

[Mr. Chairman]

some time is fixed. So what have you to say about it?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS AND DEPARTMENT OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI P. VENKATASUBBAIAH): Sir, these matters are discussed in the Business Advisory Committee.

MR. CHAIRMAN: If you, Gentlemen, give a notice for a discussion, then he will agree for that.

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES: We have given a notice:.. (*Interruptions*) Sack the Railway Board.

SHRI C. T. DHANDAPANI (Polachi): To help the Government and the Minister. ... (*Interruptions*)

SHRI A. NEELALOHITHADASAN NADAR (Trivandrum): *Kya* improvement *hua*?

SHRI KEDAR PANDEY: I have no objection if a date is fixed for a full discussion on this matter.

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE: Sir, on a point of order. The hon. Minister, in his statement, referred to two railway accidents, but he did not refer to the accident of the Neelachal Express which was derailed yesterday and five bogies were involved. I would like to know why no mention was made about it.

SHRI KEDAR PANDAY: Nobody has been injured and nobody is dead.

गाड़ी डीरेल हुई लेकिन उसमें जानी नुकसान नहीं हुआ ।

श्री अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी : आपको बताना चाहिये था ।

SHRI RAMAVATAR SHASTRI: Sir, does the Minister mean to say

that only when persons die or get injured, he will report to the House?

MR. CHAIRMAN: What he means is that that was not a serious thing and that it was not necessary to mention here.

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES: He wants people to die—for reporting to Parliament.

SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER (Delhi Sadar): It looks very strange. I say that Shri George Fernandes is responsible for blowing up the trains.

15.45 hrs.

STATEMENT RE. AGITATION BY LOCO RUNNING STAFF

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI KEDAR PANDEY): This is my second statement regarding the Loco Running Staff agitation.

Sir, I wish to make a statement regarding the recent illegal action by an irresponsible section of the loco running staff in some areas of the Indian Railways.

(*Interruptions*)

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES: Let him make a factual statement. We feel that you are making an irresponsible statement. You give us the facts only but do not call everybody as irresponsible. It is not fair to the workers when they are not here to defend themselves. Sir, he is making a statement calling the workers as irresponsible. I say that your Railway Board is irresponsible. Why should he call the workers irresponsible? We will not allow that. What do you mean by calling them as irresponsible. (*Interruptions*) The Minister must make a factual statement.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All of you please sit down.

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES: it is not fair to the workers. (*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN: I am going to say that.

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES: I bow to your judgment. (*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN: I am on my legs. All of you will please sit down.

PROF. K. K. TEWARY: (Buxar): The Minister has got the right what he wants to say.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It is better to avoid this kind of thing. Please state the facts only.

SHRI KEDAR PANDEY: The hon'ble Members are aware that, on a number of occasions, some of the loco running staff have indulged in the unprovoked stoppages of work even in the past. My predecessor had an occasion to mention, in this House on 9th June last, the illegal stoppage of work in the Delhi Division of Northern Railway. (*Interruptions*) please here me.

Sir, at a time when the economy of the country is looking up, when farms have been in dier need of fertilisers for the rabi crop, when power houses need additional trains of coal, when steel plants have shown an upward production requiring additional inputs, when foodgrains have had to be rushed to the drought-stricken regions, and specially when the Railways started showing that they were equal to the task, an irresponsible section of loco-running staff chose to jeopardise the economy and dislocate the life of the community.

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES: This is not fair to the workers.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Minister may please avoid this. (*Interruptions*) All of you please sit down.

SHRI KEDAR PANDEY: Their subterfuge of absenteeism by reporting

sick en masse reflects their irresponsible pressure tactics. The House is aware that large majority of the staff refrained from joining this misguided action of the few. They remained steadfast on their posts and kept the Nation's wheels moving. I am sure you will all condemn the acts of violence coercion and intimidation indulged in by some of the agitators who even went to the extent of harassing the families of dutiful Railwaymen, who threw acid bombs, (*Interruptions*) who pulled out their colleagues on duty and caused even serious physical injuries to them. When such serious acts of sabotage and misconduct have been resorted to, we have necessarily had to take firm action under normal rules. The Government owes it to the notion.

(*Interruptions*)

It is our policy that we shall not allow any irresponsible section of the staff to hold the Railways and the community to ransom. It is the policy of the Government that the movement of the commodities essential for the life of the people with not be allowed to be disrupted. It is also our policy that we will not allow acts of indiscipline and irresponsible behaviour to go with impunity. It is in this context that we have had to take action under the normal disciplinary rules in public interest.

We have also decided that, henceforth, the Loco Running Staff Association will be treated at par with other unrecognised categorical associations on the Railways.

SHRI SAMAR MUKHERJEE (Howrah): Sir, the objectionable words used in the statement be expunged and we want that there should be a full-fledged debate.

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES: Sir, we seek a debate on the loco running staff strike. Let it not be clubbed with the Railways budget. We seek a full debate on the demands of the loco running staff.