

[Shri Bhupesh Gupta]

repealing the Press Objectionable Matters Act will be included among the Bills that are going to come before the House? I should like to know from the Government the position in this regard because we have to make some preparations. Some indication should be given as to the Bills which the Government propose to bring before the House. Will the Leader of the House, Mr. Advani, enlighten us on this?

SHRI HARSH DEO MALAVIYA (Uttar Pradesh): Sir, I would like to know whether there would be questions admitted during the days for which the House has been extended.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: There would be questions on the 11th April, 1977.

#### THE BUDGET (RAILWAYS) 1977-78 General Discussion

SHRI S. W. DHABE (Maharashtra): Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, we are discussing the Railway Budget and some of the points which have been stated by the Railway Minister in his speech. I would like to say, Sir, something which is stated in para 20 of the speech that the collective bargaining evolved on the railways over the years has to be re-activated. It is further stated:

"It will be my consent endeavour to seek co-operation of the trade union machinery in this task. I will introduce a new element of dynamism in the management-labour relationship."

As for the work of the trade union movement, I welcome the statement but it has got many difficulties and it is not very clear. The collective bargaining in the railways is not possible and has not been made possible

because there is a clamour and the clamour has been that the trade union rights would be restored which has been generally accepted by the party in power now. Sir, in the railways, though it is an industrial undertaking under the ILO—the International Labour Organisation has accepted it as an industrial undertaking—it has been the policy of the government not to accept it as an industrial undertaking, and the Industrial Disputes Act of 1947 has been denied to the workmen to raise any dispute against the railways and the problems could not go either for adjudication or for decision. Sir, one of the reasons why the strike has taken place is this. A demand which had been made by George Fernandes on the last strike of 1974—I would like to quote his statement in the press conference; it appears on the 1st May, 1974, (Hindustan Times) is:

"Mr. Fernandes clarified that they had originally demanded minimum need based wage, but, as an interim measure, agreed to accept minimum pay for a railway worker as given to his counterpart in a public undertaking. But this demand, he said, had been totally rejected. Along with it, the demand for higher dearness allowance had also been thrown up. On the question of bonus, Fernandes revealed that railways were not included in the terms of reference of the Bonus Review Committee. Against their demand for supply of subsidised and adequate quantity of foodgrains through Railway Departmental Stores, the Ministry had only agreed to make available foodgrains in such quantities and at prices as locally available. In certain areas in the North Eastern Railway an adult got only one kilo of rice a month. Apart from inadequate supply of foodgrains from public distribution system, there were only 360 fair-price shops in 7,000 railway stations. The Railway Ministry had also refused, Sir, to accept their demand to treat railwaymen as industrial workers for service conditions and

for purposes under the Industrial Disputes Act."

Therefore, Fernandes said that these were the main demands for which they were going on strike.

Sir, on other three or four demands which he had made I would only like to say that it has been the universal demand of the working class throughout that bonus should be paid to all employees irrespective of who is the employer. I am sorry to say that in the statement first which has come from the Minister there is no reference to the important demand of the railway workers. The payment of Bonus Act, 1965 when it was enacted, excluded from its operation a number of undertakings—public undertakings and also

the railways under section 32 1 P.M. of the Act. Sir, the Bonus Commission which was appointed earlier and in pursuance of whose recommendations the Act was passed, has stated: "It is proper to construe the concept of bonus as sharing by workers in the prosperity of the concern in which they are employed. This has also the advantage that in the case of low-paid workers, such sharing in prosperity augments their earnings."

Sir, two concepts of bonus are there. As wages are low, the workers are entitled to get more money by way of bonus to augment their earnings. The second concept is sharing in the prosperity of the undertaking. It has been accepted in the statement made by the Minister that workers are responsible for more earnings apart from the Government policies, that they have worked hard and their performance is excellent. If that is the position, are they not entitled to ask for bonus? Are they not entitled to ask for a share in the prosperity? I demand, Sir, that a clear statement should come from the Minister on this important aspect of this question.

श्री उपसभापति : माननीय सदस्य अपना भाषण जारी रखेंगे। सदन की कार्यवाही दो बजे तक स्थगित की जा रही है।

The House then adjourned for lunch at one minute past one of the clock.

The House reassembled after lunch at two of the clock, Mr. Deputy Chairman in the Chair.

SHRI S. W. DHABE: Amongst the demands which Mr. Fernandes has made, who is now occupying the treasury benches, one is parity with the wages in the public sector undertakings and another is that bonus should be paid to all the workers. Apart from this, Sir, the manifesto of the Janta Party, published in "The Indian Express" of the 11th February 1977 says like this:

"It will be the policy of the Government and the party in relation to the workers to do these things.....".

Sir, I will not read out all the paragraphs, but I will read out only paragraph 6 which reads like this:

"Consistent with the Gandhian attitude towards labour and industry, the Janta Party believes that workers must be treated as part of the industry. They must not only receive adequate wages and bonus, but also be able to participate in management and equity. To attain these objectives, the representatives of workers will be provided opportunities in schemes for participation in management, etc., etc..".

Of course, Sir, the question of equity does not arise in the railway undertaking. But I think the honourable Minister has said in clear terms: "I will try to introduce a new element of dynamism in the labour-management relations" In view of the com-

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mitment to pay bonus and adequate wages to the workers, I think this statement is a very half-hearted and a halting one, the statement does not indicate that the workers in the railways would be paid the same wages as are paid to the employees in the public sector undertakings. Today Sir, in the steel and coal industries, the workers are paid a wage, a minimum wage of Rs. 425 or so while the railway employees are paid about Rs. 200/- or so, almost half of it. Therefore, it is high time that the wage policy was defined, that the national wage policy was clearly enunciated and proper norms were fixed for paying adequate wages to the railway workers. That is why I consider the demand for a need-based minimum wage as an important thing in the matter of industrial relations in the country.

The second thing to which the honourable Minister, who believes in dynamism in the labour-management relations, has referred is the question of participation in the management by the workers. This principle of workers' participation in the management has been accepted as a Directive Principle in the 42nd Amendment to the Constitution. Though the ruling party is saying that it wants to repeal the 42nd Amendment, one of the things which have been accepted and enumerated in the Directive Principles in the 42nd Amendment is workers' participation in management. There are two recognised unions in this undertaking and the progress in the matter of workers' participation in management is, as we all know, very slow. They should be members of the Railway Board since there are different levels of management and the workers should be associated with the management at various levels. If this is done, the whole thing will go a long way in improving the labour-management relations and a new concept of partnership in industry will emerge and strikes may not be necessary at all. Therefore, I consider that this is a very important aspect and I hope

that when we meet in the month of May 1977, a clear-cut policy on this issue of parity in wages and need-based minimum wage to all the workers in the railways will be announced.

**SHRI JAGAN NATH BHARDWAJ** (Himachal Pradesh): Workers participation also.

**SHRI S. W. DHABE:** I have already said that. I have already said that it will go a long way in improving the operational efficiency of the railways and will also solve many problems.

In this connection, Sir, I would like to say that it will be necessary, if workers' participation in management is accepted as an article of faith, to provide training to the workers and training programmes will have to be undertaken. To undertake training programmes with the association of labour trade unions, I think, will be a good augury and will go a long way in improving labour-management relations.

Sir, in the statement made by the Minister there is a reference that dismissed workers, who went on strike in 1974, will be reinstated unconditionally. I welcome this statement. But it is not clear what is meant by this statement. I would like to know whether it is in accordance with the decisions of the High Courts and the Supreme Court that a worker goes back to the original post and has continuity of service and is also entitled to back wages. I think that when the Minister has stated that he will be reinstated he is entitled to get back wages from the date of dismissal till he is reinstated. But if the right to strike is to be accepted as a weapon of collective bargaining. I fail to understand why only the 1974 strike is taken into consideration. In fact, there were other strikes before this. There was the loco strike, to my knowledge, in 1972 and occupation-wise, railway workers' strikes in the year 1973 also. I think that this benefit should be extended to them also, and...

**THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MADHU DANDAVATE):** There was one strike in 1948.

**SHRI S. W. DHABE:** It was a part of the movement. I am not going into that. That may be different. But at least the people involved in the strikes I have just mentioned should also be reinstated.

I have one more suggestion to make.

Sir, I hope that in laying down the policy, the important questions which arise as the right to strike as a weapon of collective bargaining, the parity in wages, the right to get bonus and, as I have already stated, trade union right—that is, the provisions of the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947, should apply to railway workmen,—will also be considered by the Railway Minister.

**SHRI U. K. LAKSHMANA GO-WDA (Karnataka):** You were taking an entirely different line six months ago.

**SHRI S. W. DHABE:** I spoke in the same spirit even then. I opposed the C.D.S. in party meeting also.

Sir, I will like to mention one or two local problems before I sit down. The Dadar Express from Nagpur to Dadar takes a long time, starting at 10 P.M. and reaching Dadar in the afternoon, at about 4 P.M., on the next day. There is a suggestion and demand that from Gondia to Bombay there should be another express train to be named as Vidarbha Express which should reach Bombay at about 9 A.M. for the convenience of the citizens of Vidarbha.

Another thing is that the electrification programme is halting between Bhusaval and Durg. There is no electrification on this line. About three hundred or four hundred workers were retrenched. I would request that this question may be taken up immediately, so that all the casual labourers who were thrown out of

their jobs will get back employment under the new scheme.

I have one last suggestion to make. There is only one train connecting Nagpur and Kolhapur, called the Maharashtra Express. It takes 30 hours. But there is no canteen arrangement on the train. I hope the Minister will look into this small assignment on the Maharashtra Express, making proper catering arrangements on this train running between Nagpur and Kolhapur.

With these words, Sir, I thank you very much for giving me this opportunity.

**MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN:** Mr. Ramlal Parikh.

**PROF. RAM LAL PARIKH (Gujarat):** Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, I am happy to learn from the speech of the hon. Railway Minister on the Railway Budget there is an overall improvement in the performance of the Railways. I do not know whether he had enough time to go through all these questions. As we all know, the Railway Minister is presenting the budget more or less prepared by the previous Government and he has yet to present a new budget. When the Vote on Account is finished and when a fresh budget is presented after a few months, the programmes and the concern for the working men in the Railways as envisaged by Janata Party are to be reflected. In spite of that, I congratulate the Railway Minister that he lost no time in taking the first opportunity for reinstating all those railway workers who were removed, retrenched and dismissed because of the railway strike which they had undertaken for their just demands.

While this is satisfactory, the question of providing basic amenities to the passengers is still a question which needs very serious probing and consideration. We are increasing the

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speed of the trains. We are introducing Rajdhani Expresses and Super-speed Expresses. While this is all right. I do not think this reflects any sense of priority. Let us find out whether the claim of the railway administration that there is adequate facility for drinking water is true. I am sorry I am unable to subscribe to this view of the railway administration that the drinking water facilities and sanitation have improved. In fact, this is one of the problems which has been hanging on for years now. Since the Railway Minister has come with a massive mandate of the people, his hands are strengthened to resolve some of these basic problems. The time has come to find some way to provide drinking water facilities in the railway compartments in the running trains. It is not impossible. It does not involve that much amount or mechanism by which one should be frightened.

Sir, I do not think that the level of sanitation is very satisfactory as yet. If we try to enter any of the lavatories at the railway stations, we can never find them clean. Probably they do not have any water facilities to flush the lavatories from time to time. Whatever may be the reason, the sanitation as a whole has remained poor under the previous Government. It would be for the new Railway Minister now to take up this problem which is a basic problem for the Class II passengers. The claim that the railways have been punctual was never true even during the emergency. Today morning, I travelled from Baroda to New Delhi by De Luxe which left Baroda yesterday evening and which reached today nearly 40 minutes late. I do not dispute that there is some improvement, but that is not enough to lead us to a situation where we can be satisfied and say, that the situation does not need any further improvement. There is need for improvement in terms of sanitation, drinking water and arrangements for reserva-

tion. No doubt, some anti-social elements have been weeded out. The reservations are a little more easier. But corruption still goes on at big stations. It will have to be the endeavour of the Janata Party Government to ensure that this corruption in reservation is totally removed. I am glad that the Railway Minister, in the limited budget for four months, has not forgotten the welfare of the railway staff and has provided nearly 19 crores of rupees for the welfare of the staff. This indicates the concern of the Janata Party Government for the railway staff. Then, Sir, there are some cases which require an enquiry. Just as the Railway Minister decided to reinstate those who had suffered because of the railway strike, there are cases where, during the emergency, the previous Government committed heavy excesses on railway employees, particularly the temporary railway workmen in the name of compulsory sterilisation. I have myself received six such employees at the Ahmedabad workshop who were forced to accept compulsory sterilisation. They belong to the minority community of Muslims. They did not abide by the compulsion and they have been removed from service and they are still without jobs and their condition is very pitiable. I would, therefore, request the Railway Minister to ensure that in respect of those who have been made the victims of compulsory sterilisation in the Railway administration under the orders of the previous Government, their condition is rectified very soon.

Sir, in terms of passenger amenities, one more thing I would like to point out. Although there are instructions that prohibition should be strictly enforced in the railway carriages and nobody should be allowed to use liquor in the railway carriages, on the 28th evening, when I was travelling from Bombay to Baroda in Rajdhani Express, in coach No. I, seat No. 35, two persons near my seat were freely using liquor and nobody could check them, nobody could tell them and

nobody could stop them from using it. I think it is very dangerous that these rules are allowed to be flouted so easily.

