

22nd February 1938

THE

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY DEBATES

(Official Report)

Volume I, 1938

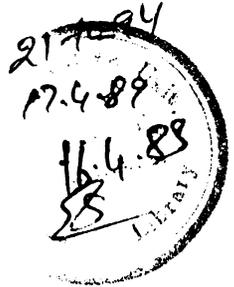
(31st January to 22nd February, 1938)

SEVENTH SESSION

OF THE

FIFTH LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY,

1938



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A

Legislative Assembly.

President :

THE HONOURABLE SIR ABDUR RAHIM, K.C.S.I.

Deputy President :

MR. AKHIL CHANDRA DATTA, M.L.A.

Panel of Chairmen :

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MR. L. C. BUSS, M.L.A.

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MIAN MUHAMMAD RAFI, BAR.-AT-LAW.

Assistants of the Secretary :

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RAI BAHADUR D. DUTT.

Marshal :

CAPTAIN HAJI SARDAR NUR AHMAD KHAN, M.C., I.O.M., I.A.

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MR. M. S. ANEY, M.L.A.

MR. M. GHIASUDDIN, M.L.A.

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

MR. L. C. BUSS, M.L.A.

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, 22nd February, 1938.

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

STARRED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

(a) ORAL ANSWERS.

TANGANYIKA MARKETING ORDINANCE.

416. ***Mr. Manu Subedar** (on behalf of Seth Govind Das): Will the Secretary for Education, Health and Lands be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government have received a copy of the Tanganyika Marketing Ordinance;
- (b) whether the Ordinance provides for a regulation sale of agricultural produce;
- (c) whether he will lay a copy of the Ordinance on the table;
- (d) whether Government are aware that the Indians in Tanganyika are strongly opposed to the Ordinance;
- (e) whether Government have examined the provisions of the Ordinance;
- (f) the suggestions made by Government thereon;
- (g) whether Government made any representation to His Majesty's Government in the Colonial Department in the matter;
- (h) if so, the result thereof; and
- (i) if they have not done so, the reasons therefor?

Sir Girja Shankar Bajpai: (a) to (i). The Honourable Member presumably refers to the Tanganyika Native Produce (Control and Marketing) Bill, 1937, which was published in the *Tanganyika Gazette* last September as a preliminary to legislation. The Government of Tanganyika, who were addressed in the matter, have reported that a substantially modified measure entitled the Native Coffee (Control and Marketing) Ordinance, applying to coffee only was passed during the October Session of their Legislative Council. No representations have been received from the Indian community in Tanganyika in regard to this Ordinance, and the Government of India have taken no further action regarding it. A copy of this Ordinance is available with the Government of India and will be supplied to the Honourable Member, if he so desires.

RESTRICTIONS ON INDIAN RESIDENTS AND TRADERS IN AFGHANISTAN.

417. ***Mr. B. Das** (on behalf of Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh): Will the Honourable Member for Commerce and Labour please state:

- (a) if it is a fact that the Afghan Government do not buy anything Indian and realise a huge custom duty ranging between 25 and 60 per cent. on Indian exports and the Government of India do not charge anything on Afghan imports;

- (b) what restrictions the Afghan Government have imposed on the Indian residents in the country as regards purchase of property and doing independent trade in that country;
- (c) if the Chambers of Commerce and Merchant's Associations in India made any representations as regards their Afghan trade; and
- (d) what the reply of the Government of India was to those representations?

Mr. H. Dow: (a) No. The Honourable Member is referred to the replies given by me to parts (a) and (b) of Seth Govind Das's starred question No. 335 on the 17th February, 1938.

(b) No foreigner can acquire interest in immovable property in Afghanistan. As regards the latter portion, foreigners can carry out private trade in Afghanistan subject to their obtaining a permit from the Afghan Government and furnishing security. Owing, however, to the monopolies granted to State controlled companies, there is very little scope left for private trade.

(c) Representations have been received from the Indian Chamber of Commerce, Lahore, and the Frontier Chamber of Commerce, Peshawar.

(d) Government have asked for some further details.

PROMULGATION OF ORDINANCES ON THE LINES OF EMERGENCY EXPORT-IMPORT ADJUSTMENT LAW IN JAPAN.

418. ***Mr. Manu Subedar** (on behalf of Seth Govind Das): Will the Commerce Secretary please state:

- (a) whether Government have been apprised by the Indian Trade Commissioner in Japan about the promulgation for immediate enforcement of three ordinances in accordance with the emergency Export-Import adjustment law in that country;
- (b) the extent to which the promulgation of these ordinances has affected the export of Indian cotton in seed or ginned, sheep's wool, wood and various other materials described under categories "2 and 3";
- (c) the action Government have taken in the matter; and
- (d) the action Government propose taking in the matter?

Mr. H. Dow: (a) Yes.

(b) There are no such categories under the Ordinance as those mentioned by the Honourable Member. There are three categories labelled A, B, and C, and cotton in seed or ginned and sheep's wool and wood come under category A. The Ordinances are of the nature of restrictions on the free export and import of commodities, but it is impossible to estimate the precise extent of their effect on India's trade with Japan.

(c) and (d). Government have published such extracts from the Export and Import Regulations as are likely to be of interest to Indian commercial interests in the *Indian Trade Journal* of 2nd December, 1937, and they do not propose to take any other action at present.

Mr. Manu Subedar: Will Government please call for a report on this subject from the Trade Commissioner in Japan?

Mr. H. Dow: We have a report from the Trade Commissioner, and it is on his report that we have published the notice in the *Indian Trade Journal*.

Mr. Manu Subedar: I suggested in my question that a fresh report be called for as in the interval since the last report was received many serious things have happened, and we would like to know the present position.

Mr. H. Dow: We are in constant touch with the Indian Trade Commissioner in Japan, and I have not the slightest doubt that he will let us know of his own motion if it is necessary to do so.

DISABILITIES OF INDIAN TRADERS IN AFGHANISTAN.

419. ***Mr. M. Asaf Ali** (on behalf of Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar): Will the Commerce Secretary state:

- (a) whether recently certain disabilities have been imposed on Indian traders trading with Afghanistan;
- (b) if so, what are the disabilities; and
- (c) what action Government have taken in the matter?

Mr. H. Dow: (a) and (b). The Honourable Member is referred to the reply given by me to part (b) of Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh's starred question No. 417. These disabilities were imposed a few years ago.

(c) The attention of the Honourable Member is invited to the reply given by me to part (f) of Seth Govind Das's starred question No. 335 on the 17th February, 1938.

FALL IN TRADE OF INDIA.

420. ***Mr. M. Asaf Ali** (on behalf of Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar): Will the Commerce Secretary state:

- (a) whether there has been a great fall in exports from India and a greater increase in imports into India during the nine months ending with December, 1937; if so, what is the extent of the decrease and the increase;
- (b) whether the trade statistics for December show an adverse balance which had to be made good by the export of bullion;
- (c) what the reasons for this sudden change of trade are; and
- (d) what steps Government have taken in the matter to check the loss of trade to India?

Mr. H. Dow: (a) The Honourable Member is referred to the Accounts relating to the Sea-borne Trade of British India for December, 1937, a copy of which is in the Library. His attention is particularly invited to pages v, 2 and 27-28 of the publication.

(b) The balance of trade in merchandise for the month of December, 1937, was adverse to India by Rs. 87 lakhs, but for the nine months ending in December, 1937, it was favourable to India by over Rs. 17 crores.

The Honourable Member's idea that the monthly balances have to be adjusted by exports or imports of bullion is elementary but incorrect.

(c) The adverse balance in December, 1937, was due mainly to reduced exports of raw cotton.

(d) A variation in India's trade figures in any one month does not call for action.

MANUFACTURE OF AEROPLANES IN INDIA.

†421. ***Mr. M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar:** (a) Will the Labour Secretary state if it is a fact that the first aeroplane was built in India by the staff and cadets of the Aeronautical Training Centre of India to be used for training the reserved forces?

(b) What is the cost of the plane, and did it make its first flight?

(c) Was only the assembling of parts done in India, or were the parts and the engine and the machinery imported, and if so, from which country?

(d) Have Government given any contribution for the building of the plane and, if so, how much?

(e) Has the experiment proved successful, and do Government propose to establish a Government factory for manufacturing aeroplanes in India? If so, when and, if not, why not?

Mr. A. G. Clow: The question should have been addressed to the Honourable Member for Communications.

COMPANIES CHARTERED IN INDIA FOR CARRYING ON COASTAL SHIPPING.

†422. ***Mr. Amarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya:** Will the Commerce Secretary be pleased to state the names of companies chartered in India for carrying on coastal shipping and when each of them had been started, and what are their respective capitals subscribed and authorised?

Mr. H. Dow: With your permission, Sir, I shall reply to questions Nos. 422 and 423 together. It is presumed that by the word "chartered" in each of these questions the Honourable Member means "registered". So far as is known, there are no Japanese, Chinese or American ships engaged in the Indian coastal trade. Information regarding Indian and United Kingdom shipping companies engaged in the coastal trade of India is being collected, and a statement showing the names of such companies will be laid on the table in due course. Such official statistics, as are available, relating to the dates of registration and the capital of the companies concerned, are contained in the following two publications issued by the Department of Commercial Intelligence and Statistics, India, copies of which are in the Library of the House, viz:

- (i) Joint Stock Companies in British India and in the Indian States of Hyderabad, Mysore, etc., 1933-34. (Twentieth issue).
- (ii) Joint Stock Companies. (Monthly issue).

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

COMPANIES CHARTERED IN CERTAIN COUNTRIES CARRYING COASTAL SHIPPING
IN INDIAN WATERS.

†423. ***Mr. Amarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya:** Will the Commerce Secretary be pleased to state the number of the companies chartered in the United Kingdom, Japan, China and America carrying coastal shipping in Indian waters and their respective subscribed and authorised capitals?

INDIA'S COASTAL TRADE.

†424. ***Mr. Amarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya:** Will the Commerce Secretary be pleased to state if the volume of India's coastal trade amounted approximately to 250 crores some years ago? If so, will he be pleased to state what the volume of coastal trade in India was in December 1937?

Mr. H. Dow: The reply to the first portion of the question is in the negative. As regards the second part, the latest available figures are for October, 1937, in which month the value of coastal trade of India amounted to Rs. 594 crores.

PERCENTAGE OF COASTAL SHIPPING SECURED BY INDIAN COMPANIES.

†425. ***Mr. Amarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya:** Will the Commerce Secretary be pleased to state what percentage of the Indian coastal shipping Indian companies have actually secured and how many ships (Indian) are doing this trade?

Mr. H. Dow: Up-to-date information is being collected and will be laid on the table in due course.

INDIAN COASTAL SHIPPING.

†426. ***Mr. Amarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya:** (a) Will the Commerce Secretary please state what amount of capital has been invested already in the Indian coastal shipping by Indian capitalists up to date? What has been the result of this investment?

(b) Is it not a fact that Australian coastal trade has been reserved for Australian shippers only and is not open to shipping of any other nation or country, even the United Kingdom? If so, is the Commerce Secretary prepared to introduce a Coastal Shipping Bill for India on the lines of Australia?

(c) Does the Honourable Member propose to legislate against rate cutting competitions by foreign and the United Kingdom shippers carrying on coastal shipping in Indian waters before a comprehensive Coastal Shipping Bill is introduced by Government for the protection of Indian Coastal shipping?

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

‡ For answer to this question, see answer to question No. 422.

(d) Since separation of Burma as a separate Government, will trade between Burma and India carried on by seas be taken as coastal trade?

(e) Will the Honourable Member be pleased to state if he has in his contemplation any scheme for Indianisation of coastal shipping trade?

Mr. H. Dow: (a) There are no official statistics available, and Government do not see sufficient justification for instituting inquiries in the matter.

(b) It is presumed that by the word "shippers" in this question the Honourable Member means "ship-owners". As far as the Government of India are aware, the coasting trade of Australia is not exclusively reserved for Australian ships, and any British ship can engage in that trade either by obtaining a licence and complying with Australian conditions as to wages, hours of work, accommodation, etc., or by obtaining a permit under the provisions of the Commonwealth Navigation Act. Foreign ships, however, have both to obtain a permit and to comply with local conditions regarding wages, hours of work, etc. It will thus be seen that British ships are given preferential conditions in engaging in the Australian coastal trade.

(c) Government have not at present under consideration any proposal to legislate against rate-cutting. I should state, however, for the Honourable Member's information that rate-cutting is not a special prerogative of foreign or United Kingdom ship-owners, and that any legislation that Government might consider would not be discriminatory against the latter. The only rate war on the Indian coast which is at present being waged is, as far as Government are aware, that which is being waged on the West Coast between various Indian companies.

(d) No.

(e) I would refer the Honourable Member to the replies given to parts (b) and (e) of starred question No. 214 and part (b) of starred question No. 562 asked by Mr. Satyamurti on the 31st August, and 16th September, 1937, respectively.

FRANCHISE OF INDIANS IN CEYLON.

427. ***Mr. Thirumala Rao** (on behalf of Mr. C. N. Muthuranga Mudaliar): Will the Secretary for Education, Health and Lands be pleased to state:

(a) the present position of Indians in Ceylon in the matter of franchise; and

(b) how far the representation of the Government of India to exempt Indians from the operations of the Village Communities Ordinance has been successful?

Sir Girja Shankar Bajpai: (a) and (b). On the assumption that the Honourable Member has in mind the Village Communities franchise, I

would invite his attention to the reply given by me to part (a) of Mr. Badri Dutt Pande's question No. 185 on the 9th February, 1938.

APPOINTMENT OF MR. SALT AS ENTOMOLOGIST TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.

428. ***Mr. Thirumala Rao** (on behalf of Mr. C. N. Muthuranga Mudaliar): (a) Will the Secretary for Education, Health and Lands be pleased to state if it is a fact that Mr. Salt has been appointed as Entomologist to the Government of India?

(b) What are the qualifications of this gentleman and what post does he hold at present and on what salary per month? What is the salary offered to him by the Government of India, and what is the tenure of his appointment?

(c) Was the post advertised in the Press? If not, how was the selection made?

Sir Girja Shankar Bajpai: (a) No.

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

Mr. Manu Subedar: Was his appointment turned down by the Agricultural Research Council at one time?

Sir Girja Shankar Bajpai: I do not know whether his appointment was turned down by any particular organisation, but all that I know is he has not held any appointment under the Government of India.

Mr. Manu Subedar: Was there any proposal to appoint him at any time?

Sir Girja Shankar Bajpai: There has been no proposal to appoint him to the post of Imperial Entomologist, because that post has been held for the last two years by an Indian officer, Dr. Prithvi.

"INDIAN MUSEUM" IN ENGLAND.

429. ***Mr. Thirumala Rao** (on behalf of Mr. C. N. Muthuranga Mudaliar): (a) Will the Secretary for Education, Health and Lands be pleased to state if it is a fact that there is at present in England an "Indian Museum" where are exhibited valuable and unique works of art which left the shores of India from time to time?

(b) Is it a fact that there is a proposal to break up this collection for reasons of economy?

(c) Has the attention of Government been drawn to the views of eminent oriental savants like Professor H. G. Rawlinson published in the Press from time to time protesting against the breaking up of the Indian Museum in London?

(d) Do Government propose to consider the advisability of taking steps to transfer to India this valuable collection and to start a great national museum and art gallery in India, the collections from England forming its nucleus?

Sir Girja Shankar Bajpai: (a) to (d). The Honourable Member has presumably based his question on a leading article published in the *Hindu* newspaper, dated the 24th November, 1937. The Government of India have no information but have made enquiries and will communicate the result to the House as soon as possible.

ELECTRICITY AND WATER CHARGES IN NEW DELHI.

430. ***Mr. Thirumala Rao** (on behalf of Mr. C. N. Muthuranga Mudaliar): (a) Will the Secretary for Education, Health and Lands lay on the table a list of the establishment, superior and inferior employed by the New Delhi Municipal Committee?

(b) Will the Honourable Member state what are the charges for the consumption of electricity in New Delhi and whether these charges represent an increase on the charges levied some years back?

(c) Is it a fact that the water rate which is at present six annas per thousand gallons is proposed shortly to be raised to eight annas?

(d) What were the interests consulted or considered before the increase was decided upon?

(e) Is it a fact that during the summer months the consumption of water is greater than during the winter months and that the proposed increase will hit badly the establishment of the offices which are kept down in New Delhi?

(f) Will Government lay on the table a statement of receipts on account of (i) water rate and (ii) electricity for the years 1935, 1936 and 1937?

(g) Will Government state if it is proposed to increase the present minimum for the water rate per month?

Sir Girja Shankar Bajpai: (a) to (g). Information has been called for and will be furnished to the House in due course.

ELECTRICAL ESTABLISHMENT OF THE CENTRAL PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT.

†431. ***Raizada Hans Raj:** Will the Labour Secretary please lay on the table a statement showing the names, dates of appointment, pay on appointment, and the present pay of each member of the Electrical Establishment of the Central Public Works Department for the maintenance of electrical installation in the Government buildings?

Mr. A. G. Glow: A statement giving the required particulars regarding the regular electrical establishment employed in the Central Public Works Department is laid on the table. Particulars regarding the work-charged establishment are not readily available.

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

Statement showing the particulars of the regular Electrical Establishment employed in the Central Public Works Department.

Name.	Date of appointment in the Central P. W. D.	Pay on appointment.	Present pay.	Remarks.
		Rs.	Rs.	
1. Mr. T. P. Gateley	1-2-1924	850	1,125	
2. Mr. A. V. Robey	5-6-1922	200	560	
3. Mr. H. P. Chatterji	22-10-1935	450	450	
4. Mr. Kesar Chand	1-7-1922	150	300	
			+30	Sub-Divisional Allowance.
5. Mr. Sunder Singh	1-2-1923	170	300	
6. Mr. Narain Dev	1-4-1922	122	300	
7. Mr. E. Wyllie	1-2-1923	190	301+	
			15	Personal Pay.
8. Mr. Mohd. Hayat	1-2-1923	129	260+30	Sub-Divisional Allowance.
9. Mr. Raghbar Dayal	Sept. 1918	120	240+30	Sub-Divisional Allowance.
10. Mr. F. D. Williams	July 1924	110	200	
11. Mr. Habibul Rahman	1-2-1923	115	150+10	Personal Pay.
12. Mr. Pooran Chand	1-2-1923	101	150	
13. Mr. Bua Datta Mal	1-2-1923	87	150	
14. Mr. Sant Ram	1-3-1932	70	95	
15. Mr. Mohd. Usman Chowdhry	8-3-1934	70	85	
16. Mr. O. P. Kohli	17-3-1934	70	85	
17. Mr. S. Ray Chowdhri	13-10-1934	70	85	
18. Mr. Davinder Singh	29-11-1934	70	120	Fixed.
19. Mr. R. P. Sareen	5-6-1936	70	75	
20. Mr. Dilbar Hussain	25-11-1936	70	75	
21. Mr. A. J. Raju	3-12-1936	70	75	
22. Mr. H. L. Datt	20-1-1937	70	75	
23. Mr. Ram Lal Vohra	16-8-1937	70	70	
24. Mr. Ram Behari Lal	3-9-1937	70	70	
25. Mr. Jaginder Singh Naura	4-10-1937	70	70	
26. Mr. Kartar Singh Popli	1-12-1937	70	70	

RESERVATION OF THE KENYA HIGHLANDS FOR EUROPEANS.

