fact all the Western countries are trying to make themselves self-sufficient. But in India, while it was announced by the Government itself that they had decided to make the country self-sufficient in regard to her railway requirements, we find that they are still shirking their responsibility, because they realise that if locomotives are manufactured in this country, much of the custom of Great Britain would soon disappear. Sir, I say it is a short-sighted policy, because we know that the situation in the world is very precarious. We know that the world will be faced with a war much sooner than most of us seem to imagine, and once there is a big world war and Great Britain is dragged into it, the first attempt of her enemies will be to cut off the communications between India and Great Britain. How will it be possible then for India to get whatever number of locomotives she may require, big or small, that she requires every year? Therefore, I say, that the time has come when the Government should take into their serious consideration all these factors and make a beginning in right earnest. May be, that in the beginning we may have to spend a little more money, may be that we may have to pay a little more for the locomotives than what we can purchase from outside India, but we all know that it brings a two-fold advantage to the country. On the one hand it will make the country self-sufficient, in respect of a vital need, on the other it would provide employment to thousands of persons in the country. After all, in England and other countries they are giving doles to unemployed people without work, and the tax-payer has to foot the bill. In this country the advent of the railways has taken away employment from millions of people. We all know that before the advent of the Railways millions of people were engaged in the transport industry, and although the Honourable Member for Communications proudly mentioned that there are more than six lakhs of people engaged in the Railways, he should know that they have thrown out of employment a much larger number of people than they have been able to absorb in the railways. After all, they have succeeded in employing a few Babus, a few coolies, and a few others who are hardly getting enough for their subsistence. Before the introduction of the Railways in India, we had the river navigation and other modes of road transports as well, and millions of people were employed in these various transport systems which were then in vogue. We know that a number of cities have been ruined since the introduction of the railways into this country. So, if we start but one workshop, we are told that 10,000 persons will be engaged in it. Adverting to this subject,

[Mr. Mohan Lal Saksena.]

the Honourable Member said last year that it was not a commercial proposition to start a workshop of that kind in India, but my Leader had pointed out to him that, after all, the Railways have not been a commercial proposition all the time in this country. So many railways were built soon after the so-called mutiny and those railways were not at all a commercial proposition. We also know that there are many strategic lines which are being constructed and run, and they don't pay their way. Therefore, Sir, if for making the country self-sufficient, if for making a beginning in the right direction, if for providing employment to a large number of unemployed we spend a little money over a proposition, which may not be a commercial proposition to begin with, I think it is worthwhile, and I hope that the House will once more record its vote in favour of this demand. Whether the Government will accept it or not, I feel confident that the time has come when the Government will have to reckon with the forces that are getting stronger than we in this House seem to realise. I hope Honourable Members of the Government will take all these factors into account and act before it is too late.

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

"That the demand under the head 'Working Expenses—Maintenance and Supply of Locomotive Power' be reduced by Rs 100"

Pandit Nilakantha Das (Orissa Division: "Non-Muhammadan): Sir, *prima facie* there is no reason on earth why the manufacture of locomotives should not be undertaken in this country. We have got more than 5,000 broad gauge locomotives and over 2,000 metre gauge locomotives, and, taking their life into consideration including also the intensive nature of the work to which they are now put, and with a reasonable expectation of traffic in the near future, we should require to replace not less than 150 to 200 locomotives every year, excluding perhaps a few more additions. This is more than enough for a factory. But all this has never weighed with those that are in charge of our railways. First of all, there is the reason of railways being a commercial business. Whose business it is I do not know; at least it is not the business of the Indians or a business for the Indian people. At the very background of it all, we suspect that there is something else which is not given out very plainly in this House. There is the reason most probably of giving employment to people abroad. This has a very close connection again with our purchases. I have shown on another occasion how our Railway stores purchase policy has grown into a regular scandal. To help it there has been created the standing, make-believe, the huge fraud, called the Indian Stores Department. I do not want to criticise it here in detail. I have no time for it. They say, on rupee tender basis, they make their purchases, and Railways are making more and more purchases through this Indian Stores Department. But I have shown and I could still show that this Department is actually purchasing more and more non-Indian goods so far at least as railways are concerned, for I have not yet looked into other purchases. The only difference is that they are purchasing foreign articles more and more in India, *i.e.*, from firms and middlemen in this country. It is again a fact that purchase of locomotives and some other specific articles can be diverted very well for various reasons to England, and this is why we are

told that the Indian Stores Department is purchasing and that Railway-men or others have nothing to do with it, perhaps meaning thereby that the Indian interest is safe and that the House or the country need not bother. So far as locomotives are concerned, we are told with the authority of experts that commercially locomotive manufacture will not be paying in this country.

