

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : Mr. Parimal Ghosh.

I. THE APPROPRIATION (RAILWAYS) NO. 3 BILL, 1969

II. THE APPROPRIATION (RAILWAYS) NO. 4 BILL, 1969

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI PARIMAL GHOSH) : Madam, I beg to move :

"That the Bill to authorise payment and appropriation of certain further sums from and out of the Consolidated Fund of India for the service of the financial year 1969-70 for the purposes of railways, as passed by the Lok Sabha, be taken into consideration."

I also beg to move :

"That the Bill to provide for the authorisation of appropriation of moneys out of the Consolidated Fund of India to meet the amounts spent on certain services for the purposes of Railways during the financial year ended on the 31st day of March, 1968, in excess of the amounts granted for those services and for that year, as passed by the Lok Sabha, be taken into consideration."

The questions were proposed.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : Mr. K. C. Panda, I shall request you that the time for these two Bills is very limited. Therefore, you will keep yourself within five to seven minutes.

SHRI K. C. PANDA (Orissa) : Madam Deputy Chairman, we are going to pass the Appropriation (Railways) Bills, Nos. 3 and 4. This is in addition to the amounts already sanctioned by the two Houses for the current year.

The Railways were nationalised as far back as 1940's or the early part of 1950's. During those days we considered that we would be able to derive some profit out of them as well as the people of India would get better facilities. But in spite of the progress made so far, whatever profit the previous Companies were deriving from the Railways, we have not been able to get profit up to that extent. And another shortcoming in this section of Government Department is that whenever facilities

are demanded by the employees, it is stated that they should adhere to the Government rules and whenever the question of profit and loss comes, it is said that they have to go according to law. We have already discussed in this House about the facilities of certain members of the staff, who were getting some facilities which were out-dated and which they were getting during the Company's time. Their status has not been raised although in other sections the Government servants are enjoying more facilities than even their colleagues in the Railways are enjoying, just as the running staff. Some sections of these railway employees who travel by the same train, enjoy better facilities, whereas the ticket collectors and the ticket examiners do not enjoy the same facilities as the driver or the fireman.

Another question is, our country is facing so many accidents in railways and now people believe that it is rather less risky to travel by air in India than in the railways. We cannot at any time be definite about our reaching our destination at the proper time. It is due to the timings of the railways as well as the halage and stoppage and so many other factors. I may mention about the victims of so many accidents. Either the relatives of the victims or those who are injured are paid less compensation than what they were being paid during the previous days. And if I am correct, in certain cases they have filed cases in the courts and the courts—and the High Courts—have given decrees for thousands of rupees per head for those relatives of the dead or the injured. And those amounts, which have been decreed by the courts should be taken as the normal compensation payable to these people.

I would like to mention about extension of railway lines. My State of Orissa and Madhya Pradesh are the victims who have been enjoying less percentage of railway mileage in comparison with the population. If there had been no chance of connecting Calcutta and Madras and Calcutta and Nagpur, Orissa would have been deprived of railways. Only about two thousand kilometres of line pass through Orissa which are not well maintained even, and if at all they are maintained properly, the coastal line faces natural calamities and not less than four to five times a year there are stoppages. Of course, fortunately this year we have

not yet had such an occasion and I hope there will not be any. Our Party Members have been advising the Railways to connect the western line in Orissa and the coastal line in different places so that there will be no breach of traffic even when there are some calamities. We have suggested to connect Rourkela with Talcher. I understand that the survey work is going on and I hope and I rather urge upon the Ministry to take up the construction work as soon as the survey work is completed and complete it by the Fourth Plan. By the construction of the Talcher-Bimlagarh line not only will the people get benefit but also the iron ore which is produced nearabout Rourkela and Keonjhar can be transported to Paradip, the nearest port in Orissa, which will increase the financial condition of the State as well. There is another link which has been recently constructed from Jharsuguda to Titilagarh. That is the third link about 100 miles which has got no express train daily. One express train goes weekly twice, bi-weekly. I request the Ministry to run it daily so that people will be assured of railway transport. That will also serve as the second route to the south from Calcutta side, and the people of the South will be assured of railway transport even if there are breaches on the coastal line of Andhra Pradesh and Orissa.

Lastly, in order to exploit the underground wealth of Orissa and Madhya Pradesh in those areas, some railway connection is necessary in the interests of traffic also. I would say that this work as well as the other works in the State which are being assured to us from time to time may be taken up immediately so that in future we may not have to face agitations just as the one we are having right now in Rourkela. Of course, I do not support the agitation of the students and some people of that steel town for having this railway line between Bimlagarh and Talcher. But I cannot assure the Ministry or the House that a severer agitation may not come off in those areas if such proposals are delayed unnecessarily.

