

**\*DEMANDS FOR GRANTS  
RAILWAYS**

**Mr. Chairman:** Now, we shall take up the Demands for Grants relating to the Railways.

Before I proceed further, I have to announce that a large number of cut motions has been received. As has been the practice in this House before, hon Members and leaders of groups may hand over the numbers of their cut motions which they select and which they desire to move, within fifteen minutes, to the Secretary at the Table. I shall treat them as having been moved, if the Members in whose names the cut motions stand are present in the House, and the cut motions are otherwise in order.

**Shri Goray (Poona):** What about the cut motions that have been tabled by those who are not present now in the House?

**Mr. Chairman:** The rule is that the Members has to be present in the House. Otherwise, it cannot be moved. If there are certain Members belonging to the hon Member's party, who are not present here now, I would say that if they are present in the House within fifteen minutes, they will be permitted to move the cut motions.

**Shri T. B. Vittal Rao (Khammam):** Can we not submit the list tomorrow?

**Mr. Chairman:** No within fifteen minutes they have to be moved.

**Shri T. B. Vittal Rao:** We can move them tomorrow within half an hour after the first hour.

**Mr. Chairman:** The convention has been that the cut motions are generally passed on to the Secretary at the Table within fifteen minutes. But I think some more time can be allowed, since it looks that the House is fairly depleted now, so that certain other Members also can put in their cut motions within the first hour tomorrow.

**Shri Nanshir Bharucha (East Khandesh):** May I suggest that in view of the fact that most of the Members contemplated that this matter might

go on till five o'clock, everybody is taken by surprise, and many hon. Members who may have stayed away thinking that the next item would be the debate on influenza might be taken by the surprise. If it is possible we might even have the House adjourned till five o'clock, and take up this matter tomorrow.

**Mr. Chairman:** I have already ruled that in view of the fact that the House is fairly depleted now, and, I presume, many hon Members might have thought that this debate would go on till five o'clock, cut motions may be submitted till the first hour after question hour tomorrow.

One other question has to be decided by the House, namely the splitting up of the 12 hours allotted for the discussion of the Demands for Grants relating to the Railway Ministry as between the various Demands. From the list which is before me, I find that the largest number of cut motions is to Demand No 1. I suggest to the House that of the 12 hours, we may devote 7 hours to Demand No 1 and then groupings may be made of Demands Nos 2 to 19, and five hours may be devoted to them. May I know the sense of the House to this suggestion that we may devote 7 hours to Demand No 1 and 5 hours to Demands Nos 2 to 19? I presume there is no objection to this.

**Shri Nanshir Bharucha:** May I say that just because the largest number of cut motions has been received with respect to Demand No 1, it does not follow that that particular Demand is so very important that 7 hours should be spent on it, because it is conceivable that many of the cut motions may not be moved at all, in which case, we may speak on one Demand for seven hours, while the other Demands may go by default? May I, therefore, suggest that not more than three hours may be devoted to Demand No 1?

\*Moved with the recommendation of the President

**Shri Radhelal Vyas (Ujjain):** No.

**Mr. Chairman:** I am unable to accept the position as stated by the hon. Member, because, if I am right, the majority of the cut motions that have been tabled to Demand No. 1 relate to disapproval of policy; certainly, such matters will be debated on the floor of the House. And it is not right to presume that the other Demands will go by default.

We may divide up the rest of the 5 hours, if hon Members are so disposed, specifically amongst the Demands which the hon Members consider to more important. We can even devote 3 or 4 hours to one group of Demands, as we have done in the past. I would like to know whether any hon. Member has any proposal to make in this connection.

Otherwise, we can divide up the remaining 5 hours between Demand Nos. 2 to 19 in the order in which the cut motions have come, and I think we can have 3 hours devoted to Demands 2 to 4 or 5, and 2 hours to Demands Nos 6 to 11, and the rest of the time for the other Demands.

**Shri Goray:** You may make it 6 hours for the first group, and six hours for the remaining groups.

**Shri Radhelal Vyas:** There are a large number of hon Members who have not moved cut motions, but who would like to speak

**Mr. Chairman:** Then, I propose that we can allocate 6 hours, with discretion to the Chair to extend it by an hour, if in the course of debate, it is found that there are a large number of Members are desirous of taking part in the same, and then we can adjust the rest of the time accordingly.

