

[Shri P. K. Kumaran.]

among the different groups of Christians in India.

Madam, it is but natural for religious institutions to raise a hue and cry whenever measures to introduce an element of rationale are resorted to. The question of recognising the Ministers of certain churches as competent to solemnise a marriage has raised a fear among the adherents of a large number of denominations of churches, the fear whether Ministers of their churches will be recognised or not. When the Bill is passed into law, the Committee that is going to be constituted will be having hard time considering which church has got to be recommended and which not. This will introduce a new element of controversy between the various denominations of churches. I should very much like to see that Marriage Registrars are appointed in all districts who will grant licences of marriage after satisfying all the conditions prescribed in this Bill. After obtaining licences, the parties may perform the religious and social part of the marriages in churches or anywhere else they want. After the marriage, within a week, the parties can cause the details of the marriage to be entered in a register maintained by the licensing authority in the presence of two witnesses, parents of the minor bride, etc. I would like this system to be prescribed for all sections of the society. A similar system prevails in America whose Constitution also, like ours, is based on secularism.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You may continue on the next occasion.

The House stands adjourned till half past two of the clock.

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

The House reassembled after lunch at half-past two of the clock. THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN) in the Chair.

MOTION REGARDING RAILWAY ACCIDENTS

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SARDAR SWARAN SINGH): Sir, I beg to move . . .

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA (West Bengal): Sir, I understand from the papers that notice of this motion was given by the Members from this side of the House and it is becoming a practice that the Government then gives notice of the same motion and then debar the Members of this House from moving it. I think it is not right. The Government should have given it before. When the Members opposite give it, they should have the right because first of all they can place the things for the Minister to consider and reply; secondly, the Members have also the right of reply and apart from this fact of time, I think it is not a good practice on the part of the Government to come in this way. It was open to them right at the beginning of the Session, for the Minister to give his own motion and whenever we try to initiate any such thing, the Government tries to come in. It is good because some of them do not want to come in even under provocation but then it is not a fair practice, not a good convention to try to debar initiative in this manner or to take away the time which the Opposition would be otherwise entitled to.

SHRI DAHYABHAI V. PATEL (Gujarat): We are in complete agreement with Mr. Gupta's remarks on this subject.

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH: I am glad that at any rate the Swatantra Party and the Communist are one on this. May I clarify the position?

SHRI DAHYABHAI V. PATEL: It is not an accident. (*Interruptions.*)

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: The issue is between the Opposition and the Government here relating to certain procedures and practices or convention which should be adhered to unless they believe in doing something not very helpful for the growth of institutions such as this.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN): I would like to hear the Minister.

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH: I thought the opposition would welcome such a move because it is well known that according to the procedures, even if a non-official motion is tabled, it only remains as a No-Day-Yet-Named Motion and it is for the Government to find out whether they have got any time . . .

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: On a point of order. I challenge that statement.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN): Let him proceed.

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH: In a matter like this, so far as Opposition motion are concerned, they are most welcome. I do not object to them. I am the last person to object to the moving of any such motion but it has to be remembered that in a matter where the Government feels that it is of sufficient importance that it should be brought before the House by itself the mere existence of an earlier non-official motion does not debar the Government from coming to the House and making a positive motion. If anything, that is something which should be welcomed.

On the other issue, I do not know why my esteemed friend, Shri Bhupesh Gupta, got agitated when I said that so far as official motions are concerned, when we make an official motion, then there is a commitment that we will find time also. It has to be remembered, subject to the over-

all control by the Presiding Officers in the two Houses of Parliament so far as the Order of Business is concerned, this is to be decided by the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs in consultation with the Business Advisory Committee. It was not a motion by way of a Resolution or the like which comes within the definition of a non-official resolution or non-official business. It was a motion for discussion of an important matter which is admitted only as a No-Day-Yet-Named Motion which has to find time. It has to compete with other items on the Business List of the Houses and I do not see why they should object to it. This means virtually that if there is any non-official motion, then the Government cannot come to the House with a positive motion. This is a position which I am afraid we cannot accept.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Sir, I would like you to hear me on this point. Firstly, I realise that it is a No-Day-Yet-Named Motion but as far as the time is concerned, it is for you to fix. Once you admit this motion, it is entirely in the hands of the Chair to fix the time and compel the Government to undertake it. It is not for the Government to say whether they are going to accept it or not. This is a point number one.

Point number two is irrelevant that time could not be found. Time has been found. The only thing is, the Government has stolen our time. We wanted it the other way round. Then if you say that we get more time, if the Government motion is there, that also does not apply here because only 2 1/2 hours have been given, not the whole day. Even on that score, we, the Opposition, stand to lose. I think the hon. Minister should not assume the authority that goes with the Chair. The motion was admitted, the time was found but the point is now the Government is taking away that time and the initiative in their hands and we are put at a disadvantage. This is what I say.

SHRI M. S. GURUPADA SWAMY (Mysore): The Opposition Members tabled the motion. It is true that it does not in any way prevent the Government coming forward with their own motion. But here in this House the motion tabled by us was much before the motion tabled by the Government. Therefore, if you admit the motion of the Government, it will be denying the right of the Opposition to initiate a discussion on such an important issue. The point is, you are denying the privilege of the Opposition to initiate discussion on matters of importance. So we have to confine our attention to this small but very important point, namely whether the Opposition should be denied the exercise of their rights in the usual course under the Rules of Procedure; otherwise, the whole procedure becomes meaningless so far as this is concerned.

SHRI K. SANTHANAM (Madras): I am sorry that the Opposition . . .

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN): Only to the extent of the point of order.

SHRI K. SANTHANAM: Yes. I am rather surprised at this opposition because if their point is conceded, it is quite possible that the Government may not be able to find time at all for many such motions. In fact it is to the advantage of this House that on as many matters as possible of such a nature, the Government should take the initiative and come forward to find the time.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Why deny the initiative?

SHRI K. SANTHANAM: But where is the initiative denied? When once a discussion is initiated, then every Member of the Opposition has the same right to speak . . .

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: No. Mr. Santhanam being an experienced parliamentarian, should know that no Member of the Opposition would have the right of replying.

SHRI K. SANTHANAM: In a motion like this, there is no question of any reply because it is the responsibility of the Government. It is only when the Government replies that we can have any concessions or any reforms or interest whatever. What is the use of my friend, Shri Bhupesh Gupta, replying? He can only abuse but the Government can do things.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: On a point of order again. Is the hon. Member entitled to say that I can only abuse? I do not wish to abuse . . .

SHRI K. SANTHANAM: What else can he do?

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: The motion was not in my name.

SHRI DAHYABHAI V. PATEL: The hon. Member is not in order to cast aspersions on a Member.

(Interruptions.)

SHRI K. SANTHANAM: I am sorry. I am willing to withdraw the word 'abuse' and say that he can criticise and oppose and the Opposition's reply has no meaning or purpose but a reply from the Government to meet the points raised by the Opposition has got substance, has got a purpose. Therefore, a Government motion is any day to be preferred to an Opposition motion.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: I am not dealing with it. He cannot have his own argument only. He said that in the Minister's reply people are interested. We are also interested in it but how is this right taken away from the Minister? The Minister can speak at the end, after listening to the speeches, minus the right of his speech in reply. Everything that he wishes to state he can state. We want this initiative because, in the first instance, we state the position of the Opposition and of the public before the Government so that the Government

spokesman in his speech states the Government's position and what they have to say. Secondly, we have the right of reply. The Opposition also should have the right to express whether the Opposition is satisfied with the position that the Government had taken on the floor of the House. The other day, in the House of Commons, certain matters of importance were discussed and, as you may know, the discussion was initiated in one case by the Deputy Leader of the Labour Party, and in another case by the Leader of the Labour Party, Mr. Gaitskell. Prime Minister Mac-Millan did not come and say that the Government must initiate the discussion. Mr. Santhanam is supposed to be a knowledgeable and learned Member of Parliament. He will kindly refer to the proceedings of the House of Commons. He can then see that the Government does not take the initiative in such cases, but it is the Opposition which takes the initiative for raising such discussions. The initiative is from the Opposition side of the House of Commons.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN): I have heard what you have to say.

SHRI K. SANTHANAM. No, Sir. I am not going to make a speech. I only want to say that I have never said that the initiative should never be taken by the Opposition. Neither did Mr. Gaitskell claim that only the Labour Party should initiate the discussion. The initiative can come from either side of the House, but when it comes from the Government side, it ought to be preferred.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: So he has admitted that the initiative came from the Labour Party.

AN HON. MEMBER: Then why raise a point of order?

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Not only that, he has also supported me. But

it seems he would support it in the House of Commons only, not in this Parliament of ours where he and I sit. Charity, we thought, should begin at home.

SHRI M. P. BHARGAVA (Uttar Pradesh): As the Rules of Procedure in this House stand at present, a Government motion always has priority over motions given notice of by any other hon. Member of the House. Take my own case. I gave notice of a motion for a discussion on the Dhebarbhai Commission's Report. It was superseded by a Government motion.

SHRI MULKA GOVINDA REDDY (Mysore): You belong to the Government side.

SHRI M. P. BHARGAVA: I gave notice of a motion for a discussion on the Eleventh Report of the U.P.S.C. and that was also superseded. So the hon. Members of the Opposition want any change in the Rules of Procedure of the House, the better course is to approach the Chairman for a change of the Rules. It is no use discussing a matter here which is beyond the purview of the House to decide. So let us take it up in the Rules Committee and try to change the rules if we want to.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN): I have heard both sides. That will do.

SHRI M. P. BHARGAVA: Why take the time of the House here?

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: The hon. Member is a camp follower of the ruling party.

SHRI MULKA GOVINDA REDDY: There is this difference between a motion from the ruling party and a motion from the Opposition. At any time, a Member of the ruling party, if he has tabled the motion, can be asked to withdraw his motion and the

[Shri Mulka Govinda Reddy.] discussion can be curtailed. But if the motion is tabled by a member of the Opposition, it not only means that he wants an opportunity to discuss that important matter, but it will also amount to a censure motion against the Government for their failures and for their acts of commission and omission. And in this particular case the Government should have taken the opportunity of tabling their motion long before the Opposition thought of it. But they never thought it was a serious matter which should be discussed in Parliament.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN): You want to say something Mr. Govinda Reddy?

SHRI M. GOVINDA REDDY (Mysore): Sir, I only wanted to say this much. The statement is to be discussed and this motion is a very important one. Only two and a half hours are allotted for discussion on this motion and already some fifteen minutes have been taken up by this preliminary discussion that we are having. I do not think this is very useful. Let us finish with this discussion and not take more time from the time allotted for the discussion of the motion.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: No, this time will not be included in that.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN): You have had your say. I think I have heard both sides of the House.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Sir, don't give your ruling now. I request you, Mr. Vice-Chairman, don't give a ruling. I do not insist on getting a ruling now.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN): But I should give a ruling.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: It is not wanted now, because we have to debate it in the chamber. As some hon. Member said, we should go to the Chairman and we would like to go

and convince him of the validity of our case.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN): Then have you withdrawn your point of order?

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: No, I have not. Why should I? I wish to keep it pending.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN): For this debate the point of order will have to be decided. So either you withdraw it or I have to give a ruling.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: I am not withdrawing, Sir. You want to give your ruling on the point of order, but it will be doing less than justice. You may feel you are doing justice.

SHRI SONUSING DHANSING PATIL (Maharashtra): Sir, when the hon. Member takes the risk of raising a point of order, he cannot say he will not withdraw it. Either he must seek the decision of the Chair or he must withdraw his point of order. These are the only two alternatives.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: The hon. Member sitting so long on the side of the Treasury Benches has forgotten everything. He ought to know that a point of order also can be withdrawn.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN): You are withdrawing?

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: I am not withdrawing it.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN): I give my decision. In view of rule 153 which says:

"The Chairman may after considering the state of business in the Council and in consultation with the Leader of the Council allot a day or days or part of a day for the discussion of any such motion."

In view of this, it is in the province of the Chairman and the Leader and

it has been decided that the Government should move it. Accordingly I ask the Minister of Railways to start the discussion.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: I will not challenge the ruling. But we have heard the rule as it was read out by you and it says that the Chairman may do it and it is left to his discretion. As a lawyer, Sir, you understand that "may" is not "must" and it is not mandatory. It is left to the discretion of the Chairman to decide in consultation with the Leader of the House. I do not know when this consultation with the Leader of the House took place. Hafiz Mohammad Ibrahim is not here to substantiate it and say that he has been consulted.

SHRI M. GOVINDA REDDY: But the Chair has given the ruling.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN): The Railway Minister.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: When was he consulted? When was Hafiz Mohammad Ibrahim consulted?

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN): I have given my decision. The Railway Minister will start the discussion.

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH: Sir, I beg to move:

"That the statement regarding Railway accidents, laid on the Table of the Rajya Sabha on the 16th August, 1962, be taken into consideration."

Sir, on the 16th August, I placed on the Table of the House a statement giving certain details about the number of accidents that took place between the date when the Rajya Sabha adjourned at the end of the last session and August, 1962 and I also gave some further details about them. There were fourteen such accidents and all of them were unfortunate, but the

most unfortunate of them all was the one which took place at Dumraon on the night of the 21st July, 1962. My sympathies and those of all other railwaymen go to the bereaved families and to those who were injured in these accidents.

