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THE  
**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY DEBATES**  
(Official Report)

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Volume II, 1934

*(17th February to 10th March, 1934)*

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**SEVENTH SESSION**  
OF THE  
**FOURTH LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY,**  
**1934**



NEW DELHI  
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1934.

# Legislative Assembly.

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# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Friday, 23rd February, 1934.

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

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

### *Second Stage—contd.*

#### DEMAND No. 1—RAILWAY BOARD—*contd.*

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Shanmukham Chetty): The House will now resume consideration of Demand No. 1—Railway Board.

*Importance of Road-Rail Co-ordination and of the Organisation of Communication Boards throughout the Country.*

**Sir Leslie Hudson** (Bombay: European): Sir, I beg to move:

“That the demand under the head ‘Railway Board’ be reduced by Rs. 100.”—(To call attention to the importance of Road Rail co-ordination and of the organisation of communication boards throughout the country.)

Mr. President, at the outset I would refer to the Honourable Member's Budget speech in which he stated that the railways would have to meet increasing competition from road transport, and I would also refer to the remarks which fell from my Honourable friend, Diwan Bahadur Ramaswami Mudaliar, on Monday to the effect that it is in the public interest that railways should be protected against uneconomic competition. With both of these statements I am in full agreement. Now, Sir, both the roads and the railways of this country are national assets complementary to one another and should not be, in essence, competitive. The roads must serve the railways and the railways must serve the roads. Even more than the roads, the railways are a national asset, and that is so in any country, and, as a matter of fact, a railway is a more tangible asset than a road. In the national interest, therefore, the railways must be maintained in first class working order, and, to enable that to be done, railways must be protected to the extent that will allow them to fulfill the purposes for which they were built. It cannot be for the economic good of the country or of the nation if this great national asset is allowed to deteriorate, a consequence which must occur if duplicated transport is allowed to compete at uneconomic levels. The recent past and the present uneconomic competition which has occurred and is occurring in many parts of the country may perhaps be put down to the fact that the development of the railways and the development of road traffic has been in the hands of the different authorities neither of whom have had that broad outlook which



[Sir Leslie Hudson.]

should enable them to envisage the services road and rail have severally to perform and the directions in which they are to develop in the future. In some cases attempts have been made to redress the balance by taxing motor transport out of existence, and, in others, the suggestion has been made that railways must give place to the road with its cheaper and more adaptable and flexible form of transport. But both these methods are wrong. There is nothing to be gained by placing uneconomic burdens on an industry which is vital for the future development of the roads of India, nor is there any sense in ignoring the railways and in building roads for motor services which merely duplicate the existing forms of transport. (Hear, hear.)

It was with a view to getting a perspective of this position that the Mitchell-Kirkness Enquiry was initiated and that the Road-Rail Conference was held in April of last year. The first resolution accepted by that Conference reads as follows:

"This Conference is of opinion that, in the general public interest, the time has come for increased co-operation and a more intelligent co-ordination of effort between the various authorities and interests concerned, in the matter of:

(a) future railway development, and of

(b) the future development of road communications, whether used for motor transport or other purposes,

so as to secure a more comprehensive and uniform plan of general development than at present exists.

In areas where uneconomic competition between railway and road transport has been proved to exist, such increased co-operation and co-ordination may necessitate the adoption, by mutual agreement, of measures designed to reduce such uneconomic competition to the minimum compatible with the maintenance of healthy competition."

Sir, with the two Honourable Members for Commerce and Industries and Labour working together and in effect forming a sort of Ministry of Communications combining all forms of transport under one head, we certainly have to acknowledge that there has been co-operation—the reason being that both Honourable Members are Members of the same Cabinet and are working together from day to day in co-operation. It is when we come to the Provinces that the situation is different. There, Provincial Ministers and Local Bodies are separately responsible for road development whilst railways are, of course, a Central subject. It was realised last year that the time had come for co-operation and more intelligent co-ordination between the various interests concerned, but, so far as is known to us, very little has yet been done in the Provinces. There is an urgent need for Provincial Communication Boards to be brought into being on which the railway authorities and those responsible for road development and waterways and also representatives of the road users should find place. The Bombay Presidency have set up such a Board of Communications on which road, rail and transport are represented. I should like to know if the Honourable Member can tell us whether any other Province has taken a similar step. Once Provincial Boards of Communications have been set up, the necessity will arise for a portfolio of Communications at the Centre, Communications to combine, as I have said, rail, road and waterways transport. It is most necessary for the country that the development of railways and of road facilities as well as the co-ordination of the present systems of both these means of transport should be focussed in the Centre. That is why I say that in the future we must have a

portfolio at the Centre to cover all forms of communications. It is important from the point of view of the Railway Administrations and of Finance that immediate steps be taken to bring together those apparently, more than apparently, those conflicting interests which have been tending to pursue their own way regardless of the particular duties of each. I believe the matter to be so urgent as to justify the calling of another Road-Rail Conference at a very early date in order to review matters in the light of the resolutions and recommendations come to last year and to plan concerted action to prevent waste of the country's money and of its assets in overlapping competition. (Hear, hear.) The country needs development and not duplication; but having said that, the railways must not think that this is going to save them from competition. They need competition and they need it badly. And here I would say that I do not agree with the Honourable Member, who spoke earlier in the discussions, that the Company-owned railways are not alive to the necessity of looking for business. I do not say they could not do more in this direction, but they certainly have been doing their best to earn a dividend for their shareholders. My own experience of Company-owned railways is that their personnel, generally speaking, look upon themselves as servants of the public, whereas in State-owned railways,—and I speak more particularly of the subordinate classes,—the staff look upon themselves as Government servants; and I suggest there is very often a good deal more than a subtle difference between the two.

Honourable Members, speaking on a previous cut motion, have stressed the importance of improving passenger amenities to attract passenger traffic from the competitive motor services. I would suggest that railways can combat the growing competitive carriage by lorries of goods, and their delivery, by undertaking direct delivery themselves. I am aware that in the case of some railways that is done; for instance, in Bombay, the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway have already initiated a very efficient service of delivery direct from the station to the consignees. In England, the railways have bought up a very large share in the great delivery companies such as Carter Paterson, Pickfords and others, in order to control the goods and their safe carriage from door to door. There may not be quite the same opportunity in India to take over such transport companies, but, although that may not be possible on a large scale, there certainly are opportunities in the large terminal points. Passenger traffic, again, should be capable of considerable expansion if quicker, lighter and more frequent services are provided; and for this purpose I should encourage the employment of the Diesel and Sentinel type of haulage in spite of what my friend, Mr. A. Das, said earlier in the debate. I would suggest too that the Railway Authorities should examine the possibilities of the issue of railway and road combined tickets and also combined rates for the carriage of goods from the depot of origin to destination.

My Honourable friend, Mr. Harbans Singh Brar, told me at some length, not long ago, of his experience in the Punjab where motor lorry transport was able successfully to compete with the North Western Railway for the carriage of goods; and I hope the Honourable Member will communicate those experiences, if not to this House, at any rate to the authorities concerned, and I trust he will not find them fall upon deaf ears. As my Honourable friend, Mr. James, said earlier in the Budget discussion, it behoves the railways to push their business, just as much as any other concern with goods, commodities or services to sell has to do, if it hopes and endeavours to continue its existence.

[Sir Leslie Hudson.]

In what I have said, Sir, I do not desire in any way to belittle the efforts of the railways of India, whether State or Company-owned, which have produced the by no means unsatisfactory results which the Honourable Member for Railways has been able to present to this House. What I do want to do, is firstly, to press on those Railway Departments whose duty it is to obtain business for their Companies and for the State, that they should go all out for obtaining that business and not sit still and wait for the business to come to them. Secondly, Sir, I would urge that Government should re-assemble the Road-Rail Conference as soon as possible and that complete co-ordination and co-operation between the railways and road transport should be brought about as speedily as possible.

Sir, I move.

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Shanmukham Chetty): Cut motion moved:

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

The Chair would remind the House that today being Friday this debate must close by 12-45.

**Mr. B. Das** (Orissa Division: Non-Muhammadan): Sir, while I was listening to the speech of the Honourable the Leader of the European Group, my mind travelled back to a non-official Conference which was held at the instance of the European Group in Simla some time in 1926 or 1927, and, I believe that, of the members of the present European Group, only my old friend, Sir Darcy Lindsay, was present at that Conference. At that Conference the European Members of the Central Legislature approached the non-official Members of the Central Legislature to consider whether there should not be a road policy of the Government of India, so that more motor cars could be sold in India; and at that Conference the idea of an additional petrol tax was broached, and, subsequently, a year after, the docile Government and the Member for Industries and Labour, Sir Bhupendra Mitra, brought his Road Committee report, and we know with what result. Some of us at that informal Conference grew suspicious at this sudden flash of imagination from the members of the European Group.

Sir, we know that our friends, the Europeans, are astute business men, astute politicians and astute Imperialists. When they flung out a programme for India, one liked to see behind, and at that time I remarked to some of my colleagues.—most of them are not present here,—that I believed that was part of the Imperialistic policy. Government want their army to go down in motor cars and in tanks to every part of India; and today the roads are not properly developed and my European friends, in the guise of selling more petrol and more motor cars in India, want to help the policy of British Imperialism in having complete roadways all over India, so that suffering as India was at the time and even now from political depression and the causes and effects of the Congress movement, the tanks will be available for every part, even in distant Chittagong, to suppress any public movement or seditious movement. Thereafter, this Mitchell-Kirkness report came. The railways began to howl. The railways are mismanaged and tottering, and seeking, as we talked the whole

day yesterday, a Statutory Railway Authority, so that the right of criticism would be taken away from this House. While I listened very attentively to the speech of my very esteemed friend, Sir Leslie Hudson, I felt that my Honourable friend wants today to provide Statutory safeguards to these railways so that they can continue their policy of mismanagement in perpetuity. If that system of public transport has failed, let us admit it, let us condemn the railways concerned; but to come to the Legislature today or five years hence and say that we will give this autocratic Railway Board or Railway Authority further power, so that they can eliminate all competition from road transport is not right. Road transport has come to stay; and, in spite of competition, it has exercised a wholesome pressure on the Railway Authorities, although revenues in railways have fallen: it is agitating the minds of those who are administering the railways as to how to reduce rates and fares. But if we give them Statutory safeguard as is contemplated, thank God, my Honourable friend, Sir Leslie Hudson, did not ask these safeguards to be given today or to be incorporated in the new Constitution Bill that is being worked out elsewhere in London; but who knows? Knowing the mind of my European friends and knowing the way in which it works, we may find it incorporated in the new Constitution Bill that there should be no right or liberty given to the citizens of India to run motor transport unless they get the sanction of the almighty Railway Authority. And what is that Railway Authority going to be? It will be a much more powerful body beyond the comprehension of this Legislature and beyond the control of the future Minister of Transport. The Honourable the Commerce Member will reply later on, and he may tell us whether he wants to go back on the promise that he gave on the floor of this House that the Government did not contemplate that the railways should in any way try to control motor transport in this country. I wanted some further light from my Honourable friend, the Leader of the European Group, as to how road competition in England and other European countries has succeeded and whether the railways are seeking Statutory power from the Legislature and from the Parliaments of those countries, so that they could do away with that competition. The only thing that I learnt was that some of the British railways were investing their well earned money in some public carrier motor transport companies. But I would be chary of giving that permission to the Railway Board to invest new capital in public transport companies. The House remembers the debate that took place in Simla over this subject on the floor of this House. Already the railways are very powerful—too powerful. If the railways are allowed to invest money in these public transport companies and eliminate competition, they will control all means of transport, the road transport and the railway transport, and the result will be that rates will go up and goods will be charged high freight and the Railway Authorities will not exercise any control on themselves to reduce their extravagant scale of expenditure, as has been evident from the Budget that has been presented by the Honourable the Railway Member. It gave me no pleasure when I read that a Pope had come from London and that the papal ukase had gone forth that there should be no further retrenchment. That Railway Retrenchment Committee, of which you, Sir, were the President, suggested that a committee of experts should come in that cold weather and look into further retrenchment. Now, this papal ukase has gone forth "There shall be no further retrenchment", except a paltry few lakhs. When the Railway Administration stands pilloried before this House for their gross mismanagement and for their

[Mr. B. Das.]

utter helplessness in balancing their Budget, when their mismanagement has reached the maximum stage and nothing can save them here, we find they are seeking help through other quarters. My European friends want to give this Railway Administration a new lease of life. They will encourage the railways to compete with other transports and thereby the railways will conceal and go on concealing their maladministration and mismanagement and go on increasing further capital expenditure in creating new road transport companies. I cannot be a party to it, nor can the country be a party to further extravagant capital expenditure by these railways when we know that their mismanagement is such that they cannot even pay the interest on money borrowed by them. The Railway Board and the Railway Member have gone further. They have repudiated their debt, their obligation to the nation. (Interruption.)

My Honourable friend, Mr. Joshi, may recollect that in the Railway Finance Separation Convention, it was decided that the railways should pay Rs. six crores every year to the General Finance; for the last three years they have not paid a sou. I was not present here, but I read very minutely the two speeches of the Railway Member and the Chief Commissioner and also the Explanatory Memorandum they circulated, and I find no mention anywhere of the failure to pay that six crores this year. I know the reason why no explanation was offered. The railways, thinking as they are that the new Statutory Authority will take them away completely from the purview of this Assembly, thought that they could repudiate this six crores debt. I wonder, the Finance Member was not there to show his suffering, the suffering which Indian finances undergo by the failure of the Railway Board in not paying this six crores of rupees every year for the last three years. As long as the Railway Separation Convention has not been annulled by this House, as long as the so-called Statutory Authority has not been created by this House, the railways are bound to pay that six crores per annum, and they ought to show in their balance sheet and in their accounts their debt to the General Finances, which has accumulated to the tune of Rs. 18 crores by this time. Nowhere has it been shown. This at least is one of my serious charges against the railways illustrating their inefficiency. Today this House is in no mood to consider or give any further power to the Railway Board or to those who control the railways . . . . .

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Shanmukham Chetty): The Honourable Member should conclude now.

**Mr. B. Das:** I do hope that the Honourable the Commerce Member will repeat the assurance that he gave before that the big railways had no desire to compete with private motor transport, and that he will also give us the further assurance that he does not desire to contemplate any fresh capital expenditure whereby the railways will have further opportunities to go on in their merry career and commit and repeat their mad extravagance.

**Sirdar Harbans Singh Brar** (East Punjab: Sikh): Sir, there is no doubt that the competition between the rail and road transport is at present very acute. It is much more so in Northern India than perhaps in other parts of the country, for the simple reason that in Northern India the roads

always run parallel to the railway lines for strategic reasons, and as the public as a whole is not looked after properly by the railways and as their general comforts and conveniences are ignored, they generally take to the road transport, because it gives them a better service, a cheaper service and more conveniences.

At many important terminal points in Northern India, we find that for short distances the road transport has almost wholly superseded the ordinary railway goods service in addition to the passenger service. The reason is quite simple. If you want to despatch your goods by goods train, you have to take the goods to the railway goods yard, there you have to wait for some hours to get the attention of the railway *Babu*, and if it happens to be late in the afternoon, perhaps you will never get his attention, and so either you will have to take your goods back or leave a *chaprassi* or a *chowkidar* there to look after your goods until the next morning when the goods clerk arrives and books the goods. The same thing happens when you have to take delivery at the other end. The road transport provides him with a much quicker and more convenient form of transport. The lorrywalla goes to the shop, loads the goods and takes them to your shop at the other end. This frequently happens between Lahore and Amritsar and at other similar stations like Ambala and Ludhiana. Thus the road transport provides a much quicker and cheaper form of transport at present, and, therefore, the public for their own benefit, both to save time and money, resort to it more readily than to railway transport. If the railways pay more attention to these things, probably they may be able to recapture their own traffic, but as the railways are run more like Government Departments and not on commercial lines,—because the clerks and other officials consider themselves more as public officers and not as servants of the public, and they do not care to cater for the public,—much of the revenues which the railways are losing now can be got back. The passenger services are just as bad as the goods traffic. I know of particular distances between very important stations where the service is the same or perhaps more slack than it was 80 years ago.

Sir Leslie Hudson mentioned about my talk with him some time ago. I mentioned to him that between many very important junctions the service was very slow and that it was very bad. The trains stop at very ordinary station for very long periods, and they take a much longer time to cover short distances than the lorries or the road transport. For instance, between Ludhiana and Ferozepur, which is a distance of 75 miles, the ordinary train takes as much as 5½ hours, though in covering that distance it passes many important stations, but in spite of all this, the service is as slow as it was in days gone by. I believe the time taken was much less five years ago. I know it from personal experience as I have often to travel on that line. The lorries cover that distance in about 4 hours and at a much cheaper cost. The North Western Railway has, during the last few months, resorted to the expedient of reducing their third class fares and they have now brought down their third class rates on this section even to half of their previous rate, but, in spite of all that, they have not been able to recapture the traffic, because people have to wait for longer hours at the stations. The booking clerk would never be at his seat in time, he would never attend to the passengers properly at the booking office till he hears that the train is to arrive in a few minutes, and then there is a big rush at the booking office. A good many people want to get tickets, but since they don't get them, they rush in haste to the platform without tickets and the guard and other

[Sirdar Harbans Singh Brar.]

railway officials push them aside. In this manner the passengers are subjected to a good deal of inconvenience and trouble, and so they quietly go to the other side of the station and get into a motor lorry. There they get a service for perhaps half the railway charge and reach home much more quickly. If the railways attend, as a business concern, to the needs of their patrons, I think they will be able to compete successfully with the road transport, and leave the lorries and other forms of road transport to provide them with feeder services without any loss to the railway services, because, if the railways would look to the comforts and needs of the travelling public in a better manner, naturally they would be able to get back all their passenger traffic, with the result that the motor and other road transport people would naturally have to get back to the feeder services, they would have to get back to roads which do not run parallel to railway lines. Thus these road transport people will provide feeder services which will be a great boon to the railways.