**Shri T. B. Vittal Rao:** If less time is taken on Demand No. 1, the time saved on it can be given to the other Demands.

**Mr. Chairman:** Quite so. Now, would the Minister of Railways like to make some preliminary remarks?

**The Minister of Railways (Shri Jagjivan Ram):** No.

**DEMAND NO. 1 (RAILWAY BOARD)**

**Mr. Chairman:** Motion moved:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs 41,70,000 be granted to the President to complete the sum necessary to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1958, in respect of Railway Board"

**Shri T. B. Vittal Rao:** I would like to draw attention to certain grievances of the railway employees in this connection.

Firstly, in regard to the pay-scales of the railwaymen, I would like to say that recently the new deal has been announced under which it is expected that a large number of employees are going to be benefited. In the last session, the Minister said, that the number of such persons was going to be much more than what had been stated earlier. But subsequently we have had the latest agreement—I do not know the details of it, but I have read about it in the papers—arrived at recently, that is, during the last two or three days, with the National Federation of Indian Railwaymen

I checked up the figures in regard to the signallers. It was stated on 10th February, 1957, that nearly 3,000 signallers were going to be benefited under the new deal.

I find that in the whole of the railways there are not more than 3400 signallers and those who are going to be benefited by this new deal will be only about 1200 or 1500. This was one of the items I found while checking up after the Minister's statement last time. However that may be, until and unless service weightage is given to the employees, I am sure it

will not be of any benefit. The Central Pay Commission when it made its recommendations, evolved a formula that for every three years of service, an employee should be entitled to an additional increment. Subsequently, there was representation that the number of increments should be more, because the Central Pay Commission also stipulated that there should not be more than three increments for any employee. Then there were more service people who had put in 25 to 30 years of service. They have been complaining that they have not been fairly dealt with. Subsequently, one more increment was added to such of those senior people.

Similarly, until and unless in the new deal that the Minister has announced, the service weightage is taken into consideration, the benefit will be much. There cannot be any argument for denying this simple right to the railwaymen because what was stated was that this new deal would cost the railways an additional expenditure of Rs. 1 crore. So if the service protection is given, I do not think it will cost the railways very much. Hence I strongly urge that service weightage should be given to these senior staff so that they may remain contented to some extent.

The next item—I have been always demanding it in this House—is the case for increasing the dearness allowance. The Central Pay Commission recommended that there should be an increase of Rs. 5 for every 20 points increase in the cost of living index. Taking into account, the present cost of living index, there is a reasonable case for an increase in dearness allowance, because when the Commission made its recommendations the index was 280 whereas it is 420 now, and prices are not going to come down.

16.44 hrs.

[MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER in the Chair]

We have been hearing from the Food Minister, the Finance Minister and other Ministers that there is going to be a crash of prices and so forth, but there is no sign of the prices

coming down, and now they say it will be stabilised at the level. So at least let them implement the Pay Commission's recommendation.

Then I came to the question of the appointment of a Second Pay Commission. The Minister will say that it has to be taken as a whole, but I would urge that the railways being the largest employer should take the lead in this direction, so that a Second Pay Commission will go into the wage structure of the employees and give them a fair deal. After the Central Pay Commission's recommendations, there was a Fair Wages Committee report. That Committee, wherein was represented labour, management and even a member of the Railway Board, submitted its report as long ago as 1950. But those principles have not been taken into consideration while evolving the pay structure.

Under the directive principles of the Constitution, the State should undertake legislation for providing for a living wage. Today the railwaymen are getting minimum wage, not even fair wage, far from a living wage.

Therefore, I would very strongly urge that a Second Pay Commission be appointed to go into the wage structure of the railway employees.

Then I come to the important point of developmental works. Recently a traffic survey was undertaken for linking Ramgundam with Nizamabad. The time taken by the Central Railway for submitting its report was nearly 2½ years. Several years ago, there was a traffic survey carried out and reported by the ex-NS Railway Administration. That report was only to be modified according to the latest changed condition. But that took nearly 2½ years. I am told that the Railway Board has received that report only last month. This is a very important rail link for Andhra Pradesh. In that State, the railway line ratio compared to other reorganised States is very low; the route mileage in Andhra Pradesh compared to other States is very much less. I am told

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this railway link will not be taken up during the Second Plan period because already the Government are contemplating connecting Guna with Ujjain. But I am afraid that unless and until this line is taken up, there will be a transport bottleneck, because the industrial development in the area covered by the line between Kazipet and Ballarshah, which is a distance of 141 miles, has gone far beyond our expectations. Every ten miles there is a big factory; there is a paper mill, a silk factory, coal mines etc. One of the biggest cement factories in the East is coming up in this area. Then there is a huge thermal station.