Of the fourteen cases shown in the Statement, seven were of train collisions, three involving passenger trains. The other four cases were of derailments, of which two involved passenger trains, one of these resulting from the train running on a tree which had fallen on the track on account of strong wind; the remaining three accidents were of trains running into road track and level-crossings, two of them being unmanned level-crossings. Of the 74 dead and 159 injured, that I mentioned in the Statement which I laid on the Table of the House, 53 were injured in accidents at un-manned level-crossings; and if the casualties in the Dumraon accident were excluded, the total number of casualties in the remaining 11 accidents works out to one person killed and 79 injured. I may mention here that of the persons injured in the Dumraon accident one more has died in the hospital since I laid that Statement on the Table of the House and so the death-roll now unfortunately stands at 74 so far as this accident is concerned. In the Dumraon accident, as I have already informed the House, a Commission of Enquiry headed by a retired Judge of the High Court has been set up to go into the causes of the accident. The findings of the Commission and the recommendations which they might make to avoid recurrence of such accidents will be eagerly awaited by the railway administration. In other cases also, enquiries have been made and those found guilty will be brought to book. It is not my intention to take much time of the House. We have already spent some time in discussing the procedural aspect and there are only a few points that I would like to mention at this stage.

What do we do to prevent such accidents? This is a matter about which

[Sardar Swaran Singh.]

the House would be vitally interested. So far as preventive measures are concerned, we tackle this problem in two ways, one is provision of technological aid to the staff to act against the possibility of accidents and in this category we have got numerous devices of a mechanical character in signalling and the like which afford great protection against the occurrence of accidents. These aspects are a few and I would indicate the few items that fall under this category. For instance, we have got the interlocking of points and signals so that until the correct road is set, the signals cannot be lowered. Then we have got the provision of token instruments on single-line/sections in place of paper line clear. Then we have got also interlocking of important level crossing gates with the signals so that so long as the gate remains open, the signal cannot be lowered. We have got what is called direct circuiting on certain sections and stations so that when a certain portion of the line is obstructed the signals controlling movement on such line cannot be lowered. It is true that our entire system has not got all these technological aids for a variety of reasons, the most important of which is the fact that we are a developing country and we are trying to develop and manufacture a large portion of this signalling equipment inside the country. We are undertaking a phased programme to progressively replace these signalling equipment with the latest technological development. It will be appreciated that we can undertake this only in a phased programme and cannot undertake the production of all these within a short time. Apart from these technological aids, there is another important aspect which I might mention at this stage and that is the educative aspect. It is important that whatever the technical aids we may provide, the best known safety device still remains a careful man. It is the railway administration's objective to create this careful man, and this can obviously be done in a variety of ways. The most important requirement is that adequate care should

be taken even at the time of recruitment so that a person of the right type might be recruited. Then, their initial training is a matter of great importance and as the House is aware, we have established a number of training institutes all over the country—the number is about fifty all over the country—where training of an intensive character is provided. Not only initial training but we attach a great deal of importance to what are called training in service, refresher courses and the like, because there can be a tendency to ignore some of the important aspects where one is intimately associated and concerned with the actual working and the institution of refresher courses is, therefore, a very important and vital matter. It is important too that safety consciousness should be created amongst the staff by distributing the right type of pamphlets, by pasting posters at appropriate places and by personal contact between the supervisory staff and those who are in charge of the various devices so that the latter might be reminded from time to time and it might be explained to them how they should handle some of these devices etc. Then we have at important railway stations accident prevention committees which are playing a useful part because they analyse these accidents and also take action to prevent recurrence of such accidents. Finally, a pilot project for screening the train passing staff for safety-mindedness by a process of psychological test is under examination of the Government at present. I might add that this psychological approach is important and other progressive countries have also adopted it. It is our intention to introduce these on our railway system also.

Apart from these preventive aspects, the other important requirement which we cannot ignore is the punitive aspect. With all the technological aid and the instruments of a mechanical character that might be provided, howsoever great may be the educative process in the form of training, refresher courses and the like, still, ac-

cidents, by the very nature of the circumstances, do take place. How do we act if these accidents take place? Our approach in this respect is two fold, one is to tackle it on a long range basis. As the House is aware, the railway administration and the Government of India have constituted an Accidents Enquiry Committee presided over by an eminent public man, Shri Hriday Nath Kunzru, who was till a few months ago a senior Member of our Parliament and a Member of this House. He is the Chairman of that Committee. There are other hon. Members, for instance, Shri Satyacharan Shastri, a sitting Member of this House and Shri Jaipal Singh, a sitting Member of the other House. There are technical Members also on that Committee. It became necessary to constitute this Committee towards the end of the last year as a result of discussions in this House and in the other House. We are eagerly looking forward to the recommendations of this Committee and it is hoped that the Committee will soon be able to give an interim report and make certain interim recommendations. So far as individual cases of accidents are concerned depending upon the nature of the accident and the gravity of the accident, enquiries are held. I would like to clarify that enquiries are held in all cases where a mishap is what is defined as "accident" in railway terminology. I might say here that the word "accident" is defined in such a way in railway parlance that it connotes much more than what we normally understand. This expression is used or this word is mentioned, even in regard to a minor derailment without any casualty or without anyone being injured. This is so defined, and very rightly so, because it is the intention of the railway administration to scrutinise every one of all those cases and to look after even these apparently minor matters with a great deal of precision and in great detail so that it might benefit by the conclusions that might be drawn from the enquiries. Every case of accident is enquired into by a committee and they

make recommendations and those recommendations are utilised later for taking preventive action, for taking corrective action, for taking punitive action. It is sometimes mentioned that the railway administration was approached in this respect and that they did not take action against those who were found guilty. We try to act in a just manner. We do not chase people. We do not unnecessarily punish them when they are not liable to be punished but at the same time we do not hesitate to take severe disciplinary action where such action is called for. Sir, I might give by way of illustration some idea about .

3 P M

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA Sir, after that I will make another point of order, after he finishes his speech.

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH I will not give the details. For instance in 1960-61 1408 members of the railway staff were punished and in 1961-62, 1,648 members of the staff were punished. They were awarded different types of punishment ranging from removal from service in bad cases to lesser punishments, like reduction to lower grade, etc., in other cases. In serious cases where the case comes within the mischief of the effective law of the country, then the police prosecute the delinquents and the courts take decisions according to the merits of each individual case. I have not got a record of the criminal prosecutions but that is the normal manner in which these matters are dealt with.

There is one aspect which I would like to mention before I finish. Unhappily, the Dumraon accident was a very unfortunate one where the death toll was high and into which now a judicial enquiry is being held. I have already supplied figures in answer to a Starred Question in this House—I draw attention to Starred Question No. 8 answered on the 6th August—where comparative figures were given about the number of accidents from 1st January to 30th June 1961 and from 1st January, to 30th June 1962? I do not want to cite those figures again.

SHRI SATYACHARAN (Uttar Pradesh): May I point out one thing. The Enquiry Committee at Dumraon . . .

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (**SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN**): You address me, Mr. Satyacharan.

SHRI SATYACHARAN: I am just correcting.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (**SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN**): You address me.

SHRI SATYACHARAN: I am addressing you. What I wish to say is that the Enquiry Committee which has been constituted in regard to the Dumraon accident is not, probably in the nature of a judicial enquiry. Only a judge happens to be there as the presiding officer.

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH: It is a judicial enquiry because it is under the Commissions of Inquiry Act and Parliament has bestowed judicial functions on these Commissions of Inquiry. We undertook legislation some time back and it is for this reason that I am purposely not mentioning anything more now about this Dumraon enquiry. The cause and other circumstances are all *judice* and therefore I am purposely not saying anything about that enquiry.

I have given these figures not in any spirit of underrating the importance or the seriousness of the accident; I do believe, as I have said some time ago in the course of an earlier debate in the other House, that even one accident is bad, and therefore we cannot explain these matters by comparing statistics and the like and it is not my intention to cite figures in extenuation. This is the general approach that I myself and the railway administration have with regard to accidents. But it is necessary to mention this to counteract any feeling that might be created erroneously that there is a rising trend in accidents.

There is one more matter which I would like to mention before I finish and that is to give some idea of the size of the operation that is undertaken by the railways. This is necessary because we do not have a proper perspective and proper background. What is our railway system like and what is the size of the operations? Extending over a route mileage of 34,950 miles and a track mileage of 52,013 miles, the Indian Government railways operate 10,529 locomotives, 28,009 coaching vehicles and 3,09,344 units of goods wagons. They run every day about 4,500 passenger trains and 3,000 goods trains. An idea of the gigantic nature of the work performed by the railways can be had from the fact that the Indian Railways operate annually 133 millions of passenger train miles and 113 millions of goods train miles. About 4.5 million passengers travel every day on the Indian Railways. There are about 6,500 railway stations scattered all over India ranging from simple flag stations with an ordinary rail level platform to gigantic stations like the Bombay Victoria Terminus, Howrah and other big stations. More than 11 lakh railwaymen work in different parts of the country in varying climatic and seasonal conditions to keep 7,500 trains moving daily all over the country. With the day to day operations of the railways spread over such an extensive area and performed by such a large number of people with equipment of varying degrees and complexity it is not fully possible to eliminate all accidents but still we are conscious of our limitations and we are trying our best to find out the cause of these accidents and to take sustained action to eliminate these accidents.

Sir, I move.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Sir, on a point of order before you put the motion. My point of order is you may not put it and I shall give presently my argument.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN): You give the reference to the rule and then state the point of order.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: I just give the substance of my case that this be held over till tomorrow when you consider and decide on the No-Day-Yet-Named motion of ours given by Mr. Dave who is present here in the House and by Mr. Ramamurti who is not here. Sir, you were good enough to refer to rule 153. You kindly take the book in your hand. In Chapter X I would invite your attention to the preceding two rules, Nos. 152 and 151. Rule 151 says:

"The Chairman shall decide on the admissibility of a motion and may disallow a motion or a part thereof."

Then comes Rule 152:

"If the Chairman admits notice of such a motion it shall be immediately notified in the Council Bulletin with the heading 'No-Day-Yet-Names-Motions'."

Now, I submit that the Chairman was good enough to admit this motion of Mr. Dave and Mr. Ramamurti and the Council Bulletin contained this fact. They are mentioned in the Bulletin under Rule 152. Now, immediately after that comes Rule 153 to which you referred.

Sir, you listen to Secretary later.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN): You carry on.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: You must hear the background. You talk to the Secretary.

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH: The Secretary is supposed to be invisible.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: He is very much visible and we like him too.

SHRI DAHYABHAI V. PATEL: But the Member is entitled to be audible.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN): You go on with your point of order.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: This Rule 153 . . .

SHRI SONUSING DHANSING PATIL: Mr. Vice-Chairman, on a point of order.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: He cannot raise a point of order, now. Who stands now?

(Interruptions)

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN): You must be specific

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: How can I be specific when I am interrupted?

SHRI SONUSING DHANSING PATIL: We cannot have a rambling discussion.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Now. Rule 153 says:

"The Chairman may after considering the state of business in the Council and in consultation with the Leader of the Council allot a day or days or part of a day for the discussion of any such motion."

This specifically relates to Rule 152, that is to say, No-Day-Yet-Named Motions. These are not Government motions as the Minister himself said. Now, how can you invoke that particular rule to decide the issue and having admitted it what happens to my motion? My case is this. Once you have admitted . . .

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN): I have heard you.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: My first point is. I would ask the House to consider this rule. It is not that I am fighting for the Opposition. I am fighting for the privilege of the House, minus some Members on the Treasury

[Shri Bhupesh Gupta.]

Benches. I cannot for the life of me understand how on earth this particular rule 153 applies to a Government motion or determination of its future.

Now, the second point in this connection is that you cannot adduce reasons. Hon. Members should consider that the rule does not say anywhere that you can throw out a motion once admitted. Our motions were admitted under Rule 152.

SHRI SONUSING DHANSING PATIL: Are we to convert Parliament into a law court?

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: It is a reflection on Parliament. Subversion of Parliament takes place in this manner.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN): Please confine yourself to your point of order.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Then, you reject that kind of argument. Have you seen the subsequent rules? Under no circumstances can you throw out a motion which had been admitted. Tell me which rule in this book lays down that you can throw out a motion which has been admitted. All that you are given power in this matter is to fix a day, allot the time. Now, the Minister's motion may be concurrent, but certainly that motion cannot be a substitute for ours, much less can it deprive us of the right of moving the motion, to which we are entitled, which has been admitted by you, and in respect of which all that you are now called upon to do is to fix a day and allot the time. I would like to know what is the fate of our motion.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN): All right, I have heard you.

SHRI B. D. KHOBARAGADE (Maharashtra): Mr. Vice-Chairman...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN): No, please. I have to decide about the point of order.

SHRI B. D. KHOBARAGADE: According to . . .

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN): I have heard the point of order. Let me decide. (*Interruption*). I do not allow arguments on a point of order.

SHRI B. D. KHOBARAGADE: According to the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business of this House, if any point of order is moved, hon. Members are free to make certain observations also, according to the rules and regulations.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN): Give me the rule

SHRI B. D. KHOBARAGADE: I am making only one or two observations.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN): No question of observations on a point of order.

(*Interruptions*)

SHRI B. D. KHOBARAGADE: On the point of order raised by my hon. friend, Mr. Bhupesh Gupta, my observation is this. As pointed out by Mr. Bhupesh Gupta, when notice of a motion has been given by any Member and it has been admitted by the Chairman and subsequently if the Government or any Minister of the Government gives another notice or the motion, then priority should be given to the first notice.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN): Mr. Bhupesh Gupta has said that and you are repeating what he has already said.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Is my motion dead or not?