Retrenchment is not sufficiently carried out. From the figures given to us by the Railway Authorities, it is clear that since 1931-32 up to 1934-35 the working expenses of the railways have not gone down, but on the other hand they have gone up. I have taken the figures from the literature supplied to us during the Railway Budget speech, and from that it is apparent that the railway working expenses from 1931-32 have gone up quite steadily. From these figures there does not appear to be any serious attempt having been made to effect retrenchment.

I think, Sir, it is high time that the railways paid better attention to the comforts and conveniences of the travelling public. Give them speedier service, give them cheaper service, give them more conveniences, and you will see that the public will again begin to patronise the railways. If you ignore them, they will naturally resort to other means of transport, and your revenues will go down every year. I would, therefore, suggest to the Honourable the Railway Member and to the Financial Commissioner for Railways that they should pay more attention to the needs and comforts of the railway travelling public in the manner I have suggested. If you were running three trains 30 years ago or if you were running two trains 30 years ago and you continue the same nowadays, that would not serve the needs of the public. They want quicker, cheaper and more efficient service. If the railways will look to all these matters, they will be able to recapture the traffic and compete with the road transport successfully.

**Rai Bahadur Lala Brij Kishore** (Lucknow Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural): This road-rail co-ordination is a problem which we have to consider very carefully in the future, and I venture to think that we have to consider this matter as a matter of transport rather than as a matter of railways. Sir, it is perfectly absurd for the railways to be managed in the way they are; it is perfectly absurd, to my mind, that they should run their own show and compete with and fight road development. The two ought to be worked together. There are many buses, of course, feeding the railways today, and they are valuable in this respect, but there are also a large number of buses which are competing with the railways as you see hundreds of these buses running on roads parallel to the railways. Suppose there are 5,000 buses and each of them takes Rs. 10 daily from railways, it comes to Rs. 50,000 a day. Sir, I venture to submit that in future we may have to regard the problem of roads and railways together. As there are hundreds of instances in which motor cars run along a route parallel

to the railways in many parts, so I am of opinion that the State in India should retain the power of regulating motor traffic, so that they may not come seriously into competition with the Indian railways. There are also hundreds of places where railways cannot go, where railway enterprise cannot pay and, so far as these places are concerned, they can be connected by motor service. Thus, motor traffic will have to be helped in order to be feeders to important railway junctions by bringing passengers from the interior.

The railways go on increasing, from time to time, rates and fares, and it is in the sweet will of the Railway Authorities alone to put up the rates and fares in any manner they like. If we see from this point of view, then competition seems to be better, for the Railway Authorities will always try to improve the amenities of the travelling public. The motor service people are carrying on their business at cheaper rates and naturally there will be a cry from the railway side and so they will try to make their administration good. Sir, it is no secret that, for lack of proper supervision by the Railway Administration, people are now patronising, in a very large number, private motor transport, and consequently the Railway Administration as a whole are driving their golden customers away from themselves, as rather than suffer the hardship of railway travelling the public prefer to use motor buses and lorries. With these observations, I support this motion.

**Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad** (United Provinces Southern Divisions: Muhammadan Rural): The competition between roads and railways has become very keen in recent years in nearly every country so much so that the League of Nations had to institute a special department to study this particular question. I had an opportunity to meet Mon. Haas, who is the Director of this particular branch, and, as a result of his investigations, he said that in the case of competition between road and rail three essentials had to be borne in mind.

The first essential was that private enterprise should not be stifled; the second was that motors should proportionately pay the cost of the road; and the third was that the Legislature should not cripple the free development of road traffic and that the whole thing should be settled by mutual consent.

These are the three essentials on the basis of which we can solve this particular problem. Before I come to the problem in India, I would just refer briefly to the attempts that have been made in various countries to solve this vexed problem. In Switzerland, the railways had a monopoly of the bus service, and later on they gave it up. Subsequently, the competition became so keen, that on the 29th May, 1938, a mutual agreement was arrived at between the railway companies and the bus companies by means of which they settled that the profits and losses of the bus services should be shared equally between the railways and the bus companies and that the fares in rail and road should be the same. In France, the buses are run by the manufacturers of the motor cars. In England, when the competition became very acute, the railways demanded of the Parliament that they should be allowed to run road buses. The Government turned down their proposal in 1919. The railways thereafter purchased the shares of the bus companies and now it is agreed that the railways should not be allowed to purchase more than 50 per cent. of the shares of these bus companies. The best attempt to solve the problem was made in New South Wales in Australia. In the New South Wales Act,



[Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad.]

there is a provision that commercial vehicles can be used within a radius of 20 miles from the station, that only members of the family of the owners and the persons who are recognised to handle the goods are allowed to sit in the vehicles, and that beyond 20 miles agricultural goods should be sent by rail. In the city of Sydney, 612 buses operating in the metropolitan area ceased to operate as the result of the New South Wales Transport Act of 31st October, 1931. In another province of Australia, that is, Victoria, they tried to pass a similar Act several times, but the Legislature turned it down, and no other attempt was made to solve this question.

Coming to India, the problem here is not so keen as it is in other places for reasons which I am going to give now. We are not manufacturers of motor vehicles as European countries are. We have to import these motor vehicles from outside and pay a customs duty to the Government amounting to 37½ per cent. That is one of the most important considerations in discussing this matter. Again, these motors pay an extraordinary duty of ten annas per gallon of petrol which is unique only in this country for the maintenance of roads. The price of petrol is further enhanced as a result of combine which Government connive at. The roads are kept in a bad condition in the Provinces, and the Government have always been indifferent to the repair of these roads. Had the Government taken strong action and kept the roads in good order, probably the life of the motor cars would have been increased and the passengers would have been travelling with greater comforts. This is to the advantage of the railway companies, because people would rather prefer to travel by train than by road if it was possible for them to do so. The next point is that the motor vehicles pay much more to the Government in revenues than the railways do. For instance, a Committee was appointed by the Government of the United Provinces in 1932 on the question of road traffic taxation, and this Committee has calculated the amount which these motor buses pay to the Government in the shape of duty. At page 20 of their report, these figures are given, and they are summarised at page 13 of the report from which I shall read out to the House a short paragraph:

"From the figures shown under appendix I, item 4, will be observed that a motor vehicle pays Rs. 1,250 approximately towards this form of revenue. The economic life of a vehicle being 2 to 2½ years this surely represents a very considerable form of contribution. We would like to stress this point more specifically by pointing out that the 4,663 vehicles operating in the United Provinces (as per figures given in the report) would be paying nearly Rs. 57,54,600 per year in the form of petrol taxation. This figure is based on an average consumption. . . ."

The amount of duty which they pay every year is about Rs. 1,200 per vehicle approximately. Those are the figures of one Province, the U. P., where bus service is comparatively less developed. If we calculate the total amount of taxation which all these vehicles pay in the whole of India, the figure would work out to about Rs. seven crores, and this is really more than the contribution of the railways to the general revenues. It appears that the railways are allowed to import stores free of duty, and, for the last four years, they have not paid even one pie to the general revenues, while the motor vehicles have been paying seven crores a year to the Government in some form or other. So, will it be fair to put the railways in competition with these road services, because railways import all their materials free and avoid payment of one per cent. to the general revenues, and these motor vehicles have to pay a very heavy duty, amounting to six crores?

**The Honourable Sir Frank Noyce** (Member for Industries and Labour): May I ask the Honourable Member his authority for the statement that the railways import their materials free of duty?

**Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad:** I am glad that my friend drew my attention to it. I looked at the figures in the Railway Budget to find out how much customs duty they paid, and I failed to find out the exact amount of customs duty in the papers supplied to us. From this I deduced that they were not paying any duty at all, but I stand corrected. That is not the important point. The point is this. These vehicles pay an enormous sum of seven crores to the Government in some form or other and our contribution by the railway is left unpaid for the last four years and it is not desirable that we should put railways in such a position that their losses may be greater. I would certainly advocate that the Railway Department should tackle the more important problems before they turn their attention to this particular question. There are two more important questions. One is to try to secure co-ordination among the different railways themselves. We know that the railways are competing with each other, for instance, the B., B. and C. I. Railway and the G. I. P. between Delhi and Bombay compete with each other, and, as a result of their competition, it became necessary to spend a large sum of money to build another railway station, called the Central Station, for the B., B. and C. I. Railway in Bombay. That is the first problem, and the second problem is that we ought to divert the road traffic from such roads where the railways are running to those places where there are no metal roads, and the traffic suffers enormously. We ought to develop the traffic in country places and change mud roads into metal roads. One person calculated the other day that if fifteen carts ran every day on a particular *kutchra* road, then it would pay the interest, the maintenance and the depreciation charges on a new metalled road along that route. If we begin to build the roads in country places, where at present no roads exist, then the road vehicles will divert their attention to those places where at present no roads and railway facilities exist. Therefore, I just conclude with the remark that, before they try to tackle this particular question and try to throw out of employment a large number of persons who are now engaged in this motor traffic, they must concentrate their attention to more important questions, such as the co-ordination among the railways themselves and the opening out of new roads in places which are still undeveloped and where means of communication don't exist or exist in such a form that these are inaccessible for the major portion of the year.

**Sir Darcy Lindsay** (Bengal: European): I wish to support the motion put forward by my Honourable friend, the Leader of our Group, that there should be very speedy steps taken to bring about co-ordination between the railways and road transport. The request is so reasonable that I hope my Honourable friend, the Member in charge of the Department, will give it his full support. In August last, the Honourable Member said: The Resolutions of the Road and Rail Conference were receiving most careful examination in consultation with Provincial Governments and, he went on to say, that the constitutional position being what it is, considerable time must elapse before securing a beneficial agreement. We all know that the wheels of Government are ponderous and move slowly and, it is with a view to expediting action that this cut motion is moved. The question is one of considerable importance, and it is no use locking the stable door after the horse, or, should I say, the motor cars, have escaped. They are playing havoc with our railways, and, before very long, it may be too late to retrieve the injury. In reading the debate at Simla in August last, on the Indian

[Sir Darcy Lindsay.]

Railways (Amendment) Bill, I find that the vital question of the preservation of the railway systems of India was scarcely dealt with. To my mind, this is the all important issue. If there is to be no control over transport by road, both passenger and goods, there is likely to be rapid development to secure all the cream for the roads and leave only the skimmed milk for the railways. As we are all aware, railways cannot exist on skimmed milk, and what must inevitably happen is that they will endeavour to raise their rates, if possible on the goods that cannot very well be carried by road or they will have to close their doors. That is a position which, I am quite sure, Members of this House would regard as deplorable, but it will come unless we take immediate steps to bring about co-ordination and save the position.

I was somewhat astounded at the speech of my Honourable friend, Mr. B. Das. He said, he wanted more light. His remarks indicate the existence of such an abysmal darkness that no words of mine, nor any searchlight that I can play on his mind, will be of any assistance. His mind is full of suspicion. Because a member of the European Group has brought forward this subject, there is something behind it. Just what it is, my Honourable friend is not quite sure. But he thinks it has to do with petrol. He thinks it has to do with the manufacture of motor cars in England. Anyway, whatever it is, it is brought forward by the European Group, and, therefore, it is of no use: it will not have his support. Mr. B. Das is a very old friend of mine, and I have always understood him to be a very able engineer, but he is certainly not much good as a railway engineer. Mr. B. Das referred, I think, to the position in England. Well, he may or may not be aware that the railways of England woke up a bit too late to this motor-road transport menace and they are now taking active steps to bring about co-ordination. They are buying up certain motor coach lines: they are buying up Companies to distribute the goods they carry to the chief towns, and various other measures of that sort are being taken. Mr. B. Das is not prepared to spare any of the Government of India money to bring this about. I also do not want to see unnecessary expenditure, and, therefore, it is all the more reason to bring about this co-ordination that we are asking for. At the moment we are only on the fringe of this competition and it will grow into a menace even more serious than the water hyacinth of Bengal in its insidious growth. The co-ordination we ask for must of necessity take the form of assistance from Provincial Governments as it is the Provinces who can make rules and regulations to govern the road traffic. At present the bus services are largely uncontrolled. As far as I know, they have no insurance to protect their passengers. Any individual can purchase a lorry and fit it out as a bus and he will run that bus just so long as he finds it pays. Therefore, I am not at one with some of my friends in the House in having that great sympathy for the owners of these motor buses.

The North Western Railway is perhaps the biggest sufferer in this competition. I find from the Mitchell-Kirkness report that the estimated loss to the system is very considerable. We also find that in the Punjab a considerable quantity of goods are carried by road, and it is here where the railways are likely to suffer very severely because the goods that are paying the best freight are the goods that are likely to be conveyed by road. Then, Sir, it is light railways also who suffer very considerably. They have been encouraged by Local Boards. They have been encouraged in the past by the Government of India who, in certain instances, guaranteed the

payment of dividend. We find that they are unable to earn the dividend and, therefore, it falls back on the Government of India to meet the charge. The Darjeeling-Himalayan Railway, with its two-foot gauge, is a case in point where the Company has been very hard hit, the passenger earnings having fallen from Rs. 4,75,000 in 1926-27 to Rs. 2,87,000 in 1931-32 in spite of a reduction in fares to try and keep the third class passenger traffic.

**Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh** (Muzaffarpur cum Champaran : Non-Muhammadan): Is it not a private company?

**Sir Darcy Lindsay**: Possibly so, but what does the Honourable Member mean by a private company?

**Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh**: It is not a State Railway.

**Sir Darcy Lindsay**: No; it is a public company. The first class passenger earnings have fallen from Rs. 1,12,000 to Rs. 18,000. On this road there is also considerable goods traffic taken by motor. Then take the Kalighat-Fulta Railway, where the earnings of three lakhs in 1925 had dropped to 1½ lakhs, the Government of India having to meet the subsidy of Rs. 52,000. The Barasat-Basirhat is another company that has had to suffer losses. They have added a number of trains to try and meet the competition, but the cost of running these trains has not been recovered by any increase in the passenger traffic. One of the difficulties of these light railways is the regulations as regards speed. I understand a two-foot gauge railway cannot go at a greater speed than 15 miles an hour, the 2½ foot gauge at 20 miles an hour. Now with buses going from 30 to 40 miles an hour along the same route, it is very easy to see that the passengers want to go by bus. If any modification of the regulation can be brought about to assist these light railways, it will be a great boon. They are also handicapped in the way of octroi and other terminal charges that the buses have not got to meet. I have got no axe to grind with motor transport in India. I am all out to encourage motor transport and I think there is ample scope if roads are built from principal railway stations into the heart of the country. I think there is ample scope for expansion in the way of motor transport, and I would even go further and suggest that the railway should offer a subsidy to any individuals or companies who may wish to open out these new routes until such time as they are found to pay.

Now, Sir, referring once again to my Honourable friend, Mr. B. Das, I wonder whether, in the course of his inquiries, he has read the Mitchell-Kirkness report in which it is stated:

"In view of the immense amount of public capital invested in Indian railways and of the paramount necessity for cheap railway rates for the carriage of agricultural staples and heavy traffic, it is not ultimately in the interest of India that the railways should be damaged as a property by extensive competition, or that, in order to pay their way, they should be forced to raise their rates on other traffic."

Sir, I have already referred to the possibility of the railways having to close down. I should have thought my Honourable friend, Mr. Das, as an Indian, and in the interest of India, would do all he could to avoid such a catastrophe. I, Sir, plead for the railway systems of India. I have been for a very long term of years a resident of this country, and I regard myself as an Indian. (Loud Applause.) My home is in India, and, in anything I can do to further the interests of India, I am at India's command. (Loud and Prolonged Cheers.)

**Mr. O. S. Ranga Iyer** (Rohilkund and Kumaon Divisions: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, it was very pleasing to hear from the Honourable the Leader of the European Group—that he was—I mean my friend, Sir Darcy Lindsay—how closely he identifies himself with India's interests, how he has spent the best part of his life in India, and how he has found a home in this country, and that as such he is prepared to devote himself to advancing the interests of the railways in India as much, I believe, as the roads in India. I think, Sir, we are really not at cross purposes, as the Chief Whip of the Democratic Party was almost trying to imply by his speech. This is no occasion for any kind of casting of suspicion or, for that matter, fancying difficulties being created by the Government in the way of flourishing motor traffic. When Mr. B. Das was viewing this question with a certain amount of dismay, I thought he was more of a democrat and less of a socialist, for, if the Railway Department is to take up, to such a large extent as is necessary, also motor traffic, must not a democrat support it, just as a socialist must support it? I would put it like that.

**Mr. N. M. Joshi:** I cannot understand the point.

**Mr. O. S. Ranga Iyer:** My friend, Mr. Joshi, says, he cannot understand the point I am making. I think I put my sentence in a rather complex way. I should put it like this to make a socialist like my friend, Mr. Joshi, understand.

**Mr. B. Das:** Democratise and socialise the railways. Then I will consider the position.

**Mr. O. S. Ranga Iyer:** If Mr. B. Das wants my support for democratising the railways, he will not get it.

**Mr. Amar Nath Dutt:** Why not nationalise?

**Mr. B. Das:** Have democratisation in finance.

**Mr. O. S. Ranga Iyer:** You cannot democratise finance, for that will lead to bad management. Sir, democracy in the administration of the railways and good management have never gone together in any democratic country in the world, and if Mr. Das, with the suspicions to which he gave vent, were to stand up even by way of interruption and tell me of one country in which democratisation has achieved efficiency in the administration of the railways, I shall bow to him.

**Mr. B. Das:** Does the Honourable Member recognise that the present railways have got no efficiency in their administration? Does he not agree with me that they are mismanaged?

**Mr. O. S. Ranga Iyer:** Well, Sir, I may say with all the authority that may attach to one who has studied the working of railways in other parts of the world, our Indian railways are one of the most efficiently managed railway systems of the world (Hear, hear), and Mr. Das will have to make a comparative study of the efficient management of the railways of the world before he destroys this efficiency.

