

The House reassembled after lunch at live minutes past two of the clock. The Vice-Chairman (Shri U. K. Lakshmana Gowda), in the Chair.

SUPPLEMENTARY DEMANDS FOR GRANTS FOR EXPENDITURE OF THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT ON RAILWAYS FOR THE YEAR 1977-78

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE): Sir, I beg to lay on the Table a statement (in English and Hindi) showing the Supplementary Demand, (March, 1978) for Grants for Expenditure of the Central Government on Railways for the year 1977-78.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI U. K. LAKSHMANA GOWDA): Special mentions. There are four persons and the Chairman has suggested that the hon. Members take about five minutes each. Yes, Mr. Bhupesh Gupta.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA (West Bengal): Who said five minutes? That was before lunch, Now the lunch is over and you have to give ten minutes. Kindly listen to me.

REFERENCE TO DEMAND FOR HAVING NATIONAL DIALOGUE ON CENTRE-STATE RELATIONS

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA (West Bengal): I rise for a special mention on a very pressing and important matter which is agitating the whole country and which is before the country today. The issue is one of Centre-State relations. As you know, Sir, the Prime Minister, Shri Morarji Desai had summarily turned down the very constructive proposal for a national dialogue on reviewing the Centre-State relations, with a view to restructuring them. Some Chief Ministers, at least more than one Chief Minister, had made that proposal. Among them are Mr. Jyoti Basu of West Bengal, Sheikh Abdullah of Jammu and

Kashmir, Shri M. G. Ramachandran of Tamil Nadu and even Mr. Urs of your State—he was the Chief Minister designate and now he is the Chief Minister—who supported that demand. This has also been supported by the Chief Ministers of other States in Eastern India—I think Nagaland and other places. Therefore, a set of Chief Ministers, a number of Chief Ministers of the country and also the Chief Minister of Punjab who belongs to the Jana Sangh-Akali alliance, had made such a demand. Then, Sir, recently the Kerala Assembly on 4th of March adopted a resolution unanimously urging a thorough overhaul of the existing Centre-State relations through Constitutional amendments and in this connection the Kerala Assembly stressed the need for a national dialogue on the subject. When the Kerala Assembly has passed the resolution unanimously, I want to stress the significance of it. All the parties are involved there, all the parties. Now, Sir, it has assumed a character of a national demand but all Mr. Morarji Desai goes on saying that he will not have any dialogue, nor will he make an attempt to have a dialogue. If anybody wants or likes, he can come and discuss with him. Anybody can discuss this matter with the Prime Minister. I do not think the Prime Minister, Mr. Morarji Desai, will not discuss it, but this is not an issue. The issue is one of having a national dialogue or a discussion in a proper constructive way, with a view to exploring the possibility of arriving at a consensus on the question so that we can restructure the existing Centre-State relations. Significantly, Mr. Morarji Desai at least in this matter is supported by the R.S.S. The Times of India dated 5th March, datelined Nagpur, carries a report, I quote:

"The Akhil' Bharatiya Pratinidhi Sabha (ABPS) of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh has expressed the view that the demand to reopen the issue of Centre-State relations was a matter of deep concern."