SHRI M. M. DHARIA (Maharashtra) : The Indian Railways are perhaps the biggest organisation of its kind in the whole world. The investment of capital is more than 3,600 crores. Every day 10,000 railway trains run in this country covering 7,000 stations and carry sixty lakhs of passengers

and, along with passengers, nearly one lakh and fifty thousand tonnes of goods. Thirteen lakhs of people are employed by the Railways. And every day the earning of revenue is more than Rs. 2,10,00,000. This is a nationalised concern. But may I bring it to the notice of the House that the whole approach of the Railway Board has remained a bureaucratic approach and they have not been able to understand and realise that is meant by public sector and nationalised sector. The Railway Board is not an accommodation committee for retired officers or other retired persons. Persons of imagination, persons having faith in our social objectives, persons with vigour and vitality are necessary to man this huge organisation. And therefore I make a demand today to scrap the present Railway Board which has failed in its duty and reconstitute it, and it should necessarily include the representatives of the employees as well.

In the recent Bank Nationalisation Bill which we passed, we have decided to have representatives of employees in the Bank Advisory Committee. Similarly, the representatives of the employees should be immediately taken in the Board which should be constituted as per suggestion made by me just now.

Along with that, Madam, may I bring to the notice of this House that there is a dispute settlement machinery which also has failed, yet it is in the minds of the employees. Let us create a new dispute settlement machinery whereby employees should have not only faith in that machinery but at all levels their participation should be ensured. It is a forum where we can introduce workers' participation in management. I fail to understand why it is not being done by the Government when the Government has declared its new policy and has decided to have a new approach. I request the hon'ble Minister to consider this suggestion and to give this new approach to the whole issue.

Madam, I would like to come to one more demand today, that is, about the Konkan Railway. I was recently associated with one conference. The people are quite agitated and even some of them are speaking in the language of Telengana activities. There are others who are making a demand for a separate State because they feel that they are neglected. They are connected

[Shri M. M. Dharia]

either by road or by sea. The Shipping Corporation and the shipping companies which carry passengers are insisting on higher fares without giving proper and adequate amenities to the passengers. These poor passengers from the backward areas of Konkan have to pay bus fares which are nearly second class fares of the Railways, and because it is a backward area the Government and the Railway Board are not prepared to fulfil their own promise. And, Madam, this is not the promise of the Indian Railways only. Mr. Lal Bahadur Shastri, when he was the Prime Minister of our country, visited the Konkan areas and he assured the people that in the Fourth Five Year Plan Railways covering the Konkan areas will be included. In this country there is no meaning of assurances coming even from the Prime Minister. In whom then the people should believe? May I tell this Ministry today and make a demand today that they should, if possible, revise the Fourth Five Year Plan and include a railway for the Konkan areas? It is most unfair. The people are agitated because the Government is not prepared to carry out the promise made even by its Prime Minister because the Railway Board has come in its way. The Railway Board always applies the feasibility test. It is the same policy when we look at backward areas like Kashmir, Marathwada and Madhya Pradesh. Everywhere it is the same policy.

SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN (Andhra Pradesh) : Andhra Pradesh.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : I can fight for my district also.

SHRI M. M. DHARIA : Madam, I entirely agree with you. So my submission to the Railway Board and to the Ministry would be to change that policy. If we want the backward areas to prosper the Railways must make for the prosperity of this country of ours, of the backward areas. When we are out to remove all regional imbalances why should this policy not be adopted? I make the demand to fulfil the promise given by the Prime Minister; otherwise, I would like to remind this Government, the people would wake up to the Telen-gana like activities. It is, therefore, time that Government wakes up...

SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN : But what happen even after those Telen-gana activities? The Government does not move.

SHRI M. M. DHARIA : My submission is that the Government should realise that these are people who believe in peace, people who gave us patriots like Tilak and Gokhale and so many others. Therefore, these Thana, Konkan, Ratnagiri areas should not be neglected any more. The Government should come forward before agitations start when it will become difficult for these Railways to function particularly in cities like Bombay where there are lakhs of employees coming from Konkan areas. They are very much agitated over this matter.

