

[Shri C. D. Deshmukh]
goods, leather and leather manufactures and tobacco. The demand for most of these items is, generally speaking, not likely to be affected significantly by the disinflationary measures being adopted by the United Kingdom Government. Our imports from the United Kingdom consist mainly of machinery, chemicals, iron and steel, vehicles and metal manufactures. It is not easy to estimate at this stage to what extent the supply of these articles would be augmented by the restriction on the production of consumer goods which the disinflationary policy of the United Kingdom will cause. Nor is it possible to say that the prices for these articles will go down appreciably. Altogether, I am not now in a position to envisage the effect of the disinflationary measures that are now being adopted either on the prices or on the quantum of our imports from the U.K.

As members of the sterling area we are interested in the balance of payments of the United Kingdom, as of all members of the sterling area, with the non-sterling world. This balance has, for some considerable time, been adverse, with the consequence that the Central Gold and Dollar Reserves of the sterling area have of late been substantially reduced. Any steps which have the effect of improving the balance of payments of the sterling area, such as the disinflationary policies being followed by the United Kingdom, are welcome to the Government of India.

RAILWAY BUDGET—GENERAL DISCUSSION—*contd.*

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: The House will now proceed with the discussion on Railway Budget. The time allowed for general discussion is 15 hours. Out of this time the time availed of is 5 hours and 58 minutes and the balance left is 9 hours and 2 minutes.

Shri D. C. Sharma was in possession of the House.

Shri D. C. Sharma (Hoshiarpur): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, I was saying yesterday that the window is a very important part of a building and it should reveal something which is not out of proportion to the actual reality of the situation. I am afraid, instead of accusing the Railway Minister of window-dressing I would say that the Railway Minister has not shown the worth of the goods that he has to the same kind of advantage to which he could have shown them. Moreover, I

do not think very highly of a person who tries to peep into a house through the window when he is perfectly at liberty to enter the house at any time.

Now, I find that there are two approaches which can be made to the Railway Budget. One is the academic bookish approach, the approach worthy of a student doing his post-graduate study and writing an essay for his class and the other approach is of practical observation of things seen and experienced. I would make the latter kind of approach.

What I do find? So far as I have been able to understand the Budget, I think the emphasis has been on four things. In the first place the Railway Ministry has been trying to attain self-sufficiency so far as locomotives and rolling-stock are concerned. In the second place it has been trying to make the railway travel as comfortable as possible. In the third place it has been working, as far as the funds permit, for the social welfare of its employees. In the fourth place it has been trying to step up the efficiency of the railway administration. I know one can compare our railway system with the railway system of any other country, but so far as I know, if our railway system is compared to the railway system of any other country in a judicious and impartial manner I would say with all sense of responsibility that our railways would show a record of achievement of which any Indian can be proud, of which any man can be proud. I would say that we inherited a railway which had been debilitated on account of the war and other things, yet, the progress of rehabilitation in our country has been very considerable. If we compare this progress with the progress achieved even in a country like the United Kingdom which has so many years of experience of railway building or railway administration, I would say that our record is, if not greater, at least as great as that of England. So far as self-sufficiency is concerned, I do not think any country in the world can show as rapid strides as we have made. The Chittaranjan Locomotive Works is there for anybody to see. Its record is there for anybody to study and its products are there for anybody to sample, and if anyone does that, he will see that we have established the traditions of mechanical engineering in this country in a much shorter time than any other country has been able to do. Again, the Integral Coach Factory is there. Of course, our needs are much greater than those that can be supplied

by this national undertakings. But, all the same, the speed at which we are moving and the speed at which we are working is something which will make anybody's heart happy. For all this, I would say that the congratulations are to be given to the Railway Minister and to the Railway Board and to those millions of workmen who are engaged in running this railway industry of ours.

For the last two or three years, I find that there has been a new look, a bright look, in the railway administration and the credit for that goes to some extent, or to a large extent, to the Railway Board which the hon. Minister, with a stroke of foresight, reconstituted, and also to the good work that the Railway Board has done and the amount of co-operation that the Board has been able to get from the workers of the railways all along the line. It was said that the railway workers want a Pay Commission. It was said that the railway workers are not satisfied with the tribunal's work. So far as the question of pay is concerned, I think every worker in our country wants that his pay should be enhanced. It is not a desire peculiar to the railways. But the fact of the matter is this. For this, you require an overall Commission and not a Commission which will concern itself only with the railways. It is a national question, and it has to be tackled not by one Ministry or the other but on a national basis. It has been said about the workers, in the Railway Minister's speech, as follows:

"The relations between the National Federation of Indian Railwaymen and the Railway Board throughout the year have been cordial. The House is possibly aware of the fact that, at a meeting that was held between the Federation and the Railway Board in July, 1955, it was possible within a short space of four days to come to an agreement in respect of three of the five terms of reference to the *ad hoc* tribunal."

After this categorical statement made by the Railway Minister in his budget speech, I do not think that any reference should have been made in whatever manner to the lapses or shortcomings of the judicial tribunal.

I want to say a few things about comfortable travel. I have been to a few countries and I must say that our system of planning is quite different from the system of planning which is adopted by other countries. In other countries I find that they have luxury trains and

those luxury trains astonish and dazzle the tourists. People come back from those countries after having travelled by those luxury trains and they have very glowing accounts to give of those conditions of travel. That is the way of planning with some countries. But I must say, as I said yesterday, that the railways are the common man's undertaking. The railways are the common man's enterprise, and I am glad that here, the improvement has begun at the bottom much more than at the top. Some people say: "Why do you give vestibule trains, air-conditioned trains, etc., to third class passengers?" There are some persons who are very critical of that. I say that the Railway Board and the Railway Ministry have done a very wise thing in stepping up the level of comforts which have to be enjoyed by the third class passengers, because the third class passengers are the backbone of railway finance and railway funds. It is good that the administration has effected this improvement, and I would ask the Railway Minister to give a few more trains like that so that the common man could enjoy the privileges which he has to get on account of freedom. On the one hand, people say that the common man does not feel the glow of freedom, and on the other hand, if you do something for the common man, they ask: "Why have you done it"? I think what has been done for the third class passengers is a practical, living, visible proof of the solicitude which India has for the common man, and I think that this is something which is very fine.

In the matter of social welfare, I would say only one thing. I am glad that the hon. Minister has given some concessions to students and I think the student community will be grateful to him for that. But I would say to him that he should give similar concessions to the primary school teachers also. There are lakhs of primary school teachers in India and the primary school teacher is a person who is neglected by everybody, specially by our Education Departments and the Education Ministry. Since the railways have the welfare of the common man at heart, I think they should begin with the primary school teacher. Let them extend this concession to him also, and I can assure the Railway Minister that he will then have no need of window-display and window-dressing. Of course, he does not have any, but as some critics have said that, I mention that there is no need for him to do that. I think the primary

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 school teacher will be there to tell the people what the railways are doing for the common man. At the same time I would say that the railways should issue coupons to those persons who have to travel a great deal. Let these coupons be issued for those persons who travel for more than a thousand miles a year or something like that. I think that should be done immediately.

I would say that so far as the programme of social education is concerned, it should not be confined merely to posters, announcements etc. The social education programme of the railways should be linked up with the social education programmes of other Ministries also. I hope the Railway Minister has a sufficient amount of imagination and that he will expand this programme of social education and implement it. Social education requires that we should understand the underlying unity of India and compartments like regionalism and casteism and things like that should be done away with. I can say that so far as the unity of India is concerned, no other Ministry can give a better account of itself than the Railway Ministry. Therefore, I think that the social education programme of the railways should be directed towards this end.

[SHRIMATI SUSHAMA SEN in the Chair]

I am very happy to find that the Railway Ministry is going to associate workers with this undertaking. It is a step in the right direction and though it is going to be done on an experimental scale, I am sure that the experiment will succeed and expand as time passes by. I know that this experiment is bound to succeed.

I would like to make one more point. I would ask the Railway Minister to visit some of these railway bookstalls. These bookstalls are there to show the taste of the people. What kinds of books are found there? I am a book-man and I have been a book-man all my life. I feel very happy that these book-stalls are there, but I feel disgusted when I look at the fair that is spread—detective stories, film magazines and sexy novels. These form a major part of the fair that is displayed at the railway book-stalls.

An Hon Member: Bhagvat Gita also is there.

Shri D. C. Sharma: Gita is there, but it remains in a corner for which you will have to conduct research. I want

that the Railway Ministry should appoint a committee to put these things on a very able and sound basis.

Another point I want to refer to is this. I am a member of the committee appointed to consider means for preventing cruelty to animals and I have been going about in this country in that connection. Whenever I was at Madras, Hyderabad or Kurnool, people came to me and told me that the arrangements for transporting cattle from one place to another are not adequate. They also tell us that the way in which birds are taken from one place to another is also not good. Of course, so far as the rules of the Railway Board are concerned, they are all right, but those rules are not observed properly.

I want to ask the Railway Minister one question. While he is going to construct 3,000 miles of new lines in the Second Five Year Plan, I want to ask how many miles he is going to give to Punjab. The consideration of the Roh-tak-Gohana line has been going on all these years and it will go on for ever. I would request the Railway Minister to be more generous to Punjab, especially to the backward areas of the Punjab and Bihar. He should give a few lines to Punjab and Bihar and a few lines to the districts of Hoshiarpur and Kangra. I have been asking the Railway Minister to construct a 9 mile line from Una to Nangal, but he has not acceded to my demands. I think that it is a very small gesture which he can make to make the good work done by the Railway Ministry visible in that part of the country also.

I congratulate the Railway Minister for the good work that his Ministry is doing. It has been said that three things are necessary for a country: fertile soil, busy workshops and easy conveyance from one place to another. So, the Railway Ministry is responsible for one-third of the greatness of this country and I hope the Railway Minister will do better than before and there will be more and more proud achievements in the years to come.

Shri P. C. Bose (Manbhum North): The hon. Railway Minister made a remarkable speech the other day while presenting the Railway Budget for the year 1956-57. The speech is to be appreciated not only for the correct picture it has given of the various achievements of the railways during the first plan period, but also for the fact that it has laid before us the numerous projects that will

be undertaken during the second plan period. I was really filled with joy when the Minister said that the railways could now look back on their achievements during the First Five Year Plan with some satisfaction and embark upon the Second Five Year Plan with confidence.

There is a proposal for the imposition of a surcharge of one anna in the rupee on all freight traffic, with the exception of foodgrains and pulses. There must be some opposition from business quarters; the hon. Minister himself admits that this imposition was not desirable while the Freight Structure Committee was examining this question. But, as he said, the surcharge has become obligatory to meet the targets fixed for the Second Five Year Plan and this increase would cause little or no hardship. I think the public will have no objection to bear this burden in their own interests.

It is a matter of gratification to learn that various concessions and amenities for passengers have already been introduced and many will be introduced in the course of the next Plan period. These will be immensely enjoyed by the people. The Chittaranjan Locomotive Works and the Perambur Coach Factory are the two monuments of testimony of our successful march towards our goal.

About the labour movement, it has been made abundantly clear in this House that everything is not going well in the labour movement in the railways. It has been said by prominent leaders that there are two wings and that Government is not co-operating and so many other things. I think the main point has been overlooked by my friends. It is a known fact that the real object of the labour movement is to safeguard the interests and promote the welfare of the workers and that the unions are only the means to that end. That being so, I hope that the leaders of different labour groups, instead of knocking at the doors of the Railway Minister or the Railway Board, will resolve their own differences and dissensions and unite together for the good of the workers who are the real sufferers in this battle between the leaders. It is no use dragging the Railway Minister or the government officers in the controversy of the labour movement. The Railway Minister himself being a public man of long standing, I know and my labour leaders friends know that he had gone out of his way to settle the dispute between the different groups, and I think he is still prepared to go further to help the labour leaders. But it is the primary duty of the

labour leaders themselves to close their ranks, resolve their differences and unite in the interests of the labour.

Shri Nambiar (Mayuram): If the Minister encourages one against the other, what will be the position? That is the point.

Shri P. C. Bose: That you have to prove. If you do not go to the Minister and if you close your ranks you will find no difficulty.

We have always to remember that the union is only a means to an end, the end being the welfare of the labourers and not of this union under me or of that union under him.

With regard to corrupt practices in the railway administration, the hon. Minister has quoted from the report of the Anti-Corruption Committee and has said that most of the recommendations of the Committee have been accepted by the Railways to uproot corruption. So far so good. But I feel that the mere implementation of the recommendations of the Anti-Corruption Committee will not produce the desired effect unless the other observations of the Committee in the interests of the labourers are also taken into consideration. In connection with their recommendations the Committee have also said:

"We also feel that in a welfare State an employee should not be treated as merely a cog in the administrative machine but as a person who should be given full scope for his development and for the performance of his duty towards his family and society. In this respect the authorities should do their best to put the Directive Principles of State Policy as laid down in Part IV of the Constitution progressively into practice. With this end in view we recommend that greater attention should be paid to the problem of staff welfare than heretofore."

This observation should also be taken simultaneously with the other recommendations of the Committee for implementation.

I have to say a few words regarding the railway lines to be opened in my State. I know the Bihar State Government has made some suggestions for constructing some lines both on the northern side and on the southern side in areas where these lines are absolutely necessary and where, as one of my friends said yesterday, there was no railway line within about a hundred miles. So I would request the Railway Minister

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and the Railway Board to look to the demands of the Bihar State Government.

With these words I congratulate the Railway Minister on his budget.

Shri Achuthan (Crangannur): I think I will be failing in my duty if I do not join the other Members in the words of appreciation about the wonderful work undertaken by the Railway Ministry and the Railway Board. To me it is a wonder that the shortest man having the biggest undertaking—**Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri** being the shortest man in the Cabinet having the biggest undertaking with one million people—has done such a wonderful job. I say that the **Shastri-Alagesan-Shahnawaz** team is a good team which will be able to deliver the goods. We know that the Indian railways are the biggest national concern and we find year by year definite progress being made in all directions. In the First Five Year Plan we see that the amount allotted was more than Rs. 400 crores, and the main bulk of it was spent for rehabilitation work; and we see really that track renewal and new carriages and locomotives and other things are coming on the line and that as far as possible, in accordance with the economic development of the country, the Railways also are doing their proper job.

We see from the traffic receipts also that year after year the earnings have been going up. In 1954-55 the receipts were Rs. 286.78 crores, the revised estimate for 1955-56 is Rs. 314.1 crores and the figure for 1956-57 is Rs. 345 crores, to be made. So we can rest assured that in accordance with the economic development of the country and the plan, the earnings of the Railways are also going up. And, as has been said by the Railway Minister, during the Second Five Year Plan when the nation grows up the Railways also will have to take up a higher responsibility. It is because of that that the scheme of the Railways in the Second Five Year Plan was to spend Rs. 1,480 crores. But the Planning Commission, after due consideration of the economic development of the country and the resources available, have said that the Railways will be able to spend only an amount of Rs. 1,125 crores.

We see that the Railway Administration can be proud of the work done in Chittaranjan and in the Perambur factory. Nobody can gainsay that fact. We see that a number of dismantled lines

have been restored. But to my great sorrow my hon. friend **Shri C. R. Narasimhan** who has all the while, during the last five years, been clamouring for the restoration of a particular line has not been given an assurance about its restoration. Even so, we know that 380 miles of new lines have been constructed and 454 miles are under construction.

In my own State I had expected that the Quilon-Ernakulam line would be thrown open to traffic this year but due not to the fault of the Railways but the non-availability of certain essential material it is going to be thrown open to traffic only in 1957. Let us expect that there will not be any postponement in that matter beyond 1957 to any further period.

We find that because of the increase in the industrial production in the First Plan period by 43 per cent. and of agricultural production by 15 per cent. there is a regular awakening throughout the country and passengers and goods traffic is steadily on the increase. It is on account of this fact that the Railways expect to spend Rs. 1,125 crores during the Second Plan period. But the Railway Minister himself admitted that he would not be able to cope with the situation as regards passenger traffic. From today's papers I find that the Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry have stated that even though the Railways will be doing their best to cope with the situation, the private sector will not be able to get the required number of wagons. They have stated it in a resolution. The Railways have to look into the matter and see that both the public and the private sectors are reasonably satisfied with regard to the requirement of wagons. The Railway Minister stated that according to the revised allocation it will be possible to provide a transport capacity of 47 million tons instead of 60.8 million tons of goods.

Coming to the surveys that are going to be taken up, I understand that in my State namely Travancore-Cochin they are not going to have any new survey or construct any new line. I may point out here that the Trichur Kollengode line was surveyed a number of times and found useful also. The Tellicherry-Mysore line was also surveyed. That was also done recently. And we expect these to be taken up. Then the Chalakkudi-Parampikulam-Pollachi line has to be surveyed as also the Kuttipuram-Guruvayur-Crangannur-Alway line. These

new surveys ought to have been taken up. With regard to the Chalakkudi-Polachi line there is a tramway line even now, and the Railways may not have to spend more because of its present tramway line. I think this line will go in a half of that region and it will be to the advantage of that region. As a result of the construction of this railway, unemployment to a certain extent, could be reduced.

Coming to the question of administration, I agree with the Minister that the Railway Board has to be expanded. The hon. Minister said that there is a necessity for divisionalisation. In the budget speech the hon. Minister has stated:

“Under this pattern, each Railway system is divided into territorial units of suitable size, the general administration of which is entrusted to a Divisional Superintendent, who functions in his sphere more or less as the General Manager does for the entire Railway.”

In my part of the country, Travancore-Cochin and Malabar, there is a strong cry to have a divisional headquarters at Shoranur. The Railway Minister must be in the know of these things. I have got telegrams and papers which show that there is every justification at least for a divisional headquarters to be located at Shoranur where even now there are good offices and buildings. I think the hon. Deputy Minister knows the place very well. If at all, we have more hope from him than the Minister because the people of Kerala have faith in him.

Shri Nambiar: No faith in the Deputy Minister?

Shri Achuthan: He knows the place very well. The memorandum here says:

“The people of Kerala irrespective of their political leanings are united and eager on this question of location of a Railway Divisional headquarters within Kerala. Already the feeling exists that Kerala—particularly Malabar—is not receiving the amount of attention it should normally get both from the Centre and the State. This issue of the Railway Divisional Headquarters, if left unexamined is apt to strengthen the said feeling.”

I am sure this question will be seriously considered. Taking all the factors there is every justification for having a

divisional headquarters located at Shoranur.

Much has been stated about conditions of travel, overcrowding etc. The Railway Minister himself has said that he may not be able to lessen that under the Second Five Year Plan. A number of improvements have been introduced with regard to facilities to passengers. We know that the income from the third class passengers comes to about Rs. 100 crores roughly whereas from the upper classes, it is never more than Rs. 20 crores. More attention should be paid to the amenities of the third class passengers. I am sure that this will be looked into.

Next, I refer to the surcharge of one anna in the rupee. People generally say that more taxes are always irksome. The Railway Minister has very rightly accepted the principal that certain articles which are of common use should be exempted from the surcharge. This surcharge of one anna per rupee comes to about one-fourth of a pie per seer. This is good. I have no objection to this. If you require more money, you have to raise it by this taxation or by the general taxation. I also think that this will not hit trade and commerce. Even though there is a committee considering this question, I think we should not shut our eyes to this for one year. I think the Minister has done the right thing.

The decision to reduce the number of classes is good. I agree to that. I am not sure what is to happen about the fares if the third class is cancelled. Will it be third class fare and the third class coaches will be called second class? Will it be having the first class with first class fare, abolishing the present second class fare and the present third class to be second class? I should like the Railway Minister to make a definite statement about this, clarifying the position regarding fares.

I am very happy that the Government are going to introduce fast passenger trains. Coming from the southernmost part of the country, it takes 60 or 70 hours to be here. In the Grand Trunk Express, we take 45 hours. Do you know what feeling one has after travelling for 45 hours in the train? When these fast services are introduced from October, the number of hours from Delhi to Madras could be reduced considerably, so that we may not feel the worry and rigour of long journeys. I agree with Shri Dabhi with regard to the abolition of the com-mode system from these upper classes. I

[Shri Achuthan]

really feel annoyed at this commode system. We are not accustomed to it. Last year also, this question was raised. I hope the Railway Ministry will see to it that the commode system is gradually abolished and our own system introduced.

I am also very happy that the departmental system of catering is coming. We like the departmental system of catering in the Southern Railway. It is said that the rates charged for carrier meals Rs. 1-4-0 is high. I do not know how that rate is fixed. Here, in the Grand Trunk Express, the rate is Rs. 1-8-0. It seems to me to be high. It is high time that the Ministry looks into the matter and fixes a reasonable rate. We want cheap, clean, good food throughout the country. I am not quite sure, but I think the Southern Railway is incurring a small loss in departmental catering. I do not know where the fault lies. But, there is a feeling that the rate of Rs. 1-4-0 is high.

Shri Ramachandra Reddi referred to the P.W.D. Schedule and the Railway schedule. In many areas there are unions of contractors. I know, in my area, a number of contractors join together and there is a union amongst them. All the contractors will not tender for all the works. With regard to so many miles, only one contractor has got a monopoly, and he will make a tender only with regard to that. With regard to other distances, the other contractors will tender. There will not be any competition. Because of the high rates which are prevalent in the railways the contractors amass a lot of money. One fine morning, all the contractors will become millionaires. Some thing must be done for this.

Shri K. K. Basu (Diamond Harbour): They will give money for the elections.

Shri Achuthan: I want corruption to be stopped. As far as possible, the works must be undertaken by co-operative societies or other bodies where corruption will be less. I am very happy at the concession given to the students and the concession of 1½ fares between July and September. I think quite a lot of people will take advantage of this and travel throughout the country and see the works that are going on for the development of the nation.

Reference has been made to the ticket examiners. They have complained to us about their poor pay. I have also written about this many times. Some ticket examiners have complained that even in

the matter of distribution of uniforms to them, there is discrimination between the old M.S.M. Railway and the Southern Railway. They say that they get a less number of uniforms than the ticket examiners who were in the old M.S.M. Railway. In regard to their allowances and other facilities, they are handicapped. One ticket examiner told me that when he wanted to check the ticket of a passenger, he was almost manhandled by the passengers and he had to run away from the carriage. I have also brought this to the notice of the Minister. Taking all things together, I think the Railways are doing a good job and I am sure the Railways will try to see that the money that is allotted to them is spent in the best way. In all aspects the Railway Minister is seeing that the labour is given their due place, and that they are taken into confidence as far as possible. Shri Giri was emphatic yesterday in saying that there must be one organisation and that organisation must include all the sections of the railway employees, so that the Railway Board can deal with them in an effective way. Moreover, I was very much pleased to hear that the Railway Ministry was going to allow a thousand scholarships to the children of railway employees for technical studies.

1 P.M.

Mr. Chairman: The hon. Member's time is up.

Shri Achuthan: In the end I would like to say that I have nothing but praise for the Railway Ministry and I expect that the whole amount will be spent in the best way possible during the coming year.

Shri Tulsidas (Mehsana West): Madam Chairman, I must thank you for giving me an opportunity for making certain observations on this important Railway Budget. The Railway Minister in his Budget speech has given us a detailed picture of the financial and organisational structure of the Indian railways as it has emerged at the end of the First Five Year Plan. In his speech he has also outlined the salient features of the Second Five Year Plan and I think that we must examine what are the aspects that he has tried to tell us with regard to the Second Plan. It is in this context of the general programme of economic development envisaged in the draft outline of the Second Five Year Plan, that I shall try to examine the Railway Budget 1956-57 and also the Second Plan of the Indian railways.

Madam, I should make it clear that I have considerable appreciation for the achievements and success of the Indian railways in several directions during the last five years and for that first of all let me congratulate the Minister, Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri, for taking a very keen interest and for bringing a certain amount of improvement in the railways.

Shri K. K. Basu: And also for enhancement of freights!

Shri Tulsidas: The Railway Ministry has been able to repair the damage done to the Indian railways on account of stresses and strains of the Second World War and the Partition of India in 1947. It will be agreed that during this period the finances of the railways have been placed on a more stable and sound footing. This is quite clear from the progress report of the Indian railways during the First Plan. The railways have also succeeded in mobilising about three-fourths of the financial outlay of their First Plan from their own resources. While the railways have received the financial resources from the general revenues for their development, it is equally gratifying to note that the contribution of the railways to the general revenues has not only been maintained, but it has been gradually growing due to the enlargement of its capital-at-charge year after year.

There is a move to have self-sufficiency with regard to financial resources of the railways as well as with regard to the physical requirements of the railways. Now taking all that into consideration, Madam, I agree with the Railway Minister that a great degree of self-sufficiency has been achieved in respect of indigenous production of rolling stock. It has also been secured due to the sustained efforts at the expansion of the production capacity of the plants and workshops manufacturing rolling stock.