Then, there is the compartmentability of departments. The railways are a commercial department. It cannot undertake industrial ventures. It is the Finance Department which will see to it whether some loss should or could be incurred in the beginning in an undertaking like the manufacture of locomotives on the probability that it may result in a profit in the long run, *i.e.*, in future. This is another device to avoid the issue.

Then there are other arguments, and they are of a technical nature. I once asked whether in the Ajmer workshop which manufactures metre gauge locomotives—let me tell the House here that only about 19 or 20 locomotives give them work throughout the year—I asked whether this factory can manufacture locomotives of the broad gauge type. The Railway Board's technical expert came and his answer was, it cannot be done. We are not ourselves technical men, and we do not know whether the plant could be actually adjusted to produce broad gauge locomotives. But I was a bit surprised at the answer, and I asked the question again—I did not ask these questions here but in some other place—that it is only for India the requirement of locomotives is of the 5 feet 6 inches gauge. All over the world the gauge is 4 ft. 8 inches. If a locomotive factory for a smaller gauge cannot be adjusted to manufacture locomotives for a bigger gauge, then only for the limited number of locomotives required by India supplying firms set up a special plant. How is it then that a locomotive factory cannot be started here in India? The reply is 'no'. The reason is, there will be loss. Practically India is the only country which has 5'-6" gauge. In England and other countries the gauge is 4'-8". I was then told by the technical expert that a plant for manufacturing 4'-8" gauge locomotives can be adjusted for 5'-6" gauge locomotives. Then cannot our Ajmer factory which is for metre gauge be adjusted for the purpose? We are told 'No'. The experts say no. We must take their words as gospel truth.

Then, again, it is said that 95 per cent. of the raw materials required for the manufacture of locomotives must have to be imported from foreign countries, therefore, loss is inevitable. We must here see who is our expert, and who determines the specification, who plans the engine and all that. He is a man from England. He is trained in and accustomed to plan specification and standard of locomotives made in England, in the industry of which country he may be, moreover, interested. The man who is to advise us in these matters should be an Indian. If he is to be brought from outside at all he must be brought from a country other than England. This is closely connected with Indianisation in higher ranks, that is, in key positions. Our present experts talk of British standard specification. The articles which are found in Britain are adapted to make locomotives in Britain, and we have been made slaves to the same British standard specification, and now under the name I. R. S., *i.e.*, Indian Railway Standard we are perhaps repeating the same thing. We are imitating B. S. S. under the title 'Indian'. We have not got our men, our technical men. We have no means to know whether really we can

[Pandit Nilakantha Das.]

manufacture locomotives in India. Our purchases are from people who are evidently interested, I do not blame any individual as such. It may be very natural for them to think of their own standard and own specification as I have said. They may not even be first rate men to conceive of new things in new surroundings.

Now, from the purchases and other things, it seems almost evident that in spite of the fear of war in the near future, our railways and our masters here are following a short-sighted policy only for the purpose of living for the moment, giving some employment to the unemployed people in England. So, some very fundamental investigation should be at once made; an Indian expert, an Indian technical man, perhaps an Indian industrialist, who is versed in Indian commerce—if necessary there should be a committee, and some other experts, if they are not found in India—I believe they are found in India, but if they are not, they should be found out in a country which is not directly interested in selling their articles here, and they should be made to advise whether some specification could be made out of Indian materials which can make our locomotives, and they should be made to say whether 5'-6" gauge engines can be made out of a plant which is adapted for metre gauge, and they should advise whether it will be profitable or not. Even though it is not profitable, the Finance Department should be made to pay 80 lakhs or one crore which was the estimate two years ago mentioned by Sir Zafrullah Khan in this House. That money should be invested at once in a locomotive factory. The poor taxpayer in this country is investing enormously for the promotion of our industries. We are investing so much and we do not grudge investing one more crore. Even if there be loss for the time being, for the future promotion of our industries, for the sake of our prosperity in time to come we want that locomotive manufacture should be begun in this country forthwith. With these words, I support the motion.

The Assembly then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Tuesday, the 21st February, 1939.