

Mr. Speaker: If the hon. Minister is not present then, of course, some of his deputies can do that. But when he himself is present, he ought to move it.

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath (Hoshangabad): I submit with all respect that you have warned the hon. Ministers in the past about this matter but they are still persisting in this behaviour; I do not know why.

Shri U. M. Trivedi (Mandsaur): I think, Shri Swaran Singh is not all right.

Mr. Speaker: We will deem it to have been moved by the hon. Minister himself.

Shri Ranga (Chittoor): Is there any request from the hon. Minister?

Mr. Speaker: If I am directing that, it is all right.

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath: It is anticipating your permission.

Mr. Speaker: There cannot be any permission by the hon. Minister, who is present, to his deputy.

The question is:

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill to authorise payment and appropriation of certain further sums from and out of the Consolidated Fund of India for the service of the financial year 1962-63 for the purposes of Railways."

The motion was adopted.

Shri Swaran Singh: Sir, I introduce the Bill.

12.20 hrs.

RAILWAY BUDGET—GENERAL DISCUSSION

Mr. Speaker: The House will now take up General Discussion on the Budget (Railways) for 1963-64.

Dr. Ranen Sen (Calcutta East): Sir, I rise to oppose the Railway Budget presented by the hon. Railway Minister.

Shri U. M. Trivedi (Mandsaur): Oppose the Railway Budget?

Dr. Ranen Sen: My opposition to the Railway Budget is due to the fact that certain indirect taxation proposals have been introduced in the Budget.

Mr. Speaker: He is opposed to the proposals.

Dr. Ranen Sen: I am explaining, Sir. My contention about this year's Budget, as far as I understand, is that the hon. Railway Minister wants a sum of Rs. 19 crores to be allotted under different heads for his Ministry. Already, within a few hours of the presentation of the General Budget by Shri Morarji Desai, there has been a sharp rise in prices all round throughout the country. The Railway Budget presented by Shri Swaran Singh is the first step taken towards this price rise in the country. I am rather astonished to find that in presenting the Budget the hon. Minister has not expressed any concern either for the public or for the railway employees who, in fact, have built up such a big organisation as the Indian Railways that we find today.

It is well known that the present Indian Railways is a very big enterprise. It started almost from a scratch after the British left India. I would request the hon. Minister just to recollect as to how many times railway freight and passenger fares have been increased during the last 15 years.

I also ask him to recollect that always in this Parliament, hon. Members of this House have criticised the Railway Ministry for certain omissions and commissions of the Ministry.

†Introduced with the recommendation of the President.

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This year, it has been stated by the Minister that in spite of the fact that since 1957-58 there has been no increase in the complement of Railway staff, with this staff, there has been a 100 per cent increase in the haulage of goods and a 80 per cent increase in passenger traffic, all this with the efforts of the Railway employees. But, in the Budget, there is scant mention of the Railway employees.

I am now coming to the provisions of the Railway Budget. As I said before, the main thing presented today is that the Railways want to get Rs. 19 crores. How? The Railways want to raise this sum by means of indirect taxation on the people. That is why I say I am opposed to this Budget. This is the main thing contained in the Budget.

The first proposal is that Rs. 4 crores will be necessary to give to the General revenues: from 4.25 per cent of the capital at charge to 4.50 per cent. As such, already in our country, the Railways give quite an enormous amount—per centage—to the General revenues. But even then, I agree to this proposal. I am conscious of the fact today, our national Defence has to be strengthened.

An Hon. Member: Are you?

Dr. Ranen Sen: There should be enough funds to strengthen our national reconstruction. I agree to that. As I said, we are conscious of this fact. Therefore, whatever additional amount of money the Railway Minister wants in this respect, we have no objection. But, for that, is it necessary to raise the freight rates by 5 per cent and raise the parcel rates by 10 per cent?

Shrimati Renuka Ray (Malda): It is necessary.

Dr. Ranen Sen: It is not at all necessary, I maintain, because of the fact that if we go through the Audit report, we find that there are so many cases of losses, avoidable losses, mis-

use and also some corruption cases are there. The Railway, such a big organisation can raise this sum of Rs. 4 crores by resorting to a little economy, by doing away with corruption and the losses that are incurred every year by the Railways. For that, increase in indirect taxation is not at all necessary. I have gone through the Audit report carefully. I believe that any Member of this House will agree with this proposal that I make that a little economy and an effort to do away with the wastage and unnecessary losses will help the Railways to raise this sum of Rs. 4 crores or so.

Secondly comes the question of paying in the Depreciation Reserve fund a sum of Rs. 80 crores. We are opposed to it, very frankly speaking. Why does the Railway Minister want to flout the decision of the Convention Committee of 1960? Where is the necessity? Last year's report proves that Rs. 70 crores as the Depreciation fund is quite sufficient to cover all depreciation and renewal cases.

Shri Ranga (Chittoor): That is why there are so many accidents.

Dr. Ranen Sen: I shall come to the question of accidents later on. But I would say that this extra sum of Rs. 10 crores is not at all necessary; and not only that, it gives rise to so many other consequences which I want to highlight here. Already, after the announcement of the railway budget, the journals of the big business, such as the *Eastern Economist* and *Commerce* have praised the Railway Ministry very much. They have said that this high appropriation to the Depreciation Reserve Fund in the State sector should be followed by a high depreciation in the private sector also. We are here building a new economy in India. If the State sector sets up this example before the country, naturally, the private sector will pounce upon this opportunity and they will also follow suit. Therefore, I

say that it is quite unnecessary and harmful.

Further, the levying of enhanced freight rates and parcel rates creates another bad example inside the country. As I have said, the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry, as soon as the railway budget was announced, came out with a statement saying that price rise was inevitable. Who manipulates the prices in this country? The Government of India have not been able to control the prices at all for so long. And this has been proved that it is the big business which always controls the prices.

The Railway Minister has tried to show us by calculation that the price rise will be only a fraction of a naya paisa on a maund or something like that. We all know that if one naya paisa is added as taxation, the big business adds 4 naya paise to that. Therefore, as I said, the enhancement of freight rates and parcel rates is injurious to the country, and detrimental to the development of the economy of the country in the long run.

Then, there is the question of the Development Fund. We all agree that the railways should be developed and developed further so that there should be a railway line going into the interior of the country, not only in the interests of the trade and commerce but in the interests of the travelling public as well. But I would say that if the rates are sought to be raised for that purpose, then the whole thing will be baffling in the final analysis.

There is a sum of Rs. 57 crores in the General Reserve Fund. According to the report of the Railway Convention Committee, 1960 and also the report of the Railway Convention Committee, 1954, for development work, the railways can take loan from the public exchequer. In this abnormal situation, I would not advise the rail-

ways to take loan from the public exchequer. What is this sum of Rs. 57 crores meant for? It is lying idle for the last few years. We already have the Depreciation Fund, the Development Fund and the Railway Reserve Fund, which is lying unused in the coffers of the Ministry and the coffers of the public exchequer.

Therefore, in short, I maintain that the increased contribution to the General Fund to the tune of Rs. 4 crores should be given. As for the rest of the allotments, I oppose increase in allotment under heading of Depreciation Reserve Fund. I would submit that there should be no increase in freight rates and parcel rates. This is my humble submission before the Railway Minister.

I now want to deal with accidents. The small booklet that has been given to us deals with accidents. The Minister himself has admitted in that report that the number of collisions involving passenger trains as also other collisions has increased during 1961-62.

According to the figures given on page 8 of the Review, the amount of damage to rolling stock and engines is on the increase. Compared to 1959-60, in 1961-62, it has nearly doubled. This figure of railway accidents, major and minor. For these accidents, the main blame has been put on the railway staff. There I differ with the hon. Minister. I never say that the railway staff is not responsible for any of the accidents. But I say that the system prevalent on the railways, the amount of hard labour that railway employees have to put in, is mainly responsible for this. In 1948 or 1950, there was adjudication for fixing the hours of work. For the last twelve years, there has not been any reappraisal of the hours of work of the running staff. I say the higher officers are mostly ignorant about these things. So they make the railway workers, the running staff, run defective rolling stock. A number of

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cases of accidents are due to this factor. Who should be held responsible for this? The railway workers alone or the Railway Administration? Shri Ranga was saying that this was the reason why so many accidents were taking place. Everybody knows it. So we should go into this matter of the reasons for these accidents.

I would just quote a sentence from the Kunzru Committee's Interim Report, where it is stated:

"The failure of railwaymen and the accidents resulting from that are insignificant as against their achievements in the context of the vastness of the field of their operation".

I would have been very happy if the Railway Minister had come out with a statement on these lines, but in the Review of Accidents, the main blame is put at the door of the employees. Therefore, the correct picture has not been presented to us.

I will say a few words about industrial relations. It seems from his report that industrial relations are very good. He has spoken eloquently about the 'payment by results'. There is no objection to this system. But I submit that the norm has been fixed rather high. This is the complaint of all the railway Unions irrespective of their affiliations. There has been no consultation with the representatives of the railway workers at the departmental level or staff level. As a result, railway workers have come to accept it as an inevitable evil. We want the further development of railways. For that, the willing co-operation of the workers is necessary. In consultation with the railway employees' representatives, some sort of workers' councils or elected bodies at the workshop level or departmental level, norms can be devised. Railway workers will willingly share the responsibility. They have done so. If it is a fact, as the Railway Minister said, that since 1957-58, there has

been no increase in the staff, but there has been increase in wagon loads, haulage and passenger traffic, who has done it? The members of Railway Board or the lower grade railway employees? Therefore, this aspect should be considered by the Minister very sympathetically.

The financial position pertaining to the staff can be seen from the report on Indian Railways, 1961-62. It is clear that indebtedness is mounting terribly. The total amount of loans issued during the year 1961-62 by railwaymen's cooperatives was about Rs. 275 lakhs more than previous year. Nearly Rs. 3 crores have been taken more by the railway employees from the co-operatives as loan. Does it show the opulence of the railway employees or their growing distress and indebtedness? Therefore, I say everything is not going on well on the railway front. The Railway Minister should consider all these things very sympathetically, consider the human element.

Industrial relations today is one of the pivots of the State as well as the private sector. I am sorry to say here that three years after the strike that took place in 1960, there are still, according to the All-India Railwaymen's Federation's figures, 60 people out of employment—23 from the Secunderabad Division, 12 from Lucknow and the rest probably from the South eastern Railway. These things continue today. The Railway Minister, instead of looking into these cases, takes a complacent view, everything is left to the whims of certain officers: What is wrong today if those 60 persons are taken back? What does the railway lose?

In respect of casual labour, the other day Shri Shah Nawaz Khan was explaining that after six months, they get confirmation, they become permanent. Theoretically that is true, but how many people reach the stage of serving for six months continuously?

There are nearly two lakhs of railway staff working as casual labour in the gang, in the different departments, even in workshops. For instance, at Kharagpur workshop, casual labour is employed in permanent jobs. I must give credit to the Railway Board for sending their circular No. E(NG)60CL/13 requesting the authorities concerned to confirm the services of these people working as casual labour after six months and suggesting that casual labour should be paid a rate of wages comparable to that of workers working in the particular State doing the same type of job. But in both these respects, the circular has been flouted. This is a standing scandal, a standing condemnation of the railway authorities, that two lakhs of workers are still held as casual labour.

Then I come to the application of the Industrial Disputes Act. It has been agreed in the Indian Labour Conference that in the State sector and in the Railways not only the Industrial Disputes Act will be applied but also all the labour laws will be applied. Even today, however, overtime rates are seldom given in the running sheds. There are widespread complaints to that effect. I would ask the Minister to look into this. If the biggest employers, the Central Government Railways do not themselves apply the laws of the land, if there is not even the semblance of justice, why should the private employers observe this law?

The Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Railways (Shri Shahnawaz Khan):

If the hon. Member could give me any instance where overtime has not been paid, I shall look into it.

Dr. Ranen Sen: I will give him.

Now, it is stated in the report that the stores are well stocked. But it is our experience and we have several reports that in while working several implements and stores were not found—implements which were necessary—were not available. So much

so, the railway workers in some cases, especially of the loco sheds, have had to purchase certain implements from outside. In most of the places those implements from the Railway stores come from the backdoor. It is simply mismanagement. I do not blame or hold the Railway Minister or the Deputy Minister responsible for that. That is why I said earlier that with better management things could be improved.

Before I conclude I would raise two other points. The other day Shri Shahnawaz Khan said something about the recognition of the trade unions the Chittaranjan Locomotive Workers Union and the Dhakshin Railway Employees Union. I have no grudge if the other unions are given recognition provided they conform to the requirements of recognition as suggested by the Indian Labour Conference... (*Interruptions.*) I am not discussing coal fields here; I am discussing the Railways though they are run with coal. So, it is not a fact that only one union exists and is recognised by the Railways. In the Eastern Railway, as Shri Sharma knows, there is another union which is also affiliated to the so-called INTUC. These are also recognised; they feel—the more, the merrier. If the Chittaranjan Workers Union and the Dhakshin Railway employees Union satisfy the conditions about the representative character and other things set down for recognition, then recognition should be granted. But to deny recognition on account of participation in the 1960 strike will be unfair. I referred to this because the other day Shri Shahnawaz Khan said that reason for non-recognition is their participation in strike. The whole Posts and Telegraphs Department went on strike. All the unions there have been recognised now. Why should there be any discrimination in regard to the railway unions?

I wish to say a few words about the rent. Shri Bhattacharyya also referred to it and Shri Shahnawaz Khan

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replied to that. The cost of the old quarters, their capital plus interest had long ago been realised. It is admitted by the Railways. Still, those quarters are charged rent. The Railways, I agree, must have a reserve balance but not in this way.

Shri Shah Nawaz Khan: Did the Pay Commission recommend so? (*Interruptions*).

Dr. Ranen Sen: The Pay Commission recommended other good things but you did not apply them (*Interruptions*.) While speaking on behalf of the railway employees I have got to say that. Now, in the new quarters, the rent has been raised from Rs. 3.75 to Rs. 7. Is it not too high? The cost of everything goes up. If the rents also go up like this, what is to happen to the poor railway employees? Then again, previously the essential staff such as the station masters, etc. used to get free quarters. Now, the question of rent assumes some importance in the life of the railway employees.

While concluding I say that the Railways should develop. Everybody should accept that position. They should develop from a big to a bigger enterprise but not always at the cost of the public and the railway workers. There are so many things to be done in the Railways and by resorting to them there could be economy and savings. While agreeing to the allocation to the general revenues of Rs. 4 and odd crores, I oppose the other provisions such as increase in the depreciation fund and the enhancement of the railway freight rates. I had brought certain points about the condition of the railways and the railway workers to the notice of the hon. Minister with the hope that he will pay sufficient attention to them.

Shri Hanumanthiyya (Bangalore City): The hon. Member who spoke now has all the time given one point of view to this House. We have to remember that his federation is not the sole monopoly owner or the

holder of all the rights of the railways. There are the people, the public. In between the Federation or the workers unions and the people who use the railways, the Ministry has to hold the scales even. If a Member of Parliament advocates only one point of view, naturally the Government cannot run away with it. The real owner of this railway system are the people. Their interests have to be safeguarded. The fares have to be as low as possible. It is one of the essential public services which is not meant to work so that any particular set of officers or workers may enjoy at the cost of the public. No doubt there is a slogan: workers of the world, unite. Against whom? They seem to be united against the common man. Let not that policy be pursued any more. They have to be just to every section of the people before they claim to serve the people truly and sincerely.

Dr. Ranen Sen: They are part of the common man and not outside.

Shri Hanumanthiyya: Recent events have proved that it is not the case.

Some sections of the railways have not been running at a profit: I am told that they run at a loss. There is the argument very frequently advanced on the floor of this House and outside that our railways are not being run on a commercial basis. The money that has been so far invested runs to the tune of Rs. 1,500 crores or more and it is not yielding enough dividend to the Government and the people. In fact, 60 per cent of the revenues are being spent on the staff which, on the face of it, does not look like a commercial or an economic proposition individual cases. Apart from the pay and salaries of the officers and the staff with which I am not dealing today, there is a major cause which is contributing to the loss of revenues, and that is explained not by any one of us who are unconnected with the railway administration but by the *Review of the Performance of*

the Indian Railways, a publication supplied to us. In the last para of that publication it is written thus:

"The railways which generally show a higher ratio of expenses to earnings, *v.z.*, the Northeast frontier, the Northeastern and the Southern Railways, are either wholly or substantially metre gauge railways. These have inherently less economic characteristic of working as compared to broad gauge railways."

So, if the railways have not given as much income as could be expected of them, it is because of the defective system of the railways themselves.

I have been pleading that the metre gauge system which is less economical, which is less efficient, ought to be scrapped. The railway administration knows much more than anyone of us that this metre gauge system is an anomaly. It is out-of-date; it is an anachronism. If all metre gauge lines are converted into broad gauge ones, the railways will be able to do much better not only from the point of view of income but from the point of view of building up this nation with greater speed. I wonder why they do not take it up. They plead difficulties about expenditure. That difficulty will always be there; even if we go on for hundred years there will be people to plead financial difficulties that come in the way. That is why a planned economy was adopted by India advisedly so that they may think in a big way; they may plan for the future; they may see that all these anomalies and anachronisms are removed. But I find both the Planning Commission and the Railway Ministry are going on in the old routine way. They have not risen to the expectation of a planning mind. If we had eliminated this metre gauge system in the last 15 years, one by one, by this time our railway system would have given us more efficient service at a lesser cost. Why did they not do it? After all, even according to the calculation, the

difference in expenditure between the broad gauge and metre gauge systems is only about one-third. This capital expenditure of one-third will be wiped out in the course of two or three years because of the increased capacity of the system to carry more goods and passengers. I earnestly request the hon. Minister to bestow his earnest attention to this matter. If he goes in the routine manner which his predecessors did, or in the way the routine-minded people ask him to do, he will not cut any new trail. The Ministry is constituted, under the democratic system of Government not for the purpose of carrying on the administration in a routine way; ministers are not expected to merely sign on the file or read the file. That may be part of their work. But it is the thinkers, those people who have vision, that ought to be in the ministerial places. As Kennedy says, it is only a man of vision, with a new frontier outlook who, will be able to introduce new ideas, new plans and new vigour into the administration. If I say that I expect such dynamism and new way of thinking and planning by the Railway Minister who happens to be a very good friend of mine, I do not think I expect too much from him. I do not want to be critical. On the other hand, I want to see that those people who sit in the places of Ministers, their minds are sublimated to the plane of a new frontier. So far, the railway administration has not come up to that standard.

I have been in Parliament before. Every year they go on repeating the same old formula—that they had to face so many difficulties including that of partition, and that it is a great thing that they have been able to solve than all. These mantrams have been repeated for 15 to 16 times annually in this House; now, it is enough; it is time that they stopped this repetition. It has become boring, to say the least. Here, we have come to a stage which, in the language of the Planning Commission, is called the take-off stage. The take-off

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stage involves the calibre of take-off mind, not a mind which all the time sticks to the earth and wallows in the routine of mud and dirt.

Now, the other day I read in the papers about the Kandla port. After we attained Independence, that port was started. The metre gauge system was constructed to facilitate its working. The railway officials themselves, now say as also the port officials, that the narrow gauge is no longer sufficient for the purpose of doing all the work expected of the port.