I would only hope that the railways will be able to plan the production of rolling stock with the objective that self-sufficiency will be achieved at the earliest. I am also pleased to note that the Railway Minister is quite serious and keen for providing increasing facilities to the passenger traffic at various concessional rates. To that extent his proposals in the Budget are welcome.

While pointing out these welcome features of the Indian railways, I shall be failing in my duty, if I do not give expression to my doubts and apprehensions about the limitations and perhaps,

if I may say so, the failures of the Railway Ministry in certain directions. I have a feeling that the Railway Minister's speech skilfully conceals these limitations and drawbacks, particularly with regard to its first and second Plan.

Though efforts are being made by the hon. Minister to present a bright and hopeful picture for the second Plan of the railways and also about its capacity to handle the goods and passenger traffic emanating from the programme of industrialisation envisaged during 1956-57, I have serious doubts whether the position at the end of the second Plan will not be hopelessly inadequate.

Despite the efforts at rehabilitation and expansion of the railways during the first Plan, it is common knowledge that the traffic capacity of the railways has failed to keep pace with the demand for it on account of the increase in agricultural and industrial production. It is only during the last year that the country had witnessed serious transport bottlenecks and difficulties in the movement of goods traffic due to non-availability of the rolling stock and other facilities.

The House will recollect that the transport situation in the country due to the existence of bottlenecks and the non-availability of wagons to move the goods traffic had become so serious during the last year that I found it my humble duty to bring this matter of serious public importance before this House. I also remember that the hon. Railway Minister gave a patient hearing to the various aspects of the serious situation prevailing at that time and he had also assured the House that prompt and early steps were being taken by his Ministry to relieve the difficulties faced by the public.

The hon. Minister in his Budget speech has attempted to give an account of the measures he has taken to meet this serious situation during the last year. I have been at great pains to understand his account of the measures taken to relieve this situation. But I am sorry to say that he has failed to throw any light as to how far the transport bottlenecks have been cleared, whether there has been any improvement with regard to the availability of wagons to the users of goods traffic, and if so, to what extent; whether there has been any increase in the movement of goods and passenger traffic as a result of the measures taken by the Railway Ministry during the last year.

[Shri Tulsidas]

I have no doubt the Railway Ministry has taken great pains to relieve this serious situation during the last year. However, I cannot content myself with the account of the hon. Minister in his speech, which, in my humble opinion, is vague in respect of the facts of the results achieved and perhaps seeks to conceal from the public the gravity of the situation that continues even today to a certain extent.

I shall illustrate my point by pointing out to certain symptoms and indicators to examine the existing situation. In the report of the Railway Board on Indian railways for 1954-55 (page 20) it is shown that the percentage increase in loading of goods traffic in 1954-55 has been 6.73 in broad gauge and 4.36 in metre gauge over the preceding year of 1953-54. If taken separately, it may appear that the increase in goods traffic during 1954-55 has been quite satisfactory in comparison to the position in 1953-54. But this is far from true, as on page 21 of this report, it has been shown quite clearly that "the outstanding traffic registered at stations awaiting clearance at the end of 31-3-1955 was much more than the corresponding figure on 31-3-1954 in spite of the increased loadings". It is also shown that the percentage increase in the outstanding traffic has been 51 per cent. on broad gauge and 48 per cent. on metre gauge during this period in comparison to the previous year. From the experience of the difficulties in the movement of transport during the last year, I would venture to say that there is every possibility that the percentage of outstanding registrations has gone further up. I would like to know whether it has not gone further up, or whether it has improved. I have not got the figures of 1955, which might come only next year. I would, therefore, like to know what the position now is.

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

Besides, the railways have stopped registration of goods booking at various important centres during this period. This will clearly reveal that the railways have failed to cope up with the needs of the country arising from the agricultural and industrial expansion. As you know, there has been a certain amount of closure of mills and industries in certain parts. The other day it was reported in the press that the Bombay Gas Company could not function and supply gas for want of coal. In this respect, I would also like to give you certain facts to show how even ordinary

development is hindered on account of the non-availability of wagons.

In our Second Five Year Plan we have a programme of development of roads. If the development of roads takes place, naturally the burden on the railways will be reduced but this progress does not take place because in certain districts the metal needed is not available. Particularly in the districts of North Bombay the supply of wagons is hopelessly poor, and so a certain allocation of wagons was made. But even though the allocation was made, practically no metal could be brought and the roads could not be put up. There is a very large programme of putting up roads, but it is not possible to execute it. I may give you certain instances.

According to the agreement arrived at by the Western Railway and according to the demands of the Bombay Government, the number of wagons sponsored under "C" class priority in October was 280, but only 35 wagons were supplied. In November 245 wagons were allotted, but no wagons were supplied for this metal. In December 245 wagons were allotted, 62 wagons were supplied. In January 103 wagons were allotted, 32 wagons were supplied; and in February this year 151 wagons were allotted on priority, but only three wagons were supplied.

The Deputy Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Alagesan): Where?

Shri Tulsidas: This is in the Western Railway for carrying metal for development of roads, and the Bombay Government has already stated that there was no wagon supply and therefore no roads could be put up.

I should like to draw the attention of the House to another disquieting symptom of our railway system. In table 4 on page 33 of the Progress Report of the Indian Railways, it has been shown that the percentage of over-aged stock to the stock on line on 31-3-1951 and expected to be on line on 31-3-1956 has gone up from 23 to 32.5 in broad gauge and from 24.1 to 33.1 on narrow gauge in the case of locomotives; from 13.3 to 16.5 in broad gauge and from 32.9 to 52 in narrow gauge in respect of wagons. This clearly reveals that in spite of the stupendous efforts of the railways towards rehabilitation and expansion during the first Plan period, the capacity of the railways to handle traffic emanating from the economic expansion in the country has deteriorated rather than showing any signs of improvement.

Permit me, Sir, to mention another similar disturbing feature of the railway system. From table XVII of the publication Indian Railways it can be seen that there has been a fall in the average speed of goods trains both on broad and metre gauges. The speed of goods trains was 10·8 miles per hour in 1950-51 but it has gradually gone down to 10·1 miles per hour in 1954-55 on the broad gauge system whereas it has fallen from 9·6 miles per hour in 1949-50 to 8·7 miles per hour in 1954-55 on the metre gauge. These figures clearly show that the railways cannot claim any credit for improving the transport system of the country and also for carrying a larger bulk of traffic during the first Plan period.

Now I shall refer to another point of some importance in this connection. In the same publication on page 25 it is seen that the punctuality of passenger trains has fallen from 74·8 in 1953-54 to 72·9 in 1954-55 on the broad gauge while on the metre gauge the percentage has decreased from 70·2 to 63·8. I have given some thought to the problem of punctuality of the passenger trains and I am sorry to say that I have come to the same disappointing conclusion that the state of unpunctuality on the railways in India has been somewhat appealing and somewhat fantastic too. I do not think that in any other advanced country of the world the state of punctuality is so hopeless as in India. I have found in other countries that the percentage of punctuality in railways is often beyond 90 per cent. where as it is the other way round in this country. I strongly feel that the Railway Minister should give serious thought to this grave defect of the railway system and also see that considerable improvement is brought about in this respect during the coming years.

In his analysis of the railways' second Plan, the Railway Minister has made certain frank confessions before the country. He has admitted that the railway system will be able to meet only 15 per cent. of the additional passenger traffic as against the estimated increase of 30 per cent, and 42 million tons additional goods traffic as against the expected increase of 60 million tons during this period. Even according to him, the increase will be utterly inadequate as movement of coal, steel and cement alone will require some 35 million tons additional capacity out of additional 40 million capacity provided in the Plan. The margin left for other commercial

movement of goods traffic including foodgrains will, therefore, be only seven million tons. The increase in production of foodgrains is going to be 20 per cent. in the second Plan. I do not know how the railways will be able to cope with this additional movement particularly when we are envisaging increased production in the industrial sector also at a much bigger pace.

In the light of the disappointing performance of the railways to meet the growing traffic consequent on economic development, it is my humble duty to urge the hon. Minister, the Members of this House and the Government to see the inevitable writing on the wall.

Shri B. S. Murthy (Eluru): Why not the capitalists come forward and give money?

Shri Tulsidas: That question you ask of the Minister, not me.

Shri B. D. Pande (Almora Distt.—North-East): Why don't you produce the money?

Shri Tulsidas: I am trying to put forth the facts as they are today. If you feel they are all right, then you are quite willing to accept them. It is for you to decide whether you want the railways on these lines or not.

Shri B. S. Murthy: We agree with you.

Shri Tulsidas: Unless and until efforts are made to reorientate the transport policy right now, I am sure the country will suffer from serious bottlenecks on the transport system and dislocation of economic activities.

I would like to make certain suggestions in this respect. I always do like to see both the sides of the railway's working. I have said about the good points and the defects. Now I would like to make some suggestions. As you know, whenever the question of railways comes, I have said that the railways will not be able to cope with the problem of transport in this country unless and until there is co-ordination between all modes of transport. I am not thereby saying that you bring in all the transport under the public sector or the Government, but there must be a co-ordinating authority with regard to all modes of traffic, whether it is railway, road or waterway. Unless that is done, it is not possible to cope with the problem of transport, and transport will really be the Cinderella of the Second Plan. Otherwise, the whole plan will fall through and it will be most difficult to achieve its results.

[Shri Tulsidas]

I suggest that the terms of the Railway Freight Structure Inquiry Committee may be enlarged in order to examine possibilities of co-ordination and to some extent equalisation of freight structure of the railways, road transport and shipping. Unless you have the whole freight structure of the country co-ordinated for all modes of transport, it will not be possible to diversify the traffic, to divert the traffic to different modes of transport. That should be brought about by this committee.

It is high time that the country has a fifteen-year or a twenty-year master plan for transport development, keeping in view the possibilities of industrial and agricultural expansion. I would suggest that a transport commission should be appointed by Government to examine the entire question of the co-ordinated development of the different modes of the transport system, through allocation of future traffic between them, and also, as I said earlier, the rationalisation of the freight structure.

My suggestion for a transport commission is neither new nor novel, because it is a suggestion that arises from the possibilities of the country's efforts at economic development failing and thereby wrecking the Second Five Year Plan owing to insufficient transport development.

Even in the U.K. a similar commission was appointed during the forties of this century, to co-ordinate the different modes of the transport system, of course, arising from a different set of circumstances.

The Railway Minister's promises for starting express goods trains are undoubtedly welcome. But the extra charge for this purpose is in my opinion unintelligible, because ordinary goods traffic will suffer thereby, and the users of goods traffic will have to pay an additional charge. It is the duty of the railways to provide prompt and rapid transport, and therefore they cannot expect or demand any extra charge for the same. If you levy this extra charge, then what will happen is that everybody will prefer to send the goods by express trains, and those who want to send them by ordinary trains will suffer. The result would ultimately be that you will be putting an extra burden on the users of the railways. Probably, that seems to be the idea of the Railway Minister.

I would also like to say that the concessions to passengers traffic, announced

by the Minister are quite welcome. However, it may be suggested that the proposed return tickets at reduced rates should be made available to the public who are travelling for distances of not less than 100 miles, rather than for distances beyond 300 miles only. This is very necessary, for most of the passenger traffic is confined to distances of the order of 100 miles. Only very few people travel for distances beyond 300 miles. If you want to give concessions really to the passengers, then you must give the concessions to passengers who are travelling for distances of not less than 100 miles, for that alone would give real benefit to the people who travel.

The Railway Minister has suggested a surcharge of one anna in the rupee on all freight traffic. At the same time, he has also come forward with the suggestion that certain articles would be exempted from that surcharge. Certainly, one would like to become popular by giving exemption to some of these popular commodities. But why should not the exemption be extended to some of the other essential commodities also, like milk, vegetables, and fruits and so on? Foodgrains have been exempted; then, khadi has been exempted. Then, we find that newspapers have been exempted. So far as newspapers are concerned, certainly one would like to support them, and that is why probably the Railway Minister has exempted them from this surcharge. But why should he not exempt the other essential commodities like vegetables, milk and so on? When you have given concession for the newspapers, because you want to be popular with the press as well as with everybody else, why should you not extend the concession to these commodities also?

With regard to overcrowding on the railways, I have suggested on a number of occasions that either the number of trains has to be rationalised so as to reduce overcrowding, or there should be different carriages attached for carrying passengers from one particular place to another particular place. I have made some suggestions along those lines, but I do not know why nothing has been done so far.

When one travels on the metre gauge section, particularly, one really feels it disgusting to see that the railways are still carrying people in such huge numbers in one carriage. If you see the seating capacity of the carriages it will be only 150 or 200, but actually you will find the carriages will be carrying

nearly 500 to 600 passengers. And yet the railway fares have gone up. Almost without any expenditure being incurred, more amount has come to the railways.

Why should not the railways give some benefit to the travelling public? It may be said that fans have been provided, that arrangements have been made for the supply of cold water, and so on. But the real amenity that is required by the passenger is enough space for a seat. That is what he wants. And that is the most essential thing that should be provided to him.

The congestion on the railways can be relieved by having more coaches wherever possible, and also by increasing the rail capacity.

I have brought out the good points of the budget, and I have also criticised some of its bad points. I have also made some suggestions in that regard, and I hope the Minister will look into them carefully and accept some at least of the suggestions which I have made, and thus give more amenities to the public.

Shri Venkataraman (Tanjore): Before I proceed to deal with certain aspects of the Railway Budget, I would like to draw attention to the very clever and lawyer-like way in which Shri Tulsidas has argued.

Shri Tulsidas: Thank you. I am not a lawyer.

Shri Venkataraman: If the hon. Member had listened to me carefully, he would have found that I said, lawyer-like.

Shri M. S. Gurupadaswamy (Mysore): To be lawyer-like is better than to be a lawyer.

Shri Venkataraman: Shri Tulsidas has said that the speed of goods trains has decreased from 10·3 to 10·1 in the broad gauge, and from 9·3 to 8·7 in the metre gauge. Going through the books supplied, we find that the net train-load in both broad gauge and metre gauge has increased tremendously. You will find that in broad gauge, the train load has increased from 468 tons to 500 tons, and in metre gauge from 174 to 222.

Shri Tulsidas should have referred to another sentence also from this report. The question of the average speed should not, however, be treated by itself, and should be considered in relation to, the

train-loads and the ton-miles per goods-train-hour. So, it is not merely by drawing attention to a decrease in the speed here or there that it could be argued that the efficiency has gone down. On the contrary, you will find that the performance of the railways both in the matter of movement of goods as well as in the matter of movement of passengers has shown remarkable improvement.

Shri Tulsidas: If my hon. friend is satisfied, then I have nothing more to say.

Shri Venkataraman: I would not be satisfied, but I would certainly like to controvert the proposition that there is a decrease in the speed. It was Shri Tulsidas's thesis, that there has been a downward trend, and that there has been a decrease in the efficiency of performance. My point is that it is not so.

There are a number of ways in which the performance of the Indian railways can be judged. Let us take, for instance, the operating ratio. The operating ratio on the Indian railways.

Shri M. S. Gurupadaswamy: You have read the Estimates Committee's reports?

Shri Venkataraman: I shall come to them presently.

The operating ratio of the Indian railways in 1952 was 77·37; in 1955, the figure was 81·77. If you look at the corresponding operating ratios in other countries, you will find that our increase is not as great as in the other countries, and that it has been commensurate with the greater amenities which we have provided both for the staff as well as for the passengers.

In the United Kingdom, in 1952, the operating ratio was 91 per cent, whereas in 1955, it was 96 per cent, which means an increase of over 5 per cent. In the USA, it was 74·42 in 1952, and in 1955, it was 78·8 per cent. The Canadian National Railways had an operating ratio of 92·85 in 1952. Their operating ratio in 1955 was 97·79. Therefore you will find that really the operating ratio of the Indian Railways, which has gone up by round about 4 per cent, is a matter which the Indian Railways can take credit of and be congratulated upon.

Then let us see some of the things which have happened in the course of the five years. This is the fifth budget that the Railway Minister has presented

[Shri Venkataraman]

to this House and it is worthwhile comparing the condition of the railways in 1952 with the condition now in 1955. In so far as the staff is concerned you will find that though the total number of officers in Classes I and II has increased their average salaries have gone down. In 1952 the total number of officers in Class I and Class II was 2,254 while in 1955 the total number of officers is 2,588. But then these 2,588 officers have drawn a salary which approximates to Rs. 1042 or 1043 per mensem as against the figure in 1952 of Rs. 1072. If you compare it with the year 1939 it will be very interesting because it was the pre-War year when prices were considered to be normal. You will notice that Class I and Class II officers drew an average salary of Rs. 1043. There has been more than Rs. 400 reduction in the salary of Class I and Class II officers. That really shows that in the matter of providing amenities for the staff we are trying to bring about a sort of egalitarian outlook and we are trying to reduce the salary of the higher staff and to increase the salary of the lower staff.

I will now come to Class III and Class IV staff. So far as Class III and Class IV services are concerned, I have two figures—one which is a combined figure for both and the other which is separate. You will notice that in 1952 Class III and Class IV staff drew Rs. 1307 in the average. In 1954-55 they have drawn a salary of Rs. 1403. Therefore, there is an increase in the course of these four years in the salary scales of Class III and Class IV staff combined. If you want the break-up you will find that the salaries of the Class IV employees have risen from 23.6 in 1939, which is the base year for the preparation of index number, to 82.1 and in the Works Side staff there has been an increase to 87.8. Then for Class III service the figure is 145.7. So the salaries of the staff has gone up markedly and the increase is of the order of 5.17 per cent. Then, in Class III when the original staff was 91.9, today it is 177.3. Therefore my submission is that during the period during which the hon. Railway Minister has been in charge, there has been a real improvement in the standard of life and the wages of the workers. I should not be understood as saying that they reached the limit of what they should get. I still feel that the salary which they get may be a fair wage but certainly not a living wage which we all endeavour to reach and if the progress is maintained at the level at which we are going, cer-

tainly the workers will reach the living wage in the course of the next five years.

Then there used to be a lot of criticism with regard to the purchase of stores. It used to be said in the debates in 1950-51 that the indigenous purchases were very much less than what they ought to be and that greater effort should be made in buying stores, and greater volume of stores, from the indigenous sources and that the imported stores should be reduced. I have some figures for that also. In 1952 the total value of stores which were obtained from indigenous sources was Rs. 68.34 crores out of a total of Rs. 97.66 crores. Really 69.97 per cent or nearly 70 per cent of the stores at that time were purchased from indigenous sources. If you compare it with the present store purchases, you will find that today out of Rs. 107 crores, Rs. 83.65 crores are from indigenous sources and the figures will show that the purchases from indigenous sources have gone up to 77.69 or 78 per cent of the total volume of store purchases.

Then my friend Mr. Vittal Rao complained more bitterly about the way in which the store balances are accumulating. He referred to the Shroff Committee's recommendation and he said that the total volume of store balance shows a tendency to be on the larger side and it is not proper or conducive to efficient administration of stores. This is what the Shroff Committee said:

"All the railways should be immediately directed that before the end of the current year "(this was in 1950-51)" reduction of stores balances appropriate to each railway should be brought about with the object of attaining an overall reduction of Rs. 10 crores."

This has been reached in 1952, the stores balances were Rs. 62.68 crores. In 1954 the figure is Rs. 52.38 crores. Now there has been a slight increase in 1955 in the stores balances and the figure is Rs. 54.94 crores. But then it has been explained by the Railway Ministry in the Report that it is for certain new constructions that they have bought these stores.

I may also refer to some of the other amenities for the labour. In 1952 the total number of houses built amounted to 6,825. Now in 1955 the number of houses built for labour is 9,901. There

has actually been an increase of about 50 per cent in the number of houses. Of course, in comparison with the total number of labour, that is, a million labour, the number of houses built is negligible. But I do not know if the railways have accepted the responsibility to build houses for all employees. They have, so far as we could see, accepted the responsibility to build houses for the essential staff who may be called upon to discharge duties at odd times of the day or night. Now my complaint is slightly different. My submission is that even quite a large number of people who are in essential services have not been provided with houses and the railway administration, though it has been making very commendable efforts in that direction, should try to provide these employees in the essential services with houses.

Then I come to the medical services. In 1952 the average medical facilities *per capita* was Rs. 15.4. In 1955 the average *per capita* cost for medical services is Rs. 17.25. So there has been an increase. Also, if you look at the break-up of these figures, you will find that the number of dispensaries has increased from 375 to 411 and the number of beds in hospitals has increased from 2,665 to 3,296. There has been a fairly marked improvement in the medical facilities given to labour.

Then, in the case of health services also there has been a marked increase in the *per capita* cost. In 1952 the *per capita* cost for health services was Rs. 15.7. In 1955 the *per capita* cost is Rs. 20.24.

These are some of the facts which will go to show how the railways have been trying their utmost to raise the material comforts of the workers as also to raise their standard of life. But there are one or two matters which really disturb me and I am sure the railways will look into them very carefully. The number of accidents has not shown that amount of progress in the right direction as it should have. In 1952 the number of accidents was on the whole 4214. The number of passengers killed was 441, the number of railway servants 185 and then others, 3588. Of these 3588, 285 were suicides on railways. In 1955, you will find that the accidents have increased from 4214 to 4439, the number of passengers dead being 455 and the number of railway servants—there is a decrease from 185 to 180—and in the number of others, there has been an increase to

3800 and odd. In this, the number of suicides is 378. I would appeal to the Railway Minister to see that the Railways are not offered as an asylum for committing suicide.

An Hon. Member: What are the reasons for suicide?

Shri Venkataraman: That is a matter for separate enquiry not connected with the Railway Budget.

Shri K. K. Basu: That is the cheapest method.

Shri Venkataraman: Then there is another matter to which I should like to refer, the number of accidents in railway workshops. The number of accidents in workshops in 1952 was, 6 deaths and 17959 injuries. In 1955, the number of deaths increased to 17 and the number of injuries to 19185. I have said once before in the course of Budget debates in previous years that this is due to the lax administration of the railway workshops. Because the railway workshops are part of the Government administration, the Factory Inspectorate also takes a somewhat lenient view of the various provisions which have got to be observed. I must emphasise before this House that such laxity ought not to be tolerated at all. It is up to the Factory Inspectorate to see that all the provisions relating to health and safety are carefully observed.

Then, about the reorganisation of the Railway Board, I must express my dissent from the Estimate Committee's Report. The Estimates Committee has said that since we have to implement the second Five Year Plan, it would not be advantageous at this stage to make any change in the Railway Board organisation. I feel that the present organisation of the Railway Board is not capable of coping with the ever-increasing duties which the Railways will have to undertake in the second Five Year Plan, and for the further progress of the country. If you compare the sizes of the organisations which prevail in other State-owned Railways—you will find that the central organisation in those countries are always large, representative and otherwise adequate to meet all the needs of the situation.

Take, for instance, the Swiss Railways. The Swiss Railways is a public undertaking of the Federal Government. There is an Administrative Council of 15 members including representatives of the Federal Assembly.

[Shri Venkataraman]

Take the case of the French Railways. The French nationalised undertaking consists of an Administrative Council of 20 members of whom 10 are nominated by the Government and 5 are representatives of labour. These 5 representatives of labour are technically elected by the entire labour but, in practice, they are nominated by the trade unions.

Dealing with the Swiss Railways, I may also mention another interesting feature. I find in the Swiss coaches, the names and numbers are put in three different languages which are prevalent in Switzerland, French, German and Italian. The sign-boards have also all these languages. I suggest for the consideration of the Railway Ministry that here also we should have three languages, the regional language, Hindi as well as English until it is abolished. We can borrow from the experience of the Swiss Railways and have all our sign-boards and directions in three languages.

I am not very happy about the abolition of the third class. People will say what is there in the name. Unless you give the comfort of second class, there is no use merely calling the third class, second class.

Shri Shree Narayan Das (Darbhanga Central): Cushions may be put in there.

Shri Venkataraman: The Railway Minister said that it will not be possible at the present moment to do so.

Shri Shree Narayan Das: Why not?

Shri Venkataraman: It is a different thing; when my hon. friend becomes the Railway Minister, he will certainly do that.

Shri Shree Narayan Das: Change the mentality of the higher classes.

Shri Venkataraman: I am only speaking on the Budget presented by Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri. The name, as I said, does not really get any benefit to the passenger. Comfort comes from the conditions and not from merely calling it second class and not third class.

There was another very interesting feature which I found in the Swiss Railways. They called all their employees—90 per cent of them—officials. They have a total of 35,000 employees and 90 per cent of them are called officials. I asked them how they were all officials and I was told that 'officials' meant permanent members. The others are temporary and casual. So, let us not be

giving merely some glorified name hiding our heads like the ostrich and forget the real conditions. By calling a worker an official he does not become an official and by merely calling the third class, second class it does not become second class.

An Hon. Member: They are fourth class officers now.