**Mr. B. Das:** I study it every year in the Public Accounts Committee.

**Mr. O. S. Ranga Iyer:** Mr. B. Das says he studies it every year in the Public Accounts Committee. It is a little bit of exaggeration, I

think, when he talks like that, for he is not on the Public Accounts Committee of every railway in the world, and I was once a member of the Public Accounts Committee myself and I know that in that Committee you only get the public accounts of the railways in India, not of every railway in the world. Now, if he makes a comparative study, he will find that we are financially sound, and sound finance is the best test of successful railway administration. I am not here on this occasion or on a previous occasion to defend the management of the railways. We ourselves have in season and out of season agitated that the Railway Minister should be responsible to the House. But let me not be side-tracked. I was saying that if my friend wants the democratisation of the railways, he is only asking for trouble so far as the management of the railways is concerned; but Mr. Joshi was asking, "do you want socialisation?" What do you mean by socialisation? By socialisation is meant the carrying on of the administration of a particular department, of a particular railway in this particular case, or of all the railways by the Government concerned. By socialisation is meant the carrying on of the motor traffic in the country, which is a terrific competitor of the railway traffic, by the Government themselves, and how, I ask, can Mr. B. Das, oppose such a move that the Government, I believe, ought to make, and probably are contemplating making, for I find, Sir, in the report of the Railway Board on Indian Railways for 1982-83, on pages 88 and 89, paragraph 49, some of the suggestions of the Government themselves in regard to this particular matter. In July, 1982, an officer attached to the Railway Board and the Road Engineer with the Government of India were instructed to visit the chief provinces, excepting Burma and Baluchistan, and collect from Local Governments and railways information on the following points:

- (a) The extent to which motor competition with the railways had grown and its effect on railway earnings;
- (b) Cases where new roads were required to open up areas at present without adequate communication;
- (c) Cases where branch lines had been projected, but not constructed, and where new or improved roads might more economically serve the area; and
- (d) Cases where feeder roads were required to afford agriculturists, etc., easy access to railway stations.

Therefore, it is very clear that the Railway Administration has been casting its eyes on motor traffic, and their conclusions might as well be communicated to this House, as probably Mr. B. Das in his numerous party engagements has overlooked the purpose, the socialist purpose as he should think from his point of view, that the Government have in view.

**Mr. B. Das:** Or the capitalist point of view.

**Mr. C. S. Ranga Iyer:** Well, here is my friend who calls the Government a capitalist, and this is a new theory which I cannot understand. My Honourable friend, Mr. Joshi, who is a better student of socialism, is silent, and, therefore, he, at any rate, understands what is capitalism and what is socialism. It is very difficult to educate my Honourable friend, Mr. Das, unless I propose to be irrelevant in the course of this debate. But, in spite of this interruption, let me try to go back to my argument.

[Mr. C. S. Ranga Iyer.]

The more important conclusions in the report have been summarised in the report of the Railway Board in the following terms:

"Excluding Madras, 30 per cent of metalled roads in British India are parallel with railways, while 48 per cent. of railways have metalled roads parallel with them and within 10 miles. Any comprehensive plan of road development should, therefore, take into consideration . . ."

—Here I am reminded of one of the splendid suggestions that you, Sir, made when you were on the Opposition Benches which I believe has been taken into consideration—

"the possibility of linking the more important villages with the public road system rather than aim at further trunk roads parallel to the railway system".

Your suggestion, Sir, if I remember aright, was to run all roads hereafter, not parallel to the railways, but rather horizontally, so that the motor traffic would feed the railway traffic.

**Diwan Bahadur A. Ramaswami Mudaliar** (Madras City: Non-Muham-madan Urban): The Honourable Member means at right angles.

**Mr. C. S. Ranga Iyer:** Yes, I mean that. I am very weak in geometry (Laughter) and I was trying to refer to the speech of the President. What I mean to say is this, that the roads are now running parallel to the railways altogether. I can well understand my Honourable friend, Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad, being amused by my geometrical difficulties. (Loud Laughter.) What I mean to say is this that the roads are being run parallel to the railways, and, henceforward, they should not be running parallel to the railways, but exactly at right angles, in the opposite direction. There are two parallel railways running in certain places; for instance, take the Podanur and Palghat line; there is the Podanur and Pollachi line both of them are more or less parallel to each other, not quite that, there must be some kind of angle between them (Laughter), I admit. What I mean to say is that they are more or less running parallel to each other, and I want that the motor traffic should run in the opposite direction, speaking angularly (Loud Laughter), namely, from the Palghat Railway station straight to what you call Minakshipuram, that is, exactly opposite to Palghat, so far as the Palghat line is concerned, but, as mentioned by my Honourable friend, Diwan Bahadur Mudaliar, not exactly at right angles, but nearly so, so that, instead of a connection on parallel lines, the motor traffic will be able to feed both Minakshipuram and Palghat. I think I have probably supplied some amusement to this House by talking of angles, verticality and horizontality and parallelograms. (Laughter.) What I mean is exactly what the Government have put in their own way. (Hear, hear.) I had better read what the report says. It says "for these reasons the solution in many cases may lie in the railways themselves operating motor transport on parallel roads". As there is motor traffic at present on parallel roads, I do not see why railways themselves should not be entitled to operate the motor traffic on parallel roads. The roads, which are running at right angles from these parallel roads, that is to say, which can be feeder roads to these railways, must not be run by the Government themselves. What I want is that while the Government are most perfectly entitled to call away all these competitors, who are running their motor traffic on the parallel roads, thereby decreasing the railway passenger traffic earnings, Government are perfectly entitled to commandeer the complete competition on these roads.

**Mr. B. Das:** No, no. We shall never give license.

**Mr. C. S. Ranga Iyer:** I know that the Government do not intend to go so far, and, therefore, my Honourable friend, Mr. Das, need not be afraid. I say that the Government must take up this motor traffic, because this motor traffic is conducted most inefficiently. These lorries and these buses are most inefficiently conducted. In the first place, they are bad, in the second place, they are dangerously run, in the third place, they have no punctual timings, and I am perfectly certain that if the Government run these buses as well as they are run in England, if they introduce those lovely buses which they have introduced in England, if they will introduce those mail-coaches that are found in England, and if the Government run them on parallel roads, then I am perfectly certain that, what they lose in the competition, they will gain in the other way, and when the Honourable the Commerce Member again stands on the floor of the House, he will not say 'that in goods traffic, we have increased our revenue, while in passenger traffic, we have lost our earnings'. Sir, if you take up separately every little volume supplied to us in regard to the revenue of the railways, you will find that in every railway the goods income has gone up and the passenger traffic income has gone down. Why should this be so? It is because of the competition of the buses, and, again, in the interest of the competitors themselves, if we introduce this running of buses at right angles to the railway roads and the parallel roads on which Government should operate hereafter, it will be good for the bus conductors themselves who are private owners because at present there is cut-throat competition amongst them. There is no regularity of the price for tickets, there is no regulation about them, today the price is four annas, tomorrow it is six annas, and, on the third day, it is eight annas, and the man who is able to stand the longest with the lowest ticket occupies the field at last and raises the price at a later stage. Therefore, Sir, even in the interest of these competitors, it would be necessary to control the bus traffic on the parallel roads by the Government themselves operating upon them and leaving the bus conductors to the feeder roads and increasing the number of feeder roads. That will also facilitate or rather develop the railways.

I shall now conclude by completing this one sentence, namely, that the Government themselves are considering that they may have to abandon certain projects in favour of good roads, and, judging from their report, the projects, which could probably be abandoned in favour of good roads, and projects, which cannot probably be justified owing to existence of good roads, will not be proceeded with. I presume that all Honourable Members have read this report, and I have only to ask the Honourable the Commerce Member if he will consider or if he has already moved the Secretary of State to introduce similar legislation in Parliament regarding this road motor competition as stated in the official report with a view to giving the railways having contracts with the Secretary of State the power to run motor services.

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Shanmukham Chetty): The Chair has been told that the unattached Members have not given notice of any cut for this afternoon. Therefore, the cut motions in the order in which they appear on the Order Paper will be taken up. The Chair also understands that quite a number of Honourable Members would like to speak on this motion. If it is the unanimous desire of the House that this debate should continue . . . .



**Some Honourable Members:** No, no.

**Mr. Muhammad Yamin Khan** (Agra Division: Muhammadan Rural): I understand that my Honourable friend, Mr. Sitakanta Mahapatra, has obtained the signatures of certain Honourable Members.

**Sir Muhammad Yakub** (Rohilkund and Kumaon Divisions: Muhammadan Rural): Only of one Member. There are many unattached Members who have not signed the agreement.

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Shanmukham Chetty): There is not that unanimity which would warrant a variation in the understanding that has been arrived at. The Chair will now call upon the Honourable Sir Joseph Bhore to speak.

**The Honourable Sir Joseph Bhore** (Member for Commerce and Railways): Sir, my reply to the debate might very well have taken the form of a series of quotations from speeches which I have delivered with reference to this subject during the past year, and, though I have very little to add to what I have at one time or another said, I am sure the House has welcomed a debate on a matter of such vital importance to the economic life of the community.

My Honourable friend, Sir Leslie Hudson, made reference to the Road-Rail Conference and expressed the hope that another such Conference might assemble at a very early date. May I remind him of what I already said with regard to that Conference? I pointed out that it had engendered the hope that there would be in the future a large measure of co-operation between the Central Government, Railways and Provincial Administrations, a co-operation which was essential if the best interest of public communications in India was to be served. Now, sir, the Conference which was held last year is being followed up by references to the Local Governments, and unless these references result in something tangible, another Conference would obviously be somewhat premature. But I have no doubt that my Honourable colleague, the Member in charge of the Industries and Labour Department, will give careful attention to the points that the Leader of the European Group has made in this connection.

I think, Sir, it is unnecessary for me to do more than confine myself to the more purely railway aspects of this debate, because other questions arising out of this road rail problem will, I hope, be discussed later. The House will certainly have an opportunity for an exhaustive examination of these questions when my Honourable colleague brings forward his Resolution in regard to the Road Fund.

Then, Sir, I come to the question of competition; and here let me repeat what I said in my Budget speech. I there said:

"What in the interests of the country the Railways are chiefly concerned with is, the elimination of wasteful competition and the utilisation of the available resources of the State to the best possible advantage of the public. It is obviously, for instance, in the public interest that such limited funds as there are should be spent on opening up unopened tracts rather than on duplicating existing lines of communication."

I want to make it perfectly clear that, so far as competition is concerned, we do not take the position that we resent that competition. We realise that competition has come to stay. But what we do complain of is

uneconomic competition. I will give the House an example of such competition which was mentioned by an official representative at the last Rail-Road Conference. He pointed out that bus competition in certain localities had reached such a stage that rival companies were in some cases even carrying passengers free, and he went further to say that in one particular case one rival company had offered to carry passengers free, and, I think he said, to give them a banana and a handkerchief into the bargain. (Laughter.)

**Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh:** This was started by the steamer companies first.

**Mr. K. C. Neogy** (Dacca Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural): We learnt it from our European friends there.

**The Honourable Sir Joseph Bhowe:** Well, Sir, Railway Administrations cannot embark on competition of that character. My Honourable friend, Sir Leslie Hudson, asked whether communication boards were in existence in Provinces other than Bombay. I think either communication boards or boards which answer more or less the same purpose, certainly road boards, are in existence in most Provinces. I am not in a position to say whether they function satisfactorily or not; but if my Honourable friend means a board which extends its purview, not merely over roads, but over other forms of communication as well, then I am afraid I am not in a position to give him definite information. I do not think that such boards do operate in the Provinces.

Then, Sir, there was a complaint that one of the reasons why railways were suffering from this competition was that they had failed to move with the times. I think Honourable Members who mentioned the slowness of our trains did the railways less than justice. I think everybody who compares the railways of today with the railways of even ten years ago will realise what improvement has been made. (*An Honourable Member:* "In trunk lines?"). In trunk lines and long distance traffic. A large number of Members of this House are personally interested in the running of what is known as the Grand Trunk Express. I think Honourable Members know that both the Chief Commissioner and I have gone very carefully indeed into the timings of this particular train and to the possibilities of improving matters; and the real difficulty, as far as I can see it, is this. The bulk of the traffic, third class traffic, by that train is traffic which is not long distance traffic. The result, therefore, is that, if we were to run a fast long distance train over this route, we would have to run at a very heavy loss indeed. That, Sir, is a real difficulty which concerns not only this particular train, but a good many other trains to which Honourable Members have referred.

Then, Sir, on the question of internal competition between railways, I am faced with a certain difference of opinion in this House. My Honourable friend, Dr. Ziauddin, said, "Why do you have internal competition between railways?" I leave him to other Members of this House who hold an exactly opposite view. My Honourable friend, Mr. Ranga Iyer, was, I am afraid, responsible for a somewhat cloudy statement, if I may say so, in regard to the actual alignment of roads in the future. I can only say that I am sorry that he did not adhere to his original suggestion that roads should be vertical, because, then, our debate would undoubtedly have reached more ethereal spheres. I would emphasise one thing, and that is that it is an entire mistake to suppose that railways are at the

[Sir Joseph Bhore.]

present moment continuing an attitude of "Take it or leave it". I think I have made that clear both here and in another place, and I will take every opportunity I can for removing such an impression if it does exist anywhere. Perhaps I cannot do better than, in conclusion, quote from a speech which I made at the last Railway Conference, and which, I think, crystallises as clearly as I can the attitude, not merely of myself, but of the Railway Department towards this most important problem. What I then said was this:

"I believe that co-ordination of transport services is absolutely essential, especially in a poor country like India, if development is not to be unduly or improperly delayed. I am myself by no means pessimistic, and hope that, despite the admitted obstacles to co-ordination, it will in some substantial measure be eventually secured. But it is not on co-ordination alone that railways must rely. I do believe that there is only one sure way in which the railways can hope to meet the competition which unforeseen developments of the future may have in store for them. What these developments will be it is impossible to prophesy today, but for such developments they must be prepared. It is only on the one hand by increasing the efficiency of railways on the technical and administrative side combined with the utmost economy in working, and, on the other hand, by straining every nerve to increase their utility to the public, that railways will be able to face a competition that must inevitably grow with the years. Railways can ultimately only ward off the competitive challenge of their rivals if they realise, as I know they do realise, that they must offer something more attractive to the public than that which their rivals can give."

That, Sir, I venture to think, presents the policy of the Railway Department. I trust that it is a policy which will meet with the endorsement of this House. I feel certain that it is the only possible policy which we can adopt if we are to meet the circumstances of the future. After what I have said, I hope my Honourable friend will not press his motion.

**Sir Leslie Hudson:** Sir, I must thank the Honourable Member for his remarks. I think the debate has brought out one or two points—possibly more. With the exception of the rather curious suspicions, and, if I may say so, somewhat illogical exaggerations of my friend, Mr. B. Das, who, although an electrical engineer himself, certainly does require more light, I think the debate has been useful. In view of the remarks which fell from my Honourable friend, Sir Joseph Bhore, in which he hinted that, under certain conditions, his colleague would be calling a further meeting of the Road-Rail Conference, I do not wish to pursue the matter further. I can only hope that my Honourable friend, Sir Frank Noyce, will realise that this is a matter where speed is required, just as speed is required on certain of the railway lines in India. To take five and a half hours to go 75 miles is certainly not break-neck speed, and I hope that Sir Frank Noyce will not set that example to the Railway Authorities by delaying a meeting of this Road-Rail Conference longer than is necessary. Sir, I beg leave to withdraw my motion.

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

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

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The Assembly re-assembled after Lunch at Two of the Clock, Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Shanmukham Chetty) in the Chair.

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**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Shanmukham Chetty): Motions will now be taken in the order as they appear on the Order Paper. The Chair

would just like to make one observation. The first two motions which stand in the names of Mr. Gopika Romon Roy and Sirdar Harbans Singh Brar ought to be considered as motions intended to refuse supplies, and the discussion must be not in relation to specific grievances, but in relation to the general maladministration of the railways, and Honourable Members must bear that in mind when they take part in the discussion. Only one such motion will be allowed, and, when that motion has been disposed of, other similar motions are barred. As to which particular motion is to be taken up, it may be said that the Chair has been told that Sirdar Harbans Singh Brar was the first to give notice, and, therefore, he will have priority. He will move the motion that stands in his name.

*Maladministration of the Railway Board.*

**Sirdar Harbans Singh Brar:** Sir, I beg to move:

“That the demand under the head ‘Railway Board’ be reduced to one rupee.”—  
(Maladministration of the Railway Board.)

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Shanmukham Chetty): Time limit will be strictly enforced.

**Sirdar Harbans Singh Brar:** Mr. President, we have this huge system of railways in India, and the Railway Board supervises it. We have to consider on this motion whether the Railway Board performs its functions in such a manner as to justify the Demand for the Grant. It appears that the Railway Board merely act as a post office. Whatever the Agents put forward, they simply agree to their suggestions, and the Railway Board themselves do not perform any functions, either of supervision or control. We have been witnessing the huge extent of maladministration that exists on our railways. Crores and crores of rupees are being wasted on schemes which afterwards prove to be failures and a public scandal. I will take the general items of maladministration in a particular order. Let us, for instance, take first the bridges and other constructional work. The Hardinge Bridge has alone cost as much as 3½ crores to the Indian tax-payer, and, within a few years, we find that the bridge has not proved to be strong enough to function as it was designed to function, and no less than a crore and a half more is needed to repair that one particular bridge. What work are the engineers doing? Either their estimates were absolutely beyond the mark, or they chose bad contractors. Is the money of the Indian tax-payer only to be raised by way of revenue to provide commission either to the engineers or to the architects or to the contractors to enable them to fill their pockets, because it has been found that within a short period these constructional works cannot meet the requirements for which they were built? Had the Railway Board utilised all this money for opening out new lines in areas where the railways do not exist at present, we could have at least 800 miles of railway instead of a single Hardinge Bridge. What special service has this bridge rendered we do not know, but one thing we know, and that is, that it has proved a huge failure, and the tax-payer is now being asked to provide another 1½ crores to repair it, but this sum alone would have given us another 800 miles of new railway in areas which have no transport facilities at present.