432. *Mr. M. Asaf Ali (on behalf of Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar): Will the Secretary for Education, Health and Lands state:

- whether they have received a representation from the Imperial Citizenship Association about fears of issue of an Order in Council regarding reservation of the Highlands in Kenya for Europeans;
- whether Government have had any information from His Majesty's Government in this matter; and
- if not, whether Government have made sure that no action will be taken except with the previous consultation of the Government of India?

Sir Girja Shankar Bajpai: (a) Yes.

(b) and (c). The proposed Order-in-Council relating to the Kenya Highlands is the subject of correspondence with His Majesty's Government.

DAFTARIES IN THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA DEPARTMENTS PROVIDED WITH QUARTERS IN NEW DELHI.

433. ***Mr. D. K. Lahiri Chaudhury:** Will the Labour Secretary please state how many daftries in each department of the Government of India have been provided, and the number not yet provided with daftries quarters in New Delhi?

Mr. A. G. Clow: A statement giving the required information is laid on the table.

Statement showing the demand and allotment of Daftries quarters in New Delhi for the Winter Season 1937-38.

Department or office.	Demand.	Allotment.
Home Department and Attached Offices	33	16
*Foreign and Political Department	23	8
Finance Department and Attached Offices	50	29
Legislative Department	8	5
Legislative Assembly Department	10	5
Commerce Department and Attached Offices	16	9
Railway Department (Railway Board) and Attached Offices	28	15
Education, Health and Lands Department and Attached Offices	56	21
Imperial Council of Agricultural Research	9	3
*Industries and Labour Department and Attached Offices	104	61
Defence Department and Attached Offices	67	38
Military Finance Department and Military Accountant General	14	7
Reforms Office	4	2
Office of the Executive Council of the Governor General	1	
Land and Development Office	1	1
Total	424	220

* The External Affairs, Political, Labour and Communications Departments had not come into being when allotments were made.

NON-CONNECTION WITH ELECTRICITY OF DAFTARIES' QUARTERS IN NEW DELHI.

434. ***Mr. D. K. Lahiri Chaudhury:** Will the Labour Secretary please state why daftries' quarters are not connected with electricity? Are Government aware that daftries are prepared to pay for electric consumption?

Mr. A. G. Clow: The answer to the first part of the question is that the expense involved would be substantial. As regards the second part, a statement was made by the Record Sorters and Daftries Association to the effect that their members were willing to pay the usual charges for the consumption of electric energy, but I am not sure that this phrase was intended to include charges for the installation, or that all daftries are prepared to defray these charges.

Mr. D. K. Lahiri Chaudhury: If they are prepared to pay for the installation what is the difficulty in installing electricity there?

Mr. A. G. Clow: There are two kinds of charges: the charges for the current and the charge for the installation.

Mr. D. K. Lahiri Chaudhury: With reference to the charge for the installation, is there any charge for the installation in any other class of Government quarters?

Mr. A. G. Clow: It is paid normally in the rent, but the officers to whom the Honourable Member referred get quarters rent free.

SETTING UP OF A MEDICAL BOARD FOR INFERIOR STAFF.

435. ***Mr. D. K. Lahiri Chaudhury:** Will the Secretary for Education, Health and Lands please state the object for which a Medical Board has been set up for the inferior staff? Is he aware that the medical examination is now extra strict?

Sir Girja Shankar Bajpai: No Medical Board has been set up. Owing to the high incidence of mortality from tuberculosis among the members of the inferior staff of the Secretariat and Attached and Subordinate Offices, the Additional Civil Surgeon of Delhi conducts a medical examination with a view to devising means for their protection.

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum: Instead of appointing an extra well paid officer, is it not the better way to deal with this matter by increasing the pay of these subordinate officials?

Sir Girja Shankar Bajpai: My Honourable friend is not correct in assuming that an extra officer has been appointed merely to look after the inferior staff of the Government of India.

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum: Will the Government consider the desirability of increasing their pay with a view to save them from T. B.?

Sir Girja Shankar Bajpai: I do not think that arises out of purely medical needs.

Mr. B. Das: Will that medical examination go into the nutrition value of the food that this class of Indian servants take?

Sir Girja Shankar Bajpai: I do not think that it is specifically the function of this officer to inquire into the nutritional value of the foods which these duffries take.

Mr. D. K. Lahiri Chaudhury: May I ask whether he has made any inquiry as to what is the reason for these duffries suffering from T. B.?

Sir Girja Shankar Bajpai: We are awaiting a report from the officer who is conducting the examination.

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum: In view of the possibility of higher officials contracting T.B. from these people will Government consider the increase of pay of these subordinate officials?

Sir Girja Shankar Bajpai: I do not think it is necessary to increase their pay in order to save the higher officials from T.B.

FOOD RESEARCH INSTITUTE AT COONOR AND NOURISHMENT OF INDIANS.

486. ***Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta:** Will the Secretary for Education, Health and Lands be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government have under them a Food Research Institute at Coonor;
- (b) whether Government have collected information regarding the percentage of the people in British India who are getting the following kinds of food. *viz.*, (i) rice and bread, (ii) milk, (iii) eggs, (iv) meat, (v) vegetables, and (vi) fruits, and if so, the amounts *per capita* thereof;
- (c) what percentage of the Indian population of British India according to statistics and other facts within the knowledge of Government, are seriously under-nourished; whether it is a fact that over sixty per cent. of the population are under-nourished and
- (d) what percentage of the Indian population in British India get food sufficient in quality and quantity for the building up of the body and preservation of health; whether it is a fact that semi-starvation is the lot of one half of the Indian population?

Sir Girja Shankar Bajpai: (a) The Honourable Member presumably means a Nutrition Research Institute. If so, the answer is in the affirmative.

(b) to (d). Information is being collected and will be furnished to the House in due course.

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

DEMAND No. 1—RAILWAY BOARD—*contd.*

*Composition of Staff attached to the Office of the Conciliation Officer—
Col. Wagstaff—in Calcutta.*

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Consideration of the Demands for Grants will now be resumed.

Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney (Nominated Non-Official): Sir, I have very few words to add to what I said yesterday, except to bring to the notice of the Honourable Member for Communications what obtains today in railway disputes and enquiries. At all inquiries the accused is not allowed any representation, except by an active serving member of the railway and the accusing officer often sits on the Committee. This Conciliation Officer is appointed for the essential purpose of bringing grievances to an amicable settlement. What does the Railway Board do today in all enquiries undertaken by railway administrations? It allows the accused to be represented by a serving member of the railway. In larger issues it listens to a body called the Federation of Railway Unions—this

Federation is really more or less a caucus of members who are not employees of the railways at all; and yet the Railway Board insists that all railway unions must be manned by service railway men. This Federation is more or less a bogus union and does not represent railway views and opinions. It has eight or nine unions on its strength; many of them are unrecognised by Railway Agents. It has no money and most of its members are paper members. In short, they are sensation mongers and not *vox-populi*. I bring this to the notice of the Honourable Member with a view to point out that the measure he has taken in the shape of appointing a Conciliation Officer does not meet the needs of employees. Let me repeat for the information of the Honourable Member the stress for two or three subordinates or other people who are familiar with the men's point of view being attached to this Conciliation Officer's staff.

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

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

Mr. N. M. Joshi (Nominated Non-Official): Mr. President, I would like to say a word on the motion of my Honourable friend, Sir Henry Gidney, as placed before the House. I agree with him that the Conciliation Officer should not have been taken from the railway service. If a Conciliation Officer is going to do his work successfully, he must take an unprejudiced and independent view of the complaint which may be made to him by the railway employees. A railway employee who becomes a Conciliation Officer is at a disadvantage from that point of view

Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad (United Provinces, Southern Divisions: Muhammadan Rural): He will not be under the Railway?

Mr. N. M. Joshi: No. He is not under the Railway Board. The point is that he should not be taken from the railway service. It is difficult for an officer who has worked on the Indian railways to take unprejudiced views on matters on which he had already made up his mind. Take for instance this gentleman, Col. Wagstaff. I do not say anything against him. But at the same time we know that this gentleman was responsible for framing what are called the Hours of Work Regulations on Indian railways. These Hours of Work Regulations are found to contain several defects which cause inconvenience to the railway employees. If any complaint is made to Col. Wagstaff regarding the Hours of Work Regulations, it is not right to expect him to change the views which he had already expressed and on which he had made up his mind. I, therefore, support the view that the Conciliation Officer should not be taken from the railway service.

There is another reason; and that is that the Conciliation Officer should be independent of the influence of the Agents. I fully recognise that by placing Col. Wagstaff under the Labour Department, that object has to some extent been achieved; but I feel that it is difficult for an officer of the Railway Department to be free entirely from the influence of the Railway Agents and the Railway Board. This independence of the Conciliation Officer is of great importance. Yesterday my Honourable friend, the Secretary for Labour, stated that there was nothing wrong if the Conciliation Officer refuses to deal with an unrecognised union. I cannot see why a Conciliation Officer should be made a sort of subordinate

[Mr. N. M. Joshi.]

to the Railway Agent in the matter of the recognition of the union. An Agent refuses to give recognition to a union. But why that non-recognition should be binding on Col. Wagstaff I cannot understand. Supposing the railwaymen on the Bengal Nagpur Railway have to make a complaint to the Conciliation Officer on the very fact that the Agent does not recognise the union: the Conciliation Officer will say, "Your union is not recognised and I cannot take your complaint".

Sir, the position is ridiculous. Moreover, the Honourable the Secretary for Labour said yesterday that although the Conciliation Officer may not take complaints from the unrecognised unions, he may take complaints from the members of the unrecognised unions as an independent group. Now, that leads to a very ridiculous position. Suppose I am the president of a union on the railways, and the union is unrecognised. If I make any representation to Col. Wagstaff, he will refuse to hear me, but suppose the members of that union as an independent group choose me to represent their grievance to Col. Wagstaff, what will he do? He will tell me that as the representative of the union he will not speak to me, but as the representative of the independent group of workers he will talk to me. Sir, this position is very ridiculous. My suggestion, therefore, is that the Government of India should give an independent position as they could to the Conciliation Officer, and not make him dependent upon the views of the Agents of the Railways as regards the recognition of the union. I think that that independence of the Conciliation Officer can only be secured, at least it can be secured to a greater extent,—if that officer is not drawn from the railway service. I hope, Sir, therefore, the motion moved by my friend, Sir Henry Gidney, will be accepted.

Mr. A. G. Clow (Labour Secretary): Sir, I should like to begin by saying that I am glad that, while speaking yesterday, my friend, Sir Henry Gidney, with his very large experience of railway matters and his constant solicitude for those employed on the railways, recognised the value of the experiments that we have made. I am sorry that I cannot agree with him on the further points that he raised. His first plea was for the appointment of two or three assistants of railway experience as office subordinates. That seemed to me rather like creating the men and finding the work for them afterwards, whereas what we try to do in Government service is to appoint no more men than the work requires. I have not yet heard from Col. Wagstaff that he is finding it difficult to carry on without assistance, and I would emphasise also that work of this type, which is in essence pioneer work in India, is not work that can be effectively carried on by office subordinates. It is work that requires a special personality, for it is work that requires very close relations with both parties.

And that brings me to another point which I would like to emphasise. Both Sir Henry Gidney and Mr. Joshi have, I think, conveyed the impression that Col. Wagstaff is to convey the grievances of the men to the Agents.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: No, no.

Mr. A. G. Clow: I think Sir Henry Gidney talked about bringing grievances to an amicable settlement. Well, Sir, that is not exactly his position. He has got to have relations not merely with the men, but with the Agents, and if I may use perhaps not quite the appropriate word that Sir

Henry Gidney used, Agents too have their "grievances". If you want a man to be a successful Conciliation Officer, he has got to understand the mentality of the Agents in every profession,—I am casting no reflection on anybody for every profession has its own mentality—he has got to appreciate the mentality of the Agents as well as the mentality of the men.

The cut motion on the paper is headed "Composition of Staff attached to the Office of the Conciliation Officer—Colonel Wagstaff—in Calcutta", but both the last speakers went on, as far as I could see, to cast doubts on the qualifications of the Conciliation Officer himself.

Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney: Sir, I repudiate that. I never said that. I would be the last person to say a word against Col. Wagstaff. I consider him an eminently suitable and able railway officer, but being a serving railway officer and under the Railway Board orders, he is pre-eminently an unsuitable Conciliation Officer because of his subordination to the Railway Board and Government.

Mr. A. G. Clow: Precisely; it is casting doubts on the qualifications of Col. Wagstaff for this post on the ground that he was a railway officer. I recognise that the work could be done by another officer, but I personally know of no one so well fitted as Col. Wagstaff to do this work, and I suggest to the House that in making the first appointment at least it is essential that we should have an officer who is thoroughly familiar with the working of the railways and who can approach in the light of his previous experience both the Agents and the men with a full knowledge of the conditions. When I look round on some of the trade unions in the country I see that they are manned by men of great enthusiasm, but they are handicapped when they are face to face with the manager of a mill, simply because he knows what he is talking about and they have not always full knowledge of the actual conditions. I feel myself that if I were to attempt the work that Col. Wagstaff is doing, I would be handicapped by the fact that I do not really have that intimate acquaintance with railway conditions which comes from almost, I might say, a lifetime of study.

There is also one other point as regards what Mr. Joshi stated about unrecognised trade unions. He seemed to think that Col. Wagstaff's value would be enhanced if he dealt with unrecognised trade unions and then put forward their point of view before the Agents. I would like to suggest that the duty of the Conciliation Officer is not to constitute himself as the channel between the men or their proper unions and the Agents. He is not there to cut out in any way direct contact between the leaders of the employees and the employers. It is rather to foster their relations. If you have a union which is unrecognised, it is not possible for a Conciliation Officer to bring them into contact until recognition is accorded. I see no reason whatever why, if there is an unrecognised trade union which feels that it has a claim for recognition, it should not consult Col. Wagstaff or rather men composing it. But I cannot see a Conciliation Officer entering usefully into the discussion of complaints or incipient disputes with unrecognised unions.

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 negatived.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): It has been represented to me by Mr. Asaf Ali on behalf of the Congress Party that certain arrangement has been arrived at since yesterday as regards the order in which the Members belonging to different Groups in the House will discuss the cut motions in which they are interested. I find it is signed by Mr. A. C. Datta, Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan, Mr. Ghiasuddin, Mr. Asaf Ali and Mr. Buss. No one has signed it on behalf of the Government, and I do not find that the subjects or motions which will be discussed by different groups have been mentioned. Nor is there any mention as regards the time limit, if any, is sought to be imposed. The arrangement which I understand has been arrived at is that after Sir Henry Gidney's motions have been disposed of, that is, the four other motions that stand in his name, the rest of his morning will be devoted to discussing certain motions that have not yet been specified by the Nationalist Group, and the afternoon will be taken up by the Independent Group. Their motions also have not been specified. Tomorrow the Independent Group will resume discussion of other motions specified, and in the afternoon the Democratic Party comes in. On Thursday the Congress Party will move their motions, but, as I have said, none of the subjects are specified. If this arrangement is agreed to, and as far as an arrangement has been arrived at, then with regard to the subjects to be discussed, and the time limit

Mr. M. Asaf Ali (Delhi: General): Sir, there is general agreement about the time limit which you suggested yesterday.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): 20 minutes to the Mover, 15 minutes to other speakers, and half an hour to the Government. If that is also agreed to, I shall be very glad to regulate the debates accordingly. Is that all agreed to?

Several Honourable Members: Yes.

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart (Member for Railways and Communications): Is it your desire that the subjects to be discussed should be announced now?

Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta (Chittagong and Rajshahi Divisions: Non-Muhammadan Rural): So far as the Nationalist Party is concerned, we propose to move No. 99.

Mr. M. Asaf Ali: We have, so far as the Congress Party is concerned, already communicated to the Railway Member

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: I am not aware of any communication.

Mr. M. Asaf Ali: There is a probability of four questions being taken up.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): You must specify the motion.

Mr. M. Asaf Ali: One is Indianisation. It comes under various heads. Practically it will come to the same thing. Our day is on the 24th. You have ample time. We will let the Railway Member know sometime tomorrow morning.

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: That will do.

Sir Cowasji Jehangir (Bombay City: Non-Muhammadan Urban): I understand that the Independent Party will take their cuts this afternoon and will continue till tomorrow afternoon. In that case, may I request you to allow Maulana Shaukat Ali to move No. 8 immediately this afternoon.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): That was not moved when called on.

Sir Cowasji Jehangir: I understand that Mr. Shaukat Ali did not move it yesterday because no arrangement had been arrived at by the Parties and he was persuaded not to move it till some arrangement was arrived at this morning. In the circumstances, I crave your indulgence to allow him to move it.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): That cannot be done, as the Honourable Member refused to move it. You have to take up some motions after 81.

Sir Cowasji Jehangir: A similar motion is in the name of Maulvi Muhammed Abdul Ghani, which is No. 3 on Late List No. 1. As regards the second and third cut motions, we will inform the Honourable Member before Lunch.

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: That is extremely inconvenient. I may be called upon to deal with the motion this afternoon and I do suggest to the Honourable Member that the greatest possible notice should be given to Government in the matter. We have been very accommodating and our programme has been upset twice and I think that the Honourable Member might at least give that much consideration to these Benches.

Sir Cowasji Jehangir: How will 61 do for the second motion?

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): That also was not moved when it was reached.