Sir, we have been told that the Fifth Plan has provided Rs. 500 crores for the development fund and that a number of new projects would be undertaken. Obviously the Railway Minister has started his job only the day before yesterday and there was not enough time to give the whole picture. But I would like to present to him some of the problems which affect the Gujarat State. The Gujarat State has been demanding for years that the railway line in the Saurashtra region which is the meter gauge one should be converted into broad gauge. This has been accepted by the Railway administration but it has not been implemented. In fact, it has been delayed under one or the other pretext. The work has started but it has never reached its completion even after years. And the bottleneck at Viramgam is of such a serious nature that it affects trade and commerce, it affects the passenger traffic and it creates a lot of inconvenience, and the Saurashtra region, therefore, is seriously affected in its entire development programme. It remains a neglected area so far as the railways are concerned. In the same way, the Gujarat people have been demanding that there ought to be some faster trains between Ahmedabad and Delhi on the lines of the Deluxe trains between Bombay and Delhi passing through Baroda on the meter gauge section because it takes 24 hours and passes through Rajasthan. The Rajasthan and Gujarat people have been demanding that there is a necessity for faster trains on this track so that people can travel conveniently by spending a night and a few hours during the day time and thus save one day. Then, Sir, on the question of introducing faster trains, I would like to stress one point. That is, we should not create any type of faci-

lities or trains or services which are exclusively for certain classes. Take, for example, the Rajdhani Express. We have only the air-conditioned 2nd class and nothing for the ordinary passengers. Now, this would not be consistent with the kind of policies that we all want to pursue of having an egalitarian society with social justice where all classes, particularly the weaker sections of the people and the common men have equal access to all the services in our country. So I would plead here that in trains like the Rajdhani Express and other superfast trains while we create facilities for air-conditioned class passengers and passengers for other classes, we must also ensure that we maintain a certain minimum accommodation for the ordinary class passengers who would also like to avail of such trains then they are already in operation.

The Railway Administration is one which directly comes into contact with a large masses of the people. The railway traffic has been rising at the rate of 6 per cent and this is a very good rise. It is, therefore, very important that the Railway Administration at every level is in close touch with public men, with representatives of the people, with Members of Parliament and Members of State Legislatures and leaders of public opinion and the Railway Administration should be continuously in the know of what is going on in the public mind in terms of the impact of the Railway Administration. Now, I think, it is necessary to review the present arrangements of consultation. There is a large scope to improve it. It is already there but there is much room for improvement. The Members of Parliament particularly have to be involved more effectively and continuously in every consultation machinery at the divisional level, at the zonal level as well as at the Central level. I think this is very important because it is this sector of the Government which, if properly managed, can bring a lot of satisfaction to the

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people, and, it is this very sector, which, if not adequately looked after, can create a lot of confrontation with and dissatisfaction among the people. Therefore it is of supreme importance that people through their various types of representatives are kept in close consultation with the Railway Administration particularly in the development of various amenities and services.

I am very happy and I congratulate the Minister again because he has indicated a surplus of Rs. 26 crores this year and while this is a good thing he has also indicated that a heavy effort would be needed for repaying nearly Rs. 477 crores debt to the revenue and development reserve fund. This all means that the Railways have a big task ahead. People can very rightly look forward to a very progressive and proletarian administration from Shri Dandavate, who is a very eminent public worker and a devoted socialist and who has been one with the weaker sections of the people. It is very fortunate that Shri Dandavate has taken over such a vital portfolio and everybody looks forward with great hope and expectation from him to revitalise the Railway Administration and make the railways the Railways of the people. Thank you.

**SHRI KALYAN ROY** (West Bengal): Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, although the baby was produced by the previous Congress regime, Mr. Dandavate has presented it before the House and I expected, on behalf of the C.P.I., that he would at least give some indication as to the shape of things to come, some kind of an outline of the specific measures which he is going to undertake to root out the rot which has crept in in this mighty institution. I congratulate him for taking a decision to reinstate all those who were dismissed or suspended. The basic democratic right which a worker enjoys in a democratic country is the right to go on a strike and the right to come back to work

after the strike is over. Even that elementary right was taken away by Mrs. Gandhi's Government and the working class has not forgiven her for that. But, is Mr. Dandavate satisfied that reinstatement is enough? What about demotions and transfers made on a mass scale? Is he going to set that right? Certainly, I do not know what he is going to do about it but what about the untold sufferings of the victimised employees in the last three years? Have you all forgotten them? What about those employees' children who could not pursue their education because their fathers lost their jobs? What about those wives and daughters—I know some of these cases in Asansol in West Bengal—the hospitals on the ground that their who could not get the medicine from husbands and fathers took part in the legal strike? And Mr. Dandavate would agree with me because I also led a strike in Asansol in West Bengal. It was a legal and justified strike and the workers were deliberately, by a conspiracy hatched by the Government and the Railway Board, victimised the workers. The Government was itching for a fight against the working class. There is no doubt about it. Emergency started and the entire military, the C.R.P. and the Border Security Force were mobilised to crush, the most genuine, legitimate, legal and justified strike. Is he going to give some compensation to those who lost their jobs, who lost their lives, who lost their properties, who were dragged in the midnight from their quarters before my very eyes? I am surprised, and I am glad also, that some of the Congressmen are speaking now. Things could have been averted if they had spoken this in 1974. They remained silent and colluded with this organised massacre of the Railway workers. I want to ask Mr. Dandavate what is he going to do about the two million workers who have been victimised and what about those who did the excesses. Are you going to completely forget that? I am not in favour of witch-hunting but what about those officers who

took sadistic delight in prosecuting, day after day, the employees? They could not dare to talk to the officers. What are you going to do about those who were prosecuted for mere collecting signatures or collecting subscriptions or putting a simple poster on the platform? Will you remain silent? Otherwise, the working class is also not going to forgive you as they have not forgiven Mr. Kamlapati Tripathi. And if you do not take any action, then these officers—because Ministers come and Ministers go—in the next opportunity will repeat what they did in 1974-75. So, I for one, want that these excesses should be enquired into and the officers, however high they are, wherever they are posted, whatever is their designation, should be punished and some example is set so that the darkest period of history is not repeated.

What about the Railway Board? As demanded in past, should there not be the abolition of the organ which was the creation of the colonial period, a useless system of the nineteenth century, the wall between the people and Parliament and the Railway Minister, which is the basic source of all this rot, mess and corruption in the entire administration? Will that remain, as it is untouched as a white elephant, or after getting the massive mandate from the people in a democratic manner, at least now will you dare to take some action to abolish it? What is the necessity of it excepting spending crores of rupees to keep them happy and hearty so that they can go on ruling in a most undemocratic manner? Then, what about certain basic ills which have been perpetuated by the Railway Board? I think Mr. Dandavate would be aware that there are nearly four lakh casual workers in the Railways. I am reading from a reply to my question on 27th August 1973. And the reply was that there were 3,14,320 casual workers and some of them have worked for ten years. For ten years he remains a casual worker. Hundreds and thousands of workers remain

under contract. And is Mr. Dandavate aware of their wages? The wage today is even less than what is paid to an agricultural labour. Will you set it right? Will you take certain decent steps to abolish these medieval traces in the Railway administration? Will you make permanent at least those workers who have completed one year of service, as is done in other public sector undertakings? Will the railway workers be treated as industrial workers? These were my demands. I fought for these demands. I went to jail for this and I was victimised for this. In regard to taking a decision on the Railway Board, will Mr. Dandavate act exactly in the same way as the other Railway Ministers did? I do not know. I have a fear that he may be swallowed again by the Railway Board whose appetite is unlimited.

**SHRI MADHU DANDAVATE:** My appetite will not be spoiled.

**SHRI KALYAN ROY:** Then, there is the question of sterilisation. I cannot forget this. Mr. Deputy Chairman, I have this 'Newsletter' of October-November, 1976. This is a periodical which is published by the Railway Board covering the Eastern Railway. On page 2, there is a heading "Family Planning: Special train introduced". There are no trains for the backward areas. No faster trains have been introduced. But a family planning train has been introduced. The General Manager of the Eastern Railway states that they have succeeded in motivating over 30,000 railwaymen to undergo sterilisation. They issued a circular. They also said that those who did not undergo sterilisation would not get promotion and would not be given other incentives like quarters and so on. I would put a question to Mr. Dandavate. Now, we know that 30,000 persons have been sterilised in the Eastern Railway. Will it be enquired into? I would like to know how many members of the Railway Board underwent sterilisation. This would be a very useful informa-



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tion. Even a child of 8 years was sterilised by Mr. Bansi Lal's Government. Even a young boy of 12 years was sterilised in U.P. I would like to know how many of the General Managers underwent sterilisation. Are they included in this 30,000? I do not think anyone of them would have undergone sterilisation.

SHRI N. H. KUMBHARE (Maharashtra): They are all old people.

SHRI KALYAN ROY: After producing 13 children. A person would look old at the age of 30 after producing 13 children.

I would like him to have a second look where excesses have been committed in the name of sterilisation. What kind of sterilisation was done to force the Class III and Class IV workers?

Then, there is the question of bonus. Mr. Dandavate said in the other House bonus as deferred wage. I congratulate him for that. But when shall I get it? The Railway Board did not allow the Government to pay Rs. 40-50 crores by way of bonus, while they spent nearly Rs. 2,000 crores to crush the strike. Will it be paid at all in this year?

What about the apprentices? I mentioned about the casual workers who number about 4 lakhs. I mentioned about the contract workers. I think there are about 12,000 apprentices who have completed their courses. Will they be made permanent? Will some more will be appointed? What is the policy?

Then, I would like to take up the question of wagons. I would not go into the details. But this is a problem which is coming up again and again in this House in the course of debate through calling attention notices and so on. I would like to know whether the Government and the Railway Board have got any policy towards the placing of orders for

wagons. The unfortunate fact is that the entire wagon industry is concentrated in the eastern part of India. Lakhs of workers are engaged in building wagons. Wagons are not built only in Jessops or Indian Standard Wagons or Braithwaite. There are also hundreds of small factories engaged in this. Before the Emergency, there have been massive lay-offs resulting in unemployment because of the erratic placement of orders for wagons. Sometimes back it was 80,000 and now I think it has gone to 10,000. What is the actual position? When will this state of uncertainty be over because the Railway Board does not know about this? They are pressurised this way or that way. They do not have the proper directive or proper instructions. I want to know how many thousands of wagons have been ordered for. What is the present position? What is the directive? Or, will these factories be closed and this erratic policy pursued? When the darkest chapter in the history is over, let the Government come out openly because all of those wagon dealings were done secretly. In what manner, I do not know. Let the Government come out openly, clearly, categorically before the House, before the people, enunciating their policy in respect of wagons. I demand this because the supply of wagons was a mysterious problem.

Do you know what is the position in coal industry? I think, 36 per cent of the freight is coal in Railways. Ninety million tonnes of coal are handled by Railways, as far as I remember, and all of them have suffered because of shortage of wagons. As a result of this, factories were shut down. So, there is no proper perspective or direction. I would like to know whether this direction will come now.

Similarly, regarding this erratic attitude towards placement of orders of axles, wheels and sleepers, you know that during the emergency, one of

the most important departments of the Durgapur Steel Plant which was producing sleepers and wheels, was closed down because the Railway Board did not place orders for these two items and the perpetual cold war was going on between the Ministry of Industry and the Ministry of Railways. Instead of placing orders on the public sector plants for axles, sleepers and wheels, they went abroad, paying a higher price and foreign exchange, allowing the workers to be thrown out of job from the public sector plants. I want to know categorically from the new Minister whether our installed capacity for wheels, installed capacity for sleepers and installed capacity for axles in the Durgapur Steel Plant will be fully utilised before he goes to abroad for these items. Will the steel plants get a proper and adequate price which was inadequate till today? It is very funny. On the one hand, the Railways deliberately give freight concession for bamboo, for cement and other commodities which are utilised for the monopoly section, at a very low price, at a low tariff, lesser than the cost of transport and on the other hand they give a higher price to the commodities, to the essential equipment which we buy from the steel plants. In other words, the basic sympathy of the Railway Board seems to be towards the monopolist and tycoons of the country. I would like to know whether his imbalance could be set right by the new Minister.

Similarly, about the question of accidents, in the printed pamphlet which was placed yesterday, i.e. "Review of Accidents of Indian Government Railways—1975-76" on page 2 it is written, I quote:

"This increase in accidents was due to the after-effects of the countrywide strike by the railwaymen and unsettled conditions of working in the country which had affected the maintenance of railway assets and discipline among the

railwaymen. During the period April to September 1975 there were 536 train accidents against 446 during the corresponding period of the previous year.

Would Mr. Dandavate own this? Did the strike lead to indiscipline? What kind of discipline has been imposed in the last two years? May I ask Mr. Dandavate: Was it a voluntary one? I refuse to accept the allegation that we were ever indisciplined. Now the Budget presented by Mr. Dandavate wants to show that the accidents and unsettled conditions of working in the country were due to the strike. I do not know actually whose Budget it is. I do not know whose baby it is. It is definitely not Dandavate's baby.

SHRI MADHU DANDAVATE: It is an open secret.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: (West Bengal): At the moment, they were illegitimate.

SHRI KALYAN ROY: Yes, responsibility rests partly on him. He is right. We both went to jail. Now you can easily accuse me. You have become Railway Minister. So compensate us. Who is preventing you? You give us bonus. Who is preventing you? You give us bonus. Who is preventing you to give us the back wages? Why have you said "reinstated"? When reinstating, the back wages should be paid whatever these may be. I see he is keeping silent and I see a smile on his face. Great injustice has been done, great wrong has been committed by the Junta which was ruling here in collusion with another Junta which is ruling in the Railway Board. I accept that if wrongs are corrected, serious discipline has to be restored, the workers who were victimised should be paid their back wages in full. You can think about it.

[Shri Kalyan Roy]

So, Sir, there must be a new approach, a new outlook. Lastly, there are two points I want to make. One is about the underground railway in Calcutta. In reply to all the questions so far tabled by me and others, I read one question put in 1974: "Overall upto date progress in the tube railways in Calcutta is 3.5 per cent and the work is scheduled to be completed by the end of 1979". This was said by Shri Mohammad Shafi Qureshi. In *The Statesman*, in the end of 1974, both Mr. Bhola Sen, Minister of West Bengal and Mr. Mukherjee, Manager, Metropolitan Transport Project maintained that "as yet there is no question of not being able to complete the underground project by 1979, the target date". Unfortunately—I have been to Calcutta—we have seen nothing but a mountain of mud coming out of the Maidan. Hardly there has been any progress. When will the Project be completed? Are they serious about it? I think there is an underground attempt to sabotage the whole thing. Can he give any date—99 years, 100 years or 200 years—when the 3 per cent expansion will increase to at least 4 per cent expansion? All this time we were trying to get a categorical reply from Shri Buta Singh or Shri L. N. Mishra, but we never got a reply. Now Mr. Dandavate has come and I definitely think that the workers should be more enthused after they go back to work. So he can give a categorical assurance—as Railway Minister he can give a commitment that by such and such date, this will be completed. All the old dates are gone.