Similarly, with regard to railway workshops, there is too much of duplication. In Madras alone, we find that every railway system has got its own workshop. Why can't they combine together and have one common

[Sirdar Harbans Singh Brar.]

workshop? Why should there be so much duplication? Crores of rupees can be saved if all these workshops combine, and with that saving speedier and more efficient service can be rendered to the people.

Then, there is the ruinous policy of freight rates. We find that particular commodities of less service to the community at large are being treated at special favoured rates out of all proportion to either the classifications or the schedules. Food grains, for instance, are treated in the worst manner possible, while other commodities, much less useful to the country at large and much less advantageous to the people, are being transported at much lower rates, because it serves certain particular small interests. Agricultural food grains are charged at much higher rates than even coal. I just had a memorandum on that subject, but somehow during the luncheon hour I mislaid it, and I am not in a position now to quote the figures; but I can say that the lowest minimum for food grains is '1 of one pie per mile, while for coal it is '05 per mile per maund. Such inequalities of rates act in a very detrimental manner to the general interests of the tax-payer and the masses. The price of wheat in the Punjab is now about Rs. 1-8-0 per maund, and the freight charges from the Punjab to Calcutta by special ways of calculating up to terminus junctions on different railway systems and then adding them up works out to Rs. 1-2-0 per maund. It is cheaper for the Punjab people to send wheat to Karachi and then by sea to Calcutta than to send it by railway from the Punjab to Calcutta. The railway systems, as they are administered by the State for the welfare and benefit of the people at large, must consider the interests of the general public, and not simply to classifications and to the fictitious rules they have framed. One cannot understand these classifications. You see the rates, maximum and minimum, and the subjects are mentioned within those classifications, but then you find in actual practice that the rates charged are out of all proportion either to that minima or to the maxima; special rates are given to certain items mentioned in those very classifications. That proves that favoritism for particular commodities is being shown by the Railway Administration, and the Railway Board is responsible for all that. If they had adopted the policy of covering the out of pocket expenses for the transport of these articles, or if they had said that over and above that there must be so much percentage of profit, one could have understood the position. If all their out of pocket expenses can be met by transporting coal at '05 per maund per mile, certainly the out of pocket expenses on wheat could be met in the same manner, because it is easier to transport wheat than coal, it is of uniform weight, and the wagons could be loaded up to their full capacity, but these things do not come to light; ordinary people do not know how these rates are worked.

Then, I come to the question of conveniences to passengers. All countries provide return tickets, and, for special fairs and pilgrimages, special return fares are charged. But India is a country which is by no means Christian as a whole, and yet concession rates are given for Christmas and Easter, but not for Holi and other festivals, nor for pilgrims to Hardwar, Amritsar, Muktesar and Benares, where lakhs and crores of people go and visit every year. The trains are overcrowded, but no heed is paid to the inconveniences of these third class passengers. The generation of electricity in the carriages does not cost much; electricity is generated by the motion of the trains and the railways can as well provide

fans in the third class carriages. The third class passengers do not get any convenience either within the carriages or at the railway stations. The majority of the stations exist in rural areas from where the masses generally come. They do not have any sheds to shelter them either from rain or from the heat of the burning sun. Water arrangements and such other things are equally bad. Very few and very inconvenient waiting rooms are provided and the booking arrangements for third class passengers are very bad. The third class passengers are treated as cattle by the booking clerks. The booking clerk turns up a few minutes before the train is scheduled to depart, and the passengers are pushed up and down the platforms. The train services are simply very bad. From Rewari to Fazilka, a distance of 280 miles, it takes 20 hours for a train to reach there. Between Lahore and Delhi, the trains are stopped for two hours and 2½ hours at junction stations. Why so much halt, and it is simply beyond one's comprehension why people should be made to sit in those tight compartments for such a long time when they have to cover this distance.

Another thing is that these railways are not run on economic lines. Why do you not transfer the strategic lines to the Military Department? Why should the British soldiers be allowed the concession of paying a third class fare and travelling in a second class carriage, thus crowding the second class passengers who pay full second class fares? It is simply scandalous that Indian soldiers are not treated in the same way as the British soldiers in the matter of this concession.

When we tell the Railway Member to treat the staff of the railways on commercial lines, that is, whenever there is a profit the staff should get a bonus, and whenever the railways make a loss the staff should share that loss—the Government tell us that the railway being a Government concern, it cannot be treated in a manner different from that of the other Departments of the Government. Then, why issue concessions to railway servants? They have got free passes to travel throughout India, simply crowding the trains without paying any railway fares. Why not you then give free passes to other servants of the Government? Do the post office allow their servants to have free postage and free telephone and telegraph service? Certainly not. Why not treat your employees in a similar fashion? It is beyond one's imagination how this commercial department is being mismanaged. The predecessor of the present Financial Commissioner of Railways had the audacity to tell the Railway Retrenchment Committee that they allowed free passes to their servants, because it did not cost them anything. Imagine such a financial theory propounded by a financial expert who manages the railways? If all those people who were travelling free were to pay the railway fares as ordinary people do, how many lakhs and crores of rupees would accrue to the railway coffers? That is not taken into account. Every employee getting Rs. 100 or 150 and above gets a second class pass, and I have not seen a second class compartment which is not overcrowded by these free pass holders, and they get even their reservation without paying any fee, because they belong to that masonic lodge known as the Railway Department.

A Pope Committee cost us as much as three lakhs of rupees to sit, and the initial reduction in expenditure, as a result of its recommendations, is only Rs. 7½ lakhs. Fancy as if somebody in the Government of India

[Sirdar Harbans Singh Brar.]

could not manage such a retrenchment sitting in the office of the Railway Department here, and they had to bring out a man from Britain to effect an economy of Rs. 7½ lakhs at a cost of Rs. three lakhs!

In the Punjab, in certain areas, people are used to have their pumps or tube wells at a cost of Rs. 60 or Rs. 70 per pump, and the North Western Railway, in order to provide water at flag stations to the railway staff consisting of three or four persons, had to spend Rs. 1,200 each to have these tube wells. The Chief Engineer of the North Western Railway admitted that the cost was Rs. 1,000, but the reason he put forward was that they had to reach much lower depth. When the villagers get as good water from those pumps which cost Rs. 60 or 70 to put up, and when the Government officials, such as sub-divisional officers, magistrates and others are taking water from those water pumps, which only go a depth of 30 or 40 feet, what was the necessity for the railway to go 200 feet deep, except for the benefit of the engineers and the contractors, and to spend Rs. 1,000 on a tube well which ordinarily costs between Rs. 60 and Rs. 70?

In these circumstances, I think the Railway Board performs no useful function whatsoever except to act as a post office passing the demands of the Railway Agents to the Government of India. The Agents can as well manage the railways and the Member for Railways can deal with the Agents direct without the use of the Railway Board, which costs us such a huge sum, but exercises no control over the expenditure of the public money on such huge projects as bridges, etc. I would, therefore, suggest that the demand should be reduced to one rupee so as to refuse them supplies.

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Shanmukham Chetty): Cut motion moved:

"That the demand under the head 'Railway Board' be reduced to one rupee."

**Mr. M. Maswood Ahmad** (Patna and Chota Nagpur *cum* Orissa: Muhammadan): Sir, I oppose the motion moved by my Honourable friend, the Sardar Sahib. As a member of the Railway Standing Finance Committee, I think my Honourable friend is not justified in moving this motion, as he should realise that he himself has passed this demand which he wants to be rejected now.

**Sirdar Harbans Singh Brar**: I got these figures afterwards.

**Mr. M. Maswood Ahmad**: Whatever may be our grievances, whatever may be the trouble, we must realise that there must be some Central Authority to co-ordinate the different railway systems in India. If this motion is adopted, what will be the result? There will be no Railway Board, and it will not be possible for my Honourable friends, Sir Joseph Bhore and Mr. P. R. Rau, to stand up here and give replies to our questions. I think it is a wrong use of the convention for Members to give notice of such motions for refusal of supplies and get preference over others who want to ventilate their grievances against the railways before this House. It will not be possible for the Honourable Member to reply to the points which may be raised from different sides of the House in this connection. Certain aspects of the Railway Administration have been

dealt with by my Honourable friend, and on those grounds he wants to reject the demand for the Railway Board. But, here, again, I may say that a certain Member may want that the Railway Board should be abolished on account of inadequate Muslim representation, another Member may say that on account of the very unsatisfactory Sikh representation the Railway Board should be abolished. Others will say that, on account of there not having been a raised platform on a particular station, the Railway Board should be abolished. If questions like this are raised, then how will it be possible for my Honourable friend, the Railway Member, to reply to all the points in this way? It is better that a particular policy is discussed in a token cut, so that the Honourable Member may be in a position to reply and place the whole facts before us. No doubt there are many grievances brought forward by my Honourable friend. I entirely agree with him, so far as his facts and arguments are concerned, and I hope my Honourable friend sitting over there will consider them, but I oppose the motion on a question of principle. In connection with the freight on agricultural produce, I feel very strongly that Government should do something. The charge for carrying grain from one place to another is very high. I am very sorry I cannot place all the facts in this connection on the present occasion, because I have opposed this tactic of getting priority, but I intend mentioning them when the token cuts will come.

Sir, I oppose the motion.

**Kumar Gopika Romon Roy** (Surma Valley *cum* Shillong: Non-Muhammadan): Sir, at the outset I should like to say a few words. I have very great respect for the Member in charge personally, and I have also very great regard for the Members who sit opposite; but when I represent my constituency, I have no other alternative but to criticise them in the strongest possible language and with all the emphasis that I can command.

I moved in 1931 on the 25th of February a cut motion on the floor of this House on the maladministration of the Assam-Bengal Railway, when I narrated in great length about the mismanagement that were indulged in, and the consequent inconveniences witnessed and experienced in the Assam-Bengal Railway. In the middle of my speech, the then Speaker of the House, Sir Ibrahim Rahimtoola, remarked:

"He has made an overwhelmingly strong case for his motion. I hope the Honourable Member will be satisfied with the strength of the case he has put before the House."

The then Commerce and Railway Member, the Honourable Sir George Rainy, said in reply:

"At the same time, the House would be ungrateful to the Honourable the Mover if they did not desire the Government should pay attention to the various points he has raised, and, in so far as he has shown that things are not entirely as they should be, to see what can be done to make an improvement."

In another place he said:

"I will certainly read his speech carefully and see what can be done. I think one thing we might do. I do not think any Member of the Railway Board has inspected the Assam-Bengal Railway, since Sir Austen Hadow did so 18 months ago, and, therefore, in the ordinary course I think it is likely that one of the Members of the Railway Board will be going there before long, and that would be a good opportunity to look into the various points which have been raised and to see whether anything can be done."



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In conclusion, he said:

"I hope my Honourable friend, the Mover, will be satisfied that we will look into the points he has raised and see what we can do."

I, on the assurance of the Honourable the Railway Member, withdrew my motion, and thought there was really something in the mind of the Honourable Member to do for us behind his assurance. Sir, this was not the first time that I ventilated my grievances on the Assam-Bengal Railway.

On the 13th of March, 1950, on the floor of the Assam Legislative Council, I moved the following Resolution:

"This Council recommends to the Government that immediate steps be taken to urge on the authorities concerned to make the following improvements for the convenience and safety of the passengers in the Assam-Bengal Railway and for the general public :

(a) That raised platforms under proper sheds be constructed at all the stations in the Assam-Bengal Railway.

(b) That facilities be provided for the passengers while travelling by trains in the Assam-Bengal Railway to have their meals and baths at proper times.

(c) That the Assam-Bengal Railway Company be asked to introduce the system of issuing ordinary and week-end return tickets to all classes of passengers as are prevalent in other railways.

(d) That the Assam-Bengal Railway lines be protected by proper fencing to avoid accidents."

The Honourable Member in charge of Railways in Assam, Maulvi Saiyid Sir Muhammad Saadulla, said in the beginning of his reply:

"But we in the Public Works Department had to protest to the Legislative Department, and whether this was pointed out to His Excellency, I do not know. We did protest to the Legislative Department. The Resolution has, however, been admitted. Under definite instructions from the Government of India, we the Government Members cannot discuss this Resolution. All that I can, therefore, say is, that if there is any discussion over this question by non-official Members, I will submit the proceedings of the discussions to the Government of India, who may place it before the Railway Board for any action they may consider necessary."

In another place, he said:

"As I said before, if there is a discussion on this subject and Honourable Members want to put forth any of their grievances against the Railway, I will duly send the proceedings to the Government of India for any action they think proper."

To this the Speaker of the Assam Council, the Honourable Maulvi Faiznur Ali, said:

"I have made a statement on the point raised by the Honourable the Judicial Member that although this is a Central subject, Rule 22 does not empower me to disallow any Resolution which may be considered by the Government either to be detrimental to the public interest or which relates to a subject which is not the primary concern of the Local Government. Accordingly, if there be any local grievances and the Resolution be in order, although it is a Central subject, I admit it."

I think the House will be interested to hear what the then Vice-President of the Executive Council, the Honourable the Finance Member of

Assam, the Honourable Mr. A. W. Botham, said in connection with this Resolution:

"Perhaps I may intervene for one moment, Sir. I think my Honourable colleague's position is not so much that the matter should not be discussed in this Council, the matter is one which might have been disallowed by His Excellency, but the Resolution has not been disallowed by His Excellency, and, so far as I can see, there is nothing to prevent it being discussed in this Council. But what my Honourable colleague says is, what he considers, to be the correct attitude of the Local Government in the discussion. That is to say, he is unable to take any active part in the discussion, but he is prepared to forward the discussion to the Central Government for such action as they may think fit."

The Resolution was put and adopted. So, Sir, it is obvious that the Resolution moved in the Assam Legislative Council was also forwarded by the Member in charge to the Railway Board as mentioned by the Member in charge in his speech. Hence, I think, I should not labour much to prove that the grievances in the Assam-Bengal Railway which the Assamese do suffer reached the ears of the Railway Board in 1930 and are still reaching.

A perusal of the debates that took place on that date on the floor of the Assam Legislative Council by various Members from various parts of Assam will bear me out as to the seriousness of the inconveniences that are felt by the inhabitants of the Assam Province. Sir, in 1931, while discussing the Railway Budget on the Demands of the Railways, I tabled a few cut motions to ventilate the grievances, on the floor of this House, of the travelling public on the Assam-Bengal Railway in the Province of Assam, viz.:

- (1) That the demand under the head 'Railway Board' (pages 1-2) be reduced by Rs. 100. (Maladministration of the Assam-Bengal Railway.)
- (2) That the demand under the head 'Companies and Indian States: Share of Surplus Profits and Net Earnings (page 26) be reduced by Re. 1.' (New Introduction of First and Second Class Return Fares in the A.-B. Railway while passengers travel only on the Assam-Bengal Railway.)
- (3) That the demand under the head 'New Construction (page 27) be reduced by Re. 1.' (Reckless Managements of the Assam-Bengal Railway in the newly constructed lines.)

All these cut motions appeared in the printed list, and I am pretty sure that copies of these lists also reached the Members of the Railway Board. Hence notices for redress of grievances have also not escaped their notice in 1933. Unfortunately, Sir, I had not the chance of moving this cut motion as the discussion could not reach the number. Despairing of ventilating the grievances by a cut motion, I tabled the following Resolution on the 26th of February 1933:

"That this Assembly recommends to the Governor General in Council that immediate and adequate steps be taken by the Railway Board to redress the various grievances of the general travelling public, particularly of Assam, while travelling by the Assam Bengal Railway."

The Resolution appeared in the list and that certainly reached the Members of the Railway Board. And they surely realised that I tabled the Resolution to ventilate the grievances on the floor of the Assembly. So they cannot deny any knowledge of the Resolution, but, unfortunately,

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on the non-official day, my Resolution was not reached, and hence I did not get a chance of moving it. Then I tabled the same Resolution for the Simla Session on the 6th of April, 1933. The Resolution appeared in the list, and, Sir, you very kindly called me a few minutes before the Assembly was going to be adjourned for the day. I could not finish my speech on the narration of the grievances in Simla. Sir, you very kindly allowed me to continue till the next non-official day in New Delhi. On the 30th of January last, I got the chance of moving the Resolution here, and here too I could not finish the narration of all the grievances, as time limit was over, and so I had to conclude in the half way. Perhaps the grievances I then narrated while moving my Resolution are still fresh in the minds of the Honourable Members of the House. I myself, with the inhabitants of Assam, are highly grateful to the Honourable Members of the House for giving my Resolution their kind and sympathetic support, but I have got something to say regarding the softness of reply which the Honourable the Member in charge of the Railways gave in reply to my speech. Sir, in the beginning he had also to confess:

"I must first express my satisfaction that the chance of the ballot has enabled my Honourable friend to move his motion. I have known that for many long months he has borne the burden of his many grievances, but, not until I heard his full exposition of them, did I realise what their extent really was."

However, I am thankful to him for acknowledging that I have been barking, since 1930, on the floors of the Legislatures of Shillong, Simla and New Delhi. The first point which the Honourable Member for Railways has dealt with in his speech is the "Raised Platforms". The Honourable Member has sympathised with me, but as usual that sympathy vanished, rather evaporated on the plea of "Scarcity of Money". (Laughter.) Perhaps the Honourable Members would do well to remember what I said in my speech regarding the Platforms. The exact words, Sir, were:

"The Agent told me that owing to the scarcity of funds the question of raised platforms could not be considered. I requested him to proceed with the works gradually, though not all at a time in one or two stations every year. He told me if I remember aright, his wordings, 'Blue Pencil' would go in Delhi and Simla from one end of the paper to another straight off if he proposed any expenditure on the raised platform question, while, Sir, for the convenience of the passengers to construct raised platforms in one or two stations may mean a nominal expenditure of Rs. 1,000 to Rs. 2,000 only."