Sir Cowasji Jehangir: We will let the Honourable Member know in half an hour.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan (Agra Division: Muhammadan Rural): I understand that our 56 goes away. In that case we have got only two more cuts, that is Nos. 131 and 177. We might take 177 first and 131 next if there is time left.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Very well. Sir Henry Gidney will go on with his amendments now. What motion does he want to move?

Imposition of Undue Demands made by the Railway Board for House Rent of Railway Employees of G. I. P. Railway.

Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney: Sir, I am deeply grateful to the House and appreciate the consideration shown to me regarding my remaining cut motions. I shall be as brief as possible in return. Out of the

[Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney.]

17 motions in my name, I have selected 4 and with your kind permission I shall move No. 83. I do not propose to move 82. Sir, I move:

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

At the outset I would like to emphasize that when the State took over the G. I. P. and E. I. R. lines, one of the pledges given by the Government was that none of the employees enjoying certain privileges would be deprived of them and suffer any hardships thereby. The question is, have these privileges—vested interests been honoured and protected? I do not doubt that when contracts were entered into with the Secretary of State, the Railway Board honourably and seriously intended to fulfil their part of the terms of this transfer, but in practice things have worked the other way. The present state of affairs is due to the different interpretations which the Agents have put upon the Railway Board's orders: Those who are familiar with the working of the railway administrations know that Agents often devolve their powers on the heads who, in turn, devolve them on the divisionals who in their turn devolve them on to their assistants or the upper subordinates and the sufferer is the workman. This results in great hardships especially in connection with house rent of subordinates, not only the subordinates of the operating staff but other subordinates such as the medical staff. There are other instances in which the orders of the Railway Board have been either changed or flouted by the railway administrations. I refer to old scales of pay not being given to retrenched men who were got rid of after 1930-31 and who were promised the old rates of pay when re-engaged, also to the deprivation of education subsidies to the old servants of the G. I. P. Railway.

Let me take the rent question. In this matter it was one of the privileges that the old servants had; indeed it is a privilege which by usage has almost become a vested interest if not an accruing right. Apart from that, what we feel today is this, and I am concerned mainly with the G. I. P. Railway Administration. Sir, there was a time not long ago when railway quarters were free to almost all employees. Railway servants who had to pay rent were given the first quarter that was available, irrespective of the type of house and of the grade of the servant. Railway Agents were wise to realize that it would be better to have a quarter occupied than to have it lie fallow. These men were given these quarters, they did not ask for them and they were told that they would only have to pay rent at the usual rate of ten per cent. of their pay. Other orders have recently been issued—I understand they emanate from the Railway Board, I hope not, because whatever be the charges I have made against the Railway Board, I feel sure they are not guilty of such inhuman orders. But what is the actual position today? These subordinates till lately occupied quarters at ten per cent., they have suddenly been told that they must now pay the full rent of the quarters; in other words, they are called upon to pay thirty to thirty-five per cent. of their pay, and this hardship is accentuated by the fact that these orders are to have retrospective effect from April 1935! I wonder if the Honourable the Railway Member realizes the effect of this order,—no doubt such small matters very seldom come to his notice—but I would like him to realize what this means to these subordinates. It means that these people are now called upon to pay thirty to thirty-five per cent. of their salaries as house rent

and for no fault of their own, because they occupied the quarters in question and so saved the railway the loss they would have incurred had these quarters remained fallow and unoccupied. The Railway Board, when these things are reported to them, should, I submit, make inquiries. I do not know if any inquiries have been undertaken. This matter has been brought prominently to the notice of the G. I. P. Administration and I have heard from the Agent that it is being inquired into. Sir, these inquiries are generally very very infructuous, and I do ask the Railway Member to be so kind as to bring this to the serious notice of the G. I. P. Railway Administration and ask the Agent to inquire into the matter immediately.

Then the question of house rent also affects other railway servants. For instance the Medical Department. Railways indent on the Army and secure military assistant surgeons as medical officers. Those officers are generally senior men, they come on their own military pay not on railway rates of pay, old or new scales. But, they are considered for rent purposes as being on the new scales of pay. They have no new scales of pay at all. Formerly they were given rent free quarters, now they are denied that and I consider it is a matter that should be thoroughly enquired into and remedied. This again refers particularly to the G. I. P. Railway.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I would remind the Honourable Member that he has already agreed to the arrangement under which the rest of this morning, after he has finished, will be taken up by the Nationalist Group to discuss their motions. I take it the Honourable Member will see that there is time left, for the purposes of the discussion of the Nationalist Group motions as agreed to by arrangement.

Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney: I did not quite catch the purport of your remark, Sir. Do you ask me to be brief in my remarks?

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Certainly you have to allow time to the Nationalist Group in accordance with the arrangement which, as I understood, the Honourable Member himself accepted.

Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney: I will,—very well, Sir.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I only wanted to remind the Honourable Member.

Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney: All right, Sir. With these remarks, I move my motion.

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

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

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: Sir, Sir Henry Gidney appears to have based this cut motion on certain occurrences on the G. I. P. Railway. He suggests that we are aware of the facts in the Railway Department and further that in this connection we have issued a certain order. Now my information is that we are not in possession of information as to the details of the case and we have been quite unable to trace the order to which reference is made. But if Sir Henry Gidney will let us have the detailed facts of the case. I can promise him that there will be an investigation.

Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney: Sir, in view of the Honourable Member's remarks, I would ask for leave of the House to withdraw this motion.

The motion was, by leave of the Assembly, withdrawn.

Salaries of Railway Improvers and Apprentices in Service before introduction of Pre-co-ordinated Rates of Pay and New Scales of Pay with special reference to E. I. Railway.

Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney: Sir, I beg to move:

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

Sir, my remarks will, at your request, be very brief. On this subject I would like to refer to certain principles governing the pay and prospects of old employees of the E. I. R. I am not making a complaint against the railway, for I must admit that in Mr. Bell, the Agent, of the East Indian Railway the employees have an officer who, by his just dealings with the staff, has gained their entire respect, confidence and affection. I can personally vouch for this, although we have not been able to agree in a few matters. The matter to which I now refer is one in which he is unable to move in the face of existing rules. Prior to the introduction of the co-ordinated scales of 1928 on the East Indian Railway, there was a system by which apprentices were engaged in the various Loco. sheds for training as shed apprentices. After finishing their three years' apprenticeship and on attaining the age of twenty years they were classed as improvers and were paid Rs. 60, 70 and 80 per mensem as salary in their first, second and third years of service as improvers. After they had been in receipt of their maximum pay of Rs. 80 as improvers for one year, if they were considered efficient and deserving, they were permanently appointed and recognized as mechanics on the grade of Rs. 90—20—250. It appears that this system was suddenly discontinued in 1929. But the surprising part of it is that the apprentices who were under training in 1928 have been denied the privileges of the conditions under which they were originally recruited. All of them were treated as temporary men till 1937, i.e., for over ten years, when the present Agent confirmed them and for which act, I thank him, although, according to the rules governing their recruitment, they should have been confirmed as mechanics on the grade of Rs. 90—20—250 one year after reaching the salary of Rs. 80 as improvers, provided they were efficient, and none of them has been so confirmed. I submit, Sir, that this amounts to a serious breach of contract, in that the railway failed to abide by the rules under which these apprentices were recruited. Even in the case of those who had finished their first three years' apprenticeship prior to 1928, the railway has denied the grant of the pre-co-ordinated scale of pay. This is **against** the very principles which the Government of India have laid down in the case of the new scales of pay. Surely, the Government of India cannot countenance the adoption of different principles for new scales of pay and pre-co-ordinated scales in respect of paid apprentices. This deprivation of salary and brand of inferiority is confined not only to these apprentices but in other classes of service, e.g., the Lower Gazetted Service. The Lower Gazetted Service was created for certain specific purposes—mainly to replace the former Local Traffic Service, the Provincial Engineering Service which were abolished about 1930. But it seems that the main reasons for the creation of this service was to create a sort of leave reserve for officials and to secure high class labour at cheaper rates. These

people have also suffered. What has happened to the promises made by the Railway Board? The pay which is given to these officers is insufficient, especially when they officiate in official appointments. Lower Gazetted Service officers can rightly be called the convenience—*par excellence*—of officials—their leave reserve. One of the terms of this service is that 10 to 20 per cent. of the members would be promoted to the junior and senior scales of service. But has the Railway Board fulfilled this term? Certainly not. Except for a handful of promotions they have done nothing for the promotion of the Lower Gazetted Service to the superior service. These officers are performing the work of the superior services but are not drawing the salary of that service except some small allowances when officiating. These efficient officers who have proved their efficiency by their ability are being used mainly for the convenience of the superior services without paying the salary attached to the superior posts. This is the way in which the Railway Board is protecting the interests of the Lower Gazetted Service. I would like the Honourable Member to look into this matter. Why have they treated the members of the Lower Gazetted Service in this fashion? Again, why is it that the railways find it necessary even today to recruit more officers from England and pay them the Lee Concessions, etc., as has been done within the past month? I submit that it is not fair and I would ask the Honourable Member to remove their grievances and to look into these matters.

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

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

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: Sir, I trust the Honourable the Mover will realise the difficulties with which we are presented in dealing with detailed matters on a somewhat indefinite motion. In his motion No. 88 he has given no indication of what were the precise grievances which he proposed to bring to our notice. We have been unable to find in our records—certainly at the notice we have had—any information which would enable me to reply to the Honourable Member’s allegations. But I can give him in this case, as I have done in others, the assurance that any representations in these respects will receive our consideration.

Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney: I am sorry the Honourable Member has found himself so handicapped. I should have thought

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member has no right to reply.

Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney: I do not want to reply but with your permission and with the permission of the House and in view of what the Honourable Member has said, I wish to withdraw my motion.

The motion was, by leave of the Assembly, withdrawn.

Difficulty in obtaining Leave legitimately due to Staff owing to Reduction in Staff.

Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney: Sir, the next motion standing in my name is what I consider to be one of the most important of the many motions of which I have given notice. Sir, I move:

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

[Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney.]

In presenting this to the House I would invite the very serious consideration of all Parties, for it is one of the most serious grievances of railway employees. It is a position pregnant with danger; it is a position which endangers the safety of the public; and it is a position which has worked so harshly on the staff that their health is being seriously undermined. It is an indisputable fact that this position does exist today and that it is a most serious condition. The mere fact that we see so many advertisements appearing in the press, the total reduction of railway employees as seen from the blue books and the reduction of the cost of railway employees as seen in the economies effected, are proofs positive that there is a shortage of the staff. This shortage, I submit, has existed for years and it certainly is the result of this epidemic of retrenchment and economy which we see are being practised today. Now, how does this reduction affect the staff and their efficiency? It means that the staff are required to put in extra work for longer hours and they are not only deprived of rest but of the application of the Geneva rules regarding hours of labour. The result of all this is that their health is being undermined and what is more important is that this overworked staff is a danger to public safety. Because of the deterioration of their health, these people are compelled to apply for leave. It is the practice in all railway stations that these over-worked men are compelled to go to the railway doctor and ask for leave which means they want rest. The railway doctor is the man who usually saves them from this terrible situation—this tragedy. As a result of this, which I would call the connivance—I use the word deliberately—developes the interference between the Divisional Superintendent and the Medical Officer of the station. Men go sick and the doctor gives them certificates but many of them at the Divisional Superintendent's interference are more or less made or persuaded to go out on work. This is a direct outcome of the reduced staff of railways. The other day a statement was made by my Honourable friend on the other side who told the Honourable Member for Communications that members of the subordinate railway staff could not get leave either on account of serious illness or for urgent domestic reasons. Sir, this is a serious position and it must affect the efficient management of the railways. Men cannot get leave for health or for domestic reasons owing to the fact, as I have just stated, that there is no leave reserve. If there is a leave reserve, it is a very inadequate one. In other words, the men have to work on, well or ill. Sir, to my mind, the greatest defect of the railway administration of today is the utter absence of the human touch between officials and staff. And what do we find in its place? The "push touch", the "drive touch" and the men are the sufferers. The extra work demanded at all costs of a reduced staff must impair their health and efficiency. Now, Sir, contrast this position with that of the officers. There is no appreciable reduction in the number of officers employed. We know the familiar statement that jobs are kept in abeyance only waiting to be filled up when money is available. The divisional system has certainly increased the number of officers and the Lower Gazetted Service is always at hand to supply a leave reserve for officials. There is, therefore, no difficulty in officers getting leave. In fact, they get it for the mere asking, indeed their furlough passages are arranged without any difficulty months before they sail. I draw the attention of the Honourable Member to this contrast between the official and the subordinate not with any hostile purpose or with the

desire to create any bad feeling, but as a fact, an undeniable fact. Why should there be this difference between the official and the subordinate? Both are citizens of India and both are the servants of the Crown. Why, then, make fish of one and the flesh of the other? Why should you ruin the health of your subordinate staff and deprive him of his legitimate privileges and which are in his and the employer's interests? Surely, no such leave privileges were promised to the officers when they signed their contracts with the Secretary of State for India. Sir, I find myself bankrupt in words with which adequately to express my feelings of indignation on this subject. It baffles description as it exposes the dangers ahead unless it be rectified and adequate leave and sick reserves are provided on

12 Noon. all railways. I, therefore, ask the Honourable the Communications Member to look into this matter. I know he is desirous of helping the poor humble railway servants. I beg of him to consider this matter very seriously and apply his whole-hearted attention to it. It can only be done by a thorough enquiry which I ask him to undertake at once. If the Honourable Member promises to enquire into the matter, I shall ask for leave to withdraw the motion, if not, I shall move for a division. I do hope this House will agree with me that no efforts should be spared in removing this serious grievance of the staff. 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. N. M. Joshi: Sir, I do not like to take up much of the time of the House, but I would like to make one or two remarks on this subject. My Honourable friend, Sir Henry Gidney, has drawn the attention of the Government to the real grievances. The subordinate employees and also the lowest paid employees are given certain leave privileges. Unfortunately the privilege cannot be enjoyed by a large number of them, for want of leave reserve. I should like the Government of India to give serious attention to this problem. I would suggest to the Honourable Member that he should make an enquiry as to the extent to which the privilege of leave already given by the rules is enjoyed by the railway men. It is no good making these rules and saying that the railway men can enjoy certain leave, if there is no provision for leave reserve. They cannot actually enjoy the leave. The rules are, therefore, no good. I would, therefore, urge upon the attention of the Honourable Member in charge of the Department to make some enquiry as to the extent to which leave is actually being enjoyed. I am quite sure that if he makes the enquiry, he will come to the conclusion that some provision will have to be made for employing leave reserve so that the option of leave could be well enjoyed.

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: Sir, I had intended to deal at some length with this subject, but in deference to the wishes of my Honourable friend, Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta, I will content myself by saying that enquiries are already on foot to ascertain the extent, if any, to which these leave privileges are nullified by insufficiency of leave reserves.

Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney: Sir, I thank the Honourable Member for his sympathetic reply and I beg leave to withdraw my motion.

The motion was, by leave of the Assembly, withdrawn.

Policy of Rates and Freights affecting Commerce and Industry.

Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta: Sir, I beg to move:

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

Sir, I want to discuss the policy of rates and freights so far as they affect our industry and commerce. I have been fighting year after year for the principle that in India the railways are the property of the people, and, therefore, it is their duty not merely to earn dividends, it is their duty not merely to balance the budget, it is their duty not merely to present a surplus budget, but that they have a higher and nobler duty to perform and that duty is to encourage and to foster and to promote the industries of India. But my complaint is that the railway policy of rates and freights has always been and is still such as to hamper and handicap our industries. Sir, this question of rates and freights is a very difficult question and a very complicated question. Last year the Honourable the Railway Member observed that this question could not be very conveniently discussed on the floor of this House in all its details. I do not, however, propose to go into details specially in a country where the whole system is a system of special rates and special rates are dependent upon many factors. In the circumstances it is impossible to get any light from any particular items. There are some items which will support one view and there are some other items which will support another view. The question, therefore, is not of individual special rates, but of the general policy and of the general principles. In dealing with this question, I must confess that I am not an expert at all. It is a subject which requires special and technical knowledge of the working of these rates to which I have no pretension whatsoever. Therefore, I propose not to rely too much upon the result of my own examination but upon the result of the examination by those people and by those Chambers who are competent to judge. It is a very very old question. I find, Sir, that more than a quarter of a century ago, Sir F. S. N. Lely, K.C.I.E., one of the most distinguished Members of the Indian Civil Service in a book written by him entitled, “Suggestions for the better governing of India” said:

“A Traffic manager wields irresponsible powers over the country commanded by his railway. By a slight readjustment of rates he can, and sometimes he does, crush a rising home manufacture in favour of a foreign customer.”

That was said more than a quarter of a century before. That was the opinion of a non-Indian high official.

In 1910 the trade of the City of Broach in the Bombay Presidency was being killed as a result of the freight policy of the railways and there was a representation made by the merchants and citizens of Broach and that was forwarded to the Government of India by the Governor of Bombay. Sir James Clarke, the then Governor of Bombay, in absolute disgust, made these remarks: “The railways are made for India and not India for railways.”

Then, Sir, coming to 1911, we find this subject was discussed in the Imperial Legislative Council by the Honourable Mr. Sinha. In 1912, Sir Vithaldas Thackersy in a historic speech made a strong protest against the rates and freights policy of the Government of India and the Railway

Board. The Honourable Mr. (now Sir) Ibrahim Rahimtoolah made a similar protest in the Imperial Legislative Council in 1915. The question was raised again before the Industrial Commission and they complained bitterly against this policy which was calculated to discourage Indian industries and foster foreign industries. The system was condemned by the Industrial Commission and they recommended that at all events "the internal traffic and the external movements should be rated at least equally". Then, Sir, the same complaint was again repeated before the Indian Fiscal Commission. I shall read just two short paragraphs from their Report at page 73:

"The Indian Industrial Commission received much evidence in regard to the alleged handicap imposed on Indian industries by the railway rates policy: and devoted a Chapter of its report to considering this question. Similar evidence was given before the Railway Committee which sat last year, (*that is, the Acworth Committee*) and we have received complaints from persons interested in industries in many parts of the country to the effect that the system of railway rates operates to the disadvantage of Indian industry."

Then, after referring to the circular issued by the Railway Board in 1915, the Report goes on to say:

"But we feel bound to point out that this circular was issued in 1915, that the Industrial Commission reporting in 1918, drew attention to complaints indicating conditions quite inconsistent with the policy enunciated in the circular, that the Railway Committee in 1921 received similar complaints and that exactly the same complaints were made before us in 1922. We cannot believe that these complaints are entirely without foundation. In spite, therefore, of the sympathetic attitude of the Railway Board and in spite of the fact that this question has already been dealt with by two important Commissions within the last four years, we think it necessary to refer to the matter briefly in the hope of emphasizing the points which appear to be accepted generally in theory but do not appear to be translated into practice."