You will observe that for dealing with the traffic flowing there must be some sort of a rail link from Ramgundam to Nizamabad. So I request that this should be taken up.

Then I come to another rail link for which I would request a survey. That is between Kazipet and Nellore via Macherla. This will open up the hinterland where there has been no railway, for example, in the district of Nalgonda. Also, it will shorten the distance from Hyderabad to Madras by about 120 miles. So the engineering and traffic survey should be taken up simultaneously because at least at distant date we have to take up this line.

Then I come to the question of the policy pursued in the matter of recognition of railway unions. Recently there has been a little change and some unions which were not affiliated to the National Federation of Indian Railwaymen, have been recognised. Taking an objective and realistic view of the unions existing, the difference that exists between the leadership of the National Federation of Indian Railwaymen led by Shri Vasavada and the National Railway Union led by Shri Guruswamy, I do not think that they can come together. We have seen that there have been meetings and agreements entered into or understandings arrived at in the presence of the then Railway Minister and the Labour Minister, that both the Federations should merge and

there should be elections at the lowest level and democratic elections should be conducted, and wherever there is a dispute the Regional Labour Commissioner or Chief Labour Commissioner, his services could be taken up as arbitrators. But, what we have found in practice is that they have not gone ahead with this. Each one of them thinks that his leadership will be at stake and both of them are unwilling to merge with one another. The fact remains that there is a National Federation of Railwaymen under the lead of Mr. Guruswamy and another National Federation of Railwaymen under the lead of Shri Vasavada. The National Federation under the leadership of Shri Guruswamy claims a membership of 2 lakhs and that under the leadership of Shri Vasavada, one lakh and odd. Therefore, to deny recognition to anyone of the Federation is not proper. You are not going to have harmony. There were two federations functioning prior to their merger in 1953. Let the two federations continue. We all wish that there should be only one federation but it has become quite impracticable to go ahead with that idea. The only remedy lies in recognising both the federations. At least, there will be some sort of harmony and industrial peace. Otherwise, I am afraid, the rivalry will go on and the only people who will take advantage of this disunity will be the Railway Board, in turning down the legitimate grievances.

Then, I refer to another matter, the under-utilisation of capacities obtaining in the Railway printing presses. Much is talked about economy. But, here, in the Railway printing presses, though there is lot of unutilised capacity, I do not understand why orders are given to other private presses. In several cases magazines and other things are printed outside. In the Calcutta Press which is a big press, there is also unutilised capacity and we find that the printing of magazines, weekly newsletters etc. are given to other people. In Secunderabad also, there is a Railway printing press. I

have a little more intimate knowledge of it. I have also submitted a representation to the hon. Minister for which I have not yet got a reply even though 2 to 3 months have elapsed. When the press was under the N. S. Railway system, they used to print most of the requirements of the N. S. Railway. But, now, we find that some of the work has been taken over from here to Byculla. In Byculla there is also half work. I do not understand why we should spend so much money—to the tune of lakhs—by off loading and giving work to the private presses. Two or three years ago, we were told that 2 officers have been deputed to go into this question of reorganisation of the Railway printing presses. I do not know what report they have submitted, for we have not got a copy of that report or what action has been taken thereon. I would request the hon. Minister to look into this state of affairs obtaining in the Railway printing press and go into the root-cause why some of the work has been entrusted to the private sector.

Having said so much about the Railway printing presses, another factor which I want to mention is that though the Railway printing presses are working under the Factory Act, the provisions of the Act are not fully implemented, even in the matter of having a compound or Watch and Ward staff or other things. At least some of the basic provisions of the Factory Act should be implemented and these Railway printing presses should be properly protected. Otherwise, there would continue to be the losses and thefts which amount to a couple of lakhs of rupees.

Then, I come to the acting allowance rules. There is a big disparity in these rules as applied to the Railwaymen.

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** I hope the hon. Member will be able to conclude by 5 o'clock.