Lastly, I shall mention one of the very basic points which is agitating not only the railway workers but also other workers: what is the criterion regarding choosing collective bargaining agencies? I quote, Sir, from *The Statesman* of 3rd December, 1973: "The Union Labour Minister, Mr. L. N. Mishra said in Calcutta on Sunday that he attached considerable importance to the conference in Delhi on

January 22, to which he had invited leaders of the two railwaymen's federations and those of the four central trade unions. He was keen on developing a norm which would help and solve the disputes as soon as possible". Indian Railway employees number 2.4 million distributed over 729 categories and he wants to the multiplicity of unions. Would he now introduce what he was preaching and advocating and shouting all along that there should be a secret ballot to choose the type of union which will get recognition? So long recognition was left at the mercy of the Congress Ministers and their stooges. There is no doubt about it. So long, recognition was given not on the basis of majority but on the basis whether one's allegiance was to the INTUC or not. That was the only criterion. Even where the workers did not like this, the union was recognised just because it happened to belong to the INTUC. Will this anarchic state of affairs disappear to continue? Will he now have the courage to introduce the ballot system in the railways so that multiplicity of unions is avoided, and will he do it in consultation with the Centre of Indian Trade Unions? At least last year we found all the labour legislations have been pushed through without any decency of consultation whatsoever. Nobody knew about it, not even a whisper about it. Suddenly we found in the House that a Bill has come, affecting the working class. Whether the same situation will continue, whether the same anarchic situation will continue, the working classes want to know.

Lastly, before I sit down, I can assure him that so far as the AITUC is concerned, we will give wholehearted co-operation to improve the efficiency of the railways, whose productivity has already gone up. There is no reservation about it but, at the same time, the working class wants positive answers to the questions of recognition of secret ballot, payment of bonus, reinstatement with back wages and definite steps against those officers who committed excesses in

the last three years of the darkest rule. Thank you, Sir.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRABARTI (West Bengal): Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, I would like to take just a few minutes to present some of the cases of my State, West Bengal.

Sir, my request to the hon. Railway Minister firstly would be with regard to the Howrah-Sheakhala broad gauge line. The Railway Minister might know that there was a light railway which has gone into liquidation for quite some time now. Then the Government took a decision that it should be a broad gauge line between Howrah and Sheakhala. But unfortunately so far nothing has been done. Very little work has been done in this direction to open the Howrah-Sheakhala line. As the hon. Minister will know, more than ten or fifteen lakhs of people come from that side of Howrah district, and the road condition being so bad and the road transport being so bad, the people are over-crowding the bus stops, and so many accidents occur. Now this line has to be completed as early as possible.

My next point is that we were demanding a double track between Dum Dum and Barasat for a long time now. The survey has been completed. Because of the single track, untold suffering has been caused to the people who are living in this area, a vast area from which a large number of people commute daily to and from Calcutta. This aspect should be looked into and action taken as early as possible. This, I hope, the hon. Minister will do.

Sir, I was rather glad to note that the Railway Minister said in the other House—it appeared in the paper—that he wanted to open more railway tracks in the hinterland. I may remind him that there is one place known as Balarghat in North Bengal. This area has a very big town but there is no railway line to approach this place. We have been fighting for a long time for having a railway line

in that area. At the same time I understand that survey has been completed for one or two lines in the Sunderbans area which is also a hinterland of West Bengal. I hope the hon. Minister will also look into that in order to open more lines in the backward area or the hinterland area. Now, Sir, regarding the metropolitan tube railway, as my honourable colleague Mr. Roy has already pointed out, the way the work is going on, we do not know whether we will be able to complete it by the end of this century or even by the middle of the next century. The problem connected with this is that as years go by, because of the price rise, the cost of having the project completed goes up. Already it has probably become double. It may be ten-fold or twenty-fold judging by the progress of the work, which is 25 per cent. A final and firm decision must be taken as early as possible so as to allot more money for this project. Otherwise, it will be as good as abandoning the whole project because at the rate at which the work is progressing, I do not know whether any Government will be able to complete this project even in 50 years of time.

Sir, I share my concern with Mr. Roy again in the matter of wheel and axle department of the Durgapur Steel Plant. I have visited the plant personally and I have seen that the workers are laid off or rather they are simply sitting idle because the Railways are not purchasing wheels and axles. What they are telling them is that they will buy so many wheels or so many axles and they will assemble these things in their plant. And again they are importing such things from abroad by paying huge amount of money whereas they do not like to pay even cost price of these wheels and axles produced at the Durgapur Steel Plant, who were supplying complete assemblies of wheels and axles which the Railway Board has discarded. They say, "No. We are not going to buy the complete assemblies. Piecemeal we will buy certain number of wheels

[Shri Rajat Kumar Chakrabarti]

and certain number of axles from your plant". This point should be looked into properly.

About the casual workers or temporary workers, I have also the same viewpoint. It is surprising that the people who have been working for the last 8 to 10 years are even today being paid Rs. 4 as daily allowance, which comes to Rs. 120 per month. They are not being made permanent. They do not enjoy the facility of provident fund or gratuity or any other privilege which a worker should get.

Sir, it is very good to know that the honourable Minister has decided to take back those people who were retrenched and they will be given their proper places, and so on. Sir, in this connection, I would like to point out that many a time we have found out that because of the bureaucratic action, this sort of things develops between the Ministry and the working class. Sir, I would like to put the question to the new Minister that whenever a worker is being retrenched or harassed by the bureaucracy, what action does he propose to take to ensure that he is able to get his grievance redressed? The poor worker cannot meet the Minister and cannot represent his case. He cannot even go to the court to get his grievance redressed because the man has nothing to eat, his whole family is starving. He cannot approach the Government to have a redressal of his grievances.

Sir, I would like to quote one example. Though it is not exactly connected with the Railway Ministry, since the full Ministry has yet to be formed, it is my appeal to the Government through the Railway Minister to look into this particular case. There is one Mr. Haripada Ghosh, Upper Division Clerk, who has been there for 20 years in the Calcutta Port Trust and who for the last four years has been responsible for unearthing under-invoicing and over-invoicing in the Calcutta Port Trust which will in-

volve more than Rs. 3 crores. He submitted several memoranda to the Ministry of Shipping and Transport and he has made an allegation against the Chairman and the C.F.A.O. and the Ministry has agreed that 80 per cent of the charges which have been made by this man, who is also working as the President of the Staff Union, are substantiated. But, very unfortunately, the corrupt gentleman, Mr. D. K. Sen, the officer, has been given an extension recently for one year and this poor fellow, Mr. Haripada Ghosh, has been suspended from service and there is an inquiry going on *ex-parte* in order to throw him out of the job. Sir, the reason why I mention this point is because there is no scope for putting any question on the Ministry of Shipping and Transport and the poor fellow has probably been retrenched during the last week so that the family will be starving next week or week after that. So, this is the price, this is the thing they get in return for the service rendered to the country. There is no dialogue between the worker and the Minister. What is the procedure? The procedure is they must approach public representatives like MLAs and MPs. Whenever we write a letter to the Minister, it should be the duty of the Minister to enquire from the MLA or the MP and call for the file to see who is to blame and whether the man has been suspended or not. Most of the Ministers depend completely on bureaucracy and whatever the bureaucracy tell them, they take action on the basis of that and the poor people have no way to make his words reach the ear of the Minister. So, I would appreciate if the new Government, the new Ministry will take action, take this viewpoint whenever such letters are received from them, from public men like us, they should also call us and see what is actually happening, so that there may be a proper link between the workmen, the masses and the Ministers who are always surrounded by bureaucracy and whatever they put up in the file there is no other way for the Minister to know what is

actually happening in those cases. So, I hope these cases will be dealt with properly in future. Sir, I may say that that particular Haripada Ghosh was called by the highest body, the Public Accounts Committee held on the 15th March, 1975 in the Parliament House. Here he submitted all the documents and the PAC categorically assured him that no repressive measure would be taken against him and he would not be penalised or victimised for coming as witness or coming to the PAC for giving evidence. But, in spite of the categorical assurance given by the PAC, this particular gentleman not only had been suspended but he has been retrenched, probably last week.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: If that is so, it is a gross breach of privilege. You should ask Mr. Ghosh..

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRABARTI: I have submitted a short-notice question.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Not here. We are also here. But to the Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRABARTI: Already a letter has been written to the Chairman, but no answer has been received from the last Chairman.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: I would suggest to you, since you have taken it up, kindly to write a letter. We are participants in the Public Accounts Committee unlike in the Estimates Committee.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRABARTI: I have simply a suggestion that the action of the bureaucracy is such that many times there is no connection between the actual suffering people and Ministers. Ministers should not put up walls surrounding them and the only communication between the Ministers and the public

or the masses is through the public representatives like us, MPs, MLAs or the party people. I am not going to take up further time. I sincerely hope that so far as my State of West Bengal is concerned, the views about the railway lines, the plight of the Durgapur Steel Plant, etc., will be looked into and appropriate action taken as early as possible.

श्री उपसभापति : रेलवे बजट पर बहस के लिए दो घंटे का समय निर्धारित किया गया था। करीब आधा घंटा मंत्री महोदय अपने उत्तर के लिए लेंगे और साढ़े तीनों बजे के करी। अपना उत्तर प्रारम्भ करेंगे। इस लिए माननीय सदस्यों निवेदन है कि संक्षेप में बोले ताकि ज्यादा सदस्य बहस में भाग ले सकें। Shri Viswanatha Menon.

SHRI VISWANATHA MENON (Kerala): Sir when I speak on this Railway Budget, I feel the time has been too short to criticise the Minister because he is new. But certain things we have to say because the Railways are not run by Ministers; they are actually run by the Railway Board. And almost all Railway Ministers are prisoners of the Railway Board. So my humble request to Mr. Madhu Dandavate is not to be a prisoner of the Railway Board. Try to make them your prisoners. Either scrap this Railway Board or change their pattern of working. They are a set of bureaucrats sitting there and thinking in the old traditional bureaucratic way and doing things accordingly. That is what is always happening. For example, when he made the statement in the Lok Sabha about reinstatement of workers, the next day comments of a spokesman of the Railway Board appeared in the papers. He asked "What workers?" They do not know anything. So even at the first stage they are not happy with this kind of thing. So you must be very careful. That is what I have to tell the hon. Minister on this matter.

[Shri Viswanatha Menon]

Then coming to the demands of the workers, naturally I need not elaborate them. Everybody knows them. They include the question of bonus, the question of parity in wages and so on. The basic point is whether the new approach of the Ministry will be to consider the Railways as an industrial concern, whether the Industrial Disputes Act will be applicable to the railway workers, and whether they will get the benefits of other public sector undertakings. The previous Ministers were evading this basic problem; rather they were opposing this demand. My humble submission is that this is the basic question on which he has to take a decision.

Then about the reinstatement of workers, naturally the reinstatement order may be there, but for months together these workers will have to go after the officials the divisional officers and so on. So a particular date must be fixed by which time the workers must be taken back with back wages. And in the case of those people who have suffered, who have been murdered, who have been killed by the police in connection with the railway strike, compensation must be paid. This is a natural corollary of the action he is thinking of. If he wants to implement it, the basic point is that he should have the machinery. And the Railway Board being what it is, I do not think it will be in a position to implement all these things because their entire approach is bureaucratic. They treat the railway worker just like their own slave. So that attitude must be changed. I request the hon. Minister to take a very strong stand on this question. And if he succeeds, well and good, because even now I have my own doubts since the bureaucracy in this country is so powerful. Anyhow, on my behalf and on behalf of the Centre of Indian Trade Unions, I promise him all co-operation in this connection.

Then I come to my State. Naturally we also want certain things. I

am coming from the southern most State and unfortunately in these elections, no Janata candidate has been elected from there. Neither a Janata candidate nor a Marxist candidate has been elected. So, do not ignore us. You must take more interest in our State.

SHRI U. K. LAKSHMANA GOWDA:  
Mr. Kalyan Roy will give you assistance.

SHRI VISWANATHA MENON:  
But in Kerala neither a Marxist nor a Janata candidate was elected. So, do not have any differential treatment. Our main point is on the question of electrification. Kerala has got abundant electricity and our Government is prepared to give electricity cheaply. Why not electrify that area? This is a very important point. And the Government of Kerala, whoever was in power, had taken up this attitude. The other point is about the Alleppey-Ernakulam railway line. Here also the Government of Kerala has offered to give them wooden planks and other things free. At least this project must be taken up. Now I come to another important line, namely, Telicherry-Mysore line. This is a very important line connecting the two States of Kerala and Karnataka. I will request the new Railway Minister to take some interest in this line also.

Then, in Kerala there is one district where there is not even an inch of railway line. It is the Idikki district where we have the plantation belt. We have the Idikki project and Munnar. My humble suggestion to the Railway Minister is to provide a railway line between Alwaye and Madurai passing through Munnar and the plantation belt. From the economic point of view, from the business point of view and from the travellers' point of view this will be very useful and in every respect it will be a very lucrative line for the Railways.

Now I come to the difficulties of ordinary or Janata passengers. It is only natural that the Janata Government must have some feeling for the Janata passengers. What is their lot? They have no drinking water. People coming from Kerala have to spend two or three days in the trains. There is no provision for taking bath. There is no water. Your first concern must be for these people. If necessary, please scrap this Rajdhani nonsense. Stop that business. It is not at all essential. Why should you bother about Rajdhani? Try to do something for the second class or Janata passengers. Give them more facilities and forget the Rajdhani. Provide drinking water for the second class passengers in every compartment.

SHRI KALYAN ROY: Why not have both Rajdhani and Janata?

SHRI VISWANATHA MENON: You may be interested in Rajdhani.

SHRI KALYAN ROY: Shri Samar Mukherjee wants more Rajdhani.

SHRI VISWANATHA MENON: Shri Kalyan Roy is more interested in the Rajdhani because that goes to Calcutta. I am not so much interested in it. My point is preference must be given to second class passengers. If they have money, let them have Rajdhani. The other day I wrote a letter to Mr. Qureshi and I got a reply from him. It was his last letter because soon after that his Government lost in the elections. I had suggested to him to have some cabins, like the ladies' cabins, in the Jayanti Janata so that the passengers can lock their cabins and look after their luggage. The Minister said: We have no money. We have to put some fans which will cost too much. I ask: What about air-conditioning in the Rajdhani? I only wanted some cabins for the passengers of Jayanti Janata. Why not do that? Why not provide drinking water in the second class

compartments? That should be your first concern. After doing that, you can take interest in Kalyan Roy's Rajdhani. His party is more interested in Rajdhani.