Then they quote the recommendation of the Industrial Commission and make recommendation on those lines.

Coming to recent times, the Public Accounts Committee, of which my Honourable friend, Mr. B. Das, was a member, raised this question again in 1935. An answer has been given by the Railway Board, and that answer shortly is this. If I understood it correctly, they plead guilty to the charge so far as the policy was in force some years before, but when they say that fiscal conditions have altered and as things have altered the railways have altered their policy and are adjusting themselves to the altered conditions. That is the whole case made by the Railway Board in answer to the charge brought against them by the Public Accounts Committee and that is also the case made by the Honourable the Railway Member last year on more than one occasion. My complaint is that it is not a fact that the policy has been changed in recent times. I shall not rely, as I said before, upon the result of any examination by myself. Recently there was the Wedgwood Committee, and these complaints were repeated before them. And they were not repeated by hostile critics or by professional agitators or interested individuals but by Chambers of Commerce who are competent to speak on this matter. For instance, this complaint was made by the Bombay Chamber of Commerce who in a written memorandum before the Wedgwood Committee said this:

"Railway freights *at present* appear designed to facilitate the transport of cotton for export rather than to further an increased consumption in the interior."

Allow me to remind the House, Sir, that this Bombay Chamber of Commerce is a European Chamber. But that Chamber does not stand

[Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta.]

isolated in this regard. There is the Upper India Chamber of Commerce which is another European Chamber, who said this in their memorandum:

"When the railway rating system, as now in use, was built up, India would seem to have been looked upon as essentially an importing and exporting country and this view still seems to be governing the rating system. India is, however, fast developing into a manufacturing country of importance and this change has naturally brought about a change in the direction of the movement of transport of her raw materials as well as of the manufactured goods. The railway rating structure, therefore, requires very careful investigation with a view to bringing it into line with the present day conditions."

This was the case made before the Wedgwood Committee by the different Chambers. Let us see what the verdict of that Committee is. We shall find it on page 83 of their report:

"Several Chambers of Commerce complained that rates had not been adjusted to changed fiscal conditions and that they facilitated import and export of traffic to the detriment of Indian industries. This general complaint was illustrated by reference to the rates on cotton from the cotton growing districts to the ports and to Cawnpore respectively. The case is substantially the same as that which was considered by the Acworth Committee in 1920-21 and described in the report of that Committee as being 'an Indian grievance of long standing'. It was dealt with more recently in a special Note by the Railway Board to the Public Accounts Committee," etc.

Then they go on to say:

"We do not think we can add anything to the comments of the Acworth Committee or to the arguments as set out in the Report of the Public Accounts Committee; but we were impressed with the feeling of grievance that appeared to exist in regard to these rates. A grievance of this character in Great Britain would, failing satisfaction, find its way, in natural course, to the Railway Rates Tribunal, where it would receive a thorough hearing and could be argued out in all its bearings. It is a pity that in India the Railway Rates Advisory Committee has not come to be regarded in the same light."

It does not appear whether the allegations made by the different Chambers before the Committee were in any way traversed by the Railway Board. At all events there is no mention of that in this report; and of course, according to the well-known principle, non-traversal of a charge is tantamount to a confession of that charge. I will then refer to another short paragraph in that report,—page 86, paragraph 133:

"In hearing the complaints placed before us by Chambers of Commerce and other bodies, we have formed the impression that the trading community feel themselves burdened by a sense of helplessness in trying to obtain a fair hearing, and that almost as much importance attaches to this as to the substance of their complaints."

There is still another passage in this report to which I am anxious to refer: at page 79, in paragraph 127 we find this:

"For whilst the classification is reasonably uniform for all railways there are surprising variations in the application of the schedules. Cement, for instance, is carried by twelve Class I Indian railways on seven different schedules, so that the charge for 300 miles varies from 51 pies per maund to 114 pies per maund. Salt is carried on ten different schedules, and the same is true of grains and pulses."

Then they say, Sir:

"We are nevertheless under the impression that the diversity of schedules on the Indian railways cannot altogether be justified by considerations of this character."

They proceed and say that:

"It will be incumbent on the railways to work steadily in the direction of simplification and to lose no opportunity of establishing themselves in a more logical and defensible position."

The railway position is indefensible according to the verdict of this Committee. Does the Government challenge this verdict of the Wedgwood Committee by which they swear in season and out of season?

Now, Sir, these are the charges, but I think we have almost a confession from no other than Mr. Jarrad, Agent of the Bengal Nagpur Railway. He said this only in 1936:

"In recent years trading conditions all over the world have changed. There has been no difficulty regarding production, but no adequate system of distribution has yet been devised, and it is the method and cost of distribution by railways of production throughout India which the commercial people question. We have to realise and visualise the vast change in Indian trading conditions brought about by the protectionist policy of the Government of India which in itself, to my mind, justifies a complete review of the railway freight rating policy. India is bent on developing its own industries and the success or otherwise of this development of internal trade largely depends on an adequate scheme of distribution among a population with restricted purchasing power."

My grievance is that no heed has been paid all these years to this grievance. Of course, individual concessions have been granted in some cases, but they are more dangerous than beneficial as they give room for nepotism and back-door influence. If a particular gentleman has got influence with the railway authorities or Government he gets an advantage and special rates are quoted to him, but that is a thing which ought to be avoided.

Just one word about the rebate to Afghanistan and Iran. The question really is—whether imported foreign goods are given a rebate and not Indian manufactures: I want a specific answer from the Honourable Member whether or not this is so. Sir, what I want is a reorientation of the entire policy, not by quotation of special rates: it ought to be a cardinal principle of the railway policy that it must encourage and foster Indian industries: at all events the railway policy should not support foreign industries at the cost of Indian industries.

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

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

Mr. F. D'Souza (Government of India: Nominated Official): Sir, I hope the Honourable the Deputy President will not think it presumptuous if I venture to congratulate him on the moderate manner in which he has put his case. Had I not the privilege of being behind the scenes I should perhaps have been convinced, by his eloquent presentation of the case, that there was really something wrong with our rating policy. I shall, however, endeavour to explain to the House that the position is not quite as bad as it has been made out, and that our rating policy accords with the needs of the situation. The existing rates structure is not on a scientific basis. It has grown up in the course of time, and has been adapted, so far as human knowledge and experience can make it, to the varying needs of the day. It is admittedly somewhat intricate, and it is, therefore, that any ill-considered interference with some points of detail have reactions which, to those not in intimate touch with the position, seem almost incredible. I think, therefore, Sir, that the House would like to know what exactly is the rating structure to which I refer.

Broadly stated, commodities carried on railways are grouped in sixteen different classes, each class having a prescribed maximum and minimum. Within these maxima and minima railway administrations

[Mr. F. D'Souza.]

are allowed to alter freight rates at their discretion in order to meet conditions which arise from time to time. The maximum rate chargeable for a commodity is based on what is considered to be a reasonable rate to charge under normal conditions. For example, the ordinary rate for coffee is .62 pie per maund per mile. It was suggested the other day, during the general discussion on the budget, that this rate was abnormally high. Now, the difference that the freight rate from Southern India to Northern India makes in the retail price of coffee is a little less than one anna per pound, after being carried for 1,600 miles or more. The price of coffee in Southern India is, I understand, about four annas per pound and in Northern India from twelve annas to a rupee. A difference of one anna in the retail price cannot make any appreciable difference in stimulating the consumption of coffee. I have given this illustration, Sir, to indicate how small relatively is burden of the freight charge on a commodity, and would suggest, therefore, that, viewed broadly, there is nothing seriously wrong with the rating of coffee, and this remark applies also to other commodities. The Honourable the Deputy President gave some details of the criticism which railway rating policy was subjected to during the last 30 or 40 years. I suggest, Sir, that it would serve no useful purpose if I endeavoured to explain the circumstances which gave rise to the criticisms to which the Honourable the Deputy President referred.

To turn now to the cases to which reference has been made more recently, I may take first the allegation in regard to traffic to and from Iran. The Honourable the Deputy President inquired whether the rebate on freight rates that is allowed for traffic to and from Iran is restricted in its application to foreign goods or applies also to Indian made articles. The Honourable Member for Railways explained the other day during the course of the general discussion, that this rebate was introduced 38 years ago at the request of Indian traders to enable them to get their consignments carried by rail through Baluchistan to Iran in competition with the sea route from Bombay and Karachi to Bunder Abbas in the Persian Gulf. The necessity, therefore, for the rebate arose only for traffic originating in Bombay and Karachi and the rebate arrangement was accordingly limited to traffic from Bombay over the B., B. & C. I. and Jodhpur Railways and over the North Western Railway. Subsequently, the concession was extended to traffic carried also over the East Indian Railway. But it is not limited to imported goods. Consignments booked from Amritsar, Delhi, Cawnpore and all other stations on the North Western and East Indian Railways are carried to the frontier of Iran at these concession rates. The suggestion that these rates favour foreign goods is, therefore, not correct.

Then the Honourable the Deputy President referred to complaints made by various chambers within recent years and suggested that these indicated that the railway rating policy which had been criticised many years ago had not in fact changed. General statements of this kind are difficult to prove or to disprove. But as the Honourable the Deputy President made a special reference to a representation of the Upper India Chamber of Commerce, it may interest the House to know that the representation was to the effect that various other industrial centres had concession rates for cotton which were being denied for traffic carried to Cawnpore. The Upper India Chamber of Commerce felt so very strongly in this

matter that they considered it desirable to make a representation on the subject to the Provincial Government. A careful examination of each one of the points detailed in the Chamber's representation and the Provincial Government's comments thereon was made by the Railway Board, and a detailed reply sent to the Provincial Government who forwarded a copy to the Upper India Chamber of Commerce. Every point made in the Upper India Chamber's representation was answered fully. This was over eighteen months ago and there has been no further reference since then from the Chamber. The conclusion, I submit, is that the Chamber are satisfied that they had not quite as good a case as they thought they had. The Honourable the Deputy President also referred to representations made by the Bombay Chamber to the Wedgwood Committee. This and the Upper India Chamber have been specially mentioned because they are European Chambers and, therefore, presumably not suspected of taking a biased view. But during these several years that I have been in the office of the Railway Board I do not remember receiving any representation from the Bombay Chamber suggesting anything specifically wrong or needing rectification in connection with the rating policy.

The Honourable the Deputy President further said that the non-refutation of a charge is tantamount to its acceptance. Allegations of a very general nature cannot easily be refuted: but whenever there has been any occasion to examine charges of preferential treatment as between one centre and another, such examination has almost invariably justified what had been done, generally on the grounds of competition.

Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta: Did you place your case before the Wedgwood Committee?

Mr. F. D'Souza: My recollection is that the Committee could not find the time within the few months they were here to make any detailed investigation of the various points on which representations were made to them in connection with the rating policy

Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta: But they heard the other side too.

Mr. F. D'Souza: They did, and they also heard our side, but they did not hear it in sufficient detail to be able to come to more definite conclusions

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

Mr. F. D'Souza: I am sorry for having taken up so much time. But I would like to add, Sir, that while the strength of the feeling against our rating policy generally is recognised, it is difficult to understand why those who feel they have a grievance in any individual case or in connection with any commodity generally, do not ask for their case to be put before the Railway Rates Advisory Committee, a body specially constituted to deal with grievances in connection with railway rates

An Honourable Member: It is so expensive and takes a long time to settle.

Mr. F. D'Souza: We realise that the procedure leads to delays, but this is due to various causes, including the time taken by complainants in the presentation of their case and in the production of their evidence. If the Rates Advisory Committee is to investigate cases in accordance with what may be termed legal procedure, delays are inevitable. But if the grievances are of long standing, surely it is not reasonable to suggest that a few months more or less makes any appreciable difference to the case. May I suggest, therefore, to the Honourable the Deputy President that, in view of the avenues that are open to the trade interests to have their grievances redressed, there is no necessity for him to press his motion.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member must remember that the Honourable the Railway Member is entitled to half an hour for his reply if he wishes to take up that time, so that the debate must be regulated accordingly. In the afternoon it is the Independent Party that will move their motion.

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: If I may say so at this stage, Sir, I shall be unlikely on this occasion to take half an hour.

Dr. P. N. Banerjea (Calcutta Suburbs Non-Muhammadan Urban): Sir, the demand of the public in India with regard to the railway rates policy of the Government is a two-fold one: one negative and the other positive. As regards the negative side of it, the complaint is that the railway rates policy is so devised as to encourage the export of raw materials from India and the import of finished products from other countries. Now, on this question there was a debate the other day, and the Honourable Member in charge of Communications said that although this complaint had a foundation a quarter of a century ago, it had no foundation at the present moment. Is that correct?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: No, Sir, I made no such admission.

Dr. P. N. Banerjea: I may be mistaken then.

Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta: That was the note of the Railway Board.

Dr. P. N. Banerjea: He also complained that there were no specific instances pointed out to him. In this connection, Sir, I may refer to the specific instance which was pointed out on the 17th December, 1934, by Mr. Gavin Jones at the annual general meeting of the Associated Chambers of Commerce. He gave some very interesting figures. He stated that from Bombay to Cawnpore, a distance of only 840 miles, the freight rate for cotton per maund is Rs. 2-8-9, while from Cawnpore to Bombay over the same line and traversing the same distance, the freight is Rs. 1-10-11. The Honourable Member for Communications said that the Railways had laid down certain principles to guide their conduct, and these were competition between one railway and another, competition between a railway and a coasting steamer, long haul *versus* short haul and so forth. Now, do any of these principles apply to the particular case which was mentioned by Mr. Gavin Jones? I may incidentally mention that Mr. Gavin Jones is not a political agitator; he is not even an Indian; he is an Englishman or perhaps a Scotchman

Mr. F. E. James (Madras: European): No.

Dr. P. N. Banerjea: Then is he a Welshman? He is as much interested as the Honourable the Member for Communications in the maintenance of the British Empire in India. So he cannot be accused of any bias in this matter. This morning Mr. D'Souza referred to the evidence which was tendered by some of the Chambers of Commerce before the Wedgwood Committee. He said that the Wedgwood Committee had no time to go into the memoranda which were submitted to them by various bodies. Have the Government, I ask, gone into these memoranda, and have they come to the conclusion that there is no foundation for the complaints which they make? I want a definite answer.

Sir, it has been pointed out that there is a Railway Rates Advisory Committee. Everybody knows that this is not a judicial tribunal in the sense that a judicial tribunal exists in England or in other countries, and, as has been pointed out by my friend, Mr. James, it is very expensive to move this body and the procedure also is very cumbersome. For these reasons the public do not take advantage of this tribunal, if it at all can be called a tribunal. Now, if the Government is really willing to remove all feeling of want of confidence in such a tribunal, are they prepared to establish a really independent judicial tribunal which will investigate all cases of complaints? Besides this general charge, there are numerous anomalies in the rates fixed by the different railways. In Bengal the other day I heard a complaint that the rate levied on the transport of mustard seeds from Cawnpore to Calcutta was different from the rate levied on the transport of mustard oil. I do not know why this discrepancy should exist. However, I would ask the Honourable Member in charge of Communications to investigate this matter.

So far as regards the negative side of the question. I now come to the positive side. On the positive side we want that the railways should actively encourage the industrial development of the country through their rates policy. That is our demand, and that demand was accepted by the Tariff Board on chemical industries when it said, "A railway is a public utility service, and its objects must be to provide transport at the cheapest possible rate so that both industries and agriculture may develop and add to the prosperity of the country". Now, look at Japan. What is Japan doing? If we read the annual reports of the Trade Commissioner, we find that the Japanese railways, steamships, banks, and Government, all work in co-operation in order to foster the industrial advancement of the country. I want that such a policy should be adopted in India at present. It should be remembered in this connection that the real competitor against India at the present moment is not Britain but Japan; Germany is another competitor. So, in order that India may be able to compete on fair terms against these two powerful rivals, it is necessary that a more enlightened policy should be adopted. As there is no question now between Englishmen and Indians, because the competition which at one time existed between India and England has become one of much less significance at the present moment, I would earnestly request the Government to take up the point of view of the Indian public so that the industrial development of the country may be advanced.

Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad: Sir, there are three fundamental questions in this particular problem of rates and fares. The first is that the classification of rates as put down in the coaching tariff is very complicated. It

[Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad.]

is very difficult even for railway men to put down a particular item in a particular class. So much so, a commodity like cement is put under seven different classes by the 1st class railways. The same is the case with regard to salt. It is very difficult even for railway men to determine where to put in a particular commodity, and therefore this classification is exceedingly troublesome, and on account of putting them in different classes, the charges are also very different. Now, take the case of cement, the rates for the transport of cement vary very considerably. The classification should be simplified; it should be intelligible to the tradesman and it should be intelligible to the railway servants.

Now, the second point is this. The maximum and minimum are fixed by the Government and within this, the railway administrations are allowed to administer the rates. There is wide margin between maximum and minimum. As Mr. Mudaliar once said, that the margin is so wide that even an elephant can pass through these two. The difference is so wide. There should be at the most a ten per cent. latitude on either side. There should not be a very wide difference between the maximum and the minimum.

The third difficulty is that the present Rates Advisory Committee is a useless body. Two years ago, it had only four cases to try in the whole year and took long to determine those four cases. We have repeatedly demanded on the floor of the House that the Rates Advisory Committee ought to be replaced by a Rates Tribunal such as exists in the United Kingdom. It should be an effective body. My friend has cited certain cases which really ought to have been decided by a rates tribunal—the rate for cotton from Cawnpore to Bombay and from Bombay to Cawnpore. Last year, I drew the attention of the Secretary of the Railway Board to another case—piece goods. Here there are two different rates, one from Calcutta to Bombay and another from Bombay to Calcutta. This reminds me of a story about the Bhogaon station which is really famous for all kinds of foolishness. The Railway ticket from Bhogaon to Mainpuri was seven pice, while the rate from Mainpuri to Bhogaon was two annas. The railway authorities were confused by the atmosphere of Bhogaon and they took several years to rectify the mistake. This mistake deliberately exists in the case of rates in several places, between two stations they have got two different rates, one rate in one direction and another rate in the reverse direction; and in addition to this, there are so many complaints which are raised from time to time by tradesmen and others. These things ought to be expeditiously decided by some authoritative body. Therefore, it is very desirable that we ought to establish this rates tribunal which we have been demanding at a very early date. I hope that the Government would agree to modify these three things, the classification of the schedule, lowering the difference between the maximum and minimum and the establishment of a rates tribunal. It is only then that substantial improvement may be in sight.