Shri Shah Nawaz Khan: But Kandla has not been linked by narrow gauge.

Shri Hanumanthaiya: I am sorry; I meant the metre gauge as against the broad gauge.

12.59 hrs.

[MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

It seems that the transport of food-grains and coal take up all the wagons and trains and there is no room for any other traffic. Now, there may be the question of doubling that metre gauge. If, by way of proper vision, a broad gauge system had been constructed for Kandla port, this anomaly would not have arisen. We have now to face the necessity of either dismantling the metre gauge in order to lay broad gauge or of doubling the metre gauge. If once for all broad gauge had been constructed, it would have been so much beneficial to this country and the present bottleneck would not have arisen. I urge upon the hon. Minister to take note of it, to take a lesson out of it and see that the Mangalore port and the Tuticorin port that are now being developed do not suffer the same fate, the same inconvenience, within the course of one or two years. The Mangalore port is proposed to be developed. Money has been allotted. The railway administration is thinking of constructing a metre gauge line from Hasan to Mangalore. It is a very illogical proposition.

I will bring another aspect of this into consideration. You cannot, in this age of ours, construct the railway on the basis of supplying ore to outside countries through these ports. The supply of ore through these ports and the railways is a temporary phase of our economy. The time may very soon come when we no longer will be what is called a country which is exporting ore. We will no longer be an exporting country in that sense. We will have to export our products through Mangalore port from the hinterland, the whole of South India on the west coast. After everything is said and done, the west coast ports carry more export and import trade so far as India is concerned than the eastern ports. Therefore, I plead with the Minister to see this point in proper perspective. Ultimately Kandla, Bombay, Mangalore and Cochin will have to do the bulk of our foreign trade, may be 75 per cent. So far as the east is concerned, the trade may not be ultimately as great as the other one.

13 hrs.

There is already congestion in the ports of Bombay and Kandla. So, Mangalore port has to be developed as soon as possible and it has to be connected with the hinterland not by metre gauge, but by broad gauge. There is a proposal to construct a line from Salem to Bangalore. I submit that this also should be a broad gauge line and not metre gauge. The other day, the Minister said that new-line construction of the railways is based on what is called the industrial pattern; I agree for the time being. The Government of India has already announced that there is going to be, a steel plant in Bellary district. If Bellary district ultimately comes to have a steel plant, lignite must be supplied from Neiveli. You have to take the lignite from Salem to Bangalore and from Bangalore to Hospet or wherever the steel plant is located. Therefore, it is absolutely necessary that the contemplated line from Salem to Bangalore should not

be metre gauge, but broad gauge. From Bangalore to Guntakkal, it should be a broad gauge line. From Guntakkal to Hospet, you have already sanctioned broad gauge for the purpose of carrying ore to Madras. If ore is to be sold to eastern countries, it has to be sold to western countries also. Therefore, from Guntakkal to Hospet, and from Hospet to either Goa or Karwar, broad gauge lines should be constructed. Railway system in this region has to be rationalised by making it all broad gauge not only from the point of view of ore carrying but also from the point of view of meeting the ultimate needs of export and import trade of the whole of South India.

There is another aspect I expect the Minister to ponder over. The South Indian system of railways is not giving us much income, because the main reason is that coal has to be brought all the way from Bihar and Bengal coalfields. The transportation costs are so heavy that they eat into the income of the Southern Railways. The age is coming soon when we have to make wide use of electric energy and atomic energy. One atomic plant has already been contemplated for South India. It may be in Madras or somewhere else in the south. Ultimately our railway system has to subsist on electrical energy and not so much on coal. For what I know, our coal deposits are not of such a good quality. The inferior quality of coal is not only costing much, but I am told it is one of the causes for delay in the running of trains. If we plan as real planners, we will have to make provision for the ultimate conversion of our railway system at any rate in South India from steam traction to electric traction.

The Minister of Railways (Shri Swaran Singh): What about diesel?

Shri Hanumanthaiya: No Sir, I do not want diesel engines. I will discuss it later. Electric engines could be used with advantage where

the gradient is very steep, because when the electric trains go down the steep gradient, I understand from scientists that instead of the engine consuming electricity, it generates electricity and supplies the line. Therefore, it is economical. To show that this kind of planning is being considered in earnest, I would appeal to the Railway Minister to start the construction of a broad gauge system of railways from Mangalore to Hasan and onwards to Bangalore with electric traction and not coal or diesel one. The ultimate destination should not be Hasan, because it is only a district headquarter. A broad gauge line from Mangalore to Madras to make it logical.....

Shri Swaran Singh: Already there is a broad gauge line from Mangalore to Madras.

Shri Hanumanthaiya: But it goes in a curved manner. It does not go straight. It costs more. I am sorry the Planning Minister is not here. I want the Planning Minister to be here, because the Planning Commission overawes the Railway Ministry. It has power with out responsibility. Some of the Railway Ministry's proposals are cut out by the Planning Commission. I very much wish that when the Railway budget is being discussed, the Planning Minister made it convenient to attend the House. Otherwise, I would be quite justified in saying that the Planning Commission enjoys power even without caring to listen to the views of members of this House on such important matters. My complaint is that the Planning Commission has to develop a spirit of better vision and large-heartedness, a spirit of new frontier, much more than it has so far done. May be the system of ministerial working is such that many Ministers do no care to attend the meetings of Parliament when important subjects like the railway budget are being discussed. I hope a lesson would be learnt and the concerned Ministers,

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who are very intimately connected, would be present on such occasions.

As I said, for the whole of South India, electric traction is the ultimate objective. I have placed before the Government that the railway system in South India has to be rationalised so as to see that every capital in the south is connected with Delhi. The real Grand Trunk Express from the south has to start from Trivandrum and go through Bangalore, Hyderabad and Nagpur. From Nagpur onwards, it is all right.

Shri Swaran Singh: Then Madras should be cut cut?

Shri Hanumanthaiya: Madras will have its Grand Trunk Express. I am not quarrelling with Madras. But the real Grand Trunk line is the line that I proposed—it should start from Trivandrum, touch Bangalore and Hyderabad and then pass through Nagpur and Bhopal to Delhi. This also should be electric traction.

On page 60 of the Review, I find that during the course of 10 years from 1950-51 to 1960-61, there has been an increase of 28.8 per cent in the personnel of all the Indian Railways. But the accounts department, during this period of ten years, increased by 60 per cent. I want the accounts department. It is a kind of healthy check, I concede. But you won't appreciate if the brake is bigger than the wheel. In the case of the Railway Ministry, during the last ten years, the accounts department personnel has increased by more than 60 per cent as against 28.8 per cent in the case of other personnel. It is, after all, the other personnel that matter. It is they who are responsible for the running of the Railways. Please, therefore, do not allow this checking agency to become bigger than the working agency. As I said, the brake must not be bigger than the wheel.

Sardar Swaran Singh: It should be strong enough to stop the vehicle.

Shri Hanumanthaiya: I am very highly thankful to the Railway Minister for his candour and courage for he has admitted that the trains run late. If the trains run late it must be admitted and rectified. Very few Ministers are capable of such candour and courage. I congratulate him on this stand. Last year, Sir, when this question came up, we passed a resolution directing the Ministry to extend the time schedule, if necessary, so as to make the trains arrive on time. We said: "if necessary". I am sorry to say that the yhave taken advantage of this latter clause "if necessary". Even though they have extended the time schedule the trains do not arrive on time at all.

An Hon. Member: That is a habit.

Shri Hanumanthaiya: Sir, there is a proverb in my language—Kannada "Modale thergadi survava nige hasige kottanthe". It means: "It is like one who is already feeling dasy, being supplied with a bed"; how will it work. He will go to sleep. Like that the Railway Ministry which was already.....

Sardar Swaran Singh: He will lie down and sleep.

Shri Hanumanthaiya: The Railway Ministry was already practising a kind of dosing by running their trains late. When with all good intentions we said in our party meeting that "if necessary" they could extend the time-schedule, they have taken advantage of that clause. They have used it as the bed, they have completely stretched themselves on the bed, by extending the time-schedule and still running the trains late.

Sardar Swaran Singh: I can assure the hon. Member that we will review the position at the time of the next time-table. Certain timings were extended where works were going on. As the works are completed we will have a second look at it.

Shri Hanumanthaiya: Here I have to make an appeal to you; not only to you but also to those people on my right, the Communists, who, I am told, have a great say in the matter of managing the labour unions. It is much more their responsibility than the responsibility of the officers of the Ministry, if it is a question of running trains on time. I have seen myself that labour unions have acted sometimes more as a brake to efficiency, more as a brake to the earnestness of the officers of the Ministry to make the railways work methodically.

Shri Shah Nawaz Khan: That is not so.

Shri Sonavane (Pandharpur): May I know which unions the hon. Member is referring to—Communist unions or others?

An Hon. Member: INTUC.

Sardar Swaran Singh: All the Communist Members are absent, you must have noticed.

Shri Hanumanthaiya: Sir, the Communist Members are absent whenever there is a crisis in the affairs of the country.

Therefore, during your regime I want to see that the railways run on time to such an extent that, as you yourself said, our watches must be adjusted by looking to the trains arriving on time on platforms. That will be the greatest achievement to your credit, and it is that credit that all the three of you earnest men, patriotic men, must try to achieve all the time.

Shri P. K. Ghosh (Ranchi East): Sir, I am glad that you are giving me an opportunity to speak on the Railway Budget. While studying the Railway Budget proposals for the year 1963-64, the most important thing which draws our attention is the fact that the railway freights on goods and parcels have increased without any justifiable reason. The Railway Budget proposals envisage an increase

of 5 per cent in the existing surcharge on goods, which will mean that in cases where a 5 per cent surcharge already operates there will be an effective increase of 4.75 per cent, and in other cases, which are exempt, the increase will be 5 per cent. A new levy of 10 nays paise per rupee has been imposed on parcel traffic except in the case of vegetables, milk and newspapers. The additional revenue which is expected to come from this increase is Rs. 19 crores—Rs. 17 crores under goods and Rs. 2 crores under parcels. The levy will, however, not apply to railways' own traffic because this will mean an adjustment of figures. It will not also apply to the defence department and also the Posts and Telegraphs Department, because the tariffs of these departments are reviewed periodically and adjustments are made.

The Railway Minister has stated that this increase of Rs. 19 crores is required for the following purposes:

"A little more than Rs. 4 crores will be required for additional contribution to be made to the General Revenues by way of increase in the rate of dividend from $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent to $4\frac{1}{4}$ per cent; and, secondly, Rs. 10 crores for increasing the Depreciation Reserve Fund from Rs. 70 crores to Rs. 80 crores, and, thirdly, Rs. 5 crores for adding to the Development Fund."

Let us now examine whether this revenue of Rs. 19 crores which is required under different heads by our Railway Minister is at all necessary or not. The Railway Convention Committee of 1960 suggested an increase in the Depreciation Reserve Fund from Rs. 45 crores, prevalent during the period 1955-56 to 1960-61, to Rs. 70 crores during the period 1961-62 to 1965-66. Depreciation charge is directly connected with or proportionate to the valuation of the rolling stock. The Railway Convention Committee, while allowing a sum of Rs. 70 crores to be charged as depreciation during the period 1961-62 to 1965-66

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has made due consideration of the increase in the value of the rolling stock of the railways during this period.

Shri Swaran Singh: The hon. Member should remember that the renewal of track is financed from this.

Shri P. K. Ghosh: That can be financed from some other fund. Why should it be done from the depreciation fund? Depreciation fund is meant for the wear and tear of the rolling stock.

Shri Swaran Singh: Wear and tear of the track is also covered by that.

Shri P. K. Ghosh: In the previous year also the information given was that it includes funds for renewal of track. Now, the same provision is there. There is no change.

I think the Railway Convention Committee had in mind also the new track that will be laid during this period. Depreciation is not something which can be increased or decreased at the whim or wish of somebody. It is directly dependent upon and has some bearing on the valuation of the rolling stock and, if the Minister wants, the valuation of the track. Previously, in the year 1949-50 it was Rs. 30 crores. Then it was raised to Rs. 70 crores. Still, the Railway Ministry is not satisfied and it wants to raise it to Rs. 80 crores, Rs. 10 crores more than what the Railway Convention Committee has recommended after thorough investigation and due regard to various aspects.

Let us now examine the additional contribution proposed to be made by the railways to the general revenues. The Railway Convention Committee, after considering various aspects like the average rate of interest charged by the Government, recommended in 1960 that the amount of dividend payable by the railways during the period 1961-62 to 1965-66 should be

4½ per cent. I fail to understand why the Railway Minister wants to pay 4 per cent more dividend to the Government three years after this recommendation was made by this Committee. Since railway is a public utility undertaking, Government should give more and more concessions and facilities to the travelling public. Instead of doing that, it is increasing the dividend payable to the general revenues by ½ per cent.

The expenditure to be met from the development fund is being increased considerably from Rs. 12.14 crores in the year 1956 to about Rs. 24 crores in 1962-63. Although the figure has been doubled in five years, still the Railway Minister is not satisfied and he wants to impose another Rs. 2 crores. Even after getting Rs. 26 crores for expenditure from this fund, he wants to have another Rs. 5 crores for enhancing the reserve of this fund, which is not at all required, because it is not so essential. Considering all this, what I feel is that our Railway Minister wants to take advantage of the sentiments of the people to help the Government at the time of the emergency.

Let us now consider the justifiability of the increase in freights from the commercial point of view. As the railways is a monopolistic business of the Government and as there is no similar undertaking in the country, it is very difficult to make a comparison of the fares charged by the railways. We cannot compare it with the railways of other countries because the conditions in those countries are quite different from that prevalent in our country. Therefore, all I can do is to give the House a comparison between the fares and freights charged by the railways and by the road transport, although the operating costs in the case of road transport is much higher than the cost of operating a railway locomotive, as the Railway Minister pointed out while making his speech on the railway budget, when he said:

"... by utilizing one gallon of high speed diesel oil one diesel locomotive will give nearly 400 net ton miles of performance, against about 60 net ton miles that a road truck will give for the same consumption of diesel oil".

The cost of running or the cost of fuel of diesel is seven times more in the case of road trucks. Since the management and overhead expenses are the same, we can legitimately expect that the freights charged by the railways should be half of that charged by the road transport companies. But this is far from being the case. If we study and compare the fares charged by the railways with those charged by the road transport companies, we will find that the railways are charging nearly double that of the road transport companies. For example, if somebody wants to send a wagon load of household goods from Delhi to Agra, which is a distance of about 202 kilometres, he will have to pay freight at the rate of Rs. 3.12 for every 100 kilograms plus 5 per cent surcharge. This works out to Rs. 1.23 nP. per maund. With the proposed surcharge it will come to Rs. 1.29 nP. per maund. On the other hand, if we carry a truckload of household goods over the same distance, the truck will charge about 75 nP. per maund for the same distance.

Now, let us come to passenger fares charged by road transport undertakings. The Delhi Transport Undertaking charges fare to passengers for a distance of ten miles which is about 17 kilometres approximately 35 nP. Of course, the Delhi Transport Undertaking does not ply buses for long distances but only for short distances. I have very little knowledge about the Delhi bus services, but I know of my part in Bihar. In my part of Bihar, the private buses charge only 3 naye Paise per mile. That comes approximately to 2 naye Paise per kilometre.

An Hon. Member: Which class?

Shri P. K. Ghosh: The general class. There is only one class in most of the buses now. It can be compared with the second class of the Railways. The Railways charge 40 naye Paise for third class for the same distance, that is, a distance of 10 miles or 17 kilometres, for passenger trains and 45 naye Paise for Mail and Express trains, although the bus journey is comparable to second class journey by railway. For the second class the Railways are charging for a distance of 17 kilometres 70 naye Paise for passenger trains and 75 naye Paise for Mail and Express trains.

Incidentally, I may also point out that if somebody travels with family of six in his own car, it will cost him less than the third class railway fare giving due consideration for depreciation charges etc.

Shri Swaran Singh: That is very interesting.

Shri P. K. Ghosh: It is really interesting.

Shri Swaran Singh: After depreciation on the value of the car also?

Shri P. K. Ghosh: Yes; after depreciation on the value of the car. You can work it out. If you like, I can show how it comes to that. When I have to travel with my family, generally I travel in my own car because that works out cheaper than the third class fare.

Shri U. M. Trivedi: Do not quarrel about it. Let us proceed.

Shri P. K. Ghosh: If you want, I can give you the figures and show the difference.

Shri Swaran Singh: If you start a service like that, you will take away all the traffic.

Shri P. K. Ghosh: There also Government has imposed restrictions. There is the permit system and control. I cannot bribe the Government

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servants and get a permit. I am the last person to do that. But those who can do that do that and get a lot of money.

Shri Narendra Singh Mahida (Anand): Give us a permit and we will run it.

Shri P. K. Ghosh: You give me a permit and I will show you how much it comes to.

The above example shows that either the Railways should have made a very high percentage of profit or it should have decreased its fares considerably. For a business undertaking there is a basic guiding principle and that is that as the volume of business increases, cost per unit decreases. But, unfortunately, this principle does not hold good in the case of our Railways. The volume of business has increased hundred per cent during the last decade but the fare is increasing every now and then since 1948.

Shri A. P. Sharma (Buxar): This year there is no increase.

Shri P. K. Ghosh: Freight has increased. Somehow or other you are affected.

Dr. Ranen Sen: It goes on increasing.

Shri Narendra Singh Mahida: Without increasing the facilities.

Shri P. K. Ghosh: From the very little information which we get from the Audit Report and other reports that are supplied to us along with the Budget papers, it is very difficult to ascertain on what minor points the Railways are losing. But I can say that generally the cause of this loss is gross mismanagement, wastage, lack of co-ordination, lethargy and dishonesty on the part of railway employees. I may give some examples of that.

The hon. Railway Minister has said:

"The Howrah-Burdwan Main Line which had been electrified at an earlier stage on the DC system is being converted to 25 KV AC system to have unified system of traction in this area."

If the Railways knew that it would not be possible to get DC lines whenever they want to extend their electrification, they should have done this on the AC system in the very beginning. This is a glaring example of lack of vigilance on the part of the Railway planners.

Shri Swaran Singh: AC traction of that voltage was a later development all over the world.

Shri Ranga: Is DC rejected everywhere else?

Shri Swaran Singh: That is a fact. Even in other parts of the world originally they had DC. They are now converting it into AC.

Shri Ranga: So, we repeat their mistakes.

Shri Swaran Singh: Not mistake; that is the development in this technology.

Dr. Ranen Sen: Howrah Section had that DC system very recently. You could have done it with AC.

Shri U. M. Trivedi: At that time their knowledge was weak.

Dr. Ranen Sen: It was done only about five years ago.

Shri P. K. Ghosh: If we turn to the Appropriation Accounts of Railways in India for 1961-62, Part II, Annexure H, issued by the Railway Board, which gives the statement of losses etc., we find that large sums of money ranging from Rs. 10,000 to lakhs have been lost in a large number of items due to negligence and dishonesty on the part of railway staff and an appreciable number of such

cases is due to lack of proper foresight. Then, the Railway has to pay large sums of money against claims made by the consignors of goods due to shortage and loss of goods. I may mention that the Railways are spending large sums of money on Railway police and on the Watch and Ward department. Even then, why should there be any loss and theft? The most interesting thing is that, whenever there is such a theft, in most of the cases enquiries are held and after due enquiry it is found out that they cannot make any railway employee responsible for this. I think this is done deliberately.