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN): Please hear me. I have heard you. The rules relating

to motions in Chapter X do not make any distinction between a Government motion and a private Member's motion. So, all the rules apply to both the motions. That is number one. Number two is, I would ask the Member to refer to Rule 22, that is, regarding Government business. If it had been a private Members' day, it would have been a different thing. As it is, today is Government business day. So, I hold that in such cases where there are two motions from Members as well as from the Government on a Government business day, the Government's motion will have precedence.

Now, Mr. Mulka Govinda Reddy.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Mr. Vice-Chairman, so many . . .

(Interruptions)

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN): Please resume your seat.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: What happens to our motion? Will it be discussed tomorrow?

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN): I have given my ruling.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Rule 22 cannot be read with rule . . .

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN): Mr. Bhupesh Gupta, please.

SHRI SHEEL BHADRA YAJEE (Bihar): Obey the Chair.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: How do I obey you?

The question was proposed.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN): I call upon Mr. Mulka Govinda Reddy to speak.

SHRI MULKA GOVINDA REDDY: Mr. Vice-Chairman, the Minister of Railways has given us some impres-

sive figures regarding route mileage, the number of passenger trains that run every day, the number of goods trains that run every day, the number of millions of passengers who travel by train. He has tried to compare them. In view of the vastness of the country, the large number of passenger trains being run, the large number of goods trains being run and the big route mileage, he has tried to show that the number of accidents that have occurred is not quite alarming. I do not know what his idea was when he tried to compare the number of accidents against this background. Even if one accident occurs, serious notice should be taken of it and proper steps should be devised to see that accidents do not occur again. Committees have been appointed when serious accidents took place to find out why such and such accident took place. The Shah Nawaz Committee, which was appointed in 1956, gave a very voluminous report. Therein they had stated the causes of accidents that occurred during the period before and they had also suggested some preventive measures. The Government have again appointed another Committee headed by Dr. Kunzru. It is more than eight months or so. I do not know why an interim report has not been submitted by that Committee. It would have been better, at least for discussion on such an important subject like this, if that Committee had submitted an interim report. We could have offered more constructive suggestions. Unfortunately, the Committees that are appointed take their own time to submit their reports. Maybe the Government is partly responsible, for they may not be co-operating with the Committee in giving all the material that is necessary for the Committee to come to some sort of conclusions and give their findings on such an important question. Time and again we have discussed this question of accidents and I was really pained to see how the Minister tried to minimise the seriousness of the railway accidents. He also quoted in the other House the figures, the number of acci-

[Shri Mulka Govinda Reddy.]

dents that are taking place in other countries, particularly America and England. The conditions that are obtaining there and that are obtaining in India are totally different. There many of the accidents take place not because of follies, not because of the limitations under which those railways work, but because mostly of the environment that there is in those countries. So, he did not mention the figures here but took refuge under the guise that our railways work much better than the railways in other countries and that the rate of accidents in India is much lower than the rate of accidents in America or England. Sir, by having this discussion the Railway Board and the Railway Ministry should be able to learn some lessons, and if they are prepared to implement the salient suggestions that will be made by the Members, then many of these discussions will not take place and many of the accidents that take place these days will not occur. It has now become almost an everyday affair, and in nearly 30 or 35 days 15 accidents have occurred. After the statement was made by the hon. Minister in this House and the other House, another accident had occurred to a De Luxe train. It is therefore incumbent and imperative on the part of the Railway Ministry to see whether they could avoid these accidents. Many of the accidents that have occurred have occurred not because they are accidents but because of the wrong things done by the Railway Ministry. When a train leaves the station, care is not taken to see whether it has a defective engine, defective locomotive, whether proper check was made of it, whether the bogies that are attached to the train are properly checked up, whether the screws and bolts that are there are properly placed in their proper places, and so on. These are all things which, if properly inspected, will show whether the train is fit for travel or not, and if these things are properly adhered to, many of the accidents will not occur.

A Member in the other House has reported a statement from the "Statesman" of Calcutta that the locoshed people asked the driver of a particular train to somehow manage even though he complained that he could not take the train. He tried to manage. When the train arrived very late, he was said to have been mishandled by the crowd for the late arrival of the train, and he is reported to have stated to the correspondent that in spite of the protest that he made he was asked to take that locomotive which was very defective. Last year similar accidents occurred, for instance, the Ranchi accident. It is also reported that the engine driver protested when he was asked to take the train because the engine was defective. But in spite of his protests he was forced to take that engine and a big accident occurred which was much more serious than the one we had at Dumraon. I am glad that a Judicial Enquiry Commission has been appointed to go into the cause of the Dumraon accident, so I am not referring to it now. But what I am saying is that these are things which, if properly looked into, will avert accidents. Time and again suggestions have been made that the railway track is worn out and dilapidated, that proper repairing should take place, that worn out and dilapidated rolling stock is there and proper repairs should be undertaken. If these things are undertaken, if the track is properly checked up and if the rolling stock is properly checked up, some of these accidents could very well be avoided. The Minister himself has confessed that more than 25 per cent. of the engines that the railways have are overaged. Proper steps should have been taken to replace such overaged engines. These matters which require a little bit of imaginative planning are not properly planned, matters with regard to the development of railways, with regard to the replacement of engines, with regard to the replacement of tracks and rails, and so on.

Another intriguing factor in these accidents is that whenever an accident occurs, the Railway Minister at-

tributes it to the human factor. Yes, human beings are necessary and human factors have got to be taken into consideration. But the Railway Ministry and the Railway Minister do not take these human factors into consideration. They do not take the human beings that work in these railways as human beings. They are fatigued and overworked. The terms and conditions of their service are so bad that most of the engine drivers, most of the pointsmen and most of the cabinmen do not have that enthusiasm and do not have that zeal necessary to work properly in these railways. This is a very serious matter which the Railway Ministry should look into and see that their conditions of service are revised, and the time factor should also be taken into consideration. The engine driver should not be allowed to drive for more than eight hours or whatever the time that is reasonably allowed for an engine driver to drive. Sometimes it so happens that when these trains are derailed or accidents take place, the same driver will have to take the engine and he will have to work not eight hours but he will have to work 24 hours or even 32 hours. That is the case, and the conditions of service are so bad. When the drivers are asked to drive the engines in such inhuman conditions, it is not possible for any driver to be properly equipped, to be properly mentally prepared to take these engines and avoid accidents. So it is but necessary that the hours of work allotted to engine drivers should also be revised properly.

Another thing I would like to say is this. The Minister has said just now that accident means even late arrival. It has been so defined in the material that has been supplied to us. Even the late arrival of trains is also considered an accident. Sir, in this age when the space ships can go round the world and can come down to the earth with such accuracy, I really do not understand why the railways, which boast that they have a mileage of 35,000 and that about 7,500 trains run every day, do not keep up to the

time. It is not only a loss to the railways, it is a national loss. So many working hours are lost. The Review of accidents on the Indian Government Railways shows that nearly 9000 accidents occur every year. In 1958-59 it is 9071; 1959-60 it is 8960; in 1960-61 it is 8890. By these accidents the loss that the Government have sustained or the railways have sustained is as follows:

1958-59—

Cost of damage to rolling stock and engines—Rs. 17 lakhs.

Cost of damage to permanent way—Rs. 23 lakhs.

Interruption to through communication—10, 184 hours.

[THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN in the Chair]

1960-61—

Cost of damage to rolling stock and engines—Rs. 38 lakhs.

Cost of damage to permanent way—Rs. 33 lakhs.

Interruption to through communication—13,729 hours.

Madam Deputy Chairman, it is generally felt by the ordinary public that railway travel today has become hazardous, that there is no safety and that they are not sure whether they would be reaching their destinations if they travel by train. And there is a very nice cartoon which was published in 'The Hindustan Times' dated the 18th which shows that the former Railway Minister had an accident when he was travelling in an Accidents Special and had broken his legs and that the present Railway Minister had become a sleeper on account of it. It is a very interesting and thought provoking cartoon. I would ask the Minister to bestow some thought over this question of accidents and see that recurrence of accidents on railways does not happen.

Another point that I would like to add is that the Minister while answer-

[Shri Mulka Govinda Reddy.]
ing some questions here has said that there are 19,000 unmanned railway crossings. Some of the accidents take place at these railway crossings. The classification that was made by the railways at that time does not hold good today. In view of the fact that we are undergoing great changes in our economy and that a very rapid development has taken place, traffic through almost all these unmanned railway crossings has increased so much that they should try to see that all these 19,000 unmanned crossings are manned. Another point that I would like to suggest is that they should have traffic islands near these crossings to check the speed of the lorry drivers, particularly the lorry drivers of Delhi, who go with a reckless speed.

Again, it has been stated that a number of accidents take place because some of the trains are run at a higher speed than has been allowed. It is a matter which should be gone into. The Railway Ministry should see to it that proper steps are taken to see that the engine drivers are not allowed to take the trains much faster than has been authorised or permitted on those particular routes.

This Review also gives another important point, whether these accidents take place on the track or at the stations. Really, I do not understand why accidents should take place at stations. Most of the accidents have taken place at railway stations, which could be easily avoided with proper care and caution. There should be inspectors to give proper guidance. The Station masters, divisional Superintendents and general managers should exercise proper care and authority to see that proper discipline is maintained and should take proper steps.

I would also like to add that the time has come to think about reorganising the railway zones. Some of these zones are too big and it is impossible for the Railway Ministry

or the zonal authorities to manage such huge Zones. The Railway Minister should consider the question of reorganising the railway zones and increasing the present number by about three or four. If the zones are small, it is possible that they can be properly managed with proper supervision. The rolling stock and the track can be properly supervised, the locomotives can be properly checked and if they are not fit for operation, they can be replaced.

With these words, I conclude my speech.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Lohani. Please take ten minutes. There are a number of speakers.

SHRI I. T. LOHANI (Gujarat):
Madam Deputy Chairman, I am indeed very happy to have been given this opportunity to take part in today's debate. From the statement of railway accidents, I find that a number of accidents have taken place due to the drivers having exceeded the prescribed speed limit. I would therefore suggest that some means should be found to mark the speed at which the driver can take his train so that any exceeding of the prescribed speed could be noted and at every halt both the guard and the station master could check the speed at which the train had been run. In case they find that the driver has exceeded the speed limit, he should be immediately checked, and such accidents could be avoided. I would also request that a speed limit may be fixed for trains when approaching the stations, whether they are to halt at a station or are going to go through.

Having further studied the statement of accidents, I find that some of the accidents have taken place due to the negligence of the staff. I would therefore request the hon. Railway Minister to consider imposing penal punishments over and above dismissal.

I am happy to see that a Committee has been appointed to go into the

causes of the accidents that have taken place, and it is going to recommend ways and means by which these accidents could be averted. I do hope that it will fully take into consideration the human factor and try to recommend ways and means by which these accidents could be avoided and suggest some system for closer co-ordination between the station staff, the cabinmen and the points-men.

Since independence, both passenger and goods traffic have increased tremendously. Therefore, the pressure on railway tracks and on rolling stock is tremendous and it is increasing day by day. I feel therefore that it is necessary to keep a greater vigil on the maintenance of the tracks and the rolling stock. To substantiate my argument I should like to give an example of the increase in traffic on the metre-gauge section between Ahmedabad and Delhi. Ten years ago as many as 15—20 trains used to pass through Palanpur; today there are more than 50—60 trains passing, within twentyfour hours. Thus the pressure on the tracks has increased, and this being a very important line which connects both Gujarat and Rajasthan with the rest of India, I would request the hon. Minister to consider doubling the line in the near future. It would also reduce the pressure on the tracks, which it has today.

Having thus made my observations I should like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Indian Railways for meeting the challenge after independence, the challenge of such heavy passenger and goods traffic. Our railways are playing a very important role in developing our country and I shall be failing in my duty if I only pointed out the failings and not appreciated the good work they have done and are doing. Therefore, the Railway Minister and the whole department deserve our hearty congratulations for the yeoman service they are

doing and I am sure, in time to come, our railways will reach greater heights of efficiency.

Thank you.

SHRI P. K. KUMARAN (Andhra Pradesh): Madam Deputy Chairman, the Railway Minister has placed before us a statement in which 14 accidents are listed. These accidents have taken place during a short span of time, between two Sessions of Parliament. During this period a large number of accidents have crowded together at the rate of almost one accident for every two days. Naturally, therefore public mind is much exercised; a feeling of insecurity is being felt in all quarters.

The list with us shows a good number of accidents where the trains have entered obstructed lines. This shows that apart from the human factor involved, the signal and interlocking systems on our Railways are not perfect.

Apart from the fact that we have not been able to make use of the advanced knowledge that is available in the modern age, there are historical reasons also which contribute a lot to the number of accidents. Madam, we have inherited from the British almost a heap of scrap in the form of railways. Our railway system was put to the maximum use during war years. There was no replacement, no repairs worth mentioning. Maintenance of track was neglected. Rails were not renewed. Engines had become exhausted. We could not do the renewals and repairs that were required to make the system render efficient service.

It was on such a system that the heavy Canadian W.P. engines were introduced during the period 1949-50. The engine itself was not made according to the design which we wanted. After importing, as many as 150 changes had to be made on some engines before they were put on the track. That was the beginning of the

[Shri P. K. Kumaran.] present spate of accidents on our railways. Ever since then accidents have been keeping more or less the same rate of increase as the increase in the volume and speed of our traffic.