Mr. B. Das (Orissa Division: Non-Muhammadan): Sir, my friend, Mr. D'Souza of the Railway Department, knows very well the criticism that the commercial community of India has been levelling at the rates policy of the railways. I should like to inform the Honourable Member for Communications that European commerce and Indian commerce are of one mind in this matter, which has been given expression to by my friend, Dr. Banerjea. Mr. DeSouza said that the Wedgwood Committee

had no time to look into this matter. My friend, the Deputy President, referred to para. 127 of the Committee's report. It is very interesting. This is what it says:

"The problem no doubt calls for the best experience of the rates experts of the different administrations if a satisfactory solution is to be found, but we would urge that the movement as a whole should receive its impulse from higher quarters and that the Railway Board should give it their special attention and encouragement."

It is no use saying that everything is all right and that nothing need be done. Reference was also made to the Public Accounts Committee. The Public Accounts Committee also considered the Wedgwood Committee report and there was a minute approved by a majority with the exception of the Government representative, Mr. Nixon, who was Chairman of the Committee. On page 24, this is what the Committee say:

The Railway Enquiry Committee (paragraphs 122 and 123) say that individual rates should continue to be readily adjustable to meet varying conditions, but they cannot recommend any general reduction in charges. Until this question is far more carefully studied and its effects on railway receipts properly assessed, we recommend to the Government that they should not accept the proposition that there can be no general reduction in charges."

What I want to point out is that the Public Accounts Committee last year and the year before and also two or three years previous have been impressing upon the Railway Board that the rates policy should be revised and that the aim should be the development of Indian industries. Mr. D'Souza says "Why don't you go to that Committee", referring to the Rates Advisory Committee in Calcutta. The Acworth Committee wants a rates tribunal but instead the Government appointed an advisory committee. The Member for Communications ought to know that two cases were dealt with by this Committee last year at a cost of Rs. 80,000. Add to this the lakhs that the parties must have spent to fight out their cases. This is not a fair machinery which the Government have provided to revise the rates structure of the railways. The Honourable Member himself knows that three or four cases are pending. The machinery is so cumbersome and even if it comes to a decision it is not binding on the Government. It is better to scrap it and start a machinery which can try a case like any other judicial Court or any business tribunal and give its decision in a short time. Otherwise, the Rates Advisory Committee ought to be abolished. The Government have helped the Wedgwood Committee to make those reactionary recommendations but they have had no time to revise the rate structure policy for goods traffic. It should soon be done.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I have just now been given to understand that the Independent Party have agreed to begin their motion at 3 o'clock today, instead of at half past two. So, there will be three quarters of an hour at the disposal of the Honourable Members.

Mr. Sami Vencatachelam Ohetty (Madras: Indian Commerce): If I intervene in this debate, it is not to get any specific grievance ventilated but to express the anxiety of the commercial public to know exactly what is the policy of the Government in regard to the fixation of rates and freights on various commodities. It has been practically admitted that this structure is as old as the early fifties of the last century and that it was based upon the then prevailing commercial policy of the country, namely, exports of raw materials and import of finished goods. The structure no doubt served its purpose all these years, and as

1 P. M.

[Mr. Sami Vencatachalam Chetty.]

the Government would undoubtedly admit, the commercial policy of this country has undergone a radical change, making it also necessary that there should be a re-examination of the structure based upon that policy. It is a pity, Sir, that the Government did not listen to these complaints in time so that the commercial public might be assured that their interests are not neglected. It is easy for the Railway Board to answer the arguments that may be advanced from this side in respect of the freight on any particular commodity. For instance, my Honourable friend, Dr. Banerjee, has quoted the case of the difference of freight on cotton from Bombay to Cawnpore and *vice versa*. I am sure that the Railway Board will say that Bombay being the selling market, it is desirable that the freight on cotton from Cawnpore to Bombay must be certainly less than what it would be from Bombay to Cawnpore. Similarly, in the case of several other things the Railway Board may easily put forward arguments in plausible justification of their policy.

What we are now concerned with is that the whole policy must be re-examined with reference to the present-day movement of goods. I do not think India can dispose of the question of the export of raw materials in this light-hearted manner. We have to continue to be an exporter of raw materials to a certain extent and to that extent we desire that the freight on exportable articles must be comparatively lighter than on other articles which need not be exported. But on that ground the necessity for a re-examination of this policy does not disappear. There is yet the question of the movement of manufactured goods within the country from one end of the country to another. It is in respect of this particularly, that the Railway Board ought to make its policy quite intelligible to the ordinary merchant who may not have the equipment to understand the method or the procedure which he has to adopt in regard to the preferring of appeals to the so-called Rates Advisory Committee. Sir, in this particular matter I must point out that the south suffers a great deal more than upper India. I must congratulate my brethren of upper India, who are far better equipped in the matter of information as to the activities not only in the Railway Department but in various other Departments and thus have taken advantage of the concessions and privileges that they may be able to secure from the Departments concerned, but in the south, on account of various reasons, we suffer from a very severe handicap in many matters and also in the matter of freights fixed by the Railway Board. For instance, I may point out that in respect of cotton piecegoods it was after nearly fifteen years' struggle that only six months ago we were able to persuade the M. and S. M. Railway to re-adjust its freight on piecegoods from upper India to places like the city of Madras and Madura.

Sir, the Madras Presidency being an agricultural province has to depend upon upper India for various manufactured goods. It looks forward to a lightening of the freight rate on several goods manufactured in India and which have got to be exported to Madras. A different story awaits in respect of sugar. Sir, while factories in Madras Presidency have been allowed to grow on the strength of a particular tariff policy in regard to sugar, most of these factories have to allow their stocks to accumulate on account of the lighter rate on sugar from Bihar and Cawnpore to the Madras Presidency. These points should be attended to by the Railway Board and the Madras Presidency has been putting up a continuous fight in order to induce the Members of the Railway Board to look into this small demand

from the Madras Presidency. Sir, some instances may be quoted of such disparities in regard to freights and rates. There is, therefore, no good in the Railway Board advancing the same kind of arguments in respect of particular items that may be pointed out. The general demand is that there must be a committee of inquiry with regard to these rates and freight policy, and the policy must be laid down in order to make the manufactured goods of upper India available to the distant parts of this country, much cheaper than they are available now and also to adjust their rates and freights on commodities which have to be exported from ports and in regard to the necessity for such exports for this country. Moreover, the machinery that is established for the rectification of any such disparities in rates and freights, as has already been stated, is too cumbersome and a little more ponderous than we humble folk could possibly manage.

I have come across several instances where the Members of the Railway Board have visited various parts of this country, meeting the Chambers of Commerce, listening to their addresses and making very very vague replies, and in the end there was nothing doing except to note down the points, perhaps as a matter of courtesy to those gentlemen who happened to meet them. Sir, it is desirable that complaints of this sort must be expeditiously met, and a definite policy laid down so that the public might understand the somewhat complex working of these rules and tariffs. As has been stated by one of the previous speakers, the wide margin that there is between the maxima and minima operates also as a trade hindrance in certain quarters, giving a great deal of latitude to the individual railway Agents to exercise their rights, and it is desirable that that margin also should be narrowed. Sometime ago there was a demand for a revised classification in regard to these rates and fares. There was a Conference of the Agents of Railways and I do not think much has come out of that Conference. At any rate, the benefit of that Conference has not been felt by the commercial public. Finally, I want to conclude my remarks by appealing to the Government to re-examine the whole policy and make it quite suitable for the present needs of the commerce of this country. It is no good again saying that the railways have nothing to do with the tariff policy of the country. I think it is in this direction that there must be a fundamental change in the attitude of Government in regard to the trades and manufactures of this country. As long as the railways are a department of the Government, they can be looked upon quite legitimately to be a sort of help and aid to the commerce and the industry of this country. So, they cannot take up the attitude of saying that they have nothing to do with the commercial policy of the country and that they are only to run the department on commercial lines and to see whether a particular traffic will be paying or not. With these remarks I support the motion.

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: Sir, do you wish that I should conclude my speech?

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): You will have half an hour. The Independent Party have agreed to waive half an hour. But if the Honourable Member does not want to begin now, he can begin after Lunch.

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: I should very much appreciate if you agree to that.

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.

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: Sir, in rising to answer this debate I find myself confronted with a certain number of difficulties. The first is the difficulty to which reference was made by Mr. D'Souza, that is to say, we are called upon to answer a charge which in its very nature is indefinite. Well, Sir, I have some sympathy not only with my own side but with the other in this matter and I can realise how difficult it is for them to press home a charge when they have so little material on which to rely. But I have still another difficulty and that is that there appears to be no great degree of unanimity amongst the speakers who have supported the charge. You, Sir, I think are one of those who hold that the railway policy should be so directed as to discourage export trade in the interests of internal commerce and industry. On the other hand, your colleague in your Party, Dr. Banerjee, called to my attention the case of Japan and the wonderful efforts towards organisation that had taken place in recent years in Japan. Now, Sir, unless I am mistaken the whole of that organisation is directed towards developing the export trade of Japan and not with a view to developing internal prosperity in the sense that you mean. There is still another difficulty and that is that industry within India is not entirely a happy family. We have the famous case that has been quoted so often, the Cawnpore complaint,—I intended in any case to quote that,—but my Honourable friend, Mr. Vencatachelum Chetty, has revealed to us other rifts in the lute—divergence of opinion between north India and South India as to whether the railway rating policy in regard to sugar and piecegoods is correct or not correct. I believe that if we consulted the sugar industry and the piecegoods industry, we would find that we would have our protagonists as well as our antagonists.

There is still another difficulty with which I am confronted because this rating question has two distinct aspects and I think that no speaker today has attempted to distinguish between the two or has even realised that there were these two aspects. The two aspects are these. First of all you have your tariff structure, the general scheme on which you work when you are fixing rates. The other aspect is the manipulation of rates within the framework that is laid down as a guide. Now, I shall treat those two separately. First of all I shall deal with the rate structure, and will endeavour to tell the House what we are doing in that direction, and in this regard I propose to make my opponents a present of something which I should have thought that they for themselves would have discovered. In 1934, the then Railway Member, Sir Joseph Bore, in reply-

ing to an observation by Diwan Bahadur Ramaswami Mudaliar in the budget debate on 24th February, 1934, said :

“I refer lastly to a very important matter which he, (*He is referring to Diwan Bahadur Ramaswami Mudaliar*) made mention of. He said that it is time that the classification of goods which has existed for so long should be reconsidered and revised. That, Sir, is a question of undoubted importance, and I can assure him that the matter has already been taken up for consideration. He will realise that a basic revision of this nature involves an effect on railway revenues and on trade which is so great that we cannot embark upon it without being in possession of all relevant statistics and the first steps towards an investigation into the subject will be the collection of these statistics. The Indian Railway Conference Association has taken up this matter and we hope that the collection of statistics which alone will enable us to go properly into the question of reclassification will be undertaken at the earliest opportunity.”

Now, Sir, when my predecessor expressed that hope he was naturally unaware of the implications of the proposal. The question was taken up by the Indian Railway Conference Association in 1934 and their preliminary investigations of the problem revealed the somewhat disconcerting fact that in order to collect statistics it would be necessary to expend the no mean sum of 20 lakhs. Now, there is no doubt about it that probably the best way of tackling this problem of revision of the rates structure would be a really scientific investigation based on statistical material. But without any guarantee that anything useful would result,—it might be that the only result of this statistical investigation would be that we were doing approximately what was correct,—it was felt that to embark on the collection of statistical evidence costing us a great sum was in the special circumstances of those days a course of action which could not possibly be contemplated.

Mr. Manu Subedar (Indian Merchants' Chamber and Bureau: Indian Commerce): Was it felt by the Government or by the Railway Conference Association that it would cost 20 lakhs expenditure?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: I should be very glad if the Honourable Member would be relevant and allow me to proceed with my complicated reply to a very complicated debate. This is a very small courtesy that I ask of him. Though it was not possible to undertake this strictly scientific investigation, the possibility of more empirical methods was not lost sight of.

The Railway Conference agreed that a committee should investigate whether something might not be achieved by employing the methods that had been used by what was termed the Calcutta group of railways. The Committee were of opinion that these methods which involved consultation with commercial and industrial interests had already achieved something, and in July, 1935, there was called in Delhi a conference at which representatives of the Indian Railway Conference Association met representatives of commerce, of industry and of agriculture. As a result of this discussion the Committee came to the conclusion that really what the public wanted,—the public that was using the railways,—was not any scientific readjustment and reformation of the basic rate structure but something more direct. They looked in general for lower rates, and if possible, for some greater degree of promptitude in obtaining information as to the rates at which their goods could be carried. On the whole it was felt, therefore, that more could be done by instructing the railways to keep in touch with commercial and industrial interests in the relevant

[Sir Thomas Stewart.]

centres and to adjust the rate structure bit by bit according to the advice that they might there receive. That, Sir, is what is being done in regard to rate structure. In this connection I might refer to an opinion which has been quoted against me in this House, that is, the opinion of the late Sir Vivian Jarrad. Now, that was not an *ex-cathedra* pronouncement by which we who are less experienced than he was must be bound. That, I suggest, was rather an experimental expression of opinion which was contained in a paper which he read before the Indian Railway Conference Association. And the opinion he expressed is not one that has received universal acceptance. In fact, I believe that the majority of his colleagues were not in agreement with the sentiments expressed by Sir Vivian. The Wedgwood Report has been quoted against me. It is rather extraordinary how useful this report has proved to those who have so utterly condemned it. As one who has not condemned it, may I in better faith be allowed to quote a passage that I think has already been quoted, the end of paragraph 127?

"The problem no doubt calls for the best experience of the rates experts of the different administrations if a satisfactory solution is to be found. But we would urge that the movement as a whole should receive its impulse from higher quarters and that the Railway Board should give it their special attention and encouragement."

I think, Sir, that from what I have said this afternoon it can be deduced that this recommendation of the Wedgwood report has been fulfilled.

I come now to the question of the manipulation of rates within the rate structure; and here again, in passing, I would just refer to our difficulties in regard to indefinite charges, and in doing so I would remind Dr. Banerji of what was said by Mr. D'Souza earlier in the day. Dr. Banerji quoted the case which had been made out in, I think, a meeting of the Associated Chambers of Commerce by Sir Tracy Gavin Jones. I do not think that Dr. Banerji had realised that this was precisely the case to which Mr. D'Souza had made reference in the morning. Mr. D'Souza said that that case had been taken up by the Provincial Government and had been submitted to the Government of India. A very full reply traversing the case of Sir Tracy Gavin Jones was returned from the Government of India and to that we have had no rejoinder. Applying the principle that you, Sir, enunciated this morning, I take it that there is no rejoinder possible.

Dr. P. N. Banerjee: What is the substance of that reply?

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: Had I had notice and time I should have produced the letter which we wrote and would have read it out, but that unfortunately is impossible at the present moment. But I should say that there would be no difficulty in letting the Honourable Member have a copy of the letter.

Sir, it is a truism to say that the prosperity of our railways is bound up with the prosperity of the country; and though I am not prepared to accept your particular formula that it is the duty of the railways to foster industry, I would put forward an alternative formula. I would say that

it is the duty of the railways to do what they can for Indian industry, subject always, however, to their commercial and national commitments and subject also to the other interests that may be affected by their working. I do not wish to rely merely on that statement of policy of obligation, which obligation, I claim, we are doing our best to fulfil. Nor am I going to rest on the more general denial that corresponds to the more general accusation. I think we have evidence that the railways have taken steps to encourage indigenous industries, and the most important example of all is that of the great steel industry. Without those special freight rates which were given by the Bengal Nagpur Railway and the East Indian Railway I doubt whether it would have been possible to establish the steel industry which is now at Jamshedpur. But it is not in regard to steel only that there have been concessions given. Cement, glass-ware, machinery, matches, piece-goods, sugar, biscuits, confectionery—these are among the manufactured products of India which are receiving concessional treatment: by concessional treatment I do not mean that there have been any backdoor influences at work; what I mean is that the railways, in order to encourage these industries, have reduced their rates.

Throughout this debate—I hope I am not wrong in saying this—throughout this debate we appear to have been concerned mainly with Indian industries. I do not know if there was one voice raised on behalf of Indian agriculture. I should be sorry to think that it was more than an oversight, but, whether it was oversight or not, it is one in which we have no share as the railways are at all times conscious of the necessities of agriculturists. They may not agree with individual defenders of agriculturists, but their general policy is to assist as far as possible in the proper and adequate movement of agricultural produce. The Agents do not merely sit back in their chairs at head offices and wait for representations from poor individual agriculturists. In this matter the railways have a definite policy, and they have definite instructions from us that they should keep in constant touch with the Directors of Agriculture and the Marketing Officers in the various provinces, and that they should co-operate with these officers in securing new markets for agricultural produce. But that in itself is not enough. Railways, as you know, run not merely in one province: they may run in two, and though it might be to the interests of Madras, for example, that low rates should be quoted for the conveyance of paddy to a district in Bombay, it is necessary also to consult the wishes of the authorities in Bombay to whom it might be a most embarrassing and depressing circumstance to have cheap supplies arriving which would affect the prices realised by the local cultivators. Therefore, the railways have a wider duty than merely to take parochial action: it is part of their duty to co-ordinate the transport of agricultural produce, so that there should be no inter-provincial interference of the kind to which I have referred.

I am now confronted with the last of my difficulties. By reason of the programme that has been fixed for this House, the next speaker is timed for 3 o'clock, and I am presented with the problem of filling up the time till then. In any case that is a matter with which I am not concerned: I simply regret my inability to meet the last of my difficulties.

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 35.

Abdul Ghani, Maulvi Muhammad.
 Abdul Qaiyum, Mr.
 Abdul Wajid, Maulvi.
 Abdur Rasheed Chaudhury, Maulvi.
 Asaf Ali, Mr. M.
 Azhar Ali, Mr. Muhammad.
 Banerjea, Dr. P. N.
 Bhagavan Das, Dr.
 Chaliha, Mr. Kuladhar.
 Chattopadhyaya, Mr. Amarendra Nath.
 Chaudhury, Mr. Brojendra Narayan.
 Chetty, Mr. Sami Vencatachelam.
 Das, Mr. B.
 Essak Sait, Mr. H. A. Sathar H.
 Hans Raj, Raizada.
 Jogendra Singh, Sirdar.
 Kailash Behari Lal, Babu.