I do not want to take much of your time. One other line I want to refer to is the line between Kuttipuram and Guruvayoor. The survey for this line has already been done. I think the work should start now. Shri Kamalapati Tripathi was very much interested in this line. I think the present Minister also will take interest in this line.

श्री वीरेंद्र कुमार सखलैचा (मध्य प्रदेश) ; माननीय उपसभापति महोदय, माननीय रेलवे मंत्री जी ने जो बजट प्रस्तुत किया है, उसके बारे में मेरे मित्र श्री कल्याण राय अभी कह रहे थे कि यह पहले का तैयार किया हुआ बजट है लेकिन अपने कुछ विचार या अपना कुछ दृष्टिकोण वे इसमें और सम्मिलित कर सकते थे। मेरा ऐसा ख्याल है कि इतना समय नहीं था कि नये रेलवे मिनिस्टर अपने कुछ विचार इसके अन्दर सम्मिलित कर सकें या उसको रिशेप कर सकें, इसमें कुछ परिवर्तन कर सकें। हम भी यह चाहेंगे कि पूरी तरह से विचार करने के बाद, पूरे फैक्ट्स और-फिगर्स के साथ रेलवे की बैकिंग देखने के बाद आवश्यक परिवर्तन करने का प्रयास करें वह उचित होगा। इस नाते से जो तैयार किया हुआ बजट है यह सब पूर्व में तैयार किया हुआ बजट है। हमें यह पूर्व में तैयार किया हुआ बजट हो प्रस्तुत करना पड़ा क्योंकि समय बहुत कम था। इसके लिये इत पर कोई उत्तरदायित्व नहीं है।

सुधार के बारे में मेरे मित्र कुम्भारे जी कह रहे थे कि इमरजेंसी में ही रेलवे में पैक्चर लटी आई है। इमरजेंसी के कारण ही भ्रष्टाचार कम हुआ है। इ



[ श्री वरद कुमार बल्लेच ]

बातों में कोई तथ्य नहीं है। अगर केवल इमरजेंसी को लेकर ये बातें कहीं जाती हैं तो इन बातों को झूठ सिद्ध करना होगा। लोगों को डरा धमका कर भ्रष्टाचार मिटाना चाहेंगे, किसी को एक्सट्रीम दवा दे कर ठीक करना चाहेंगे तो यह उचित बात नहीं है। इसी नाते से इमरजेंसी हटा दी गई है। मैं समझता हूँ सामान्य कार्यकाल के अन्दर ही ट्रेनें समय पर चलेंगी, ठीक प्रकार से कार्य होगा। मनथ के ऊपर पैसेंजर अपने निश्चित स्थान पर, अपने लक्ष्य पर पहुंच सकेंगे। दूसरे देशों के अन्दर भी ट्रेनें समय पर चलती हैं। जब हम यह कहते हैं कि भारतीय रेलवे के एम्पलाइज एफिशिएंट हैं, उनकी कार्यक्षमता के अन्दर कोई कमी नहीं है तो यह कैसे मान लें कि इमरजेंसी के बाद ट्रेनें समय पर नहीं चलेंगी। यह जो कहा जाता है कि आज 90 परसेंट पैक्च्युलिटी है और यह सब इमरजेंसी के कारण है तो मेरा कहना है कि यह बात दूर होनी चाहिये। बिना इमरजेंसी के 95 परसेंट, 98 परसेंट पैक्च्युलिटी होगी, समय पर ट्रेनें चलेंगी, इस चीज को भी प्राप्त किया जा सकता है। इस लक्ष्य को भी प्राप्त किया जा सकता है। मुझे आशा है नये रेल मंत्री सारे कर्मचारियों का पूरा सहयोग देकर समय पर ट्रेनें चलवाने का प्रयास करेंगे।

अभी मेरे पूर्व वक्ता यह कह रहे थे कि जनता पार्टी नई पार्टी है। मैं यह कहना चाहता हूँ कि जनता के नाम से तो यहां पहले से ट्रेन चलती है। आप जानते हैं जनता ट्रेन के नाम से एक ट्रेन चलती है। हम इन ट्रेनों को एसेंशियल सर्विसेज के रूप में चलाते हैं। जनता के लिए चलाते हैं। जनता को आवश्यक सुविधा देने के लिये रेलें चलाई जाती हैं। सबसे बड़ी बात जो शासन को ध्यान में रखने की है वह यह है कि जनता

का कोई अधिक न अधिक सुविधा मिले, एसेंशियल सर्विज किस प्रकार से उपलब्ध हो। इसके बाद रेलवे कर्मचारियों के हितों को देखने का बात आती है। मुझे विश्वास है कि नये रेल मंत्री सारे कर्मचारियों का विश्वास प्राप्त करके ठीक प्रकार से और समय पर ट्रेनें चलाने में सफल हो सकेंगे, ठीक प्रकार से जनता को सुविधाएं दिलवा सकेंगे। हम जानते हैं कि कर्मचारियों को दंडित करके या भय से काम नहीं करा सकते। काम दिल से और मन से होता है। मुझे विश्वास है सारे कर्मचारी इसी भावना से काम करेंगे और जो लक्ष्य हमारे सामने है है उसको पूरा करने का प्रयास करेंगे।

मेरे मित्र जनता को और सुविधाएं देने की बात कर रहे थे। मैं समझता हूँ कि एयर कंडिशनड कोच समाप्त कर देने में कोई कठिनाई नहीं होगी। कुछ थोड़े से व्यक्तियों के लिये इस सुविधा को जारी रखना कोई आवश्यक नहीं। आप जानते हैं कि पहले फर्स्ट क्लास, सैकण्ड क्लास और थर्ड क्लास, ये तीन क्लास हुआ करते थे और आपने थर्ड क्लास को हटा कर सिर्फ फर्स्ट क्लास और सैकण्ड क्लास रखा। यह अच्छा कदम है। जब ऐसा हुआ है तो एयरकंडिशनड कोच को जारी रखने की कोई आवश्यकता नहीं है। हम इसको अवलिश कर सकते हैं। कुछ लोगों की सुविधा के लिये यह आवश्यक नहीं है कि इसे जारी रखा जाए। अभी एक माननीय सदस्य ने ध्यान आकर्षित किया कि हम गर्मियों में सेकेण्ड क्लास के पैसेंजर्स को पानी उपलब्ध नहीं करा सके हैं।

श्रीमन्, मैं केवल गर्मियों के मौसम की ही बात नहीं कह रहा हूँ। मैं तो यह मानता हूँ कि एयर कंडिशनड कोच की कोई आवश्यकता नहीं है। इस नीति को बदला जाना चाहिए और सेकेण्ड

क्लास पैसेंजर को सुविधाएं देने की ओर ज्यादा से ज्यादा ध्यान दिया जाना चाहिए।

SHRI KALYAN RAO: What about saloons for high officers?

SHRI VIRENDRA KUMAR SAKHALECHA: No question of saloons now.

मुझे इस बात पर भी आश्चर्य होता है कि आम तौर पर मंत्री लोग तो साधारण कौचेज पर ट्रेवल कर सकते हैं, लेकिन रेलवे के जो बड़े अधिकारी हैं या जो रेलवे बोर्ड के सदस्य हैं उनको यात्रा करने के लिए सैलून की आवश्यकता होती है। मैं समझता हूँ कि आज की परिस्थितियों के मुताबिक सैलून के माध्यम से यात्रा करने की आवश्यकता नहीं है। जो सुविधाएं जनता को उपलब्ध हैं, वही सुविधाएं अधिकारियों को भी दी जानी चाहिए। आज आवश्यकता इस बात की है कि सेकेण्ड क्लास के यात्रियों की सुविधाएं बढ़ाने के लिए सरकार की तरफ से कार्य किया जाना चाहिए और उनको अधिक से अधिक सुविधाएं प्रदान की जानी चाहिए मैं समझता हूँ कि इसके लिए आपको जो भी काम करना पड़े वह किया जाना चाहिए।

आज भी भारत के अन्दर यह स्थिति है कि लोग छतों के ऊपर चढ़ कर यात्रा करते हैं। मैं समझता हूँ कि अगर लोगों को डिब्बों के अन्दर बैठने के लिए जगह मिल जाती तो वे किसी भी स्थिति में अपना जान खतरे में डाल कर छतों पर यात्रा करना पसन्द नहीं करते। कोई भी आदमी अपनी जान खतरे में डालना नहीं चाहता है। चूँकि डिब्बों के अन्दर जगह नहीं मिलती है, इसलिए लोग छतों के ऊपर यात्रा करते हैं। ऐसी हालत में जरूरत इस बात की है कि लोगों को डिब्बों के अन्दर बैठने के लिए

स्थान दिया जाना चाहिए। जहाँ पर और जिन स्थानों में रेल के डिब्बों में लोगों को जगह नहीं मिलती है, वहाँ पर और ट्रेनें चलाये जाने की आवश्यकता है। सेकेण्ड क्लास के पैसेंजर को कम से कम डिब्बों में जगह मिल सके, इसका प्रयास किया जाना चाहिए।

उपसभापति जी, इस सदन के अधिकांश सदस्यों को और लोक सभा के सदस्यों को भी इस बात का अनुभव होगा कि रेलों में रिजर्वेशन प्राप्त करने के लिए कितनी कठिनाई का सामना करना पड़ता है और इस क्षेत्र में रेलों के अन्दर कितना भ्रष्टाचार है। इमरजेन्सी के काल में भी यह भ्रष्टाचार बना हुआ था और मेरा कहना तो यह है कि इमरजेन्सी में भ्रष्टाचार और भी बढ़ गया था, क्योंकि लोगों को इस प्रकार का डर नहीं रह गया था कि कोई शिकायत करने वाला भी है। अखबारों में कोई बात छप नहीं सकती थी। अगर दिल्ली से अहमदाबाद जाना हो तो रिजर्वेशन नहीं मिलता था, लेकिन अगर 10 रु० का नोट आगे कर दीजिये तो सीट मिल जाती है। इस प्रकार की स्थिति सर्वत्र व्याप्त है। मैं चाहता हूँ कि इस प्रकार के भ्रष्टाचार को समूल नष्ट कर दिया जाये। हमारे रेल मंत्री जी इस विभाग में अभी नये आए हैं। मैं आशा करता हूँ कि वे इस तरफ भी ध्यान देने की कृपा करेंगे। आज आवश्यकता इस बात की है कि रेलवे के अन्दर भ्रष्टाचार समाप्त करके सेकेण्ड क्लास के पैसेंजर्स के लिए पानी, बिजली और अन्य सुविधाएं उपलब्ध कराई जाये।

इसके अलावा यहाँ पर पिक रेलवे चलाने की बात भी कही जा रही है। मीटर गेज लाइनों की भी यहाँ पर चर्चा होती है। यह भी कहा गया है कि सभी मीटर गेज लाइनों को ग्रांड गेज लाइनों में बदला जाएगा। लेकिन अभी तक इस दिशा में कोई खास प्रगति नहीं हुई है। यह भी

[श्री वीरेंद्र कुमार सखलेचा]

कहा जाता है कि पैसे की कमी है। इसके कारण कई क्षेत्रों में जहाँ पर इसकी आवश्यकता है, अभी तक कोई काम नहीं किया गया है। मैं खास तौर से आपका ध्यान मध्य प्रदेश की ओर दिलाना चाहता हूँ। स्टेट रिआर्गेनाइजेशन कमीशन की रिपोर्ट के मुताबिक जब मध्य प्रदेश का निर्माण किया गया तो यह भी कहा गया था कि वहाँ पर रेलों की अधिक से अधिक सुविधाएँ प्रदान की जाएंगी; क्योंकि यह हमारे देश का सबसे विशाल प्रदेश है। आज भी मध्य प्रदेश के अन्दर गाड़ियों की बहुत कमी है। मैं चाहता हूँ कि अहमदाबाद से कलकत्ता तक रेल लाइन बनाई जाये और भोपाल और बिलासपुर को भी रेल द्वारा जोड़ दिया जाये। मध्य प्रदेश में अधिकांश भागों में मीटर गेज लाइनें हैं। उन को ब्राड गेज में बदलने की आवश्यकता है। अहमदाबाद से खण्डवा तक की लाइन को अभी तक पूरा नहीं किया गया है। इसी प्रकार से अहमदाबाद, कलकत्ता, भोपाल से कनेक्ट करते हुए उज्जैन, भोपाल, बीना, कटनी होकर रेल लाइन निकालने की चर्चा की गई, लेकिन उस पर कुछ नहीं हुआ। मध्य प्रदेश के इन्टीग्रेशन की दृष्टि से यह उचित है कि छत्तीसगढ़, मध्यभारत, महाकौशल और जबलपुर का इलाका भी कनेक्ट हो और सुविधा से तेजी के साथ आना-जाना हो सके। इसका प्रयास अभी तक इस दृष्टि से नहीं हुआ। मुझे आशा है कि रेल मंत्री इस ओर ध्यान देकर, मध्य प्रदेश में कम्युनिकेशन की जो कमी है, खास कर जो ट्राइबल इलाके हैं, जो आदिवासियों के इलाके हैं जहाँ बहुत दिनों से यह मांग की जाती रही है कि वहाँ से इन्दौर को कनेक्ट किया जाय, लेकिन यह कार्य आज तक पूरा नहीं हुआ। विभिन्न मंत्री आए और आश्वासन देकर चले गए, लेकिन आज तक उन को पूरा नहीं किया गया। इसके कारण पूरे धारा जिले के

अन्दर रेल टच नहीं होती है, बस्तर का कोई कनेक्शन आज तक भी रायपुर या दुर्ग से नहीं है। बस्तर में 185 किलोमीटर का कनेक्शन रोड से है। तो यह सारे जो पिछड़े हुए इलाके हैं, विशेष-रूप से जहाँ 60 लाख आदिवासियों की आबादी है, उनका देश के अन्य भागों से रेल से कोई कनेक्शन नहीं है। आशा है कि नई लाइनों के अन्दर इस क्षेत्र को प्राथमिकता दी जायगी। अभी भी इस बजट के अन्दर नई लाइनों के बारे में जो प्रावधान किया गया है, उसे देख कर मुझे आश्चर्य होता है। इसमें भी ऐसे क्षेत्रों के लिए कोई प्रावधान नहीं किया गया है। यह तो पुराना तैयार किया हुआ बजट है लेकिन फिर भी इसका पुनरावलोकन करते समय उसमें इस बात की ओर ध्यान देंगे और मध्य प्रदेश के लिये नई रेलवे लाइनों की व्यवस्था करने का प्रयास करेंगे।