I was talking about the signalling system. Except in some modernised stations, we are still having the good old mediaeval system of signalling and point locking system. Even mechanically fully interlocked stations are few. Our system can cater only to the old type of light trains which run in a leisurely way. Yet we are running faster and heavier trains nowadays. That is possible because the staff are giving their maximum co-operation.

The number of accidents could have been reduced if only the authorities take to the practice of removing the causes of accidents whenever they are discovered. But they are more interested in fixing responsibility on somebody, punish him and then close the file. If nobody could be fixed, they invariably attribute the accidents to sabotage. Sabotage has become a convenient device for the top officials to explain away accidents which are difficult to understand. I think the report of enquiry about the accident to the Ranchi Express at Ghatsila is ready by this time. I hope the Railway Minister will make the report available to us and also give an opportunity to discuss the report.

I will give some examples of accidents. On 10-8-1962 the driver of a passenger train struck against a signal post at Kagankarai and fell down from the running train. But this is not included in the list given to us by the Railway Minister. The driver is now in Vellore hospital in an unconscious state.

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SHAH NAWAZ KHAN): That was not a train accident.

DR. A. SUBBA RAO (Kerala): That was an engine accident.

SHRI P. K. KUMARAN: Some months back, at Thinnappati, the driver of a banker engine working a mail train struck against a signal post. He fell down unconscious in the cab and ten days later he died.

At Buddireddippatti, on 4-10-1961, a goods train driver struck against a signal post. He was in hospital for six months. He was permanently disabled and was given some light job after recovery.

Now, all these three stations are situated between Jalarpet and Salem on the west-coast Main Line of Southern Railway. About a year back the signals were rearranged over this section, when the signal posts were planted too close to the track. If the authorities had taken steps to remove the cause even when the first accident took place, the other two accidents would not have taken place. But then, the question of taking the blame for not providing adequate distance between the track and the signal post must be owned by the engineer who supervised the work of rearranging the signals. This the officer was not prepared for; nor were the other officers willing to apportion blame on their friends; hence, accidents after accidents, ostensibly due to the carelessness of the drivers. Even now the administration has not learnt its lesson. They are not contemplating to refix the signals.

To cite another instance of the defect of the signalling system, on 24-3-1958, the Grand Trunk Express had an averted collision with a goods train at Machavaram in the Vijaya-wada-Bitragunta section. Points were set for one line but the signals were lowered for another line. The vigilance of the running staff saved the train from disaster. What was the reaction of the administration? They issued a circular on 26-3-1958 instructing the staff that they should not rely completely on the signals. Four days after the first accident, while the

staff were still trying to understand the circular, another accident took place. On 28-3-1958, Delhi-Madras de-Luxe Express and Madras-Calcutta Mail came face to face on the same line, at the same station, Machavaram. Luckily, this time also they did not touch each other. The staff were vigilant. And what did the administration do? The circular of 26-3-1958 gets converted into a correction slip to the General Rule No. 36-B. That was all. Of course, the file of accidents was closed by fixing responsibility on the A.S.M. and dismissing him from the service. But was this enough? If the correct lesson was drawn from those accidents and the defects in the station interlocking system was removed throughout the railways, the Dumraon accident would not have taken place. Instead of improving the mechanism of the system, we went on adding correction slips to the General Rules for working the trains. Even now the same approach persists and hence the accidents are increasing.

You cannot run faster and heavier trains with the equipment meant for slower and lighter trains in a leisurely way. In many stations, where traffic is heavy, the spring trap system of points or key locking system of points is in use. On 4-12-1961 at Kistna Canal station, a passenger train and a goods train dashed against each other. Ten passengers were injured. This is a line where, on an average, 50 to 60 trains pass through up and down. If the station had a fully interlocked system of points and signals, this accident could not have taken place. A thorough examination of the entire signalling and interlocking system is called for. I hope the Railway Minister will take necessary steps in this direction.

Then comes the question of maintenance of tracks. The railway track was grievously neglected during the years of the second World War. The

renewal of rails and sleepers have not yet caught up with the demands we make on the railway track now. Underneath the sleepers, there should be 8 inches of stone metal packing. This is neglected now. In olden days, gangmen were asked to pack the sleepers with stones and soil thrown in between the crevices among the stones. Such a packing used to withstand the weight and speed of trains rolling over the track. Of late, they are asked to pack the stones without even a track of soil, and not so deep as before. The modern trains are heavier, longer, and speedier ones. Two trains up and down, and the packing becomes loose and the track sinks. This is especially dangerous in coastal areas and areas where rainfall is heavy. Hitherto a gang of 12 men was given the responsibility of maintaining 3 miles of track. Now, this has been increased to 4 miles. And wherever extra gangmen are given, they are casual labourers. By the time the gang reaches one end of the gang length, the other end under the impact of the present heavy and fast traffic would have become loose and sagging. Even in the olden days, workmen were demanding more men for each gang. Instead of increasing men, you have increased the miles. The increase of workload is two fold by adding more miles and by quicker loosening of the packing under the sleepers.

Madam, in many sections loose jaw type of iron sleepers are being used now. Sometimes these sleepers are not properly manufactured with the result that it results in defects in the track. And when a defective rolling stock moves over this track, derailments are sure to take place.

These iron sleepers often become rusty and the holes become enlarged. The keys which hold the rails to the sleepers become loose. And whenever a speedy train passes over, the keys slip away. If an accident takes place, they definitely get scattered.

[Shri P. K. Kumaran.]

Then, of course, the authorities get the opportunity of throwing the entire blame on sabotage and avoid many an embarrassing query. I do not believe that sabotage is one of the reasons for accidents on our railways.

Then I come to the question of maintenance of engines.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Your time limit is over.

SHRI P. K. KUMARAN: Five minutes more.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Two minutes.

SHRI P. K. KUMARAN: Engine repairs are divided into four schedules. If the repair takes place in the order prescribed according to the schedules, there will be no difficulty. But this practice had been given up long ago. Nowadays our engines are under permanent repair. Tools and spare parts are not supplied. In the repair sheds there are more supervisors than actual workers.

Then, Madam, instead of using new spare parts, parts from the next engines are removed and put on to the engine required first. Many a time drivers are being forced to take out engines without gauge glass, asbestos packing, high pressure joint sheets, etc.

The number of skilled workers available for maintenance of engines is not sufficient. They are not given skilled leave reserve staff, and the workload is more than they could do efficiently. To illustrate, on 29-8-59, the Madras-Calcutta Mail was derailed at Chinna Ganjam because of the defect in the left radial wheel. On the previous day, the same engine was taken from Rajahmundry to Waltair. The driver had remarked that the radial wheel was defective and the wheel might slip off the rails. But without properly removing the defect, the engine was booked again.

If the driver had refused, he would have been charged for obstructive work or insubordination. The engine derailed at Chinna Ganjam. The book in which the driver made his remark disappeared in the other shed. The accident was attributed to sabotage.

On 24-2-61, the Delhi de Luxe Express escaped a major disaster near Kavali. The side code crank pin of the engine broke into two. The vigilant driver sensed something wrong and brought the train to a halt; otherwise hundreds of lives would have been lost that day.

Again, on 20-3-62 the Delhi Janata Express came to a sudden stop on a bridge near Talamanchi. The gudgeon pin on the left side of the engine broke into two pieces. Luckily, the train was going at a slow speed of 10 miles per hour. Hence the train came to an automatic stop. If the train were moving at full speed, the river underneath would have swallowed hundreds of lives.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Are you going to mention all the accidents? Then you will take a long time.

SHRI P. K. KUMARAN: I am only giving examples to illustrate my point. The accident which happened to the Ranchi Express on South-Eastern Railway also is an example of defective engines being put on express trains.

Another accident which I remember is the one at Srirampura near Cuddapah. Here the line is 1 in 90 gradient. The authorities have recently constructed a station where there is no loop line. But two sidings start from the two ends of the station. These sidings cross in the scissor fashion in front of the station. If two trains are to be crossed at this station, the first train must be received in the siding. Then the second train should be allowed to

pass After that the first train must be backed on to the other siding and then started for the main line First of all a crossing station at such steep gradient should not have been permitted (Time bell rings) Two minutes more

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN You have taken 17 minutes You can wind up now You need not mention all this, otherwise you will need the rest of the day for that list of accidents alone

4 P.M.

SHRI P. K. KUMARAN The Railway Minister has said in the other House that the best safety measure is a careful man I agree with him but it should also be remembered that the railwaymen are not entrusted with bullockcarts If you look at the casualties, you will find that a good number of them are railwaymen themselves I do not think that anybody will be careless enough to allow accidents to happen in which he himself is involved I have got many more points to mention but since there is no time, I resume my seat.

श्री महावीर दास (बिहार) उपसभापति महोदया, माननीय रेलवे मंत्री जी ने जिन दुर्घटनाओं का उल्लेख किया, उनमें से २ दुर्घटनाओं की जांच चल रही है और जिसमें डुमराव दुर्घटना की जांच कमीशन द्वारा कराई जा रही है। १२ दुर्घटनाओं में जिनकी जांच हो चुकी है, उसमें आपरेटिव स्टाफ के अन्दर ५ ड्राइवर, ५ लीवरमैन, २ कैबिन मैन, ३ सहायक स्टेशन मास्टर और १ प्वाइन्ट्समैन हैं। इस तरह से कुल १६ रेलवे कर्मचारी दोषी ठहराये गये हैं और अन्य ७ रेलवे कर्मचारियों को भी दोषी ठहराया गया है। एव दो दुर्घटनाओं के अन्दर सड़क पर चलने वाले यातायात के २ ड्राइवर दोषी समझे गये हैं। इन १४ दुर्घटनाओं के अन्दर २ रेलवे कर्मचारियों की और ७२ यात्रियों की मृत्यु

हुई है तथा २८ रेलवे कर्मचारी घाहत हुए हैं और १३१ यात्री घाहत हुए हैं। दुर्घटनाग्रस्त यात्रियों एव रेलवे कर्मचारियों के प्रति सभी की समवेदना है। परन्तु यह देखना होगा कि ये दुर्घटनाएँ क्यों होती हैं और वास्तव में इसका कारण क्या है। अगर हम पिछले कुछ दिनों की बातों को याद करें तो हमें मालूम होगा कि पिछले समय में हमारे यहाँ रेलों की सख्या कम थी, ड्राइवर, कैबिन, मैन और उच्च अधिकारियों की भी सख्या कम थी और साथ ही साथ काम का भार भी कम था। आज हम दिन प्रति दिन तरक्की कर रहे हैं, इसलिए यह स्वाभाविक है—अस्वाभाविक नहीं कहा जा सकता है—कि इसमें कुछ दुर्घटनाएँ भी हो जायें। आप देखेंगे कि सन् १९५६-५७ में यात्रियों की सख्या १,३८३ करोड़ थी, तो वहाँ सन् १९६०-६१ में १,६१६ करोड़ हो गई, अर्थात् हर वर्ष यात्रियों की सख्या बढ़ रही है, क्योंकि हम हर वर्ष रेलवे में तरक्की कर रहे हैं और यही हमें आगे भी करना है।

श्री विमलकुमार मन्नालालजी चौरङ्गिया (मध्य प्रदेश) हम एक्सीडेंट में भी तरक्की कर रहे हैं।

श्री महावीर दास मैं आपका बतलाना चाहता हूँ कि हम रेलवे एक्सीडेंटों में कमी कर रहे हैं, हम उसमें सुधार कर रहे हैं। आप देखेंगे कि सन् १९५६-५७ में जहाँ ०.२० के हिसाब से प्रति १ करोड़ यात्रियों पर दुर्घटनाओं से मृत्यु हुई वहाँ १९६०-६१ में ०.०२ के हिसाब से प्रति १ करोड़ यात्रियों पर दुर्घटनाओं से मृत्यु हुई है, अर्थात् ०.१८ प्रति करोड़ कम मृत्यु हुई। इस बात से यह साफ जाहिर होता है कि हम क्रमशः दुर्घटनाओं को कम करते जा रहे हैं। सन् १९५६-५७ में जहाँ प्रति करोड़ यात्रियों पर ०.२४ यात्री दुर्घटना से घाहत हुए, वहाँ सन् १९६०-६१ में प्रति करोड़ यात्रियों पर ०.१६ यात्री दुर्घटना से घाहत हुए। इससे यह साफ जाहिर होता है कि रेलवे तरक्की करने के साथ ही

[श्री महावीर दास]