Lahiri Chaudhury, Mr. D. K.
 Lalchand Navalrai, Mr.
 Malaviya, Pandit Krishna Kant.
 Murtuza Sahib Bahadur, Maulvi Syed.
 Paliwal, Pandit Sri Krishna Dutta.
 Parma Nand, Bhai.
 Raghurib Narayan Singh, Choudhri.
 Rao, Mr. Thirumala.
 Sant Singh, Sardar.
 Scott, Mr. J. Ramsay.
 Sham Lal, Mr.
 Shaukat Ali, Maulana.
 Sikandar Ali Choudhury, Maulvi.
 Singh, Mr. Gauri Shankar.
 Singh, Mr. Ram Narayan.
 Subedar, Mr. Manu.
 Umar Aly Shah, Mr.
 Zafar Ali Khan, Maulana.

NOES 42.

Abdul Hamid, Khan Bahadur Sir.
 Ahmad Nawaz Khan, Major Nawab Sir.
 Aikman, Mr. A.
 Ayyar, Mr. N. M.
 Bajpai, Sir Girja Shankar.
 Bewoor, Mr. G. V.
 Boyle, Mr. J. D.
 Buss, Mr. L. C.
 Chanda, Mr. A. K.
 Chapman-Mortimer, Mr. T.
 Clow, Mr. A. G.
 Craik, The Honourable Sir Henry.
 Dalal, Dr. R. D.
 Dalpat Singh, Sardar Bahadur Captain.
 Dow, Mr. H.
 D'Souza, Mr. F.
 Fazl-i-Ilahi, Khan Sahib Shaikh.
 Grigg, The Honourable Sir James.
 James, Mr. F. E.
 Jawahar Singh, Sardar Bahadur Sardar Sir.

Kamaluddin Ahmed, Shamsul-Ulema.
 Kushalpal Singh, Raja Bahadur.
 Lloyd, Mr. A. H.
 Mackeown, Mr. J. A.
 Mani, Mr. R. S.
 Menon, Mr. P. A.
 Metcalfe, Sir Aubrey.
 Miller, Mr. C. C.
 Ogilvie, Mr. C. M. G.
 Rahman, Lieut.-Col. M. A.
 Sen, Rai Bahadur N. C.
 Sher Muhammad Khan, Captain.
 Sardar Sir.
 Sircar, The Honourable Sir Nripendra.
 Slade, Mr. M.
 Smith, Lieut.-Colonel H. C.
 Spence, Mr. G. H.
 Staig, Mr. B. M.
 Stewart, The Honourable Sir Thomas.
 Sundaram, Mr. V. S.
 Thorne, Mr. J. A.
 Tvlden-Pattenson, Mr. A. E.
 Walker, Mr. G. D.

The motion was negatived.

Mr. Deputy President (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta): According to the arrangement that has been arrived at, it is now the turn of the 3 P.M. Independent Party.

Failure of the Railway Board to enforce the Home Department Resolution regarding 25 per cent. Services to Muslims in Railway Services.

Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani (Tirhut Division: Muhammadan): Sir*, I beg to move:

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

* Translation supplied by the Honourable Member of his speech delivered in vernacular.

Sir, my intention in moving this cut motion, as I have already indicated, is to discuss the failure of the Railway Board to enforce the Resolution No. H-14/17-B./33, dated the 4th July, 1934, of the Home Department of the Government of India regarding reservation of 25 per cent. services to Muslims in Railways. Sir, on receipt of this Resolution the Railway Board adopted their own resolution on the subject, *vide* their resolution No. E. 34-C. M.-113, dated the 12th December, 1934. The Home Department Resolution runs as follows:

"In accordance with undertakings given in the Legislative Assembly, the Government of India have carefully reviewed the results of the policy followed since 1925, of reserving a certain percentage of direct appointments to Government service for the redress of communal inequalities. It has been represented that though this policy was adopted mainly with the object of securing increased representation for Muslims in the public services, it has failed to secure for them their due share of appointments and it has been contended that this position cannot be remedied unless a fixed percentage is reserved for Muslims.

The review of the position has shown that these complaints are justified and the Government of India are satisfied by the enquiries they have made that the instructions regarding recruitment must be revised with a view to improving the position of Muslims in the services."

Para. 7 (1) (i) of the above Resolution says:

"25 per cent of all services to be filled by direct recruitment of Indians will be reserved for Muslims."

Section IV, para. 8 (1), says:

"The total reservation for India as a whole of 25 per cent. for Muslims and of 8½ per cent. for other minorities will be obtained by fixing a percentage for each Railway or local area or circle having regard to the population ratio of Muslims and other minority communities in the area."

The Government of India when decided to reserve 25 per cent. for the Muslims in Railway Services they adopted the different percentage for different railways as explained before. While fixing the desired percentage of Muslim services for every railway, I think, the scale was, perhaps, given in the hands of a Monkey Judge which took away some portion of 25 per cent. of reserved seats for Muslims as it is evident from the average percentage of all the percentages taken together, for different railways and I think, it comes down to 22.99 per cent. The matter did not rest there; when the scale was entrusted to the Railway Board again some portion of the various percentages was reduced and thus in rounding the figures the percentage fixed by the Home Department was further disturbed, as for instance, the percentage of the North Western Railway came down from 64.11 to 55 per cent. Thus you will find, Sir, how the Rule of the Monkey Judge was applied in the case of Muslims.

Now, Sir, you are fully aware that when this Resolution was adopted there was much agitation by the majority community against the said Resolution. Thus the different interests were set up to minimise its importance, and I assure you, Sir, that they succeeded to such an extent that the position of Muslims became still more worse than what it was before the said Resolution was adopted. I cannot say why there was so much howling against it. The Mussalmans were not allowed more than what was their due share on mere population basis. In India the Muslim population is just 25 per cent. according to the census of 1931.

[Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani.]

I do not like to traverse the whole field of railway services, as I am not permitted by the time allotted to me. I will, therefore, confine myself to placing before you a few most convincing cases of deplorable state of affairs. For the present I must rely on the figures prepared by Government staffs as I am not in possession of full information how Muslims' fates are sealed as the Railway Board is to some extent miser in supplying us all their publications. If you will look at pages 84 and 85 of the Railway Administration Report, Vol. 1, of 1936-37, you will find the position of Muslims in the two classes of railway services very discouraging and disappointing.

The review of the progress made during 12 years is:

Particulars.	1925 (1st April).			1936 (31st March).			1937 (31st March).		
	Total.	Muslims.	Percentage of Muslims.	Total.	Muslims.	Percentage of Muslims.	Total.	Muslims.	Percentage of Muslims.
State Managed Railways.	1,142	36	3.15	1,062	66	6.21	1,075	68	6.32
Company Managed Railways.	806	9	1.12	788	29	3.68	777	88	4.89
Total	1,948	45	2.31	1,850	95	5.14	1,852	106	5.72

Thus, you will find, Sir, the progress of Muslim representation in railway services during the period 1925—37, i.e., 12 years is 3.41 per cent. more and it, therefore, means that the average progress comes up to .28 per cent. and at this rate of progress Muslims will take 90 years to complete their representation to 25 per cent.

Now, let us take the position of Muslims so far as the subordinate services rising to Rs. 250 a month is concerned. The review of the progress made is:

Particulars.	1925 (1st April).			1936 (31st March).			1937 (31st March).		
	Total.	Muslims.	Percentage of Muslims.	Total.	Muslims.	Percentage of Muslims.	Total.	Muslims.	Percentage of Muslims.
State Managed Railway.	5,181	191	3.69	5,486	330	6.01	5,498	387	7.04
Company Managed Railways.	2,641	48	1.82	2,605	78	2.99	2,593	82	3.16
Total	7,822	239	3.05	8,091	408	5.04	8,091	469	5.80

Thus, you will find, Sir, the progress of Muslim representation in railway services of this type is (5.80—3.05) 2.75 during the period 1925—37, i.e., 12 years, and it comes up to .229 per cent. per year and at this rate of progress Muslims shall require 105 years to complete their quota of 25 per cent.

In this connection I will refer you to page 80 of the same Report which speaks of progress made by various communities in superior services. The percentage is as follows:

	per cent.
Hindus	61·1
Muslims	11·1
Anglo-Indians and Domiciled Europeans	11·1
Sikhs	11·1
Indian Christians	5·6

I know, Sir, it is not at all difficult to find pleas for this lower representation of Muslims in directly recruited services. Their condition regarding promotion too is of utter helplessness.

Although I have attained the 53rd year of my life, I could not be yet able to find the proper meaning of the word "efficiency" in the British Dictionary, and it is this screen behind which the interested persons have to play their games in ousting the Muslims from their legitimate rights. In the name of efficiency it is said that Mussalmans cannot get share in higher grades of services. There is no fixed standard by which the whims and fancies of interested parties can be put an end to.

The second way of ousting the Muslims and debarring their claims is promotion. In most of the railway services, say under Loco., Engineering and Traffic Departments, persons are taken in as apprentices and trained for a certain number of years and then given permanent posts as mechanics, chargemen, P. W. I. and Inspectors of Ways and Works, etc., and it is given out that so and so have been promoted. Sir, may I ask the Honourable the Railway Member whether it is promotion under the shelter "efficiency". I say such jobbery the sooner is stopped the better. Hindus and Muslims alike are not taken in these services which are the keys for higher grade lifts. I have never seen any Indian taken as an A class apprentice in any of the Company-managed railways. The Bengal and North Western Railway have ever turned their deaf ears. It is the Anglo-Indians or Domiciled Europeans with home education who are taken in. Sir, the qualification "home education" is a recent innovation for lower primary qualification in our country. May I ask the Railway Authority in the name of Christian justice whether it is fair at all. Most of these home qualification men are occupying the higher services. The claims of Bihari Muslims and Hindus have ever been ignored by the railway authorities, say, Bengal Nagpur Railway and East Indian Railway, who derive more benefits from Bihar. The Bengal and North Western Railway's whole income is derived from Bihar, yet they are the foremost in ignoring the claims of Muslims of the soil.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai (Sind: Non-Muhammadan Rural): On a point of order. I would like to know whether when the Chair and the Member in Charge of the Railways do not know how to speak in Urdu

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: I beg the Honourable Member's pardon.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: I hope the Honourable Member will also speak in Urdu.

Mr. Deputy President (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta): Nothing depends on whether the Government Member understands it or not. The determining factor is whether the speaking gentleman can speak in English with facility.

Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani: Sir, my difficulty is not less than that of the Railway Member. It is not the case that I do not know English but if you can permit me I can use Urdu words wherever needed in my speech.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: Will that be in order?

Mr. Deputy President (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta): He has not done so yet.

Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani: Sir, I find that in countries abroad no foreign companies or concerns are allowed to employ their own men rather they are forced to employ the sons of the soil. But, here, in India the case is otherwise. All the foreigners have been and are invited to make India their common grazing ground and I cannot say how far such state of things will continue.

A novel plea, I find, has been raised by the Wedgwood Committee that Indians find it below their dignity to work in workshops as mechanics and hence foreigners should be imported in the railway services. I want to let the Railway Authority know that it is we Indians who can bear the hardships and heats of burning furnaces and not the foreigners who are mostly imported from cold countries and who are most accustomed to use fans and cold drinks. I think, time has come, if not, it is bound to come sooner or later when we will find our sons not deprived of the resources of our country. Sir, we are paying a huge interest over the railway capital of 750 crores and others are allowed to reap its fruits.

I appeal to the Honourable the Railway Member, who is a very reasonable and just man, to take up the cause of the poor community of Mussalmans and see that their legitimate grievances are sooner redressed.

With these words, I move my motion and hope to be supported by all Honourable Members.

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

Maulana Shaukat Ali (Cities of the United Provinces: Muhammadan Urban): Sir, I would not take much of your time. I am very grateful to my friend the proposer for giving me an opportunity to say a few words on this subject, when I myself could not move my cut motion in the interest of other Parties in the House. Before I go on further, I want to tell the House that I do not intend to offer any criticism for the sake of criticism. My object is this. My knowledge of railway affairs could in no way be near that of the Honourable Member in charge of Railways and other railway officials. Government have made a provision that 25

per cent. of the jobs on the railways should go to Muslims and they must see that in every grade, from the highest to the lowest, as far as possible they should get them and that there was no real grievance left to the Mussalmans. At one time the minorities were weak and not sufficiently educated, and thus the jobs had become the monopoly of certain people for which we had no right to grumble. The fact remains that we were backward and took to English education late. I am glad that in 1923 and later on in 1925^{is} the Government realized this, and since then the minorities have been allotted 33 per cent. of the posts out of which 25 per cent. have been reserved for the Muslims. I for my part would not like that any harm should be done to any minority for the sake of the Muslims or even to the majority. Those who deserve let them get it but to those who are backward and who came in late and to whom you have given definite promises, you must use all your brains and all the expert knowledge in your power to see that these promises are fully carried out. I have got certain figures to put before the House. I speak subject to correction, because I have not the same resources as the Honourable Member in charge. In 1930, there were 8 lakhs of total employees and the Muslims were 1 lakh and 82 thousand. The percentage was 22.3. In 1931 we were 22.1 per cent. In 1932, it was 21.6 per cent. and it stayed there till 1935. In 1936 it was 21.8 and in 1937 we went down to 21.7 per cent. In these eight years we have been either retrenched or have lost over 27 thousand Muslim employees. In the last year's report, I find that 1898 people were retrenched. Of these, the Muslims total 905. That is 50 per cent. I cannot understand, why this reduction? Muslims are not inefficient and that inefficiency is not the monopoly of any one people. There are many administrative posts in the railway the duties of which the Muslims (and I also include the Sikhs) are perfectly capable of performing.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: Hindus of Sind?

Maulana Shaukat Ali: If they are in a minority, let them also come in. If promises were made to them, they must be carried out. I have no desire to rob any man. It is not a question of generosity but I want justice.

Sir, this is in the matter of the general services. Take the higher appointments. Taking the figures of 1937, there were 1,075 ordinary gazetted officers on State Railways, out of which Muslims were only 68. percentage 6.32; on company-managed Railways, there were 777 officials, the Muslims were only 38, percentage 4.8. In the case of senior subordinates, on State-managed Railways out of a total of 5,498, the Muslims were 387, percentage 7.04. On company-managed railways, out of 2,593, Muslims were only 82, percentage 3.16. Now, this was still worse. Sir, I do not want to bring in any discrimination; I have stated in this House before and I state it today that if you want to bring out men from abroad to train us, men whom you cannot get in this country, then by all means get such men out from Europe or America on high salaries, so that they can train up our young men, but I do object to the policy that new appointments should be made from people outside India. Irrespective of all other considerations, there are lots of young qualified people in this country who can fill such jobs. Only the other day I came across in the Press a notice about some British candidates on the railway or some other Department, the

[Maulana Shaukat Ali.]

qualification of the man appointed was that he went to a public School or Cambridge, played hockey and tennis and so on. Sir, there are any number of young men in this country who can play hockey, cricket, and football very well, and who had other qualifications also. We do not want to bring out such young men from outside to train for the benefit of foreign countries. If you want to get out efficient teachers, do it by all means and we shall have no objection, but this importing from outside India of new untrained officials should be stopped altogether, and everybody in India, whether Englishman or Anglo-Indian, Muslim or Hindu or Parsi, anyone who calls India his home, should be given a preference. Sir, many people have complained to me about partiality and communalism in railway offices, but I have made it a rule and I never asked a question in this House, and I do not criticize for the sake of criticism—but I keep in touch with the Heads of Departments and bring such matters to their notice. Of course, other people do put questions and do this in a perfectly right manner and probably are more energetic but I go to the Heads of Departments and put our case before them and leave it to them to undo the wrong. I hope the Honourable the Railway Member will see that the officials do deal with the minorities, who are weak, more sympathetically and see that they do get a fair deal. It is often said—such and such an official is a Muslim, therefore, he appoints Muslims. I have not yet had much opportunity of looking into that because there are so few Muslims. Then, it is said—oh, somebody is a Hindu and he appoints all the subordinates from amongst Hindus. I do not know if there is any truth in all this but I mention it so that the officials in India must see that there should be no partiality and there should be a fair and square deal, all round. I request the Honourable Member to issue instructions on this point. I was assured the other day that in the Clearing Accounts Office, 13 new appointments were made, and only one Muslim was appointed. Sir, these are small things and I do not want to fight for crumbs but I feel that a department like the Railways, which employs a very large number of labour, should offer every opportunity of employment to educated young men of every community and I urge that men of our community should have a fair and square deal so that it should lead to an uplift amongst our own people and we may never be short of efficient officers to carry on the work in the railways. With these few remarks, I bring these points to the notice of the Honourable Member for Railways.

Maulana Zafar Ali Khan (East Central Punjab: Muhammadan): Sir, in our traditional lore the name of "anti-Christ" has become a by-word. Now "anti-Christ" is associated in our traditions with the donkey. The donkey, according to an article of faith with a very interesting section of the community in the Punjab, is the railways. I am now concerned with the definition of the donkey as given by this interesting section of the community in the Punjab. (*An Honourable Member*: "Which community?") The Mirzais—the Kadianis. (Interruption.) Well, my remarks would have been thoroughly appreciated by the present Communications Member's predecessor, Sir Zafrullah Khan. Now this donkey, as everyone knows, happens to be a very obstinate animal. The present day's anti-Christ has let out his beast of burden on hire and plies a roaring trade. Europeans ride it, the Hindus ride it, and it is a very amiable animal. This donkey trots along at a swinging pace, but as soon as the Muslim comes near it, it

is seized with a fit of obstinacy and, it refuses to move. Thrash it soundly, flog it as much as you like, but it won't budge an inch, and when the Mussalman comes near the beast, he sometimes administers a sound kick.

Joking apart, Sir, it is a very serious matter and I bring it to the notice of my Honourable friend, the Railway Member,—who has produced a lasting impression upon my mind, and who is the very quintessence of courtesy. Sir, I had an occasion of seeing him the other day and I was so much impressed by his personality that I have not sufficient words to admire him. Well, Sir, this is a very serious matter. The Mussalman has been feeling it for a long time that, so far as his representation in the services is concerned, and especially in the Railway Department, he has been very shabbily treated. My learned friend, Maulvi Abdul Ghani in his Urdu speech has given you the facts and figures, and Maulana Shaukat Ali who followed him also placed before you some interesting statistics. I would not go through those statistics but I would only tell you that although the Government have from time to time realized the situation and issued circulars after circulars calling upon their subordinates to see to it that the Mussalmans are properly represented, that in the higher services and amongst subordinates of the all-India services their proportion in the services should be twenty-five per cent., that percentage is nowhere to be found. Their present proportion in the services is somewhere near 21 per cent. My Honourable friend, Maulana Abdul Ghani, thinks that it would take one hundred years before the Mussalmans can come into their own proper proportion. I am afraid, even in a hundred years this proportion would not be reached.