एक और बात की ओर मैं ध्यान आकर्षित करना चाहता हूँ और वह है ट्रेन्स के बारे में। अभी तक ट्रेनों का जो टाइम टेबल होता है वह वर्ष में दो बार चेंज किया जाता है, परिवर्तित किया जाता है। उसके कारण यात्रियों को बड़ी असुविधा का सामना करना पड़ता है। चेतक एक्सप्रेस उदयपुर से दिल्ली आती है। उसके अन्दर स्लीपर कोच के बारे में और टाइमिंग्स के बारे में जो असुविधाएँ हैं उन्हें दूर किया जाये। खंडवा से नई ट्रेन का टाइम जल्दी हो गया है और वह चित्तौड़ में आ कर डेढ़ घण्टे खड़ी रहती है जब तक कि उदयपुर से वहाँ गाड़ी न आ जाये। इस लिए टाइम टेबल के बारे में जनता की आवश्यकताओं की ठीक प्रकार से अनुभूति करके इस प्रकार का परिवर्तन किया जायेगा और इसके लिए प्रयास किया जाना चाहिए।

एक और बात, जैसे कि पहले के रेल मंत्री ने व्यवस्था की है और मैं चाहूँगा कि नये

मंत्री भी उसको आगे बढ़ाने की कोशिश करेंगे। श्री कमलापति त्रिपाठी जी ने हिन्दी को रेलवे के अन्दर पूरा प्रोत्साहन देने का पूरा प्रयास किया। मुझे पूरी आशा है कि श्री दंडवते जी भी हिन्दी को प्रोत्साहन देने का प्रयास करेंगे। वे भी हिन्दी के समर्थक रहे हैं। रेलवे के अन्दर अधिकांश काम हिन्दी में हो, इस दृष्टि से प्रयास करेंगे।

उपसभापति महोदय, संसद की अनेक कमेटियां हैं जो कि हर रेलवे से सम्बन्धित हैं। लेकिन उनकी हालत यह है कि वह साल में एक आध बार ही मिलती हैं। इस सम्बन्ध में पैसेजर्स को क्या सुविधायें दी जा सकती हैं, इनमें क्या सुधार किया जा सकता है, इस सम्बन्ध में उनकी राय ली जानी चाहिए। पैसेजर्स की क्या कठिनाइयां हैं, इसमें क्या परिवर्तन कर सकते हैं, इसके लिए ये समितियां फार्मली मिलने का प्रयास नहीं करती। मेरा ख्याल है कि इस ओर भी ध्यान देने की आवश्यकता है।

इसी प्रकार से कर्मचारियों के परमोशन के बारे में एक निश्चित व्यवस्था की जानी चाहिए। हम जगह-जगह स्टेशनों पर देखते हैं कि कर्मचारी अपने परमोशन के बारे में, जो ईमानदारी और मेहनत से काम करने वाले लोग हैं, उनके क्लेम्स की कोई सुनवाई नहीं होती, पक्षपात द्वारा दूसरे लोगों को फायदा मिलता है। मेरा सुझाव है कि रेलवे में परमोशन के बारे में, सर्विसेज के बारे में इस प्रकार की निश्चित प्रणाली बना दी जाय, जहां कि ऑनैस्ट कर्मचारी को ठीक प्रकार से एप्रिसियेशन मिल सके। क्योंकि यहां आजकल कोई ऐसी व्यवस्था नहीं है इस कारण पक्षपात चालू है और इस पक्षपात के कारण कई आदमी भ्रष्ट होने पर भी आगे उन्नति पाते हैं और सही काम करने वाले को कोई मौका नहीं मिल पाता है।

पैसेजर्स को सुविधा दिलाने के लिए पैसा आवश्यक है। मेरा कहना है कि यह जो सारा भ्रष्टाचार होता है रेलवे के अन्दर, गुड्स के अन्दर, बुकिंग के अन्दर, यदि इसको खत्म किया जाय तो इससे काफी पैसा उपलब्ध हो सकता है। हम सेकिड क्लास में सुविधायें बढ़ाने, नई रेलवे लाइन डालने में उस पैसे को लगा सकते हैं और इससे बार-बार यह कहने की आवश्यकता नहीं होगी कि हमारे पास पैसा नहीं है। नये क्षेत्रों में हम आजकल रेलवे लाइनों नहीं डाल सकते हैं, सेकिड क्लास में सुविधायें नहीं बढ़ा सकते। यदि इसमें सुधार किया जाय तो हम इससे पर्याप्त मात्रा में धन उपलब्ध कर सकते हैं, वचत कर सकते हैं और उस पैसे को इस कार्य के अन्दर लगा सकते हैं।

मुझे आशा है कि नए मंत्री जी इस दृष्टिकोण से और इन सारे पिल्फरेज को रोक कर और अन्य फजूल के खर्चों के अन्दर कमी कर के उस पैसे को नई लाइन्स लाने के अन्दर या सेकेण्ड क्लास के पैसेजर्स को सुविधाएं उपलब्ध कराने के अन्दर लगाएंगे। इस आशा के साथ मैं अपना निवेदन समाप्त करता हूं।

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Now, Shri G. Lakshmanan.

SHRI OM MEHTA (Jammu and Kashmir): Sir you have to call one Member from that side. You consecutively called three Members.

SHRI G. LAKSHMANAN (Tamil Nadu): I belong to the Opposition.

[The Vice-Chairman (Shri Ranbir Singh) in the Chair]

Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, before I commence my small speech on the Railway Budget, I would like to salute the great Indian people for restoring a self-respecting way of life in this country to themselves. You all know, Sir, that no citizen could live in this country, at least for the

[Shri G. Lakshmanan]  
past two years with self-respect. And the Indian people the most cultured, civilized and ancient people of the world, have restored that self-respecting way of life to themselves not through bullets but through ballots. Therefore, I salute those great Indian people for this non-violent revolution which they have brought about through the ballot paper. Sir, how was the self-respect of a citizen of this country affected because of two years of emergency? No officer, whether he is in the Railway administration or in any other department could come to the office in the morning with a belief that he would go back as a government servant.

SHRI KALP NATH RAI (Uttar Pradesh): Are you speaking on the Railway Budget?

SHRI G. LAKSHMANAN: Yes, I am speaking on the Railways. I am speaking about you also. I am speaking on the railways, and all the atrocities you have committed have also to be spoken of so that you can refine yourself, you can correct yourself. That is why, I am helping you.

Sir, I was saying that the self-respect of the citizens of this country has been affected because of this emergency. A railway employee will come to the office in the morning telling his wife and children that he would get some money from his office to look after them. And when he comes to the office he is given a paper saying, "you are compulsorily retired you are considered to be a dead-wood and that your services are no more required." There is no charge-sheet and no intimation that he would be removed from service, even at the age of 50, when he has a lot of responsibilities to discharge to the family and to the nation. He would have had his son or daughter in a medical college or an engineering college or an arts college. He goes back to his house in the evening and tells his wife that everyone of them has to be on the streets. Likewise in the Railways, thousands of

employees have been compulsorily retired. I would, therefore, request the hon. Railway Minister to reinstate all those employees who have been compulsorily retired at the fag end of their service, having put in 30 or 35 years of unblemished service, having served not only the Indian Government but also the foreign government loyally. And those citizens have been made by the previous Government to live a life without self-respect. And why do I say that they could not have a life of self-respect? Because, as soon as they are retired, they have no other go but to beg for money from other employees. Therefore, they have lost their self-respect. That self-respect must be restored to all the employees, not only the railway employees but also the Government employees and the industrial workers who have been discharged or dismissed by the capitalists or the Government or the public sector undertakings. Sir, here I would like to make a special request to our hon. Railway Minister to see that all those people who have been compulsorily retired after the declaration of emergency are reinstated unconditionally with a regret for the action taken by the previous Government and that, I think, our hon. Railway Minister would do.

Sir, I want to say another thing. I said: They were not able to lead a life of self-respect. I said this because a lot of money which is due to the railway employees was deducted in the name of impounding of dearness allowance. The amount is about Rs. 1300 or Rs. 1400 crores. Since such a large amount was impounded, a railway employee was not able to make both ends meet. The Government at that time had stated that because it increased the inflationary trends in the country, therefore they were stopping the payment of dearness allowance. But, what is the situation prevailing for the past one or two years? The prices have increased by 15 per cent. Therefore, their view that because of the grant of dearness allowance the prices have

increased, is not correct. The fact is that their policies have failed. No decent Government would have asked for the extension of the period for the impounding of dearness allowance, as the Government did last year. The Government thought that if the dearness allowance was not paid to the employees, the prices would fall and inflationary trends would be curtailed but those things have not taken place and instead the prices have increased by 15 per cent. No decent Government could have asked for any extension of the period in respect of the impounding of dearness allowance or compulsory deposit. Therefore, what that Government did not do, this Government, the Janata Government must immediately honour. My special request to the Railway Minister is that an Ordinance should be issued today to the effect that from 1st April compulsory deposit and dearness allowance shall not be deducted from the salaries of employees. Of course, the amount already impounded can be returned according to the provisions of the Act. I would like the Government to state that no compulsory deposit in respect of dearness allowance would be deducted from the salary due on 1st April 1977. An Ordinance to this effect should be issued. That is my request.

Sir, as far as the railway employees are concerned, you all know that they have been co-operating with the Government and the railway industry is the most efficient industry in our country, rather in the whole of Asia, but the people involved in that industry were called anti-national criminals and they were all victimized for a national struggle, a trade union struggle. I am very happy on the announcement made by our hon. Railway Minister to the effect that all these employees would be reinstated. Mr. Railway Minister, you must tell all those railway employees who have dismissed that the accusations made against them by the former Government, namely, that they were criminals or anti-national elements, are regretted by the Government of India

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which has now taken charge. You must also reinstate all those people with full pay and all that.

Sir, so far as the Indian working class is concerned, it is the most efficient working class or else our country would not have improved so much. The railways have improved like anything.

Then, Sir, I would like to refer to the catering services on the railways.

(Time bell rings)

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI RANBIR SINGH): Please try to wind up.

SHRI G. LAKSHMANAN: The catering services employ a vast manpower on the railways. The Miabhoy Commission had recommended that all those people who had completed 240 days of work on such establishments must be paid the salary of a class 4 employee.

(Time bell rings)

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI RANBIR SINGH): Please try to wind up.

SHRI G. LAKSHMANAN: Sir, the Deputy Chairman was good enough to permit the hon. Members to speak. There are no speakers on the other side.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI RANBIR SINGH): There are many, my friend.

SHRI G. LAKSHMANAN: All right, I will obey you.

SHRI KALP NATH RAI: You should speak on railways.

SHRI G. LAKSHMANAN: I cannot exclude you and all the atrocities that were committed by you in these two years which will be ringing in your ears and we will be exposing you in this one year, which has been in-

[Shri G. Lakshmanan]

augurated by the President of India. That will continue. (*Interruptions*). It is a very good fight. It is a democratic fight and I cannot exclude you.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI RANBIR SINGH): Please wind up.

SHRI G. LAKSHMANAN: I thank you for the opportunity you have given me. If I had some more time, I would have posed some more problems.

SHRI MULKA GOVINDA REDDY (Karnataka): Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, I congratulate the Janta Government and I congratulate my good friend, the Railway Minister, Shri Madhu Dandavate. I am glad that he has appreciated that there has been all round improvement in the Railways during the past years and in his speech he stated: "There has been general appreciation of the unprecedented improvement in the railway working". I am glad that the Railway Minister in his speech also stated: "All the Railway employees who were either suspended or dismissed as a sequel to their participation in the Railway strike in 1974, will be reinstated unconditionally." This is a very bold decision and I am glad that he also stated that this will be implemented within six weeks and their seniority will be restored and there will be no break of service in their case and their service will be counted. I would also urge that he should agree to the request made that they should also get their past pay for the period during which they remained suspended or dismissed.

Mr. Vice-Chairman, there should be proper cordial and good industrial relation between the employees and the Railway management. Not only should the employees be considered as employees but also as partners in the Railways. Only then they will give of their best to improve the Railways to bring about an all-round improvement in its working.

I would also urge that the Railway zones should be reorganised. They have become too unwieldy. There should be one more Railway zone comprising the former Mysore State and the new areas that have been added to Mysore, that is, Karnataka. Mysore had its own Railway, Mysore Railway, and most of the employees, when the Railways were integrated with the Indian Railways, were not given their due share in promotions etc. Their claims should also be looked into.

Mr. Vice-Chairman, in order to improve the working of the Railways, in order to speed up the traffic, both passenger and goods, the present metre gauge system should be converted into broad-gauge in a phased manner. The work already started on conversion into broad gauge should be speeded up, for example, the Guntakal-Bangalore line. It should be completed at the earliest. The Hospet-Hubli-Miraj line should also be completed at the earliest. Then, there is a demand from the State Government that the Bangalore-Mysore Railway line should be converted into broad gauge. I would also urge that there should be more and more of dieselisation and electrification. With this, we can see a lot of improvement in the working of the Railways.

I am glad that the Minister stated in his speech that they are considering the question of having a Konkan Railway. We will extend all support to him if he constructs this railway line from Bombay to Goa and to Bangalore. It is a very badly neglected area. There are no proper communications. And this railway line will fulfil the requirement of this area. Sir, some surveys have already been made in regard to the Chitradurga-Royadurga line. Work should be undertaken on this line. Now, these are two dead points. If these two points are joined together, there will be a lot of improvement in the movement of goods and in the running of trains between Andhra and Karna-

taka. The State Government has been urging that Karwar which is going to be a very important port should be connected by rail. I would urge that Karwar and Hubli should be linked by rail.