An Hon. Member: How?

Shri P. K. Ghosh: The employees, those who earn money, give some share to the persons who come for enquiry. This is going on. The lowest staff accepting bribe gives a share to the high officer when he comes for checking and the high officer gives a share to the higher officer and this goes on to top rank officer. In our country a system has come of "ब्राह्मण और खिलाफत" If you take bribe, if you can give a share to the higher officer, then, you can digest that money. Otherwise, you will be caught and penalised. This Intelligence branch, incidentally I may mention, has enhanced corruption instead of checking it. I will talk about it later on some other time on some other occasion.

Ticketless travel has increased. Here, I may mention, recently, our Deputy Railway Minister issued a circular to the Members of Parliament in Bihar with the request to mobilise public opinion on this account. How by mobilising public opinion on this account can this ticketless travel be checked?

Shri Bhagwat Jha Azad (Bhagolpur): He should mobilise his officers first.

Shri P. K. Ghosh: Yes. Instead of doing this, if he had introduced more effective vigilance on the part of the

checking staff and prescribed more drastic punishment for dishonesty on the part of the Railway workers, I think this evil could have been checked. No passengers can dare to travel without ticket unless they bribe the Railway checking officers.

Shri A. P. Sharma: How many cases like this has the hon. Member come across and reported so far?

Shri Ranga: He is not a member of the vigilance staff.

Shri P. K. Ghosh: We are not given power to check. If we go to check a Railway officer, he will give us a slap. Give us power to check. Let the Minister give Members of Parliament power to check the vigilance staff and the Railway staff. We can definitely give you hundreds of cases.

Shri D. N. Tiwary (Gopalganj): So that they may have a share also?

Shri P. K. Ghosh: I think Members of Parliament are not expected to take.....

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: He must finish. He has taken half an hour.

Shri P. K. Ghosh: I have taken only 20 minutes. I can speak for half-an-hour.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: He has taken more than 30 minutes.

Shri P. K. Ghosh: Entering into contracts at higher rates than the lowest offer with the contractors who are favoured by the Railway authorities have become very common with the Railways. Cases where such contractors have not worked according to the specifications and terms and conditions of the contract are becoming very common in the Railways. I may mention the case of the Bengal Stores and Supply Co. of Chakradharpur who took up contracts worth about a crores of rupees to construct railway bridges, quarters and yards for the Railways in Chakradharpur division. This contractor has a record of mis-

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appropriation in the field of foodgrains controls and he was penalised and he was impeached in the High Court. In this connection, I may quote a few lines from a representation sent by Mr. R. P. Sarangi, M.L.A. Chakradharpur. This gentleman was very philanthropic to take the trouble of finding out the defective construction in the works done by this contractor.

Shri Swaran Singh: How is that philanthropic?

Shri P. K. Ghosh: He did it in the interest of the Public.

Shri Swaran Singh: I see.

Shri P. K. Ghosh: Public money is being wasted. If proper estimation is made, it will be found out that the Railway has wasted about Rs. 40 lakhs on this contract—inferior quality of works on Railway bridges.....

Dr. M. S. Aney (Nagpur): Did he submit that to the Railway authorities?

Shri P. K. Ghosh: Here I may mention that this gentleman wrote several letters to the Vigilance department and the General Manager of the South Eastern Railway. I do not know what steps have been taken. They did not care to give a reply to this gentleman. On being written by me, they replied that the Railway authorities are not—they replied harshly; it appears they are also involved in this case—Railway authorities are not bound to give information regarding the steps taken in particular matters to the informant. He did it in the interests of the Railways, in the interests of the public. He is a public representative. They had not the courtesy.....

Shri Swaran Singh: I did not object to a particular instance being mentioned if it is mentioned in a general way. But, if the hon. Member wants to go into details, it is not normally done.

Shri Ranga: It is not a question of detail. It is a matter of one crore. You have given contract to a gentleman who has been condemned by the High Court.

Shri Swaran Singh: I would request Shri Ranga who is a senior Member to reserve his judgment unless he sees the whole case.

Shri Ranga: Therefore, he asks the Government to study. The Government do not bother.

Shri Swaran Singh: I am raising a simple point that so far as individual cases are concerned, we have followed a practice that they are referred to in a general manner and in this House individual merits or demerits of a particular contract which, according to the statement of the Member concerned, is the subject matter of a complaint and investigation, are not generally discussed. If you want to discuss, I have no objection.

Shri Ranga: The Member is not raising the subject matter here. He has made a complaint. Now he complains that you have not investigated that.

Shri Swaran Singh: He does not say so.

Shri P. K. Ghosh: I wrote to you about 3 or 4 months, 6 months ago regarding this case. I have got the papers also. You replied that investigations are being made. But, unless somebody raises a question in Parliament, the Ministry is not obliged to give a reply in the usual manner as to what steps have been taken in this matter. So many lakhs of rupees of public money are involved. As a representative of the public, I am entitled to know and get information as to what steps have been taken.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: They have written to the hon. Member that investigation is going on.

Shri P. K. Ghosh: Still, it is going on for two years.

Shri Ranga: It will go on for years.

Shri P. K. Ghosh: He has promised to let me know.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: I believe that there are other speakers also from the hon. Member's party, and so, he has to give them also some time.

Shri P. K. Ghosh: I should submit that if all this wastage and mismanagement is controlled, the railways will earn enormous amount of money to help the general exchequer at the time of emergency, and also to expand the railways enormously, which is sorely needed in every corner of our country.

Then, I would like to mention a few grievances relating to my constituency. One of them is that a sleeper coach should be provided on the Ranchi-Howrah Express and the Patna-Tatangar express. However, that is a small matter; I shall leave that there, and mention something more important.

I would like to point out that there is no rail link to Hazaribagh, which is an important town in Chota-Nagpur district. Incidentally, I may mention that a large number of collieries, mica mines and other precious mineral mines are situated in this district, and the railways are earning enormous amounts of money by carrying coal and other minerals from this district. But the people of this district are unfortunate enough not to have a rail link with their headquarters. I would, therefore, suggest that a new railway line should be constructed between Ranchi and Kodarma via Hazaribagh. This line will pass through important and fast-growing mining and industrial centres of Chota Nagpur, like Pathratou, Bhurkunda etc. If this suggestion is given effect to, the distance between Ranchi and Patna by rail will come down to about 200 miles as against the present dis-

tance of 262 miles. As regards Ranchi and Patna, you know that Patna, of course, is the capital of Bihar, and Ranchi is going to be one of the most industrially developed centres in India. Incidentally, I may mention that in this case, the distance by rail between Delhi and Ranchi will also be decreased considerably.

I hope the Railway Minister will give due consideration to these suggestions made by me. In conclusion, I should thank you for giving me so much time to express my views.

Shri V. B. Gandhi (Bombay Central South): The hon. Railway Minister Shri Swaran Singh has presented his railway budget. We have had from him a rather heartening picture of the all-round progress that our railways have made. We have listened to him and to the account that he gave us of the way in which railwaymen of all ranks rallied in the recent national emergency. The way they did that was almost heroic. And I may assure, therefore, on behalf of this House, Shri Swaran Singh and the rank and file of the railwaymen that this House has a very sincere appreciation of what they did.

Now, I come directly to the subject of the budget. I shall try to confine myself to dealing with one aspect of the budget, namely the proposal to raise a sum of Rs. 15 crores as additional revenue in 1963-64. This revenue is designed to be utilised to strengthen the Railway Depreciation Reserve Fund and the Railway Development Fund. We all recall that last year, in the budget, there was a proposal to secure an additional revenue of a sum of Rs. 21.26 crores, and for the purpose of that proposal, the railway freights and passenger fares were to be raised, and they were raised. In the current budget, again, we find, as I have just said, that freight rates are to be raised by means of a surcharge of 5 per cent on goods; also, a surcharge of 10 naye-

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paise per rupee is to be levied on parcels. We find that here there is a regular history of periodical increases in charges made by the railways.

The Railway Freight Structure Enquiry Committee of 1957 had suggested a limit of something like 13 per cent up to which the railways should go in increasing their charges. But we find today that already they have utilised this recommendation to its full limit. Now, I shall begin by saying that I do not favour this proposal of increasing the railway freight rates. I wish they could have found some other way of doing that without having to increase these freights. For one thing, these increases enhance the cost of freight to the users of railways and for another, they have serious wider repercussions which go much beyond the sphere of railway freights. I mean here in this case what usually happens is that there is an upward push all around to the entire cost structure in the economy.

14 hrs.

Reading the two paragraphs which deal with the proposed increases in railway freights, one finds that the case they have made is not a very convincing one and as I said—I repeat it—I wish that they could have avoided having to impose this new burden. I am not opposing the idea of raising additional revenues for the Government. Government should have all the revenues possible at this time of emergency that they could get. But here I am making a distinction, and that is that it is the Government that should have these additional revenues and not necessarily the railways. Why? Because getting these revenues by way of addition to railway freights through the railways has certain repercussions, as I have said, on the cost structure of the economy. We all know that already our economy has become inflation-prone and we can take chances of further inflation only at our peril. The Finance Minister in his last year's budget speech has given us his price philosophy in

respect of public undertakings owned by Government. According to this...

Shri Swaran Singh: It will be more profitable to refer to this year's speech.

Shri V. B. Gandhi: I shall, but I will try to make out my point.

With reference to public undertakings, this philosophy is that we should take out of public undertakings as much as we can. Now, I believe that to that extent it is quite legitimate for a government to want to take out of its public undertakings as much as those undertakings can yield. But there is an exception which should be made in the case of certain undertakings in which I include—and prominently include—the railways. Why I do so is because, as I have said, on whatever is done by way of changing railway freights depends to a large extent certain consequences, economic, which are to follow. We have, therefore, once for all to decide the direction in which we shall go in this matter of price policy. Do we wish to go in the direction of inflation or do we wish to go in a direction in which it will still be possible to check inflation? The price philosophy of the Finance Minister may be good in some cases, in some undertakings, but it will not be so good, also right, as I said, in the case of railways. It has to be discriminatingly applied. Let me quote the Finance Minister very briefly. He says:

"We must get an adequate return on the vast amount of capital we are investing in our railways, power plants, irrigation works, fertiliser plants, steel plants and the like".

Further, he goes on:

"A policy of charging a proper fee or price for the services and products supplied by the public sector has to be followed. Betterment levies, water rates, electri-

city charges, railway freights and the like cannot be determined on the philosophy of no profit and no loss".

And so on. I will not read any further. That, in a nutshell, gives the philosophy as laid down last year.

As I said, this is not an all-wrong policy. It is legitimate for us to so work some of our undertakings as to see that they result in a fair margin of profit, a surplus for general revenues. But the railway undertaking does not belong to that category and that for the reason that what the railways offer to their consumers and their users is a service which, in most cases, forms an element of cost in their hands.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: He has already taken 15 minutes.

Shri V. B. Gandhi: Railway services, as is well known, are largely used by those who are producers of goods and services and railway freights and fares are an element in their cost of production.

I have very few minutes and, therefore, I will come directly to the points I wish to make. For that, I cannot do better than read a brief passage from my last year's speech in this House on the budget. I hope my hon. friends will not mind it.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Your own speech? It is already on record. Need not be read.

Shri V. B. Gandhi: I may be allowed because otherwise it will not make any sense to all that I have said. It is only a few minutes.

"For instance, Railway is one such industry that has a greater inflationary potential. For, the railway or railway service is something which constitutes an element in the cost of production of a whole range of services and products. Railway service constitutes an element in the cost of production that straddles the

entire spectrum of our economy. Why does it do that? Because, railway service is an element in the cost of production of so many other products. Let us take an instance. If you raise the railway freight by say 5 per cent, then the cost of coal which the Railways carry has to be increased not by 5 per cent, but perhaps a little more, proportionately a little more than 5 per cent. Then, this coal is largely used by the steel plants. The steel makers have to put up their price of steel more than proportionately. The steel makers pass it on to those who use their steel, say, the tool makers. The tool maker in his turn has to put up the price....

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: He cannot read speeches which have been made before, which are already a part of the record. It is strictly illegal.

Shri V. B. Gandhi: I thought it might be relevant.

Shri Bade: He may refer to the page.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: He may give the page. Those who are interested may go through it.

Shri A. C. Guha (Barasat): That may also go into the proceedings.

Shri V. B. Gandhi: I am referring to Columns 3228 and 3229.

Before I conclude I shall only say that there is a very clear case for making a distinction between our policies of charging prices for services of our public undertakings in a discriminating way, and always looking to the larger economic consequences of our policies.

Thank you.

Shri U. M. Trivedi: The administration of railways has been a matter of criticism at my hands for the last so many years. I have found that they only justify an adage in Gujarati

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which says that even if a big Babul tree grows on the buttocks of somebody and if some people criticise it..

Shri P. R. Patel (Patan): What is there Gujarati about it?

Shri U. M. Trivedi: ... then the man whom you accuse of having a big Babu tree on his buttocks will only say that it is creating an umbrella for him. He does not feel ashamed that such a strong attack has been made upon him. The same thing is here. The railway administration has not shown any improvement whatsoever.

Unfortunately, wastage in the railway administration is growing. Studying the Railway Budget I find a good deal of wastage that could have been avoided and can even now be avoided by some imagination on the part of the Ministry. Year in and year out we see that high-salaried officers are on the increase. After applying my mind to the Directorate-General of Standardisation I find that the work can be done by 10 senior Class III officers, with the help of tree juniors for each of them but the standardisation which can be judged, analysed and recommended within a fortnight all over the railways is taking away a lot of expenditure without any proper use. Even today the standards which we require are missing. They are missing in the making of coaches, in the making of a comfortable journey, even in the signals given for incoming and outgoing trains. The Western Railway has one system, the Central Railway has another, the Northern a third and the Southeastern a fourth. An Indian passenger on Indian railways, travelling in his own country, gets confused when he travels from one zone to another. What type of standardisation is being carried on I do not know.

Even in getting tokens of line clearance the systems differ, and standardisation has not been introduced. sometimes the Railway Minister criti-

cises the Opposition saying that they criticise simply for the sake of criticism and do not offer any constructive suggestion. I would like to sit with him across the table, but I want to tell him that this type of wasteful expenditure must be avoided under all circumstances. Too much waste is taking place in the administration of our railways.

In 1938-39 when India was undivided, the total mileage of the railways was 41,000 but today we have got a total mileage of only 35,625. That is to say, there is a sort of shrinkage in mileage. Total employees then were only 6,41,000 but now the number of employees has increased to 11,76,000 and this does not include the so-called casual labour where, by the machination of employing a man for three months, discharging him and employing another man in his place, we see to it that they do not complete a period of six months and become eligible for being made permanent. Thus, we have a huge number of employees without any corresponding benefit.

We have got a huge force growing up, the Railway Protection Force. In 1952 in my maiden speech in this House I said that this Watch and Ward Department was merely a Watch and Rob Department. So, you probably got funky—I am sorry using that language—and changed the name to Railway Protection Force. What is the protection that is afforded by these people? Why not utilise the police force for this purpose? Why pay for the railway police? We always pay to the State Governments every naya Paisa that is to be spent for providing police. Now, what do they do? They are useful for crushing down the spirit of the railway employee. Every class III employee is worried by these police officers. Each sub inspector of police in charge of what we call station House GRP or the SOGRP extracts money from each of these people and threatens him. I remember twenty such cases

and I shall enumerate them if you like. If you like I will show that on the Western Railway every SOGRP molests every station master on the line and extorts money from him. What is the protection granted? Senior officers are also silent about it. They are not able to give any protection to class III employees. The net result is that for every little accident you may not like to prosecute but a threat is held over the head of the railwaymen and he is told: unless you pay Rs. 5,000 I am going to prosecute you. Now how many prosecutions have you been able to save? Of what use is the railway protection force? If you go to Ratlam you will see this day in and day out, a thing which I have pointed out to the officers concerned, there is a big hole created in the wall in the loco shed. Every day theft is taking place. Young urchins of 7-8 years age do the theft of coal. A man is sitting opposite carrying on, stealing coal for years together. No steps have been taken to stop this. This is a useless body. In the Rajasthan Railway with 189 miles, there were five chowkidars and there was not a single case of pilferage in the whole of Rajasthan railway. But what do we find with this huge army of railway protection force? I do not say that these people should be thrown out of employment. It is time that they were transferred wholesale to the Army. They are not of any use to the railway administration.

Shri Shahnawaz Khan: They are standing shoulder to shoulder with Army personnel in NEFA. Do you know that?

Shri U. M. Trivedi: I am not criticising the man as such. I am criticising the administration of the railway protection force which is of no use to the railway administration. They go and stand at the railway platform when all the goods are there. Four or five of them keep watch. On whom? So that others may not look at them and they may carry on pilfering. How many cases are there. I ask the Deputy Min-

ister and the Minister, against these people for pilfering? How many cases are there against the head constable and naiks, involved in theft?

Let me read out an illustration from page 111 of the Appropriation Accounts of the Railways for 1961-62.

"110 mild steel iron girders booked to Morvi on 3-1-1960 were loaded in a wagon which arrived at Kotah on 10-1-1960 under entry SCOB—Eastern Railway."

That is Sitarampur, a siding of Tata-nagar. They arrived at Kotah. What route was being followed? Before the train terminates the guidance is taken and the guard gives the guidance and is entered by the number-taker. He does not take care to tally it. He just makes a report and the guidance that is submitted by the guard is sent to the DOS and nobody cares to find out what happens. This wagon was marked sick.

"It was placed on sick line for repairs and made fit on 24-1-1960 but it remained there upto 28-1-1960. On 29-1-1960 it was placed on line when the label showed entry ex-SCOB to Indore. The wagon left Kotah on 2-2-1960 and arrived at Indore on 6-2-1960."

Instead of going to Morvi, the wagon went to Indore. The train had terminated there at Kotah. The wagon was noted, the guidance was noted there. What was the railway protection force doing? 110 steel girders were got delivered through the agency of these people at Indore. Many such instances are given herein. When you see them and see the position you will find that there is absolutely no protection given to the railway property. You can just stand on any station where there are the sugar mills. Thousands of maunds of sugarcane are stolen and who are the people stealing it? It is these, my friends of the railway protection force.

I shall now refer to co-ordinating the efforts of all railway employees. In

[Shri U. M. Trivedi]

this very nice book, *Indian Railways*, very nicely printed—every year it is being printed; most of it appears to be a waste and some of it is useful for persons like me. It says in figures that 5876 fans were provided and so many reading lights were provided. Come with me in the train in the Malwa section between Ajmer and Khandwa. Not one first class has got a single reading light; each one has been taken out. Everytime I go there I find it is missing. What happens? Everytime I look at the fans, when the hot season begins, I will find; that the fan is either noted as 'damaged' or removed. The fan is not available. What is this railway protection force meant for if this sort of thing is going on? We must have to look into the affairs of this administration in a very careful manner.