साथ अच्छी तरह से निगरानी का काम भी कर रही है। हमारे रेलवे कर्मचारी सजग हैं और हमारे कर्मचारी मुस्तैदी से काम कर रहे हैं और इसी को वजह से दुर्घटनाएं कम हो रही हैं। आज आप देखेंगे कि रेलवे में तरक्की हो रही है और स्टाफ भी बढ़ गया है। इसके साथ ही साथ आपको यह भी सोचना होगा कि ब्रिटिश काल में रेलवे स्टाफ बहुत कम था। आज हम रेलवे में तरह-तरह की तरक्की कर रहे हैं और लाखों लोगों को ट्रेनिंग दे रहे हैं। हो सकता है कि इस ट्रेनिंग के दरमियान कुछ ऐसे लोग कमजोर रहें जिनकी वजह से कुछ दुर्घटनाएं हो जायें। परन्तु इसके लिए यह नहीं माना जा सकता है, यह नहीं कहा जा सकता है कि हमारे रेलवे अधिकारी अपने काम में सजग नहीं हैं, सचेष्ट नहीं हैं, जागरूक नहीं हैं। अगर आप दुर्घटनाओं के सम्बन्ध में विचारेंगे तो आपको मालूम होगा कि रेलवे ऐक्ट की धारा ८३ के अनुसार ५ प्रकार की दुर्घटनाओं का उल्लेख है और उसके अनुसार जो कार्य-बाहियां कानूनी तौर पर बताई गई हैं कि बिना किसी विलम्ब के राज्य सरकार को, रेलवे इंस्पेक्टर को और निकटतम स्टेशन के स्टेशन मास्टर को दुर्घटना की सूचना देनी चाहिये और जिस स्टेशन मास्टर के क्षेत्र में दुर्घटना घटी हो, उस स्टेशन के स्टेशन मास्टर का कर्त्तव्य है कि अविलम्ब स्थानीय जिलाधीश और पुलिस अफसर को दुर्घटना की सूचना दे दें। इस नियम का पालन सर्वदा होता रहता है। यह जो आंकड़े हमारे सामने प्रस्तुत किये गये हैं, वे अविलम्ब जो रिपोर्ट तैयार की जाती है, जांच की जाती है, उसके आधार पर हैं और सही हैं। इससे यह सिद्ध होता है कि जो ब्योरा प्रस्तुत किया गया है उसके अनुसार जितने यात्री आहत हुए हैं या जितने यात्री मरे हैं, वे बिल्कुल ठीक हैं।

धारा ८५ के अनुसार रेलवे ऐड-मिनिस्ट्रेशन ने केन्द्रीय सरकार को

दुर्घटना का रिटर्न भेजा है और उसी के अनुसार ही माननीय मंत्री महोदय ने दुर्घटनाओं का ब्योरा प्रस्तुत किया है, वरना धारा ६२ के अन्दर सम्बन्धित अधिकारी दोषी ठहराये जा सकते हैं। मुझे विश्वास है कि इन दुर्घटनाओं की रिपोर्ट केन्द्रीय सरकार को ठीक ठीक प्रस्तुत की गई है। केन्द्रीय सरकार ने भी, जो रिपोर्ट उसको मिली, उसको अविलम्ब प्रकाशित किया और इसके बारे में यह नहीं कहा जा सकता है कि उस में कोई खामी है या रिपोर्ट में कोई कमी है। मैं इस के साथ ही साथ यह भी कह देना चाहता हूं कि १९६०-६१ में ११,६०,७१४ रेलवे कर्मचारी थे; जिन पर २,०४,८२,३३,००० रुपया खर्च होता था। १९५९-६० में जब कि ११,९८९ बैगन्स बनाये गये थे, वहां १९६०-६१ में १९,१०० बैगन्स बनाये गये। १९६१-६२ में डबल लाइन ६०० किलो मीटर तैयार हुई और हम इसी प्रकार के दिन प्रतिदिन रेलवे में प्रगतिशील कार्य करते जा रहे हैं। इन सब चीजों से मालूम होता है कि हम तरक्की कर रहे हैं। परन्तु आप को यह भी देखना होगा कि रेलवे में जहां तरक्की हो रही है, वहां आपरेटिव स्टाफ के सम्बन्ध में क्या क्या बातें होती हैं। मुझे इस बात को जानने का मौका मिला है कि जमालपुर स्टेशन में ११ सहायक स्टेशन मास्टरों के स्थान रिक्त हैं और उनकी पूर्ति तीन वर्षों से नहीं हो रही है। यह मानना होगा कि आपरेटिव स्टाफ में ड्राइवर, लीवरमैन, केबिनमैन, और प्वाइन्ट्समैन इत्यादि आते हैं और जब कभी इन लोगों की जगह रिक्त होती है। उसको अविलम्ब पूरा किया जाना चाहिये, अगर इन लोगों की जगह की पूर्ति होती रहेगी, तो मेरा विश्वास है कि रेलवे में दुर्घटनाएं कम हो जायेंगी।

आजकल रेलवे में बहुत से प्लानिंग के काम हो रहे हैं, फिर भी रेलवे की तरक्की के लिये तृतीय पंचवर्षीय योजना में १,३२५

करोड़ रुपये रखे गये थे और उसे योजना कमीशन ने बढ़ा कर सम्भवतः १,५६० करोड़ रुपये करने का विचार किया है। मेरा विश्वास है कि योजना कमीशन द्वारा जो बढ़ोतरी की जा रही है, उसको माननीय रेलवे मंत्री जी रेलवे के विकास में अच्छी तरह से लगायेंगे और इस बारे में अच्छी तरह से विचार करेंगे।

इसके साथ ही साथ ड्राइवरों की सुविधा की ओर भी ध्यान दिया जाना चाहिये और उनकी जो दिक्कतें हैं, उन्हें दूर किया जाना चाहिये। दुर्घटनाएँ जो होती हैं उन्हें भी रोकने के लिये स्टाफ को अच्छी तरह से काम करने के लिये बढ़ावा दिया जाना चाहिये। रेलवे में जो केबिनमैन, प्वाइंट्स-मैन तथा अन्य लोग हैं, उनकी सुविधा का खयाल रखा जाना चाहिये तथा उनको बेतन में भी राहत दी जानी चाहिये।

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please wind up.

श्री महाबीर दास : अगर हम रेलवे कर्मचारियों को इस तरह की सुविधा देंगे, तो वे हर तरह की तकलीफ उठाने को तैयार रहेंगे और अपना कार्य भी अच्छी तरह से करेंगे।

साथ साथ आप देखेंगे कि जो १४ दुर्घटनाएँ हुई हैं . . .

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please wind up. There are far too many speakers.

SHRI MAHABIR DASS: Just two minutes more.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: One minute. You are denying other speakers.

श्री महाबीर दास : टू मिनट्स। तो उन १४ दुर्घटनाओं में से जो दो दुर्घटनाएँ हुई हैं, वे बैलगाड़ी या मोटर गाड़ी से टकराकर

हुई हैं। इसके सम्बन्ध में मेरा यह कहना है कि अपने यहां ३२ हजार लेविल क्रॉसिंग हैं, जिनमें से सिर्फ १२ हजार मंड हैं। आप देखेंगे कि २० हजार लेविल क्रॉसिंग अनमैन्ड हैं। तो मैं यह रिक्वेस्ट करूंगा कि जो २० हजार अनमैन्ड लेविल क्रॉसिंग हैं, उनको जल्दी से जल्दी मैन्ड बनाया जाय।

हम यह भी महसूस करते हैं कि माननीय रेल मंत्री, उपमंत्री और जितने अधिकारी वर्ग के लोग हैं, वे दुर्घटनाओं से काफी दुखी हैं और वे जवाबदेही पर विचार कर रहे हैं। मेरा विश्वास है कि अधिकारीगण और मंत्रीगण सब के सब तत्परता से विचारेंगे कि भविष्य में दुर्घटनाएँ कम हों।

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Mani. The hon. Member will please keep within his time limit.

SHRI A. D. MANI (Madhya Pradesh): Madam Deputy Chairman, the hon. Minister of Railways when initiating this debate said that the best safety device on the railways is a careful man. Well, whatever may be the impressive performance of the Indian Railways, including the 3 lakh wagons which are being run on the rails and including also the 4,600 passenger trains, to all of which the Railway Minister made reference, I should like to say that the chart that he has presented to the House regarding the railway accidents does not bear out the fact that careful men are to be found in large numbers in the railway administration, from the Railway Board to the last gangman. I would like to invite the attention of the hon. Minister to item 6 of the Table which has been placed before the House. In that item you are told that there was an accident on account of the cabinman and the leverman not setting the points properly. And what was the action taken? The increment of both of them was withheld.

AN HON. MEMBER: Is that all?

SHRI A. D. MANI: Yes, that is all. If there had been a serious accident and if there had been loss of life, who would have been responsible? But in spite of that, this is the punishment that has been meted out to the cabinman and the leverman. You can see that in item No. 1 there was derailment of an engine and some wagons and the reason was excessive speed and the track was obstructed by a train having fallen on it. And then, what was the action taken? It is stated here:

"Driver having been killed in the accident no action was called for."

I believe they should have found out how this derailment took place, whether the track had been damaged by the previous train having fallen on it. But all that is stated here is: The driver having been killed, no action was taken. Madam, I believe that on the railways a large number of men who do not have the requisite educational qualifications have been appointed as cabinmen and as persons to set points. There is a rule on the railways which says that the station master and the superintendent must explain the rules to every employee and record an entry for each individual on the staff in the form of a declaration to the effect that the rules and instructions have been explained to him and understood by him. In other words, the men that the railways are employing at various strategic points are persons without the adequate qualifications. They must have picked up experience, but we would like to know what kind of a proficiency they had earned before they were appointed to those posts.

Madam, I believe you know and the House also knows that before a person is given a driver's licence he is tested by a traffic inspector to find out whether he is a person qualified to drive a motor car on the road. I would like to ask the Railway Minister whether any test has been prescribed for persons who operate the cabins, for the person who sets the

points and so on. I would like to make a suggestion to the hon. Minister that the standard of punishment which is given for grave negligence and carelessness is very low. I do not want to be vindictive towards poor men who have got to work under harassing conditions. But if you have got to maintain the efficiency of our railways, the punishment cannot be lenient because lenient punishment undermines the morale of the railways more than any other factor. If the Railway Minister would only tell us what is the percentage of the accidents on the railways in the U.K. and the U.S.S.R. we would see that the percentage in the U.K. and the U.S.S.R. is much lower than the percentage of accidents on our Indian railways. In 1958-59 over 4,000 accidents took place and I believe about 8,000 accidents took place after that year's report was submitted to Parliament.

SHRI SATYACHARAN: May I point out to the hon. Member that we have also to consider the enormity of the land and also the population.

SHRI DAHYABHAI V. PATEL: Does the Minister need anybody to defend him? He is competent to defend himself.

SHRI A. D. MANI: I do understand that we are having 50,000 miles of railway line and ours is a vast country with difficult terrains and so on. But still the standard of operational efficiency of the Indian Railways is lower than the operational efficiency in the U.K. and U.S.S.R. and it is a matter on which we should stand comparison with the U.S.S.R. and the U.K. because the Indian Railways are the best undertaking of the Government of India.

There is one other point that I would like to raise here and that relates to track renewal. Mr. Roy of the Railway Board made a statement last year, I believe and he said that the track renewal programme of the railways has not been properly at-

tended to. There are about 7,226 miles of railway lines which have not been renewed, and according to him, cushion ballast is not available for thousands of miles. There is again the difficulty about sleepers and track renewals. I think the time has come when the Government should conduct detailed technical investigations regarding the track maintenance in the country. The load on the railways is very heavy and I believe experts have warned that the railways use 90 lb. rails for the broad gauge and 60 lb. rails for the metre gauge, and that this poundage is quite inadequate to bear the weight of the traffic and the speed of the traffic that is moving. I would, therefore, suggest to the hon. Minister that he should conduct a detailed technical investigation into this matter. We do not want a parliamentary committee of enquiry to find out whether the track maintenance on our railways has been done properly.

Madam, I would like to mention one more point before I close. The Railway Minister referred to the accident prevention committee working on different railways. I am glad that he gave us this information because a large number of us are not aware of the work of this committee. We do not know when they meet. After all, such an accident prevention committee should meet at some time. I would, however, suggest to the hon. Minister to constitute a railway safety committee on which Members of Parliament, persons from the public, the State Governments are also represented and that committee will constantly meet and advise the railways.

SHRI N. SRI RAMA REDDY (Mysore): What are the functions of the committee they have?

SHRI A. D. MANI: We do not know what the functions of that committee are. My hon. friend Shri Rama Reddy asks what are the functions of this committee. I don't know.

I would like to mention one other thing and that is this. There is a lot of labour discontent on the railways. Let us be frank about it. The Essential Services Ordinance and the Bill that was brought in later on, have produced a riot of discontent all over the railways. Unless Government mends its labour policy and permits the railway unions to function as industrial unions function, there will not be any contentment in railway workers. It is this labour discontent which has sapped the efficiency of railwaymen at various centres and this has been responsible for the negligence, which again is the root cause of all these accidents. I do hope that the Government would modify its labour policy and take into account the feelings of railwaymen who feel that they have been denied their fundamental right to organise themselves into legally constituted trade unions. Thank you, Madam.

SHRI DAHYABHAI V. PATEL: Madam Deputy Chairman, since the time at my disposal is very little, I shall not repeat myself. I am grateful to Mr. Mani for raising some of the very important points which were in my mind. The Railway Minister gave us, in his speech, a lot of information, very valuable information, but unfortunately he was being derailed by my hon. friend, Mr. Bhupesh Gupta, again and again. He gave us astronomical figures. I do not think the figures were meant for any other purpose except to confuse the House and us. Madam, we were told, for instance, even the number of passengers carried every day by the railways. Now, do the passengers create accidents? I submit that it is very unfair to use the figure relating to the number of passengers carried on the railways in relation to accidents. Passengers have no voice in the accidents.

SHRI ARJUN ARORA (Uttar Pradesh): Compare it with the figure of people killed.