But the Honourable Member in charge of the Railways has not said how much he has sanctioned for electric installation at the Badarpur Junction. The Honourable Member has cited instances of Paris, Lyons and Nord. He can quite draw a simile with the Shahara Desert even, while drawing the simile, perhaps the Honourable Member forgets that Assam is not Paris. (Hear, hear.) The rainy season in Assam exists for about eight months in the year and the average rain fall is more than 240" to 250", and in Assam lies Cherapunji which is famous for the greatest rain fall in the world. (Hear, hear.) Perhaps he forgets that in Assam women folks cover their body anyhow by a cotton *dhoti* of 9 to 10 cubits only and in Paris, Lyons and Nord, the ladies do ride on horse back. (Laughter and hear, hear.) If he would have taken all these facts into consideration, then he could have imagined the miserable plight of a passenger in a muddy uncovered platform and that also when there are incessant rains. The Honourable Member had not the heart to refuse "Electric installation in a station where

there is no train in the night" in these days of financial stringency. But he is at a loss to find a remedy for the convenience of the travelling public. This is how the Members in the Treasury Benches do respond to the necessities of the country. Sir, as regards silting of the Chorgola, the Honourable Member in charge of the Railways says:

"If my Honourable friend can place before me definite evidence to show that the silting up of these Valleys is definitely due to the bridges in question, we shall certainly look into the matter."

Sir, I have dealt with this exhaustively in my cut motion in the year 1931 and I have placed an album which the Honourable Member may find in the Library of the House. (Hear, hear.) As a result of that discussion, the question was raised during my interview with the Agent of the Assam-Bengal Railway at Chittagong, and I have quoted the reply of the Chief Engineer's letter in my speech of the 7th September, 1933, at Simla.

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Shanmukham Chetty): Order, order. The Honourable Member must finish his speech in a minute. He will get another chance later on.

**Kumar Gopika Romon Roy**: The wording of the Chief Engineer's letter may be repeated here for refreshing the memory of the Honourable Member:

"Alleged silting of the Longai and Chorgola. Your letter No. E./337, dated 8th August, 1931. The bed of the Longai at the main line bridge has a greater average depth now than when the bridge was built. The Chorgola does show some silting which is due to natural causes and not to the bridge. The Chorgola is not a very active river and there have been complaints about its deterioration up the valley for many years. In the 1929 flood, there was no appreciable current, and practically still water under the bridge, the discharge passing by the Puamara Bridge to the Longai and a similar state of affairs existed in the 1916 flood. Under these conditions, some silting is to be expected."

And I hardly require to repeat the criticism which I made on the Chief Engineer's letter. Still the Honourable the Railway Member says:

"If my Honourable friend can place before me definite evidence to show that the silting up of these valleys is definitely due to bridges in question, we shall certainly look into the matter."

I have placed all the facts which the Honourable Members opposite may gather from the proceedings of the Assam Legislative Council and the proceedings of the Assembly, 1931-34, and I have narrated what the Chief Engineer said. Still the Honourable Member says that I am to place definite evidence before him. Sir, what more definite evidence I can place before the House or before the Honourable Member? Inundation by flood of the Chorgola Valley is not thought to be a serious cause for Government investigation, but it is my duty to put definite proofs, and if I am able to prove the facts, then he will only look into the matter, but he does not say that he will remove the grievances. This is what is called the official jugglery of words. Under the circumstances, with these few words, I support the motion.

**Mr. E. Studd** (Bengal: European): Sir, I had not intended to take any part in this debate, but the spectacle of the "starving" Member from Assam struggling to find raised platforms and his eloquence on that subject moved me to intervene, because I do know something about the Assam

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Bengal Railway. For a number of years past I have travelled there on various occasions. Many of my friends have also travelled there often and have told me stories about that railway. I admit that it has its defects, very few railways have not, but I have travelled on railways where the trains have been even slower and where, I think, there have been quite as many grievances as my Honourable friend has produced. I think perhaps that in these days one has to be thankful for small mercies, and it may cheer him up a little if I tell him a story of the Assam Bengal Railway some years ago. A cousin of mine had been doing a fairly extensive tour round tea estates and one morning he was landed at a station on the hill section of that railway not very long after it had been opened. He was in a district where motor cars in those days were unknown, there being no roads over which they could travel. Having waited at the station for some time, which consisted of one small grass hut and no platform, either raised or otherwise, he thought he would find out how the train was running. So he went up to the one and only official who was station-master, ticket-collector and everything else. He said: "Babu, is the train running up to time today?" The reply that he got was rather startling. "Oh, Sir," he said, "yesterday's train not in yet, Sir." (Laughter.) He had to walk 14 miles along the sleepers before he could get any food, shelter or anything else. I hope my Honourable friend will take comfort from that, and realise that perhaps the Railway Board is not quite as useless as he makes it out to be.

There is only one other point on which I should like to touch, and that is the remarks made by the first speaker on the subject of the Harding Bridge. I do not know whether he has ever crossed that bridge by train. I should rather imagine from his remarks that he has not. But I do think that his remarks are entirely unjustified. To my mind, that bridge ought to be looked upon as one of the outstanding contributions of recent years to the amenities of the travelling public. I have no doubt that a number of my friends from Bengal will remember the old days when you went in a train to the edge of the river; you got out at some awkward hour of the night or morning and got into a steamer, and, after having a couple of hours delay, you were ferried across the river and then got out again and got into another train and continued your journey. It was bad enough going north, but it was worse going south, when you usually had to turn out about 4 o'clock in the morning. Now you can get into the train and go comfortably on the broad gauge the whole way from Calcutta right up to Siliguri at the foot of the hills. I think that the bridge is not only a great contribution to the amenities of the travelling public, but it is an engineering feat of which India may well be proud, for it is certainly one of the big bridges of the world. To belittle the efforts, the knowledge and the skill of the engineers who built that bridge in the way that the Honourable Member Sirdar Harbans Singh Brar did, is, I think, to do them great injustice. The fact that further money has to be spent on protection works and not on the bridge itself seems to me to be no reflection whatever on the original builders. Unlike my friend, Mr. B. Das, I cannot claim to be an engineer or even to have any engineering experience, but to the ordinary layman travelling across that bridge it seemed that it was almost unnecessary to put such elaborate and lengthy protection works on either side of that bridge to protect it against the river. Experience, however, has proved that it was just the other way. But I do rebut the suggestion, which I consider

most unjust, that there was any fault on the part of the engineers in the building of that bridge and that this extra expenditure, which has got to be incurred now, can in any way be attributed to them. I most strongly oppose the motion.

**Mr. Uppi Sahab Bahadur** (West Coast and Nilgiris: Muhammadan): Sir, I rise to support the motion. At the same time, I wish to place before the Assembly our grievances regarding the South Indian Railway which escaped even the lashes of my Honourable friend and Deputy Leader, Diwan Bahadur Ramaswami Mudaliar. When he spoke about the Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway, I thought he would also say something about the inconvenience felt by the passengers on the South Indian Railway. Sir, you know that in the upper classes they have introduced a certain kind of pump. When we come from Madras to Delhi, we find it difficult to pump out water from those pumps. When I travelled from Simla, there was a family travelling in the same compartment as myself. The male member of the family was an old man. He wanted to use the bath room. So he went into the bath room, and, after some time, he came out of it, and was standing. We did not know each other. He was also from Malabar and was standing rather perplexed. I asked what was the matter with him. He said: "There is no water, and I want water." I went to help him, and what I found was that the pump was out of order. So he had to remain without water till we reached Podanur and then I complained to the Station Master about it, who sent a mechanic or an engineer to repair it. Last time, when I was coming to Delhi, I was joined by some other friends at Calicut and we also had some of your friends including Mr. Venkataram Iyengar of Coimbatore in the same compartment. We were taking our meals, and I wanted water to wash my hands. But the pump was not working again. I complained to a railway servant at Shoranur. I saw some people going in, who, after some time went out. I asked them whether the pump was set right, and they said that it would not be available till we reached the next station. The next station was Ottapalan where the train stops only for a short time. Then I called the guard who said that we would get water at Olavakote. I told him I had taken my meals and I had to wash my hands. Then, after a distance of 80 miles, the train reached Olavakote, and he said "this is no watering station and then we had to run from Olavakote to Podanur, another 80 miles. Then a mechanic came and repaired the tap. But after the train moved, when I went inside the bath room for water, I saw that there was no water, because the tap was left open by the mechanic and so all the water had run out. I understand that you, Sir, had once complained about this pump. I submit that there is no necessity to introduce such a system in the upper class carriages in the S.I.R., especially in the broad gauge, where there is not any scarcity of water. At least my district contains plenty of water and there are also big irrigation works constructed by the Madras Government along the line. What is the necessity for such a pump in the higher classes while in the third class compartment there is the ordinary tap.

The other point about which I should like to draw the attention of the House is that the beds in the second class compartments are very bad. The material with which the beds are stuffed come out and there are a lot of bugs in the compartment. The S.I.R. Administration do not care to keep the carriages clean. During the rainy season most of the third class and even the second class compartments that run in Malabar are

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leaky. The S.I.R. do not seem to care for the convenience of the passengers, but they are careful to bury the capital under the earth. The S.I.R. Administration have remodelled a station like Erode which looks a very desolate place. There is no use of spending lakhs of rupees in underground passages, etc., at such a station, simply because it is a junction from Trichy to Malabar. When we ask for necessities, the railway says that it has no money. For the last 20 years we have been demanding an overbridge on the Calicut level crossing. The train passes through the most crowded part of the city and the gates are closed very often for 15 minutes when the trains pass through the gates and shunting takes place. My Honourable friend, Mr. Thampan, was also crying for some modification of the level crossing at Olavakote, but the S.I.R. had no money; on the other hand, they would remodel any station by digging lot of capital, that will not pay, into the earth. So, I support this motion.

**Mr. Muhammad Yamin Khan:** Sir, my justification in rising to take part in this discussion is simply because I had promised to my Honourable friend, Kumar Gopika Romon Roy, that I would speak on this motion. As far as his grievances are concerned, we have got full sympathy, and I should like that the Honourable the Commerce Member should take note of all the grievances which he has mentioned in the half of his speech. I presume that he would have made a longer speech but for the fact that he had no time. If the Honourable the Commerce Member will go through the typed pages which Kumar Gopika Romon Roy had in his possession, I think he will be quite satisfied.

As far as the motion is concerned, I must congratulate my Honourable friend, Mr. Maswood Ahmad, for making a very sensible speech today and in fact that was the most sensible speech that I ever heard him make in this House. His speech was really to the point, and I support the contention that it is not right and proper that a Member of the Standing Finance Committee, when he sits up in the Finance Committee and allows all the expenditure that he does in that Committee, and then that he should come to this House and say that the grant in respect of the Railway Board should be reduced to one rupee. He wants to refuse what he had already sanctioned in the Finance Committee. If the idea of my Honourable friend had been that he wanted to raise a particular issue and if he wanted to discuss a matter of policy, then his motion ought to have been that the grant should be reduced by one rupee and not that the grant should be reduced to one rupee.

**Mr. M. Maswood Ahmad:** Then he would not have got priority for his motion.

**Mr. Muhammad Yamin Khan:** If the idea is to get priority, then I can only say that it is not treating the House properly. The House would consider itself to have been treated properly if the Honourable Member had come before the House in an open manner and placed his grievances before the House. No Honourable Member should come to this House in a round-about manner just to get a priority and put his grievances, because it would be very difficult for the House to come to any conclusion. That is why I congratulate my Honourable friend, Mr. Maswood Ahmad, for giving a lead to this House and making that very sensible speech.

My Honourable friend, Sirdar Harbans Singh Brar, has urged some of his grievances which I think have got no connection with the Railway Board. He has got some grievance against a particular line of railway, but that grievance would come under a different category. If my Honourable friend wanted to raise this issue, he ought to have done so by a rupee cut. But to say that the Railway Board should not exist and that the Railway Board should be abolished, because some trains are not running at the proper time and that there are some grievances in the time table and in the schedule of trains, I should say that these have got nothing to do with the Railway Board. I think it is a mere waste of time of the House if we bring forward motions of this kind before the House, and I also say that it is not properly treating the House if we spend any more time in discussing this motion. With these words, I oppose the motion.

**Mr. Amar Nath Dutt** (Burdwan Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural):

3 P.M.

I was almost being converted by my Honourable friend, Mr. Maswood Ahmad, about the unreasonableness of this motion, but when I heard the eloquent speech of my Honourable friend from Assam, I was convinced that I had no other alternative but to support it. His grievances may be with respect to a particular railway about the raising of platforms and the removal of a platform from a particular place where there is danger of life to human beings from, as he has been pleased to say in one of his speeches, the King of the Forests. All these things are not to be trifled with, and if my Honourable friend, after strenuous efforts of half a dozen years, both here and at Simla and also in the heights of Shillong, has not been able to get his grievances redressed, then certainly it is our bounden duty, as his colleagues, to support him. But I must say that the poor Railway Board should not have been reduced to three pies only.

**Kumar Gopika Romon Roy:** It is rupee one now.

**Mr. Amar Nath Dutt:** Even then, if we look at the number of officers in the Railway Board, I think Re. 1 will not be sufficient to keep up these officers, and they must at least have a morsel of food and a loin cloth to wear for the whole year.

**The Honourable Sir Joseph Bhore:** Sir, may I explain to my Honourable friend that the officers are quite safe, because their salaries are non-voted? It is only the clerks who will be affected.

**Mr. Amar Nath Dutt:** I am greatly relieved to hear that the officers are quite safe. Then, it is Mr. Joshi's clients who can do very well with a loin cloth and a morsel of rice. I really do not see how these specific grievances can come under this head. But as I find several Members rising up and narrating their own grievances with regard to particular railways as was done by my friend, Mr. Uppi Saheb, I think I may also be permitted to bring before this House the grievances of a particular railway in which the Government also are interested,—I mean the Bankura Damodar River Railway. It runs through a tract of country which was mentioned by Megasthenes as being the earliest and highly civilised in the whole of Northern India, a tract which was known by the name of Gangarides. The line has been constructed up to a village, which is of no importance commercially or otherwise and it has been left there. After that, there is marshy land for miles and miles, and then comes the great



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river Damodar, and you have to go about 10 or 12 miles over these marshy lands. Then, if you cross the river Damodar, you can, after a few miles, get either the station of Tarakeswar or Champadanga or Burdwan. If this line had been taken up to Burdwan and connected with the sub-divisional town of Arambagh, there would have been some justification for it, and there would have been more traffic than we are having. Remember, Sir, that Government gave a guarantee of four per cent. to this railway.

**Mr. P. R. Rau** (Financial Commissioner, Railways):  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent.

**Mr. Amar Nath Dutt:** I stand corrected. But it does not yield a dividend of even two per cent. and Government have to bear the loss all along. This matter has been brought to the notice of the Railway Board, and I hope some steps will be taken in the near future so that the Central Revenues may not suffer in the way it has been suffering. In this connection, one other thing occurs to me. I find in a book, which was with Sir Darcy Lindsay, mention of a particular road from Burdwan to Jehanabad, i.e., Arambagh, and it crosses the Bankura Damodar River Railway at a particular station called Sehara. Sir, you will find bullock carts and motors passing on the road near this line and the management of this Bankura Damodar River Railway is so bad that people never take to it. They send their goods in bullock carts or motor lorries and avoid this line. Then the treatment of the railway employees to the passengers has been such that in most villages they are inclined to boycott this line altogether. If my Honourable friend, the Member in charge, will call for the papers, he will find many criminal cases have cropped up between the employees of the railway and the travelling public. Even in big railways like the East Indian and other railways, you hardly hear of assaults and criminal cases between the railway employees and the travelling public. But, in this small line of 60 miles, several cases have occurred in the last few years between the employees and the public. This line is wholly mismanaged, and, therefore, Government have to suffer a loss to make up the dividend of  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. But why should the Central Revenues suffer in this way? If they take statistics, they will find that, if this line is connected either with Burdwan or Tarakeswar or Arambagh, it may be made paying, because these are trade centres, and Courts of justice are located where people have to frequent; but no one will care to go to the village of Raynagar from Bankura except a few who may have relatives living on that line. They can tap such places of pilgrimage as the birthplace of Ramkrishna Paramahansa and the birthplace of Kavikankan, the greatest poet of Bengal. Then, again, there is the birthplace of Raja Ram Mohan Roy, the founder of the Brahmo Samaj and a place of pilgrimage for Brahmos. These places can be tapped if they extend the line to Arambagh. As I said, this line, which has been stopped at a certain place, does not serve the purpose for which there might have been some justification in those days when it was constructed. This tract of country being the oldest civilised one in Northern India and the birthplace of so many famous men, both in the 18th and in the 19th century, it is the bounden duty of the Government to extend it. Then, again, there is in this tract the goddess Kali of Tirol which cures insanity. (Laughter.) (Some Honourable Members: "Send the Railway Board there.") It may be necessary to send many people there, the Railway Board as well as Honourable Members from some Provinces who marry very late. (Laughter.) So my submission is that the management of this particular railway line should be inquired into, so that in future

criminal cases may not crop up between the travelling public and the employees of the railway. It is also a line which, by an extension of 20 miles, may be made paying so that the Central Revenues may not suffer.

One more thing. I was thinking the other day when I had occasion to go to the Railway Station at Delhi and I was told that all racial discrimination had been abolished: but, in the matter of latrines, I found in one place it was put up "Europeans" and in another place "Indians". This discrimination ought not to exist. I am an Indian and I was dressed as an Indian, and, of course, my self-respect did not allow me to enter the place: I think even my gallant friend, Colonel Gidney, would not have entered that place, and he would have had to use the Indian latrine in the same way as ordinary *dhoti*-wearing Indians like Mr. Mitra and Mr. Lahiri Chaudhury do. I beg to submit that all these distinctions should be done away with. These are grievances no doubt, but that does not entitle us to say that the Railway Board should be abolished; and considering that the salaries of the higher officers are safe, whom are you going to abolish? It is only my friend, Mr. Joshi's clients. With these words, I do not know whether I should support or oppose the motion.

**Some Honourable Members:** The question may now be put.

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Shanmukham Chetty): The question is:

"That the question be now put."

The motion was adopted.