Now, about doubling. Doubling is going at great speed. Before it started, just to allow the progress of the mail train, and not to obstruct the progress of the goods train or restrict their speed, some stations were created, new stations which never provided for any traffic, just for the sake of having crossings. 8 or 9 stations had been built between Godhra and Ratlam. Now, doubling has been completed. But these stations are also there, with no traffic earnings whatsoever, not even a pie. Although doubling has been complete, what is the speed of the trains? You had a speed of at least 12 miles for the metre-gauge and about 11.2 miles on the broad-gauge per hour for goods trains. Have you increased the speed now? Your speed in 1960-61 came down to 8.5 miles on the metre-gauge. It is not a very great progress of which we can be proud and it has been brought to your notice over and over again. It was unfortunate that our Ministers for Railways are three only and they have got a huge army to manage. Really, I do admire their courage; they do that task as efficiently as they can but at the same time they must look up and see that they carry out their duties more efficiently.

14.26 hrs.

[SHRI SURENDRANATH DWIVEDI in the Chair]

Shri Shah Nawaz Khan: Look at the loads that are carried.

Shri U. M. Trivedi: My hon. friend Mr. Shah Nawaz Khan will bear with me. I do understand what this load means and what it does not. It is merely a jugglery. What is done is this. It reminds me of the new box wagons that were made. They were made for the purpose of bringing coal, for rapid movement of coal. Their method of coupling is that one box wagon can be attached only to another box wagon so that these box wagons are to be carried back empty all the way from the place they have reached to the coal fields. The empty haulage is there. But the mileage is calculated on all that and that mileage multiplied by the movement gives you the tonnage which is a fictitious one, which is not there really. It is like the EFT business. I was reading that General Shah Nawaz Khan, our hon. Deputy Minister, was very fond of having a gang of TTEs who are known as Shah Nawaz Gang going about. Now, what is the result? A figure of Rs. 3 crores is given as being realised from ticketless travel. My respectful submission is this: please do not calculate that every EFT represents a ticketless travel. I find this every time I travel, year in and year out that the poor fellow, the TTE has been told: "your daily return must come to Rs. 20; if it does not come to Rs. 20, you will be penalised or censured; action will be taken against you." That is why he goes to a wayside station master and tells him: if a man wishes to go to Indore, give him a ticket to the next station and I will make an EFT for the rest of the distance. That kind of thing is shown to you: here is ticketless travel which we have checked. This is a thing which we all know. We must not gloat over the picture and feel that we have been able to check ticketless travel. It is not so.

Again this reminds me further of a certain grievance which generally the railway employees have. The Government of India is trying, through this new amendment of the Constitution, to see that government servants do not get a second opportunity of giving an explanation. The railway employee will be the employee who will be the worst hit on account of this, because the railway official is not a lawyer and is not trained in that art and what he does is this. He allows an enquiry to be held by one officer. He reads the report of that enquiry, and after reading it, without even giving an opportunity to the employee concerned who is to suffer the penalty coming before him, he passes an order either of removal or reduction in rank or some such thing. You have not been able to mould the procedure properly so far as discipline and appeal rules are concerned, and today that is a sore to anybody who has got an eye on the rights of natural justice which a man must get before he is condemned in any manner. And here I will ask, through you, Sir, the Deputy Minister to look into the case 58 Calcutta 1938 A.I.R. where recently one of the judges remarked that it is an offence against natural justice that a man who passes an order, who condemns a person, has not even seen the face of that person, nor heard his evidence, and yet passes the order. I personally brought one case to the notice of my hon. friend, but I will not refer to it here, because he might be dealing with it even today. But the difficulty is that this is a general thing, and the greatest hullabaloo that is raised by the railway staff is, "for God's sake do not put us into such a situation where the senior-scale officer may pass an order without giving us any hearing and depriving us of our only means of livelihood." I have found, and it is a thing which each one of us will realise, that a railway employee is a special type of employee and he loses contact with the world. He thinks generally that he is a very wise man, but he finds in the struggle for existence after he gets out of the railway that he is nowhere and that his life is most miser-

able once he loses his job on the railways. Therefore you must take pity on him and mould the rules in such a manner that your employee does not suffer for want of a proper hearing.

One thing more and I may have done with this. I would like to draw your attention to the present position of the enquiry clerks on the Western, Central and Northern Railways. These enquiry clerks are really one of the most polite staff that obtains on the railways. They deal with the public; they deal with them in an extremely polite manner, they give proper information and proper guidance, and they are very intelligent people. But what happens? They have no channel of promotion. The people trained under them, the ticket collectors trained under them, become their bosses. There is no channel of promotion provided for these people and they get stuck up at Rs. 240. I know of about 50 clerks on the Western Railway who have put in fifteen, seventeen or eighteen years of service, and they are rotting in the same place where they were. Under the regulations the highest grade is probably that of the chief reservation inspector, to which the man can never aspire to rise. You must provide for a proper channel of promotion for these enquiry clerks, because these are better behaved men and they will be able to behave in a better manner with the passengers. You should look into the question whether provision cannot be made for their being promoted as conductor guards on mail trains and such other important positions where they may have to deal with superior people and they can behave in a proper manner.

Then, one thing which I am in duty bound to bring to your notice is this. There is a complaint, and a very reasonable complaint, on behalf of the staff of station-masters and A.S.M.'s on the Central Railway, the Northern Railway and the North-Eastern Railway, and particularly on the Central Railway where the old system still prevails even today of interpolating

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guards in the grades of S.M. and A.S.M. They thus deprive the poor A.S.M. who has chosen a particular line, of his proper promotion. The guard, who does not know, either the Morse telegraph code or the operating signal system is, because of his having reached a particular grade, interpolated here, and the poor A.S.M. who is a specialist is kept back. Very recently there was an order by the Railway Board, and that is why I have the grouse that the Railway Board is not able to co-ordinate everything and standardise things in a proper manner. Why this system does not prevail in the other five or six Zones and why it is allowed to prevail only on the Central, Northern and North-Eastern Railways, passes my comprehension. The Station-masters' Association of the Central Railway went to the Supreme Court, and the Supreme Court Judge—I think it was the Chief Justice Mr. S. R. Das himself—although he was not able to do full justice, observed that it is high time that such incongruity should disappear and that these railway people, that is the Station-masters and A.S.M.'s of the Central Railway, should not be made to suffer on account of this.

Next I would like to say a few words about quarters. On the last occasion also, after the vote on account, when the question arose on the Railway Budget, I drew your pertinent attention to the question that you should not charge any rent from the Station-masters and A.S.M.'s of wayside stations. It is sheer injustice, I should say, that rents should be charged from these people. They live in the villages, and they live at the risk of their lives, just to help the railway administration. Yet you want to charge them rents. Would you give them the liberty of going and living in the village where they can get a house on a rent of eight annas? The railway administration charges him at the rate of ten per cent of his pay. Why charge him at all? Formerly they were not charged. It is quite good, and you can charge, at big cities where there is

dearth of accommodation. But where there is ample accommodation, where there is no demand for your quarters, and the man has to remain perforce in your quarter at the cost of his life and sacrifice the comfort of being with his children and others, even there why is the rent being charged from him? Most emphatically I will submit that you must see that this anomaly is removed so far as these wayside Station-masters are concerned.

Then, one thing more.

Mr. Chairman: The hon. Member is taking all the time and will practically leave no time for the second speaker of his party.

Shri U. M. Trivedi: I must have exceeded the time-limit; I thought I had not. I will now conclude.

One more thing that struck me is this. We are going to increase the import of diesel engines. On the one hand we were going to charge electric traction. The AC traction has now been introduced on the French Railways. It has been found to be useful and economical. We are talking of changing from DC to AC. If we want to change from DC to AC, please consider this position properly and well. If it is economical I see no reason whatsoever for having increased traction by diesel engines. There is something which has reached my ears, and therefore I am bringing it to your notice that a high-level and full enquiry must be made before we put in our orders for diesel engines.

Shri A. P. Sharma: Mr. Chairman, Sir, unlike the previous speakers, at the very outset I would like to congratulate the Railway Minister and the Railway Ministry for presenting a budget which is surplus, maintaining the financial position of the Railways sound and also without increasing the fare of third-class passengers, which was increased last year.

I was listening very patiently and carefully to the observations made by

the various speakers regarding the working of the Railways, sometimes also passing sweeping remarks against the railway employees as a class. So far as the working of the Railways is concerned I do agree that there is scope for improving their working. As a matter of fact, at no stage it can be said in any particular department that a stage has been reached that there is no scope for improvement. Therefore, so far as the criticism of the working of the railways is concerned, I have also certain suggestions to make, to which I shall come later on. But I am very much pained to see some of the Members passing sweeping remarks against the railway workers as a class—may they be small or big workers; they are also a part or section of society, and therefore, if there is any shortcoming in the railway employees as a class, that shortcoming is also found in the society as a whole. By saying this, I do not mean that I am out to support whatever, right or wrong, the railway employees or a few black-sheep among them might be doing; I am stating this only because I am associated with the railway trade union movement. Particularly, it pained me to hear the remark of my hon. friend Shri Hanumanthaiya from the Congress benches, when he said that the labour unions are working as a brake to the efficient working of the railways. In the previous year also, in this very House, I opposed this kind of remark from some hon. Members. It pained me more when such a remark comes from the hon. Member from the Congress benches, because, since I also belong to the Congress benches, it becomes a painful duty to oppose such remarks from my own friends.

So far as the railways are concerned, I have also to make a few observations regarding their working.

I would like to draw the attention of this House to the Audit Report for 1961-62, which has been published in 1963, this year. If you look into that report, you will find that the loss on the railways had just increased by double during the last few years. In

the year 1957-58, the losses were Rs. 48 lakhs; in the year 1961-62, the losses have gone up to Rs. 96 lakhs. If you see the items of losses you will find that some of these losses are due to delay in taking decisions by high officials, and delay in executing the decisions.

Then, a very strange item of loss is that a number of quarters which have been constructed for the railway employees; some of them remain unoccupied, and in some cases, they have remained unoccupied even up to 20 months. That also is an item of loss. Here, I would like to speak about the particular attitude of the railway administration in the matter of labour relations. The building of quarters for railway employees is definitely a welfare measure and therefore I am sure that if, before the construction of these quarters, before they acquire the land for building such quarters, the railway employees or their representatives are consulted, the railway employees, would not have refused to occupy these quarters. In this particular case, it is specifically stated that the railway employees have refused to occupy the quarters because of certain inconveniences.

In the Audit Report you will also find that in certain cases excess purchases have been made and the stores have remained unutilised, and so they have had to be scrapped on account of their not being utilised by the railway administration. In this way, you will find a number of things, but I do not wish to take much of your time and the time of the House, because they are fully explained in the Audit Report.

Next, I would like to draw the attention of this House and of the Railway Minister to the working of the various zones about which I also spoke in the previous year while speaking on the railway budget. The railway administration itself had accepted that they had created some more divisions in the Eastern Railway

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and divisionalised the South-Eastern Railway. They have divisionalised these railways to improve the operational efficiency of the railways. The Railway Minister, in this very House, assured us while replying to the debate on the railway budget last year that if necessary more zones would be created. If you see the increased volume of traffic on the railways and also the expansion of the railways in this country, where the route-mileage has also increased, I do not think that there can be anybody who will disagree that there is a necessity for revision of the present zones.

In this connection, I would like to draw the attention of the House to the fact that the Northern Railway runs from Mughal Saraj to Bikaner and Jodhpur; the Western Railway runs from Kutch to Bombay and up to Delhi on this side; similarly the Central Railway and the Southern Railway cover large areas; They are unwieldy that even the railway officials are complaining that it is not possible to manage these railways efficiently. I do not, therefore, understand what is the difficulty that stands in the way of the Railway Ministry in revising these zones and making them smaller so as to attain better operational efficiency.

Sir, I would now like to draw the attention of the House to the economy, and particularly to fuel economy. The hon. Railway Minister has appreciated the introduction of Suri transmission. You will be surprised to know that this transmission was invented in the year 1956. But, although on an average 150 to 200 engines are purchased from outside, every year, in the course of the last seven years only seven engines have been fitted with Suri transmission. It has been admitted by the Railway Ministry itself, that there has been an economy in fuel consumption to the extent of 10 to 12 per cent. This patent will last only for seven years more. If this is not fully and widely utilised, it will be utilised by other interested parties. I do not understand what is the diffi-

culty in the way of the Railway Ministry in having a wider utilisation of this Suri transmission which has been so useful in saving fuel.

The Railway Minister has talked about incentive schemes about which the railway workers are also concerned. I can assure this House that not more than 25 per cent of the workshops have been covered by this incentive scheme so far. The result is that most of the railway employees are dissatisfied because, we find that most of the higher grade posts in the various workshops are not being filled, and the result is that the chances of promotion for the employees even in certain semi-skilled posts are also being curtailed. Therefore, I would request the Railway Ministry to examine the working of this incentive scheme, because the Railway Minister has said that he would like this incentive scheme to cover a greater number of workshops.

14.48 hrs.

[MR. SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

My hon. friend Dr. Ranen Sen has said something about Chittaranjan. I would like to add the Integral Coach Factory, Perambur also. It is a fact that the factories at Chittaranjan and Perambur have done very useful service so far as the self-sufficiency of the railway is concerned, but, as I stated the other day while speaking on the supplementary grants for the railways, the railway workers who made Chittaranjan a pride of this country have not been given even trade union rights. The result is that no union is recognised in Chittaranjan and Perambur, although they fulfil certain conditions.

My hon. friend Shri U. M. Trivedi has spoken about the increase in house-rent. At this stage, I would like to associate myself with acclamation of this House the appreciation accorded by the hon. Railway Minister for the efficient working of the railway

workers, particularly during the emergency, and especially on the North-Eastern and the North-east Frontier railways, in carrying goods and moving troops and materials for defending our borders without interrupting any other normal movement of traffic. I would also like to ask a question to the Railway Ministry: in view of this good performance by the railway employees, is it proper for the Railway Ministry, as a good employer, —instead of rewarding the railway workers—to increase the house-rent of the railway quarters to such an extent so as to take away whatever little benefit they have got on account of the recommendations of the second Pay Commission?

Sir, the Railway Minister has very kindly appreciated the labour relations on the Indian Railways. So far as this is concerned, I find that every Railway Minister, year after year, at the time of the budget, has expressed the same opinion, namely, that the permanent negotiating machinery is working very satisfactorily on all the tiers.

I am connected with one of the Federations and as such, I can inform this House that this permanent negotiating machinery is a total failure. It has failed to work effectively both at the divisional level and General Manager level. Perhaps to some extent it works satisfactorily at the Railway Board level only. What is the fate of this negotiating machinery? The highest tier of this negotiating machinery is the Tribunal. If we fail to settle certain grievances of employees by negotiation, an *ad hoc* tribunal is to be set up for arbitration. But you will find that in the railways not a single arbitration has been conceded so far, excepting the one-man tribunal known as Justice Shankar Saran tribunal. The recommendation of that tribunal has also been accepted by the Railway Ministry with great difficulty.

Thus, you will find that in the railways there is no proper machinery to

deal with the grievances of the railway workers. The railway workers do not have the right to differ. When I say this, I mean that the last word is with the railway administration and not with the railway workers. I do not mean to say that whatever the railway workers say should be accepted. But whenever a dispute arises between two parties, it is an accepted principle by the Government that the dispute should be adjudicated by a third person. Therefore, I do not understand what is the difficulty of the railway administration in extending arbitration to railway employees. Recently on the question of house rent allowance, there has been some difference of opinion between the National Federation of Railwaymen and the Railway Board. We demanded arbitration on that question, to which the Railway Board flatly refused. Then, where is the question of getting justice for railway employees? On the top of that, there is a complaint that the railway employees do not behave properly with the administration. But if all the peaceful methods of negotiation and the method of arbitration are shut, where is the other alternative except fighting against such an administration?

The Railway Minister also stated that 400 joint committees have been set up on the various railways. So far as the labour is concerned, we do not know what are these joint committees. The Joint Committees must be existing amongst the high officials and their so-called favourites. But so far as railway labour in general is concerned, I can tell you straightaway that there is nothing like a joint committee on the railways.

Workers' education has been very much talked about—workers' education not for improving the efficiency of the working of the railways, but educating the railway workers in the matter of trade unionism, to make them good trade unionists. I remember in 1959 there was an agreement between my Federation and the Railway Board, according to which the

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railway administration agreed to give certain facilities like travel facilities and accommodation facilities for starting trade union education centres. But I do not know whether the Railway Minister is aware—because I am not aware—whether there is any such centre functioning in the railways. It would be a very happy thing if the railway administration sets up education centres to educate the workers and make them reasonable, sober and constructive trade unionists.

It is stated in the Railway Minister's speech that there is a programme of constructing 12,000 quarters every year for the staff. The Deputy Minister accepted the other day that 45 per cent. of the railway employees have already been housed. There are 12 lakh employees on Indian railways and with this programme of constructing 12,000 quarters every year, I do not know how many years it will take to provide houses to a substantial number or a majority of the railway employees.

Regarding educational facilities for the children of railwaymen, I am very much pained to see the observation made by the Railway Minister in his speech that there are 36 higher secondary and high schools, 24 middle schools and 641 primary schools functioning on the Indian railways. There are more than 6,000 railway stations all over the country. I do not know the year 1957, 1958, 1959 or 1962, whether this figure of 641 relates to because I remember these schools were started as early as three or four years back and every year these things are being repeated. In this particular statement of the Railway Minister, it is said that education for children of railwaymen is a State subject. This is not a correct statement. The railway administration itself had accepted that if the State Governments fail to provide schools for education of children of railwaymen, it is the responsibility of railway administration to provide schools for the education of their children.

Sir, lastly, I come to trade unions. The railway administration follows a very peculiar system of dealing with the trade unions. In this very House, the trade unions have been accused by more than one hon. Member. As I said earlier, one hon. Member said that trade unions are serving as a brake to the efficient working of the Indian railways. I want to emphasise in this House that there are trade unions and trade unions, but the railway administration is treating all the trade unions—good, bad and indifferent—alike. If there is a destructive trade union, they take it to be a good trade union. If it is a bad trade union, that is also treated as a good trade union. But if there is a constructive trade union that comes last in their list. We have been advocating for the last 15 years from the very inception of the Indian National Trade Union Congress that the railway administration should fix certain norms, certain code of conduct for trade union workers. If a particular trade union does not observe that code of conduct, they must brand that trade union as bad and that trade union has no right to exist. But if a trade union is going to serve the interests of the railway workers and through them the interests of the country, that trade union must be encouraged. I am talking of a trade union which has already accepted—not because Government wants it or the Railway Ministry wants it, but because the railway workers of that union have themselves decided on their own willingness that whenever the interest of the country comes before them, they will sacrifice their own interests; they have given enough proof of it on the last so many occasions, particularly at the time of the last general strike, when 85 per cent. of the railway workers on the call of that kind of trade union have opposed that strike, because it was not in the interests of the country.

With these words, I would submit to the Railway Ministry that if they accept a new and constructive

approach towards the trade unions, they will find that the trade unions will be working the Indian Railways, instead of co-operating in the working of the Indian Railways.

Shri N. R. Ghosh (Jalpaiguri): Mr. Speaker, Sir...

श्री ऋद्धवाय (वेवास) : अध्यक्ष महोदय, मैं समझता हूँ कि इस वक्त क्वोरम पूरा नहीं है।

Mr. Speaker: The bell is being rung. Now there is quorum. The hon. Member may continue.