Shri Venkataraman: There is another matter which I would like to emphasise. Railways are the field in which Government ought to try to implement their socialistic philosophy. The Taxation Enquiry Commission has suggested that the difference between the salaries of the lowest and the highest should not be more than 30 times. In several countries you will find that the difference is not 30 times; it is 5 or 6 times. In New Zealand, the difference between the lowest employee in the railway and the highest paid is rounabout 5 times. Then, in Switzerland, again, it is about 4 times. The unskilled worker gets about 5,500 francs and the maximum, the head of a division in the first category gets, is about 20,000 francs. We should try to evolve a social philosophy in which the lowest railway employee should get Rs. 100 and the highest should get not more than Rs. 2,000. The result will be a difference of 20 times and it is possible in the present nature of the functioning of the Railways to implement that social philosophy.

Now that insurance has become nationalised, I want to throw out a suggestion that all the railway employees should be insured so that they may be protected against the fatalities of life. It is necessary to give them adequate protection; the provident fund is insufficient to cover such risks.

There is only one other matter which I want to deal with and that has been referred to by Dr. Lanka Sundaram. He pleaded very passionately and eloquently for the recognition of sectional unions, that is, functional unions like the All India Ministerial Staff Association, the All India Running Staff Association etc. It had been my firm conviction—and I have always repeated it in this House—that it is improper for the Railways to recognise functional or sectional unions. The Railways ought to recognise only one union for each region, for each zone. That is the only way in which you can adjust the rival claims of the various members constituting every union. Otherwise, what happens is this. One section like the Station Masters

come and plead for their own emoluments; another section like the Running Staff come and plead for their own emoluments with the result that the relative rights and obligations of these several categories are not judged on a level. And whoever is able to shout most gets away with it whether he deserves it or not. The question of fixing wages is not as haphazard as it is in this country. In western countries wages are fixed by a job evaluation. In job evaluation, the education required, the experience required, the amount of initiative required, the agreeableness or disagreeableness of the job, all these are given certain points, and the total of it all goes to evaluate the particular service. For instance, a person carrying sand from one place to another will be given less points than a person who is carrying coal or for that matter fertiliser from one place to another. For that, the evaluation of the job has to be done scientifically. After such scientific evaluation a gradation has to take place. On the basis of that gradation the salaries and wages have to be fixed. A recognition of these sectional unions will prevent any such job evaluation on a scientific basis and it will only open the door for mutual rivalries among the various sections of the employees in the Railways itself, with the result that instead of bringing about healthy trade union movement in the country, we would have only a sort of rivalry and bickerings among the various sections. I am quite sure that my friends Shri Vittal Rao and Nambiar, who used to agree with me at least on this matter, will bear me out in the point I have made.

Shri Nevatia (Shahjahanpur Dist.—North cum Kheri—East): Yesterday Shri Gopalan enquired why with the expenditure of more than about Rs. 400 crores, it was not possible to show better results, both with regard to the carrying capacity and other improvements.

As in the case of the overall Plan, the First Five Year Plan on Railways also had to lay strong foundations for building a better super-structure. In the very nature of things they had to meet the ravages caused by the war and the problems created by Partition. And that is exactly what has been done in the First Five Year Plan—rehabilitation of the railways and the problems created by Partition and several other problems also. The hon. Minister of Railways and his colleagues as well as the members of the Board deserve our admiration for the way in which they have handled

railway matters and laid a strong foundation on which we can build the prosperity of the country for the future.

Coming to the next Five Year Plan, I find that only 15 per cent additional passenger miles have been contemplated by the Planning Commission, and that is what is provided for as against 30 per cent estimated in the tentative plan-frame. This means that in the next five years the overcrowding will continue to be the same as it is today or perhaps in a greater degree. It is very unfortunate that no provision has been made according to the tentative plan-frame. The overcrowding, I am told, is 18 per cent. in the broad gauge and 25 per cent in the metre gauge. Taking the normal increase in the population and normal increase in movement alone due to improvement in the living standards, 15 per cent will be absorbed by them and the overcrowding will continue to remain. The Planning Commission estimated that the overaged wagons would continue to be utilised for some time. Already the percentage of overaged wagons is very high and it will still be high. For broad gauge, instead of 29.5 it will be 25 in 1955-56. For metre gauge, the overaged will be reduced from 45 to 27. Similar is the position with regard to locomotives. The utilisation of overaged locomotives, coaches etc. may help to a certain extent, but the Plan places greater reliance on overaged stock, which is not very healthy because it means delay in the trains, less passenger miles, less speed, and so on and so forth. Those are the difficulties that will come up.

So far as goods traffic is concerned, as against 61 million tons asked for by the Railways, the estimate is now based on 42 million tons. The traffic in carriage of general goods, that is, grains and commodities other than steel, coal and cement, is only 10 per cent, even less than 10 per cent, and that comes to 2 per cent per annum. According to the draft Second Five Year Plan, we are providing for increases, 500 per cent increases, in most of the commodities. What will be the effect of this in most of the cases? The industrial raw materials will not be available to the factories and the goods produced will be lying in stock, and there will be shortage of consumer goods. What is the use of producing capital goods if the consumer goods are not available? That will lead to inflationary tendencies and people will not be able to consume the capital goods that will be produced—iron and steel. That is a very important

[Shri Nevatia]

matter to consider. What I think is that after one or two years, plenty of wagons will be available to the consumer goods industry till the iron and steel projects come into operation, when wagons will be withdrawn from general traffic. It will lead to shortage in production of consumer goods and create inflationary tendencies.

In my opinion, it will create a serious situation at the end of the third year of the Second Five Year Plan. If the industry and other sectors are expected to fulfil the targets laid down in the draft Second Five Year Plan, then it is necessary that security should be given to them about the off-take, about the transport of finished goods as well as providing them with raw materials which are very essential.

I find that there have been increases in claims from 3,73,758 to 3,78,394. I suggest that there should be a greater devolution of authority in the matter of settling minor matters in this respect. At present for every little thing, matters hang on. If the local authorities are given some more discretion in the matter of settlement of claims of small amounts, say, up to Rs. 500, and if such cases are allowed to be settled by regional authorities, it would help matters and several cases may not go to court and there may not be such threats. That stage should not be allowed to come in.

In ticketless travel also, there has been an increase from 69,57,255 to 75,86,808. This is the figure detected. Perhaps many more have gone undetected. That also is a matter of concern because every year there has been increase in ticketless travelling. I agree the detection is better, but that does not give us the complete picture because the undetected may be many more.

Regarding accidents also, from 21 per cent in 1950-51, it has progressively increased year after year. The number of persons killed in accidents has progressively increased. While our railwaymen deserve all credit for the good work that they are doing, I think greater precaution is needed in these matters so that the number of accidents on the Railways are reduced.

Shri Nand Lal Sharma (Sikar): All round increase!

2 P.M.

Shri Nevatia: In the Estimates Committee, it has been said that the work is not progressing well and the efficiency of the workers has gone down. It is very unfortunate. We expect our workers to play their full part in ensuring full production in the workshops. I find very often that managerial efficiency is passed on to the labourers. Better planning, better methods, better lay-out of the shops and better tools—all these result in high production. With all these unless better managerial efficiency is not available, it is not possible to expect the labour to give very good production. There should be a full study about the various lay-outs, tools equipment etc. in the workshop so that production could be increased. For another ten years, you will have to utilise the overaged locomotives and wagons and other things and for that reason it is necessary that the workshop capacity should be utilised to the fullest extent possible.

There is one test for finding out the efficiency of the railways in one aspect—miles per wagon per day. In India it was 43 for broad gauge last year and this year it is 46. In Japan it is 62. If we can step up our wagon miles per day, even with the same number of wagons, we would be able to carry 20-30 per cent more. There is great scope for improvement in this matter. Better marshalling facilities, reduction in transhipment delays, etc. can help matters. When we are improving our line capacity, and yard capacity we cannot have the same speed. There would be some handicaps but our attention should constantly be to bring our efficiency to the level of Japan.

So far as ton miles are concerned, we are leading every country in the world. In India it is 141 as against 131 in USA and 139.6 in UK. The merchant community—the traders and businessmen—also deserve some credit. They are loading the wagons to the maximum extent and are making the fullest use of the wagons made available. If it is a ten ton wagon, they load ten tons. But so far as the wagon miles per day is concerned, it is not very high.

There is another point about the development of backward areas. It is a matter of satisfaction to us that in spite of a serious cut in the amount provided in the next Plan, the Railway Minister is going ahead with the survey of 3,000 miles as originally proposed. The Prime Minister the other day, speaking in the Federation of the Indian Chambers of

Commerce and Industry said that the existence of highly developed areas in the west and undeveloped areas on the side of the globe, creates problems which is not good. Even in the same country, there may be highly developed and also undeveloped regions and that creates social, political and economic problems. So, the same thing applies here also. If the backward and undeveloped regions are allowed to remain so, they will create problems. So, the matter should not be looked purely from the point of view of revenue but also from the point of view of uniform development of the country so that every region may feel the impact of independence and better life. It is essential that this target of 3,000 miles should not be dropped; it should be taken up in all seriousness. In this connection, I would like to talk about my own constituency, Lakhimpur Kheri and I hope that something would be done in that direction: There is a bridge at Palia and if decking is done it will connect an area about 100 miles long and 50 miles wide, which lies in the Nepal border and which is at present entirely cut off from the rest of civilisation. There is only one bridge and decking should be done.

The proposed freight increase means an increase of 6.25 per cent. On some commodities there has been an increase of about 500 per cent during the last four or five years. During the war the charge on these commodities increased by about 12.5 per cent but after the war it has increased to about 500 per cent. I would, therefore, request the Railway Minister to examine the case of these commodities on which there is already a 500 per cent increase after the war or from 1948 onwards. For instance, take sugar. From Rs. 12 in 1948, it has come to about Rs. 65 or Rs. 70.

Shri Alegasan: Is there no increase in the sugar price?

Shri Nevatia: It has come down. In 1948 the price of cane was Rs. 2 and that of sugar was Rs. 35, the prices have now come down.

I can see the emphasis about the supply of wagons for the general goods traffic—that is, other than coal, cement and steel—for which some reasonable provision has been made. For the other traffic, it appears to me that a very serious situation is likely to arise after two or three years. The Finance Minister has said that we must watch inflationary tendencies and the railways should not be a

party to creating such tendencies by holding up the transport of essential goods.

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao (Khammam): Sir, before I make some observations on the railway Budget, I would like to join my friend, Shri Asoka Mehta in paying a tribute—humble as it is—to the Estimates Committee for the reports that it has submitted to this House. For the first time, we have a comprehensive picture of this largest national undertaking with all the details. Various recommendations have been made which, if implemented, will go a long way to increase the efficiency and the development of our railway system.

There has been some improvement when we compare the progress during the first Plan period. We have been able to rehabilitate some of our rolling stock though we have not yet completely rehabilitated the rolling stock. But even by the end of the Second Plan, we would not have completed rehabilitating the rolling stock. The percentage of over-aged locomotives in service at the beginning of the First Plan period was 30 per cent. where as at the beginning of the Second Plan, it will be 32 per cent—an increase of two per cent. By the end of the Second Plan period it is estimated to be 18.3 per cent. With regard to wagons it is 27 per cent in the beginning of the First Plan period, 19 per cent at the end of the First Plan period and it is estimated to be 8.5 per cent after the Second Plan period. Similarly for carriages the figures are 36 per cent, 26 per cent and 10.5 per cent. Still the availability of transport is lagging behind demand. This fact is accepted by one and all. The development during the Plan period has been to the extent of 2.6 per cent of the total mileage. In this I include those dismantled railway lines which have been restored during the First Plan period. Computing it for one lakh population it is 0.24 route miles. We had 9 route miles for a lakh of population and during the First Plan period we have an addition of only 0.24. Why the picture has been like this notwithstanding the fact that we have spent Rs. 432 crores? I do not know. If the deliveries which are expected by the end of the First Plan period, that is 31-3-1956, are received then we would be spending Rs. 432 crores. Having spent this amount, why only this much increase and this much rehabilitation? We have been in this very House telling time and again that so long as we depend on the imports

[Shri T. B. Vittal Rao]

we shall not be able to make any headway. This is the picture that we can get by depending on the imports. From the countries with whom we have negotiated and get locomotives we are not able to get steel. The countries that supply us locomotives and wagons are not prepared to part with steel. Our requirements of steel for the railways are 3.5 lakh tons per year. Out of this 1.2 lakh tons are imported. Though these countries which supply us locomotives are the largest producing countries in the matter of steel production—nearly 100 million tons are produced in the United States of America a year and similarly Germany and other countries produce huge quantities of steel—yet they are not willing to part with steel because it will help industrialising our country.

Sir, if we view from this context the controversy between the Planning Commission and the Railway Board what do we see? The Railway Board has demanded Rs. 1,480 crores and the Planning Commission has reduced it to Rs. 1,125 crores and the controversy is there. I would like to be on the side of the Planning Commission in this matter. Though I have got some differences with the Planning Commission in the matter of allocation of only Rs. 710 crores for industrial and mineral development, in this matter I will be on the side of the Planning Commission because I would like that money is spent on the industries. If the transport lags behind we will have to accept it. But, I will show ways and means as to how the transport could be improved.

One important thing which we should note is that out of these Rs. 1,125 crores the Railways have to pay up to Rs. 445 crores.

Shri Alagesan: Rs. 375 crores.

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao: If you add the dividend and all those things like Development Fund etc. it will come to that figure. The Railway Minister has assured the House that though the allocation made has been cut down, he is not complacent. I hope and trust that he will make a drive to implement this assurance. I have been putting questions in his House about the utilisation of the idle capacity in our workshops. I used to go and get information but now we have got the Estimates Committee's recommendations and they have clearly suggested how the capacity of the various workshops could be increased, how the rate of construction of carriages could

be increased and so on. The only bottleneck has been the steel and sometimes timber.

Our country abounds in timber, yet our railways find it difficult to get timber. I come from Secunderabad where there is a good workshop. There at no time, even during the war, we were running short of timber. But, today we are running short of timber. The workshops which had been working two shifts—the carriage shops, saw-mill workshops—have been reduced to one shift. The reason given is that timber is short. When we go deeper to find out how there has been shortage of timber we are told by the authorities that some officer or foreman has gone to a distant place, somewhere about 500 miles south of Guntakal, to get it, whereas in Hyderabad there is good timber. It is full of forests and the timber there was used during wartime. It has to be properly seasoned that is all and then you can use it. That is how we can increase the capacity of our workshop.

I have seen, Sir, the machine-making factories outside India when I had an opportunity to go. I used to see the whole process very minutely. I was amazed to find that the process involved in the lathe machines is all being done in the railway workshops excepting that have no steel casting or steel foundry in our workshop. Drilling and the other processes involved in the lathes machines are done in the railway workshops. There is ample scope in our railway workshops to develop these and thus utilise the capacity.

Then by reducing our expenditure on the various earth work and other things we can save something. In this connection may I draw the attention of this House to the very inspiring speech made by none else than the Chairman of the Railway Board at the Central India Institute of Engineers. One sentence of his speech appealed to me very much. He appealed to the engineers by saying "we engineers should be able to do in one rupee what a layman does for two rupees". I hope he will instil this spirit into the minds of the various railway engineers in our country. As a class, these railway engineers—I have personally nothing against anybody—are accused. Go any where all over India we are told that these engineers are corrupt as a class and everybody takes bribes, manipulates or does some other thing. So, I hope that he will implement in practice what he has said and instil this spirit into the

minds of the engineers. We have seen how corruption is going on in some places. We have the famous case of the ex-Saurashtra General Manager that is the case of 4 Gazetted Officers who misappropriated about Rs. 13 lakhs. Still their case is going on year after year for the last five years and they are getting subsistence allowance because they are so poor after misappropriating Rs. 13 lakhs. I do not know when that case will end.

I now come to the other aspect, namely, the density of traffic obtaining or is likely to obtain in the grand trunk line between Nagpur and Howrah. This has to be carefully considered. I have read the explanatory memorandum. They say that they are considering the doubling of the track, between Nagpur and Howrah. Recently, the trains there were running very late, in the month of January. Further, the trains were running only in the day-time in the Orissa territory. I had an opportunity to go twice or thrice there and I have been able to study it. On this line, there are going to be three steel plants—Bhilai, Rourkela and Tatanagar. Added to this difficulty, there is going to be coal obtained from the Korba coalfields through the Champa-Korba line. On the top of this, our Production Minister has thought it fit to instal a fertiliser factory in Rourkela. I do not find any alternative but to double this line. Until and unless it is doubled, I do not find any alternative. I would go to the extent of saying that that railway line requires electrification. Otherwise, we cannot move the additional quantity of five million tons of iron ore required by these additional steel factories, five million tons of coal required for them and also the fertiliser factory. In addition to this, you have said that four million tons of coal will be raised from the Korba coalfields. Unless facilities are made to meet these needs, I am afraid there will be bottle-neck. In terms of trains, we have to be moving at least 15 trains each day, each carrying 1,000 tons. This is the picture. So, doubling this line is a necessity. But then the Railway Minister will come and say "Oh, I have to double these 450 miles of lines, therefore, there is no more development and no backward areas to be opened".

There is much economy that can be observed in the manner in which we deal with the goods train. There have been some experiments and linking of carriers. Now, there is another feature, and that is, express goods trains are going to be

run. I welcome it. But the way the operation of this service is maintained leaves much to be desired. I have seen goods trains being detained at stations for as many as two hours. This is criminal. What does that time mean? It means so much of coal is wasted; so much detention of rolling-stock, etc. I cannot understand that. When a passenger train is known to be late by one and a half hours, the goods train has still to wait till that passenger train passes the station. During this one and a half hours, if the goods train is not detained, it could have easily reached about 20 miles or even the next station further off. This detention of goods train has to be carefully gone into. I have seen that in the Balharshah-Kazipet section and also in the Dornakal-Bezawada section, goods trains are being detained for a long number of hours, and the figures in the railway budget itself show the speed with which the goods trains move.

Then, the Railway Ministry has thought if fit to have a surcharge of one anna on freights. This is highly objectionable, in view of the fact that the Freight Structure Committee is going to give the report. Until that Committee has reported and until that report is received and until decisions are taken on it, we should not increase the rates. This is the way things are being done. How much are you going to get? Rs. 11 crores only. You can have drawn this amount from the depreciation fund or at least an extra Rs. 10 crores could have been adjusted later on after the receipt of the recommendation. Probably the Railway Minister is afraid that the report of the Committee may not come in by the end of this year, because some members of the Committee have to discharge their international responsibilities, being members of the United Nations Organisation. So, I do not know when we will get the report. Already there has been considerable delay in constituting the Committee. A decision was taken in February last year, but the Committee was constituted sometime in September. Why all this delay? I have nothing against the members of the Freight Structure Committee. They will all be very useful. They are very intelligent and will give good recommendations, but I am afraid whether they will find time to attend to this work and devote all their time to it. This increase in freight is highly objectionable. Year by year, this has been our case. In 1952, you increased the freight charge on coal. In some cases, it was from 30 to 50 per cent.

Again, you have increased it in 1955.

[Shri T. B. Vittal Rao]

Now, there is a surcharge. What is it that you offer to the passengers? Overcrowding cannot be solved; your goods cannot be moved quickly; there are losses in transit. All these things are there. But yet you want to fleece the people.

Another important aspect is participation of workers in the industry. I welcome it, but in order that the participation of workers should be real, I want industrial democracy. Whomsoever you take let him be the elected representative. Let him be elected from amongst the workers. Do not nominate and say there is participation of workers in the industry. We have been hearing our Labour Minister telling us. "We have appointed or nominated a director from amongst the workers, to the Board of Directors, in some State-managed industries, and so, there is workers' participation". That is not real participation. If you really want the workers' participation, let the person be elected.

My friend Shri Venkataraman has referred to some salient features regarding the wage ratio. He has compared it with the ratio obtaining in Switzerland and said that in Switzerland the ratio between the highest and the lowest is 1 : 5, whereas in this country it is 1 : 55. He has also shown some figures wherein he points out certain increase in wages. This increase in wages is calculated on the money. But real wages have lagged behind; they are on the level of 1939 standards. The recent figures provided by the Planning Commission show that the real wages of the working people of India, have come only to the level of 1939. So, there is an urgent necessity of appointing a second Pay Commission. The former Pay Commission, whose recommendation we have, was not appointed by a national Government. It was appointed by the Governor-General. It did not have labour representatives. But even then, while giving the pay-structure, they have mentioned in the report that the Government should earnestly make an endeavour to increase the purchasing power of the rupee. But what have we seen after the Pay Commission's recommendations? Has the purchasing power of the rupee gone up or gone down? So, I strongly urge that the railways, being the largest employers, should recommend to the Cabinet that there is urgent need for the appointment of a second Pay Commission.

In the Swiss railways, as I said, the wage ratio is 1:5. Again, the employees

there get children's allowances and residential allowances. The children's allowance is paid at 275 francs per annum irrespective of the number of children. In the second Five Year Plan, we are providing for the additional employment of 1,50,000 persons. But how many quarters are we going to have? 60,000. How long is this inadequate housing condition of railway workers to continue? How many years will it take? If a railway worker is provided with quarters in some big city, there is profit to the railways, because they need not pay the house rent allowance. The number of quarters to be constructed should be increased. At least let us have 20,000 quarters instead of 10,000 a year.

I now come to recruitment. Much is being made about the technical personnel. What has been done in the matter of training or recruiting these personnel? To give an example, in a workshop where there are 3,250 workers of whom 1900 are skilled, 480 semi-skilled and 870 unskilled, we have got only 30 A Grade apprentices. Increase this number of apprentices. The Railway Minister himself knows how many thousands of applications come for these 30 posts of apprentices. If this number is increased, it would be useful for the fast development of our transport system.

Before I conclude, I earnestly urge the Railway Minister to consider the doubling of the Howrah-Nagpur line. Even if you double the Bezwada line, it is not going to solve the transport bottleneck. We have to carry 3 million tons of coal to South India. How is that possible unless we have an alternative line? Our production of coal and minerals is being impeded on account of inadequate transport facilities. We are today extracting coal only from 30 square miles whereas we have got 800 square miles of coal bearing area in Hyderabad. Transport is the main bottleneck and unless and until the Kazipet-Nellore line is laid by passing Bezwada via Macherla, there is no scope for improvement.

Lastly, I submit that there is no use running the TELCO under the Tatas; TELCO should be taken over by the Railway Ministry.

Shri M. S. Gurupadaswamy: Mr. Deputy-Speaker, I went through the Railway Budget very carefully. After going through the various figures and various proposals, I came to the conclusion that this a big camouflage.

An Hon. Member: You are fond of it!

Shri M. S. Gurupadaswamy: I am saying this because it is true. The hon. Railway Minister is a personified epitome of this big camouflage. If hon. Members are patient, I will explain how it is a camouflage. If we turn through the pages of the reports of the Estimates Committee, it will not take long to see that all the achievements that the Minister has claimed and all the big things that he has said in his speech are not true.

I will explain this. The first Five Year Plan was a plan for rehabilitation so far as the transport system was concerned, especially the railways. We have to see how far this problem of rehabilitation was properly tackled and solved. According to the Railway Minister himself, rehabilitation of railway assets was not completely solved during this five year period. The first Plan, however, was meant to solve this problem of rehabilitation. If you could not solve this problem during the period of five years, how many years do you require for it? While considering this matter, we have to see whether all attempts have been made to see that rehabilitation is done within this particular time. If the Railway Ministry had given serious consideration to this problem and had taken adequate measures I have no doubt that the rehabilitation problem could have been solved within that period. After going through the report of the Estimates Committee, there is no other alternative for me except to come to this conclusion.

Hon. Members will find that the Railway Ministry was not able to utilise the funds allotted to them for the purpose of rehabilitation. Nearly 20 per cent of the funds allotted for the purpose of certain matters relating to rehabilitation were not utilised. What are the reasons. The first reason is shortage of steel. Let us analyse whether any attempt was made by the Railway Ministry to overcome this bottleneck. I agree that steel is very important for railway work. But I want to know whether any serious attempt was made to acquire steel. In this connection I can only quote the report of the Estimates Committee. The Committee states that if the Railway Ministry had made an attempt to acquire steel, that is, to import steel in 1954, they would have succeeded because at that time the world price of steel was favourable and there

was not much difficulty in importing steel. If there had been preplanning to get adequate quantities of steel, that would have been possible. But, the Railway Ministry did not do anything in this particular matter. There is another aspect also. The Railway Ministry and the Ministry of Commerce and Industry have been pulling against each other. There is no co-operation between them. The report says that it is very unfortunate that no unity of action is maintained between the two Ministries. They are behaving as if they are step-daughters. This is the reason why there has been too much of shortage of steel for the work of rehabilitation.