**Shri T. B. Vittal Rao:** Yes, I hope to, Sir.

We have been removing some of the disparities, for instance, the disparity

in the matter of granting leave. The disparity between class IV and class III has been removed and the class IV people have been brought on a par with class III. In the matter of acting allowance also the rules applicable to classes III should be made applicable to class IV.

There is a peculiar system by which these acting allowances are computed, which does not obtain under the standing orders for private industry. For instance, if a person goes on leave for 42 days, then, the person who acts in his place will get acting allowance. It is only when the original leave vacancy is for 42 days or more that he gets the acting allowance. But when an employee goes on leave for a month the person acting in his place does not get any acting allowance. If the leave is extended by another fortnight or even a month, then he is given acting allowance only for the period the leave is extended because the initial vacancy was not for 42 days or more. Even though a person has worked or acted for a total period of more than 42 days, the initial period of 30 days is taken out and he is given acting allowance for the extended period. This is a disparity. It is a very simple one which I think the hon. Minister will be able to remedy so that there may be fair treatment.

About the Railway Board I have to say one thing. I have been reading recently about the economy cuts and suggestions for the reductions in various Secretariat. I think no other department under the Government of India has expanded to the extent the Railway Board has. A few years before there was a hue and cry about the number of Members in the Railway Board. Subsequently, some years ago, the then Railway Minister Shri Gopalswamy Ayyangar reduced it by one. Later in the year 1954, we saw a statement made by the then Railway Minister increasing the number by another 2 Members. Now, we come to a Railway Board with Additional Members. I do not mind increasing the number of Members. But, before doing that, have they worked

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out the workload for each, have they made a proper job analysis?

We have got five full-fledged railway board members and about five or seven additional members. This enlargement of the Railway Board should be thoroughly examined. I am not aware of any additional work in the sense that the mileage has not increased. Though the volume of traffic has increased, the total railway tract is only 36,000 miles as against 42,000 miles in the undivided India. Then we had only four members as against the present ten or more. So, I strongly urge upon the Minister to see whether some economy could not be made

17 hrs.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: We will continue this discussion tomorrow. So far I have received notice from one hon. Member that he intends to move his cut motion No. 56. It will be deemed to have been moved subject to its being otherwise admissible.

#### Disabilities of Railway Staff

Shri Frank Anthony (Nominated—Anglo-Indians) I beg to move

'That the demand under the head Railway Board be reduced to Rs 100'

#### INFLUENZA EPIDEMIC

Shri Sadhan Gupta (Calcutta—East) Sir, I am raising this discussion as something more than a *post mortem* on the last influenza epidemic. It is important as a *post mortem* and I am not under-stating that aspect of the matter, I shall deal with the *post mortem* aspects in some detail. As I shall presently show, my aim is something more to emphasise that aspect and to examine what has been done and what has not been done.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: If the hon. Member does not mind, I have to say a few words. It is one hour's discussion. He would like to listen from the Minister in detail an explanation on what he has to say. There are

rather twelve members who have expressed desire to speak on this subject. I shall not be able to accommodate all of them but even if we could give a chance to five of them, perhaps they may require five minutes each and it will be 25 minutes.

The Minister of Health (Shri Karmarker): I should not like to take more than fifteen minutes.

Shri Sadhan Gupta: Fifteen minutes will be quite sufficient for me and I think I will conclude within that time.

As I said we shall examine how and why this epidemic had broken out and whether everything was done. It is necessary to remember the devastating toll that this epidemic has taken. When I refer to the devastating toll, I did not obviously mean the mortality rates because, fortunately, it has been small. But, apart from mortality, there has been certain aspects in the epidemic which are undoubtedly alarming.

First of all it has enveloped a large part of the country—north, south, east and west and it has raged with virulence practically in all parts of the country. What is more, it has affected a very huge population. We have a sort of a pamphlet which seeks to give us certain statistics of the number of deaths that have taken place as a result of this epidemic.

But, Sir, it is difficult to be convinced that the statistics, at least as far as the number of cases is concerned, are very accurate. Take the case of West Bengal of which I have some experience. It is said that the number of cases there was about 72,700. I cannot believe this figure to be correct, because in Calcutta, where a population of about five million live, I have made quite widespread enquiries and found that in every part the disease has raged. It has raged in *basties* which are very heavily populated, it has raged in refugee colonies which are also very heavily populated, it has raged in middleclass household