Shri N. R. Ghosh: The hon. Member of the Communist Party who opened the debate on the railway budget this morning wanted to scrap the whole railway budget on certain grounds. He spoke of the trade unions, industrial relations, accidents and other things. I would only say this that there are trade unions and trade unions. There are certain unions who mostly try to create disaffection amongst the workers and who do not have the interest of the country at heart. Therefore, whenever these gentlemen speak about these industrial relations, we have to be careful. We wonder what is actually behind their mind, up their sleeves.

I do not say that the railway budget is free from blemishes. Every organic thing has got its blemishes and it must have some scope for improvement. But on the whole, the railway budget this year is a good one. It has not enhanced the passenger fares and it is a surplus budget, and I think the present Railway Minister has shown enough proof of his imagination and drive. Therefore, I congratulate him on this budget. But at the same time, I must refer to a few things which strike my mind.

15 hrs.

One significant omission in the Railway Budget is that, practically, our border problem has not at all been dealt with. You know that the North-eastern frontier has been invaded by the Chinese. In the context of that

border problem, the acute transport problem of Assam and North Bengal has not at all been touched. Sir, when our country was partitioned, Assam and North Bengal were the worst sufferers. Practically the whole of Assam and North Bengal were cut off from the rest of India. There was one railway and that was taken away from us. There was one road connection, but a sizeable portion of it has gone over to Pakistan. In hot haste, with commendable speed, we got the Assam rail link. It set up a sort of railway connection, but it was more an apology than a railway. These remarks will not appeal to some people of the Railway because, I know, whenever this Assam rail link is criticised a sort of an allergy develops and any criticism against this railway is considered to be a sort of condemnation of this railway. It is nothing of the kind. With regard to the road connection, we followed an alignment which was in existence at the time of the British during the last World War. We extended that road connection, we supplied the missing link and we had the National Highway No. 31, which was soon after badly disrupted. This is the pattern of the region.

As soon as the Assam rail link was constructed, the Indian Tea Planters' Association, the West Bengal Government and the Assam Government and others pointed out that even with hundred per cent efficiency this small rail link cannot cope up with the inward and outward transport of Assam and North Bengal. You know that Assam is oil rich. It produces better kinds of tea in a big way and an enormous quantity of jute. The same is the case with North Bengal. I think many hon. Members in this House do not know that even after the Assam rail link was brought into existence more than 50 per cent. of the tea and jute produced there had to be transported through Pakistan waters. Why was this rail link brought into existence? It was meant to be an all-India route. We constructed it, but when we found that this Assam rail link besides being unstable and vul-

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nerable was absolutely unable to cope up with the inward and outward goods traffic we did not do anything thereafter. I remember to have asked, in this very House, the previous Railway Minister, as to how it was that we have to depend for the export of vital things like jute and tea, which actually earn foreign exchange for us, on Pakistan waters. I got a very unsympathetic reply then. Even then the clouds were gathering in the horizon.

Things have totally changed now. There is now an emergency. You also know the fact that when the Chinese invaded us, Pakistan timed it with a strike amongst the Pakistani workers in the Joint Steamer Company. Of course, we know that whenever we get kicks from them we respond with kisses, and the Pakistan Government always consider that to be a proof of our weakness—are they really wrong! Whatever it is, have we not learnt a lesson this time? How did Pakistan behave when the emergency began? Is it not disgraceful for us to depend on them, to be at the mercy of the Government of Pakistan for the export of our vital goods like jute and tea? What have we done for it?

Sir, as I was submitting, immediately after the Assam rail link came into existence we brought to the notice of the railway authorities that it was absolutely inadequate to cope with the freight traffic offered by North Bengal and Assam. It was voiced also by the Government of Assam and also by the Government of West Bengal. In spite of our incessant demands nothing much was done. Subsequently, on account of factors which could not be ignored, the broad gauge has been brought to Siliguri and the bridge over the Brahmaputra has also been constructed. Two major things have been done. One thought the logical sequence would be to extend this broad gauge line to Assam by a chord line. The chord line was advocated by all the trading associations, the Indian Tea Planters' Association, the trading associations of Assam and also by the

governments of West Bengal and Assam. Somehow or other, our prayer did not fall on sympathetic ears.

As I submitted, whenever we raise this question a sort of allergy develops in some people and they always think that it is an indirect condemnation of their pet prize-boy, the Assam rail link. As I said, compared with its task, it is more a toy than a real thing. You know, we had to adopt the old alignment of the railway which passes through a very difficult terrain crossed by turbulent hill-streams, and the rail link was at the mercy of these hill-streams. Every rainy season the railway line was disrupted. Even the only National Highway, National Highway No. 31—the road link—was washed away in 1950 by an unusually huge flood followed by another flood in 1952, and for about 12 years the road connection was disrupted. One could not take anything to Assam by this road.

An hon. Member: Is it?

Shri N. R. Ghosh: I do not know whether hon. Members of this House are completely conversant with these facts. But that is the pattern of things which prevails there. Assam, as I said, is oil rich. Industry is expanding there. Whatever foreign exchange you are getting comes mostly from Assam and North Bengal. If the integration of the country is of any value, how can you neglect Assam and North Bengal in this way. I shall read to you three or four lines from a memorandum....

Shri Shah Nawaz Khan: I would like to inform the hon. Member that this toy railway has carried almost all the traffic that was offered in Assam.

Shri N. R. Ghosh: With great respect, Sir, I have to say that it is extremely incorrect. The other day, the Deputy Minister, Shri Tripathi, gave us a talk, and he said that more than 50 per cent. of the goods traffic is carried by the steamers by Pakistan

waters. I have myself got very intimate knowledge of these things. From Jalpaiguri we have sometimes to send our tea to Dhubri to be transported from there to Calcutta by Pakistan waters.

Shri Shahnawaz Khan: Please give it to us; we will carry it.

Shri N. R. Ghosh: Mr. Tripathi was giving very great credit to the General Manager, N.F. Railway for his wonderful efficiency in this emergency. As a matter of fact, Shri T. N. Singh, in one of his talks—that was reported as a piece of news sometime ago said that the broad-gauge was going to be extended up to Gauhati. I do not understand how this matter could be neglected in this way, could be shelved. This was also the feeling of Shri Tripathi. Are we not going to have an all-India route? If you extend the broad-gauge of Siliguri up to Dhubri (to a place called Yogi Ghupa) then you can have an all-India route connecting Ganga and Brahamaputra and you can eliminate Pakistan waters. Do you think that the Pakistan Government can be relied upon? If that is not the case, is it not criminal on the part of the railway authorities and on the part of the Government to leave things as they are? When you want to become self-sufficient, should you not extend the railways up to Dhubri, even if you do not take it to the whole length of Assam? There was the memorandum sent by the Assam Government, a well-documented, well-argued memorandum, giving facts and figures and a wealth of details which says:

“The State Government have often made reference to the Ministry of Railways for consideration of the extension at least up to Gauhati of the broad-gauge line now terminating at Siliguri, but so far they have not received a favourable reply. They wish to point out in detail how the extension of the broad-gauge line is the only solution for Assam's serious transport problem.”

I was submitting that as a result of the incessant demands of the two Governments and of the trading associations of North Bengal and Assam, an expert committee was appointed by the Railway Board. That expert committee made certain recommendations by which the Assam rail link could be strengthened and improved. They also stated that even with hundred per cent. efficiency the Assam rail link will never be able to cope with the inward and outward traffic of Assam and North Bengal. Therefore, the only alternative is to have a chord line, which will pass through a much better terrain, a stabler terrain, which will reduce the distance by 50 miles. Instead of doing that, some improvements only have been made in the existing line which will not touch even the fringe of our problem.

Afterwards, a survey was ordered. We made representations and the two Governments sent memoranda to the railway authorities. So, in spite of the allergy of the railway authorities, they allowed a survey to be made. That survey was for the shorter route, by the chord line from Siliguri, Belacoba across the Teesta, Monynaguri, Dhupguri, Falakata, Alipur Duar, Cooh-Bihar and then to Dhubri or Gauhati in Assam at the first stage. That survey report has been completed and the estimate and the report are in the possession of the Railway Ministry.

The two State Governments and the trading associations have all along been pressing this point. But the Ministry says: many improvements have been made and they would suffice for the present. If they are not going to extend the railway line up to Gauhati, they should extend it at least up to Dhubri for the present. Why are they not doing it? The experts committee, the memorandum of the Assam Government, they have proved, demonstrated, mathematically shown that it is impossible to cope with this problem of export by the present Assam Rail Link. Here I am not accusing the Assam rail link; it did its

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job, so far as it can. But you cannot change a goat into a milch cow. We require a milch cow. However much we may feed a goat, it will continue to be and remain a goat and will never become a milch cow.

As regards the metre-gauge, some hon. Members here have pointed out, and the railway authorities know it more than any other people, that it is never profitable. Now the broad-gauge is up to Siliguri. When the big bridge which costs crores and crores, at Amingaon is complete, why do you not extend the broad-gauge up to Dhubri? It will solve the Border Transport problem and will also be profitable. Why do you not do it? It is absolutely unintelligible to lay people like some of us. Perhaps, some sort of special wisdom must have dawned upon the Railway Ministry by which they avoid or delay these matters. I do not know what those reasons are? Why this allergy?

When the solution is at hand, when the solution is just the extension of the broad-gauge up to Dhubri, I do not know why it is not being done. The other day, the Deputy Minister Shri Tripathi said here that he had a talk with the General Manager and the General Manager told him that if the orders come, he could finish it within a year. He spoke of the General Manager very highly and underlined the essential necessity of this broad-gauge.

I know that the railway officers and the railway department did a very good job at the time of the emergency. I know too that everything was thrown out of gear by the timely strike of the Pakistan Government. Then we thought of running a number of trucks. Is that the solution? Can it really cope with the situation? Will that supply the answer when the only answer is that you should extend the broad-gauge up to Dhubri? Why can't you do that?

I know that the present Railway Minister has got imagination and

drive. He cannot have any allergy and he has no allergy towards this problem. I hope he will take these facts into consideration and will try if it is possible to extend the broad-gauge line up to Dhubri for the present, as quickly as possible, for the very integrity of the country and for the protection of the borders.

Shri Priya Gupta (Katihar): Mr. Speaker, I rise to submit my suggestions on the railway budget, presented by the Railway Minister, as a member of this House and as a representative of the All India Railwaymen's Federation and as a spokesman of the workers and peasants.

I hail the attitude of the Railway Minister in his bold step to increase the contribution to the general revenues at the rate of 4.5 per cent. I say so because I feel that the public sector undertakings like the undertakings in the private sector must be able to build up their own funds, generating their own funds and trying to stand on their own legs. It is only in that way we can judge how an organisation is going to be stabilised.

The railways started with a capital of Rs. 800 crores and now its capital at charge has gone up to Rs. 2,000 crores, if I am correct. Now we have to see that for development work, expansion and other work what percentage of the total expenditure expected or budgeted to be incurred this year are being taken from foreign loans and what portion of it is being borne by the Plan outlay and what percentage is being borne by the funds generated by its earnings. The percentage that the railways will be able to contribute to the general exchequer will be the criterion of their efficient functioning. Since the Railway Minister has taken this bold step, I am sure he must be satisfied that there will be proper utilisation of manpower, proper measures of economy and the administrative efficiency will be cent per cent. Unless these three factors are taken into account, what-

ever steps he may take for the improvement of the railways, it is bound to result in failures.

I do not want to make any castigating remark about anybody but what I feel is that the time has come to warn everybody, at each level of the administration, fight from the bottom, class 3 and class 4 workers up to the officers at the helm to see whether the administrative efficiency is going up or going down. It is no use giving money and then surrendering it. It is no use allotting money which is not used properly by the railways.

So far as earnings in respect of freight charges are concerned, as the hon Railway Minister has put it, it could be seen from the angle of view that the increase is a few *naye* Paise here and there. But the after-effect of this will be very bad. It will bring a cumulative oppressive impact on the budget of lowest strata of our society because salt and other food-stuffs will be sold at a higher price on this plea of increase in the freight charges although it is a very small percentage.

In respect of passenger fares I have seen it increase to the average of 14.7 for all. The third class passenger earning is quite good. First class earning is tolerable and air-conditioned class earning is also tolerable. But the second-class earning is about 11 per cent or something. Why is the percentage low in respect of second-class earnings? I think, either the Administration should give some amenities to lure or attract the people to use the second class more and more or it should abolish it altogether and give, as in the Janata, sleeping accommodation in lieu of one bogey.

As regards the Depreciation Fund and the Revenue Reserve Fund, we must keep a watchful eye on them. Our assets are many whose capital value at the time of purchase was less but whose price today is great. So, the Depreciation Fund should be ac-

cumulated to that amount. Though the increase in the contribution to the General Exchequer from 4.25 per cent to 4.50 per cent is a very good and bold step, I feel that the Railway Ministry should think whether, because of this aspect of the increasing tendency in prices, Depreciation and Revenue Reserve Funds can also not be increased in addition to the contribution to the General Exchequer at the increased rate. That must not be lost sight of.

In the Report by the Railway Board on the Indian Railways for 1960-61 they have said that there has been an intensive attempt at practising economy in the administration and in the Railway Board's structure. I appreciate it. I should not make any comment on it. It is very good. There has been some reduction here and there. But if you kindly go into the details of the things put over there, that is, total last year's expenditure and this year's expenditure on the officers' cadre (permanent) in the Railway Board and total expenditure on the Railway Board officials (Gazetted) on the temporary cadre this year and last year, it will be seen quite correctly that it is not on the decrease. But an overall decrease has been there. It may be that the increase is only due to increments and other things. There has been no reduction in the cadre. There has been some decrease for some other things, but it has not been only for the purpose of decreasing the expenditure on administration. In the Demands he has said so and I object to it. There has been a decrease, but the decrease is not due to an intensive attempt to reduce the establishment. It will be evident from the Explanatory Memorandum and Notes which the Railway Board itself has prepared.

Then I would like to say something about the industrial policy. Formerly the Railways maintained some showrooms at important places. They carried the showrooms in the trains

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with many items and things which the Railways consume for their maintenance. That gave some initiative to the local merchants, the business people and the craftsmen to go and see whether or not a particular region could manufacture such items. This was a very good thing. Now our Railway Administration does not entirely depend upon foreign or imported things. Some of the major items are also manufactured in our country. I will request the Railway Ministry to go into this again so that this initiative can be maintained in each region for developing industry because it is national industry and national industry means developing regional industries everywhere, all over the country so that the economic conditions of the people of those regions may also be developed well.

When I come to the defence efforts my lips are shut because I see high-sounding words like war efforts, emergency and defence efforts. They are very nice words. We cannot object to them. I am a national of this country and my motherland has been aggressed upon by the Chinese. People will have a bad opinion or a bad notion about me if I do that. They will feel about a Member of Parliament doing that. But I do not mean the *prima facie* value of these words. I mean the internal feeling of those who are operating our war effort measures. I know, everybody has got his lapses. It is high time they tone it up. They must do it properly. They must bend, stoop down if other people cannot come up. That is not prestige; that is not fetish. Society demands it; the country demands it. I would urge upon the Railway Ministry and the Railway Board to stoop down to that extent.

I may tell you that 106 Territorial Army personnel were sent from Gorakhpur to the North-East Frontier Area and only four Officers Commanding were sent. Do you know how they have been dealt with? These

four officers were called in the officers' Rest House Club and were given a party and a send-off. But for these 106 Territorial Army men not a single officer gave them party or came even to see them off at the station platform. Could they not feel today that they were being separated on this imaginary social structure of lower-and high-income groups? Can I not expect this change in the attitude on the part of the General Managers and the other officials? And do you know the tragedy about it? The General Secretary of our North Eastern Railway Mazdoor Union affiliated with the All-India Railwaymen's Federation gave parties and invited the officers as well as the workers. He did it. But in the send-off when the Railway officials took a snap photograph of the send-off of the bogey, unfortunately the festoons and the banners of the Mazdoor Union came. So, that picture was not allowed to be published in the papers and magazines because the Union will be given the first preference. Should this be the attitude? Are you not going to help the organisation?

On the 20th October when this war was officially declared over here, we personally addressed meetings there. We called upon the workers to contribute their one day's pay. Everybody said, "Yes, we will do that; we must do that." We were preparing to collect the amount. Then it became the prestige issue of the officials there. On the 30th of the month, 1st being the payment day, the officers printed coupons and said, "You must give it here; do not give to the Unions, otherwise we will see you." They should have called the Union people. It was an open mass meeting for meeting war emergency. There were dozens of provincial and Central CID. RPF CID people were there to watch and report to the General Manager, the Chief Personnel Officer and the Vigilance Officer as to what had been discussed there. We discussed that we will donate; that we will work for

it. We discussed and resolved that we will help to the fullest extent. We were never called. The whole tragedy is that the labour has not been taken into confidence. Why? Are we foreigners? We have seen the British officers. I am an ex-railwayman. I have worked with foreigners, with European engineers and with others also. They sat side by side with us and we got together and functioned.

Shri Shahnawaz Khan: Did you ever fly at the throat of a European officer?

An Hon. Member: Why a European officer?

Shri Priya Gupta: I can understand if it was a foreigner. I cannot understand a mother behaving like a step-mother to her son. That is the reply. The whole question at issue is that.

The entire territorial army men of 106 people were to leave and report to the Muzaffarpur camp on the 27th. Do you know what the Railway administration, the North Eastern Railway, did? On the 26th evening they intimated the 106 personnel that news. They had to do many things. They had to fill up authority for drawing payment and also give a declaration how much they want to draw at the field, how much has to be given to the families. This was never done. Still this has not been done. Do you know what else they are doing? A senior administrative officer on Rs. 1900, is taking a *kudali-phawara* and just digging a trench wasting the whole day and showing, "I am doing this war effort". These things should go away.

The Railway Administration, the N.E.F. Railway has published pamphlets and other things: "Donate blood", "Donate blood". You will find that in Gorakhpur, not a single officer has donated a single drop of blood.

An Hon. Member: They are all old.

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Shri Priya Gupta: Our men have given a lot. This is the whole tragedy of it. This is about war effort.

What else? Myself and Mr. Peter Alvares, General Secretary of the All India Railwaymen's Federation were called by the Railway Minister and asked by him to go and visit the front over there. He said, "your people are shaky, they have fled away". I said, this cannot be. We went there. We went. What did we find? We found that the Railway officers, gazetted officers were issued passes and un-official escorts in the shape of stenographers, personal assistants and clerks to go on duty—where?—to the place where their wives were going to be sent away from the danger zone. Accommodation was arranged in one day's notice in the Railway trains. For class III and IV, चौया वर्ग कर्मचारी, what about their family? अगर उन को डेंजर होगा, तो कोई पवाह नहीं ।

Secondly, what happened? We went and visited Tezpur. Several M.P.s were also there. What did we find? On the one hand, while everybody else had fled away from there, the Railway men, station masters, A.S.M.s, drivers, security people, electrical and mechanical workers of all ranks, I.O.W.'s, P.W.I.s, gangmen, sweepers, everybody was intact over there. They said, we are not flying away from here until the last breath of our life; we will save our motherland. They were there. When they were ordered by the General Manager to vacate by special train, the Station Master or A.S.M. whoever was in charge, carried several lakhs of rupees, without getting any armed escort to protect his carriage for safety. On the other hand, the Treasury officer there burnt the Currency Notes worth over lacs value there and everybody came away.