Apart from the shortage of steel, there are shortages of other materials also, like sleepers. Enough sleepers could be had from our own country. There are so many forest areas which could supply sleepers to our requirement. It is a great pity that the Railway Ministry comes before us saying that there was no proper supply of sleepers. On the one hand the funds allotted to the Railway Ministry were not utilised properly. On the other hand, the Railway Ministry says the resources available to the Ministry are not adequate for the purpose of rehabilitation or development of the railways.

Shri Raghuraj Sahai (Etah Dist.—North-East *cum* Budaun Dist.—East): That is because out of the Rs. 432 crores that they required only Rs. 400 crores were allotted.

Shri M. S. Gurupadaswamy: Here we are at the end of the First Five Year Plan. A plan should be worked on the basis of planning. The first estimate of the requirement of the Railways was something like Rs. 350 crores. Later on more money was allotted. Ultimately it was found that the expenditure was of the order of Rs. 432 crores. My hon. friend is right that there was additional allotment of money. We have got a plan. You do not spend money according to the plan. Either there is more expenditure under certain items or there is a lapse under certain other items. So there is no proper planning about the utilisation of the liquid resources available. I would say this imbalance or lack of planning is responsible for the haphazard development of the railway system in India.

As a result of these shortages, many other drawbacks have resulted. What are they? One is that railway tracks could not be renewed. Here, in page 1

[Shri M. S. Gurupadaswamy] of their Twentieth Report the Estimates Committee say:

"Despite the increase in the number of passenger trains in the post-war period, the overcrowding, particularly in third class passenger trains and suburban trains, is serious.

In spite of progressive increase in coal and goods loading, the availability of rail transport is totally inadequate to meet the current demands of traffic.

The Railways have not yet been able to complete the process of rehabilitation. Apart from a substantial percentage of overaged rolling stock, there are arrears of 7,389 miles of track awaiting sleeper renewal and 7,233 miles of track awaiting rail renewal. On 1-4-1955 as many as 1,784 miles of track were under speed restrictions due to heavy arrears of renewal."

As a consequence of these shortages there has been considerable slowing down of the tempo in the work of renewal of track. And as a result, speed restrictions have had to be imposed.

The incidence of speed restrictions on transport is really very much, because such speed restrictions will slow down the transport of services and goods. Ultimately there will not be much movement of goods and services in the country. And the whole trade and commerce of the country will be in difficulty. Denial of transport is denial of opportunity to trade, and denial of opportunity to go about, and also a denial of opportunity to civilized life.

If you had taken proper care to assess your requirements and to husband your resources for the purpose of meeting these requirements, I think you could have solved the problem of rehabilitation in the first Five Year Plan period. You have not done so, you have failed. So the task of rehabilitation is carried over to the second Five Year Plan period. The second Five Year Plan should have been a plan for the development of railways. But unfortunately today the rehabilitation work is still to be finished. So the second Five Year Plan has to allocate a lot of money for the purpose of rehabilitation, and it will be a plan mainly for the rehabilitation of the railways.

From the figures given by the Railway Minister it can be seen that there cannot be an appreciable increase in the capacity

of rail transport and it cannot meet the full demands of the public. It will fall short of the requirements of the country. So, notwithstanding the fact that we are going to spend about Rs. 1,125 crores the railways transport would not be adequate for our purpose. That means that the *status quo* will be continued and there will be no progress. The Railway Minister said that significant achievements have been made at the end of the first Five Year Plan and he painted a rosy picture, a picture of bright colours. But one must know that underneath this painted beauty there is barren clay, and the progress that has been made is not real progress. That is why I say it is a camouflage. It is not real progress and the achievement is not real achievement or if you want to call it so, you may say that the stagnation will be in progress even in future. The *status quo* will be maintained even in the Second Five Year Plan. Our goods and passenger traffic will not get any facilities better than the present, and the overcrowding which is so bad today will be continued even in the next Five Year Plan period. So I would say that the budget does not give an indication in regard to the development of our railways on proper lines.

My next point is about the policy of the Government in regard to new lines. It is very unfortunate that I have to say some bitter things about this matter. In Australia and in South Africa there are what are called electoral railways and electoral surveys. That is, if the members of the ruling party, or a powerful political group, bring pressure on the Railway Minister, then he will immediately order either a survey or order the construction of a railway line in that particular electoral zone. In South Africa and Australia such things are very common. There the development of the railways system is conditioned by politics. The progress of the railway system has become haphazard in those two countries because political considerations guide the development of the railway system and not economic considerations. So people say that those railways are electoral railways. Here also we are repeating the same thing. Much of the surveys that have been carried on under the Railway Ministry are conditioned by politics. Politics is at the back of most of the surveys. I am prepared to challenge the Minister on this point. It is political consideration which is dominant in respect of most of the surveys and in respect of certain lines. Every year it

has become an annual competition in Parliament for Members to ask for railway to this place or to that place.

Shri Matthen: (Thiruvellah): What is wrong with it ?

Shri M. S. Gurupadaswamy: I say 'wrong' because the Railway Ministry has not shown any non-resilience to the pressure groups. Therefore, I fear, and I think my fear is correct as shown by our experience, that the Railway Ministry is constantly subjected to political pressure.

An Hon. Member: No.

Shri M. S. Gurupadaswamy: The railway system is developing according to political opinion and the kind of political pressure that is brought on the Minister. I would say therefore that the development is not scientific.

Shri B. D. Pande: Your mind works in that way.

Shri Nambiar: Politics is good; party politics is bad.

Shri M. S. Gurupadaswamy: Railways should be kept out of politics; politics should be kept out of railways. That is what I say. Formerly, in the British days the railways system was developed on considerations of strategy to suit their own political purpose. Today, we are repeating the same mistake. We want to develop the railway system according to the pressure groups that are functioning within the Congress Party. Another consideration,—it may be minor, or it may be important—is big business. The Railway Minister wants to give transport facilities to big business only. The whole development in the next Five Year Plan is meant to cater to the needs of big industries. Big industries are concentrated in selected pockets. These selected pockets receive all the benefits and the backward areas are completely neglected. They will remain backward and they will not be opened up. The Plan contemplates the building of 850 miles of new lines. We do not know whether the hon. Minister has analysed how many of these miles have been allotted to the north and how many to the south. On analysis I have found that most of the new lines will be in the north only. The south is being denied most of the benefit of railway expansion. This is very unfortunate. You may give reasons for this. You may say the needs of steel industry should be given priority, you may also say that the

collieries should have the benefits of railway expansion and so on. But you must also know whether South India is entirely neglected.

An Hon. Member: Entirely ?

Shri M. S. Gurupadaswamy: Because benefit is negligible. The Railway Minister has created this imbalance. I would also suggest that before the final plan is adopted, more lines should be allotted to the south. Unless you open up the backward areas, it is very difficult to develop commerce and industry. Everybody is tirelessly and constantly saying that the small industries and village industries should be developed. How can you develop these industries ? Unless you provide proper transport facilities, unless you connect all the producers and consumers by a proper transport system, it will be very difficult to achieve a balanced economy.

You may well remember that effective transport is indispensable to economic progress. Civilised life or economic life or even the unity of the country is not possible and cannot be achieved if you do not have a proper transport system. Railway plays a very significant part in this transport system. I may even say that the railway occupies the central fulcrum of the whole system. I would urge upon the hon. Minister to consider all these factors and see that the railways develop on scientific lines, that no partisan view is taken in respect of new lines, that no politics is imported into railways and that there is a balanced development.

Lastly, . . .

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: The hon. Member must conclude now. I have given him a lot of time.

Shri M. S. Gurupadaswamy: Lastly, I would say that all the recommendation of the Estimates Committee and the Corruption Enquiry Committee should be implemented.

Shri Debeswar Sarmah (Golaghat-Jorhat): I associate myself wholeheartedly with those inside this House and outside who have offered their unstinted praise to the hon. Minister of Railways and his colleagues, and the Railway Ministry in general.

I was attentively listening to the speech of the hon'ble member, Shri Asoka Mehta and also some other speeches from the opposition. If I remember aright, Shri Asoka Mehta used

[Shri Debeswar Sarmah]

the word "window-dressing". Let us look at certain figures and see what is window-dressing. In 1955-56, 8 million tons of goods have been carried by the Indian Railways over the 1954-55 figure. Passenger traffic has increased by 7.5 in terms of passenger miles. A similar increase is noticed in other traffic also.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: I am only giving a suggestion, because the time available is limited. I called Shri Debeswar Sarmah because he comes from Assam and nobody has spoken so far about Assam. First of all, let them say about what they want and then come to some general observations if there is time. I am only throwing a suggestion because general observations have been made.

Shri Debeswar Sarmah: I am very grateful to you and I appreciate your suggestion. But the word "window-dressing" and some other words used by Shri M. S. Gurupadaswamy are jarring to the ears. Is such an improvement in one year window-dressing? Within 5 years, the Railways have spent 32 crores over Rs. 400 crores. There has been replacement and, or addition of the order of 1,600 locomotives, 4,800 passenger coaches and 61,000 goods wagons. There have been 380 miles of new lines and 430 miles of old lines have been restored. If this is window-dressing, I do not know what we should call improvement. I would submit with due respect that any Ministry anywhere in the world could be proud of such achievement. We are proud of Chittaranjan which has produced more locomotives than the target fixed. So also of Perambur. All these things rebound to the credit of our Railway Ministry.

I shall just touch upon the Second Five Year Plan. In the Second Five Year Plan, a sum of Rs. 1,125 crores has been allotted as against a bigger demand. The shortfall in passenger and goods traffic will be great and we shall come to grief if there is not operational efficiency. We already feel about it.

I thank you for the hint you dropped and I shall now speak about our problems in the North East of India. The problems are many, and look like being insurmountable. I have only to start with reading a resolution of the Assam Political Conference which was held on the 25th and 26th of last month at Barpetah, which was attended by an hon. Minister of the Union Government. Shri Khandubhai Desai, and was also address-

sed by Shrimati Indira Gandhi. The resolution reads thus:

"The Assam Political Conference considers a serious situation obtaining in this State due to transport bottle-neck. This has created a very considerable distress coupled with contributing to the raising of the cost of living to a high pitch. The result has been that all developmental works have been held up and the industrialisation of the State has been blocked.

The lack of amenities, rolling stock, engines etc., has caused great dissatisfaction amongst the people. The dropping of the Garo Hills Railways Scheme, the only one of its kind for the State in the Second Plan is highly resented. The Conference, therefore, requests the Government of India to take urgent steps to remove the bottle-neck by arranging for sufficient number of wagons and engines and by replacing out-moded stocks, proper ballasting of tracks, rebuilding weaker bridges with requisite strength, speeding up trains and quicker movement of goods and developing the workshop at Bongaigaon. Further it requests Government of India to provide in the Second Five Year Plan double tracks from Moniharighat to Tinsukia, or alternatively extend broad gauge lines to Assam, including railway to Garo Hills."

3 P.M.

This resolution summarises the whole transport position in Assam, where all development has been stopped, and that is because of the transport bottle-neck. We waited for the First Five Year Plan for something to materialise. Unfortunately nothing came. Then we waited for the Second Five Year Plan and in it also nothing worth mentioning has been included towards the development of that region in North-East India in respect of Railways and roads.

A moment ago, the hon. Member Shri Gurupadaswamy said that all things are going to the North-East and the South is completely neglected. I wish Shri Gurupadaswamy would come to our side and see the position.

Shri M. S. Gurupadaswamy: You are the East, not the North.

Shri Debeswar Sarmah: I am talking of the North-East. In all humility, I pose a question to the Railway Ministry as well as to the Government of India. What do they think of the 1½ crores of people in this North-East region

covering an area of about 80,000 square miles? There is that old metre gauge line without any bridge over the Brahmaputra with the result that we have neither corrugated iron sheets, nor cement, nor iron rods for any developmental works, leave alone movement of food-grains and other essential necessities of life. In the circumstances, I would request the Minister to let us know what is being done to develop North Bengal with a population of about 27 lakhs, Cooch-Bihar, Assam, Manipur and Tripura. I am not unmindful of the fact that the Railway Ministry has not got unlimited resources. Their resources are limited, and certain things demand priority like the steel industry, coal and one or two other things. But the people of area also look up to Government for development, and if they are left to their own resources, I do not think the people of North Bengal, Assam, Cooch-Bihar, NEFA hills, Manipur and Tripura can at any time develop themselves to the standard of the rest of India.

Shri Bansal (Jhajjar-Rewari): That applies to many areas, to my area also.

Shri Debeswar Sarmah: I do not know if there is any area that is so backward. At least there is no contradiction when I say that this area is one which, due to so many reasons, has been completely left out of development schemes till now.

"We talk of *sarvodaya*. We talk of a socialist pattern of society. Our people ask us: what is this socialist pattern of society when even under the Second Five Year Plan there is no proposal for development of Assam?"

[SHRIMATI RENU CHAKRAVARTY *in the Chair*]

In the First Five Year Plan we practically had nothing. In the Second Five Year Plan there is no proposal for the development of Assam. So, when we go to the villages and talk about the Avadi and Amritsar resolutions and try to explain them to the people, some of them stand up and say: "Well it is difficult to understand your pattern of a socialist society". As a matter of fact, the other day in the presence of the Minister of Labour, Shri Khandubhai Desai, a very responsible person, in utter disgust of things, stood up on the dias of the Assam Political Conference and in the presence of 10,000 people said: "If crude oil is going to be taken away from Assam to some other place to start a refinery, we shall cut the pipes". We, of

course, do not support that. In India we cannot afford at any cost to play with the law and order situation. But that is an indication of the attitude of the people in that area arising out of a feeling of frustration.

I will read only one sentence from a letter of the National Chamber of Commerce Tinsukia. It states:

"We learn that wagons registered in November and December, 1955 for rice and paddy for movement within the State of Assam have not been allotted as yet in March 1956."

If for movement of paddy and rice within the State wagons registered in November and December have not yet been allotted, goodness knows what is going to happen to us.

Then again, there is another aspect of this matter. In the Second Five Year Plan whatever money is sanctioned to the State of Assam and other places in this area, how are they going to develop if they cannot transport their goods? Now, I do not say that the hon. Railway Minister has got an Alladin's lamp. He cannot create things at his will. What our people expect of the Union Government is that there should be proposals, there should be speedy examination of schemes with a view to develop railway transport in that region. We are grateful to the Ministry for having taken up this survey of the Garo Hills railway from Pandu, but no concrete proposal has been taken up for actual execution during the Second Five Year Plan.

In the working of the railways also, while travelling in other parts of India we find certain amenities, a lot of improvement, but those who have had occasion to travel in our part of the country will find that all discarded bogeys have been sent there. Other amenities and particularly catering have gone down. I do not know why. Only yesterday a friend of mine here coming from Assam said that he had to travel both ways in the first class coach which was without light. Of course, being without light and without fan is so normal in Upper Assam that we do cease complain of it.

Sardar Hukam Singh (Kapurthala-Bhatinda): You only complain when there is light!

Shri Debeswar Sarmah: I am not sure if some employees have taken it into their heads to discredit the working of the railways in our part of the country. I

[Shri Debeswar Sarmah]

am not too sure. I can only request the Railway Ministry to look into the matter. Lightning strikes without notice are not very rare in that region. The trouble is that officers of the rank of R.T.S., D.T.S. and A.T.S. cannot contro' their subordinates properly. On the other hand, they are afraid of bringing the matter to the notice of the superiors lest they may be considered inefficient. I once talked to a particular officer and said: "Look here, if this is the state of things, why don't you move the higher authorities for the transfer of such people to another section", and that officer was frank and friendly enough to say: "If we go on complaining our superiors will consider that we cannot manage our subordinates. After all, we have to do a lot of things willy nilly for our food". These things are happening that way in that part of the country.

One of the smallest items I would like to bring to the notice of the Railway Minister. I suppose there are cleaners and sweepers in that part of the railway also, but there is no cleaning and no sweeping. You cannot touch anything. If a person travels wearing white clothes, khaddar particularly, his clothes become dirty. These are very small things but can be improved. I only mention these for improvement of the Administration

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Shri Nambiar: There is no dust there.

Shri Debeswar Sarmah: . . . and to draw the attention of the Railway Ministry to it

People do really look up to the Centre to discipline the employees of the railway in the Assam zone. We do not know what is the matter. Officers must know something. They ought to know.

I shall briefly touch upon a very recent incident, which is illustrative of how things are going on during last 2 or 3 years. On the 26th January, there was a passenger found travelling without ticket at Lumding Junction and he was roughly handled. That was in the morning. Towards the evening, there was a procession taken out. Lumding is a junction station right in the midst of hills. That was developed a little during the war-time. But the population there consists mostly of the railway people, their dependents and some other trades people also. The next day, that is, on the 27th, there was a partial strike in the offices of the DTS and the DMO. The same thing happened on the 28th also. On the night of 27th-28th January, at midnight,

the trains were suddenly stopped on the three sides of the Lumding junction in spite of the fact that the Deputy Commissioner, the Police Superintendent and other officers were holding a judicial enquiry at the spot of the platform. The trains were held up for 14 hours.

My point is this: Did the railway officials know that there would be a strike? And were they shutting their eyes to the partial strike in their own offices? A few days after a communique was issued on this matter from authoritative quarters that the trains were held up for about 14 hours on the mid-night of the 28th-29th, because these could not be received at the station platform and with a view to avoid risk to passengers only. But the crucial question, the crux of the matter is: Who was the aggressor in this case? Those who were there and a host of other members of the Pradesh Congress Committee, and others, who were involved in the held up, know it for certain, from our personal knowledge partly, and also partly from on-the-spot information, that the police certainly was not aggressive. Then, who was on the aggressive, and why was it that the trains were stopped at mid-night without any previous warning? For whose fault the trains could not be received at the platform and from whom the danger to passengers apprehended. Some trains were stopped in the midst of a forest at Diphu, where the passengers could get neither milk nor drinking for the children; nor were any eatables to be found at that place. When that was the situation, how could a communique be issued from authoritative quarters that it was in order to avoid greater risk to the passengers that the trains were held up? Those of us who were present there and who were held up there—at least six passenger trains had been held up, from all sides—know what is what. The boot was on the other leg.

We only hope that the Railway Ministry will conduct a high-level enquiry, and remedy things.

Mr. Chairman: The hon. Member has already taken 20 minutes. He should conclude now.

Shri Debeswar Sarmah: I shall conclude then. Thank you very much.

Shri L. N. Misra (Darbhanga-cum-Bhagalpur): I rise to congratulate the Railway Minister on the performance of his administration. I feel that in the course of the last seven years the Railway Ministry has not only been able

to stabilise the administration and rehabilitate itself, but has also given proof of its capability to discharge higher responsibilities in the coming years.

The dislocation caused as a result of the war and the Partition has been overcome, and the foundations for better progress have been laid. I like to congratulate the Railway Minister specially for the performance of the Ministry under the First Five Year Plan. At a time when there has been a shortfall in most of the other departments of Government, I feel that the Railway Ministry is the only Ministry which has exceeded the targets; It has not only been able to spend the targeted amount of Rs. 350 to Rs. 400 crores, but it has spent Rs. 432 crores. That is an achievement of which the Ministry can rightly be proud.

I am not very much happy over the allotment that the railways have got under the Second Five Year Plan. I am told that only about Rs. 1,125 crores have been allotted to the railways as against an estimated demand of Rs. 1,477 crores.

We are aiming now at more production in every sphere. We want to produce more cement, more iron, more steel and more of general goods. There is almost a war cry for more and more of production. And yet we are not giving due attention to the problem of transport. If the transport problem is not attended to, I am afraid that we can gain nothing. If we are not able to cope with the transport needs of the country, then we cannot produce more cement; we cannot produce more steel; in fact, all our plans will not succeed. If we do not pay due attention to the question of transport, I feel, therefore, that the railways should have preference even at the cost of the other projects contemplated under the Second Five Year Plan.

I was very much unhappy to see that the problem of the construction of new lines has been so coldly treated. As against a demand for 3,000 miles of new constructions, we are going to have only about 800 miles, and that too only in areas of development, *i.e.*, where cement and steel are to be produced. I do not know what will happen to those backward areas where even today there are no railway lines for miles and miles.

I do not want to go into the details of the proposals for new lines. But I feel that even out of the sums allotted, the railways should try to allot some funds for the construction of new lines.

So far as the problem of transport is concerned, I would like to make one suggestion. If we feel that we cannot have resources to develop our railways adequately, we should try to co-ordinate the three means of transport in our country, namely the railways, the roadways, and river navigation. I was heartened to hear the suggestion from Shri Tulsidas more or less on the lines which I am suggesting, namely that there should be a central co-ordination between the railways, the road transport and river navigation.

I feel that especially river transport in our country has to be developed properly. I have seen some reports about what has happened in this regard in Soviet Russia. It is heartening to see that that country has provided miles and miles of channels within its territory connecting one part of the country with another, and also connecting one river to another. They have been able to solve the problem of transport by this way. We too can give a trial to this thing in our country. I do not suggest that we should have similar new channels in our country at this stage, but we could develop this river transport to some extent; to begin with, we can have about five to seven lakhs of boats with capacity to carry 20 tons each, and moving for a distance of about 10 miles a day. In that way, we can do something, so far as the problem of transport is concerned. So far, river navigation has been neglected in our country.

Unless there is co-ordination between the three different modes of transport, I am afraid we shall not be able to succeed. I should like very much that a special department is created for the purpose of effecting co-ordination between the railways, the road transport and river navigation.

I now come to the question of the Railway Board. My hon. friend Shri Venkataraman had referred to this question of the reconstitution or remodeling of the Railway Board. I do not agree to the suggestion of the Kunzru Committee or the line suggested by Shri Venkataraman, that there should be something like a statutory corporation which will be free from the Ministry's interference. I hold the view that the Railway Board should have inspiration and instructions from the Minister; it should be under the Minister, and it should continue to function in the way it has done. But it should be strengthened. I am glad that the Minister himself has in the

[Shri L. N. Misra]

course of his speech in the Rajya Sabha the other day suggested that the Railway Board is to be strengthened.

I feel that the present chairman who looks to the civil engineering side of the Board is too much overworked. The duty of the chairman of the Board should be only to look to the planning aspect and the Efficiency Bureau, and the laying down of broad policies. He should not be overburdened with the normal departmental work of the civil engineering side. A special member may be put in charge of that. We have seen that there is excessive pressure of work at present in the Railway Board. We have also seen that the disposal of normal receipts has increased from 35 to 40 per cent a month. Therefore, the Railway Board needs to be strengthened with additional hands, so that they will be in a better position to bear the responsibilities in regard to the implementation of the Second Five Year Plan.

I have to suggest one more thing. There are many problems which can be easily disposed of at the General Manager's level. The Estimates Committee has also suggested on those lines. I want to suggest that there should be an advisory board at the level of the General Manager consisting of four or five persons of which one should necessarily be the President of the recognised Railwaymen's federation of that area. Then the Railway Minister can appoint two or three efficient retired railway officials with administrative experience who can advise the General Manager on the general administrative and operational affairs. We have these Consultative Committees and Zonal Committees. But in my opinion they devote most of their attention to railway passenger amenities and other aspects and not to the operational or administrative side. Therefore, I suggest that there should be an advisory committee at the General Manager's level, who can help the General Manager on these administrative or operational matters. Of course, their recommendation should necessarily be advisory.

Then I would like to come to the question of discipline among staff. Shri Giri has said something about it. Shri Venkataraman also said something about it. With what little experience I have gained from my membership of the Estimates Committee and my tours of the area, I have found that there is general deterioration in the discipline of the staff. There are apparent reasons for it. First of all justice is not being done to the

workers in time. Even Tribunals awards are not implemented in time and naturally they take recourse to other means. There is of course, outside influence also. There are some other reasons. Our people in general, and staff in particular, have not been able to appreciate the change from Police State to the Welfare State and they are not able to appreciate the responsibilities that have devolved upon them. Therefore, I feel that some sort of education should be given on matters of discipline etc. and so far as the Government is concerned, they should see to it that the implementation of the award etc. are attended to in time and quickly so that no room will be left for outside factors to influence our men in the railway.

I also feel that we can do something better if we can change the promotion system. At present the promotion is purely a mechanical thing and people having longer experience are promoted. But everyone cannot be worthy of the responsibility that come in course of this long service. Therefore, I feel that people having integrity, honesty, and initiative should get priority in promotion over those people whose only claim is their long standing service.

Lastly, I would come to the question of metre gauge. I am constrained to complain that there has not been due improvement so far as metre-gauge system in our country is concerned. The metre gauge system in our country is not negligible. It is perhaps equal to the broad gauge. We have about 15,171 miles in metre-gauge and 15,755 miles in broad-gauge. If you look at the working of the First Five Year Plan, if you look at the working of the budget, you will find that enough attention has not been paid to metre gauge, especially metre gauge in the North Eastern Railway. This Railway has 4,726 miles. In several matters like the speed of trains, number of trains, passenger amenities, doubling of the track you will see that the trains in the North Eastern Railway are not up to the standard, even according to the standard that we have got in broad gauge. There is only one good train in which we have got all the facilities it is Oudh Tirhut mail. In the North Eastern Railway we should have express trains and some more mail trains. Renewal of track in that area is also very much necessary. We can increase the speed of many trains by renewal of track. Even the speed of passenger trains can be increased. Between Darbhanga

to Saharsa in the North Eastern Railway, though the distance is about 100 miles, normally it takes 10 to 12 hours for a train to cover this distance. Therefore, special attention is to be given to the North Eastern Railway in particular and to the metre-gauge system in general. I also feel that doubling of track in certain areas of the North Eastern Railway should be attended to.