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Shanmukham Chetty): The question is:

"That the demand under the head 'Railway Board' be reduced to one rupee."

The motion was negatived.

#### *Muslim Representation in Railway Services.*

**Mr. M. Maswood Ahmad:** Sir, I move:

"That the demand under the head 'Railway Board' be reduced by Rs. 100."—(Muslim Representation in Railway Services.)

In moving this cut it is my intention to repeat the old story which has thrice been told on the floor of the House in the life of this Assembly. This is, therefore, the fourth time that I am repeating it. Certain friends may say what is the use of telling the same story again and again: but there is a verse in Persian—I am sorry my Honourable friend, Sir James Crerar, is not here, otherwise he would have appreciated it:

*"Taza khahi dashtan gar daghhai sina ra,*

*Gahe gahe bar khan in qissae parina ra.*

—which means "If you want that the impression on your heart should not fade, go on reading again and again the story occasionally . . . ."

**Mr. Muhammad Yamin Khan:** "Of my love".

**Mr. M. Maswood Ahmad:** Certainly my Honourable friend, Mr. Yamin Khan, loves the Treasury Benches: there is no doubt in it. (Laughter.)

Sir, I think that just as the British policy about India is unchanged, whether it is a Conservative Government, or a Labour Government, or a Liberal Government, in the same way I find that the policy of the Indian Government in connection with Muslim representation in the railway

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services at least is the same, whether a European Member is in charge of the Department or an Indian Member is in charge. The other two reasons for telling this story are that we want to inform the Government that we know where we stand, that we are aware of what is our percentage, and that we understand their policy very well. Secondly, these stories are told to inform the Muslim community inside the House and outside as to what their position is and what is the meaning of those promises which have been given by so many Honourable Members on the floor of this House. If you will see the Administration Report, you will find that the percentage of Muslim representation has been decreasing year by year, and I do not know what kind of dictionary is kept in the Railway Board in which the meaning of the word "increase" is found to be as follows:

In 1930, the Europeans *cum* Anglo-Indians were 19,628 or 2·40 per cent; the Hindus were 5,79,040 or 70·8 per cent; others were 36,716 or 4·49 per cent; while the Muslims were 1,82,349 or 22·31 per cent. of a total of 8,17,738.

In 1931, the Europeans *cum* Anglo-Indians went up by ·01, that is to 2·41 per cent, numbering 19,040, our Hindu friends became 70·86 per cent; others became 4·6 per cent; while Muslims came down to 22·13 per cent numbering 1,72,975 of a total of 7,81,859.

This is the meaning of "increase" in the dictionary of the Railway Board and this is the dictionary which Mr. K. M. Hassan consults for the meaning of these words:

In 1932, again, the Europeans *cum* Anglo-Indians went up to 2·47 per cent, numbering 18,102; our Hindu friends became 71·19 per cent; others became 4·84 per cent, while Muslims came down to 21·56 per cent, numbering 1,55,876 of a total of 7,31,979.

Another increase is (decrease) in the third year.

Now, I come to 1933, the fourth year. What happened?

In 1933, Europeans and Anglo-Indians again went up to 2·58 per cent; Hindus were 70·97 per cent; others became 5·06 per cent, while the Muslims again declined to 21·52 per cent, numbering 1,35,969 out of 7,10,271.

So, in these four years, year by year the percentage of the Muslim community has been decreasing in spite of so many promises by my Honourable friend, Sir George Rainy, who is not here, and my Honourable friend, Sir Joseph Bhore. These figures have been published in the first paragraph of the chapter about staff; that is, of the services taken as a whole: in this menial and subordinate grade services men have all been included.

I now come to the question of the Honourable Member in charge himself. Regarding this I can say that in the history of the railways I do not remember to have seen any Muslim having ever been in charge of the Railway Department. This post has always been occupied by our non-Muslim friends. I will suggest in this connection that the portfolios should be so distributed.\* . . .

**Sir Gowsaji Jehangir (Bombay City: Non-Muhammadian Urban):** How many Indians have held this portfolio?

**Mr. M. Maswood Ahmad:** I hope the reply to that question will be given by my Honourable friend, Mr. Colvin, when he replies to my question: I hope he will keep this question also in his mind. In my opinion, the portfolios should be so divided that all the communities should get a chance some time for working as a Member in each Department: a particular portfolio should not be reserved for a particular community for ever.

**An Honourable Member:** Which portfolio has been reserved for what community?

**Mr. M. Maswood Ahmad:** I think it should be given by rotation, one Hindu, one Muslim, one Christian, and so on. I suggest definitely that the Members in charge of Departments should be of different communities on different occasions. This is my suggestion to the Government. Now, Sir, I come to the Members of the Railway Board.

**Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh:** Will my Honourable friend say what particular portfolio has been reserved for a member of any particular community?

**Mr. M. Maswood Ahmad:** I did not say that any particular portfolio had been reserved for a member of any particular community. I said that Mussalmans have not got the portfolio of the Railway Department. Not a single Mussalman has been made in charge of any Department . . . .

**Mr. Amar Nath Dutt:** Neither a Hindu.

**Mr. M. Maswood Ahmad:** Sir, I was mentioning that not a single Mussalman had ever been appointed as a Member of the Railway Board.

Now, I come to the Railway Board. From the list you will find, Sir, that both Europeans and Hindus are represented there, while not a single Mussalman is found in the list of the Members of the Railway Board. In this connection I should like to point out that, now that the Statutory Railway Board is going to be created in the near future, Honourable Members representing different communities have very wisely suggested that there should be at least two Muslim Members on that Statutory Board, and I am glad that my Hindu friends have, for the first time, shown to the public that it is not the Hindu community which stands in the way of Muslims, but it is the Europeans, and it is the Government, which stand in the way of Muslims. And, Sir, you will be surprised that the Whitehall authorities have very vehemently opposed the idea of having even two Muslim Members on the Statutory Railway Board. The Government of India as well have vehemently opposed the recommendation.

[At this stage, Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Shanmukham Chetty) vacated the Chair which was then occupied by Mr. Deputy President (Mr. Abdul Matin Chaudhury).]

Sir, on behalf of my community I wish to bring to the notice of the Government the fact that the entire Muslim community insist that two seats should be reserved by Statute for Mussalmans as has been recommended by the Committee.

Now, Sir, I turn to the Directorate. I find there are about five Directors in the Railway Board, and none of them is a Mussalman. All the five Directors are non-Muslims. The Secretary in the Railway Board is a non-Muslim, and the Assistant Secretary is also a non-Muslim. Petty

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jobs like those of *chaprassis* and *bhisties* are given to Mussalmans in the Railway Board, and only four petty officers are found in the list of officers in the Railway Board. In this connection at least, the Railway Board has become Mussalman. As a Mussalman cannot have more than four wives, the Railway Board do not think it proper to have more than four members on their staff. My Honourable friends, Mr. Rau and Mr. Colvin, do not want to have more than four officers on their staff in the Railway Board.

**Mr. S. C. Mitra** (Chittagong and Rajshahi Divisions: Non-Muhammadan Rural): They should have eight.

**Mr. M. Maswood Ahmad:** Then coming to staff, the House will be surprised to hear that there are about 106 clerks in the Railway Board. Not one of the Superintendents out of six is a Mussalman. There are only three Assistants out of 27, six second grade clerks out of 45, and about eleven third grade clerks and two out of 15 stenographers in the Railway Board. This is the condition of the Railway Board. The whole system in the Railway Board is very defective. The Secretary or the head of the Branch calls by name certain persons to be taken in their branches. The result is that certain clerks who were juniormost, men who had worked for only two months in the office have been promoted from third division to the second division, and many seniormost clerks in the third division have not got their chances . . . . .

**Mr. Lalchand Navalrai** (Sind: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Where is Mr. Hassan then?

**Mr. M. Maswood Ahmad:** Have they given any power to him? The reply is, none. Then, as I have said, whether the Government is Conservative or Liberal, the result is the same for India, and the same is the case with regard to Muslim representation in the railway services—it may be Mr. Hassan or anybody else, we have to judge by the result. The result shows that our percentage has decreased, and in certain departments it is perfectly hopeless as I have been showing.

Now, Sir, I come to the gazetted ranks. Up till now, not a single Mussalman has been appointed as Agent of any railway. Europeans and my Hindu friends have got their share, but there has not been a single Mussalman who has been appointed as Agent of any of the railways in India . . . . .

**An Honourable Member:** Who is the Indian Agent?

**Mr. Deputy President** (Mr. Abdul Matin Chaudhury): Order, Order.

**Another Honourable Member:** Will the Honourable Member say who is the Hindu Agent?

**Mr. Deputy President** (Mr. Abdul Matin Chaudhury): The Honourable Member must be allowed to proceed with his speech without interruptions. Other Honourable Members will have their opportunity to reply.

**Mr. M. Maswood Ahmad:** Mr. Singh is the Hindu Agent on the E. B. Railway. Sir, in spite of numerous promises, not a single Mussalman has been promoted to the post of Deputy Agent, and, in this connection, my friend, Mr. Mitra, has also said that something is loose somewhere. (Laughter.) This is the word used by my friend, and the Honourable Member in charge of the railway staff could not explain certain super-sessions that had taken place last year. Here is his speech. I can read it if necessary—but I shall not waste the time of the House . . . . .

**Mr. Deputy President (Mr. Abdul Matin Chaudhury):** The Honourable Member has got only three minutes more.

**Mr. M. Maswood Ahmad:** I believe, Sir, that 20 minutes will be allowed.

**Mr. Deputy President (Mr. Abdul Matin Chaudhury):** Twenty minutes have already passed.

**Mr. M. Maswood Ahmad:** Then I would request you to kindly give me another five minutes as was given to my friend, Raja Bahadur Krishnama-chariar.

I shall now take only two points regarding qualifications and supersessions. There are so many cases of supersessions that different communities have superseded my community, and that is very well known. With regard to qualifications, it will be said that qualified Mussalmans are not available, but here is a list and here is a letter from the Controller of Railway Accounts, and from this list the House will find that in the Accounts Branch there are 1,938 non-matric Hindus. You will be surprised to know, Sir, that even non-matric Muslims were not available and only 189 were taken. I am ready to give the same number of Muslim graduates if Government are ready to replace the non-matric Hindu clerks, and yet it is said that qualified Mussalmans are not available. When the question of appointing a Muslim comes in, all sorts of difficulties are raised, but when the question of appointing a non-Muslim comes in, the question of qualifications goes into the waste paper basket. Now, I may point out that when vacancies occur, they are never advertised,—posts are rather created for men and not that men are searched for posts. This is my definite charge against the different departments in the Railway Board, and, in proof of that, I shall quote a letter which I have received from the Railway Clearing Accounts Office. This is what it says:

"There have been no vacancies which could have been advertised before being filled up."

This is the exact wording of the letter I have got. This letter further says this:

"Adequate arrangements exist in my office for the receipt and disposal of applications for appointment. Under these arrangements, every application comes under my personal scrutiny."

Now, this is an absurdity. You don't advertise the posts, and you fill in all the vacancies yourself, because in this letter it is stated that there have been no vacancies which could have been advertised before being filled up. This is a great absurdity . . .

**Mr. P. E. Rau (Financial Commissioner, Railways):** May I know from what document my Honourable friend is reading?

**Mr. M. Maswood Ahmad:** I am quoting from a letter which I have received from the Railway Clearing Accounts Office, No. E.-50/548, dated the 21st—22nd February, 1934, and if my Honourable friend desires it, I am prepared to place it on the table of the House. (The letter was laid on the table of the House.) I very much desire that this letter should be published\* in the proceedings with my speech to show how jobs are created for relatives and friends of officers.

\*The contents having been quoted by the Honourable Member in extenso the letter has not been reproduced.

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With regard to efficiency, I shall only quote one instance and finish my speech, because my time is very limited now. There is no machinery at all to show whether a man is efficient or not. If I say that my friend, Mr. Rau, or Mr. Colvin, is inefficient, who is going to challenge me? It is my whim. (Laughter.) It is the same case with regard to other officers. It is very easy for any Member to say that a particular man is efficient or that he is inefficient. I shall quote another case. Messrs. Kishorilal and Daulatram Narula were most efficient sub-heads in the time of Messrs. L. S. Deene and Sundaram, but, in the time of Mr. K. R. S. Rau, these people have been declared inefficient and reverted as clerks. This is an instance of efficiency. This is your efficiency. One Officer comes and says that a clerk is efficient; another Officer comes the next day and says he is not efficient. Again, seniority lists are always changed. Questions after questions have been asked in this House on that . . . .

**Mr. Deputy President** (Mr. Abdul Matin Chaudhury): The Honourable Member must now conclude his speech.

**Mr. M. Maswood Ahmad:** I will not take more than two minutes. This is the seniority list for the 3rd May, and this is the seniority list for the 4th May, and you will find that a man who was 4th on the 3rd May becomes 17th on the list of the 4th May, and the man who was 22nd was promoted to be the 1st. In order to save time, I lay these seniority lists on the table of the House\*. I do not want to read the names therein. I want them to go into this debate in order to show how these things are done. With these words, I move my motion.

**Mr. Deputy President** (Mr. Abdul Matin Chaudhury): Cut motion moved:

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

**Khan Sahib Shaikh Fazal Haq Piracha** (North West Punjab: Muhammadan): Sir, I thank you for giving me the opportunity of giving vent to my own feelings and the feelings of those whom I represent, on this very vital question of Muslim representation in railway services, which has been a long standing grievance of the Muslim community and has always been the subject of discussion in this House. Sir, the paucity of Muslims in railway services has become almost a chronic disease. The constant demand of the Mussalmans inside and outside the Legislature, the sympathetic replies of Railway Officers and the assurances of the Government have not yet been materialised. The time honoured percentage of Muslims in railway services is not improved. According to the statements given on pages 57 and 58 of the Railway Board's Report for 1932-33, published a few days ago, there are at present on Indian railways only four per cent Muslim gazetted officers, and less than 4½ per cent Muslim upper subordinates.

In paragraph 79, at page 59 of this Report, a statement is made to the effect that during the year 1932-33 the difficult problem of representation of minority communities in railway services continued to receive attention of the Government. I will ask my Honourable friend, the Railway Member, to let me know whether this remark is serious or

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\*Vide Appendix "A" printed at the end of the day's debates.

otherwise. Every year we draw the attention of the Railway Board to the need of increasing the percentage of Mussalmans in services, but the results are in the inverse proportion of our efforts. On the occasion of the Budget debates, the Honourable the Railway Member and the Honourable the Financial Commissioner for Railways give assurances that they would pay special attention to the claims of the Muslims, but, inspite of such assurances, the position does not improve.

I will start with the assumption, Sir, that Muslims are included among the minorities, and if the Railway Board make a statement that they have been giving their attention to the welfare of minorities, it should mean that Muslims have been getting some share of this attention. Let us now examine the statement of staff, given on page 51 of the Railway Board's Report for 1932-33, to find out the result of this continued attention to Muslims during the year.

Before examining the figures for 1932-33, I will trouble the House with some statistics given on page 44 of the Railway Board's Report for 1931-32. There was some retrenchment in that year and a large number of staff was turned out. The number of Muslim employees was reduced by 15,000 during the year 1931-32. It was not unreasonable to expect that, in view of the paucity of Muslims in railway services, the retrenchment would be taken as an opportunity to increase their proportion. The Railway Department ignored their pledges. They ignored the promise given by His Excellency the Viceroy to the Delhi Muslim Association that the proportion of Muslims would not be reduced. The Railway Department turned out 15,000 Muslims, while, according to the pre-retrenchment proportion, not more than 11,000 Muslims should have been discharged. We brought this glaring injustice to the notice of the authorities. We shouted from house tops, that far from saving the Muslims from the axe, 4,000 extra Muslims had been sent away. We brought this fact to the notice of His Excellency in a memorandum submitted to him. We lost no opportunity of reminding the authorities that they owed it to the Muslim community to restore their jobs to these unfortunate 4,000. I have been shocked, Sir, to find from the Report for 1932-33 that 5,000 more Muslims have been reduced in this year. This reduction is again more than the proportion of Muslims. Thus the year 1931-32 witnessed a reduction in the proportion of Muslims. In 1932-33, the same thing has been repeated and the ratio of Muslims has again been further reduced.

Sir, the Government do what they want. Sikhs and Indian Christians each form only about one per cent of the population of this country. They are already overrepresented in the railway services. The proportion of Sikhs is slightly more than their population ratio and the proportion of Indian Christians in railway services is double their population ratio in the country. Yet, during the year 1932-33, the number of Sikhs was not reduced to the same extent as Muslims. There has been a reduction of only 176 Sikhs out of 8,767, which is two per cent. On the other hand, more than 5,000 Muslims have been reduced out of 1,57,876, which is 3.16 per cent. Indian Christians who hold twice as many jobs as they are entitled to on the population ratio have been increased by 8.16 per cent. Their number on the 1st April, 1932, was 14,398. On the 31st March, 1933, they numbered 15,574. This leaves no doubt in one's mind that the policy which the Government are following is this. They will increase the numbers of Sikhs and Indian Christians and other microscopic minorities including Muslims, and, by clubbing together the statistics of all minorities they



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will say that everything possible is being done for the minorities in railway services.

Turning to page 58 of the Report, Sir, I find that during the year 1932-33 the percentage of Muslim senior subordinates on State-managed railways has increased from 5.38 per cent to 5.39. This was an increase of .01 per cent in one year. Sir, at this rate, there will be an increase of one per cent in one century, and if we want an increase of 25 per cent to make up a 30 per cent proportion for Muslims, we shall have to wait for 2,500 years.

We hope that the Government would take suitable action so that the proportion of the Muslims may be increased from 5.39 to at least 25 per cent within the living memories. I am surprised that a certain section of our own countrymen stand against the Muslim demand under the false excuse of efficiency and these very men in the second breath demand the Indianisation of services. May I ask, on what principle the Indianisation of services is urged? Is it the principle of efficiency or patriotism? There is only one reply, that it is the principle of patriotism, and I entirely share in their demand. Unless we have more seats for Indians, we cannot have more seats for Muslims. But I beg to differ from these men who, after securing more seats for Indians with our help, try to usurp all of them for themselves, simply because the keys of all these doors for entering into railway services happen to be in their hands.