Shri Shahnawaz Khan: The person who brought back the railway cash happens to be a Railway officer.

Shri Priya Gupta: You are absolutely incorrect. You do not know the working of the Railway. I have worked and I have first hand knowledge about it. That is why I tell you. This was the condition over there. This is how it happened. This is a gesture. I am not going to yield for these comments. I have no time. Please don't disturb Mr. Shah Nawaz Khan. This is what happened there.

Shri Shah Nawaz Khan: I was there before him in Tezpur.

Shri Priya Gupta: The All India Railwaymen's Federation offered unstinted support and called 12 lakh workers to give co-operation. This is how the Railway's Head has dealt with them. Why should you get irritated?

I would request one thing. Today, in the perspective of defence efforts, what are we doing in Katihar? Traffic has increased so—many fold, without increase of staff. The line capacity being the same there, the output is more रफ्तार बढ़ गई है। The total number of operations have increased. For that, they have got appreciation letters. When we returned from Tezpur and reported to the Minister and to the Chairman of the Railway Board, they said, we appreciate, and issued letters to them. On the other hand, they are getting charge-sheets—I refer to the Class III and IV people of Katihar—from the District officer who is handling the war emergency over there "so nicely". That District officer is behaving like this. That District officer was pardoned by the Railway administration when he misused a pass over there in the N.E. Railway. This is the condition. Charge-sheets are given to these people, as well as, intimidating them, I would chuck you off if you do not behave properly. Openly they are saying, we will fulfil our grudge and wrath and see that you are rooted out from the job, we will make you like slaves to work. These things—this tone should not be there.

I would say one thing, about military traffic. While the other non-Member was speaking carrying the load by the N.E.F. Railway, the Deputy Minister interrupted. I am grateful to the hon. Minister; he has appreciated the work of the frontier railwaymen there. He said that the N.F. Railway has carried it. There were difficulties, difficulties not only by working for 23 hours, 30 hours and 36 hours of continuous working—S.M.s, A.S.M.s guards, drivers, firemen, pointsmen, levermen, everybody, On the top of that curtailing certain items for general traffic. The general public were asked to be deprived for the time being because if this traffic is borne by the same Railway, the military traffic would be hampered. That is the position.

My submission is this. Even today, in the name of emergency, not only in the N.E.F. Railway, but in other Railways, there are so many increases of railway officials, class I and other gazetted officers. But, not a single Class III or IV man has been increased as if there is no work for the workmen there. It is just like a person pressing a switch and operating a wireless machine. They are sitting at the table and over the telephone getting everything done as if there is no field work required of them. I am sorry, this is the war effort. This is not a personal castigation, when there was trouble due to Chinese aggression the hon. Deputy Minister was opening a swimming pool in Gorakhpur. Unfortunately, the swimming pool is opened not only in the headquarters, but in Gonda and every district. Is this the time for that, in times of war economy to spend money for swimming pools, curtailing medical facilities of the railwaymen?

जब बीमारी बढ़ रही है।

Shri Shah Nawaz Khan: This swimming pool is an amenity for staff also.

Shri Priya Gupta: Medical facilities have been curtailed.

Shri Shah Nawaz Khan: No, it has not been curtailed.

Shri Priya Gupta: It has been curtailed. Kindly look at the Gorakhpur C.M.O. budget. This question is over there.

I would then come to industrial relations and labour policy. Every year, as my hon. comrade over there said, the Railway Board is publishing this booklet. That is all right. The P.N.M. is there. Yes; the kalashi secretary is allowed to sit in the Railway board. It is just like this. In our society, when a rich man's daughter-in-law comes in, she does not know how to cook, she does not know to serve: just a show case girl peeping over there. Similarly, the Railway Administration is using the machinery prescribed by the International Labour Organisation. They are maintaining a show of that, we are also maintaining it. But, they do not know what the internal things are. I submit very earnestly that this thing, in its true perspective, should be translated into action. If that is not done, the labour policy will be bad. I may tell you, I am warning you, that without the labour coming up.....

Mr. Speaker: Why should the hon. Member threaten me?

Shri Priya Gupta: Through you the hon. Minister. Not threatening; it is only a submission. We are so much oppressed.

Mr. Speaker: I have to receive all this anger and all this excitement.

Shri Priya Gupta: As सर्वसहा वृ मृती "Mother", You have to take it and transmit it to the proper place.

Mr. Speaker: I have no chance to transmit it.

Shri Priya Gupta: The P.N.M. meeting: In 1951, Shri Jaya Prakash Narayan was the President of the All India Railwaymen's Federation and Ayyangar was the Railway Minister, they sat together. He said, we should

evolve a machinery, we should not go to court and go on quoting the provisions of the Industrial Disputes Act, बात-बात पर कोर्ट में जाना ठीक नहीं है। Let us sit together and evolve a machinery, that is how came P.N.M.,— that show-case daughter in law." That was never translated into action. I say so because it never functioned, though it prescribed three tiers: at the General Manager's level and the District officer's level: talk, discussion, meeting the railway representatives through the labour union, workers' union and mazdoor union; at the Railway Board level with the All India Railwaymen's Federation and the other Federation and thirdly a Tribunal wherever there are disputes that are not resolved at Board's level. If at the general manager's level we could not agree then we could go to the Railway Board level. And if at the Railway Board level we could not agree then we can go to the tribunal. But this disagreement at any level should not lead to castigation on any person or any employee. After all, the men must disagree. Even a father disagrees with his son in respect of the planning of the family affairs, but that does not carry any venom.

As regards the third tier, the tribunal has never been given until today, for nearly 11 years from 1951 up to 1962. Coming to the Code of Conduct or the Code of Discipline, at the tripartite meeting a decision was taken, which the central organisations of labour and other undertakings have accepted, and it contains some provisions to be observed by the private sector, but the Railway undertaking wants to violate those principles and promulgate something else in their place.

While I am on this war effort measure, I may tell you that the 1960 strike is always referred to in this House unfortunately. It is an unfortunate chapter. May I recall the words of Shri Jawaharlal Nehru, our Prime Minister—who is unfortunately absent here just now—uttered in

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1936 or 1937 when there was a strike in the Assam Oil Company, Digbo. He was then a trade union leader, and a member and official of the All India Trade Union Congress which was then patronised by the Congress Party. The strike had been decided to be held, but some "samjhouta" was made, and the strike was going to be dropped. But Mr. Nehru said 'We want to go on strike for strike's sake, and we must go on strike', and that strike took place at that time. But today, the position is different, and that is forgotten.

Shri Shah Nawaz Khan: There is some difference between a foreign Government and our own Government. Both should not be treated alike.

Shri Priya Gupta: The 1960 strike was for a cause, whereas the 1937 strike was not for any cause because for strike's sake. Still, should we be so shabbily treated? Anyway, the Railway Minister did kindly agree with our General Secretary, AIRF to review the cases, and I am sure that he will be doing it, but it is getting too late. About 63 to 67 people are out of employment today. Their cases should be reviewed, and the sanctity of the decisions of the Home Minister who said that if the cases were not in connection with sabotage and *maarpheet* etc. then those cases should be considered leniently, should be honoured. In none of these cases to which I have referred is there any such thing. May I not, therefore, appeal that either the Minister should withdraw his circular or sanctity should be given to the decision taken by the sister Ministry? I hope that very soon, the tactful and tolerant negotiator, Shri Swaran Singh, who is talking on behalf of the nation with the foreign countries, will be doing the needful and withdrawing the punishment imposed on the railway workers at least today when the country needs the full co-operation of all railway men. Can I not urge upon the Railway Ministry that at the time of

the Republic Day celebrations even the criminals were set free? Are we worse than criminals? I feel that we are not. Therefore, I submit that the cases of these persons should be considered at least at this juncture when the fullest co-operation of all the people is required. I hope that the Railway Minister will kindly reconsider the cases of these persons and reinstate all the people who are out of employment today due to their participation in the strike, and also withdraw the punishments awarded to them. I shall be grateful if the hon. Minister will kindly take this step.

Our Federation of railwaymen have offered their wholehearted and unstinted support for the war efforts and they will be offering, and we promise such support and co-operation physically, mentally etc., and we shall tolerate everything. I have told the workers: 'Tolerate the outraging behaviour and the misbehaviour of the officers; even if they do so do not give up the job that you are doing, because you are doing that job for your Motherland; the officers may be causing hindrance to the Motherland by displeasing you or misbehaving with you, but tolerate them, do not take any notice of those things'. That was what I told the workers.

Then, I would say a word about the service conduct rules. One gentleman by name Mr. M. T. Parekh, an accounts clerk was discharged because he wanted permission to stand for the corporation elections or for election to the municipality. He sought for the permission. The reply did not come in time. He again reminded the authorities. He was given official leave in connection with his fighting the elections, and mind you, officially he was given leave, and when he fought the case, he could not succeed. So, I appeal that this boy's case may kindly be considered as it would have been considered even otherwise.

While I am on this subject, I would request you to permit me to refer to the charter of demands put forward by the N.F. Railway Mazdoor Union in May, 1962. This charter contained the following demands. The first demand was:

"Increase of dearness allowance proportionate to rise in cost of living index and ensuring stabilisation of market fluctuations and setting up of permanent wage Board for fixing minimum pay etc."

The second demand was:

"Grant of three advance increments or Rs. 10 whichever is more to all class III and class IV staff."

This demand is to the effect that the same amenity should be given to the class III and class IV employees as that given to the class I and class III officers, that is to say, they should be put on a par with the class I and class II officers and given three advance increments. Similar three increments of the order of Rs. 75 to Rs. 150 are given to the gazetted officers who are working in the North-Eastern Frontier Railway. It is our demand that the class III and class IV staff also should be paid those advance increments or this should be withdrawn from the class I and class II officers who are getting it there at present. For, the point is that just as the other officers could be posted everywhere, all over the country, likewise they have also to go everywhere for their work. So, this is our second demand.

Their third demand is:

"Strict observance of Hours of Employment Regulations".

Even in this war emergency period, and even in the normal periods also, there have been flagrant violations of these regulations.

The fourth demand is:

"Regular and immediate payment of all arrears arising out of fixation of pay, implementation of Joint Advisory Committee's recommendations, leave salary, special pay and Assam allowances relieving, travelling and overtime allowances etc., etc., and regularisation of provident fund and other accounts."

The fifth demand is:

"Guarantee regular supply of uniforms, occupational garments with extended facilities to omitted categories."

The sixth demand is:

"Decasualisation of labour."

On casual labour, I have spoken threadbare during the last budget speech, but I would simply say that in spite of the Railway Board's clear directives, in the Fatagarh traffic district, the rate for casual labour is Rs. 1.05 to Rs. 1.50, I do not understand how this could be so when it is in the same traffic district there, when the Railway Board has said clearly that the rate should be a flat rate of Rs. 2 and so on. But I would submit that we want decasualisation of labour. Casual labour cannot function in this country, in the socialistic pattern of society to which our country is pledged.

The seventh demand is:

"No discriminatory curtailment allowances and restoration of existing local special pay and allowances already withdrawn."

This relates to the removal of the discriminatory curtailment of existing local special pay and allowances and restoration of the allowances already withdrawn from newly transferred staff at Alipur Duar junction, at Siliguri junction and other places.

[Shri Priya Gupta]

The eighth demand is:

“Creation of congenial atmosphere for proper functioning of the PNM for mitigating to the grievances—a conciliatory machinery adopted in lieu of the provisions of Industrial Dispute Act and setting up of arbitration in conformity with the agreement with the Railway Ministry and the All India Railwaymen's Federation in the year 1951.”

The ninth demand is:

“Modification of the provisions of Establishment Codes and other rules including DAR in keeping with the provisions of the Constitution of India, (expunging the provisions of special power of termination and dismissal).

While I am on this subject I would just like to mention one point in regard to the proposed amendment of article 311 (2) of the Constitution. I want that the Railway Ministry should intervene with the Law Ministry and restore the original provision in regard to the second hearing in case of dismissal, discharge or removal from service and for reduction in rank which is now sought to be withdrawn. I would submit that in the case of others, even a vakil is permitted to defend them; therefore, I would submit that at least the second hearing or second opportunity must be given to those employees who are going to be dismissed.

The tenth demand is:

“Setting up of *ad hoc* committee for Marine staff as recommended by the Second Pay Commission.”

And the last demand is:

“Stoppage of direct recruitment to the intermediate category and reviewing the expansion of avenues in the channels

of promotions for the categories of class III and class IV”.

In respect of these various items which they have submitted, some are under deep and active consideration of the Railway Board, and we hope that something might soon come out of it.

While I am on this subject, I would urge the Railway Ministry to warn the general managers of the zonal railways and the others to have a change in their attitude to the railway officials under them and to take the railway labour into confidence.

Now, I would say a word about the catering business, and then I shall conclude.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Member has got three minutes more from the whole allotment to his party, and, he can utilise those three minutes. No second speaker would be allowed from his party.

Shri Priya Gupta: How much time has been allotted to me?

Mr. Speaker: 36 minutes have been allotted to his party. He has already taken 33 minutes. Now, only 3 more minutes are left to him.

Shri Priya Gupta: I shall finish within that time.

While I was travelling in the Pathankot Express, I found a simple type of tea leaf. It was called the magic leaf or something like that, and it had been accepted by the Railway Administration without an open tender. As regards the quality of the tea, I would not like to say anything about it here; if only the Deputy Minister of Railways would have been present there, I would have begged of him to take it, and after one or two sips of the tea, I am sure he would not have taken it at all.

I would submit that the monopolisation of the catering business and also the book-sellers' business should be dispensed with so as to provide better avenues to others.

While on this subject, I would draw your attention to one thing. The Special Police Establishment and the Vigilance organisation was started a long time ago. The Home Ministry has now declared that 80 per cent of this cadre of S.P.E. drawn from police and other officers from States, have to be confirmed. I request that this should also be done in respect of the corresponding tenured posts or R.S.O. drawn from staff in the railways. This matter should be considered in the light of the decision of the Home Ministry. The vigilance or anti-corruption organisation cannot function only because of the fact the vigilance inspectors and others are ex-cadre and tenure posts and they feel shaky about proceeding against officers suspected of corruption. I can tell you that the punishments given to officers are nothing as compared to the lower grade staff. Here in Delhi there was a claims case. The people were caught. There have been probably some remarks by the Public Accounts Committee on this matter. It has not yet been taken up by the Railway Administration. The chief clerk was penalised by withholding his increment cumulatively. But the Divisional Superintendent, who was found guilty in the findings, was given a punishment without touching the skin of the officer, namely, the displeasure of the Railway Board was conveyed to him! This was the punishment given to the Divisional Superintendent. I urge that there should be equality of treatment and equal opportunity.

Regarding collection of the Defence Fund, in the commercial department they have got a system of waiving demurrage and wharfage compensation to which is made by parties donating to Defence Fund a meagre amount of that. Money is being wasted everywhere. Due to that, the

Public Exchequer is suffering very much. This has also got to be looked into.

In Delhi also during the banana and mango season, we find one goods clerk writing the vouchers and RRs. Most of the time the weighing machines are out of order. So everybody says, 'Sender's weight accepted'.

अगर कोई नहीं मानेगा तो उसके लिए लोग गली बक्के, जोकि पांच छः आदमी खड़े रहते हैं।

There are a number of people waiting in the queue. This one poor clerk accepts the sender's weight. The number of baskets mentioned is '400', but at the destination station 600 are unloaded. All these things are happening for want of staff.

Regarding the criteria to declare whether a thing is to be made open delivery, what is the price to be fixed etc., nothing fixed is laid down. Until this lacuna is done away with, we will be losing revenue on this score. All these matters should be taken into consideration.

Shri A. C. Guha: After the very interesting speech of Shri Priya Gupta, I am afraid my speech will appear to be quite drab and uninteresting. But anyhow that speech though very much critical of the railway authorities, is much in contrast to the speech with which this debate started today. It is surprising that Dr. Ranen Sen stood up to oppose the Railway Budget. Criticism is one thing.

We, belonging to the Congress Party also often criticise government measures, but to oppose the Budget altogether is a sort of unusual thing. Anyhow, that is for him. But it leaves a certain impression in our mind. This is one of their tactics to sabotage any attempt at the mobilisation of the nation's resources for the defence of the country and for the development of the country, and to create a sort of discontent in the mind of the people against the Government in connection with any

[Shri A. C. Guha]

measures taken for the defence or development of the country.

15.55 hrs.

[MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER in the Chair]

Speaking broadly, I think the railways this year have been doing fairly well. During the debate this time last year, there were angry protests about the performance of the railways, particularly in regard to the transport of goods, specially coal. But this year the position has improved very much and I think there is hardly any difficulty in the transport of coal or other commodities. This emergency has been the test of the Indian railways. It has put an unusual load on the Indian railways and they have carried the load with credit and have discharged their functions more or less to the satisfaction of the nation.

My hon. friend, Shri N. R. Ghosh, spoke vehemently about the Assam link route. I also have my own feelings, though I do not like to imitate his language. I cannot muster the vehemence of his feelings. He comes from that area. So his feelings must be more bitter than mine. But knowing the strategic position of Assam, it will be almost suicidal for the country to depend on the tenuous Assam rail link. When this rail link was completed, it was hailed as a great achievement, particularly of the engineering section of the Indian railways. It was really a great achievement there. But if the Government is to depend on that thin rail line for transport of all commodities, consumer goods, civilian and defence personnel and defence materials, I think it would prove completely inadequate for the purpose. Now that the broad gauge has been extended upto Siliguri, it is not difficult for Government to extend it to Dhubri or even to Gauhati. Government should give top priority to this.

In this connection, the question of the Farraka Barrage also comes to my mind. The Farraka wagon ferry is there to carry good from this side of the Ganges to the other. Everyone can understand that even in ordinary times, not to speak of the emergency, this arrangement cannot be considered satisfactory. As soon as possible, the Farraka Barrage should be completed. There should not be any sort of indcision about this matter. The other day an assurance was given by the Minister of Irrigation and Power about the Farraka Barrage. I hope it will be implemented and the Barrage completed ahead of schedule.

The main task in the discharge of which the Indian railways faced much criticism last year was about the transport of coal. This year, as I said, the position has improved considerably. About 5200 wagons have been supplied to the Bengal-Bihar coal fields this year as against 4781 supplied by this time last year. So there is considerable improvement. But I would like to suggest one thing about the Box wagons. I can understand that the Box wagons have greater carrying capacity, but the necessary pre-conditions for making full use of Box wagons have not been fulfilled as yet. There is no weighing bridge and there are other difficulties also about which I hope the Railway Board and railway engineers know better than we laymen. Therefore, before introducing the Box wagons, they should fulfil the engineering pre-conditions which only can ensure their proper utilisation. Moreover, BOX wagons carrying coal often come back empty on the return trip. They are not suitable for carrying all sorts of commodities. That also will be a sort of uneconomic factor which they should consider before introducing BOX wagons on a large scale.

16 hrs.