Lastly I come to the question of my constituency. For three or four years I have been pressing for the restoration of certain lines, old dismantled lines in the Kosi areas of Bihar. That area had a network of railway lines and only a few years back we have lost those lines. Now with the Kosi project that area is being developed. I, therefore, suggest that the old dismantled lines like Forbesganj-Raghopur line, Supaul to Chandpihar line etc. should be restored. Then there is the suggestion for the construction of a new line between Jhangharpur to Lawkaha. I have been pressing for these railway lines for some time. I will beg of the Railway Minister to take up the question of the restoration of lines in Bihar and give us at least a few of those three or four lines that have been dismantled in that area.

श्रीमती उमा नेहरू (जिला सीतापुर व जिला खेरी—पश्चिम) : श्रीमती जी, मैं रेलवे बजट का स्वागत करती हूँ और मिनिस्टर साहब को मुबारकबाद पेश करती हूँ कि उन्होंने जो बजट हाउस के सामने पेश किया है वह इतना अच्छा है। सब से ज्यादा खुशी की बात मुझे यह मालूम हुई कि, जैसा कि मिनिस्टर साहब ने अपनी स्पीच में कहा, तीसरे दर्जे की गाड़ियों की शकल अब बिल्कुल बदलने वाली है, यानी हमारे यहां एक और नई गाड़ी निकलेगी, जो अभी एक्सपेरिमेंट के लिये होगी, जो क्लासलेस ट्रेन होगी। लेकिन इस बारे में मैं उनसे इतना ही कहना चाहती हूँ कि जब आप इस गाड़ी को क्लासलेस बना रहे हैं और सब मिल कर इस गाड़ी में जायेंगे, थर्ड क्लास के पैसेन्जर्स और सेकन्ड क्लास के पैसेन्जर्स, तो उसकी सीटों पर गद्दियां जरूर होनी चाहियें। बगैर गद्दियों की सीट्स नहीं होनी चाहियें क्योंकि जो थर्ड क्लास के पैसेन्जर्स हैं उन को भी हमें आराम पहुंचाना है। इन सब चीजों को देखकर और जो तरक्की हो रही है उस को देख कर मेरी आँखों के सामने एक नक्शा आ जाता है और वह नक्शा सोशलस्टिक भारत का है। इस लिये मैं समझती हूँ कि जब क्लासलेस ट्रेन चलने लगी तो कोई बजह नहीं है कि हमारे

रेलवे एम्प्लायीज जो हैं, जो उन ट्रेनों में काम करने वाले लोग हैं, उन की नौकरियों में कोई क्लासिफिकेशन बनाये जायें, उन में कोई नीचा और कोई ऊँचा क्यों हो? मैं समझती हूँ कि गाड़ियों के साथ हमारे एम्प्लायीज के क्लासिफिकेशन को भी खत्म कर दिया जाय अब यह वक्त आ गया है।

इस के बाद मुझे यह कहना है कि रेलवे एम्प्लायीज के लिये हम ने इतना इन्तजाम मकानों के बारे में किया, लेकिन अब भी हमें उनके लिये बहुत से मकान तैयार करने हैं। मैं ने सुना है कि जब यहां पर सन् १९५२ में रिग्रूनिंग हुआ नार्दन रेलवे का तो उस समय यहां पर हालत यह हुई कि आप ने हर एक रेलवे से स्टाफ बुलाया। और जो स्टाफ यहां पर आया उस से वादा किया गया कि उस को यहां पर मकान मिलेंगे। लेकिन उनको अभी तक मकान नहीं मिले हैं, जो कि हमारी सरकार ने मकान बनवाने के लिये जमीन भी ली है और मकान बन भी रहे हैं। मुझे मिनिस्टर साहब से इतना कहना है कि जो स्टाफ बाहर से आया है उस के लोग इन्तजार कर रहे हैं कि मकान बनें और वह उनमें जावें। लेकिन उनके अन्दर एक वहम पैदा हो गया है और वह वहम यह है कि उन से कहा गया है मिनिस्ट्री की तरफ से कि जो मकान बने हैं वह लोगों को मिलेंगे जरूर, लेकिन उनकी कंटेंगरी के लिये वह मकान नहीं हैं। मकान कुछ तैयार हुए हैं जिन के लिये आप ने रुपया भी संकशन किया है यह मकान उन लोगों को ही दिये जाने चाहियें। मैं समझती हूँ कि अगर हमें दूसरी पांच साला योजना को कामयाब करना है तो केवल ट्रेनों की ही तरफ हम को ध्यान नहीं देना है बल्कि इम्प्लायीज को भी आगे बढ़ाना है। जो गरीब लोग हैं हमें उन को मकान ही नहीं देने हैं, उन की तन्दुस्ती का भी विचार करना है। आपकी स्पीच में अस्पतालों की भी चर्चा है। बहुत सी जगहों पर मैटर्निटी सेन्टर्स नहीं हैं, हमें मैटर्निटी सेन्टर्स का भी बन्दोबस्त करना है। इन सब चीजों को जब हम देखते हैं तो हमें बड़ी खुशी होती है, और मैं समझती हूँ कि जो कुछ मिनिस्टर साहब ने अपनी स्पीच में कहा है उन सब बातों को वह पांच साला योजना में पूरा करेंगे।

आज हम यह देखते हैं कि आप ने रेलों को बढ़ाया है लेकिन अभी तक भी जो ओवर-करार्डिंग होता है वह कोई कम नहीं हुआ है। आज भी लोग रेल की पटरियों पर खड़े हो कर सफर करते हैं। आप को चाहिये कि आप ओवर-करार्डिंग को किसी न किसी तरह से

[श्रीमती उमा नेहरू]

खत्म करें। आपने एक्सप्रेस जनता गाड़ियों का भी जिक्र किया है। मैं चाहती हूँ कि एक्सप्रेस जनता के साथ ही साथ अग्रर हो सके तो मेल जनता गाड़ियाँ भी आप चलायें। मेरे विचार में ऐसा करना आपके लिए कोई मुश्किल बात नहीं है। ऐसा करने से जो गरीब लोग हैं वे एक स्थान से दूसरे स्थान पर जल्दी से पहुंच सकेंगे। इन मेल जनता ट्रेनों को आप बम्बई, मद्रास और कलकत्ता के बीच चला सकते हैं।

इसके अलावा मैं यह भी कहना चाहती हूँ कि गाड़ियों की तादाद बढ़ाने के साथ साथ आप को कोचिंग की तादाद भी बढ़ानी चाहिये। इसके साथ ही साथ मुझे यह भी अर्ज मिनिस्टर साहब से करनी है कि जो पार्सल बुक कराये जाते हैं उनकी डिलिवरी लेने के लिए हमें बहुत दूर स्टेशनों पर जाना पड़ता है जिस से बहुत तकलीफ होती है। अग्रर आप कर सकें तो उस जगह पर जहाँ रिजर्वेशन्स होती हैं वहीं पर अग्रर पैसेंजर बुकिंग पार्सलज का इतिजाम हो जाए तो बहुत अच्छा होगा। मुझ से लोगों ने कहा है कि पहले यह हुआ करता था कि जो पैसेंजर पार्सल हुआ करते थे वे लोगों को उनके घरों में ले जा कर पहुंचाये जाते थे। यह चीज बड़े बड़े शहरों में होती है। अब इसको बन्द कर दिया गया है। अब फिर अग्रर इसको शुरू कर दिया जाय तो यह एक बहुत अच्छी बात होगी।

लाउड स्पीकरों और सिनेमा शो दिखाने की भी आपने चर्चा की है। सिनेमा का तो मुझे अनुभव नहीं है। हां जो लाउड स्पीकरों की बात है यह बहुत ही अच्छी है। अग्रर लाउड स्पीकरों के साथ साथ रेडियो का भी आप प्रबन्ध कर दें तो मैं समझती हूँ कि यह ज्यादा मुनासिब होगा। यह जो लाउड स्पीकर होंगे इनके जरिये से सोशल सर्विस बखूबी हो सकेगी। खाने पीने की चीजों के बारे में, प्लेटफार्मों की सफाई के बारे में और विशेषकर मक्खियों से क्या क्या बीमारियां फैल सकती हैं इसके बारे में आप लाउड स्पीकरों के जरिये से बहुत अच्छा प्रापेगंडा कर सकते हैं।

आपने टैक्सों के बारे में कहा है। मैं समझती हूँ यह ज्यादा अच्छा होता अग्रर आप खाने पीने की चीजों पर टैक्स न लगाते, जैसे दूध है या सब्जी है। मैं आपको यकीन दिलाती हूँ कि टैक्स देना हम लोगों की बिल्कुल भी बुरा नहीं लगता है लेकिन शर्त यह है कि आप हमारी सहूलियतों का पूरा पूरा इतिजाम करें। मैं

समझती हूँ कि एक स्टेट जो अपने आप को वेलफेयर स्टेट कहती है उसका सब से पहला फर्ज यह है कि वह टैक्स तो लगाये लेकिन इस बात का भी ब्याल रखे कि लोगों को सहूलियतें भी मुहैया होती हैं या नहीं।

पंच वर्षीय योजना के बारे में मुझे यह कहना है कि जो काम आपके जिम्मे किया गया है वह बहुत मुश्किल काम है और बहुत जिम्मेदारी का काम है। जितनी भी डिवेलपमेंट प्राजेक्ट्स बनीं हैं उनका माल लाने ले जाने में आपको रेलों का, फेरीज का और जहाजों का इस्तेमाल करना होगा। अग्रर आप का ध्यान केवल बड़े इंडस्ट्रियल सेंटरज की तरफ रहा तो इससे देश का बहुत हित नहीं होगा। आपको एग््री-कल्चरिस्ट्स का भी खयाल करना है। इस के बगैर आपकी जो योजना है वह सफल नहीं हो सकती है। आपको इंडस्ट्रियलिस्ट्स का और एग््रीकल्चरिस्ट्स, इन दोनों का खयाल रखना होगा और इन दोनों को ट्रांसपोर्ट की सहूलियतें मुहैया करनी होंगी। आपको यह भी देखना होगा कि एग््रीकल्चरिस्ट्स का माल जल्दी से जल्दी इधर से उधर आए जाए।

अब मैं जो रिपोर्ट एस्टीमेट्स कमेटी ने दी है उसके बारे में कहना चाहती हूँ। मुझे अफसोस है कि मैं उसकी रिपोर्ट के साथ सहमत नहीं हूँ। मैं समझती हूँ कि अलग से एक ट्रांसपोर्ट मिनिस्टरी का बनाया जाना बेकार की चीज है। यह ठीक है कि अगली पंच वर्षीय योजना में ट्रांसपोर्ट बहुत अहमियत रखती है। लेकिन मैं समझती हूँ कि बजाय इसकी अलग मिनिस्टरी बनाने के इसको रेलवे मिनिस्टरी के साथ ही रहने दिया जाय। अग्रर आप समझते हैं कि आपके पास कार्यकर्ता जो हैं वह काफी नहीं हैं तो आप और कार्यकर्ता रख सकते हैं। लेकिन ट्रांसपोर्ट की एक अलग से मिनिस्टरी बनाने की बात को मैं नहीं मानती हूँ। हमारा मुल्क एक गरीब मुल्क है और यह चीज मुनासिब नहीं है कि हम एक के बाद एक मिनिस्टरी बनाते चले जायें।

अब मुझे जो वेगन शार्टेज है उसके बारे में थोड़ा सा कहना है। पहले भी मैंने इसके बारे में शिकायत की थी और कहा था कि इनकी तादाद बढ़ाई जाए। उस वक्त बिहार पर कोसी में बाढ़ आने की वजह से मुसीबत आई हुई थी और बहुत सारी वेगंज उधर बिहार की तरफ डाइवर्ट कर दी गई थीं। मैं चाहती हूँ कि जो बैगन शार्टेज है उसको भी दर किया जाए।

अन्त में मैं ज्यादा वक्त न लेते हुए जो बेरी अपनी कंस्टिट्यूएन्सी है, उसके बारे में माननीय मंत्री जी को याद दिलाना चाहती हूँ। सीतापुर कोई बहुत बड़ी जगह नहीं है, वहाँ पर बड़े बड़े कोहे और गीतल के कारखाने नहीं हैं। वहाँ चावल, दाल आदि पैदा होते हैं और उन्हीं पर हम लोग ज़िन्दा रहते हैं। वहाँ का जो सेंटर है उसके नजदीक कोई रेल नहीं है और न ही कोई स्टेशन है। अब मैं फिर शास्त्री जी से प्रार्थना करती हूँ कि वह सीतापुर की तरफ भी ध्यान दें।

आखिर में मैं इतना ही कहना चाहती हूँ कि हमारे रेलवे मिनिस्टर साहब की निगरानी में जो योजना बनाई गई है और जिसको कि वह अब अम्ल में लायेंगे उसमें वह अवश्य कामयाब होंगे। इस रेलवे बजट के बनाने के बारे में उनको मुबारिकबाद भी देती हूँ और उनसे प्रार्थना करती हूँ कि वह जो रेलवे एम्पलायीज़ हैं उनका भी ह्याल रखें क्योंकि यदि आप उनको संतुष्ट रखेंगे तो आप बड़ी आसानी से आगे बढ़ सकेंगे और आपकी योजना भी सफल होगी।

Shri J. R. Mehta (Jodhpur): Madam Chairman, this Budget has evoked widespread feelings of satisfaction, approval and praise in this House and outside; and, I am very pleased to be able to associate myself with these feelings of widespread satisfaction.

Now, in associating myself with these feelings, I am not swayed entirely by the financial results of the Railways during the year that has gone by. Passenger earnings, goods earnings and generally, railway earnings have been good and our surplus has gone up. All this is satisfactory so far as it goes but it is also gratifying to note that the process of rehabilitation of railways has gone on at a very rapid pace and we have achieved the physical targets which we had set before ourselves. What is more satisfactory is that our Railways are geared for the great task that await them in the next Five Year Plan.

All this is satisfactory. What gives me more satisfaction than anything else is the spirit which permeates every individual connected with the Railways, from the highest to the lowest in the discharge of his duties and responsibilities. I am sure hon. Members will agree that today the railwayman in India is far more courteous to the general public far more solicitous of their conveniences and comfort than he was ever before.

And he is setting up a standard which other departments of the Government, whether in the Centre or the States, will do well to emulate.

I am aware of the fact that—and the complaint is voiced in this respect in some quarters—the speed of our goods and passenger trains has shown a downward trend and there has also been a deterioration in punctuality. I am sure that the Railway Minister will be able to assure us that the matter is not out of his sight and that he will take adequate measures to see that further deterioration does not take place and that we are able to set up correct standards in this respect. Of course, we can understand that when we are in the process of expansion, something of this nature might be in sight. But I am sure the Railway Minister will take adequate measures in this respect.

I am not also obvious of the fact that there is even now considerable corruption to be encountered among our railway staff. But my own impression is that it is on the decrease. As hon. Members are aware, we had a committee, headed by Acharya Kripalani, to go into the entire question of corruption on Railways and I am glad to note that out of 146 recommendations made by that committee, as many as 128 have already been accepted by the Government and the remaining ones are also receiving consideration. And then we have the assurance of the Railway Minister that his Ministry will leave no stone unturned to fight and resist this evil.

While I appreciate all this, I would take this opportunity to emphasise that corruption in India is an all-pervading evil; and that, therefore, all our efforts to weed out corruption, if they are to be effective, must be all-pervasive also. Corruption in this country today is not confined to the Railways alone. It permeates all other departments of one Government, more or less. Indeed it has taken deep roots in all spheres of our life—business life, social life and even public life. And conditions in one sphere react on conditions in other spheres. My respectful submission is that if we are honest in our desire to combat and eradicate corruption from our midst, it will not do to deal with it piecemeal, taking one department of Government in isolation from the rest, or for the matter of that, one sphere of life in isolation from other spheres. We are planning in a big way to make India great and glorious, and yet all our grandiose objectives and

[Shri J. R. Mehta]

schemes are likely to founder on this rock of corruption unless we can blast it in time.

If I had my way, I would give top priority to the appointment of a high power committee to go into this question as an all-India phenomenon and take effective measures to root it out.

I am not at all happy at the curtailment which the Planning Commission has thought fit to bring about in the allocation to be made to the Railways during the Second Five Year Plan period. This curtailment will mean that our Railways will be incapacitated from coping to the full with the increased passenger traffic as well as goods traffic. As against 30 per cent increase anticipated in passenger traffic, provision has been made for 15 per cent only, and as against 6·8 million tons of anticipated increase in goods traffic, provision has been made for 42 million tons only. While I do not doubt that there must have been compelling circumstances which led the Planning Commission to bring down the targets proposed by the Railway Ministry, I trust hon. Members will readily agree that this curtailment is not only unwise but positively dangerous. It will tantamount to putting a serious clog in the wheel of our expanding economy, and might upset it entirely and at any time. And I do not see the wisdom of producing more if we are unable to move the goods we produce to places of their consumption. I strongly appeal to this House to see that finance, or lack of it, is not allowed to stand in the way of our Railways expanding to their full capacity commensurate with the increased demands of our passenger and goods traffic. I respectfully submit that if we create conditions which are bound to generate tremendous increase in traffic and if we do not take precautions beforehand to make arrangements for their catering, it is no planning at all. I would respectfully ask: is this planning or is this bankruptcy of planning?

From this point of view, that is to say, from the point of view of the needs of the Railways and the vital role they are expected to play in our expanding economy, we may not grudge them the extra income to be derived by the proposed levy of a surcharge of one anna in the rupee on all freight traffic with a few exceptions like grains, fodder, khadi, newsprint, etc. I would however suggest that that all or most of the essential commodities which are exempted

from the levy of sales-tax should be exempted from the levy of this surcharge also.

Having pleaded the cause of the Railway Ministry of the Railways with this hon. House, I wish to be excused if I take the liberty to plead with the Railway Minister for a cause which it is my duty to espouse. I want to plead with him for giving a railway to Jaisalmer which is a part of my constituency. That vast area on the north-west of Rajasthan, on the border of Pakistan, is at present entirely cut off from the outside world. I submit that its very location as a frontier zone should be sufficient justification for giving it a railway. It is an obvious strategic necessity. And this fact alone should suffice to overrule any objection put forward on strictly financial grounds. I dare say that such an objection will lose much of its force before long when the Rajasthan Canal will bring the much-needed water to the dry and parched lands of Jaisalmer, as a result of which both goods and passenger traffic is bound to increase. But even leaving this financial aspect out for the time being, I respectfully ask whether we can deny to the God-forsaken brethren of ours whose lot is cast in those arid regions the elementary benefit of communication in the shape of a rail link, consistently with our ideal of a welfare State. In a welfare State, all backward tracts must be opened up, irrespective of considerations of gain and loss. I respectfully submit to this hon. House that this Jaisalmer area, which covers about 16,000 square miles and which is absolutely cut off from the rest of the country, poses a challenge to our claim to introduce a Socialist State of society.

I would like to say a word about the integration of *ex-State* Railway officers to which the hon. Railway Minister referred. The subject has exercised the minds of many of us in those States for a considerable time as I am sure it has exercised the minds of the Railway Minister and of the Railway Board. In his last Budget speech, the Railway Minister had promised a sympathetic and early decision. I am glad that he has now been able to announce his decision. I do not feel like dealing with the merits of the decision at this stage. But as one who was guilty, so to say, of inflicting himself on the Railway Minister several times, individually as well as in company with some other friends, I am here to testify to his unflinching courtesy, his infinite patience, his keen desire to appreciate the other man's point of view, his

remarkably human approach, his transparent sincerity and desire to do justice, and above all his solicitude for the interests and welfare of the railwaymen, from the highest to the lowest, whether of the *ex-State* Railways or otherwise.

Shri Kamath (Hoshangabad): The hon. Minister is blushing! He feels positively embarrassed.

An Hon. Member: We must fully agree with these words of praise.

Shri J. R. Mehta: He is one of those persons whose handling of human beings and human affairs (*Interruptions*) is such that one has to be satisfied at least outwardly even if one may not get all that one wanted.

I know that the Railway Minister's task is not an easy one. Between divergent views of the Board, the so-called high-powered review committee and the Home Ministry, it could not have been easy to evolve a formula which would give the maximum common measure of satisfaction, if I may say so, to the maximum number of people. This, the Railway Minister has sought to do sincerely and honestly and he deserves full credit for it. Our gratitude and the gratitude of all *ex-State* railway officers in the fullest measure goes to him for what he has done.

I am told that there are a few hard cases and anomalies even now but in the spirit in which I approach the problem I have no desire to go into them here. I am content to leave them to the good sense of the Railway Minister who, I trust, will look into them sympathetically and see his way to rectify them so far as they admit of rectification without real violence to the principles involved. I do expect him to see that there are no *dridras* in Hanuman's Golden Lanka, that is to say, in Shastriji's Golden Railways. (*Interruptions*).

Mr. Chairman: The hon. Member had better continue without paying heed to them.

Shri J. R. Mehta: They have taken much of my time. However, I shall finish in half a minute.

There is one aspect of the case which does not seem to have been covered by the orders announced and which I should like, therefore, to mention here. I understand that the staff of the *ex-State* railways have been allowed the

option to retain the scales of pay and allied conditions of service available to them on the *ex-State* railways concerned or to come over to the Central Pay Commission's scales of pay and the Government of India conditions of service so far as they hold the same posts or equivalent posts as they held at the time of financial integration. But this option is being denied to them on promotion to higher posts. I do not want to elaborate this point because my time is up. But I would just request the Minister to look into these as I am told that this had created very serious anomalies and hardships to the employees of the *ex-State* railways.

श्री जांगड़े (बिलासपुर—रक्षित—अनुसूचित जातियाँ) : सभानेत्री महोदया, प्रथम पंच-वर्षीय योजना की समाप्ती का समय आ रहा है और द्वितीय पंचवर्षीय योजना का कार्य तीन या चार महीने बाद शुरू होने वाला है और राज्यों का पुनर्गठन भी फिर से होने जा रहा है और देश की तरक्की दिनों दिन होती जा रही है। इन आघारों को अपने सामने रख कर हमें देखना चाहिये कि हमारा रेलवे मंत्रालय आगे क्या करने वाला है, और हमें उसकी कार्यवाहियों पर विचार करना है।

रेलवे रिग्रुपिंग के विषय में मुझे यह कहना है कि अभी रेलवे मंत्रालय रेलवे की रिग्रुपिंग के विषय में कुछ विचार नहीं कर रहा है। मेरा ख्याल है कि देश जब बहुत ज्यादा तरक्की कर जाय और यहाँ पर यातायात के साधन बहुत ज्यादा बढ़ जाय और उसके बाद में यदि हम रेलवे की रिग्रुपिंग करेंगे तो हमारे रेलवे मंत्रालय को फायदे के बजाय नुकसान ही ज्यादा होगा। इसलिये हमको अभी से निश्चय कर लेना चाहिये कि हमें रेलवे की रिग्रुपिंग पर फिर से विचार करना है या नहीं और खास करके पूर्वोत्तर रेलवे जो कि १,६०० मील से भी अधिक लम्बी है और जो मथुरा से लेकर डिब्रूगढ़ और उसके आगे बढ़ चुकी है, उसका हमें विभागीकरण चाहिये। इसीप्रकार पूर्वोत्तर रेलवे पांडु रीजन एक बहुत बड़ा भाग है और गोरखपुर से उसको कंट्रोल नहीं किया जा सकता है। और उस रीजन का एक अलग जोन बनाना चाहिए क्योंकि गोरखपुर से उसका कंट्रोल करना मुश्किल होता है। वहाँ पर केवल डिप्टी जनरल मैनेजर को जनरल मैनेजर कीपावर देने से काम नहीं चलेगा जब तक कि हम आसाम और बंगाल के रीजन को अलग नहीं बनायेंगे और एक अलग ग्रुप नहीं बनायेंगे तब तक नार्थ ईस्टर्न रेलवे

[श्री जांगड़े.]