Members have already said that proper amenities are still wanting, particularly for the second class passengers. Though there is some improvement in regard to cleanliness in the trains and at the railway stations, this is not adequate. The Minister has stated that there is some improvement in the railway catering. This is far from true. The railway catering has not at all improved. Some steps should be taken to see that proper food is served to the passengers in the trains and at the various stations. The catering committees should be revived. National, zonal and divisional committees should be constituted to supervise catering in the railways and to see that proper food is served to the passengers. There were and there are consultative committees at the national, zonal and divisional levels. They should also be reconstituted so that the people and their representatives feel that they are consulted and they are involved in the management of the Railways and in regard to the provision of services to the business people for movement of foodgrains and so on. These are very important things which should be immediately attended to.

The Railway Board and the Ministry had taken a decision to locate the wheels and axles plant at Yelahanka near Bangalore. This decision was taken nearly two years back and this was announced on the floor of the House. But no steps have been taken in the direction of implementing this decision. This is very necessary. I heard some rumour. I do not believe in rumours. But it has been said that the Railway Board is thinking of shifting this plant from Yelahanka near Bangalore to some other area. I am sure the hon. Minister would look into this and start imple-

menting this decision which the Government had taken sometime back.

Lastly, I would like to say something about punctuality in the running of trains. In his speech, the hon. Minister has stated that it is now nearly 90 per cent. It is true that there has been some improvement in the running of trains. But there is no explanation forthcoming why trains are delayed even at the starting point. I can understand if there is delay on the way. The question of starting the trains at the scheduled time from the starting point should be looked into and there should be no reason or explanation given why trains could not be started at the scheduled time from the starting point.

We wish the hon. Minister well. He has taken charge only recently. He has not been able to devote much time in preparing the future plan for the development of Railways. The Railways are the biggest undertaking in the country. If there is all-round improvement in the Railways, there will be improvement in the national economy as a whole.

SHRI V. V. SWAMINATHAN (Tamil Nadu): Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, I welcome the Budget because it is surplus, without raising the rates of freight and fares of the passengers. But this Budget is said to be a short one, for the first four months and you would come again to this House with a subsequent Budget. I would request the hon. Minister, Prof. Dandavate, to give an assurance that even in the subsequent Budget there will be no rise in fares of at least second class passengers. One of the hon. Members said that mostly the passengers travel by second class, whereas I would like to add that the major portion of the railway income is only from second class passengers and yet the convenience of the second class passengers is not adequately looked after in proportion to the income contributed by the second class passengers. I congratulate the Minister,



[Shri V. V. Swaminathan]  
 Prof. Dandavate, and pay tribute by joining along with other colleagues in this House for having boldly reinstating all the employees sacked in 1974 strike, unconditionally, that too within six weeks, without any loss of promotion or break in service. Also I have to thank the hon. Minister because in the other House he gave an explanation about bonus. He said that bonus is a deferred payment and not an *ex-gratia* payment. As law stands today, as far as the railway employees are concerned, industrial laws are not applicable to them. The railway industry is called a departmental undertaking. Neither is it called a public undertaking, nor an industry. There are differences of opinion among various high courts. I expect, at least during the Janata regime the hon. Minister, Prof. Dandavate, would make it clear in unequivocal terms either by bringing in amendments to existing laws or new legislation that the railway department would be considered as industry or the industrial laws would be made applicable to the railway employees thereby enabling them to get bonus. I am glad that the Minister has to take concrete steps to see that the participation of labourers is extended to the service and commercial organisations and as an experimental measure, he has introduced selection committees in important cities like Madras, Bombay and Delhi. It is said that a sum of Rs. 10 crores had been allotted for the development of underground tube railways in metropolitan cities of Bombay, Madras and Calcutta. But Mr. Kalyan Roy said, as far as Madras is concerned like Calcutta we do not find any visible sign or improvement in this respect. Additional efforts will have to be made to improve the position in those areas. In your speech you mentioned that important terminals like Delhi, Bombay, Calcutta and Madras are now reaching the saturation limit but as far as Madras is concerned, I must say that it is a very ancient junction and requires immediate improvement. No steps

have been taken to improve or expand the Egmore Junction at Madras. They can easily acquire the zoo area which can be shifted to the Raj Bhawan, Guindy, Madras. That has to be done.

I am also glad that the Minister had made a mention about implementing recommendations of the Kripalani Committee to wipe out corruption in the Railway Department, he was thinking of appointing an expert committee to review the structure of freight rates on rational basis and also to reconsider the set-up of the Railway Board.

Now, here they have said that there is cleanliness in Railway stations. I would like to bring it to the notice of the hon. Minister and the officials concerned that as far as railway platforms are concerned, there are lots of beggars and loathsome diseased persons loitering here and there pestering the passengers. What the Railway Police and the BSF have been doing, I do not know. I hope the Railway Minister would now take steps to see that beggars and worst diseased persons without tickets are not allowed to enter the platforms and worry the passengers.

Thank you.

SHRI KHURSHED ALAM KHAN (Delhi): Sir, at the outset I must say that the speech of the hon'ble Minister reflects some of the assets which he has inherited from the previous Government and we hope that these will be preserved in letter and spirit.

Sir, the Railways, which is the largest public sector undertaking, have stayed out of the red for the last two years. This is a very creditable thing because the financial position of the railways for the previous years was not very cheerful. Therefore, we look forward hopefully that the year 1977-78 would also close with a good profit and this tradition will be maintained in future also. Obviously, this is due to the fact that all the people concerned in the public sector undertaking have

made the contribution and have given of their best. And it is hoped that they will continue to give of their best in future also.

There is no doubt that the railways have come out of the tunnel, as they say. But really speaking, they are still not out of the woods and, therefore, more hard work, more honest work and more thoughtful planning will have to be done in order to achieve the objectives that we have in view. It is earnestly hoped that the high level of operating efficiency and the economies of operation that we have achieved during the last two years will be maintained and will be improved. This is a very important matter and, in fact, we have to give the highest priority to this matter.

Sir, the Hon'ble Minister has taken the decision to unconditionally reinstate the staff that was dismissed, or whose services were terminated in 1974. This is his decision and I suppose he has taken this decision in his wisdom. Sir, we would like to sound one word of caution, that is he has to ensure that this act will not erode the discipline which is very essential for a public sector undertaking like Railways.

Sir, in recent weeks, there have been a number of serious and major accidents. Normally, we read from the papers that these accidents are attributable to human error or human factor. But I suppose this is not the only reason. There is some other reasons also, and that is the failure of the equipment. It is, therefore, very necessary to ensure as to how far the human error is responsible for these accidents and how far the failure of the equipment and what are the Railway authorities are going to do in future to prevent such accidents. In my opinion—and I hope the hon'ble Minister will also agree with me—this is a dangerous trend and has to be prevented in future.

Sir, it is a known fact that the financial structure of the Railways is out-dated and out-moded. This was stated at the time of the last budget also. But we are not aware as to what action the Railway Board or the railway authorities are going to take about it. In fact, not only the financial structure but the Railway Act itself is out-dated and out-moded and we need a revised and a new Railway Act. I hope the Railway Minister will find some time to give consideration to these suggestions.

We quite agree that there is need for some financial relief on account of the various social obligations that the Railways provide. But it will be necessary to examine the whole question of freight and rates and then take a decision; otherwise *ad hoc* decision will not be a lasting solution.

Sir, another very important factor is the rail-road coordination, particularly in view of the fact that high-rated traffic is now being largely diverted to road traffic. Besides, it is also a known fact that 4 P.M. about 5,000 all-India road transport permits have been issued, and this will mean that high-rated traffic will be diverted to road and the railways will have to do something to ensure that they get their due share of high-rated traffic. Otherwise I am afraid it will be necessary for them to revise the freight rates for the ordinary traffic which will hit the common man.

Sir, apart from the other achievements of the Railways during the last two years it is a known fact that the operating efficiency of the railways has improved from 65 per cent to 90 per cent and this is a very good achievement. We want our railways to run on time and we want them to continue to run on time and I hope it will be necessary to ensure that this aspect of the railways gets special attention and top priority of all concerned.

[Shri Khurshed Alam Khan]

Sir, another important factor which must be kept in view is the terminal capacity in cities like Delhi, Bombay and Calcutta. The terminal facilities which exist at present have already been outstripped by the requirements and unless immediate steps are taken for providing additional terminal facilities, we would find that the terminal facilities existing will be choked up and there will be difficulty in admitting trains and in the departure of trains on time.

Sir, another important point which a number of speakers raised is the rapid transit system and they all spoke about Calcutta. The rapid transit system is necessary not only for Calcutta but also for Bombay, Delhi and Madras. The allocation of Rs. 10 crores made for the rapid transit system in the Plan is most inadequate, and I earnestly hope that the hon. Minister will use his good offices with the Planning Commission and get an adequate allocation for this purpose. I hope something will be done about it soon and we should not allow the underground projects to go underground for ever.

Sir, I think a number of friends have stressed the need for workers' participation at various levels. We also agree that the scope of workers participation should be enlarged to cover more areas and more departments, but it seems necessary that workers' participation should be linked with some kind of incentive schemes so that the workers become more interested in such participation and produce really good results.

Sir, as I have said, the railways' financial position is not still very comfortable and therefore immediate steps have to be taken for the re-casting of the financial structure of the railways. This is a very important matter and otherwise it will be really difficult for this undertaking to be run on commercial lines and be viable also.

Another important factor which we have to keep in view is the demands of the workers—whatever may be our decision—regarding payment of back wages, wages for the period they were suspended or discharged. We have also to keep in view the fact that the Exchequer is not overburdened or, otherwise you will have to come forward for increase of freight rates and passenger fares which we consider are already quite high and there is no scope for further increase.

Another important factor is planning in the railways. The planning may be on a long-term basis and it should not be confined to five or ten years. In fact we should formulate a plan for at least a period of fifteen years and implementation with review on a year-to-year basis or whatever period is decided for the purpose. Sir, all efforts should be made for levelling of the crosses and for increasing the productivity, particularly looking into the cost of fuel. The cost of fuel consumption in the Railways is still very high and something has to be done to control it because the fuel cost is a very important factor of the over-all operating cost.

I would also like to mention that the recruitment policy of the Railways needs some reconsideration in view of the fact that there are certain communities which are not entirely represented on the Railway staff and something has to be done to ensure that they also get their due share. I am sure the honourable Minister will look into this matter and do something about it.

Sir, in the end, I would like to say that the Railways are our largest public sector undertaking and I would hope that this public sector undertaking will continue to progress because our entire progress and the progress of the country depends upon our communication system, our transport system, and therefore it needs all the importance, it needs all the

priorities and it needs all the considerations that the Government can afford to give it.

Thank you, Sir.

उपसभाध्यक्ष (श्री रणबीर सिंह) :  
देखिए, अब आप 5 मिनट से ज्यादा नहीं  
लीजिए ।

SHRI JAGJIT SINGH ANAND  
(Punjab): I hope you will bear with  
me as you did for the rest of them.

उपसभाध्यक्ष (श्री रणबीर सिंह) :  
आपके दल से कल्याण राय जी ने आलरेडी  
20 मिनट ले लिए हैं ।

SHRI JAGJIT SINGH ANAND:  
Firstly, I must say that when I heard  
about the announcement made by Mr.  
Dandavate in the other House yester-  
day, it was like a whiff of fresh air.  
I must say that this announcement  
shows that he has brought the impact  
of his trade union approach to the  
new job that he has taken up, and  
he needs my congratulations for that.  
But I must say that it is not a ques-  
tion of going back to 1948 or 1949; he  
should kindly go back at least to 1973  
because the category-wise unions—I  
mean, the loco running staff unions—  
which initiated certain action, had  
also roused the working classes to  
the bigger action in which he himself  
was one of the leaders and about  
which he has been kind enough to  
say that all those who were dismiss-  
and retrenched will be taken back.  
This pleases me especially because  
last year in January, 1976, honour-  
able Mr. Kamalapati Tripathi had  
made a partial concession, but under  
pressure of the *bara sahebs* of the  
Railway Board he went back on this  
concession within two months, in  
March, 1976. And there have been  
many people who have been going  
from door to door and who have been  
under great duress. So this an-  
nouncement made by him will be a  
very positive factor.

Then, Sir, I also want to say that  
there was the Miabho Report and  
there were commitments made by the  
past Ministers that by the 31st Decem-  
ber, 1976 the total time for a man on  
duty in the case of the running staff  
will not be beyond 10 hours in any  
case. That has not been implement-  
ed. Mr. Khurshed Alam Khan was  
talking of the achievements during  
this period, and the most laudable  
achievement was punctuality. No  
doubt, there was some improvement  
in punctuality, but the way it was  
attained is more important. We know  
that the staff was neither increased  
nor given any concessions, nor was  
there any improvement made in their  
living and working conditions; it was  
the chasers who made them do more  
work. So I would request Mr.  
Dandavate to see that it is not that  
the horse-beaters are increased but  
the horses that do the job are increas-  
ed and they are given good condi-  
tions of work. (Interruption). What  
I am saying is that the punctuality  
was at the cost of beating of the  
workers and by putting more and  
more of chasers. I have gone to Kan-  
pur and seen how they increased their  
working hours from 10 to 24 and  
under what conditions are the run-  
ning staff working. I must say that  
with his trade union background the  
Minister should see to it—and I do  
hope that he will—that it is not that  
the workers are squeezed like this and  
punctuality got out of them; punctu-  
ality should be under normal condi-  
tions.

Here, I also want to say about the  
Railway Board. My friend's observa-  
tion was that things have been out  
of the red for the last two years.  
Why were things out of the red in  
the Railway Board only for the last  
two years? Why had the Railway  
Board gone on expending and ex-  
panding? It started with 3 Members.  
Now, there are 5 full Members, 8  
Additional Members, 3 temporary,  
Additional Members, 30 Directors, 90  
Deputy Directors, 379 technical staff  
and 1,297 non-technical staff. All this  
has been happening since 1956 and

[Shri Jagjit Singh Anand]

the Railways have been going from bad to worse till the emergency came. Do we need an emergency to make these *bara sahebs* function, who go about in saloons? What I am saying is that I expect a different type of set-up now.