If we have a Prime Minister in England like Mr. Neville Chamberlain, a time will come when the Britishers will not be in India. Eden has gone and others have gone and the time is fast approaching when the weak-kneed policy of Great Britain in International affairs will make a mess of the whole situation. Japan will devour China and become a great Power and will then advance towards India and then will come the time when the Mussalman will get his proper share. So, I say again that this question of communal representation is a burning question; it is a standing grievance and I am bringing it to the notice of the Government. My friends, Maulana Abdul Ghani and Maulana Shaukat Ali, have tried their best not to make any remark that might injure the political and economic susceptibilities of our friends, the Congress Members. They have tried not to make it a Hindu-Muslim question and I will also not make it a Hindu-Muslim question. It is a purely economic question: it is a question of bread. Why should not the Mussalman have his share of the bread? Those who declare that the people of India are one nation, those who are after carrying on mass contact with the Mussalmans and those who think that the Mussalman is a part and parcel of the entire Indian nation,—I ask them whether this Mussalman is not entitled to his share of the loaf? When his share comes, you say "Inefficiency! thy name is Mussalman". The Mussalman is declared inefficient and unfit. (*Cries of "No, no" from Congress Benches.*) Then, why don't you plead his cause? It is the Congress which ought to have pleaded the cause of the Mussalman. What Maulana Abdul Ghani and Maulana Shaukat Ali have said the Congress ought to have said. If there is any sense of justice left in you, you should bring this matter to the notice of the Railway Member and see to it that the Mussalman gets his share and the Government fulfils its promise. This is justice pure and simple.

[Maulana Zafar Ali Khan.]

On the 13th of December, 1934, instructions were issued by the Railway Board to its subordinates that the proportion of the Mussalmans on the North Western Railway should be 60 per cent, on the Assam Bengal Railway, 35 per cent, on the Eastern Bengal Railway, 45 per cent, and on other Railways the proportion should be as it stood then. We thank the Honourable the Railway Member and the Department which is in his hands for all this, but we ask him whether these instructions have been acted upon? No, they have not been acted upon, and the Railway Board will have to reform itself in the matter of fulfilling the promises it makes before it can expect its subordinates to obey its orders. There is much to be done in this respect.

One thing more and I have finished. It is a fact that from Bengal right up to the North-West Frontier Province and from Karachi right up to Calcutta the Mussalman's position in the railways is pitiable and deplorable and you will just know how he feels. I have before me a small pamphlet issued by certain gentlemen in Calcutta and I will read out the headings which will show you what their feelings are in the matter :

“East Indian Railway—a Hindu concern : Mussalmans as helots of Hindu oligarchy : cases of grave injustice : total disregard of rules : communal allotment orders violated and defeated : complete failure of 1934 Government Resolution : irrefutable facts and figures : shameful situation in Howrah Division.”

This is how the Mussalmans feel it and this is only one instance. Go to the Punjab, go to the North-West Frontier Province, go to Sind, go to Karachi, wherever you go you will find the Mussalmans crying. Several Mussalmans have come to me and asked me . . . (Interruptions.) There is a section of the people in India who think that the Britishers purposely provide the Hindus with more services than they have provided the Mussalmans with so that these two should fight amongst themselves and then they provide themselves. This is how they look upon this from another point of view. So, Sir, the situation is very critical and grave and it is becoming an all-India one.

I would, therefore, suggest that a small Committee should be appointed consisting of the Honourable Member for Communications as its head and two Muslim Members and two Hindu Members. All these five gentlemen should make a tour of India and examine the situation and see whether the grievances of the Mussalmans are imaginary or real. Then and then alone something could be done. In the meantime, positive orders should be issued to the subordinate departments of the Railway Board in which they should be told very plainly that if they do not obey the definite instructions and the policy enunciated by the Railway Board, they will be seriously dealt with. With these words, I support the cut motion of my friend and I hope and trust that it will be passed.

Bhai Parma Nand (West Punjab: Non-Muhammadan): Sir, on looking at this motion, my first impression was that the question of the distribution of services in the railway had been so much thrashed out for the last six or seven years in this Honourable House that this subject should have been dropped. That was my first impression. But on hearing the speech of the Mover, Maulana Abdul Ghani Sahib, there was a

little change in my view. Maulana Abdul Ghani did not bring in any communal matter in his motion. The motion had been worded on purely communal lines but the trend of his speech was that in higher services and the gazetted services the proportion of posts held by the Mussalmans was much less and although the percentage was increasing during the last few years from 3 to 4 and to 6, all the same, he thought that at this rate it will take about 100 years to complete their 25 per cent. proportion.

If the motion had been worded in this way that the superior and the gazetted services in the railways should be Indianised as soon as possible, I would certainly have supported the motion and felt no need for me even to intervene in this debate. Maulana Shaukat Ali too has taken a very reasonable attitude as he did not complain of any other community's share being greater. But his view was that as the promise has already been made to the Muslims and the order of the Government of India had been passed, railway authorities have failed to carry out that order in order to make up the proportion of Mussalmans in the railway services. Sir, we note these two different stages. When such motions were moved on purely communal lines, myself and my Honourable friend, Sardar Sant Singh, opposed them. Our position was that we should take the people of this country as a whole and should not make it a point to divide them into different compartments by means of distributing public services, fixing shares for different communities. To me public service means doing duty for the country or for the department in which one is employed. It is a matter of service, not of right. In such a case, one who is more efficient or who has got more experience should be taken in to do the duty. There are certain departments for which the Muslims are more fitted. There is the military service in which more than half is appropriated by the Muslims. There is the police service in the Punjab and in the United Provinces and even in Bihar where perhaps half or even more than half of the services in these provinces go to Muslims. Similarly, there may be other types of jobs for which the persons belonging to the Muslim community might be considered more fit. The Hindus took to education earlier and so they were taken in the railway service in large number. They got accustomed to the railway service for such a long time and were thus more experienced and trained in this line.

Now, Sir, according to the view propounded by my Honourable friend, Maulana Zafar Ali Khan, that we should divide the bread between Muslims and other communities, this being an economic question so far as the Muslims are concerned, the object is to argue that the Government have got certain revenues from the people and these revenues whether through railway service or through other ways, should be distributed to the Muslims and the other communities in a definite proportion. I said that the Muslims have other departments in which they have a preponderating share for themselves. I, therefore, submit that taking the country and the services as a whole the Muslims have got their full fair share and much more of services. They are not in any way losers in the distribution of shares. Some time it was suggested that if the revenues of railways are to be distributed among the various communities, we should then have separate tickets and see which community contributed more to the earnings of the railways. What was meant was this, that the railway earnings were either through passenger traffic, which amounted

[Bhai Parma Nand.]

only to 27 crores, and the other through the goods traffic which brought more than 62 crores and as the House is well aware the goods traffic was carried on by persons mostly belonging to the Hindu community. Therefore, I submit that the Hindus contribute a much greater share towards the revenue and they have thus a right to partake in the distribution of revenues of the country by way of jobs to be fixed for their community. I submit, however, that the other view is that it would lead us nowhere if we divide the people and the country into different compartments. The interest of the different classes is of course a different thing and we can see that interests of poor and working class are preserved and safeguarded.

My submission, therefore, is that the Muslims were not in any way losing in the communal distribution of the revenue of the country. On account of constant agitation carried on in this House for so many years, by means of interpellations and Resolutions, drawing the attention of the Government to the paucity of Muslims in the railway services, the Government of the day had to yield and they issued an Order in Council giving a certain award, namely, that 25 per cent. should be reserved for Muslims. All of us were opposed to that award, but all the same we thought if the Muslim community had demanded it as the Government had given them a pledge, we should have no objection if their demands were fulfilled. Now, Sir, there is another kind of demand and it is that the Government are failing to make up the deficiency in the distribution of services so far as Muslims are concerned. It is a mystery to me how the Government fail to fulfill its duty as laid down in the circular. I know something about the Punjab railway service. I can tell the House that I myself read in the newspaper advertisements calling for applications specifically from Muslim candidates only, and non-Muslims were specially told not to apply. Again, this circular was explained by the predecessor of the Honourable the Railway Member and I saw that explanation. It said: if there are ten appointments to be made, the first one is to go to a Muslim, the second to a Christian, the next one to a Sikh and so on, with the result that out of 10 appointments, the Hindus were to get only one or two.

In this connection, I should like to draw the attention of the Honourable Member to another instance where communalism works great hardship to Hindus. There is a Railway Engineering College in Lahore, where the students have to undergo a four years course, spending at least Rs. 80 a month. Of course, some scholarships are given by the Railway Department. Last year 15 or 20 Hindu students came to me and complained that although all of them had come out of the college after undergoing four years course, not one of them has been absorbed in the railway. After spending such a large sum of money for four years, they are stranded without any job. I can only attribute it to the fact that they are Hindus and that is why they are deprived of getting any appointment. I know for a fact that the predecessor of the present Railway Member—I mean Sir Muhammad Zafrullah Khan—was laying so much stress upon department for the recruiting of Muslims and I therefore cannot understand how and where this distribution goes wrong and why the percentage of Muslims remains practically the same or, as claimed, is decreasing every year. This is a mystery to me. I think it

is up to the Honourable Member in charge of the Department to explain matters and thus clear the doubts of my Honourable friends, Maulana Shaukat Ali and Maulana Zafar Ali Khan.

Personally, I say I am opposed to this distribution of posts on communal basis. The Muslims have the monopoly of certain departments, the Hindus are recruited to certain other departments. But as the Muslims want communal representation in all the departments and as the Government also had pledged to give them such communal representation, let this pledge be fulfilled. However, it is impossible for me to understand how the Railway Department after having the principle of communal proportion admitted, has failed to satisfy the Muslims. That is a serious charge against the department and it is for the department to explain it. So far as I am concerned, I repeat, if there was no communalism in the services, that would have been the best and the right principle. But if this ideal is not to be followed because our friends want communal representation in services, let the Government who passed this Communal Order in Council carry it out in order to satisfy our friends here.

Sardar Sant Singh (West Punjab: Sikh): Sir, I stand to oppose this motion. As a matter of fact, as has been pointed out by my
 4 P.M. Honourable colleague, Bhai Parma Nand, we have never approved of this circular issued by the Government of India. As greed is never satisfied but tries to have more and more, the same is with regard to the proportion in the services. In order to prove my point I will just refer to the background of this motion. In 1932, Mr. Hassan issued his famous report about the proportion of the services occupied by Muslims in the various departments including railways. According to his recommendation, 50 per cent. of the posts on the North Western Railway, 25 per cent. on the Railway Board's office, 40 per cent. on the Eastern Bengal Railway, 30 per cent. on the East Indian Railway and 15 per cent. on the Great Indian Peninsular Railway were to be reserved for the Muslims. This circular has gone further than the recommendations and gives much more than even Mr. Hassan recommended. According to the circular which is the subject of debate today, Government gave 60 per cent. on the North Western Railway in place of 50, 45 per cent. on the Eastern Bengal Railway in place of 40; and then the other railways were divided into parts; 19 per cent. on the East Indian Railway, 10 per cent. on the G. I. P. Railway, 55 per cent. on the R. & K. Railway, 35 per cent. on the A. B. Railway, 19 per cent. on the B. & N. W. Railway, 12 per cent. on the B., B. & C. I. Railway, 12 per cent. on the B. N. Railway, 11 per cent. on the M. & S. M. Railway and 6 per cent. on the South Indian Railway. If we compare the figures we find that this circular gave to the Muslims much more than what Mr. Hassan recommended in his report. The result is that we find that recruitment is not confined within these limits but as a matter of fact on the North Western Railway, of which I have some knowledge, in new recruitment the Muslims are given much larger share than even 60 per cent. Not only this: things have come to such a pass that the interests of other communities are being entirely ignored. The North Western Railway has been manipulated in such a way as to include all the areas through which it runs,—the area of Sindh and the North-West Frontier Province which is an overwhelmingly Muslim area; and thus the percentage of other communities which are residing in the Central Punjab or in the

[Sardar Sant Singh.]

Punjab itself has been reduced, with the result that a lesser percentage has been reserved for the Sikhs. In this inequitable circular which no administration should have issued, we find that while 8 per cent. are reserved for Anglo-Indians, a community which is less in number and population than the Sikhs, we find no reservation for the Sikhs as such who are included in other minorities.

Now, why I oppose this is very clear from the figures. My Honourable friend, Maulana Zafar Ali, calls it a critical situation. From the figures themselves I will explain what that critical situation is. In the superior services on the State-managed railways in 1925 the share of the Muslims was 3.15; in 1937 it has more than doubled itself, and is 6.32. In the superior services on the Company-managed railways the share of the Muslims has gone up from 1.12 to 4.89—that is, gone up four times as compared to 1925. In 1925, the Muslims had a share in the subordinate services of 3.69 on State-managed railways; it has gone up to 7.04 in 1937. In Company-managed railways the percentage of the Muslims rose from 1.82 to 3.16. This is the critical stage and critical situation which has been referred to by Maulana Zafar Ali in his speech. Figures have already been given by Maulana Abdul Ghani in his speech and I need not repeat them. What we find is that in this attempt to appease the Muslim community the rights of other minority communities are being simply ignored and trampled upon. It is time that we should record our protest; otherwise our case may go by default. If my friend, Maulana Abdul Ghani, had moved that Indianisation is slow and their share should come from the share allotted to Anglo-Indians and Europeans, I would have supported the motion and would have helped him. If we study the figures we find that in the State-managed railways in the superior services the Europeans occupy 52.56 per cent. of the whole service; the Muslims have 6.32 in the State-managed railways and 4.89 in Company-managed railways; and out of the total allotted to Indians which is 47.44, their share is 6.32. And if we take out of this 47.44 the share given to Anglo-Indians and domiciled Europeans, which is 8.46, that means that out of about 40 per cent. of Indians the Muslims have 6.32 per cent.—that is to say, between 6 and 7 per cent. of the share allotted to Indians.

Maulana Shaukat Ali: Instead of one-fourth.

Sardar Sant Singh: Why one-fourth? You go by the circular; I am condemning the circular. Out of the share allotted to Indians they get between 6 and 7 per cent. May I ask if it is a fair distribution of the crumbs as they call it? Where is the critical stage? I would surely like the shares to be given to all communities. I would not oppose that demand. But when the demand comes to get a share out of the other minority communities, and when I see that this distribution of shares has absolutely demoralised the services in the railways where other communities are also working, I certainly cannot but regard it my duty to oppose such a motion.

Does the Railway Department know that anybody belonging to the Hindu or the Sikh community on the North Western Railway has no security of tenure and is not sure when he is going to be turned out by the intrigues and the scheming that is going on in all the departments?

Do they know how many cases of injustice have occurred in the name of this circular? I know of cases wherein a person has come to be discharged not for any fault in the discharge of his duties, but because a Muslim has to be recruited in his place. We are coming to that state when Government should revise this circular—at any rate the Department should see that this circular is worked in a fair, unprejudiced and impartial manner. At present things are becoming intolerable in services. I receive complaints from various employees of the North Western Railway that it is becoming almost impossible for them to do their duty in the office. They are always afraid what their superior officer is going to do with them under one pretext or another. Pretexts are being sought to turn out Hindus and Sikhs from railways. Is this a state of affairs which the Department or Government would like to continue any longer. (Interruption.) You go to the services and ask their complaints. Complaints are becoming loud, and probably they will become louder still when recruitment goes on in the manner in which it is going on at present. It is unfortunate, Sir, to raise communal issues on the floor of the House, but concession is made to those who do cry and think that they are crying for something which they want: as a matter of fact they do not want what they are crying for: they are simply crying, for by crying they get what they want. If justice is the consideration, if regard is had for truth, then probably these circulars will not come in this House and on such occasions. Therefore, I oppose this motion.

Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali (Lucknow and Fyzabad Divisions: Muhammadan Rural): Sir, all this effusion and this force which my friend, Sardar Sant Singh, has shown on the floor of this House today would have been much better shown if he had discussed this matter on his own cut motion. To discuss this on a motion from my friend, Mr. Abdul Ghani, seems rather inappropriate. It looks as if the national spirit which he shows always is poles apart from the feelings he has expressed today. Sir, by this cut motion, if my Hindu and Sikh friends think that Mussalmans in this House want to have their own claims to be espoused, they are mistaken. Our object is not only to discuss the rights and claims of Muslims, but we hope and trust that when such motions are brought in this House it will be understood that we espouse the cause of Indianisation. It is not a question of Hindu or Muslim rights, but if Muslims ask for their rights, it is not right for our friends, Hindus and Sikhs and Indian Christians, to rise and oppose that motion. Probably the best thing would be that they should in their own turn come forward in this House with their own cut motions, and they should expect us to support them rather than to oppose us just as they are doing today. Sir, I am really surprised that we have made it a communal point: it is practically a point for Indianisation. Never mind the wording: we have today put it just as you had tried to do it, just as my friend, Sardar Sant Singh, puts it, just as Colonel Gidney does: we have always been doing it in the same way, but our object is Indianisation. You read between the lines and take it in future that these things are brought forward in this House not in a communal spirit, but in the spirit of Indianisation. I would not have taken part in this debate today but for the speech which my friend, Sardar Sant Singh, has made.

Mr. M. Asaf Ali: He does not mean a word of what he said.

Sardar Sant Singh: No, rather you do not mean a word of what you are saying now.

Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali: When we see the red report, Volume I, page 80, we find the subject of Indianisation discussed in paragraph 77. We find here that direct recruitment for vacancies was as follows: Europeans 3; Hindus 11, Muslims 2; Sikhs 2; Anglo-Indians and Domiciled Europeans 2. Now, I ask my friend, Sardar Sant Singh, to note that it is a Government report and the heading is Indianisation. I ask him if Mussalmans and Sikhs are not in the same position. From the diagram on page 81 and from the wordings there and from the information subsequently given, the direct recruitment of Mussalmans to superior Railway services on the State and Company managed Railways was 32.4 per cent. Then it goes on to promotions. We find vacancies filled as follows: Hindus 1; no European; no Muslim; no Sikh; Anglo-Indians 2. Now, I refer to the third diagram on page 81. It refers to lower gazetted services; vacancies filled by Europeans 15, by Hindus 10, by Muslims 1, by Anglo-Indians 5 and by Sikhs one. Now, I ask my friends, Sardar Sant Singh and Bhai Parma Nand; to compare and study these figures and then come forward in this House and say that Mussalmans are more than they should be: they are not—I will prove it by these three diagrams, and it is the subject of Indianisation alone. Now, if you come to page 82, paragraph 78, what do you find: vacancies filled by Europeans 7, Hindus 6, Mussalmans 9, Sikhs 1, and by Anglo-Indians 9. If you raise your own claims or rights I have absolutely no objection: I shall be with you, but ask Government to give you your proper share. Now, Sir, when we come to Company-managed Railways, excluding H. E. H. the Nizam's Railway and Jodhpur Railway, what do you find: Europeans 8, Hindus 1, Muslims 1, Anglo-Indians 2, Sikhs 1. Now, I ask my friend, Sardar Sant Singh, to read this whole chapter of Indianisation. If he had stressed that point I would have been content; but I find that he is fighting for crumbs: we have all come with the beggar's bowl before the Government today and ask for our communal rights

An Honourable Member: Read the motion.

Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali: I say that this is the real situation today. I say you have to see through this and not think merely that we are putting forward our claims merely on communal grounds. You have to read between the lines of the motion. If my friend, Sardar Sant Singh, gives notice of a similar cut motion I shall be very glad to support him if he proves that his case is as bad as the case of the Muslims. With these words, I support the motion.

Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad: Sir, it is not the first time that I have heard the speech of my friend, Sardar Sant Singh, on similar questions. When the question of the P. W. D. in New Delhi comes up, then he swallows the whole thing because his community has monopoly in P. W. D. but now, in railway services he says we should go only by merit.

Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali: May I remind Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad that in the Account and Audit Services they are 90 to 95 per cent.

Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad: May I draw the attention of Sardar Sant Singh to page 85 of the Administration Report where we find that in the subordinate services the share of the Muslims in State Railways is 7.4 while the share of the Sikhs who are only 1 per cent. of the population is



3·02? The Sikhs, therefore, have got three times the share they deserve on the population basis and Mussalmans less than one-third. The Muslims want only justice: they do not want any unfairness or any special favour; but my friend who is submerged in injustice, having got thrice his share, comes forward and opposes us. Had it come from any other quarter I could have appreciated it, but coming from him I do not understand his position.

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

I will now give the actual figures in the N. W. R. and the E. I. R. and also of the railways as a whole. In the N. W. R. inspite of the circular of the Government of India, I actually see that the percentage is going down; in 1933, it was 54·88; in 1934, it became 55·39; in 1935, it was 54·82, and now it is 54·90. It has not in any way appreciated. Taking the E. I. R., in 1934, it was 20 per cent.; in the next year it fell down to 19·61 per cent. and then it became 19·87 per cent. and now it is 19·73 and so it has not appreciated there. Taking all the railways together, in 1934, it was 28·02, the next year it was 28·03 and then it became 28·40 and finally 28·17. So, during the last four years, the proportion of Muslims in the two main State Railways and in all the State Railways taken together has not appreciated inspite of the efforts of the Railway Board, inspite of the efforts of the Government of India.

I would now like to point out that when the Government of India passed the Resolution about 25 per cent. of fresh recruitment for the Muslims, the railway administration stopped recruitment altogether in the intermediate grade: in future every one will have to be recruited on Rs. 25 to Rs. 35. This was done in order to stop recruitment of minorities in the intermediate grades and what was the result? The result is that it has effectively lowered the efficiency of the E. I. R. I will draw attention at the proper time and point out that one of the chief reasons for the accidents in that railway is that they are now recruiting only in the lowest grade. and recruiting persons who really are not fit for the work they ought to perform and they are getting rid of intelligent people who were at one time recruited in the higher grade direct. This has been done inadvertently and I think the time has come when this rule ought to be revised and recruitment should not always be on the lowest pay, but should also be in the intermediate grades; this is absolutely essential for the efficient running of the railways.

Sir, we have been discussing the question of Mussalmans in railway services for the last ten years—it was first initiated by Sir Henry Gidney in 1927; at that time when I was not here—and year after year we have been discussing it on the floor of this House; but the position has not substantially improved. The causes have to be found out and should be remedied. We have really to take some more effective steps. It ought not to be made an annual issue if we are to progress. We must give a due share to every community in India. But my Honourable friend, Sardar Sant Singh, pocketing three times his due share criticises just claims of others. These criticisms have become in his case a chronic disease. During the past few years there has been no debate in which Sardar Sant Singh did not raise his voice against this demand for justice; but whenever a question arises about the P. W. D. here then he laughing in his sleeves quietly walks out. What I really want to suggest is that in

[Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad.]

the interests of efficiency—not so much in the interests of recruitment of Muslims—I do implore the railways to start recruitment in the upper subordinate grade; I understand that the Agent of the E. I. R. has already made a recommendation to that effect and we should give a fair share to all the communities residing in India. It should not be the monopoly of one community alone.

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: Sir, I do not think that the terms of the motion which has been moved require me to take any active part in the family discussion that has been going on for the last hour. The motion is by way of seeking to censure the Government of India for evading their obligations in regard to Muslims in the railway services. It is appropriate, therefore, that I should remind the House of what these obligations are. These obligations were laid down in the orders of 1934 under which 25 per cent. of the vacancies to be filled by direct recruitment were to be reserved for Muslims provided of course that candidates with the minimum qualifications were available. Now, Sir, it was obviously impossible to apply a flat rate percentage all over India. The uneven distribution of population made that course impossible, and for that reason the percentages which were read out by Sardar Sant Singh, which ranged from 60 per cent. in the case of the N. W. R. down to 11 per cent. in the case of the M. & S. M. Railway, were fixed as a level towards which the various Agents should work in their recruitment. Having shown that our obligation was to recruit as far as possible all over to the 25 per cent. level, though we had to depart from it, exceed or go below it, according to the situation of the various railways, here are the results that we have achieved. In 1934-35, on the State-managed Railways we recruited 367 Muslims out of 1,903. It will be remembered that the orders were issued about the middle of the year, and it was obvious that a certain time had to elapse before the orders were communicated to the various Agents and before they could make arrangements to re-adjust their recruitment programme. So, in 1934-35, there were 367 Muslims recruited out of a total of 1,903 representing 19.29 per cent. In the next year 1,123 Muslims were recruited out of a total of 3,166, being a percentage of 35.47. That was on the State-managed Railways. The corresponding figures on the Company-managed Railways, which of course were not under the same absolute obligation as the State-managed Railways, were 295 out of 1,891 in 1934-35 representing 15.6 per cent. In 1935-36, the figure was 297 out of 1,816 giving a slight rise of 16.35 per cent. The state of affairs in 1936-37 is that out of a total recruitment on all railways of 5,569, there has been a recruitment of 1,736 Muslims giving an all over percentage for India of 31.2 of Muslims. I claim, Sir, that so far as recruitment is concerned, the obligations laid down by the orders of 1934 have been more than fulfilled. It is perfectly true that the total number of Muslims in the services does not by any means approach the figure of 25 per cent. but there was never an undertaking by the Government of India that they should simply with the wave of a magic wand evict other communities and replace them at once by Muslims, but we have realised that the process of giving the Muslims a more adequate share in the services will be a very slow one if we confine our recruitment to recruitment in the lowest rank, and I think with the acquiescence of this House orders have been issued that there should be recruitment at intermediate stages up to the extent

of 20 per cent. of the vacancies,—recruitment of that 20 per cent. being of course divided up in the agreed communal proportions. I think it is not necessary for me to say any more in defence of the position of the Government of India in this matter.

Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad: May I ask one question, Sir? While appreciating very much the steps you have taken for the liberal recruitment of Muslims, may I know why the total percentage has not changed? It has in fact deteriorated.

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: Sir, I can answer that question. The corpus of employees is not a fixed one. There are changes in its composition not only owing to recruitment, but owing to wastage,—wastage of the nature of retirements, retrenchment or death.

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

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

Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani (speaking in vernacular): Sir, in view of the assurance given by the Honourable the Railway Member, I beg leave of the House to withdraw my motion.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The question is that leave be given to the Honourable Member to withdraw the motion.

Several Honourable Members: Yes.

The motion was, by leave of the Assembly, withdrawn.

DEMAND NO. 6-E—WORKING EXPENSES—EXPENSES OF TRAFFIC DEPARTMENT.

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: Sir, I move:

“That a sum not exceeding Rs. 9,89,85,000, be granted to the Governor General in Council to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1939, in respect of ‘Working Expenses—Expenses of Traffic Department’.”

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

“That a sum not exceeding Rs. 9,89,85,000, be granted to the Governor General in Council to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1939, in respect of ‘Working Expenses—Expenses of Traffic Department’.”

Economy.

Mr. Muhammad Ashar Ali: Sir, I move:

“That the demand under the head ‘Working Expenses—Expenses of Traffic Department’ be reduced by 33 per cent.”

The Honourable the Member for Communications in his speech today expressed very great sympathies for the agriculturists of India. He was sorry to find that none from this side of the House raised any question about agricultural interests

Dr. P. N. Banerjee: I did.

Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali: If you did, I take it that you did so.

Now, Sir, it is indeed a good sign that the railways are taking a great interest in the agriculture of this country and are also taking effective steps for the transport of agricultural produce from one part of the country to the other. But what I find is this that even small traders who have to export things of local production from one place to another do not find those facilities which are afforded to big traders and merchants. I mean those exports which are made from local places to Bombay. Complaints have been made to me by people who export mangoes and melons from my own province. I find that there is absolutely no facility given to these people. They find it very difficult to export small merchandise, for instance, from Lucknow to Delhi or Lucknow to Calcutta. Small traders from Cawnpore and other places find the same difficulty. You must give facilities for the export of agricultural produce from one province to another or from a province to outside India by reduction in freight rates. Otherwise all this talk of helping agriculture and small traders will be of no avail. I am thankful to the Honourable Member at least for trying to do something.

Coming to my cut motion, I have to say that there are two happy families in the Railway Department and they are the Railway Board and the higher Government gazetted officers. Every year we find that grievances of the lower paid staff are ventilated but I find that neither the Railway Board nor the Railway Member attach any importance to the reduction of the large salaries of the railway officials at the top and their numbers. We find there is retrenchment of the lower staff but no retrenchment of the higher staff. Each railway has got a personal branch under the Deputy Agent. The Deputy Agent gets Rs. 1,950. There are four to six Superintendents under the Deputy Agents at headquarters and they are getting Rs. 1,350 each. Then there are Assistant Superintendents, eight to ten. They are drawing Rs. 900 each. At the same time in each division there is one Divisional Officer on Rs. 1,350 each, one assistant on Rs. 900 each and a large clerical staff both at headquarters and divisions. This is the way in which duplication of appointments is going on.

The Honourable Sir Thomas Stewart: On a point of information. I do not wish to interrupt the Honourable Member. Could he tell me which particular railway he is referring to?

Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali: I am referring to all State Railways. Now, why was this personal branch created. It was created to deal with all staff matters, for instance, recruitment, promotion, seniority, punishment, transfers, postings, and so forth. Instead of this personal branch dealing with these affairs, we find that each divisional branch is dealing with the same subjects. Is it right that there should be this duplication of work? There is no retrenchment, there is waste of money. In the transportation, commercial and mechanical engineering departments, they are dealing with all these staff appointments and the duplication goes on there also. I want the Member in charge of Communications to look into this state of affairs. These officers are appointed and they are doing absolutely nothing and duplicating the work. The net result is that this personal branch has to carry out not the Railway Board's orders but the orders of the Agents and other Divisional Officers. Therefore, I urge that this personal branch is absolutely redundant and should be done away with. I lay on the

table a list* of cases showing how duplication is going on. If the Honourable Member goes through it, he will find how much useless duplication is going on.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member ought to give the House some indication as to what is contained in the list.

Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali: I have given some cases where duplication is going on. I did not want to take up the time of the House by reading the whole thing.

I come to another subject. The number of passengers who travelled in the first class in the year 1930-31 was 670,000. In 1935-36, it came down to 384,000. What is this reduction due to? The Railway Board may say anything but the reason that I would give is that this decrease is due to the competition of motor traffic. Sir, the officials and especially the higher officials take to motor driving and motor travelling far more than they travel by the first class compartments on the railways. Now, on whom will the responsibility lie? Will it lie on the low paid staff or the Indian public? I submit that the responsibility will lie upon the higher grade officials who travel more not by the first class on railways but who travel by motor and even send their luggage by motor lorry. Sir, in spite of all this I find that the Railway Board is, in accordance with the Wedgwood Report's recommendation, going on with the re-building of coupé compartments for first class travel. The Railway Board very willingly acceded to this desire and recommendation of the Wedgwood Report, as I find from page 5 of the statement showing the action taken by the Railway Department. In paragraph 73, it is mentioned that "the possibility of adopting coupé compartments more generally for first class travel is under consideration" and various designs and layout of new coaching stock are being re-examined. Sir, the result is that money is already being spent on devising ways for perfection of the coupé compartments in spite of the fact that first class travel has been reduced by that big amount which I have just mentioned.

Then I find also that the Honourable Sir Guthrie Russell in his speech in the other House has deprecated to a certain extent the Wedgwood Report. Now, that report which has been derided to a certain extent is being followed by the Railway Board and its recommendations as regards such matters even, *viz.*, that the coupés should be built for the first class compartments, are being adopted. If you will refer to Sir Guthrie Russell's speech in the Council of State on page 5 thereof, he says:

"Without implying any disrespect to the Committee I would like to make it clear that action had already been taken on many of the recommendations of the Report."

Now, Sir, it shows very clearly that the Wedgwood Report is fit only for the waste paper basket. Many of the so-called recommendations of the Wedgwood Report, as Sir Guthrie Russell mentioned, had already been acted upon and they had already been put forward for adoption by either of the two former Committees,—the Pope Committee and the other Committee. Then, further on, in paragraph 8, page 5, Sir Guthrie Russell says that "I think a safe summing up of the recommendations would be

* Not printed in these Debates; placed in the Council Library.

[Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali.]

that the main theme of the report, at least so far as the purely railway parts are concerned, is better service to the public". This better service to the public is a matter which somehow is not liked by our friends either in the Railway Board or in the Government of India itself, and therefore those other things which the Wedgwood Committee reported about with regard to "better service to the public" were not taken up, but they took up the construction of coupés for the first class travellers although there has been a great reduction, as I have shown, in such travel. So, what I find out is this that this Wedgwood Report has not found any favour with the Government of India so far as the majority of their recommendations are concerned, although lakhs of rupees of the tax-payer's money have been spent upon it. Then, Sir, on page 6, paragraph 9, Sir Guthrie Russell says:

"The Report devotes a considerable amount of attention to the question of the incivility of the staff and corruption. I know that all railways have tried experiments and are doing their utmost to root out these two evils. But to root them out entirely requires the co-operation of the general public."

Sir, I take it that the general public ought to do its level best, but unless the officials themselves look into the corruption and unless the complaints brought forward are dealt with in due time and speedily, it would be impossible for the general public to do anything. Unless our voice is heard when we place before the Honourable Member or the other officials of the Railway Department the complaints, and unless they stop brushing aside these on some small note of the Railway Agent that "this thing does not exist", and so forth, unless these matters are looked into either by some responsible committee or by the Honourable Member himself, the Members of this House and the public cannot do anything. Sir, the Members of this House are always prepared to place before the Honourable Member the real state of affairs but we are sorry

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

Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali:but we are sorry nothing is done. Sir, since last year, 2,017 non-gazetted staff were reduced but the gazetted staff increased by 13, whereas the work for the gazetted staff, I should say, is not that much which is done by the lower paid staff. Sir, my time is very short and I would like to refer to some points but I am sorry it would be too late and I shall not be able to finish what I have to say. Sir, by increasing this gazetted staff the efficiency has not increased. As the Honourable House knows, accidents have on the contrary increased, and it is clear from a reference to page 110 of this red volume, the Administration Report, that accidents increased by 74. If you will refer to Chapter VIII you will find:

"That the total number of accidents shows an increase of 74 as compared with the previous year."

Sir, you go on increasing the higher staff, you go on giving them high salaries but what do we find? We find from your own report that accidents are increasing every day. Sir, besides that, what is the business of this higher staff if they do not look into the framing of a proper time

table policy? Sir, in the case of the E. I. Railway I find that the branch line trains are not even connected with the important main lines and *vice versa*. If the time table is not even framed properly, the passengers have to wait and the result is that they take to road, instead of going by the train. So, if these matters are not looked after by the higher staff, then what is the good of keeping all this higher staff and paying them such fat salaries?

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

Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali: Sir, I move my motion.

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

"That the demand under the head 'Working Expenses—Expenses of Traffic Department' be reduced by 33 per cent."

MESSAGE FROM THE COUNCIL OF STATE.

Secretary of the Assembly: Sir, the following Message has been received from the Council of State:

"I am directed to inform you that the Bill to amend the Durgah Khawaja Sahab Act, 1936, which was passed by the Legislative Assembly at its meeting held on Thursday, the 3rd February, 1938, was passed by the Council of State at its meeting held on the 21st February, 1938, with the amendments shown in the enclosed statement.

The Council of State requests the concurrence of the Legislative Assembly in the amendments."

Sir, I lay on the table the Bill, as amended by the Council of State.

Statement showing the amendments made in the Bill to amend the Durgah Khawaja Sahab Act, 1936, by the Council of State at its meeting held on the 21st February, 1938.

In clause 3, in proposed section 5—

(a) in sub-section (1)—

(i) for the words "Hanafi Muslims, of whom" the words "Hanafi Muslims, namely" were substituted;

(ii) in clauses (a) and (b) the words "one shall be" were omitted;

(iii) in clauses (c), (d), (e) and (g) the words "shall be" were omitted; and

(iv) in clause (f) the words "may be" were omitted; and

(b) after sub-section (3) the following sub-section was added, namely:—

"(4) If any authority or body entitled to elect, nominate or co-opt a member fails to do so within six months, the Central Government may nominate a member to fill the vacancy from among persons qualified to be elected, nominated or co-opted in respect of the vacancy."

The Assembly then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Wednesday, the 23rd February, 1938.