तरक्की नहीं कर सकती और चूँकि यह मीटरगेज है, इसलिए इस पर सरकार द्वारा पूरा ध्यान नहीं दिया जाता।

इसके बाद मैं यह कहना चाहता हूँ कि राज्य पुनर्गठन आयोग की सिफारिशों के आधार पर नये राज्य फिर से बनने वाले हैं और उसके अनुसार मध्यप्रदेश एक बहुत बड़ा विशाल प्रदेश होगा और जिसका एरिया १ लाख ७० हजार वर्गमील होगा। वहाँ पर आप देखेंगे कि भूपाल जो उस विशाल प्रदेश की राजधानी बनने जा रहा है, जबतक उन शहरों को जो भूपाल से ६०० और ७०० मील की दूरी पर स्थित हैं, उनका भूपाल से सम्बन्ध नहीं जुड़ता है, तबतक नये राज्य का बनाना और वहाँ के लोगों को सुविधा देना बेकार होगा, इसलिए हमें मध्यप्रदेश में जितने बड़े बड़े शहर हैं, उन्हें भूपाल से जोड़ना चाहिए। उदाहरणार्थ मैं आपको बतलाऊँ कि बीना से बिलासपुर पहुँचने में अभी भी २४ घंटे लगते हैं और मेरा सुझाव है कि यदि जो वहाँ पर पैसेंजर ट्रेन है उसको फास्ट पैसेंजर ट्रेन कर दिया जाय तो कोई खर्चा भी नहीं बैठेगा और बजाय २४ घंटे के १२ घंटे में पहुँचा जा सकेगा। इसी तरह से भूपाल से रायपुर के लिए भी एक अलग नई गाड़ी चालू कर सकते हैं और यह क्या ही अच्छा होता यदि भूपाल से जितने भी मध्यप्रदेश के मुख्य मुख्य शहर हैं, उनको मिलाने के लिए एक सर्कुलर ट्रेन चलायी जाय ताकि राजधानी के साथ उस प्रदेश के अन्य शहरों का सम्बन्ध जुड़ सके और कम समय में और सुविधापूर्वक एक जगह से दूसरी जगह जाया जा सके और ऐसा करने से वहाँ के शासन कार्य में भी काफी सुविधा होगी और लोगों की प्रशासन की सुविधा सुलभ होगी।

हमने रेलवे बोर्ड के बजट में देखा है कि "Renewal of tracks" का जो डेटा है, वह हमें नहीं मिलता और स्पीड रिस्ट्रिक्शनस कारण हम देखते हैं कि दिल्ली से लेकर मद्रास तक हम अधिक गाड़ियाँ नहीं चला सकते। "Renewal of tracks" का डेटा न होने के कारण और स्पीड रिस्ट्रिक्शनस व्यारे की कमी के कारण हम अधिक गाड़ियाँ नहीं चला सकते। भविष्य में कितना खर्च करना पड़ेगा इसके सम्बन्ध में हम को कोई जानकारी नहीं मिलती, क्या ही अच्छा होता यदि रेलवे मंत्रालय इस सम्बन्ध में हमें पूरी जानकारी देता।

हम यह भी देखते हैं कि बहुत सी नई लाइनों का सर्वे कार्य किया जाता है और बहुत सी

लाइनें लगाई भी जाती हैं लेकिन साथ ही हम यह भी जानते हैं कि बहुत सी ऐसी लाइनें हैं जिनका कि सर्वे आज से तीन, चार साल पहले हो चुका है और जिनके कि बनाने की मंजूरी भी हो चुकी है लेकिन स्टील की और वुडन स्लीपर्स की कमी के कारण जो सर्वे वर्क है और जो कंस्ट्रक्शन वर्क है वह रुका पड़ा है और हमारे रेलवे मंत्रालय को इस ओर ध्यान देना चाहिये।

हम जानते हैं कि हमारे देश में लोहे की कमी है और वुडन स्लीपर्स तो हैं हालाँकि हमारे देश में लकड़ी की कमी नहीं है लेकिन कुछ प्रोसीज्योर ऐसे हैं, तरीके ऐसे हैं कि उसकी कमी भी हमको हो जाती है। आज इस बात की बड़ी जरूरत है कि जैसे भी हो जब तक कि इन तीन चार सालों तक हमें अपने देश को लोहे के मामले में आत्म निर्भर नहीं बना लेते तब तक के लिए हमें वाशिंगटन और लंदन की जो पर्चेजिंग फ़र्म्स हैं उनके जरिये से लोहा मंगाकर अपना काम चलाना चाहिये।

गुड्स ट्रेनों की स्पीड बढ़ाने के सम्बन्ध में रेलवे मंत्रालय को विचार करना चाहिये। दूसरे हमारे देश में वेगन्स की अत्यधिक कमी है और सरकार को उनकी उचित व्यवस्था करने की ओर तत्काल ध्यान देना चाहिये। और वेगन्स की कमी होने के कारण ही बहुत से व्यापारी अष्टाचार की ओर बढ़ते हैं। आज इस सम्बन्ध में काफी अष्टाचार की शिकायतें हमारे सुनने में आती हैं। रेलवे मंत्रालय को वेगन्स की कमी दूर करने के लिए फ़ौरन कदम उठाना चाहिये। हमारे यह भी देखने में आता है कि गुड्स ट्रेन की जो स्पीड है, हालाँकि उसकी लोडिंग कैपेसिटी बढ़ गई है, पर उसकी जो स्पीड कैपेसिटी है वह दिनों दिन घटती जा रही है यद्यपि इफीसियेंसी ब्यूरो इसपर ध्यान देता है फिर भी इस ओर रेलवे मंत्रालय को ध्यान देना चाहिए क्योंकि गुड्स ट्रेन की स्पीड में कमी होने से देश को लाखों रुपये का नुकसान होता है, इसलिए उनकी स्पीड को बढ़ाया जाना चाहिये।

अभी हमारे मंत्री महोदय ने रेलवे में डिवीजन-लाइजेशन करने का जो विचार प्रकट किया है उसको एक्सपेंडाइट किया जाय और क्या ही अच्छा होता यदि अनुमान समिति ने डिवीजन-लाइजेशन की ओर जो संकेत किया है, उसके आधार पर हम रेलवे के प्रशासन को चलायें ताकि रेड टेपीजम् से बच सकें और जनरल मैनेजर और अन्य लोगों से हमारा सम्पर्क बहुत ज्यादा हो जाय।

नैरोगेज रेलवे लाइन के बारे में मैं पांच, छह साल से देख रहा हूँ कि उनकी हालत में सुधार करने के लिए किसी का ध्यान नहीं जाता है और यह बड़े खेद की बात है कि नैरोगेज लाइन्ज़ पर एमिनिटीज़ बढ़ाने के सम्बन्ध में किसी भी सदस्य ने नहीं कहा। रेलवे बजट में कहा गया है कि हमको नैरोगेज के सम्बन्ध में अपना दृष्टिकोण बदलना होगा परन्तु हो सकता है कि उनमें सुविधायें सुलभ करने में १०, १५ साल लग जायें और लोग समझने लग जायें कि इन लाइनों का कल्याण होने वाला नहीं है, इसलिए ज़रूरत इस बात की है कि रेलवे मंत्रालय नैरोगेज लाइन्स में सुधार और सुविधायें सुलभ करने की ओर तत्काल ध्यान दें और उसपर अपना निर्णय दें, मैं बहुत सी छोटी लाइनों की बाबत जानता हूँ और मिसाल की तौर पर आपको बतलाना चाहता हूँ कि रायपुर से घमतरी तक जो नैरोगेज है, उस ४८ मील के फासले को तय करने में गाड़ी को ६ घंटे लग जाते हैं जब कि साइकल से हम उस फासले को ४ घंटे में तय कर सकते हैं। इसलिए आज ज़रूरत इस बात की है छोटी कि लाइनों में सुधार किया जाय और पैसेजर्स एमिनिटीज़ को बढ़ाया जाय और ब्रौड गेज बनाया जाय।

4 P. M.

इस के बाद मैंने देखा कि रेलवे मंत्रालय ने एक जगह लिखा है कि अन्य देशों में प्रति हजार व्यक्तियों के पीछे ४७, ४८ मील रेलवे लाइन है, लेकिन हमारे देश में केवल ३२ मील है, यह संख्या भी खासकर उत्तर प्रदेश, बिहार या दूसरे उत्तरी हिन्दुस्तान के भागों की रेलवे लाइनों की वजह से है। जो पिछड़े हुए इलाके हैं उन में से कुछ स्थान तो ऐसे हैं जहाँ पचास पचास हजार स्क्वायर मील के अन्दर एक मील भी रेलवे लाइन नहीं है। कई आदिवासियों के क्षेत्र हैं, जैसे बस्तर आदि, जहाँ हमारे प्रधान मंत्री गये थे जहाँ साक्षरता तनिक भी नहीं है, वहाँ के कुछ सदस्य यहाँ पर भी अंगूठा छाप लगाते हैं, वहाँ के लोगों ने अबतक रेल देखी तक नहीं है। यह एक लाख स्क्वायर मील का क्षेत्र है जहाँ पर कि एक मील भी रेलवे लाइन नहीं है। इसी प्रकार से बिलासपुर मंडला और रायपुर मंडला के बीच का क्षेत्र है जिसका एरिया पचास हजार स्क्वायर मील है, वह पर रेलवे लाइन नहीं है, इसी प्रकार से और भी बहुत से क्षेत्र हैं। यदि आप हिन्दुस्तान का नक्शा उठा कर देखेंगे तो आप को पता चलेगा

कि कितना बड़ा गैप है जहाँ पर रेलवे लाइन नहीं है। भगवान जाने यह गैप कब पूरा होगा।

एक माननीय सदस्य : पहाड़ी इलाके में कैसे रेल चलेगी।

श्री जांगडे : वह पहाड़ी इलाका नहीं है, प्लेन है, वहाँ रेलवे बन सकती हैं।

इस के उपरान्त मैं कुछ अपनी कांस्टिट्यूएन्सी के बारे में कहना चाहता हूँ। गत तीन वर्षों से बताया जा रहा है कि बिलासपुर में जो रेलवे कालोनी है उस की ओर ध्यान दिया जावे। बिलासपुर रेलवे कालोनी की जनसंख्या १०,००० है और बिलासपुर जिले की जनसंख्या १७ लाख है। हमारे यहाँ की रेलवे कालोनी में जो रेलवे एम्प्लायीज़ रहते हैं उनके लड़कों को रेलवे कालोनी के स्कूल में भर्ती होने का मौका नहीं मिलता है तो भला बताइये कि उन को शहर के ३-४ हाई स्कूलों में कैसे भर्ती किया जा सकता है? जो १७ लाख लोगों के लिये मक ही हैं। वहाँ पर एक हाई स्कूल की डिमांड बहुत सालों से की जा रही है, रेलवे मंत्रालय से पत्र व्यवहार स सम्बन्ध में बराबर बढ़ता जा रहा है, लेकिन वहाँ रेलवे कालोनी में अब तक हाई स्कूल नहीं खुला है। बिलासपुर रेलवे कालोनी के बच्चों से पूरी फीस ली जाती है। दूसरे स्कूलों में जहाँ बच्चे बढ़ते हैं और दो तीन भाई होते हैं तो कम से कम एक भाई को आधी माफी मिलती है। मैंने इसकी ओर पिछले साल भी ध्यान आकर्षित किया था, लेकिन इसकी ओर मंत्रालय कभी ध्यान नहीं देता और सब बच्चों से पूरी फीस ली जाती है। हरिजनों से भी वहाँ पूरी फीस ली जाती है। यहाँ तक कि प्राइमरी स्कूलों में भी जो हरिजन हिन्दी की पहली, दूसरी, तीसरी और चौथी कक्षा में पढ़ते हैं उन से दो आना, चार आना, छः आना और आठ आना फीस ली जाती है। यह बहुत गलत तरीका है, लेकिन इस की ओर भी रेलवे मंत्रालय ने अब तक ध्यान नहीं दिया।

बिलासपुर रेलवे कालोनी में मैं देखता हूँ कि क्लास फोर स्टाफ के एंप्लॉयमेंट के सम्बन्ध में बड़ी संख्या में घूसखोरी की शिकायतें आती हैं। वहाँ के अस्पताल में जो २०० रु० दे दे उस को जल्दी से जल्दी सर्टिफिकेट मिल जाता है, इस से वहाँ पर भ्रष्टाचार फैलता है और लोगों की एफिशिएंसी में भी दखल पड़ता है। मैंने जेनरल मैनेजर से शिकायत की है कि स्थानीय लोगों को क्लास फोर स्टाफ के एंप्लॉयमेंट में जगह

[श्री. जांगड़े]

नहीं मिलती हैं, बाहर के लोगों को प्रिफरंस मिलना है। मैं चाहता हूँ कि इसके लिये एक निष्पक्ष जांच समिति बनाई जाय जो इस की जांच करे।

डी० एम० ई० के खिलाफ भी लोगों से मुझे बहुत सी शिकायतें सुनने को मिलती हैं जिन को कि मैं सहन नहीं कर सकता हूँ। इस लिये मुझे कहना पड़ता है कि रेलवे मंत्रालय भले ही कुछ काम बहुत अच्छे कर रहा है, लेकिन इन बातों की तरफ उस ने कोई ध्यान नहीं दिया है।

खादी के सम्बन्ध में मुझे मालूम हुआ कि रेलवे मंत्रालय २७ लाख रु० की खादी क्रय कर रहा है, मैं चाहता हूँ कि जब कि रेलवे विभाग में लगभग ११ लाख कर्मचारी हैं तो कम से कम ११ करोड़ की खादी खरीदी जाय ताकि हजारों लोगों को काम मिल सके और लोग भी सादगी का सबक ले सकें। जब तक रेलवे मंत्रालय तथा दूसरे मंत्रालय सादगी का सबक दूसरों के सामने नहीं रखेंगे तब तक वे सादगी का सबक नहीं सीख सकेंगे।

मैं देखता हूँ कि जो बड़े बड़े उतरदायी व्यक्ति हैं जब वे लोग रेलवे मंत्रालय से पत्र व्यवहार करते हैं तो उसका जबाब उन को बहुत देर में मिलता है। मुझे खुद इसका व्यक्तिगत अनुभव है। जब मैं रेलवे मंत्रालय से पत्रव्यवहार करता हूँ तो तीन तीन साल बाद मुझे उसका जबाब मिलता है। इसका कारण लोगों की शिकायतें दूर नहीं होती तो स्ट्राइक्स होते हैं तथा दूसरी दिक्कत पैदा होती है। जब इस तरह की बातें होती हैं। तो लोग कहते हैं कि आखिर यह स्ट्राइक्स क्यों किये जाते हैं? जब मेरे जैसे उत्तरदायी व्यक्ति की करेस्पॉन्डेंस का उत्तर तीन साल के बाद मिलता है तो दूसरे लोगों का पत्रों का उत्तर-रेलवे मंत्रालय कैसे जल्दी दे सकता है।

इस के बाद मैं रायपुर रेलवे जंक्शन के सम्बन्ध में बताना चाहता हूँ। रायपुर बहुत बड़ा रेलवे जंक्शन है और वहाँ की जनसंख्या एक लाख से ऊपर है। रायपुर स्टेशन दोनो तरफ जनता की आबादी है। वहाँ पर दो तीन ऐक्सिडेन्ट्स हो चुके। और दो तीन मनुष्य मर गये वहाँ एक ओवरब्रिज की बड़ी आवश्यकता है। जैनरल मैनेजर ने खुद इस के सम्बन्ध में आश्वासन दिया था कि ओवरब्रिज बन जायेगा लेकिन अब तक वहाँ पर ओवरब्रिज नहीं बना है।

रायपुर-जगदलपुर का १८४ मील का क्षेत्र बिना रेलवे लाइन के पड़ा हुआ है। या तो

घमतीरी लाइन को ही और आगे बढ़ाया जाय, और अगर आप छोटी लाइन को बढ़ाना पसन्द नहीं करते तो बड़ी लाइन बनाइये जो कि रायपुर से जगदलपुर तक हो। कम से कम इसका सर्वे तो हो ही जाना चाहिये ताकि वहाँ के लोगों को विश्वास हो जाय कि जगदलपुर में जो कि डिस्ट्रिक्ट हेडक्वार्टर है, द्वितीय पंच वर्षीय योजना के अन्त तक रेलवे के दर्शन हो सकेंगे।

मैं रेलवे मंत्री महोदय को इस सम्बन्ध में बहुत ज्यादा धन्यवाद देता हूँ कि उन्होंने हरिजनों के प्रति बहुत सहृदयपूर्वक व्यवहार किया और रेलवे बोर्ड ने जो हरिजन एम्प्लायीज के लिये स्पेशल ट्रेनिंग सेंटर खोला है उस के लिये भी धन्यवाद देता हूँ। परन्तु इसके साथ साथ मैं यह सुझाव भी देना चाहता हूँ कि एग्जामिनेशन कंडक्ट करने का जो तरीका है उस में शोड्यूल्ड कास्ट्स और शोड्यूल्ड ट्राइब्ज के लिये अलग एग्जामिनेशन किया जाय। अगर कम्पटीशन भी करना हो तो उस में भी बाहर के लोगों को इन के साथ न बैठाया जाय। वह कम्पटीशन सिर्फ शोड्यूल्ड कास्ट्स और शोड्यूल्ड ट्राइब्ज के कैंडिडेट्स के बीच में होना चाहिये। यदि बाद में देखें कि इस संपरेटिस्ट टेन्डेन्सी बढ़ती है तो इसको तीन चार साल ट्रायल देने के बाद वह इस को बन्द कर सकती है। लेकिन कुछ दिन इसको जरूर ट्रायल देना चाहिये। प्रमोशन और रिट्रैकमेंट के लिये सेलेक्शन एग्जामिनेशन हो तो वह सिर्फ शोड्यूल्ड कास्ट्स और ट्राइब्ज के बीच में किया जाय ताकि अधिकतर क्लास २, ३ और ४ के ऐप्वाइंटमेंट्स के लिये यह लोग ज्यादा संख्या में पहुँच सके और सरकारी कर्मचारियों को यह कहने का मौका न मिले कि हम ने दुर्बल्लिस्ते मंगाई थीं लेकिन शोड्यूल्ड ट्राइब्ज और शोड्यूल्ड कास्ट्स के लोगों की दुर्बल्लिस्ते बहुत नहीं आई, और लोग योग्य नहीं मिले हम क्या करें अगर उन का परसेन्टेज पूरा नहीं होता है। यह कहने का बहना उनको न मिले। इस तरह से शोड्यूल्ड कास्ट्स और दूसरे शोड्यूल्ड ट्राइब्ज के लोगों को भी कहने का मौका नहीं मिलेगा कि सरकारी कर्मचारी हम लोगों को एप्वाइंट नहीं करते हैं और बाहर से आदमी बुलाते हैं।

इस के बादमें अपने क्षेत्र की ओर आता हूँ। मैं ने कहा था डूंगरगढ़ से बिलासपुर जो गाड़ी पहले चलती थी उस को डूंगरगढ़ से बिलासपुर तक न चलाकर भिलाई से रायगढ़ तक फिर चालू किया जाय। इसी तरह से सब लाइनों में मैंने देखा कि पैसेन्जर एग्जामिनेशन के लिये बहुत सी चीजें को गई, लेकिन इस लाइनपर

एक भी गाड़ी नहीं चलाई गई। हावड़ा से नागपुर तक एक जनता एक्सप्रेस चलाने का प्रश्न तीन चार साल से किचाराधीन है। मैं चाहता हूँ कि यह एक्सप्रेस चलाई जाय और इसी साल शीघ्र से शीघ्र चलाई जाय। तीन चार वर्षों से कोचेज मिलने पर चालू होगा ऐसा कह कर क्यों टाला जा रहा है।

केटरिंग के सम्बन्ध में मुझे कहना है कि मैं ने देखा कि हालाँकि डिपार्टमेंटल केटरिंग हो रहा है लेकिन उस में भी मुझे खेद है कि पहले के मुकाबले में बहुत ज्यादा उन्नति नहीं हुई है। पहले जो कंटेक्टर थे वह जनता को रद्दी चीजें देते थे और पैसेन्जरों को परेशान करते थे। इस समय भी मुझे डर है कि शायद रेलवे एम्प्लायीज भी उन्हीं व्यवसायियों का स्थान न ले लें। मैं चाहता हूँ कि वह उनका स्थान न लें और जनता को परेशान न करें। मेरा सुझाव है कि आधा रेलवे डिपार्टमेंट का हो और आधा प्राइवेट फर्म का साझा हो। क्योंकि दोनों के साझे का जब मिला जुला केटरिंग होगा तो कम्पटीशन होगा और चीजें ज्यादा अच्छी होंगी। सदर्न रेलवे में जो डिपार्टमेंटल केटरिंग है वह नुकसान पर चल रहा है। रेलवे एक कामशौल कंसर्न है इस लिये मैं नहीं चाहता कि उसे किसी जगह पर लास हो। मैं चाहता हूँ कि डिपार्टमेंटवाले खुद इस के लिये कोशिश करें कि पहले की खाराबियाँ दूर हों। मैंने खुद एक बार मंत्री महोदय को सबलॉटिंग के बारे में कहा था। बड़े बड़े कंटेक्टर हैं वह चालीस चालीस, पचास पचास कंटेन्ट अपने हाथ में ले लेते हैं और उस के बाद उन का सबलॉटिंग करते हैं। इस की बात मैंने यहां पर कही परन्तु रेलवे मंत्रालय यहां बैठा हुआ कुछ कर नहीं रहा है। मैं चाहूँगा कि सरकार इसकी ओर ध्यान दे और जो व्यापारी इस तरह की सबलॉटिंग करते हैं उन के ऊपर सख्त से सख्त सक्रिय कार्रवाई करे, तभी इस बारे में कुछ हो सकता है।

इस के बाद मैं बिना टिकट चलने वालों के सम्बन्ध में कुछ कहना चाहता हूँ। मैं देखता हूँ कि रेलवे रेवेन्यू में बड़े बड़े लीकेंजेज होते हैं।

मैं टिकट कलेक्टरों को चपरासियों से ज्यादा का दर्जा नहीं देता क्योंकि वह लोग अपनी जिम्मेदारी अच्छी तरह से नहीं निभाते जिस से सरकार को नुकसान होता है। मैं देखता हूँ कि जब भी कोई बड़ा नेता किसी पार्टी का या अफसर स्टेशन पर पहुंचता है तो वहां पर हजारों आदमी बिना टिकट पहुंच जाते हैं, अफसर या

जनता के लोग। इस से लाखों रुपये का नुकसान सरकार को प्लेटफार्म टिकटों के न होने से होता है। इसी तरह लाखों रुपये का नुकसान बिना टिकट चलने के कारण होता है। जो हमारे बड़े बड़े अफसर हैं उन की बीबीयाँ और बच्चे फर्स्ट क्लास में बिना टिकट के चलते हैं, खास तौर से जिन का १०० या २०० मील के अन्दर चलना होता है, सब की जान पहचान टिकट कलेक्टरों से होती है और टिकट कलेक्टर उन के टिकटों को नहीं पूछते हैं। इस की ओर भी सरकार को ध्यान देना चाहिये ताकि जो बिना टिकट चलने का तरीका है वह दूर हो जाय।

Shri Sarangadhar Das (Dhenkanal-West Cuttack): Madame Chairman, I usually speak in general terms on the Railway Budget but I very much regret that today I have to speak on a particular problem that has been mentioned in the Minister's speech about Orissa although Orissa is not mentioned there. Under the sub-title, "Vandalism on Railway Property", in paragraph 50 of the Railway Minister's speech, this has been mentioned, and that is why I come to it. I am grieved to mention it, because there are various things in the Railway Ministry that I also appreciate, but here, in this case, I charge the Railway Ministry for having lost this property. It is said that railway property worth Rs. 54 lakhs has been destroyed in Puri station. I charge the Ministry for the reason that the Ministry did not take any timely precaution to protect that property nor has it made any attempt to make an enquiry into it. I will give the Lok Sabha what has come out in the High Court of Orissa. In certain cases it was demanded by the counsels that the first information report should be submitted. The first information report of the incident on the 22nd of the January was submitted after many attempts to get it. Finally, the police had to give that first information report. I have read the report myself. In that report it is said that the police charged about nine people; seven of them are very prominent Congressmen of Puri town and Puri district. The police said that those people, on the night of the 21st January, in a large public meeting in front of the temple, incited the people to take some action. The police have made this charge against the member who was presiding over the meeting. He had said that as long as there is life in this body nobody dare attempt to take any train southwards or northwards through Puri town. There were speeches by other members whom

[Shri Sarangadhar Das] the police mentioned. In this report it is also said that on the following day, on the 22nd when 10,000 people had gathered on the railway lines on both sides of the outer signal, there were inciting speeches. The crowd did not agree with the suggestion made by the President of the previous night's meeting who, after changing his mind, had said and had advised that the railway communication should not be interfered with. The crowd had already been so excited that they did not listen to him and the President went away. Then the police came on the scene and after a lathi charge, tear gas and throwing of hot water on the people, a shot was fired. As far as I know, an Anglo-Indian sergeant major fired a shot. Then again there was another shot. About two of three shots were fired and a boy aged between 12 and 14 got hit, his skull was removed and he fell down there. 10,000 people gathered and a little boy went down. You can imagine what will happen among 10,000 people. I presume they were not all excited. There might have been some 100 people who were excited. Some of them came and took the blood from the head of that boy and put it on their chests and said they would take revenge. When this happened, the police and the magistracy decamped from there; they ran away. When they ran away there was a psychological effect on the crowd who felt that they were the masters of the situation and they burnt coaches, the station building etc. The police had been hiding themselves inside the station house. When they found that the crowd was engaged in burning the coaches, they also went away to their police lines and the magistrate went to his bungalow.