Now, Sir, I want to say something about representation also. I happen to be the President of one small railway union, the Northern Railway Workers' Union. It is not a recognised union. Firstly their letters were not answered. Then I began writing letters on my MP pad. There used to be some response from my honourable friend who is no longer here. He was under me as a press worker once but when he began organising later on the All-India Safai Mazdoor Union and began running after the "Rising Star" who fused like an electric bulb, we did not get replies to letter despite repeated protests. I would request whenever an Honourable MP writes to Minister, the letter should be more promptly replied but not like the other way. Shri Qureshi said that letters would be replied, but replies were not received.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI RANBIR SINGH): Please try to wind up.

SHRI JAGJIT SINGH ANAND: Shri Qureshi said letters will be replied but they were not replied by him, replies prepared by 'Burra sahibs' were sent without applying mind. I have not spoken for three minutes yet.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI RANBIR SINGH): You have already taken five minutes.

SHRI JAGJIT SINGH ANAND: Sir, now I want to mention some specific problems regarding a region which is common to me and to the Vice-Chairman. They started a Flying Mail. It was a very good train. Now it is a dust-gathering mail. They introduced Shan-e-Punjab. The Flying

Mail goes to Amritsar early in the morning and it goes to Ludhiana in between as Shan-e-Punjab. It comes back without any sort of *safai*. It is full of dust. It comes back as Flying Mail. So, Shan-e-Punjab, the pride of Punjab, the best train, has been turned into a dust-gathering train. I would suggest that the Tata Mail should go daily from Tatanagar to Amritsar instead of going once in four days and that train reaches Amritsar before 6.00 A.M. and leaves Amritsar after 7.00 P.M. The Flying Mail is not properly cleaned. If this Golden Temple Express as it is called is made a daily train, both the problems would be solved. Then, Sir, it is already named "Golden Temple Express". It is a very good name. It serves many people from Tatanagar to Golden Temple. It meets the Sikhs sentiments. It is a very good sentiment. That train comes from Jamshedpur and goes to the Golden Temple. It is a good name. Then, Sir, about the Rajdhani Express. I would say that whatever train service facilities you have built up, by scrapping them you are not going to save. Only you make better utilisation of them. You should be careful in future that at the cost of second-class passengers you are not going to bring in such more and more trains. Here I agree with my friend from the CPI (M). About the present Rajdhani Express an announcement was made that instead of stopping it in Delhi, it will be taken to Chandigarh, and then nothing was done about it by his predecessor. I would request Shri Dandavate to look into this to have more revenue with the same trains and with no more additional expenditure. Then, Sir, I want to say that there are certain very stark anomalies. In the past Shri Qureshi, despite all our efforts, did not send replies. One small thing, Sir. While converting into new first-class coaches, they have not given a proper seat to the poor attendant who goes from Delhi to Jammu Tawi. They have reduced the space to just nine inches—and they have taken away the extra rexin seat also where he even cannot sit.

It is just a commod top. Then, Sir, chair cars have been introduced on the Flying Mail. They can provide more space. You can go in Flying Mail from Jullunder to Delhi by paying Rs. 71 and by gathering all the dust. But you come by the same chair car by air-conditioned express and you pay only Rs. 39 because firstly a foolish decision was taken to increase the air-condition rate. Now they reduced it. Now everybody in the first class is crying that you are given in Flying Mail the ordinary Chair seats and you are charging Rs. 71 and in the Delux Train you provide for 39 rupees an air-conditioned Chair seat. This also we wrote to the Minister. Finally, an explanation from the bureaucracy was sent. Such a thing causes injury to the public very much. I would request that it may be looked into. Because of shortage of time the only thing I would say is that the Railway Convention Committee, which had to be dissolved, was unanimous that this Railway Board had to go. They have said that it is the most powerful white elephant and its bureaucrats do not at all listen to whatever has been said in Parliament all these years. I would request Mr. Dandavate to look into this and take some early action either through the formation of a new committee or through some other way to get rid of this Railway Board which is full of inefficiency, corruption and "bara lat-sahebism". That is what it is.

**THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI RANBIR SINGH):** Mr. Lakshmana Gowda, I hope you will take only two minutes.

**SHRI U. K. LAKSHMANA GOWDA:** Certainly. Thank you for giving me two minutes even though I had not given my name. Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, I only want to congratulate my friend, Mr. Madhu Dandavate who has taken over as the Railway Minister and I welcome him. I know that he

had not had any time to look into the actual railway budget. In the budget that has been prepared in the short time available to him and presented to this House, there are many good features. But there are a lot many things which are more desirable and unfortunately because of lack of time, I cannot go into these details. I would just like to mention one or two points. The first point is with regard to his decision regarding the workers retrenched in connection with the 1974 strike. Certainly it is a welcome decision. I congratulate him on that. But at the same time, I would like to utter a few words of warning. Everybody in this House including congress members today have been saying that there should be not only reinstatement but reinstatement with back wages without any consideration to what the effect is going to be on the railway finances. I certainly do not object to reinstatement. I welcome the decision. Also question of bonus has to be reviewed. The whole matter has to be reviewed. But one has to have definitely some idea of the effect it is going to have on the railway finances. I do not want my friend, Mr. Dandavate, to come here at the time of the next Railway Budget saying that because of these things, he had to raise the fares of second class passengers and also the freight rates on essential commodities. I only request him to look into this matter very carefully and to increase the efficiency of the railways. As my friend, Mr. Khurshed Alam Khan said, during the last one year or so, so many truck services have been introduced and there is such a heavy competition with the railways particularly in freight transport. So one has to be very careful to see what the railway finances are going to be in future. So I would caution him that very careful consideration should be given to see that efficiency is increased corruption is reduced and generation of more freight and passenger traffic is done so that after providing all these amenities, it will be possible to see that the railways

[Shri U. K. Lakshmana Gowda]

do not go into the red but continue to be one of the important public sector undertakings which will provide the exchequer with sufficient finances. I would like also to join my friend, Mr. Mulka Govinda Reddy, particularly with reference to certain matters which were referred to by him regarding Karnataka. I would plead for the early completion of the Hassan-Mangalore railway line which was taken up several years ago and work on which is going very slow. A part of it has been commissioned and I hope it will be completed this year. I would also like to suggest the continuance of the broad-gauge railway line from Miraj right up to Bangalore, and also the extension of broad-gauge from Bangalore to Mysore. With these words, Sir, I once again congratulate my friend, the Railway Minister and I hope he will be able to come to us with more concrete proposals in future.

Thank you.

SHRI HAMID ALI SCHAMNAD (Kerala): We also join him in his sentiments.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, it was indeed a very pleasant change to find that the very members who were instrumental in subjecting the working class to untold miseries, atrocities, tortures and imprisonment, have changed over to the side of the working class and they have come forward to champion the cause of the railway workers. I welcome this new change that has taken place. But for this change to be brought about, a political change had to be brought about in the country and those in the treasury benches had to be thrown to the opposition benches. Does not matter. Even then a change has come about. Even if they, for their own purposes, for their own limited strategies; side with the working class, I will consider this to be an important post-emergency gain in the country. I welcome this change. Friends, many hon. Members had referred to the position and

functioning of the Railway Board. I will have to put the record straight. While sitting on the other side of the House—of course in the other House—many of us had expressed certain doubts and suspicions regarding the functioning of the Railway Board. And we do not change our opinion when we change from the opposition to the treasury benches. But I would like to examine the entire issue in depth. Some hon. Members went to the extent of saying that it is the Railway Board members who try to swallow the Ministers. It depends upon who is the Minister. I can assure the hon. Members that firstly I won't tolerate or allow them to swallow me and if they ever do it they will find it difficult to stomach me. They will find it a difficult job. I have checked up the constitutional and legal position on this. I have found out that no doubt there are certain deficiencies in the functioning of the Railway Board. But very often when the Ministers are not able to deliver the goods, they throw the baby to the Railway Board and to the Members of the Railway Board. And they say: What could we do? I would like the entire House to understand as to what is the position of the Railway Board *vis-a-vis* the Minister. I would like to clarify this point and put the record straight. Here is the Manual of Office Procedure and here the position of the Railway Board has been made quite clear. Section 114 of the Manual says:

The Railway Board was first constituted under the Indian Railway Board Act of 1905 for controlling the administration of railways in India. It functions as a Ministry of the Government of India and exercises all the powers of the Central Government in respect of regulation, construction, maintenance and operation of railways. By virtue of inclusion of the Financial Commissioner for Railways in its constitution the Railway Board also exercises the full powers of the Government of India in regard to the railway expenditure.

No doubt the powers are very wide. But at the same time even in this Act there are a number of lacunae. It says that the Railway Board has to function as a Ministry. And when a Ministry functions, who is the head of the Ministry? It is no good denying the fact that even if the Railway Board has to function on the Ministry, it is the Railway Minister who is the head. That position should be absolutely clear. Whenever any policy matter comes up or when an important issue comes up for decision, even if the Railway Board has the powers and functions of the Ministry, it is ultimately the decision of the Minister that must reign supreme. His decision is supreme even under this out-dated Act. But sometimes difficulties are created. It is not because of the provision of the Manual or the legal provisions in the Act, but because of the failure of the Ministers. If I do not look into the papers, if I function as a mediocre, if I do not try to understand the financial implications of the problems, if I do not try to understand the genuine difficulties of the working classes, if I do not respond to their legitimate representations, if I do not try to understand how the resources of the country are to be mopped up or how those resources are to be developed for the Railways, if I do not do these things, then as a Minister I have to rely on experts or some Secretary or some Chairman and such Chairman or such Secretary will always destroy a mediocre Minister. That is what has been happening in this country... (Interruption) I am not casting aspersions on X or Y. I am only putting forward the theoretical position. It is not only in this country. There are a number of volumes of literature available on the functioning of Parliamentary Democracy all over the world. Maurice has written a beautiful work which says that whenever a Minister functioning in any Ministry refuses to study the problems, who does not understand the grievances of the people, who does not try to study all the aspects of the problems, then he has always to rely on bureaucracy. It is not that he has no power.

It is not the bureaucrat that dominates him. He has the freedom. But if I as the Minister decide to surrender my freedom at the feet of the bureaucrats, whether in the Railway Board or elsewhere, then it is not the Members of the Board who are to be blamed, but it is the Minister who surrenders his freedom that is to be blamed. He is to be blamed and I can give a solemn assurance to this House that on the day I find that I have to surrender my freedom to the bureaucrats in the Ministry. I shall resolutely come and courageously come before the House and tender my resignation as the Railway Minister of this country. That is the position that I would take before this House. In spite of that, Sir, certain restructuring of the Board is necessary. I have repeatedly said that and it is not only I who has said that, but, Sir, you will be happy to note that the Administrative Reforms Commission that was set up—again it was set up not by our Government, but it was the legacy of the old Government—has said that. And, Sir, in the Administrative Reforms Commission that was set up, not only the members of the then ruling party were there, but eminent members like Shri H. V. Kamath were also functioning as members of the Commission.

SHRI KALP NATH RAI (Uttar Pradesh): The Prime Minister also.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: Yes, fortunately. I am very proud to say that the person who holds the position of Prime Minister in this country now was heading that Commission, that Administrative Reforms Commission at that time and that Administrative Reforms Commission has come forward with a very valuable document in which there is a chapter on the functioning of the Railway Board. We would like to go through it and we would like to take the suggestions from the trade union organisations also and we would also respond to the suggestions made by the members of the Opposition. As far as the functioning of the Ministry is concerned,



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I am least concerned with my position in the Janta Party and I do not function merely as a member of the Janta Party. Even if constructive suggestions and proposals are made by many members of the Opposition, I would be willing to accept those suggestions and proposals and it is only on this basis that parliamentary democracy in this country functions and can function. That is why I say that we would examine the entire problem. But, for that, I need not cast any aspersions on any individual Members of the Railway Board. Sir, when the Members in both the Houses make allegations against each other, we have the opportunity to answer those allegations. But very often what is done by the Ministers is that if they fail in their policies, if they fail in their ministerial tasks, if they fail in the implementation of their policies, they find some scapegoats and they find such scapegoats in the Secretaries and other members of the staff because these people have no right to come before the House and put forward their points of view. So, whenever I fail, I shall never put the blame on my officers, but I shall take the blame on myself and for that even if the House wants to punish me, I shall face that punishment and I will not make the members of the staff the scapegoats because they have no opportunity to come to the House and they cannot issue any statements. But as far as we are concerned, we have the fullest freedom and even as far as the Minister is concerned, he has the fullest freedom and, therefore, there is no question of his being swallowed by anyone.

Then, Sir, an honourable Member said: "Do not try to become the prisoner of the Railway Board; but try to make the Railway Board your own prisoner." Sir, my concept of freedom is that I will not surrender my freedom and I will not be anybody's prisoner and, similarly, I will not ask anyone to be my prisoner because freedom must not be for one, but must be for everyone. Therefore, that

concept of unilateral freedom is not acceptable to me at all. Neither shall I be anybody's prisoner nor shall I ask anyone to become my prisoner. It is the policy that has to be implemented and that policy is to be directed by you Members of this House and the Members of the Lok Sabha and I will be purely guided by the constructive proposals and suggestions made by you all. Therefore, I would like to make a solemn assurance that we will examine in depth these questions on the basis of the recommendations of the Administrative Reforms Commission, on the basis of the suggestions made by the various trade union organisations, on the basis of the suggestions made by the Railwaymen's Federations and also on the basis of the suggestions that have been made by some of the other trade union organisations. We will try to examine the problem in depth and try to find out whether there is any necessity for restructuring the entire Railway Board and we will take it up in right earnest.

Sir, there is another aspect to which I may be able to make a categorical reference now. There are many friends who talk about the demands of the railway workers. Some wanted us to make a declaration here and now that bonus is granted; some wanted us to declare here and now that the workers will be treated as industrial workers; some wanted us to declare here and now that all the previous demands that have been made by the All-India Railwaymen's Federation and others would be accepted *in toto*. Sir, I am glad that Mr. Kalyan Roy, who took a very radical position, a radical stand, even he had the courtesy to say that the Minister had very little time and he was prepared to accept it. I am saying this not because I have come to this side of the House. I would like to make the position clear and let there be no confusion. The National Co-ordination Committee for the Railwaymen's Strike which was set up put forward a six-point programme, a charter of demands, which included bonus, which included the demand for the

recognition of the railway workers as industrial workers, the demand for job evaluation and a number of other problems and so on, and when the question came up at the time the whole thing culminated in the strike, the leader of the Committee had made it explicitly clear that these demands were also negotiable.