SHRI DAHYABHAI V. PATEL: Number of passengers do not make for accidents; it is a certain amount of negligence that makes for accidents. Figures were given in regard to the number of trains, number of engines, track mile and number of stations. Madam, there are several railway lines in this country which have one train going up and one coming down during a day or perhaps two. There is hardly the possibility of an accident happening on such lines except in the case of very gross negligence. I submit it is very unfair to total them up here. Similar is the case in regard to the nineteen or twenty thousand unmanned level crossings. The level crossings through which a large amount of traffic passes through, can certainly be taken into consideration but where you have level-crossings on railway lines on which only one or two trains pass during a day, far out in the countryside, in a branch line or in some neglected place or neglected area, it is not fair to include all these, total up all of them and then point out the huge load that the railways have to carry. It is quite true that the workload of the Indian Railways is very high but I would like to ask a very pertinent question. What was the workload of the Indian Railways during the war period? During the war period they were working with old equipment; they were working with old engines; they had not got the facility of the new engines that you have got, all the expanded track capacity that you have got and yet accidents were few, in spite of the sabotage carried on by people who believed in that manner of winning freedom. I say, in spite of that, accidents were few because the efficiency of that railway system, that management from top to bottom was very high. I say that the management of the Indian Railways has deteriorated from top to bottom very much after that management left, as is the case in the Government, in other services and everywhere. That is the thing that needs to be remedied. It is efficiency that is needed. The Railway

Minister talked of the careful man. Madam, the careful man needs a careful administration to support him. However careful a man is, when he says that a particular engine is defective, that he is reluctant to drive it, yet he is told that he must drive it. In such circumstances, how can you blame him if accidents occur in such a system? It is proficiency that has gone down considerably and when proficiency of the railways has gone down, naturally efficiency will go down and the careful man will become a difficult commodity to find.

Madam, there is another point that I should like to refer to. We have so many Ministers and Cabinets are expanding even in the States. How many Ministers get involved in railway accidents? Madam, I am not at all against Ministers. God forbid that anything should happen to them but since the Minister has given so many figures, will he tell us, out of the numerous accidents that have taken place, out of the numerous trains that have got derailed, in how many cases the Ministers were involved, in how many train accidents the Ministers were involved? Well, accidents do not take place then, because the whole system is efficient or at least tries to be efficient. There is a certain amount of fear and they are all screwed up to efficiency and hence they are careful. Why cannot the railway administration make carefulness the rule, the everyday routine because the life of the ordinary citizen of this country is as valuable to him and to his family and, may I say, to the country also as that of the numerous Ministers that we have in this country and of whom there does not seem to be any end now? Madam, a Committee has been appointed, the Railway Accidents Enquiry Committee. I am glad we have an efficient person, an eminent person, a keen student of railway administration like Dr. Kunzru to be the Chairman of that Committee. Unfortunately, another accident prevented his being a Member of this House and so we have lost the benefit of his advice here.

(Interruption).

Madam, when one of the most serious accidents took place, the Railway Minister had to go to Madhya Pradesh to enquire into another type of accident and so the Deputy Minister, Mr. Shah Nawaz Khan, went to the site of the accident. That is exactly what I am saying that efficiency has gone down everywhere, and Ministers are saddled with so many other responsibilities of their party and organisation. Mr. Lal Bahadur Shastri was a different man when he was the Railway Minister and he was so conscious that he resigned when a serious accident took place. You heard the answer that he gave yesterday about the work of the Accidents Enquiry Committee. These Ministers are saddled with too much responsibility about the party and the party is suffering from too many accidents and too many derailments all over that they have the job of keeping the party together and, therefore, the administration of the country is being neglected everywhere. That is the real trouble.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Do you want to say that the sum total of all this is that we are on the brink of a disaster?

SHRI DAHYABHAI V. PATEL: I do.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: For once both of you agree.

SHRI M. RUTHNASWAMY (Madras): Not a railway disaster, I hope.

SHRI DAHYABHAI V. PATEL: In this effort to keep the falling house together and prevent it from falling to pieces, the energy of the highest and the best people in this country has to be engaged but here also, the principles on which that organisation was built or the high principles with which so many people came into the service of this country—so many people came to Parliament, have also gone. That is the reason and that is

the root cause of these accidents and I hope the Railway Minister will apply his mind a little more to this serious case than to what is happening in Madhya Pradesh.

SHRI ARJUN ARORA: Madam Deputy Chairman, the statement laid by the hon. Minister on the Table of the House related only to the inter-session period giving one the impression that the accidents on the railways take place only when Parliament is not in session. That impression has been belied by the railways and an accident has taken place. The accidents on the railways, some speakers will like us to believe, take place only because punishments are not given to the poor operatives. I would submit that that is far from the truth. The boot is on the other leg.

SHRI DAHYABHAI V. PATEL: On the Minister's leg or whose leg?

SHRI ARJUN ARORA: It is on the other leg, not on the operatives, not on the workers. A number of instances have come to the notice of this House in which the engine drivers have pointed out the defects of the engines and still they have been asked to drive them. A number of instances have come to light which show that drivers are asked to drive engines for 12 hours continuously and the well-known factor of fatigue of the operative is entirely ignored by the railway administration. The Minister has given a long and impressive list of the achievements of the railways. The number of wagons has mounted up; the number of trains has mounted up. I will submit that that has happened because the men have co-operated and the railway administration has failed because the number of operatives has not proportionately risen. The workload on the railway employees has increased enormously. The railways should immediately apply scientific methods of measurement of workload and job evaluation and reassess the strength. On a number of occasions one has found that the

[Shri Arjun Arora.] same number of people, the same strength of men are handling the much increased job. Unless the railways do something in the matter, unless the railways apply the now well accepted methods of work study and measure the workload of each employee, accidents will happen. The poor driver, the poor pointsman; may be negligent sometimes but it is entirely baseless to say that he is responsible for the accidents. Accidents on the railways continue to increase because the supervision at the higher levels is very lax. Indeed what one finds is that people higher up always look to Delhi. They have lost the initiative. The people higher up in the railways who should be inspecting the work of their subordinates are rushing to Delhi to attend one meeting or the other. It is the officer class which is not doing its job. It is those who sit at the top as officers who are not doing their job and that is why there is no promptness in the railways, there is no earnestness among those who are supposed to supervise the work of the operatives and that is why in this atmosphere an element of irresponsibility prevails. That must be done away with. It is no use our saying that accidents here are less than those in the U.S.A. The U.S.A. is a funny country in many ways. It is a good country in many ways but funny in many ways. Their national holidays are marked by the number of people killed in road accidents. That does not happen in India and we do not want that to happen in this country. It is no use our enumerating the list of evils in America and saying that our evils are less. Human life in India is valuable and it should be considered even more valuable.

SHRI C. D. PANDE (Uttar Pradesh): Question.

SHRI ARJUN ARORA: I am amazed at your questioning this. Mention of unmanned level crossings has repeatedly been made. I am glad that

the Railway Minister has thought of manning a few hundreds of the 19,000 which are still unmanned. I wonder if the Railway Minister is not manning the other level crossings because he finds paucity of men. There is no paucity of men in the country. If there is not full-time work for the people who may be required to man all the 19,000 unmanned crossings the Gaon Sabhas and Village Panchayats' co-operation may be enlisted. Voluntary or part-time paid people should be recruited for manning level crossings at the crucial hour. I suggest that the Railway Minister should do something about it because though the number of trains has increased, though the number of wagons that the railways are moving has increased, every accident brings disgrace to the railways. That is something which I do not want to happen. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Before I call upon Mr. Chordia, there are a number of Members who would like to speak. If it is the desire of the House we can extend the time by half an hour and the Minister could be called upon at 5-10 to reply. Is it the desire of the House that we may extend the time?

HON. MEMBERS: Yes.

श्री विमलकुमार मन्नालालजी चौरङ्गिया:

महोदया, यह जो वक्तव्य माननीय मंत्री जी ने सभा के पटल पर रखा उस को देख कर के बहुत दुख होता है कि हमारे यहां पर थोड़े ही दिनों में इतनी दुर्घटनायें हो गई और सब से पहले आइटम को ही पढ़ कर मुझे ऐसा लगा कि विभाग द्वारा ऐसी गड़बड़ की गई कि दो एक्सीडेंट्स को एक ही में नम्बर कर के आपने यह संख्या कम करने का प्रयास किया। मैं सदन के सदस्यों से प्रार्थना करूंगा कि वे पहले आइटम को ही पढ़ें और उस में "काज़ एन्ड रिस्पान्सिबिलिटी" वाले शीर्षक को देखें— Excessive speed and the track being obstructed by a train having fallen on it due to strong wind.

इस का सीधा मतलब यह है कि एक ट्रेन पहले से ही हवा की वजह से वहां पर गिरी पड़ी थी और दूसरी ट्रेन तेजी की रफ्तार से आते हुए आपस में टकरा गई। ये दोनों बातें अस्पष्ट हैं और मैं मंत्री जी से अपेक्षा करता था कि यह जो हवा की वजह से ट्रेन गिरी इसका अलग से खुलासा करते और इस में उल्लेख किया जाता . . .

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH: Train नहीं A tree had fallen.

श्री विमलकुमार मन्नालालजी चौरड़िया : मुझे बड़े दुख के साथ कहना पड़ता है कि हमारे मंत्री जी यह भी एक्सीडेंट कर बैठे। और जब ये मंत्री जी हमारे इतना बड़ा एक्सीडेंट कर सकते हैं—ट्री की जगह ट्रेन लिख दें और हमको समझने का अवसर भी न दें—तो बड़ा आश्चर्य होता है। यह जो ट्री की जगह ट्रेन और ट्रेन की जगह ट्री हो जाता है उसी तरह से नम्बर ३ को जगह नम्बर ४ हो जाता है जिससे बड़ा एक्सीडेंट हो जाते हैं—प्लेटफार्म नम्बर ३ पर गाड़ी आती है, कह दिया नम्बर ४। कितना बड़ा एक्सीडेंट हो जाता है आपके विभाग द्वारा? आपने इसको सभा के पटल पर रखा और पूरी तरह से आपको . . .

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH: Which item is the hon. Member referring to?

SHRI V. M. CHORDIA: First.

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH: First is tree.

श्री विमलकुमार मन्नालालजी चौरड़िया: तो आप पढ़ कर बता दीजिए कि वह ट्री है या ट्रेन है। हमारे इसमें ट्रेन छपा हुआ है।

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH: I am very sorry if that is there. Are you referring to the accident on 27th June 1962?

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Cause and Responsibility: Excessive speed and the track being obstructed by a tree . . .

SHRI V. M. CHORDIA: It is train here.

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH: I am sorry. There cannot be train there because the copy that I have says clearly 'by a tree having fallen on it due to strong wind.'

श्री विमलकुमार मन्नालालजी चौरड़िया : टी आर ए आई एन को आप ट्री बोलेंगे या ट्रेन ?

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH: I have to apologise if it is typed there 'train,' it should read 'tree.'

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I think you should be more careful.

श्री विमलकुमार मन्नालालजी चौरड़िया :

बड़े दुख के साथ कहना पड़ता है कि इतना बड़ा स्टाफ होने के बाद भी इतनी बड़ी लापरवाही आपके विभाग द्वारा बरती जाय और उसके लिये कोई जिम्मेदारी नहीं। केवल "सोरो" कह देने से इलाज हो जाय तब तो हमारे ड्राइवर्स, स्टेशन मास्टर्स भी कह देंगे "व्हेरीसोरी"। और सैकड़ों आदमी उसमें मारे जायें, यह कुछ अच्छा लगता नहीं। माननीय मंत्री जी से प्रार्थना है कि यह जो एक्सीडेंट्स की प्रोग्रेस होती जा रही है, जैसे मिनिस्टर्स की प्रोग्रेस आपके यहाँ होती जा रही है, यह कहां तक उचित है। अगर आप सही तौर पर सब बातों को लिखेंगे तो ज्यादा अच्छा होगा।

अब इसके बारे में यह निवेदन है कि यह सारी चर्चा तो हो चुकी है, मैं समय कम होने की वजह से जो मुख्य मुख्य बातें हैं उन्हीं पर आपका ध्यान आकृष्ट करना चाहता हूँ।

सबसे पहली बात यह है कि जो इक्विपमेंट इस समय रेलवे के पास है उसके फेलियर

[श्री विमलकुमार मन्नालालजी चौरङ्गियां]
होने से बहुत सी दुर्घटनाएं रेलवे में होती रहती हैं। इंजन में चाहे ब्रेक हो या न हो, स्पीडोमीटर हो या न हो, फिर भी ड्राइवर को आज्ञा दे दी जाती है कि वह गाड़ी को ले जावे चाहे गाड़ी रास्ते में हो फेल हो जाय। इस तरह की बहुत सी गड़बड़ियां होती रहती हैं जिन पर नियंत्रण लगाना बहुत आवश्यक है।

दूसरी बात यह है कि रेलवे ट्रेक बहुत पुराने हो गये हैं और उनका सेंटिंग प्वाइंट ठीक नहीं होता है, जंग खाये होते हैं, जिसका नतीजा यह होता है कि जब गाड़ियां तेज रफ्तार से चलती हैं तो पुर्जे ढीले रहने की वजह से एक्सीडेंट हो जाता है।