I appeal to the Government and to the sister community that some suitable convention should be made for the services, and an equitable share should be given to the Mussalmans. No Mussalman has ever advocated that the efficiency of the services should be lowered. On the other hand, the conditions for entrance may be made as high as the nature of the work may demand, but once the standard is fixed, the Mussalmans should not be debarred simply on the ground that a particular Muslim candidate solves one question less in Arithmetic or one question less in the geography of South Africa. No one can say that competent Mussalmans are not available, and I strongly maintain that the Mussalmans can run the entire Railway Administration and fill up all the posts of responsibility, and can do the work as efficiently as any body else can do.

**Bhai Parma Nand** (Ambala Division: Non-Muhammadian): Sir, I rise to oppose this motion. My first reason is one which I have very often repeated in this House and I will repeat it once again. It is that communalism is a sort of poison that works in the body politic of the nation.

**An Honourable Member:** Do you believe it?

**Bhai Parma Nand:** I do. My friends would suggest that I am a communalist. If to oppose communalism tooth and nail is to be a communalist, then, I confess, I am. It was only yesterday that Colonel Gidney remarked that communalism is the negation of nationalism, but he did not give us any reason why communalism should be continued. It was by chance that my Honourable friend, Mr. Joshi, quoted from the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Labour where it was said that there should be no racial discrimination in the services. He also read out a foot note on that very recommendation. That foot note was by the Government of India which said that they did not want racial discrimination, but, at the same time, to redress communal inequalities they wanted

communalism in the services. As Mr. Joshi referred to this point, our Honourable friend, Sir Cowasji Jehangir, got up to oppose the vice of communalism. He was condemning reservation in services and I along with others was glad to hear such remarks from such an Honourable Member. But I do not know what happened. In a moment something crossed his mind and he suddenly changed and said that as the Muhammadans were a large community in India, therefore they could demand reservation in services. They have a right to do it. Again, Sir, there is our otherwise most respected leader of the Independent Party, Sir Abdur Rahim, whose chief complaint with regard to the White Paper was this. He was all praise for it, but his complaint was that it had not fixed the due share of the Muslim community in the services. I do not blame him at all. The Mussalmans as a community can think what is best for them. They can decide as to their line of policy in this matter. If they want reservation, they should have it. I do not object to it. I do not blame them, but my point is simply this. When we condemn communalism, we should understand, as a fact who is really responsible for this. Speaking on behalf of Hindus, I say we do not want communalism. We want fair field and no favour. If Muslim friends want to gain their due share, they should ask for fair and free competition. They can complain, as Maulana Maswood Ahmad has complained, about any irregularities such as that there are no examinations and that the promotions are given by irregular means. Of course these complaints are perfectly justified and I would be the first man to condemn such irregularities. My point is that if the Muhammadan leaders want that their community should be raised, they should try to have better qualifications. It is a wrong policy to always depend upon outside support. Reservations are mere crutches; they would never learn to walk if they always depend upon these crutches supplied to them by others.

**An Honourable Member:** Why not fix university qualifications?

**Shri Partha Nand:** You may have university qualifications from the highest to the lowest service. You can have open competition. You can appoint any body of impartial judges to allow you fair field, and, whoever comes up to the requisite standard, may be selected. If there is such a competition, we should have no objection to it.

Leaving this point aside, I would take up the other question to which my Honourable friend, Mr. Ranga Iyer, referred. When he was talking about Muslim representation on the Statutory Railway Board, some Honourable Member objected that that was communal. Mr. Ranga Iyer at once replied that the best way to end communalism was by agreement. I quite agree with the spirit of it, but I want to modify the sentence a little bit. I would say, the *only* way to end communal disputes is by agreement. I want that this agreement should not depend upon the arbitrary whim of any one individual or of any committee however highly placed he or it may be. This agreement should be based on certain principle. Let there be some reasonable grounds for that proportion. Let a *uniform* rule be fixed by our Muslim leaders. Then I would agree to that principle. The one principle that has been so often stressed and talked about is the proportion of population, that is, the ratio of population theory. If I am not mistaken, I have to give credit for the discovery of this theory to the great Muslim leader of the Punjab, Sir Fazl-i-Hussain; and this theory coming from a great Muslim leader and having been

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accepted by all the Muslims, I should have no objection to accepting it as the basis of mutual agreement between the two communities. Taking that view, Sir, I now come to the other point and that is about the cry of inadequate Muslim representation in railway services. My friend, Maulana Maswood Ahmad, says that their clamour has not brought out any result. I want to tell him that it was as a result of that clamour or agitation, which they carried on persistently in this House, that the Government appointed a Muslim officer on a pay of Rs. 1,700, simply to inquire into this grievance of theirs. We discussed Mr. Hassan's Report. I want to point out this as a fact that, taking Mr. Hassan's report and all his figures to be correct, and by excluding the other minorities, such as Christians, Anglo-Indians or Europeans, what is left behind I am prepared to accept, in respect of the remaining services, the population basis for distribution between the Hindus and the Muhammadans. If the Muslims accept this as the basis of an agreement, we shall not have any dispute on that point again. In that case, if they want to have more services, let them try to get them from their sister communities with whom they have entered into a minority pact in London. (Hear, hear.)

My friend, Mr. Maswood Ahmad, admitted that the Hindus were 79 per cent and the Mussalmans were 21 per cent. Now, taking the average of all the subordinates and the higher services in the railways, the Hindus are 69 per cent and the Mussalmans 21 per cent. That clearly means that the Muhammadans are more than one-fourth as compared with the Hindus. Therefore, they cannot complain that the Hindus have got a larger share in the railway services.

**Mr. M. Maswood Ahmad:** But there are menials and others, and all the big jobs have got into the pockets of my Honourable friend. Bhai Parma Nand.

**Bhai Parma Nand:** Take the Hassan Report. Take the head "Sub-ordinate Services" after excluding services given to other minorities; if you have got less than 25 per cent, I would allow at once that these extra persons should be removed and the posts be given to you. I am sure, you have got one-fourth already.

**Mr. M. Maswood Ahmad:** Thank you very much.

**Bhai Parma Nand:** But the very fact that goes against you is that the root of your agitation is not that you want your due share on a population basis: you want much more and that is the thing that makes you always complain and ask for more.

**Mr. M. Maswood Ahmad:** No, no. We shall be satisfied on the population basis, if we got in all grades in all Departments.

**Bhai Parma Nand:** Well, Mr. Hassan's report says that the Muslims should get 35 per cent of the total services. Now, I do not understand how you can claim 35 per cent of the total. Not only this, but he recommends that all the Railway Agents should be given immediate instructions, for instance, in the Punjab, the Muslims should be given 50 per cent, on the E.I.R. 35 per cent, and so on. The recommendation was that the Agents should be instructed to make up this proportion as soon as they can.

These are the two main recommendations in Mr. Hassan's report which are still under consideration by the Railway Board. But what I want to explain to my Muslim friends of this House, is this, that Mr. Hassan's report has not been disregarded; that report has been under consideration and action has been taken on it. I have in my hand a letter from the Secretary of the Railway Board in which it is clearly laid down as to which of these recommendations have been accepted by the Board and, consequently, the Agents have already been instructed to follow up these recommendations. Mr. Hassan made fifteen recommendations. Out of these, there are about seven which are still under consideration. Decisions have been taken on the eight.

**Mr. Deputy President** (Mr. Abdul Matin Chaudhury): The Honourable Member has got two minutes more.

**Bhai Parma Nand**: I promise, Sir, not to move my cut motion if you could give me a little more time. (*Voices*: "Move your cut motion.") I hope you will allow me, Sir, to include this letter and all these recommendations which have been accepted by the Railway Board as part of my speech—as Maulana Maswood Ahmad had done. The first recommendation was to the Divisional Superintendents that selection should take place on different dates in different Divisions, so that the Muslim candidates from one Division could easily go to another. This recommendation has been accepted by the Railway Board and the Agents are instructed to follow that course. Then, with regard to the point that no regard should be had to the record of the family of any recruit, and so on, the provision has also been made as the Board says that this cannot cause any detriment to the Muslims, because one-third of the vacancies are reserved for the redress of marked communal inequality. With regard to recommendation No. 4, that is, promotions, it is said that the Board consider it important to ensure that particular communities are not handicapped by the preponderance of any one community in the establishment branches of railway offices and they leave it to the Agents to take whatever steps may be necessary for this purpose. Thus, several of these recommendations have been accepted by the Railway Board and instructions have been issued to all the Agents. Out of these eight, two are still under consideration, and I do not know how the Railway Board can consider it feasible to give 35 per cent to one community only.

Sir, if they do assign 35 per cent to the Muslim community, and as the Anglo-Indians, the Indian Christians and the Europeans have already got 20 per cent or more, and if they have to assign a similar share to other communities, that would simply mean that the majority community, that is, the Hindus, must be deprived of their share in all the railway services, their fault simply being that they are a majority community, that they are the main population in this country and have been so for very long ages! That being their fault, they should be deprived of their share, while percentages for other communities should be fixed according to their own wishes and claims.

**Mr. Deputy President** (Mr. Abdul Matin Chaudhury): The Honourable Member must now conclude his speech.

**Bhai Parma Nand**: Now, Sir, another of Mr. Hassan's recommendations was that a definite organisation should be established which should carry into effect all these recommendations, and, failing that, the Deputy

[Bhai Parma Nand.]

Director, that is, Mr. Hassan himself, must be entrusted with that task. The decision of the Board on that point is that the Board expect every Agent and other officers shall give due consideration to the orders issued in this connection. Sir, I think that should give complete satisfaction to my Honourable friends for the reason that their continued agitation has borne ample fruit and they should see that no more agitation on that point is required.

**Mr. S. G. Jog** (Berar Representative): It is just like pouring more oil on the fire.

**Bhai Parma Nand:** As my Honourable friend, Mr. Jog, says, a communal bait is just like pouring oil over the fire, the more oil you pour, the chances are, the more and more the flame will grow and this dispute would never end. My plea is simply this that we are prepared to come to an agreement and to fix the Muslim share so far as the Hindus are concerned. As for the rest, I cannot say anything. But it should not be done as it has been done in the case of the Communal Award when some committee or any other person in authority issues an award giving privileges according to his own arbitrary will to one community or another, against which the Hindus shall have a permanent grievance.

**Maulvi Muhammad Shafee Daoodi** (Tirhut Division: Muhammadan):

4 P.M. Sir, it is unfortunate again that this question which was raised against the Government has taken a different turn, and my Honourable friend, Bhai Parma Nand, has given it the most awkward turn.

**An Honourable Member:** What have you to say about Mr. Maswood Ahmad's speech?

**Maulvi Muhammad Shafee Daoodi:** I do agree that it should not have been put in that way too, but I fail to understand the mentality of my friend, Bhai Parma Nand. I think he should have weighed his words before he uttered them. At this stage of our political consciousness, he says that communalism is a poison, by which he means that nationalism is a blessing. I do not know if there are not people who also assert that nationalism is a poison and that it is the brotherhood of mankind which is really a blessing. If this sort of discussion goes on, there is no end to it. It is not practical politics. If it was practical, it should have dawned on the minds of my friends some years before. Now, after five or six years fighting between ourselves and having lost all that we were likely to get, it is rather astonishing to me to find Bhai Parma Nand saying that communalism is a poison. He would certainly be remembering the time when our friends the Hindus were not in the position of a minority in any reformed Council and it was then very easy for them to say that the reservation of seats for minorities was something anti-national. But, Sir, with the creation of the North-West Frontier Province as a Governor's Province, the whole thing has come out as transparent as possible. We remember fully well, that, at the very beginning of the Round Table Conference, when a Committee sat to decide the fate of the North-West Frontier Province, it was the President of the Hindu Mahasabha who sat on that Committee as its member in London. (A Voice: "Whom do you mean?") I mean Dr. Moonje. When the question arose as to what proportion of seats should be given to the Hindus

and Sikhs in that Province, I hope the House will remember that the Muslim members only asked the Hindu friends as to what they wanted. The reply was—three times the population, and the Muslim members of the Committee at once, without a minute's delay, agreed to that proposal which they hoped would satisfy the minorities. And the matter was at once set at rest.

**Bhai Parma Nand:** The whole of the North-West Frontier Province was created out of the Central revenues that came from the people of India and not from the North-West Frontier Province alone. If they had spent their own money on it, we would have welcomed them.

**Maulvi Muhammad Shafee Daoodi:** I do not know if my friend, Bhai Parma Nand, or myself are contributing to the revenue of India, and, therefore, we are so anxious for that revenue. But the Hindus in the Province are making all their money from the Muslims. However, it is a matter to be decided at some other forum. The point here is, how are we going to put an end to this communalism which is telling so seriously upon the future destiny of India unless the majority community is prepared to satisfy the minority community. After all, the majority right is not going to be snatched away by any community. The majority community will remain a majority community. The only thing that can happen to it will be that a certain portion of their rights will be taken away, but still they will remain a majority. Why are they afraid of this arrangement unless they think that they would rule by their majority in a manner which will be oppressive to the minority. If you have got no such idea, why should you grudge parting with some of your proportions in favour of the minority? A minority must in no case be converted into a majority. That is the position which the Mussalmans in India have taken and that is why the noble souls who sat on that Committee set that very noble example for the whole of India. Now, you cannot say that the principle of representation should be something else and that the principle would be only this and this alone. That the majority should satisfy the minority is the only workable and practicable solution and nothing else can make the chariot go. If the majority has created a sense of insecurity in the mind of the minority, it is responsible for it, and it is for that reason that the minority wants something more than their population share. The Mussalmans of the Frontier may have created a sense of insecurity in the minds of the Hindus and the Sikhs in their Province, and they were, therefore, justified in asking that they will have three times and no less. And this was given ungrudgingly. If the majority cannot think for itself, why does it not imitate the members of that Committee and adopt the same course which they did. I should think that this is a very simple matter. They ought to know that, in this motherland of ours, the two communities have got to live and, therefore, we have got to make up our differences. This cannot be done unless the majority, wherever it exists, satisfies the minority in whatever way it is possible for it to do.

Now, my friend says at one time that the population basis is all right. If it was all right, he should have followed it from the very beginning and could have asked the Frontier Hindus and Sikhs not to ask for anything more than what they were entitled to on the population basis. I would have then considered him to be just. But I find that when his turn comes, he wants three times their due share, and, when

[Maulvi Muhammad Shafee Daoodi.]

the other community talks in the same strain, he comes down upon it and says that it is communalism and it should be discarded.

The next point is, what my friend, Bhai Parma Nand, has just now said, that it was only for these two communities to come to some terms on this question. He is right. But, at the same time, he praised the Honourable Sir Fazl-i-Hussain for having uttered some words to the effect that he wanted the population basis to be the principle by means of which the two communities should be represented in different Provinces. I do not know why he should quote Sir Fazl-i-Hussain when he knows very well that the Muslim community has in its organisation put forward its claims quite distinctly. Before 1st January, 1929, you may have reason to say that the Hindu community in India did not know what the Muslims wanted, whether they wanted this thing or that thing. But on that day all the Muslims came to an understanding and rightly devised a formula which was made public throughout India and throughout the world. In that formula is laid down what the Muslims want. The Muslims said very clearly that if the Hindu minority wanted weightage where they were in a minority, the Muslims also should have weightage wherever they were in a minority. They said very clearly in that formula that the majority community should never be reduced to a minority or even to equality, and today, Sir, we stand by that formula.

**Bhai Parma Nand:** What about the Federal Assembly?

**Maulvi Muhammad Shafee Daoodi:** As regards the services, it has been made clear that there is no use having a percentage in the Legislature if the minorities are not to have a hand in the administration of the country. The Administration and the Legislature must go hand in hand, and, therefore, we said that our representation in the Legislature must be reflected in the services too. You cannot make any distinction between the two. If the decision has been taken that the minority communities should have weightage in the Legislature, then the same rule should apply to the services and the minority communities should have representation in the services to the same extent as has been decided upon by the Communal Award. If the communities do not adhere to the Communal Award and if they want to fight over it again, that is a different matter. We have been fighting over this for the past so many years and the third party will, of course, have a very good day if we go on fighting further. Once you say that you cannot decide this question between yourselves, you yourself beg the British people to decide it for you. Now that the decision has been given, you begin to fly away from it. I also feel that I am very much handicapped by that decision in many respects, but I have to blame only the communities. The Hindus were to blame and also the Muslims were to blame, because they could not come to any amicable settlement and they had to join hands in asking the British Government to decide the question. The decision having been given, it is not open for us to say that we will not abide by that decision and that we will go on fighting over the question again. You have to make your choice now whether you are to live peacefully or whether you have to fight. These are the two alternatives before you. If you want to fight with the Muslims, then you will have to forgo your rights as an Indian in your mother country, and if you want to fight with the Government that be or with the authorities that be, then the Muslims are at your service if you treat them honestly and fairly and justly.

**Bhai Parma Nand:** Why were the Muslims fighting for all these years? Was it not for the 14 points? If the Hindus now agitate against the Communal Award, how can it be said that we are fighting with the Muslims?

**Maulvi Muhammad Shafee Daoodi:** The question having been settled, you have lost your opportunity to re-open the subject. Do you want to go on with these fights? I would indeed be very sorry and I would never feel pleased when we have to fight among ourselves. But if the fight is forced upon us, then we have to take it up. That is our only position.

**Mr. Deputy President (Mr. Abdul Matin Chaudhury):** The Honourable Member's time is up.

**Maulvi Muhammad Shafee Daoodi:** I shall conclude in a minute. I was going to say that it is not up to my Honourable friends of the Hindu community to say that they did not know what the Muslims wanted. The Muslims said very clearly in their resolution on the 1st January, 1929, it is so clear that the man who runs in the street could read and find out what the demands of the Muslims are.