It is not that we are now saying so. You can check up all the papers during the railway struggle, any you will find that even when we were embarking upon a massive railway struggle we had made it clear to the then Railway Minister that all these demands are negotiable in the sense that if you accept them in principle the implementation can be deferred. Some sort of interim relief can be given to the workers. After all, the railway workers have to look to the strength of the Railways. Mr. Madhu Limaye had written a letter to Prime Minister, Smt. Indira Gandhi. Mr. George Fernandes had written a letter to Mr. L. N. Mishra, the then Railway Minister, and made it clear that these demands were negotiable in the sense that we were prepared to see that they were accepted in principle and that as far as the implementation is concerned, because of the state of economy of the country, we will not insist on the implementation of all of them. Now the problem has been made more complicated. Did those friends on the other side who insist that here and now declare the bonus, take note of the fact that when we were behind the bars for 19 months, they not only stopped the implementation of the policies which they were propounding but under the directive of the former Prime Minister of the country they reversed even the accepted bonus policy of 8.33 per cent? They reversed the entire policy. They linked up bonus with productivity. They said that it was not possible to grant bonus where there was not profit at all. They completely reversed that policy. They brought in legislation. So, before we implement our bonus policy, first we will have to reverse the bonus policy that has been introduced by them. They have made

a complete mess of the national bonus policy by introducing complete reversal of the old policy. It is not merely a question of bonus policy. Now it is a question of bonus policy over the entire country. Therefore, we will have to go into the entire problem in depth. We will have to sit with the representatives of trade union organisations, we will have to sit with the representatives of the various sections, and I have complete confidence that we will be able to arrive at some sort of a viable conclusion with the help of which we will see that the economy of the country flourishes and at the same time we will be able to give the benefit to the working class. Now, this is the attitude that we are going to take.

Friends, so many problems have been raised. I have been told that it is a welcome step that all the employees who have been victimised during the 1974 struggle will be taken back. Seniority will be retained. Break in service will be condoned. Everything will be completed in a time-bound phase, six weeks. That is what I declared in the other House yesterday. And I wish to repeat it here also, because what happens is the Minister makes an assurance and the implementation machinery is lacking about the time-bound character of the implementation. And, therefore, immediately after the presentation of the Budget in the other House I had a meeting with the members of the Railway Board—the Chairman of the Railway Board was also present—and I discussed with them the question as to what is the time that is required for complete implementation of that policy. I told them that I would not give them the time myself, but that they must state, keeping in view the administrative difficulties, as to what is the time that should be fixed up. I was told that from the administrative point of view the entire problem of victimisation may be tackled within six weeks. Next day I announced in the other House that within six weeks the entire problem would be solved. And I can assure this House

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that after the announcement that I have made on the floor of the other House, when six weeks' period is completed, after that you will not find even a single victimised worker of 1974 out of work. All of them will be rehabilitated...

(Interruptions)

Many other problems have been raised. The first task is to tackle the problems of the working class. Therefore, if other problems have to be tackled, there must be a little elbow room. We will sit with all of you. Nothing will be done in a unilateral way. We will consult the trade unions. As far as the working class is concerned, a new scheme has to be put through. It is not merely through the co-operation of Ministers, not merely the co-operation of the Railway Board, but what is required is the co-operation of the working class and the respective trade union organisations.

I can assure the House that all the relevant problems will be tackled with full co-operation and consultation of the trade unions and they will be settled amicably. That is the approach that I would like to take.

A number of problems regarding the construction of lines have been made. I do not want to go into the rigorous details of each and every line. In fact, I have taken the charge only two days back. If I try to utter even the name of some of the construction lines, I may be wrong geographically, though I may be right politically. Therefore, I do not venture into giving false promises. I want to make a general statement. All the constructions of new lines, especially in the backward areas, where the surveys have been completed, will be expedited. We will try to expedite the matter. Wherever resources are lacking, we will try to provide resources. We will discuss the problems. It will be our constant endeavour to see, especially in the backward regions, that we push forward the construction of new lines. It is my

constant endeavour to see that in this country, the regional economic imbalance between the rural areas and urban areas are removed. Necessary infra-structure for development has to be built up and this infra-structure can be provided only by the Railways. That is why, in the other House, I have been insisting for years together that if the backward regions are to be economically developed, it is necessary that priority must be given to the construction of the infra-structure in the form of railways and rest assure that it will be my constant endeavour to see that these lines are constructed without any partiality and without any bias for any province or State. By way of clarification, I may say this. Some remark has been made that probably when I am thinking in terms of the development of the West Coast Railway, I am adopting a parochial attitude. I wish to make it very clear that the West Coast Konkan Railway which is sought to be built up has been on the anvil for a long time. It is not a railway line for one particular State. It will start from Maharashtra. It will go through Goa. It will pass through Mysore State and go to Kerala. It will go to Cape Camorin which is a part and parcel of Tamil Nadu. Therefore, there is no instrument other than the West Coast Railway through which we can bring about the spirit of integration in the entire Southern region and in the country. This is one aspect which has to be borne in mind. I never talk in terms of the problems and gains of one particular State, even if I come from that State. Some of the newspapers have reported today that I have said that this West Coast Railway will run through all the States, but it will not touch the State from which I come. I come from Konkan area. The entire line is called as Konkan Railway Line. I think it was because of reporting. I had said that it would touch not only the place from which I come, it would touch all the States I had mentioned. I would like to make that correction because it is a distortion of the statement that I

had made. There are other lines to which references have been made by our friends from Bengal, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, etc. There have been memoranda also. You can rest assured that we will look in to the problems whether it is Tamil Nadu or Kerala or Bengal or Bihar. We will judge all the problems on merit. Wherever surveys have been completed, it will be our endeavour to see that we mop up the necessary resources and construct the lines.

There has been a lot of reference to corruption. Certain booklets have been circulated along with the budget papers. It is quite clear that these documents were prepared before we took over or even before the declaration of the results. I do not know. I do not own the responsibility for every statement in the booklets or documents that have been circulated. Someone rightly said that I am carrying the baby which has been produced by someone else. It is factually correct that someone produced the baby and I am carrying it. Even while carrying somebody else's baby, I tried to twist the arm of the baby which could have probably hit the working class. I have seen to it that the baby is not able to play any mischief. Once that is done, the basis for the future would be laid.

One hon. Member went to the extent of saying that if we grant the various demands of the railwaymen and there is a greater burden thrown on the society and the finances of the Railways, probably we may come forward in the coming budget with certain proposals and try to increase the fare. He wants me to declare that there will be no increase in the fare at all. If even stupidly I declare that, some other Member from the Opposition side will raise a privilege issue against me right tomorrow. If I were on the other side, I would have certainly raised that. I am throwing a hint. But he will not be using it because I would not commit that breach of privilege by saying what I am likely to do in the next Budget. It will be a breach of

privilege and, therefore, I do not want to make any commitment for the future. But we will take into account all the suggestions that have been made over here.

Sir, there has been a reference to corruption. On corruption, there has been voluminous material in this country. On Railways also, there is considerable material. Acharya Kripalani was heading a committee on corruption and all the parties had co-operated with that committee. No partisan dimension was projected in that particular committee. And the findings of the Acharya Kripalani Railway Corruption Committee are a wonderful document. I will carefully go through it. I will discuss also some of the problems with Acharya Kripalani himself. Fortunately, he is available with us for some sort of consultation. Therefore, we will consult prominent citizens, we will consult various agencies and we will try to set the things right. There have been a number of committees that have been set up and I want to tell the House that some of the committees have been born out of a desire to be a patronage to individuals. If some persons have lost in elections, they have to be rehabilitated there. Unfortunately in our country, very often some of the jobs have really become the jobs of rehabilitation compensation. We will not like to follow that practice at all and we will examine all the committees. If we find that certain committees have been created only to project certain individuals or give patronage to them or to rehabilitate them when they have been politically uprooted, such committees will be completely wound up. We do not want to carry on with such committees. Probably, it might inconvenience the Members of my Party, it might inconvenience the Members of the opposition party. But I will not be guided by the fact whether it affects the Members of the Janata Party or it affects the Members of the Opposition. I must see to it that in the eyes of the public, our picture must be very clear. And

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with that perspective, we will review and re-examine the committees that have been formed in the past. And if we come to the conclusion that certain committees are useless—I found that certain committees have been created with the same type of Members appearing and obviously, to rehabilitate them, these committees have been created—such committees will be scrapped. I give you that assurance. I do not want to take much of your time.

**SHRI KALYAN ROY:** What about the under-ground railway system?

**PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE:** I am coming to that. As far as all those trade union problems are concerned, I have said that we will examine them in depth in consultation with the trade unions and arrive at the necessary conclusions. And those trade unions will also include not only the recognised federations but we have also to take into account the views of the other labour organisations.

Friends, repeatedly we are told and I am happy that it has not been repeated here and within the two days, when I tried to examine the working of the Railway administration, I found that there is a lot of centralisation. And here, some Members have also referred to that. They said that there must be rapport between the Minister and the individual person who is aggrieved. I want the House to understand that there might be lakhs and lakhs of people or thousands of people who feel aggrieved. Some might be industrial workers, some might be passengers, some might be coming for appointment in the railways and some might have grievances regarding transfers. For all of them, if the individual cases are to be attended to by the Minister, it is very likely that if a man comes through a right channel and an influential person, probably, his case might be settled when others who have no in-

fluence with the influential personalities will go completely neglected. And, therefore, I will respect no doubt the communications sent by all the MPs; all the trade union organisations, but it will be my constructive suggestion to all the MPs and all the trade unions that it is better that all the cases of injustice rather being taken up through individuals, whether they are MPs or MLAs, if they come through the respective trade union organisations and passenger associations and if institutionalisation of all these grievances is made, it is easier for us to function. And it is on that level that I will try to function so that I myself will not remain amenable to various influences. That is the perspective in which the Administration will try to function. Sir, I am thankful to Members on both sides of the House who, without inducting any bitterness in the debate, have made a number of constructive proposals and suggestions. I especially thank the last speaker and the one before him who have stressed the necessity of building up the finances of the railways and augmenting the production of the railways. On this point I may assure them that since in my very first speech, namely, the Budget speech; I have given the railway workers an assurance that injustice in the form of victimisation is going to be ended, I have now the moral authority to go to the railway workers and tell them that I have done my job and it is now for them to do their job, namely, to improve discipline, improve production and improve efficiency and with that particular moral tone, I am confident that through trade union organisations and even through individual appeals I will be able to tell the workers to augment the resources.

I have already sent one general appeal to all the railwaymen the keynote of which is: I have responded to your demand which could not be considered for the last three years. I may tell you that the former Labour

Minister of the Government of India rang me up and said that for the last three years he was trying to see that all these retrenched workers were re-instated but could not succeed because there were a number of difficulties. He said that he was happy that I had done it today. Therefore, with that achievement I will be able to appeal to the workers that they must augment the resources, improve production, improve efficiency and the performance should be far better. It does not depend upon the emergency. Thus in the coming year we are going to establish that even without the imposition of emergency in the country but with the willing co-operation of the workers in this country and by holding consultations with the trade unions, efficiency and discipline and the strength of the railways can be improved. That will be the task and objective with which I will try to function.

### THE BUDGET (GENERAL) 1977-78 —General Discussion

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI RANBIR SINGH): We shall now take up the General Discussion on the General Budget, Mr. Kureel.

श्री प्यारे लाल कुरील उर्फ तालिब (उत्तर प्रदेश) : उपसभाध्यक्ष जहां तक बजट का ताल्लुक है, मुझे कुछ कहना नहीं है। उस पर मुझे कुछ ज्यादा विचार करने की जरूरत नहीं है क्योंकि यह इन्टरिम बजट है। आगे जब जनता पार्टी का बजट आयेगा उस पर हम कुछ कह सकेंगे।

फिर भी दो-तीन बातों की तरफ मैं आप की तवज्जह दिलाना चाहता हूँ कि यह जनता सरकार जो बनी है यह भानमती का कुनवा है जो मुन्तलिफ आइडियोलोजी वाली पार्टियों से बना है। हमारी छोटी-छोटी गलतियों को लेकर, हमारी छोटी-छोटी कमजोरियों को लेकर इन लोगों ने जो शीशमहल बनाया है वह किसी भी वक्त

चाकनाचूर हो सकता है। यह मैं बता देना चाहता हूँ और खुले तौर पर बता देना चाहता हूँ कि यह इन को कामयाबी नहीं है, इन की पालिसियों की कामयाबी नहीं है, इन की अपनी पार्टी की कामयाबी नहीं है। आज तक ये जमाते आपस में लड़ती रही हैं और जो गवर्नमेंट में बैठे हुए हैं...

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE (West Bengal): Sir, the Finance Minister is not here. He should be here.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI RANBIR SINGH): The Finance Minister is busy in the other House.

रेल मंत्री (प्रो० मधु बंडवते) : पटेल साहब दूसरे सदन में काम में लगे हैं। वे चन्द मिनटों में आ जायेंगे।

श्री प्यारेलाल कुरील उर्फ तालिब : फाइनेंस मिनिस्टर को ही नहीं, सब मिनिस्टरों को यहां होना चाहिए। कोई भी मिनिस्टर यहां मौजूद नहीं है। मैं कहना चाहता हूँ जनता पार्टी के लोग जो आपस में लड़ते थे, आपस में एक दूसरे का सिर फोड़ते थे इकट्ठा हो कर इन्होंने एक ऐसी पार्टी को हराने की कोशिश की है जिसका कुछ इतिहास है, जिस ने बड़े-बड़े काम किये हैं। मैं आजादी की बात नहीं कहना चाहता हूँ। उस पार्टी ने हिन्दुस्तान को यूनीफाई किया है, आजादी के बाद तमाम रियासतों को हिन्दुस्तान में शामिल किया। जो काम पटेल ने किया देशी रियासतों को हिन्दुस्तान के अन्दर मिला कर वह काम कोई पार्टी नहीं कर सकती थी। जमींदारी को मिटाया और गरीबों को, काश्तकारों को भूमि पर अधिकार दिया। जो सीरदार थे उन को भी भूमिधर बनाया।

मैं पूछना चाहता हूँ कि कमजोर जातियों के लिए, शेड्यूलड कास्ट के लिए, शेड्यूलड ट्राइब्स के लिए इन पार्टियों के पास क्या प्रोग्राम था ?