फेलियर आफ ट्यूमन एलीमेंट के हिसाब से भी रेलवे कर्मचारी ओवरवर्क हो गये हैं। वे लोग ओवर टाइम अलाउन्स लेने के लिये फालतू वर्क लेने के भी आदी हो गये हैं। वे लोग ओवर टाइम वर्क इसलिये करते हैं ताकि उनके बाल-बच्चों के पानन पोषण के लिये ज्यादा से ज्यादा पैसा मिल सके। इसका नतीजा यह होता है कि वे लोग पैसे के लालच में आकर ज्यादा काम करते हैं और काम के भार की वजह से वे अपना काम अच्छी तरह से नहीं कर पाते हैं। इसका नतीजा यह होता है कि वे थकावट में अपना काम करते हैं और एक्सीडेंट हो जाते हैं। इस थकावट को दूर करने के लिये जो वे ओवर टाइम के समय करते हैं, उसको दूर करने के लिये ड्राइवर शराब का उपयोग करते हैं। शराब के नशे की ज्यों ज्यों स्पीड बढ़ती जाती है त्यों त्यों रेल की स्पीड भी बढ़ती जाती है और अन्त में इसका नतीजा एक्सीडेंट पर खतम होता है। इसलिये आवश्यकता इस बात की है कि रेलवे में लोगों से ओवर टाइम काम नहीं लिया जाना चाहिये और समय में रिलोफ भेज देना चाहिये ताकि वे लोग ज्यादा काम न कर सकें। इसके साथ ही साथ शराब का

उपयोग रेलवे कर्मचारी अपने काम के समय न किया करें। वे इसका उपयोग अपने घर में बैठ कर अच्छी तरह से कर सकते हैं। वैसे तो हमारी सरकार सारे देश में मद्य निषेध की बात कहती रहती है लेकिन देखने में कुछ दूसरी ही बात नजर आती है।

रेलवे विभाग द्वारा जो नियम बनाय गये हैं वे प्रेक्टिकल नहीं हैं। जहां केबिन नहीं होता है वहां पर स्टेशन मास्टर की ड्यूटी होती है और वही प्वाइंट सिगनल और प्वाइंट सेंटिंग का काम करता है। लेकिन देखने में यह आता है कि यह काम ज्यादातर स्टेशनों में स्टेशन मास्टर नहीं करते और छड़ीदार तथा चोबदार को यह काम दे देते हैं। स्टेशन मास्टर के पास जब कहीं दूसरे स्टेशन से टेलीफोन आता है तो वह अपने चोबदार और छड़ीदार को मुनने के लिये आज्ञा देता है और साथ में यह भी कह देता है कि अगर फलां ट्रेन आ रही है तो उसको "मेन लाइन" दे देना और फलां ट्रेन आ रही है तो उसको "लूप लाइन" दे देना। इस तरह से स्टेशन मास्टर वहां पर कुछ काम नहीं करता है। इस तरह का काम एकरिस्पसिबिल आदमी का है और एक जिम्मेदार आदमी को स्टेशन मास्टर की जगह नियुक्त करना चाहिये ताकि वह इस तरह के कामों को करे तो ज्यादा अच्छा रहेगा। अगर आप इस तरह की व्यवस्था नहीं करते हैं तो आपको अपने नियमों में परिवर्तन करना चाहिये ताकि इस तरह के कामों के बारे में अच्छी तरह से व्यवस्था हो सके। स्टेशन मास्टर के पास सब स्टेशनों से गाड़ियों के आने के बारे में टेलीफोन आते रहते हैं। स्टेशन मास्टर को स्टेशन में टिकट भी बांटने होते हैं तथा कोई मन्त्री जी या कोई बड़ा अफसर पहुंच गया तो उसकी खास हजुरी में भी रहना पड़ता है। कई तरफ से ट्रेनें आती रहती हैं और स्टेशन में और कई काम उसको करने होते हैं जिसका नतीजा यह होता है कि उसका दिमाग बोझिल हो जाता।

है जिसकी वजह से काम में गड़बड़ होने की सम्भावना हो जाती है। इस बात पर भी विचार किया जाना अत्यन्त आवश्यक है। इस सम्बन्ध में जो भी नियम हैं उन्हें, प्रैक्टिकल बनाने की कोशिश की जानी चाहिये। इसके साथ ही साथ रेलवे के जो भी नियम हैं वे ज्यादातर अंग्रेजी में ही छपे होते हैं। रेलवे में जो छोटे कर्मचारी काम करते हैं वे अंग्रेजी भाषा नहीं समझते हैं जिसका नतीजा यह होता है कि वे रेलवे नियमों के बारे में बिल्कुल अनभिज्ञ रहते हैं। जब उन लोगों के पास इस तरह के नियम जाते हैं तो वे कागज पर अपने अंगूठे के निशान लगा देते हैं और इससे समझ लिया जाता है कि उन्होंने वे नियम पढ़ लिये हैं। इसलिये मेरा निवेदन यह है कि तब तक रेलवे विभाग अपने नियमों को हिन्दी भाषा तथा अन्य क्षेत्रीय भाषा में प्रकाशित नहीं करेगा तब तक रेलवे कर्मचारी रेलवे नियमों को अच्छी तरह से नहीं समझ सकेंगे। आज जरूरत इस बात की है कि रेलवे नियमों का अच्छी तरह से अध्ययन किया जाना चाहिये और साथ ही साथ रेलवे कर्मचारियों को इसकी ट्रेनिंग भी दी जानी चाहिये। इस चीज के अभाव के कारण रेलवे में हम आज तरह तरह की गड़बड़ियाँ और एक्सीडेंट होते हुए देखते हैं।

मेरे पास समय कम है लेकिन सुझाव बहुत देने हैं, इसलिये मैं कुछ और सुझाव दे देना चाहता हूँ। जहाँ तक रेलवे में एफिशियेन्सी का सवाल है उसके बारे में मुझे यह निवेदन करना है कि जैसे खेती में एक्सटेंसिव कल्टीवेशन करने से गड़बड़ हो जाती है और इंटेंसिव कल्टीवेशन करके एफिशियेन्सी लाई जा सकती है और पैदावार भी अच्छी होती है, उसी तरह से इस समय हमारे जो इतने जोन्स बढ़ गये हैं, उसके साथ ही साथ काम भी बढ़ गया है लेकिन उनकी क्षमता काम करने की नहीं बढ़ी है। जोन्स का क्षेत्रफल इतना अधिक फैल गया है कि हम उनका प्रबन्ध अच्छी तरह से नहीं कर पाते हैं। अगर हम इन जोन्स

के क्षेत्रफल को कम करेंगे तो एफिशियेन्सी भी बढ़ जायेगी और हम अच्छी तरह से काम भी कर सकेंगे। इसलिये इन जोन्स के क्षेत्रफल को कम करना बहुत आवश्यक है। मेरा निवेदन है कि माननीय रेलवे मन्त्री जी इस ओर अवश्य ध्यान देंगे।

दूसरी बात जो मुझे कहनी है वह यह कि हमें रेलवे के हर एक काम के लिये किसी न किसी कर्मचारी को जिम्मेदार बनाना चाहिये। इस समय देखने में यह आता है कि हम किसी काम के लिये किसी आदमी को जिम्मेदार नहीं बनाते हैं और जब कोई दुर्घटना हो जाती है तो उसकी जिम्मेदारी एक आदमी दूसरे आदमी के ऊपर डाल देता है। स्टेशन मास्टर के ऊपर ही सब जिम्मेदारी नहीं डाल दी जानी चाहिये। अगर पोर्टर को हम कोई काम सौंपते हैं तो वह उस काम के लिये जिम्मेदार माना जाना चाहिये। अगर पोर्टर कोई काम गड़बड़ करता है तो उसकी जिम्मेदारी किसी दूसरे के ऊपर नहीं डाली जानी चाहिये। इसलिये devolution of authority की आवश्यकता है और इसकी ओर रेलवे मन्त्रालय को अवश्य और जल्दी ध्यान देना चाहिये।

इसके साथ ही साथ मुझे यह भी निवेदन करना है कि रेलवे में जितने भी रिक्त स्थान होते हैं उनकी अविलम्ब पूर्ति की जानी चाहिये। यह देखने में आता है कि जब कोई स्थान खाली रहता है तो रेलवे कर्मचारी स्वयं उस स्थान में काम करते हैं ताकि उन्हें ज्यादा एलाउन्स मिलता रहे और उस स्थान की पूर्ति नहीं होने देते हैं। यह कार्य वे सिर्फ पैसे के लालच से करते हैं ताकि उन्हें अपनी तनखावा से ज्यादा पैसे मिल जाय। इसलिये मेरा निवेदन है कि इन सब सुझावों की ओर रेलवे मन्त्रालय अवश्य ध्यान देगा और 'ट्री' की जगह 'ट्रेन' शब्द का भविष्य में इस्तेमाल नहीं करेगा। अगर वह इस चीज का ध्यान नहीं रखेगा तो भविष्य में दुर्घटनाओं की संख्या और अधिक बढ़ जायेगी।

SHRI SITARAM JAIPURIA (Uttar Pradesh): Madam Deputy Chairman, I thank you very much for giving me an opportunity to say a few words on this important subject. A very old saying is that accidents never happen, they are caused, and I am sure all of us present here do agree and realise the truth and importance of that saying. There does not appear to be two opinions on that. No one is happy with the accidents and everyone is trying and should try to see how accidents can be avoided. If you go through the reasons why accidents are caused, the statement that is laid before the House proves it amply clear that the human factor has played the most important part in it. Next to that is the factor of materials and equipment. Coming to the human factor, I would say that lack of responsibility appears to be one of the main reasons for it. Why lack of responsibility has developed more is a matter which needs heart-searching, particularly on the part of those in the administration. The Code of Discipline, which is applicable to a number of industries, if I am right, has not yet been accepted by the railway administration. If the Code of Discipline is accepted, it might be a step forward in making people more discipline minded.

Another reason that I have been told by quite a few persons is that while disciplinary action is taken against those who are in default, there is a certain amount of favouritism and also vindictiveness against a few others. There are only two ways by which we can put a man on the right line. Either reward him for his good acts or punish him if he has done wrong. If there is a feeling in the mind of anyone that a certain amount of vindictiveness will be shown against Mr. A for his action and a certain amount of favouritism will be shown to Mr. B for the same action, I am afraid it will be very difficult for the administration, in spite of their best intentions, in spite of their best efforts, to maintain discipline in the rank and file.

Another thing is the question of tracks. It has been recognised and accepted by all that the traffic has increased enormously. It is, therefore, necessary that we must maintain our tracks, and have double track wherever necessary. While I do not dispute in any way the necessity for spending money on additional passenger amenities, I feel, constructing new stations at places by spending five million rupees on an individual station can be delayed for the time being, where the question of life of men is involved, where the question of increasing traffic in the developing economy of our country is most essential, not only the track should be maintained and doubled, but the money for the time being should be spent only on such activities, rather than on creation of certain show pieces and making certain things which will only add to the amenities which, to my mind, can certainly wait for some time more to come.

A little while ago quite a number of my predecessors have mentioned about the speed. If I am correct, the speed of the trains has been brought down as compared to what they were several years ago. While on the one side in other countries we find that the speed on railways has gone up—particularly in Japan I am told that nearly hundred miles an hour speed is in vogue—on the other side we have brought down our speed. Why we have to bring down our speed is certainly a matter for investigation. There again; it appears that lack of proper maintenance is one of the main reasons why we cannot speed up our trains. We have to suffer not only by keeping the running wagon hours at a lower rate, but also the traffic carried is less. It was suggested in the last report on the accidents on Indian Government Railways that special lessons on avoidance of accidents should be given to the trainees in the Railway Training Schools. I am sure that the Railway Ministry has introduced that subject but to our extreme regret and surprise we find that in spite of all that accidents have been on the increase. This certainly is a matter

which should be looked into and dealt with by the administration strongly, forcefully and with determination.

One thing more I would like to say and it is about the compensation that is being paid to those who suffer in the railway accidents. Undoubtedly, the members of the staff and the workmen on the railways do get a certain amount of compensation. The passengers' claims are also considered by a magistrate appointed for the purpose. I would most humbly suggest that the railways should find out if there could be a system under which all concerned definitely get an insurance claim and are not left to the mercy of any individual. My submission for the consideration of the Railway Minister would be that just as we have an air insurance scheme at the different airports at a very nominal charge for a certain destination, if the same facility is granted to those who are travelling by train, it may go a long way in creating some confidence. There was the accident which occurred to the Punjab Mail some time ago. I had occasion to travel fortunately or unfortunately the next day of that accident and believe me, the train was almost empty, and when I enquired of a number of railway officials, they all said that the accident that happened the previous day had an effect on the mind of the travelling public. It is quite natural, it is bound to happen. Confidence will be created if concrete steps are taken, if positive action is taken against those who are not competent, and if rewards are given to those who do a good job and thus bring about efficiency in the railway administration. Thank you.

SHRI M. GOVINDA REDDY:

Madam, if we compare the accidents that have taken place in recent months with accidents in the decades of the pre-independence era or even with those of the decade of the post-independence era, we must admit that there are far more now than there ever were and that there must be some reason for these accidents taking place. One reason is that our track is over-

aged, and within our resources we have not been able to renew the track to the extent desirable. Also we have been compelled by the pressure of demand of service to use increasingly overaged engines and overaged rolling stock. So that also may, in a way, be responsible. But we are very happy to find that the railways are making every attempt to effect renewals of track and also to replace overaged rolling stock. For this purpose I am very happy to mention that the Planning Commission have seen the point and have given an additional allotment to the railways over and above the allotment they made in the Third Plan. They say that there is a silver lining in the stormy cloud, and it is perhaps as a result of the accidents the Planning Commission has been persuaded to give more allotment.