I am again grieved to make mention of this, because there is an impression around that this vandalism was done by the people of Puri and that they must pay for it. Sometimes it is said that the reconstruction of Puri station should be done by the people of Puri. It has been mentioned by some people somewhere that there must be a punitive tax on Puri. But, I ask, why is it that in the first information report given by the police there are nine names out of which one or two only have been arrested, while the rest are roaming all over the country as free citizens. After this incident, on the 23rd, when the troops arrived from Cuttack, with the help of the troops the police went into the mohallas and arrested 300 to 400 people without any evidence. It was an indiscriminate arrest. They kept

the people in confinement, instead of bringing them to the court. I say that the Railway Ministry has failed to protect the railway property. It is well known that on the 18th January the Provincial Congress Committee in Cuttack passed a resolution that they were dissatisfied with the decision of the Government of India regarding the Orissa-Bihar boundary. In that resolution it was said that the Ministers, the Members of the Assembly and Members of Parliament from there, should resign. Some of them did resign, and the Chief Minister, before bringing those resignation letters—or whatever it may be called—and asking for permission from the Congress Party to resign, had also advised the students when they asked him what the authorities were going to do—this was reported in the press and it has never been contradicted—

Shri Raghunir Sahai: On a point of order. Are we discussing the SRC Report?

Mr. Chairman: We are not discussing the SRC Report. But there is a section in the Railway Minister's budget speech regarding the loss of railway property and certain incidents connected with it. That charge is being replied to by the hon. Member.

Shri Sarangadhar Das: I do not wish to go into the matter in details—all over the State. That will come for discussion when the Bill about the State reorganisation is presented. But I say in this connection that enough warning had been given by the Provincial Congress Committee's resolution on the 18th, and knowing full well what had happened in Bombay on the previous occasion, it was the duty of the Railway Ministry to protect the lines lying in Bombay-Maharashtra and in Orissa in the same way as they protect the trains running through dacoity areas. In that duty they have failed and also they have failed so far to have any enquiry. *(Interruption)* I again say that the Railway Ministry has failed in not demanding a judicial enquiry into this matter when there was a loss of Rs. 54 lakhs. I do not want to go very far into it; but this much must be enquired into by the Railway Ministry. As a result of the enquiry, whoever is found guilty of having incited the people—the crowd of ten thousands—, whoever has abetted this action must be punished and the damages of Rs. 54 lakhs, I would suggest, should be collected from the Congress Committee, which happens to have several crores of rupees. The Congress Committees have several

crores of rupees and there is no justification for the tax-payer to pay this money. They should be asked to pay it, if it is proved—I am pretty sure that it will be proved...

The Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri L. B. Shastri): What is the personal opinion of the hon. Member on that question of the border dispute?

Mr. Chairman: Order, order. I think it will be wrong to enter into this question of the border dispute. Anything concerned with the loss of railway property and the people who may or may not be implicated in it can be discussed here. I do not think we can go into the entire question of border disputes now.

Shri Sarangadhar Das: I have qualified right at the beginning that I do not want to go into the matter of the movement that took place all over Orissa, because that will be discussed when S.R. Bill is introduced. I mentioned only that part of Cuttack which was concerned with my accusation that the Railway Ministry has failed in both cases, namely, in not protecting the property in Orissa and also in Bombay and Maharashtra and in not having demanded an impartial enquiry into this matter.

Shri Altekar (North Satara): The progress of the Indian Railways is commensurate with the personality of the Minister in charge of it; unobtrusive yet prominent, gentle yet firm, not big yet all-pervasive, not hasty yet expeditious; he has stuck resolutely to his task and achieved steady progress in the sphere of his activities. As a matter of fact, he deserves the compliments that have been given to him by hon. Members from all quarters.

Our problems are as immense as the extent of our country and as huge as the size of our population. The difficulties are many and they are peculiar to the conditions of an underdeveloped country. He has tried to do his best with the limited resources at his command, he has tried to overcome the various shortages as much as he could under the circumstances obtaining here. The first Five Year Plan was one of rehabilitation. I need not quote the various achievements and the figures; they are already there in the Budget and they have been referred to by several hon. Members of this House. We have laid sure foundations of achieving self-sufficiency and we are on the way to progress in the direction of manufacturing locomotives, coaches and wagons. Even during the

second Five Year Plan, we are not promised that we will achieve this self-sufficiency completely, but certainly we are proceeding towards that goal. The difficulty is in connection with getting sufficient material, particularly iron and steel, required for the expansion of the railways. Therefore, in the second Five Year Plan, we have got a scheme to develop our iron and steel industries and that has been undertaken. I believe by the end of the second Plan, we will have sufficient iron and steel, which should go a long way to overcome the deficiency of this material required by the railways as well as by other departments.

All that has been done during the past five years is to use the material that was available as properly and as expeditiously as possible to increase the number of trains, carrying passengers as well as goods. There are also proposals to run some express goods trains. With all that, we will not be in a position to meet the demands in the country in full. We must think of ways and means to expand the network of railways in this country. The extent to which new lines have been indicated in the second Five Year Plan or in the schemes set out in the Railway Budget is not sufficient to meet the requisite demands of the country. Certainly we shall have to think very seriously how we get sufficient allotment for the purpose of the expansion of our railways. We want to double our production during the next 20 years. By that time we must also be able to double the network of railways and other means of transport. Otherwise, we will not be able first to make arrangements for production and then for transport of whatever is produced in the country to places where they are required. Therefore, we should set ourselves seriously to the task of finding out how we can expand the network of the railways in this country.

I beg to point out that people are prepared to pay some extra surcharge, if it is going to be used for the development of our railways. The Planning Commission has also said that the revenues of the railways would go a long way towards contributing to the expansion side of the railways. Because of the curtailment of the original allotment of Rs. 1,480 crores to Rs. 1,125 crores, the expansion side has suffered very heavily. We expected that since the first Plan was one of rehabilitation, the second one would be one of expansion. On the contrary, we find that it is mainly one of adjustment. The expansion of the railways is only on that side where the steel

[Shri Altekar]

plans are being established. In many other regions there is no expansion. Last time I made a suggestion that there should be a new line from Lonand-Phalton Akluj to Kurduwadi, which is sugar factory and prospective commercial area. I also spoke about the survey which was already made in connection with Satara-Koragaon and construction of that line should be immediately undertaken. I must thank the hon. Minister for having completed the survey of Diwa Dasgaon line and also for having completed the aerial survey for a Railway line on the west coast. I want that the Diwa Dasgaon line should be undertaken immediately and at least a few miles of the new line should be actually undertaken during the next year. Merely a survey will not be of any avail; something tangible must be done in addition to that. I would suggest that railway out-agencies should be established for the Ratnagiri District. There should be an out-agency from Kolhapur to Ratnagiri, Kolhapur-Phonda-Malvan and also from Karad to Chiplun. That will relieve the distress on that side to some extent. That is as regards the expansion of railways.

But there is also another aspect of it, and that is of converting narrow or metre gauge lines into broad gauge lines. The hon. Railway Minister was invited to the Conference held in Sangli on the 29th June, and there the problems were placed before him by the Deccan Manufacturer's Association. A discussion was held and he was convinced of the fact that there should be a broad gauge line from Poona to Miraj and Kolhapur. The suggestion made was that it should be even up to Hubli. But he showed a favourable reaction in respect of the Poona-Miraj-Kolhapur line. I should like that it should immediately be undertaken.

There should also be a diversion from Budhgaon-Sangli to Miraj. Then the whole section on this side will be brought under broad gauge. Because, there is so much congestion and bottleneck at Poona and Ghorpadi, the traffic cannot be adequately handled and cannot be coped with—passenger as well as goods traffic. There are so many complaints coming to me to the effect that they are not getting wagons for months together. Recently they have not been coming to a large extent, because those who have cause to complain must have been disappointed for want of any redress so long.

Shri Matthen: Why not extend the broad gauge up to Bangalore?

Shri Altekar: Yes, I would like it. Let Railway Minister first proceed in this direction and let this matter be taken up. That is what I would like to be done immediately.

At the same time I must thank the hon. Minister for having declared in the other House that the conversion into broad gauge of the old Barsi Light Railway from Kurduwadi to Miraj is being undertaken. I must say that all these various schemes of expansion must receive greater attention than what we find at this time.

I would also like to point out that there should be a universal concession parcel rate for milk. I thank him for having accepted it in part from Miraj to Poona and from Bhillavadi to Poona. But that concession has not been given from Miraj to Karad and from Bhillavadi to Karad. The reason that is given for not giving this concession is that the distances are less than fifty miles. But I would like to point out to the hon. Minister that this concession is obtaining in places which are within a distance of fifty miles on the Western and Central Railways: for instance, Bombay to Bassein (35 miles), Virar to Bombay (35 miles), Bombay to Saphala (45 miles), Bombay to Kelva Road (49 miles), Nandgaon to Chalisgaon (26 miles), Dhulia to Chalisgaon (35 miles). Therefore, I request that this concession which is elsewhere available for distances shorter than fifty miles should be available on the Southern Railway as well.

Karad is an important place. A new township is arising at Helwak, the place of the Koyna project, and the milk supply has to go to that place *via* Karad. It is therefore very essential that this matter should be looked into immediately.

Then I would like to point out that the abolition of the second class is not a very desirable thing. There are so many distinctions that we find, like air-conditioned carriages that are being run, as also third class sleeping accommodation, reserved coaches for distances over three hundred miles; there will also be railcars. Under the circumstances the abolition of the second class and the renaming of the third as second class will be of no avail. This small convenience and comfort which the middle class people who cannot afford to pay first class fare have been getting should not be taken away and they should not be deprived

of them. The step to abolish present second class is more sentimental than realistic.

In conclusion I would like to say that all these various schemes that have been suggested by me should be undertaken. I would also like to point out that the Kolhapur-Poona daily janata should be continued immediately.

With these suggestions I would urge that the hon. Minister should look to the conveniences of the people as immediately as possible and give relief to them to the extent possible, as I have suggested.

Shri Alagesan: Madam, I must first of all thank the hon. Members and express my sincere satisfaction at the very constructive approach and helpful attitude that they have shown in dealing with this budget. I was all the more pleased that the Leader of the Communist Party displayed the same constructive approach and helpful attitude. I thought in my mind that if this indicates a shift in the basic policy of that party, its repercussions would not be confined to the field of the Railways alone but would overflow the railway field and prove beneficial in other fields as well. I am glad to say this, Madam, when you are adorning the Chair.

But I was sorry there was one exception to this very harmonious approach, and that exception was the "camouflage" speech of the hon. Member who is not present here. He is a very young gentleman, and I do not know how so much of cynicism, frustration, perversion and poison have gone into his make-up. I believe he has to flower into a fuller personality, and all the things that I mentioned are detracting factors. I do not think that even what I say will be taken in the right spirit, but still I thought I can venture to make these few remarks.

Having said this, I should now take up the various observations made by hon. Members. The first, naturally, is the suggestion and the plea that was made by the hon. Member, Shri Giri. I am sorry he is not here today. I have no doubt even the hon. Minister in his reply tomorrow would say something about it. In this House, if I may be permitted to say, there is a little unrealism when we start replying to an hon. Member who is not present. I do not complain. I know hon. Members are very busy gentlemen and they have only the time to make the speech—I have no doubt a lot of preparation goes into it—

and after having made the speech they have to go and look to other important things.

Shri Nambiar: We represent him here.

Shri Alagesan: Hence I should not like to complain. But I was saying so from my own point of view. There is a little unrealism in addressing a reply to an hon. Member who is away from this House, perhaps from this city. Still, the things that he said are so weighty that I should first pay attention to what he said. I appreciate, I can say at the very outset, the spirit that prevailed the speech he made. But I should at once add that I did not like several things in his speech which tried to show the Railway Ministry and the Railway Minister in a bad light. In fact I thought they did not deserve it. It is no secret when I say that the role that the hon. the Railway Minister has been playing was one of peace-making. His touch was always one of healing. It never went to divide, or to wound; it was always one of healing. Our strategy is not divide and rule. It is old and outmoded. We are not interested in it. Our predecessors, the foreign rulers might have been interested in it. Our present strategy is to unite and cooperate. When this fact is realised in the country as a whole, by the railwaymen as a whole, by this House as a whole, I feel sorry that the hon. Member should have made these remarks. He gave a narrative of the merger of these unions and the bringing into being of one Federation. The narrative was quite all right. We should remember that in this connection he paid a tribute to the memory of the late Shri Harihar Nath Shastri. We know the part that he played, how helpful he was, how big his understanding was which was able to take all sections under the same wing. We should also remember with gratitude the part played by that noble son of Indian Shri Jai Prakash Narain. The part played by the hon. Minister was not an insignificant one. He did want to bring the two sections together and that was achieved. True, as Shri V. V. Giri pointed out, that unity was achieved at the top. Nobody imagined that this unity will not travel down and bind the unions at the Railway level also. In fact, unions of three Railways, namely the Central, Western and Northern, did unite. We were hoping that in the other Railways also the union would unite. Then, I do not know what happened. Some evil fate should have intervened. I do not want to blame anybody. Because we are interested, as I said in unity

[Shri Alagesan]

and peace, I should not say, as the hon. Member said yesterday, things which would make this unity more and more difficult. I should say things here which will make this unity more and more possible and feasible of achievement. So, I shall speak words which will unite and not make the division bigger. So, when we were expecting that the unions in the other Railways would also unite, something happened. As far as I can see, there was no clash of either principle or ideology in this. It should have been, perhaps it was, unfortunately, clash of personalities. Perhaps there was no towering personality in this great organisation who can unite the two different opinions that arose and carry them together. That should be the reason. But, we tried to supply that cementing force without projecting ourselves into the union politics.

Shri Nambiar: That is the mistake.

Shri Alagesan: I am glad that Shri Nambiar smiles at me. But, I would not like him to interrupt me. He can go on smiling. It will give me inspiration. We did not want to project our influence or our personality into the union politics. It would have been wrong. We tried to help as much as possible. But, it was not possible and something happened. Even then, I should say that elements that were divided made a very sincere attempt, not one attempt, but several attempts, and the latest attempt was a very sincere one. I was told that they almost came together and were within an arm's length of joining hands, closing their ranks, and trying to pull together. I do not know what happened. I shall not here divulge the information that I have. But, somebody intervened and it was not possible for them to finally place the seal of unity on their talks. That is very unfortunate. But, for all these things it is very wrong that the Railway Ministry should be blamed. Even now we are asked to do this, to do that. We are asked not to recognise a union so that we may be blamed all the more that the Railway Ministry wants to behave in a dictatorial fashion and it would not recognise any union. One may come forward and say, if you don't recognise me, at least recognise him, my brother. We did not want to give room for such a thing. We would like to go on with the present status hoping that the other wing also would come and join with the older wing or existing wing. I do not want to say older or otherwise because there may

be difference in the ages of the two wings.

I was again surprised to find that Shri V. V. Giri should have levelled the charge that the tribunal was shelved. It will be interesting to go through the history of the tribunal. It was as a result of the unanimous demand of the Federation that this tribunal was brought into existence. It was appointed in July, 1953. Then, the Railway Federation was asked to submit a memorandum explaining their case. It took a very long time. Naturally, just as hon. Members of this House are busy both in this country and in other countries, the office bearers of the Federation also had to be busy in other countries and the memorandum could not be prepared in time. My information is that the first memorandum on behalf of the Federation was submitted in December, 1954 and then additions were made to it in January 1955. Please remember that the tribunal was appointed in July 1953. Then, the Railway Board submitted its reply memorandum or a sort of remarks on the memorandum submitted by the Federation in February, 1955. There was a meeting held in April. It was decided that the tribunal should continue its sittings. Again, there was a meeting in July when the Federation opened that they should sit across the table with the Railway Board and try to reach an agreement on the various points at issue. Naturally, we could not object to it. When responsible representatives and leaders of the Federation wanted to settle the matter across the table, naturally we had no objection to it. We welcomed the suggestion. As I was telling my hon. friend Shri T. B. Vittal Rao this morning, the accommodating spirit shown was a very creditable thing for both sides, namely, the Railway Board and the National Federation of Indian Railwaymen, and they were able to reach an agreement on three out of the five terms that were referred to them. When I say three, the number may be small, but each term had a lot of sub-heads under it and they were able to reach agreement on innumerable points. Whatever agreement was reached was immediately given effect to. Now, the Federation can either try to settle the other matter by direct talk with the Railway Board or they can take the matter to the tribunal. We have absolutely no objection to either of these courses. When this is the factual position, I was surprised that Shri V. V. Giri should level the charge that we have shelved the work of the tribunal has

somehow been shelved by us. I think that it did not accord with the facts as they are.

Shri V. V. Giri made some proposals in this connection. He said that we should appoint a Chairman with impartial members who should prepare a common roll of membership in a particular year and then there should be election of office-bearers, that there should be a single set of office bearers whom we should accept. I should like to know who are we to appoint this Chairman. He vehemently opposed company unions and company federations. If we take such a step it will be misinterpreted as our trying to meddle with the affairs of the Federation. Why should we appoint anybody? I think there is enough commonsense and good sense left in the top leaders of the Federation to come to an agreement on these matters. In fact, I was told that this common roll was agreed to by both the wings of the federation. There was absolutely no difference.

Shri Nambiar: It was not agreed.

Shri Alagesan: I do not know what my hon. friend had to do with that, but that was my information. It may be wrong...

Shri Nambiar: It is wrong, there is no question of may be.

Shri Alagesan: I was told that they were able to agree on a common roll, on the preparation of a common roll relating to the membership in a particular year. Having gone so far, unfortunately they broke. So, who are we to meddle in the affairs of the federation? I should like to say here that we would not like to make any such experiment with the oldest organisation of the workers in this country.

Then again, it was Shri Asoka Mehta who said in his speech that this matter has been taken to the court. I do not know whether it has been actually taken to the court or not. Certainly, if the matter has been taken to the court, I can only say that the Ministry will surely abide by whatever decision the court gives. There is no alternative but to abide by the decision of the court. But here I should like to say—I do not know whether the matter has actually gone to court or not—that this legalistic approach, to my mind, betrays a divorce from realism and an objective looking

at facts. Such a phase in the Congress organisation also to which I have the honour to belong, of members of committees going to courts etc. I am not here to advise anybody on this matter, but I do not know how far this sort of thinking in terms of legal advice, courts etc., will accord with sound trade union policies and actions.

I should like to say one word, and I request that I should not be misunderstood when I say this, I also claim to know a little of the temper of railwaymen, the lakhs and lakhs of men who so honestly serve this country. I am not revealing anything new when I say that they are fed up with these quarrels at the top levels of the federation. They are absolutely fed up, and they may not tolerate this division and this quarrel and this vacillation any longer. My hon. friend Shri Giri has been preaching two things: firstly, one union in one industry. He has also been preaching another thing: that these unions should be controlled not by outsiders but by the workers themselves. I do not want that it should happen, I wish well by the present leadership, but if this vacillation and this inability to cooperate and work in the interests of the railwaymen continues at the top levels of the federation, I shall not be surprised if the railwaymen decide to make their own arrangements.

Shri Nambiar: Please allow them to decide. That is what we want.

Shri Alagesan: I should not like to say more on this subject.

Shri Nambiar: Let not the administration stand in the way. That is all the request.

Shri Alagesan: But I should like to assure that as far as the Railway Ministry is concerned, our policy would be to persist in peace-making and to serve the railwaymen through the federation if it is possible, and if it is not possible to serve them even without the federation.

I have taken quite a few minutes on this point and I should like to pass on to other subjects. Since it was very important and since I wanted to clear all the misunderstandings and the cloud that was raised by the speeches of hon. Members Shri Giri and Shri Asoka Mehta, I thought I should dwell this much on this subject.

Shri Nambiar: The clouds are not cleared yet, still very gloomy.

Shri Alagesan: I hope by the time you speak tomorrow, they will get cleared. Your mind also may get clear.

Shri Nambiar: Let us try, let us hope.

Shri Alagesan: Then I should like to come to my friend Dr. Lanka Sundaram. He was saying several things which were completely divorced from reality. He was using 'wooden attitude' and other phrases. He should have referred to the old proceedings of the House. He was saying "wooden attitude of the Railway Board", etc., which have absolutely no relation to the existing state of things. Of course, he was talking with some bravado, if I may say so, and then he warned us of dire consequences, and threatened us with all sorts of things. And he was saying that he was approaching the Board several times. I made enquiries of the Members of the Board. I was told he had not troubled them much, or very scarcely troubled them. But here he said he was troubling them and taking a lot of trouble on behalf of the ministerial staff, that on their behalf he was working.

Then he got into an error because he was not sufficiently posted with facts, I thought. He said we are recognising sectional organisations elsewhere but we refuse to recognise his organisation. He said in this connection that we recognise the North-Eastern Mazdoor Union and the North-Eastern Railway Employees' Union. He calls these unions sectional unions. These are unions which were previously affiliated to the AIRF and the INRWF, and they continue. They did not merge. They are not sectional unions. They represent all non-gazetted staff, and there is no question of our recognising sectional unions in that regard.

He also referred in this connection to the Class II Officers' Association. We have only said that we do not recognise for the same class of staff, namely gazetted staff or non-gazetted staff—these are the two classes—different organisations or sectional organisations within each class. It is not our policy not to recognise the association of gazetted officers which is what this Class II Officers Association is. And there perhaps I may inform the House that the office-bearers are the members of the service themselves. No outsiders are permitted to be office-bearers. In fact, that association is not a trade union in the strict sense of the term. That was explained by the hon. Minister when he intervened yesterday. This much I should like to say with

regard to the confusion that has entered Dr. Lanka Sundaram's mind.

Then about Shri Asoka Mehta who is a very learned person and who always throws his books at our face. Last year he was quoting profusely from very learned books but without giving the author's name and I had occasion to request him to please tell us the names of the books. So, this year he has brought a number of books and he gave us the benefit of all the reading that he has been able to go through. It is very tempting to read these great books, because a lot of thought has gone into the production of these intellectual feats. But then there is one danger in these things. It should be properly digested also. Just as the ordinary food that is taken if it is not digested reacts in a particular way with reference to the physical system, similarly this intellectual matter also has to be properly digested. Otherwise, it reacts in a not very agreeable way.

Shri Nambiar: First drink some *kashayam*.

Shri Alagesan: Malabar is famous for it.

Shri Raghunath Singh (Banaras Distt.—Central) : *Drakshasava* will be very good.

Shri Alagesan: Of course, he expressed anxiety, not only he but other hon. Members like Shri Tulsidas, Shri Niveetia, all these Members expressed anxiety that we will be able to carry in the next five years only the traffic that is needed for the huge iron and steel plants, for coal and for cement and that the general goods have been left high and dry. That is the present position. It is not a very satisfactory one. The hon. Minister had admitted it in his speech. But then there are one or two bright features. Of course, we have to provide Rs. 375 crores that the railways have been asked to raise. I do not know why my hon. friend Shri Vittal Rao who has always been loyal and faithful to the cause of railways should have turned against them today and said that he is siding with the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission is not something very separate, though of course it has its own functions. But then we have to find this money. That is why this surcharge on freight has been imposed. It was said by some hon. Members that we should not leave out general goods, and that we should provide capacity for moving general goods; but the same Members complained that this surcharge

should not have been levied. Shri T. B. Vittal Rao also was one of the Members who complained against it, and said that we should have awaited the findings of the Freight Structure Enquiry Committee before imposing this surcharge. I do not know; perhaps, if we had waited for their findings, then we should have had to spread this additional levy over a period of four years instead of over five years as at present, and the burden to that extent naturally would have increased.

5 P.M.

But one ray of hope is that as we proceed, and as things unfold themselves, we may be able to find more funds, and we may be able to get the necessary materials so that we may be able to bridge the margin which is there now, namely the margin which is represented by the difference between Rs. 1480 crores that was originally proposed by the Railway Board and the figure of Rs. 1125 crores which has now been allotted to the railways. We shall try as far as possible to reduce that margin, and provide for the movement of general goods.

Shri Asoka Mehta also said that we are subsidising industry indirectly by carrying coal at below cost price. It is correct, that coal for distances beyond about 350 miles carried at below cost price, but that has been a feature of railway rating in order to assist the industrial development.