In respect of the transport of coal as also other commodities, Moghalsarai

continues to be a bottleneck. The Railway Minister has mentioned in his speech that transport to the west or northwest of Moghalsarai still continues to be a difficulty. It may be a somewhat old cry, but I think the zones should now be reconsidered. There may be a redistribution of the zonal areas. Moghalsarai is the terminus for the Eastern zone. If the Eastern Zone can run up to Allahabad, there may be some improvement.

As regards the carrying of coal, though improvement has been effected regarding the supply of good quality coal and to big consumers, I think the small consumers of low-grade coal are still suffering. I should like particularly to draw attention to brick-burning coal. In West Bengal as in some other places, bricks are selling at Rs. 100 or Rs. 110 per thousand. It is an absurd price, and this is extracted from the consumers simply because of the high freight charge of coal for burning bricks, because they have to carry coal even in West Bengal by road trucks. I think there should be some arrangement for carrying this low-grade coal—The BRK and the SSI quality coal. Brick is an important item in the housing programme of the Government. If bricks sell at Rs. 110 per thousand, only the rich people can construct houses. It will not be possible for the poor. So, I think the Railway Board should give some consideration to the carrying of this low-grade coal for smaller people.

It is good that the Third Plan target has now been revised from 245 to 260 million tons. During the Second Plan we had the bitter experience of the demand outstripping the target fixed. So, I hope now the Railway Board will take into consideration the development and defence requirements of the country and if necessary revise the target further upward. They have provided an additional sum of Rs. 200 crores for this purpose, but I am not sure

that the target of 260 million tons will meet the requirements at the end of the Third Plan.

Then I come to the three Funds. It was the most regrettable that, the Railway Board allowed these Funds to be depleted. Out of the last 14 years, in nine years there were a minus accretion to the Development Fund and only in five years there was some plus accretion. We were drawing more from the Fund than we contributed. That was a dangerous thing and very bad economy. Dr. Ranen Sen asked why Rs. 82 crores should be put into the Depreciation Reserve Fund. I consider that amount to be rather inadequate. The total capital-at-charge of the railways at present is Rs. 2,200 crores. I think depreciation should be computed at the rate of at least 5 per cent. Then it will come to at least Rs. 100 crores annually. This year, though we have credited Rs. 82 crores, we have drawn Rs. 68 crores from the Fund, leaving only a net accretion of Rs. 14 crores. For a big establishment like the railways this is a meagre accretion, and a commercial point of view, I should say this is an undesirable thing.

Similarly, few years ago the other two Funds went to almost the dangerous minimum limit. It will be good for the Railway Board to see that the three Funds—the Depreciation Reserve Fund, the Development Fund and the Revenue Reserve Fund—are properly maintained, considering the capital-at-charge of the railways. Every year we are adding about Rs. 200 or Rs. 300 crores of new assets. I think the present target for the Third Plan is only Rs. 1,500 crores. So, when we contribute so much for the building up of the assets, the Railway Board should see that there is proper accretion to the Funds, very much more than the withdrawals from them.

The Railway Minister himself has admitted that a good deal of leeway has to be made up in renewal of rol-

[Shri A. C. Guha]

ling stock and modernisation of railway equipments. This can be done only from the reserve funds. About 14 per cent of our locomotives are waiting for repairs. This is not a very sound thing for the railway organisation. So, I think there should not be any complacency on the part of the railways that the reserve fund can be allowed to be depleted recklessly.

Then I come to fuel consumption. I feel proper attention has not been given to it. I think the Railway Minister himself is conscious that proper attention is not being given to fuel economy. That is why he has made only a brief reference to that very important question. During the last few years the fuel bill has been increasing very rapidly. In the three years including the coming year for which Budget estimates have been given, our fuel bill would increase by 30 per cent. I think there is enough scope for fuel economy. In another connection I had to go through certain papers, and Dr. Lahiri of the Fuel Research Institute himself made scathing remarks about lack of fuel economy procedures, not only of the railways but of the entire industrial sector in India. I think the Railway Board should prudently set up a committee to consider the question, the very important question, of fuel economy. It is not only a question of effecting financial economy for the railways, it is also a question of effecting economy in the consumption of coal. Coal is a wasting wealth of India, and we are not very rich in the quantity of coal that we possess. Therefore, there should be every attempt to conserve coal and to minimise unnecessary consumption. Alongwith coal comes the question of punctuality. Now, the railways are rather unpunctual. It is generally taken for granted that certain trains will not come in time. That by itself is a condemnation of the administration.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The hon. Member's time is up.

Shri A. C. Guha: I shall need about five more minutes.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Two or three minutes.

Shri A. C. Guha: The quality of the coal is somewhat responsible for that. They may set up their own washeries to improve the quality of coal. There is mention of only one washery in Karanpura but it is not known whether it will be under the administration of NCDC or the Railways. It is better not to depend upon other agencies to supply washed coal. The Railways may set up their own washeries and get washed coal. It may then be possible to effect some economy in the use of coal and in maintaining punctuality of trains.

I like again to refer to the North-east Frontier Railway. During British days certain lines were considered strategic and the Defence Department gave certain subsidies for them. I do not know whether such a system can be devised for this, because this Railway shows a huge deficit and is not also likely to prove lucrative in near future. But it will be more and more a strategic railway; more and more strategic use of it will be made. I think the Defence Ministry should make some subsidy to this railway for this purpose.

The two drains on the railway revenues are; claims on compensation and ticketless travelling. Every year about Rs. 3.5 crores are given as compensation and we cannot measure the loss on account of ticketless travelling. A little over Rs. 2 crores is realised from those who are detected but we can surely say that hardly ten per cent or even less of the ticketless travellers are detected. So, the Railways must have incurred a loss of about Rs. 20 crores through ticketless travel.

I am just finishing. There is then the question of public opinion, educating public opinion and more so, educating the railway officials. It will be agreed by all that ticketless travelling and claims originate mostly in connivance with the railway staff. I do not say that everyone is dishonest but surely without their connivance this sort of thing cannot go in, on such a large scale. The Railways have been doing fairly well and have been making rapid progress even as regards the manufacture and supply of their equipment. Chittaranjan and Perambur are proved possessions not only for the Railways but also for the entire nation. Over 91 per cent of the stocks and equipments are procured in India and we hope that with further progress it will be possible to have the entire stock and equipment in India. With these words I support the Budget.

श्री राम शंकर प्रसाद सिंह (छपरा) :

उपाध्यक्ष महोदय, मैं आप का बहुत अभारी हूँ कि आपने मुझे रेलवेज के बारे में अपने विचार व्यक्त करने का अवसर दिया है।

गत १६ फरवरी को माननीय रेलवे मंत्री ने इस सदन के समक्ष जो बजट उपस्थित किया, उस का स्वागत देश के कोने कोने से हो रहा है। इस बजट में यात्रियों के ऊपर कोई किराया नहीं बढ़ाया गया है और आमदनी भी दिखाई गई है।

रेलवे विभाग के अधिकारी भी प्रशंसा के पात्र हैं कि उन्होंने इस एमर्जेंसी में, इस संकट-कालीन स्थिति में, बड़ी मुस्तैदी के साथ काम किया और दिन-रात काम करते हुए लड़ाई के सामान को देश के एक कोने से दूसरे कोने में पहुंचाया। दे इस प्रकार उन्होंने जिस कर्तव्य-परायणता का पालन किया, वह उनकी देशभक्ति का परिचायक है।

रेलवेज केवल एक व्यापारिक संस्था ही नहीं है और केवल व्यापारिक दृष्टि से ही उसका महत्व नहीं है, बल्कि जन-साधारण के प्रति-दिन प्रयोग की दृष्टि से भी वह एक महत्वपूर्ण स्थान रखती है। कबल इस के कि मैं जनता की आवश्यकताओं के विषय में आप का ध्यान आकर्षित करूँ मैं अपना यह पुनीत कर्तव्य समझता हूँ कि रेलवेज में बहालियों का जो सिलसिला है, उस की ओर आप का ध्यान दिलाऊँ। रेलवेज में थर्ड ग्रेड के कर्म-चारियों की बहाली के लिए देश में चार रेलवे पब्लिक सर्विस कमीशन बन चुके हैं। इस सम्बन्ध में जो परीक्षा ली जाती है, उस में अंग्रेजी भाषा से काम लिया जाता है और उसमें रिजनल भाषाओं का इस्तेमाल न होने से रेलवेज में सुयोग्य और दक्ष व्यक्तियों का समावेश नहीं होता है और रेलवेज को अपने काम के लिए उपयुक्त आदमी नहीं मिलते। उस का नतीजा यह होता है कि काम बहुत दिनों तक उप्प पड़ा रहता है और काम के सुचारू रूप से चलने में बाधा पड़ती है। मैं रेलवे अधिकारियों और विशेषतः मनानीय मंत्री जी का ध्यान इस ओर आकर्षित करूँगा कि इस समय रेलवे पब्लिक सर्विस कमीशन की जो संख्या है, उस को कम से कम डबल किया जाए।

बिहार में हिन्दी-भाषा-भाषी लोग रहते हैं। बिहार में इस वक्त नार्थ-ईस्टर्न रेलवे ईस्टर्न रेलवे, सदर्न रेलवे और नार्थ-ईस्ट इण्डियन रेलवे, ये चार रेलवेज चलती हैं। बिहार के जो लोग नौकरी के लिए आवेदन-पत्र देते हैं, उन की परीक्षा कलकत्ता, इलाहाबाद या ऐसे ही स्थानों पर होती है। इस से उन लोगों को काफ़ी कठिनाई का सामना करना पड़ता है। झांकड़ों से पता चलता है कि रेलवे पब्लिक सर्विस कमीशन पर जितना खर्च होता है, उस का एक-चौथाई भाग तो केवल परीक्षा के लिए निर्धारित फ़ार्म भेजने से ही प्राप्त हो जाता है। आज-कल चार रेलवे पब्लिक

[श्री राम शेखर प्रसाद सिंह]

सर्विस कमीशन के लिये रेलवे प्रशासन पर जितना खर्च पड़ता है, उसी अनुपात से और पब्लिक सर्विस कमीशन की संख्या बढ़ाने पर भी उतने ही खर्च से काम चल सकता है। अगर उस में कोई कमी हो, तो सम्बद्ध राज्य सरकारों से सहायता ली जा सकती है। मेरा नम्र निवेदन है कि रेलवे मिनिस्ट्री को इधर ध्यान देना चाहिये और जल्द से जल्द रेलवे पब्लिक सर्विस कमीशन के नम्बर को बढ़ा कर रिजिनल लैवेजिज में परीक्षा लेने का बन्दोबस्त करना चाहिये।

जब सरकार की ओर से रिटायरमेंट की एज ५८ साल कर दी गई है, तो यह उचित है कि बहाली की एज में भी वृद्धि की जाये और उस को २५ बरस के स्थान पर २८ साल कर दिया जाए। मेरा विनम्र निवेदन है कि माननीय रेलवे मंत्री इस ओर ध्यान दें।

इस में कोई संदेह नहीं है कि व्यापारिक दृष्टि से रेलवेज ने बहुत उन्नति की है। उस की आमदनी भी बढ़ी है और पार्टीशन के बवत जिन इन्जनों और दूसरे पुर्जों आदि को बाहर से मंगाना पड़ता था, उन का भी उत्पादन यहां पर होने लगा है और ऐसी स्थिति आ गई है कि कुछ दिनों के बाद हम दूसरे देशों को भी ये सामान भेज सकेंगे।

लेकिन पब्लिक यूटिलिटी, जन-साधारण की सेवा, की दृष्टि से जितनी तरक्की होनी चाहिये, वह नहीं हुई है। आंकड़ों से पता चलता है कि रेलवे की आमदनी का अस्सी फ्रीसदी भाग तृतीय वर्ग के यात्रियों के भाड़े से आता है। लेकिन उनकी स्थिति में जितना सुधार होना चाहिये, उतना सुधार नहीं हो सका है। यह सही है कि गाड़ियों में पंखे लगे हैं, बत्तियों का प्रबंध किया गया है, पाखाने भी पहले से कुछ अधिक हो गये हैं, लेकिन फिर भी जितनी

सुविधाएं उनको प्रदान की जानी चाहिये थी, उतनी प्रदान नहीं की गई हैं। ज्यादा ध्यान अगर क्लासिस की तरफ दिया जाता है। हमारा देश एक गरीब देश है और यहां पर ज्यादा लोग तृतीय श्रेणी में ही यात्रा करते हैं और उन्हीं से हमें अधिकतर पैसा मिलता है और हमारा काम चलता है, लेकिन देखा जाता है कि एयर-कंडिशनड कोचिज इत्यादि पर ही ज्यादा पैसे खर्च कर दिये जाते हैं। इन एयर कंडिशनड कोचिज का जहां तक संबंध है, इन कम्पार्टमेंट्स का जहां तक संबंध है, दो ही तरीके के लोग इनमें यात्रा करते हैं। एक तो सरकारी अधिकारी करते हैं या व्यापारी वर्ग के लोग करते हैं। अधिकशतः तो सरकारी अधिकारी ही इन में चलते हैं जिन को इसका भत्ता मिलता है और जिस का भार अन्त में जा कर गरीब किसानों आदि पर ही पड़ता है। मैं चाहता हूं कि अगर हो सके तो एयर-कंडिशनड गाड़ियों का इस्तेमाल केवल विदेशी भ्रमणकारियों जो टूरिस्ट आवें, उनके लिये ही किया जाये और उनको अपने इस्तेमाल में न नाया जाए। इससे काफी बचत हो सकती है।

तृतीय श्रेणी के यात्रियों के लिये भी आपने स्लीपज का इंतजाम किया है। लेकिन ये स्लीपज बहुत कम है। इनकी तादाद बढ़नी चाहिये। दूर तक जाने वाली गाड़ियों में देखा जाता है कि दो एक गाड़ियां ही तीसरे दर्जे की रहती हैं और ज्यादातर गाड़ियां फर्स्ट और सैंकिड क्लास की या एयरकंडिशनड की ही रहती हैं। इसका नतीजा यह होता है कि तीसरे दर्जे में बड़ी भीड़ भाड़ रहती है और इन धक्का मुक्की होता है। इस वास्ते आवश्यकता इस बात की है कि इन गाड़ियों में तीसरे दर्जे के डिब्बों की तादाद को बढ़ाया जाये और इन यात्रियों को प्राराम पहुंचाया जाए। मैं आशा करता हूं कि इस ओर माननीय मंत्री जी अवश्य ध्यान देंगे।

अब मैं रिजर्वेशन के बारे में कुछ कहना चाहता हूँ। तीसरे दर्जे के लिये भी आपने यह सुविधा दी है, यह अच्छी बात है। लेकिन इससे एक दुःखद परिस्थिति भी उत्पन्न हो गई है। जो एडवांस बुकिंग करा लेते हैं, अगर वे २४ घंटे पहले अपना टिकट वापिस करना चाहते हैं तब तो उनको बीस परसेंट कम मिलता है और अगर २४ घंटे पहले वापिस नहीं करते हैं, तो उनको कुछ भी नहीं मिलता है, उनका टिकट वापिस नहीं होता है। इसको भी कोई व्यवस्था की जानी चाहिये और यह जो २० परसेंट का चार्ज है यह भी कम होना चाहिये।

आपने टू टायर और घी टायर स्लीपर्स की भी व्यवस्था की है। लेकिन टू टायर स्लीपर्स में एंटेडेंट नहीं रहता है और घी टायर स्लीपर वाला ही इसकी निगरानी करता है, इससे बड़ी तकलीफ होती है। यह भी दूर होनी चाहिये। टू टायर स्लीपर में चलने वाले यात्री को तीन रुपये पचास नये पैसे या तीन रुपये पचहत्तर नए पैसे अधिक देने पड़ते हैं। रात को सोने की सुविधा उनको मिलती है। पता नहीं यह सरकारी आदेश है या मन माने ढंग से ही अधिकारी ऐसा कर देते हैं कि दिन में सुबह छः बजे के बाद उनको उठा दिया जाता है और टू टायर्स को बन्द कर दिया जाता है। इससे दूर चलने वाले व्यक्तियों को अमुविवा का सामना करना पड़ता है। इसका नतीजा यह होता है कि जो सुविधा देने के उद्देश्य से इस स्लीपर की व्यवस्था की गई है, इसका उलटा ही असर होता है और उनको परेशानी का सामना करना पड़ता है। मैं माननीय मंत्री जी का ध्यान इधर आकर्षित करता हूँ कि चाहे कुछ पैसे और अधिक क्यों न उनको देने पड़ें लेकिन टू टायर पर चलने वाले व्यक्तियों से जिन से सरचार्ज और भाड़े के रूप में पैसे लिये जाते हैं, उनको यह सुविधा भी प्रदान करे कि वे दिन में भी टू टायर्स का इस्तेमाल कर सकें।

अपर क्लासिस के बर्थ्स का जो रिजर्वेशन होता है तथा उनमें चलने वाले जो यात्री होते हैं उनको भी इसी प्रकार की कठिनाइयों का सामना करना पड़ता है। इस और भी सरकार का ध्यान जाना चाहिये। रिजर्वेशन के मामले को इस प्रकार से हल किया जाना चाहिये ताकि सभी यात्रियों को सुविधा हो और आपका कोई नुकसान भी न हो।

तीसरे दर्जे में सफर करने वाले यात्रियों को और भी कई प्रकार की कठिनाइयों का सामना करना पड़ता है। छोटे छोटे स्टेशनों पर बुकिंग विडोज़ देर से खोली जाती हैं, जब बहुत ही थोड़ा समय रह जाता है तब खोली जाती हैं, उस समय खोली जाती हैं जब भीड़ बहुत हो जाती है। इसका नतीजा यह होता है कि कई यात्रियों को टिकट ही नहीं मिल पाते हैं, कइयों को कम पैसे वापिस मिलते हैं, कइयों से ज्यादा पैसे लेकर कम दूरी के टिकट दे दिये जाते हैं। इस और भी सरकार का ध्यान जाना चाहिये और ऐसी व्यवस्था की जानी चाहिये जिससे लोगों को इस प्रकार की कठिनाइयों का सामना न करना पड़े।

ऐसा भी देखा गया है कि जब टाइम टेबल तैयार किया जाता है, यात्रियों की सुविधा का ध्यान नहीं रखा जाता है। पुराने इंप्रूवमेंट से ही वह बना दिया जाता है और सुझाव अगर दिये भी जायें तो उसका कोई नतीजा नहीं मिलता है। मैं आपका ध्यान खपरा और सोनपुर के बीच अप एंड डाउन गाड़ियों की तरफ दिलाना चाहता हूँ। अप साइन में आठ घंटे के अन्दर कोई दूसरी गाड़ी नहीं मिलती है। इसी आठ घंटे के बीच में एक जनता गाड़ी जाती है और उस जनता गाड़ी को बीच के सभी स्टेशनों पर रोकने के लिए कितनी ही बार खतोकिताबत की गई है, लेकिन कोई फल नहीं निकला है। डाउन

[श्री राम शेखर प्रसाद सिंह]