Coming to my third point, Madam, regarding the Poona-Lonavla local railway I have been much agitated for the last two years. Workers who work for the Railways cannot come in time. Many of them are serving in defence establishments, nearly more than 30,000 employees. They cannot reach in time. Even when they are late for the late running of Railways, they suffer. The Railway Ministry can have talks with the Defence Ministry. They can adjust their timings. But why this Thana-Poona-Lonavla local railway is not coming up, I cannot understand when there are enough passengers. The whole industrial belt around that area is coming up very fast. When there are enough passengers why the Railways are not accepting this urgent demand for a suburban railway? No care is being taken. Many a time the passengers and the workers stop their functioning there. Then their officers go here and there. May I request the hon'ble Minister to visit these areas, take into consideration the feelings of the people and their genuine grievances and see that they are satisfied?

Madam, lastly I would like to appeal to this Government that we have invested nearly Rs. 7,000 crores in the public sector against which there is a lot of genuine criticism. The need of the hour is a new approach, to understand what is meant by the nationalisation of a particular industry. It is not the transfer of ownership alone which can be treated as nationalisation. We have adopted a new approach whereby we can create a new social order. Nationalisation should be an effective instrument for the construction of a new

society, for the transformation of economic and social order in the country. It is in this direction that I would like to request and appeal to the Government to change their present approach. They should think of a new approach which is the need of the hour. Thank you very much.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : The House stands adjourned till 2 P.M.

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

The House reassembled after lunch at two of the clock, the Vice-Chairman (SHRI D. THENGARI) in the Chair.

REFERENCE TO DEPUTATION OF SCHOOL AND COLLEGE TEACHERS FROM WEST BENGAL

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA (West Bengal) : Mr. Vice-Chairman, to-day a demonstration of school and college teachers from West Bengal has come; they are also coming to Parliament. We see from the newspapers that they shall be meeting the authorities including the Prime Minister, the Education Minister and the President. Naturally we would like to know in what manner the Government is going to treat the demonstrators because their demands are legitimate and long-standing and we always hear sermons about the well-being of the teachers and very many other things of that sort. Now, here are teachers who have come from the State of West Bengal to make representations to the people and the authorities here. They have also taken the opportunity of Parliament being in session so that the Members of Parliament, no doubt sympathetic to their cause, can pay attention to them and bring their influence to bear upon the authorities to meet the demands of the school and college teachers. They shall be appearing here near the gates of Parliament at about 4 O'Clock, I understand. I hope Members of Parliament will see them. Mr. Vice-Chairman, I request you also, since you are in the Chair, to see them. You should see them not only as a leader of a particular party...

SHRI RAJNARAIN (Uttar Pradesh) : As a labour leader.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA : ... not only as a leader of a particular party, or as a labour leader, but as the incumbent of this office temporarily. I think it will be very good if you went there and told them that sentiments have been voiced on the floor of the House supporting their demands. I do not think there is anybody in the House here who would oppose the granting of the demands of the teachers and it would be very good if you personally conveyed the wishes and sympathy and support of the entire House to the teachers who have come all the way from West Bengal to make their representation to the authorities concerned. I am sure my friend, Mr. Rajnarain, would have something to say on this.

श्री राजनारायण : मैं तो आपसे कहने के लिये तैयार हूँ कि इस सदन की तरफ से प्रस्ताव भेज दिया जाय कि यह सदन सर्वसम्मति से आप्रह करता है सरकार से—और चेतावनी भी देता है—कि अध्यापको की मांग पूरी कर दी जाय, अध्यापको की मांग जरूरी है, जायज है, बहुत पुरानी है। इतनी दूर से वे चल कर आये हैं, उनके कार्यक्रम और मीटिंग पर प्रतिबन्ध हो, यह ठीक नहीं है। आप हमारी भावनाएँ सरकार तक पहुंचा दे और राष्ट्रपति को कहें, शिक्षा मंत्री को कहें, प्रधान मंत्री को कहें कि राज्य सभा का पूर्ण सदन चाहता है कि अध्यापको की मांग पूरी की जाय।

SHRI CHITTA BASU (West Bengal) : Mr. Vice-Chairman, it is all the more important because there is a demand for a larger allocation for Education.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA : The Government should say something.

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (DR. RAM SUBHAG SINGH) : We will convey it to the Government.

SHRI CHITTA BASU : On the floor of this House it has been pointed out many times before that the genuine demands of the teachers of all categories—primary school, secondary school and also college teachers—could not be met because of paucity of funds. Now these teachers are coming to Parliament with the demand that a larger allocation of funds should be made available.