**Bhai Parma Nand:** Formerly you had the 14 points, and now you are coming to the services.

**Maulvi Muhammad Shafee Daoodi:** In conclusion, I have only to say this. I hope my Honourable friend, Mr. Ranga Iyer, who had been instrumental in bringing about unity between Hindus and Muslims in London will do the same now; he has been doing it on the floor of the House, always coming to our rescue, and I hope he will rise and give us some solution which might end this heart-rending trouble. I hope he will try to smooth the way which should lead to the future prosperity of our country.

**Sardar Sant Singh (West Punjab: Sikh):** Sir, a similar motion for the adequate representation of my community in the railway services stands in the list, and I take this opportunity to express the desire of my community in the matter of the railway services. Before I begin to speak on the question of communal representation, I must begin to extend a hearty welcome to a new recruit to the communalist fold, to my friend, Sir Cowasji Jehangir, who I see is perhaps sleeping. I am referring to his remarkable speech which he delivered on the floor of the House yesterday. It has been alleged and probably rightly alleged that this communal fever is a contagious one which affects very unknown quarters. In the case of Sir Cowasji Jehangir, it has done likewise. Seeing that the percentage of appointments remains at 100, he is afraid that if the percentage is divided between the various minority communities, his community will be left without any job or without any place in that percentage. Therefore, my Honourable friend made a most contradictory speech, if I may be permitted to say so, it was one of the most extraordinary speeches that we ever heard from his lips. I take strong exception to that part of his speech where he made two statements of facts about the Sikhs. The first was when he said that the Sikhs were not a minority community, and, even if they are so, they are so few in number, that they should not be recognised as a minority community. I only want to draw his attention to a paragraph in the Montagu-Chelmsford



[Sardar Sant Singh.]

Report where, after a good deal of discussion, the Government accepted the principle that the Sikhs were a distinct and important minority community in India. For the first time the Government extended the right of separate representation to the Sikhs in 1920. I think it is too late in the day now for any gentleman to assert to the contrary. The position has been accepted for the last 14 years and the Sikhs are neither willing nor ready to give up that position of advantage. The second statement of fact which my Honourable friend made yesterday was that the Sikhs were a part of the Hindu community and that they must sink or swim with that community.

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

I take strong exception to that statement. We are not a part of the Hindu community (Hear, hear), and we have never been regarded as a part of the Hindu community in the past. If any evidence is needed to prove that there are serious differences of views between the Sikhs and the Hindus, I can say from my own personal experience that recently there was a contest between myself and a Hindu over the presidentship in a municipal committee. The election cry was raised by the Hindus that Sikhs were not Hindus and hence voting should go on communal lines. That proves that we are not regarded as Hindus. The Hindus may say so now and then, because it suits them, but when it comes to practical politics, they talk of their superior position and superior numbers and they run down the Sikhs just as much as they run down the Muslims. So I say that Sir Cowasji Jehangir is mistaken if he thinks that Sikhs regard themselves as Hindus, or Hindus regard Sikhs as such.

Now, coming to the general discussion on the question of communal representation in the railway services, I must thank the Department in one respect. In my speech in the year 1931, I complained that the Report of the Railway Board did not quote figures for the Sikhs separately. This year we find the figures quoted and this gives me a good deal of information which was not to be found in the previous reports. Looking at the figures, one noticeable feature is that, in the tabular forms on the various pages of this Report, one finds that the column reserved for the Sikhs is only dotted and there are no figures. I tried to find an oasis in this barrenness and my search was rewarded on page 55, Part II. Against Transportation (Traffic) and Commercial heading, there appeared the figure 1. This Part II relates to the statement showing the total number of vacancies filled in the Superior establishments on (Class I) Company-managed railways. Similarly, in the Superior Service, there is not a single Sikh found. In paragraph 78 of the same Report, I find:

"It will be noticed from the statement that during the year under review the total number of appointments made in the gazetted ranks on State-managed railways was 11 of which 4 went to Europeans and 7 to Indians, of whom 2 were Hindus, 1 Muslim, 1 Indian Christian and 3 Anglo-Indians and domiciled Europeans."

If we go by the percentage of population, I think the Sikh population is more than that of Anglo-Indians and Europeans. Why should they get one, and the Sikhs nothing? In paragraph 77, I find:

"The Indian element in the superior services has risen from 28·02 per cent. on State-managed and 17·74 per cent. on Company-managed Railways in 1925 to 38·79 per cent. on State-managed and 32·13 per cent. on Company-managed Railways in 1933 by a corresponding reduction in the European element. Among the Indians the percentage increase by communities in 1933 as compared with 1925 is given below :—"

And, among the Sikhs, the percentage of increase is 1·06 on the State-managed and 0·87 on the Company-managed railways. Now, this percentage, the Honourable Member for Railways will agree with me, is very inadequate and I shall make one point clear on the position of the Sikhs in the railway services. I will request the Honourable Member to give us separate figures for the various communities on the North Western Railway. The reason is that the Sikh community is largely to be found in the area traversed by that railway. I want to know what is the percentage of Sikhs in the services on the North Western Railway as compared to their population in the Punjab. Here it is suggested in paragraph 79 of this Report that there are certain proposals of the Railway Board which have been submitted to the Government of India in order to decide finally the various percentages allotted to various minority communities, and it is stated that no reply has yet been received from the Government of India on this point. I hope that when the Government of India come to any decision as regards the percentages for the various communities, they will not ignore the claims of the Sikhs, particularly on the North Western Railway system.

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Shanmukham Chetty): The Honourable Member has one minute more.

**Sardar Sant Singh:** All right, Sir. There is one question which I want to put to my friend, Maulana Shafee Daoodi. He has taken just pride in saying that the Muslims have done the just and proper thing in the matter of allowing seats to the Sikhs and the Hindus in the North-West Frontier Province. May I ask him, if he is willing to consider the case of the Sikhs in the Punjab on the same lines as the case of the Muslims have been considered in the United Provinces where the percentage of the Muslim community is the same as the percentage of Sikhs in the Punjab? We can come to a settlement with him if he agrees that we should be given the same percentage in the Punjab as is claimed by him for his community in the United Provinces and Bihar and Orissa.

**Maulvi Muhammad Shafee Daoodi:** You have been given the same consideration.

**Sardar Sant Singh:** I take exception to it. If my friend only goes through the Communal Award, he will find that about 80 per cent has been given to the Muslims in the United Provinces where their population is only 14 per cent: yet we have been given only 19 per cent in the Punjab. . . .

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Shanmukham Chetty): The Honourable Member's time is up.

**Sardar Sant Singh:** With these remarks, I conclude.

**Honourable Members:** The question may now be put.

**Mr. Amar Nath Dutt:** Sir, only one Hindu has spoken, while three Muslims and one Sikh have spoken.

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Shanmukham Chetty): The question is:

"That the question be now put."

The motion was adopted.

**The Honourable Sir Joseph Bhore:** Sir, I will endeavour to let in the cold light of reason on to a debate which, unfortunately, it seems to me, has generated a certain amount of heat. I recognise that the Muslim community attaches very great importance to this question, and it is the endeavour of Government to hold the scales as fairly as they possibly can between conflicting claims, taking into account all the considerations which have a bearing upon the question. But I would ask my Muslim friends to recognize our difficulties and not to doubt the genuineness of our intentions.

For the past two or three years, owing to the necessity for retrenchment and the comparative absence of fresh recruitment, the position in regard to Muslims could not be expected to show material improvement with the best will in the world, and I would ask the House to appreciate this aspect of the question . . . .

**Sir Muhammad Yakub:** How many new appointments were made during the last year and what was the proportion of the Muslims in the new appointments?

**The Honourable Sir Joseph Bhore:** I will give my Honourable friend actual figures. I will show that there has not only not been retrogression, but that there has actually been some improvement. Take the figures on the 1st March, 1931, and compare them with the figures on the 31st March, 1933, that is to say, before retrenchment and after retrenchment. Muslims on the first of these dates showed a percentage of 29·51; on the 31st March, 1933, that is, after retrenchment, they showed a percentage of 29·55 . . . .

**Sir Muhammad Yakub:** How many of that are officiating and how many permanent?

**The Honourable Sir Joseph Bhore:** I am giving you the figures as they are shown in our statements . . . .

**Sir Muhammad Yakub:** Can the Honourable Member show the figures.

**The Honourable Sir Joseph Bhore:** I am not giving way. That is the position on State-managed railways. Now, take the statistics in the Railway Board's Report for the year 1932-33. They show the percentage of Muslim employees on State-managed railways as 28 per cent. and this compares with 28·1 for the year 1931-32. The suggestion, therefore, that owing to retrenchment their position has been worsened is, I submit, not quite accurate. If my Honourable friend feels he can convince me that we have made a mistake in our figures, I hope that he will endeavour to do so: I shall only be too glad to go into the figures with him—in fact I understand that Mr. Colvin has invited him to do so.

Let us take next the case of gazetted posts. Muslims held in 1932-33, 58 posts on the State-managed railways out of a total of 1,106, or 5·24 per cent. This compares with 4·64 per cent. on State-managed railways in 1931-32, and, with 3·15 per cent. in 1924, when the greater Indianisation of the railways really began. Now it is perfectly true that the improvement in the position of Muslims has not been marked: it has not been very material; but almost the sole reason is the fact that for the last three years we have practically not had any recruitment whatsoever. During the year 1932-33, no direct recruitment other than by promotion has taken place for any department of the State-managed railways in India in the

Superior Services, except that four special class apprentices, who had been recruited in 1926-27, were on completion of their training appointed as probationary officers. Out of these four one was a Muslim. Those are the figures that I am in a position to give. I do not think they show that we have been either negligent or that the specific orders of the Board that the percentage of Muslims and of other minority communities as well, before the retrenchment began, should as far as possible be maintained after retrenchment have been ignored: these figures, I venture to think, show how our orders have actually in practice been carried out.

One other figure I would like to give which also helps, I think, to show that my Honourable friend's contention that there has been no advance is not quite correct. As regards higher paid subordinates, that is, those on scales of pay rising to Rs. 250 and over on the State-managed railways, the percentage of Muslims to the total during 1932-33 was 5.89 compared to 5.38 in 1931-32 and to 3.69 in 1925-26. I do not propose to give the House any further figures. I admit quite frankly that, were it not for the special circumstances of the last two or three years, there might have been—and I expect there would have been—a larger increase in the number of Muslim employees. But these are circumstances over which we have no control. We were limited by the number of appointments that we had to make and we have taken the only steps that we could take, namely, to see that the percentage of Muslims was not reduced . . .

**Maulvi Muhammad Shafee Daoodi:** What do you say in regard to what the Honourable Mr. Fazal Haq Piracha said, that . . .

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Shanmukham Chetty): The Honourable Member is not giving way.

**The Honourable Sir Joseph Bhoré:** My Honourable friend is, I think, sufficiently answered, because I have definitely given the percentages before and after retrenchment. Those percentages show that there has been no real diminution. If, as I said to my Honourable friend, Mr. Maswood Ahmad, he could show me that my figures are wrong, I shall be very happy to revise that statement.

We recognise that this question of adequate representation of communities in the services is one which arouses the liveliest interest in all quarters. It is a question beset with very many difficulties and it is not a problem which can be lightly tackled or which can be hastily settled. The House will realise the diversity of interests concerned; it will also realise that any decision taken in respect of one department must have repercussions in respect of other departments. We have now tried. I would like to assure the House, to give the fullest consideration to criticisms and claims from all quarters and our final proposals which have been completed are now before the Secretary of State. I hope that it will be possible, Sir, to announce a decision on this matter at no distant date. In view of that statement, Sir, I hope that my friend will not press his motion.

**Mr. M. Maswood Ahmad:** Sir, I should like to reply to some of the points raised by my friend, Bhai Parma Nand, and also to the two points raised by my friend, Sir Joseph Bhoré.

My friend, Bhaiji, said that communalism was a poison, and in this connection I should like to point out that if communalism is a poison, then Indianisation is a greater poison. The same principle applies to both.

[Mr. M. Maswood Ahmad.]

The principle on which my friend bases his claim for Indianisation, on the same principle we base our communal claims, and our claims for adequate share in the services.

Now, the second point is, who is responsible for creating this communal bitterness? Sir, in this connection I think that my friend, Bhai Parma Nand's speeches are more responsible for creating this bitterness. He and his lieutenants are responsible for ruining India.

The third point raised is with regard to competitive examinations. As I have said on several occasions, I shall have no objection whatsoever if particular qualifications are fixed for particular posts, but I cannot rely on competitive examinations. I may point out that many M.As. and B.As. of different universities having 10 to 12 years experience of the Departments secured only five to ten marks in the recent competitive examinations of the accounts branch in drafting letters. This fact would be known to my friend, Sir George Schuster, to whom I am addressing a letter. I have got a long list of such cases. Out of one hundred and fifty marks allotted for drafting letters, some of the M.As. and graduates with honours in English got only five to fifteen marks. This may certainly appear to be absurd, but this is a fact which cannot be denied.

**An Honourable Member:** No one will believe it.

**Mr. M. Maswood Ahmad:** Certainly, no one will believe it, but it is a fact. I say that you should fix particular qualifications for particular posts. You may say that graduates alone will be given the posts of clerks or *chaprasis*, and so on, but I can not rely upon the results of competitive examination. If you want to have these absurd competitive examinations, then close all the universities at once.

Then, the fourth point is with regard to services on a population basis. Though we claim much more, I think my community will be quite satisfied if they are given their due share on a population basis in each cadre and in each grade of each Department.

Now I come to the fifth point. With regard to Mr. Hassan's recommendation, reference was made by Bhai Parma Nand and by my Honourable friend as well, but I should like to point out that it is now nearly two years or more since Mr. Hassan made his recommendations, and every year I hear that very soon Government will come to a decision and Government will fix a certain percentage for Mussalmans, and so on, but, just as the meaning of the word "increase" is different in the dictionary of the Railway Board, the meaning of the word "soon" is also different in the dictionary of the holy trinity of the Railway Board. Sir, three years have passed, but still "soon" has not reached. When questions are asked, the Railway Member says that the file is not with him, it is with the Home Member. Luckily the Home Member is here now, and when the other day I asked him a question, he said he had returned the file to the Railway Board. God knows where the file lies and when a decision will be reached.

Then, there are only two points to which I need allude. My Honourable friend, Sir Joseph Bhore, said that on account of retrenchment it was not possible to raise the percentage of Muslims in the railway services, but what about my friend, Sir Muhammad Yakub's point, what about the recruitment which has taken place during the last two or three years. Here I want to quote certain figures. In 1928-29, 70 people were recruited.

out of this four seats were given to Muslims; in 1929-30, out of 48 people recruited, only five posts were given to Muslims. In 1930-31, out of 60 people recruited, five posts were given to Muslims. In 1931-32, out of 33 people recruited, only one post was given to Muslims. In 1932-33, out of 15 people recruited, only one post was given to my community. This is the position with regard to new recruits, and all the majority of posts have gone into the pockets of my friend, Sir Henry Gidney Pasha. (Laughter.)

Then, my Honourable friend said that he would be prepared to discuss the figures with me, and I shall be very glad to meet him on Monday on this question and will submit a memorandum. I shall then be able to show him how the percentage of Muslims has gradually decreased. Mr. Hayman also in his speech admitted that the percentage of Muslims had decreased in that year by 12 per cent., and Sir George Rainy also accepted it. During the last two years also, as I have shown, the percentage of Muslims has considerably gone down.

Sir, as I said in the beginning, my intention in moving this motion was merely to bring these facts before this House and show what the real position is, and that object I have achieved. I do not want to press this motion to a division, and so I beg leave of the House to withdraw this motion.

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Shanmukham Chetty): Has the Honourable Member leave of the House to withdraw his motion?

(One Member objected.)

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Shanmukham Chetty): The question is:

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

The motion was negatived.

## STATEMENT OF BUSINESS.

**The Honourable Sir Brojendra Mitter** (Leader of the House): With your permission, Sir, I desire to make a statement as to the probable course of Government business in the week beginning Monday, the 26th February. The House is already aware that the Budget is to be presented at 5 P.M. on Tuesday, the 27th, that Wednesday, the 28th February, and Thursday, the 1st March, are gazetted holidays on which the House will not sit, and that Friday, the 2nd and Saturday, the 3rd March have been appointed for the general discussion of the Budget. Monday, the 26th and a part of Tuesday, the 27th, are available for other Government business. On Monday, motions will be made for leave to introduce:

- (1) A Bill further to extend the operation of the Salt (Additional Import Duty) Act, 1931,
- (2) A Bill to extend the operation of the Trade Disputes Act, 1929, and
- (3) A Bill further to amend the Cotton Textile Industry (Protection) Act, 1930.

[Sir Brojendra Mitter.]

The Salt (Additional Import Duty) Act is to be extended for thirteen months, the Trade Disputes Act is to be made a permanent measure, and the Cotton Textile Industry (Protection) Act is to be extended for one month. The need for the last mentioned Bill arises from the fact that it is not expected that the Bill to amend the Indian Tariff Act for the purpose of protecting the Cotton Textile Industry can be passed into law before the end of March. It is proposed on Monday to ask the House to put through all the stages of the temporary extending Bill at one sitting. A motion will then be made to take into consideration the amendments made in the Reserve Bank of India Bill by the Council of State. Thereafter, motions will be made to take into consideration and pass :

- (1) The Bill to extend for one year the duty on the import of wheat,
- (2) The Bill to extend up to 31st October, 1934, the protection to the Steel and Wire and Wire Nail Industries, and
- (3) The Bill to amend the Indian Medical Councils Act.

On Tuesday, the 27th, a motion will be made for the election of members to the Standing Committee of the Department of Education, Health and Lands. Thereafter, any of the aforementioned business, not concluded on Monday, will be taken up. And, thereafter, the remaining business will be :

- (1) Demands for Supplementary Grants in connection with the Railway Budget, and
- (2) The motion to refer to Select Committee the Indian Navy (Discipline) Bill.

The Assembly then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Saturday, the 24th February, 1934.

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