These cheap rates, however, have not stood against the shipping companies carrying the maximum quantity of coal that they could. In fact, the railways themselves have been transporting their coal to Madras by ships. But the shipping companies are however unable even to meet the demands in connection with the railways' coal. For instance, as against a demand of 14 ships for moving railway coal, they were able to supply in July 1955—and 1955 was a difficult year for coastal shipping—only 9 ships, in August 9 ships, in September 11 ships, in October 15 ships, and in November 15 ships, and in December 16 ships. As a result of the shortfall during July-September, arrangements had to be made to move loco-coal at the rate of 25 wagons per day from the Bengal-Bihar coalfields to Madras by the all-rail-route. Otherwise, there was no difficulty in our offering to move our coal by the sea-route.

My hon. friend also said that the shiploadings have fallen at the Calcutta

port. That is partly due to the fact that our exports of coal to Pakistan have completely disappeared.

Shri Asoka Mehta had then commented upon the fact in the USA there are only five men employed per route-mile as against 29 employed on Indian railways. Of course, we also used to compare our performance with that of other countries, but as hon. Members of this House go abroad more and more, we hear more of the other railways rather than our own railways.

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao: We talk about our railways there.

Shri Alagesan: That is very good. My hon. friend had been to Russia, but he talked of the Swiss railways. I was noting it. I do not know how from Russia he was having such a long vision that he could not see the Russian railways but he was able to see for into the Swiss railways.

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao: You have mentioned that in your reports. I have only quoted from them.

Shri Nambiar: So, it is your own performance.

Shri Alagesan: We are willing to take advantage of the advice of the cumulative experience of hon. Members who go abroad and study other railways. We have also sent our officers abroad, and they have produced big reports. And we are trying to . . .

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao: We want the Ministers also to go there.

Shri Alagesan: I am not very anxious. I may at once tell my hon. friend that I am not very anxious to leave the shores of my country.

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao: In the interests of the railways.

Shri Alagesan: I am a little conservative in that regard.

Shri Sarangadhar Das: May I ask a question? Are these figures 5 and 29 or whatever they are, correct?

Shri Alagesan: I was going through the uncorrected proceedings of the House yesterday, and there I found the statement that there are only 5 . . .

Shri Sarangadhar Das: I think the figure was 5.35 or something like that.

Shri Alagesan: The decimal system applies to men also, perhaps, and the

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hon. Members said 5:1 or something like that. But I am giving the figures relating to the full men and not to the decimal man. It was said that there are only 5 men employed per route mile as against 29 men employed on Indian railways. Shri Asoka Mehta must be aware that the American railways are extensively mechanised. Of course, he should be more aware of it than I. Is it his suggestion that the Indian railways also should be mechanised to the same extent, and that the labour employed at present should be retrenched? Then again, is it his suggestion that we should import the machinery required for mechanisation of the railways and fritter away our foreign currency in such mechanisation, while Indian labour could do the same work with its own hands?

Then again, perhaps Shri Asoka Mehta is not aware that the American railways get a lot of their work of repairs to rolling-stock done by outside agencies, whereas in India all this work is done by the railways themselves.

Conditions therefore are not exactly comparable. As an indication of the efficiency of performance of the Indian railways, the weighted average of the net ton-miles per wagon in a year has been worked out; and it is found—I think some of these figure were quoted also by Shri Nevatia—that whereas in India a wagon produces in a year 1,41,000 net ton-miles, in the USA the figure is 131,000; in the Canadian national railways, it is 108,000, and in UK it is only 19.8 thousand. We have therefore some reason to feel happy about our own results. I am further informed that barring Japan, we are better than any other country in this respect.

I think I have already dealt with the question posed by Shri A. K. Gopalan, Shri Tulsidas, Shri Nevatia, and Shri T. B. Vittal Rao, as to why we had not postponed the imposition of the surcharge until after the report of the Freight Structure Enquiry Committee had been obtained.

I should like now to touch upon one other matter. My hon. friend Shri Dabhi—he is not here at the moment—is a great champion of the interests of third class passengers, and he has always been complaining about the three-tier arrangement. Of course, the difficulty is there. But as has been explained on the floor of this House on several occasions, this is only an experiment. We have not extended this experiment even to all the

janata trains. Only some of the janata trains have this sleeping accommodation; we have to extend this still further. The only consideration is whether by making it a two-tier arrangement, we would not be making it a little more costly for the third class passengers to avail themselves of the sleeping accommodation.

Shri Sarangadhar Das: Was not this experiment of three tiers tried some years ago in the second class? I have travelled in it myself.

Shri Alagesan: We are aware of that experiment, but even that experiment did not contain this part, if I might remind my hon. friend.

Shri Venkataraman was very critical about the abolition of the third class and renaming it as second class. I should like to say here that this at once reduces the number of classes on the railways by one. Already, we have succeeded in reducing the number of classes by one, when we abolished the old first class. When we abolished the old first class, the old second class took its place. Of course, it was renamed first. But hon. Members would have noticed that we are trying to approximate the present first to the old first. Whatever deficiency was noticed, namely, lack of reading lights etc. all these, wherever they had been removed, are being brought back and our attempt is to approximate it to the old First Class. Of course hon. Members always (Shri Nambiar—Travel First Class) travel First Class, others also pay much less and are able to get the comfort of the old First Class while paying the old Second Class fare. That was the first phase.

Now, the second phase has to be taken up and achieved. The second phase is to abolish the existing third class and rename it second class. The hon. Minister has already indicated in his speech that we would try to approximate it to the existing second class. Of course, when we provide cushioned seats, it becomes the present second class. But, it may not be possible to do immediately because we have to give sleeping accommodation that has to come first—we have to give more seating accommodation, lessen overcrowding—all these first things have to come first. But, our attempt would be to approximate it—it may take a long time—(I do not say it would happen tomorrow)—but we would like to approximate it to the present second class. Thereby, the vast difference and disparity that at present exist between the

two classes, I hope, will be mitigated, if not eliminated. That should satisfy hon. Members on his point.

Shri Nambiar: It is without fare increase or only with cushion?

Shri Alagesan: I cannot straightway give an assurance that there will be absolutely no increase in the fares because when we provide more facilities and more amenities, naturally, it does not come from the void or I cannot always put my hand into the Finance Minister's pocket or make somebody else pay for the people who travel. I think that is a very reasonable proposition and this House and hon. Members won't have any objection to that.

Somehow or other Shri Tulsidas has always the knack of quoting wrong figures. Once he had occasion to quote figures! we took them very seriously and tried to examine how far they corresponded to the actual state of affairs. But, then, to our surprise we found that all his figures—at least most of them—were completely wrong. Today also he quoted some figures and the Railway Board has collected some other figures from which I find that the story he tried to place before the House was taken from some old fiction. He referred to the loading of ballast. He was complaining that we were not loading enough metal for road-making purposes in Bombay, that loadings of ballast from broad-gauge and metre-gauge stations on Abu Road and Mehsana district on the Western Railway were not sufficient. I have got some figures here; these are from October 1955 to February 1956. It gives the allotment for government purposes. It was 378 wagons in October, in November it was 847—so many wagons on the broad-gauge were loaded. Now, the out-standings are only 287 wagons under Government and 110 for the public. This does not show that there has been any lack of wagon facilities for moving this particular traffic for road-making purposes. So also the story on the metre-gauge.

He also complained about our inability to move coal to a particular gas plant. I find that the Railways were prepared even to give their own coal but those people were not able to take it owing to recent disturbances in Bombay. Now the situation is normal and there is no difficulty of coal supply to the gas plant. These complaints have, after all, ended in gas; and there is no reality about it.

Shri Nambiar: Gas from coal.

Shri Alagesan: Shri Viswanatha Reddi

—I thought he made a very constructive suggestion. He suggested that the freight rates for the conveyance of goods should be fixed not only on the basis of distances and classification but also on the value of the goods. He stated further that the value need not necessarily be the controlling factor or even the major factor but should be one of the elements to be taken into consideration as by so doing the transportation charges of costly commodities such as mica can be fixed adequately high so as to help the transport of cheaper material such as sand, cement etc. He said that the terms of reference to the Railway Freights Structure Committee should be altered to include this point of view as well. I would like to explain that what has stated is correct, that the freight rates are based now on distances and classification but the expression 'classification' includes several elements, not the least important of which is the value of goods. The other elements are density, liability to damage, wastage and leakage etc. But, as I have said, the value of the goods is one of the most important considerations. It is for this reason that we have 15 classes of rates, the basis for charge increasing—taking only the first leg—from :54 pie per maund per mile to 2:32 pie per maund per mile. In addition, in the case of many particularly low valued commodities, we have wagon load scales, lower even than the 1st class rate. We have 13 of them. The rates charged for the several commodities are thus graded among 28 scales of charges, based on their value and certain other factors. To cite a few concrete examples taking a lead of say, 800 miles, the rates per maund for a number of commodities vary as follows:—

	Rs.	As.	P.
Coal (that is the lowest)	0	10	0
Manure	0	13	1
Cement	1	3	6
Mica (to which the hon. Member referred)	3	6	2
Cigarettes	4	7	6

So, I say the value of the goods goes into the fixation of these freights.

Then, again, Shri Viswanatha Reddy said that the Railway Consultative Committees, the National Consultative Committee and the Zonal Committees—the functioning of these committees is not sufficiently known to hon. Members and they are not able to take advantage of the functioning of these Committees. I

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have only to draw his attention to the fact that hon. Members of this House and the other House are taken on all these committees and there is sufficient representation for both Houses in these committees, both at the zonal level and at the national level here. These names are published even in the time tables of the various Railways. Surely any question which the hon. Member wants to refer to these committees can be referred to them for consideration. I should also like to say . . .

Shri Nambiar: What he suggested was quite different. He said that every hon. Member must have the opportunity to attend if he so desires. That was the suggestion put forward by him.

Shri Alagesan: I should like to say that I have absolutely no objection to every hon. Member attending these committees and participating and contributing to the valuable work that these committees are doing. But then there comes in certain laxity. All the Members can attend this House. They are invited and we find that the percentage of vacant seats is much more than the percentage of occupied seats. So, when we say that every Member can attend, it only means that nobody need attend. I do not want to introduce the laxity in the working of these committees. If the hon. Member thinks a little over it, he will agree with me. But if it is a question of sending the agenda and all other papers to all the hon. Members, then the purpose of appointing of a few hon. Members on these committees becomes a sort of farce. So, it is for the hon. Members to approach these committees if they have got any problems to place before them.

One other hon. Member—I think it was Shri Asoka Mehta—expressed a doubt how these committees are working. I should like to say that these committees are working in a very helpful way. They have been studying sometimes problems connected with the Railways like operation, etc., and have really contributed to the smooth working of the Railways in a very great measure.

Some hon. Members—I think Shri Vittal Rao and Shri Tulsidas—have commented about passenger trains punctuality. It is true that passenger train punctuality is not as high as Indian Railways had attained some time in the past. While every endeavour will be made to ensure better results of punctuality of passenger trains, it must be realised that with the increasing volume of traffic, the sectional capacity is being

used at present to extent of about 85 per cent. and until sectional capacity has been developed, there will be increasing pressure of traffic on the existing capacity. Naturally, therefore, with such a pressure there is bound to be some effect on passenger train punctuality. As hon. Members know, we have taken up various engineering works to increase the section capacity. Naturally these very works which will increase the capacity after they are completed make for delay while they are being executed. There is delay even in moving current traffic.

I have got very little time left. I should like now to pass on to the various staff matters that were placed by hon. Members before the House.

Shri Gopalan as well as Shri Vittal Rao stated that there has been no real increase in the wages of staff. It was also stated that three-fourths of them were getting less than Rs. 100/- and therein were included the Station Masters, Assistant Station Masters, Ticket Examiners, Clerks and Commercial Clerks. Shri Gopalan went on to quote percentages of these categories in the lowest grades. Without going into any great detail regarding percentages in the lowest grades, I would like to point out that the wages of class III staff getting not more than Rs. 250/- have gone up from an average of Rs. 1519/- per annum in 1947-48 to Rs. 2,128 on the average per annum during 1954-55. I would also like to refer specifically to the category of Station Masters. On data recently collected, it has been apparent that although the scale applicable to Station Masters in Rs. 64-170, none of them or at-least very few of them in fact draw less than Rs. 100/- per months as pay apart from allowances such as dearness allowance and compensatory allowance. Taking all this into account, I think I would be right in saying that no Station Master does, in fact, draw a wage lower than Rs. 150/-. (Shri Nambiar: Question). Let the hon. Member study the figures that I will place before him before straightway contradicting them.

Shri Nambiar: They are on my finger tips.

Shri Alagesan: Shri Gopalan also stated that direct recruitment of Station Masters has reduced the chances of Commercial Clerks with five years' service. He was probably referring to certain recent orders issued by the Southern Railway in regard to the promotion of various clerical categories, such as Commercial Clerks, Trains Clerks, Ticket

Collectors and Signallers, to the Station Masters' group. There were different practices on the three pre-integration units of the Southern Railway; for instance, on the *ex-M.S.M.* section, Commercial Clerks in the grade Rs. 60-150 used to be promoted as Assistant Station Masters on Rs. 64-170; on the *ex-S.I.* section, Clerk-in-Charge in Rs. 60-150 were eligible for promotion as Assistant Station Masters on Rs. 64-170; and on the *ex-M.S.* section, Signallers on Rs. 60-150 and Ticket Collectors on Rs. 55-130 used to be promoted as Assistant Station Masters on Rs. 64-170. On account of integration, the Southern Railway prescribed a uniform method of promotion to the posts of Assistant Station Masters with effect from 1-7-1955, whereby 85 per cent. of the vacancies of Assistant Station Masters were to be filled by promoting Commercial Clerks, 10 per cent. by Train Clerks, and 5 per cent. by Signallers who qualify for the posts of Assistant Station Masters within the first five year of their service. This procedure is, however, not in accordance with the recruitment and promotion rules laid down by the Railway Board in the State Railway Establishment Code, for only Signallers have to be trained and promoted to the Station Masters' group. In November, 1955, all Railway Administrations were asked to stop the different practices existing on their Railways and to adopt the recruitment and promotion rules laid down by the Railway Board. I understand, however, that the Southern Railway are still considering how best the change-over in the mode of recruitment should be given effect to taking into account the existing channels of promotion and the number of staff already trained for Assistant Station Masters' duties in the three groups. I am sure that the point that the hon. Member has in his mind will be kept in view by the General Manager before deciding on the future course.

I have got several other things, mostly about Station Masters, and other similar categories, but for want of time I should like to forego the pleasure of explaining those points to hon. Members here.

Shri Namblar: We shall, if necessary, wait till 6 p.m.

Shri Alagesan: If that is so, I should like to go through completely.

Mr. Chairman: How much time will the hon. Minister require for finishing his speech?

Shri Alagesan: Perhaps another fifteen minutes if the House can bear with me.

Mr. Chairman: Let me just put it to the House. What is the opinion of the House? Could we sit till quarter to six?

Some hon. Members: Yes.

Some hon. Members: We shall meet tomorrow.

Mr. Chairman: I think the Minister requires only 15 minutes and there is no necessity for breaking the arguments he is developing now. Tomorrow the general discussion will continue and certain other hon. Members will contribute to it. I suggest that we can sit for another 15 minutes today. It will not be very hard since we have already lost half an hour in the discussion of the general debate. I take it that there is consensus of opinion that we continue to sit for the next 15 minutes.

Several hon. Members: Yes.

Shri Alagesan: Shri Narasimhan made a reference to the grievances of directly recruited Station Masters on the Southern Railway. As stated earlier, posts of Station Masters used to be filled from different categories but when a very large number of staff were required for the implementation of the Adjudicator's Award, direct recruitment had to be resorted to. These directly recruited candidates were assigned seniority below the staff already in service in other categories who had undergone or were undergoing training for absorption as Station Masters in consultation with the Unions. This resulted in certain directly recruited Station Masters reverting as Station Clerks although they continued to be designated as Assistant Station Masters. It was a question of protecting the rights of staff who were looking forward to promotion in the normal course as against direct recruits taken on to meet a certain expansion of the cadre.

Dr. Lanka Sundaram referred to the Station Masters demanding a scale of Rs. 150-225, adequate channels of promotion, application of uniform rules, relaxation of the so-called vision tests and the making available to them of gazetted holidays. As was announced by the Minister in his Budget speech, the redistribution of posts in the lower and higher categories is already under consideration. As far as channels of promotion are concerned, all Station Masters joining in the lowest scale can rise at least up to a scale of Rs. 200-300 and

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ever higher. The significance of the words "application of uniform rules" is not very clear. Station Masters deal with running trains and are concerned with the visibility of signals and their correct indications. It is for this reason that a rigorous standard of acuity of vision is prescribed, and it would be wrong to do away with periodical re-examination in vision, as it might endanger the safety of the travelling public. I need not say anything regarding the addition of the gazetted holidays to this staff which will come in the way of working of the railways.

Dr. Lanka Sundaram was very anxious that the ministerial staff who had offered pay satyagraha for five days should be paid as soon as they offer to receive their wages today. I am glad to tell the House that instructions to this effect have already been issued and they will be paid. It is only a sort of a self-imposed fast or something like that which they have undergone during these five days and we were all along waiting like a kind mother to feed them at the end of their fast.

Shri Trivedi mentioned that station masters and assistant station masters, who have to shoulder a much greater responsibility than many other class III staff, sometimes get less pay than the ticket collectors whom they have to control. The lowest grade of stations master is Rs. 64-170 but at some stations, there were head ticket collectors in a higher grade of Rs. 100-185. This anomaly has been eliminated by allotting a relatively higher grade to the post of the station master. At present, there are no such anomalies on the railways, as far as my information goes.

Shri Trivedi also mentioned that the travelling assistant goods clerks and travelling assistant luggage clerks of the Western Railway are not being paid any running allowances while their counterparts on the Northern and North-Eastern Railways are being paid running allowances. I am afraid there is some misunderstanding. The payment of running allowances is limited to what are termed as 'Running Staff', who are responsible for the punctual and safe movement of trains, and include only the guard, brakesmen, driver, shunters and firemen. Travelling commercial clerks do not get any running allowance on the Northern and North Eastern Railways.

There are many other points raise my the hon. Members and I shall very briefly and briskly deal with them. Shri

Viswanatha Reddy was sure that a particular line in his area, namely Pakala-Dharmavaram Section was not well attended to; he said that relaying had been taking a very long time and it was not over still. He also described that the speed on that particular section was forty furlongs per hour. It may not be so bad as that but the speeds of trains on that section are very very low. I was surprised at the speed in which a passenger train was moving on that section. But as evil fate would have it, in such a section where the speeds are so low, a very horrible accident occurred two years ago. I am now informed that the waiting will be over and the relaying of this track will be completed in the coming year, 1956-57. As has been our experience with regard to many other works that we have undertaken, here also the delay has been due to shortage of materials, namely, steel for sleepers, etc. Now, they have been received and I hope the relaying will be completed before long.

I should now like to take up the points made by hon. Members relating to the new constructions. Shri Viswanatha Reddy and Shri Ramachandra Reddi wanted the extension of the proposed Nellore-Maidukur broad gauge link of ninety miles by a further forty to eighty miles to connect with Cuddappah or Nandyal. I am afraid that such an extension would be very expensive as it involves crossing of several hill ranges and a second major bridge over the Pennar river, without at the same time any substantial traffic prospects. He also wanted to know why there was no mention of the Macherla-Nagarjunaagar dam line in the Budget: The position is that the cost of this line is being treated as part of the cost of the dam project and I am afraid the site of the common road-cum-dam over the Krishna river will not be suitable for any main North-South railway link because of the precipitous nature of the approaches.

Shri Vittal Rao was making some points and he wanted to expedite the construction of the railway line because naturally he thought it would be *via* this site up to Nagarjunaagar were a road-cum-dam is being built. But technical opinion says that so it will not be possible to have that bridge on that particular spot.

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao: Who gave that opinion? Is it the Railway Board engineers or any other outside engineers?

Shri Alagesan: Our railway engineers visited the spot. That does not mean giving up the line altogether but my hon. friend may have to wait for a long time. It will not be possible to build it at that particular spot. That was the point that I was making.

Sardar Saigal referred to the Korba coalfields constructions. Provision has already been made in the Budget for the next year for a five miles extension of the Champa-Korba branch line across the Hasdeo river. With regard to the siting of Korba railway station, the position is that bare minimum facilities for loading and handling wagons are proposed at the moment and provision of further facilities at this site or some other site according to the pattern of growth of the collieries proposed in the vicinity will take into account the existence of seams of coal in the locality. A 125 mile long extension of the Katni-Annappur-Chirmiri line to connect with Kairadih and a branch line from Tagini to Jhil-milli is proposed to be surveyed for the development of the coalfields in this region which are not to be worked now. I am afraid Sardar Saigal's suggestion for a new line from Bilaspur to Mandla Fort does not take into account the fact that the country is extremely difficult so that construction will be costly in relation to the very limited purpose. Such a line would serve, particularly in view of the fact that Mandla fort is already connected by narrow gauge line to Gondia-Bilaspur.

Shri Dabhi mentioned the Udaipur-Himatnagar line and suggested taking the line further south by conversion of the narrow gauge line from Kapadvanj to Nadiad. The survey for the former is already in progress.

Shri Ramaswamy and Shri Narasimhan stressed the importance of the Bangalore-Salem link and suggested a possible extension to Dindigal. The former is already under survey.

Shri Ramachandra Reddi and Shri Vittal Rao raised the question of the Kazipet-Macherla-Nellore survey. Investigation of this project has been postponed for the time being in view of of doubling of the line between Tenali and Gudur which has already been sanctioned.

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao: Only 25 miles.

Shri Alagesan: It will be taken up progressively. But here even while making the new line you may profit. But

there unless you have completed the line, the capacity will not be there. Here, even if you double a small stretch of twenty miles, to that extent, you are able to increase the capacity on the particular stretch in that hard-worked line.

He also complained about the delay in the remodelling of Nellore Station. The reason for the delay is that the work is rather complicated. It is, however, being pushed on as fast as possible.

Shri Siddananjappa raised the question of opening up the backward areas of Malnad by the construction of new lines. Field work has already been completed on the Hasan-Mangalore survey and the survey of Saklespur-Chikmagalur-Kadur link is in progress. As regards a direct connection between Bangalore and Mangalore the Mangalore-Hasan link being surveyed now will provide this.

Shri Mulchand Dube wanted to know the length of the track to be doubled in the first phase of doubling between Allahabad and Kanpur. This length is approximately 25 miles. The necessity for this was considered very carefully before the work was sanctioned. I am afraid the routing of traffic for Agra and beyond via Lucknow-Shahjahanpur and a new link between Shahjahanpur and Farukhabad would be too circuitous and expensive.

Shri Trivedi has mentioned the inordinate delay in completing the survey from Chittorgarh-Kotah and Ajmer to Kotah. Efforts are being made to complete the survey in this difficult area as early as possible.

In regard to his doubts about the necessity of doubling the Godhra-Ratlam section, I can assure him that the decision to double the section was taken after full consideration of operating requirements. He doubted about the wisdom of doubling.

Shri Bhagwat Jha Azad—usually he is a very impetuous gentleman—we had a very helpful speech from him this year. He has been, of course, pining for a line in his area in that pining I very much sympathise with him. This will be borne in mind.

In regard to the suggestion of Rajmata of Tehri-Garhwal, I would like to state that the nature of the terrain for a connection from Rishikesh to Rudra Prayag—I do not know whether any of the hon. Members have taken a journey on

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that terrain, such of those who have gone there will realise the truth of the statement—is so difficult . . .

Shri Nambiar: But our engineers will do it.

Shri Alagesan: It requires *pisa*. That terrain is so difficult that our present resources will not enable us to investigate the possibility of a railway line in this hill area.

Shri C. K. Nair (Outer Delhi): Pilgrims will compensate.

Shri Nambiar: They are all *sadhus*.

Shri Alagesan: Seth Achal Singh—everybody is absent—mentioned the necessity for doubling the line from Delhi up to Agra. I do not think I will be divulging any secret if I state that a proposal for this is under very active consideration and a survey has already been ordered. I would like to assure the House that I am fully aware of the hon.

Members' anxiety for more new lines in India and that to the extent resources can be found, this will be undertaken.

Madam, I thank you for the indulgence. I have got one or two points more but I do not like to further test the patience of the House and so I conclude.

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao: The hon. Deputy Minister has given some figures regarding wages. I am told that the money wages have been increased. I would like to know what was the increase in the real wages with 1939 as the base.

Shri Alagesan: I thought the hon. Member noted down the years that I mentioned. They were with reference to 1947-48 and 1954-55. If any, the cost of living index, as the hon. Member knows, should have gone down.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Half Past Ten of the Clock on Wednesday, the 7th March, 1956.