ट्रेन का भी यही हाल है। एक पांच बजे शाम को ट्रेन चलती है छपरा से सोनपुर की तरफ, उसके बाद फिर सबेरे चार बजे ही ट्रेन मिलती है। बीच में कोई गाड़ी नहीं है। ग्राम लोगों का कहना है कि जब टाइम टेबल बनाया जाता है, उस वक्त टाइम टेबल अधिकारी के पास वहां के जो लोकल मोटरें चलाने वाले होते हैं, लोकल बसें चलाने वाले होते हैं, वे सिफारिश करके ऐसी व्यवस्था करा देते हैं ताकि रेलों का इस्तेमाल न होवर बसें का ही इस्तेमाल अधिक हो। इस प्रकार से रेलों को पैसे का नुकसान होता है। साथ ही साथ लोगों को जो सुविधा मिलनी चाहिये, नहीं मिलती है, मैं चाहता हूँ कि इस ओर भी सरकार का ध्यान जाए। लोगों की सुविधा को ध्यान में रखते हुए ही टाइम टेबल बनाया जाना चाहिये। मैं यह नहीं कहता कि रेल की व्यापारिक दृष्टि को न देखा जाए। वह भी देखा जाए लेकिन जनता का भी ध्यान रखा जाए। ज्यादा से ज्यादा लोगों का जिसमें लाभ हो, वही व्यवस्था की जानी चाहिये।

गुडज़ एण्ड पार्सल्ज की बुकिंग के बाद उनको रखने के लिए शेंड्ज की व्यवस्था नहीं होती है। जो लोग अपना सामान बुक कराते हैं, उनका सामान पानी में ही भीगता रहता है। उसकी भी ठीक तरह देखभाल का प्रबंध होना चाहिये। पी० डब्ल्यू० डी० और डिस्ट्रिक्ट बोर्ड की सड़कों से मिलती हुई जो रेलवे सड़क आती है, इतनी खराब कंडिशन में होती है कि लोगों को सामान आदि लाने में बड़ी असुविधा होती है। इस ओर भी रेलवे विभाग का ध्यान जाना चाहिये।

अब मैं डिपार्टमेंटल कैटरिंग के बारे में दो शब्द कहना चाहता हूँ। कुछ समय पहले तक कांटेक्टर्स के जरिये यह काम होता रहा

है लेकिन जब इस विभाग ने डिपार्टमेंटल कैटरिंग की व्यवस्था ज्यादा तर स्टेशनों पर, बड़े बड़े तथा छोटे-छोटे स्टेशनों पर कर दी है। लेकिन मैं आपका ध्यान रांची स्टेशन की ओर दिलाना चाहता हूँ। रांची बिहार गवर्नमेंट का ग्रीष्मकालीन यानी समर कैम्प है। औद्योगिक दृष्टि से वह बहुत ऊंचा स्थान होता जा रहा है। वहां सरकार द्वारा कोई कैटरिंग का प्रबन्ध नहीं किया गया है। बाहर बी० एन० आर० होटल अवश्य है। लेकिन वहां नहीं है। उससे केवल बड़े लोग ही इससे लाभ उठा सकते हैं। पैसा अधिक लिया जाता है जो ग्राम लोग दे नहीं सकते हैं। ग्राम लोगों के खाने पीने की चीजों का प्रबन्ध सरकार की तरफ से वहां होना बहुत जरूरी है। अगर डिपार्टमेंटल कैटरिंग वहां नहीं हो सकता है और कांटेक्टर के द्वारा ही यह करवाना है तो किसी अच्छे कांटेक्टर के जिम्मे यह काम सौंपा जाना चाहिये ताकि सभी लोग इससे लाभ उठा सकें। इस संबंध में तीन बातों का होना बहुत आवश्यक है। एक तो यह देखा जाना चाहिये कि लोगों को क्वालिटी सुपीरियर मिले। दूसरे प्राइस वाजिब हो और तीसरे ठीक समय पर लोगों को सामान मिले। यह चीज देखने में आज नहीं आ रही है। अपने अनुभव की एक बात मैं आपको बतलाना चाहता हूँ। जहां पर डिपार्टमेंटल कैटरिंग है, वहां पर भी लोगों की सुविधा के अनुसार उनको सामान नहीं मिलता है। अभी हम लोग पटना से एक साथ आ रहे थे। उसी ट्रेन में माननीय मिनिस्टर फार पालिमेंटरी अफेयर्स भी आ रहे थे। कानपुर स्टेशन पर हम लोगों को श्री प्रिय गुप्त की मार्फत चाय ठीक समय पर मिल गई। लेकिन माननीय मिनिस्टर फार पालिमेंटरी अफेयर्स को नहीं मिली। अन्त में स्टेशन मास्टर को बुलाया गया और उन्होंने डिपार्टमेंटल कैटरर से कहा कि अगर माननीय मंत्री जी को

चाय नहीं पहुंचाई गई तो तुम्हें चले जाना होगा। जब इस प्रकार का छोट दिया गया तभी माननीय मंत्री जी को चाय मिल सकी। जब बड़े बड़े लोगों का यह हाल होता है, तो छोटे लोगों का क्या हाल हो सकता है, इस का अंदाजा आप लगा सकते हैं। मैं यह चाहता हूँ कि इस और भी ध्यान दिया जाए। कृपालानी कमेटी ने यह सुझाव दिया था कि जहां डिपार्टमेंटल कैंटरिंग हो वहां साथ साथ प्राइवट कैंटरिंग का भी इंतजाम होना चाहिये ताकि कम्पीटीशन की भावना रहे और काम ठीक तरह से चले अगर ऐसा किया जाता तो यह बहुत अच्छा होता।

अन्त में मैं माननीय मंत्री जी को जो बजट उन्होंने पेश किया है, उसके लिए धन्यवाद देता हूँ। रेलवे बोर्ड तथा रेल अधिकारियों ने इस संकटकाल में जिस कार्य-कुशलता का परिचय दिया है, जिस देशभक्ति का परिचय दिया है, उसी कार्यकुशलता तथा प्रेम का परिचय वे आगे भी देंगे, ऐसी आशा की जानी चाहिये।

Shri Yajnik (Ahmedabad): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, at the outset I congratulate the Railway Ministry, the Railway Board and all the railway employees for the magnificent contribution that they have made to the war effort in the emergency that was created by the sudden invasion by Chinese forces. I also support the increase in the interest charges payable to the general revenues on capital at charge. I also support the increase in the appropriation to the reserve fund. But I regret to say that I have again to join the other members of this House, some, I am glad to find, from the Congress side too, in opposing the surcharge on railway freights.

Now, the Railway Minister has told us that he wants 19 crores. I grant that he should have Rs. 19

crores, but I say that they are in his pocket. He has got them and he will get them next year. But, unfortunately, this Ministry, like many other Ministries, is ruled by the spirit of the old bureaucracy, and bureaucracy has the curious method of under-estimating incomes, taxing people much beyond their capacity and then spending the money so obtained in a most lavish manner.

Now to take first things first, I charge the Railway Ministry again of under-estimating income for the year 1963-64. Even the Audit Report refers to the tendency of the Railway Ministry to under-estimate the earnings in the year 1961-62 which exceeded the budget estimates by about Rs. 10 crores or more. What is the position, so far as 1963-64 is concerned? There is no reason why the traffic earnings should not increase by about Rs. 15 crores in the budget year, as they have risen by more than Rs. 20 crores in 1961-62 and by about Rs. 18 crores in 1962-63. Therefore, the Ministry should be perfectly justified in budgeting for an increase of at least Rs. 15 crores, instead of Rs. 5 crores that they have estimated. You may say that the increase last year was due to the surcharge on passenger fares. But this increase in surcharge has another aspect. It also provides or acts as a disincentive for people from travelling. If the earning from passenger fares has increased and continues to increase at the same rate during the last two years, the Ministry has shown no earthly reason whatsoever why they cannot estimate next year's income on the same basis. Therefore, I say that at least Rs. 10 crores to 15 crores more would be realised from passenger fares than what they have estimated in the budget. So, out of Rs. 19 crores that they want, Rs. 10 crores of 15 crores are already in their pockets.

There is another story of reckless spending and maladministration. I do not want to open the lid of the eptire Railway Administration. Some have

[Shri Yajnik]

shown what a Devil's cauldron it is. I will not go into any but the most proved facts and arguments that the Audit Report itself has given. Now, let us remember that the Audit Report itself which brings out cases of irregularities and wasteful expenditure that might amount to many crores of rupees if they are properly calculated, is only a kind of a sample survey; it does not aspire to cover every kind of irregularity, every case of maladministration and every kind of avoidable expenditure that has been indulged in by the Railway Ministry. Taking this to be a sample survey what do we find?

I will not go into small items. The first big thing that hits me in the eye is the under-charges detected in the Audit Report which have increased from Rs. 0.66 crores in 1956-57 to Rs. 2 crores in 1961-62. This under-charge raises the percentage of under-charges in total freight earning from 0.19 per cent to 0.40 per cent. Rs. 2 crores have been given away in wilful charity to consignors. If the Audit Report shows that it amounts to Rs. 2 crores, I am perfectly justified in saying that it should amount, if proper calculation is made on all railways and in every case, to many, many more crores of rupees than what the Audit Report says.

Then, there is the question of surplus stores. I only refer to it as a guiding factor. The value of surplus stores has increased from Rs. 4.01 crores in 1957-58 to Rs. 6.76 crores in 1961-62 thus raising the percentage of surplus to total stores balance from 4 to 8 per cent. That is to say, the percentage has nearly doubled. Of this surplus stores more than one-third is included in dead stores which can only be disposed of as scrap. This dead store would amount to Rs. 2 crores. If we take into calculation all the pilferage and thefts that go on, detected and undetected—according to some reports, that goes to line the pockets of several persons in railway employ, whether they are high officials or III

or IV class servants—you might reach the staggering figure of Rs. 20 crores to Rs. 30 crores which are probably lost to the Railways in this kind of avoidable waste.

Then, there are the contractors.

Shri U. M. Trivedi: On a point of order, Sir, there is no quorum. Quorum is essential.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Well; ring the bell.

Shri Sham Lal Saraf (Jammu and Kashmir): Even the Whips themselves are not present

श्री सिंहासन सिंह (गोरखपुर) : अपो-जीशन बेंचेज भी खाली पड़ी है ।

श्री उ० मू० त्रिवेदी : मैंने गिन लिये, १४ हम लोग इस समय है लेकिन आप कितने हैं ।

श्री श्यामलाल सराफ : दोनों का एक सा हाल है ।

श्री सिंहासन सिंह : सट्टल हाल में चाय बंद करनी चाहिये ।

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Order, order; no discussion across the Benches.

Shri U. M. Trivedi: I am sorry. Shri Sinhasan Singh raised it.

Shri Bade (Khargone): Where is the question of party?

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: All are equally guilty.

Shri U. M. Trivedi: That is why I came back.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Yes, Mr. Yajnik.

Shri Yajnik: I was referring to the money that is lost in dealing with the contractors who are play-boys of the Railway Administration.

The Audit report cited the case of one timber contractor who had been favoured with more than 100 con-

tracts and the Audit report says that the Railways have lost in dealing with him about Rs. 46 lakhs, some of which has been paid on totally false bills, and out of which some money has been collected, but about Rs. 33 lakhs remain to be collected and might have to be written off. These are only samples. You can well imagine the amount of loss that would be incurred by the Railways in dealing with contractors who, very often, give goods and services below specified standards, but somehow shut the mouths of the officer in charge by dubious means.

The most outstanding of these irregularities that have been brought to the notice of the public by the Audit Report is the shortage of coal found in the wagons sent to the various destinations and to various enterprises by the collieries. Extraordinary shortages of coal sent by the collieries have been detected on the South Eastern Railway in 1962 as follows: Bhilai lost 54 per cent; Waltair 12.29 per cent; Satragachi 5 to 7 per cent; Kharagpur 16 per cent, Bilaspur 9 to 18 per cent, in shortages as compared to the invoiced amount. The amount is invoiced at the station of consignment and yet, while the coal is in charge of the Railways, shortage is discovered at the station of destination: not 1 or 2 or 5 per cent; the percentages run up to 54 per cent, a really staggering figure, an all-time high in such transactions. We are told that in the Railway wagons, a line was drawn up to which coal was to be filled. The Railways had appointed some staff in order to check up whether the wagons were loaded to that point or not. But, the Railways, in their inscrutable wisdom, thought it fit to dispense with that staff as a measure of economy, with the result that crores have been wasted, crores have been lost to the Railways and to the people, whether it is Bhilai that has lost or the Railways have to pay the amount of loss to the consignees. But, anyway, it is our gift to the colliery magnates. How they palmed off

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all the amount that is mentioned in the invoices written by goods clerks is anybody's guess. But the fact remains that crores of rupees have been lost to the nation by under-hand means in the interests of the colliery proprietors.

These few illustrations are sufficient to show what can be done to save amounts in the next year. I would certainly say that everyone of these cases must be carefully inquired into, and whoever is found guilty of malpractices should be given condign punishment, however high or low a position he may occupy in the services. But, anyway, to be forewarned is to be fore-armed. The year is in front of you. It is no use having vigilance cells and similar cells in order to check up all these irregularities in the Railway Administration. The fact is that if the Railway Ministry itself becomes a vigilance cell, if everyone of the Ministers and the Ministers' associates, and every member of the Railway Board becomes the incarnation of a vigilance board and gives out the word that in the new year Government will more scrupulously and thoroughly examine every case of irregularity and will serve out condign punishment to whoever is found guilty, I think that there would be considerable improvement in the affairs, and there would be a saving of many crores of rupees that will again be there in the Railway Ministry's pockets.

If these two measures are taken, that is to say, if we estimate properly the earnings of the railway passenger fares for the next year at about Rs. 15 crores as they would be in the normal course, and if we at the same time did away with even some of the irregularities that plague the footsteps of the Railway Administration from year to year, I would say that Government would have more than Rs. 19 crores in their pockets, and there would be no earthly reason whatever for Government to levy any surcharge on freight rates.

[Shri Yajnik]

Then, I would submit that while Government indulges in miserly economies in some matters like the dispensing with the necessary inspection staff at the colliery stations, and while it is wasting any amount of money on avoidable expenditure and in useless stocks, I profoundly regret to say that some more urgent lines are starved for want of funds. And if I revert first and foremost to the broad gauge link to Kandla, I may not be misunderstood as a chauvinist or as a sectarian, because Kandla was conceived of as a port alternative to Karachi. It is an all-India port. It has been developed as an all-India port. Crores and crores of rupees have been spent and are being spent, and what is the result today? Recently a newspapers correspondent has clearly stated that due to the inadequacy of the rail link, 50,000 tons of foodgrains and fertilisers have been awaiting clearance for 8 months in godowns at the Kandla port. Kandla is probably to be declared a free port. Crores of more money are to be spent. More goods are being shipped to the Kandla port. But what is the use? Kandla itself cannot consume all the goods. It has to export goods by rail. If the line capacity on the Palanpur metre gauge side is limited, the only other alternative is to have a broad gauge link with Ahmedabad. Therefore the Jund-Kandla link has been planned. But what is the amount of money that has been spent. Out of Rs. 8 crores to be spent, the amount sanctioned for this—Rs. 6 lakhs have been spent uptil now; one poor lakh of rupees is to be spent in 1963-64 while Rs. 7.92 lakhs are to be spent the year after. With the result that Kandla will have more and more goods than it can possibly handle, and all the wonderful schemes of development that are being cogitated by either the port authorities of Kandla or the Gujarat Government or the Central Government are going to hang fire till the broad gauge link with Jund and through Jund with Ahmedabad is an

established fact. I would, therefore, earnestly request the Ministry to see if they cannot spend more money on this and help in the development of a first class port. It was a dream of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. He in his great wisdom foresaw the necessity of having a port on the western coast as an alternative to Karachi. The port has been planned and established, but for want of the minimum amenities that a railway link can supply, it is starved. I would once again urge the Railway Ministry to see if they cannot speed up the construction of the Jund-Kandla link.

Then I must also protest most emphatically against the manner in which the station of Ahmedabad, capital of Gujarat State, is being starved. The metre gauge station at Ahmedabad has been remodelled at a break-neck pace—I was very glad to see that the work was put through in a very record time—but when it comes to the broad gauge link, things are hanging fire. Out of the total amount of Rs. 1.93 crores to be spent on this broad gauge station, only Rs. 47 lakhs have been spent and only Rs. 60 lakhs are to be spent in the next year, leaving a big balance of Rs. 86 lakhs for the years thereafter. Now the tragedy is this that while the new metre gauge station has been opened, the old broad gauge station remains at the same place, with the result there is a terrible amount of confusion for the passengers who have to go a long distance in order to get their connections in the metre gauge line. We have been told that all this confusion will disappear and every passenger will be very happy as soon as the broad gauge station is remodelled, but why don't you do it soon? What prevents you from doing it? If you can spend more than Rs. 2 crores on the Himmatnagar-Udaipur line during the next year, why can you not spend the whole lot of money that you have to spend for remodelling this broad gauge station, so that the woes and difficul-

ties of all kinds of passengers—men, women and children, old people and young—might be smoothed away and redressed within a very short time.

The narrow gauge railways of Gujarat, again, are a sorry spectacle to behold. I have been raising the question of the narrow gauge railways year after year, but unfortunately there is no response from the Ministry and the Government at all. I think it is time they woke up from their slumber. The narrow gauge railways have to be either scrapped or remodelled. If they are to continue, let them be continued in a proper manner with some new engines, with some new coaches and with the minimum amenities that are necessary for the travel of human beings. Unfortunately, people have very often to travel in the night in complete darkness. There is no water and there is no light. They are so crowded that it is impossible to go to the lavatory. Like the friend from Assam who said that Assam was the Cinderella of India, which it should not be in view of its strategic importance, I would say that unfortunately Gujarat is in the position of a second Cinderella of the railways.

The former Railway Minister, Shri Jagjivan Ram, told us that he would look into the upgrading of the Saurashtra railways, which are all metre gauge. that he would see that they were brought to the standard of the broad gauge railways which operate in the rest of our State. Unfortunately, that promise, that assurance, has not been fulfilled. Even today as you pass from Viramgam to the other side, you will feel as if you are in a different railway administration altogether. The trains move so slowly that you would feel that you were still in the ante-deluvian days when the railways were worked by the Rājas and Maharajas of Saurashtra. I wish the Railway Board and the Railway Ministry

apply their mind to the matter and see to it that the Saurashtra railways which comprise a good network are brought up to the mark and in consonance and conformity with the rest of the railway system in Gujarat.

Lastly, I am afraid that all this talk that we have been having in this House has been a voice in the wilderness up till now, and probably it will remain so till the headquarters of the metre gauge lines are transferred from Bombay to some place within Gujarat. I am not indulging in any linguism, but I do feel that the Western Railway's management, seated in Bombay, is not able to do proper justice especially to the metre gauge and the narrow gauge lines, to which they have no direct access at all.

Shri Bade: It should be in Ajmer.

17 hrs.

Shri Yajnik: Anyway, what I say is that the management of the metre gauge railway lines leaves much to be desired. It is time a separate section of the Western Railway was formed to deal with the metre gauge requirements, with its headquarters shifted to some city from Bombay which does not have any metre gauge connection at all. I would earnestly request the Railway Ministry carefully to look into this matter and not to turn a deaf ear to our woes and cries which we have been repeating year after year. Let us not be compelled to take to any agitation the like of which cannot possibly be permitted under the present circumstances of emergency. I wish, therefore, the Railway Ministry to do what it can in this matter.

17.01 hrs.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Monday, March 4, 1963/Phalgunā 13, 1884 (Saka).