Madam, the hon. Minister has been pleased to explain what steps they are taking in the matter of improving the machinery, the track, in interlocking system, and so on. I am not going into that. There is one reason which should not be overlooked, and that is sabotage. Although the figure given here about sabotage shows a decrease in 1960-61 as compared to 1958-59, still it should not be overlooked. I think the railways should have an intelligence system. I do not know if they have an intelligence service. If they do not have, they should have one. If they have one, they should improve it. They should have an intelligence service to find out if there is any possibility of an organised sabotage going on.

The other reason is the human element. The Minister has placed his finger on the exact point. In spite of the perfect equipment that we have, perfect conditions that we have, if the people who operate have not got a spirit of service, have not got zeal, have not got a sense of duty, have not got devotion, then the perfect instrument, the perfect equipment and the perfect conditions do not at all work. So, it is necessary to improve the ser-

[Shri M. Govinda Reddy.]
vices. In this connection, the Minister has mentioned several steps taken by way of training facilities and refresher courses. I only wish that these are not there only in name but that they are made more effective use of. One point which I would like to stress is that there must be proper contact between the higher officials and the men under them. Of course this point has been referred to. The divisional superintendents, the general managers and even the Members of the Railway Board must have more touring work, must have more inspection work, must have more contact with the men than they have now. I do not go to the extent that one Member went here to say that they do not do their work properly. In fact, they have a high sense of duty, and we must say that our officers have been doing excellently well. But it is one thing doing office work and it is quite a different thing to have personal contacts. Their going round serves two purposes. One is to make the people on the line alert. When they expect a superior officer coming, they will always be alert and they will not be slack. The other is, when they tour more and more, they establish personal contacts. It is these personal contacts that make the men give their best, that make the men love their labour. Therefore, it is very necessary because, wherever there is an efficient and good officer who establishes intimate contact with the men, there has always been very good service given.

The other point is that the conditions of work of the poor station masters must be improved. I do not know if they have sufficient powers. As hon. Members know, excepting in cities, the station masters live far away from the habitation of villages and towns. They have to depend on the mercy of the messmen, pointsmen and cabinmen sometimes. I mentioned an instance in my Budget speech of how a station master asked the pointsman to go to a point and he refused to go. I myself was a witness to it, and I mentioned that, and I have no time to go into

that now. The powers of these poor station masters on whom responsibility rests as far as the station limits are concerned must be increased. I do not know the exact position. It has to be looked into. The powers of the station masters in enforcing discipline on the men under them must be looked into and revised. If they do not have sufficient powers, they must be given sufficient powers, and the superior officers, the divisional superintendent, etc., must support the station master when there are complaints about the slackness of the men.

Then within the short time at my disposal I want to lay stress on one point. They have got various methods of educating the services. It is all very good. One method of educating the services is by way of pictures. I do not know if any of the Members of the Railway Board or even the Minister has seen pictures produced by socialist countries. I have seen them, Madam, and I hope you have also seen. They are pictures well designed to inspire a spirit of service, devotion, love of the country, respect to national property, etc. They inspire people with such zeal that one who sees those pictures will never fail in his duty. He will be prepared to give a larger measure of work than is expected of him.

SHRI DAHYABHAI V. PATEL: Is it only the picture or the fear of Siberia?

SHRI M. GOVINDA REDDY: That is why in the Communist countries although the hours of work are more than seven hours—they work nine hours willingly, and of course there is that element of compulsion also—it is more the willingness, that is responsible for showing more production, for achieving more progress. When we have so many gangster films from America, so many useless films coming here, to disturb our discipline and ethical standards and all that, I do not know why we should not make an arrangement to have those pictures, desirable pictures if they are. If

there is anything that is not desirable, let us not have them, or let us see those pictures, let us examine them.

5 P.M.

SHRI ARJUN ARORA: Let us . . .

SHRI M. GOVINDA REDDY: Let us produce those pictures in our country. I think the Railway Ministry as well as the Government of India in general can make use of this method of carrying on visual propaganda to improve discipline among the services in the railways.

The analysis given in the Review of Accidents bring out very clearly that the points I am stressing on are very important not only from the point of view of preventing accidents but also from the point of view of increasing efficiency. On page 9, they have analysed the causes of the accidents. They have given a table. They say—

“The foregoing analysis more or less reiterates the conclusions arrived at by similar studies in the past. Of the total number of 1,545 collisions and derailments, 1,035 or about 67 per cent. were caused by the failure of the Railway staff, the percentage of collisions attributed to failure of human element being as high as 99.2. The other most pronounced factor in the causes of derailments is the failure of mechanical equipment, being responsible for 13 per cent. of the total number of derailments during 1960-61. Of the 1,415 train derailments during 1960-61, those caused by the failure of permanent way, etc. were only 75 or about 5.3 per cent.”

So, it is not so much as the overaged stock or the overworn track that is responsible, but the human element. And if we go on to page 11 where they analyse serious accidents, we see this thing at the bottom of that page—

“The proportion of serious accidents attributed to failure of railway staff in 1960-61 was 60 per cent. as against 50 per cent. in 1959-60,

but there is a marked improvement in the percentage of accidents caused by sabotage . . .”

This is what they say.

I have referred to these things to show that the Minister is well aware that the main cause of accidents is not the inefficient operation or whatever it is, but due to the human element. And in order to improve this human element, several steps have to be taken in addition to what he has proposed to do. And the one important step on which I lay stress is producing literature, producing pictures, and even holding discourse classes. In fact, I may mention another thing which exists in the Communist countries, and that is, there is discussion among a group of officials serving in a department. They discuss as to how to improve the working in that particular section. That is a very healthy thing. They discuss things and if there are any defects in their section, they report them to the director or to the higher authority. It is a very healthy arrangement. I do not know if our railways have that system. It is very good to have such a system. For instance, in a zone the men may come together and discuss the defects or they may invite suggestions. Or in a particular section, the men concerned can come together, collaborate, put their heads together and find out what is wrong.

Since I am pressed for time, I do not wish to take more time but there is nothing alarming in this because ordinarily our men, whether it is the lineman or the driver or the station master or an officer, are intelligent, more intelligent than the average men in European countries. Therefore, we have no need to fear. There may be some of these things which should be attended to. I hope that in time to come, our railways will remedy this evil of frequent accidents.

श्री शीलभद्र याजी : माननीया डिप्टी चेयरमैन महोदया, अभी हाल में जो कुछ दुःखद और सांघातिक रेलवे दुर्घटनाएं हुई

[श्री शीलभद्र याजी]

हैं उनसे हमारे देश में और इस सदन में भी बहुत चिन्ता है। क्यों रेलवे दुर्घटना होती है? यों तो लोग कहते हैं, कहावत है कि एक्सीडेंट, एक्सीडेंट ही है, दुर्घटना, दुर्घटना मात्र ही है और कौन दुर्घटना कब होगी इसकी कोई भविष्यवाणी नहीं कर सकता और कोई यह भी नहीं बता सकता है कि दुर्घटना नहीं होगी लेकिन दुर्घटना रुक सकती है और उसके रोकने के लिये हमारे पूर्व वक्ताओं ने आपको बताया है कि कौन कौन-सी वजहें हैं जिनकी वजह से ये रेलवे की दुर्घटनाएं होती हैं। मेरी समझ में भी इसके तीन कारण हैं। एक तो यह कि जो हमारे रेलवे के कर्मचारी हैं, उनकी कमजोरी है, इसकी वजह कभी उनकी असफलता होती है, दूसरे यह कि जो मशीन हैं, मैकनिज्म हैं, उसकी कमजोरी होती है और तीसरे यह कि सैबोटाज होता है। आप जानते हैं कि हमारे मुल्क के इर्दगिर्द में बहुत से मुल्क हमारे दुश्मन हैं और उनकी भी यही चेष्टा रहती है कि यहां कुछ सैबोटाज हो जिससे जान-माल का नुकसान हो—क्योंकि जब रेल दुर्घटना होती है तो सिर्फ इंसानों की, लोगों की, जान ही नहीं जाती है बल्कि उसके साथ साथ सम्पत्ति की भी बड़ी नुकसानी होती है। हमारे भाई श्री डा. ह्याभाई पटेल ने कहा कि जब हम आज़ादी की लड़ाई लड़ते थे तब रेल गिराते थे। मालूम नहीं कि वह इस लड़ाई में थे या नहीं, जेल में थे या और कहीं थे, लेकिन उस वक्त पैसंजरो के साथ ऐसी कोई दुर्घटना नहीं हुई, कोई ट्रेन नहीं गिराई गई। उन्होंने पुरानी बात को उठाया लेकिन मेरा कहना है कि जब हम आज़ादी की लड़ाई लड़ रहे थे तब यह हम ने कभी नहीं किया कि ट्रेन को ट्रेन से लड़ा दें, लेकिन आज मुल्क के बाहर और मुल्क में भी कुछ ऐसे लोग हैं—हमारे मुल्क में भी फिफ्थ कालोमनिस्ट लोग हैं, ये कहां हैं, यह कहना बड़ा मुश्किल है लेकिन ऐसे लोग हैं—जिनकी ऐसी चेष्टा भी रहती है।

तो हमारे जो रेलवे कर्मचारी हैं उनमें यदि सतर्कता हो, सावधानी से काम करने की भावना हो तो इसको हम रोक सकते हैं। जैसा कि हमारे माननीय रेलवे मंत्री ने बताया कि सेफ्टी माइंडेडनेस होनी चाहिये और जब तक उनमें सुरक्षा की भावना नहीं आयेगी और इसके साथ ही साथ सावधानी और कर्तव्यपरायणता की भावना नहीं आयेगी तब तक कुछ नहीं हो सकेगा। हम भी रेलवे यूनियनों में काम करते हैं लेकिन हमारे अर्जुन अरोड़ा साहब जो बोलने लगे तो मालूम हुआ कि सारा दोष रेलवे आफिशियल्स का है और जो रेलवे के कर्मचारी हैं उनका कोई कसूर नहीं है। जो डुमरांव में हुए कांड की बात है उसको हम यूनियन वाले जानते हैं कि वह क्या है। कहा गया कि जो कर्मचारी हैं उनको बहुत कम मिलता है इसलिये वे क्या करें, तो क्या इसका मतलब यह है कि वे जघन्य अपराध और पाप कर सकते हैं, मर्डर कर सकते हैं? अगर कोई कसूर करे तो यह कह दिया जाना कि उसका कसूर नहीं था, रेलवे बोर्ड वालों का था, स्टेशन मास्टर का था, ठीक नहीं है। जिसका कसूर हो उसको कहना चाहिये। अगर रेलवे के कर्मचारियों में कर्तव्यपरायणता आती है, निष्ठा आती है और वे समझते हैं कि हमें दूसरों की हिफाजत करनी है तो हम समझते हैं कि बहुत-सी शिकायतें नहीं रहेंगी।

दूसरी बात यह है कि मैकनिज्म की, मशीन की, कुछ गड़बड़ है। इंजन बहुत खराब है लेकिन फिर भी कहें कि नहीं इंजन तो तुम्हें चालू करना है। इसी तरह से इंजन के पार्ट्स नहीं मिलते हैं। तो जो वर्कशॉप में काम करने वाले हैं उनमें यह भावना होनी चाहिये कि वे ठीक तरह से काम करें और जो मशीन बनावें वह अच्छी तरह से बनावें। इसके साथ साथ जो रेलवे ट्रैक की मेन्टेनेंस की बात है उसकी ओर पूरा ध्यान दें और जब गाड़ी चलती है तो

गाड़ी में जो काम करने वाले हैं वे अगर सावधानी से काम करें तो हम समझते हैं कि शायद कभी एक्सीडेंट हो जाये तो हो जाये लेकिन इस तरह से हम एक्सीडेंट को कम कर सकते हैं ।

एक्सीडेंट को रोकने के बारे में कई उपाय सुझाये गये किन्तु इसी बीच में और भी बहुत से सवाल आये । लोगों ने कहा और अखबारों में भी यह बात निकलती है कि यदि एक बार कोई रेलवे का एक्सीडेंट हो गया तो मंत्री भागने लगते हैं । अखबारों में यह भी आया—हमने उसका पढ़ा—कि एक बार एक एक्सीडेंट हुआ तो लाल बहादुर शास्त्री चले गये, उन्होंने इस्तीफा दे दिया और उन्हें भी जाना चाहिये । यह कोई शोभा की बात नहीं है, ड्यूटी छोड़ कर भागना कोई शोभा को बात नहीं है । लाल बहादुर शास्त्री जी ने कोई अच्छा काम नहीं किया और मैं उसको तारीफ नहीं करता । यह भी अखबार में निकला कि सरदार स्वर्ण सिंह जा भा जा रहे हैं । हो सकता है कि वजु-पी दुर्घटना हुई हो, मैं नहीं जानता, लेकिन अखबारों में खूब निकला, हमारे Parliamentary Times ने खूब छापा । तब मंत्री से और रेलवे के जो मुलाजिम हैं उन से, रेलवे यूनियन्स में काम करने वाले के नाते, अपील कइंगा कि काम को छोड़ कर भाग जाना उचित नहीं है । इस तरह से तो इतने आदमा जाते रहेंगे और आते रहेंगे । यदि कोई गलती है तो उस सुधारना चाहिये ।

श्री विमलकुमार मन्नालालजी चौरड़िया :
और बेशर्म सरीखे डटे रहना चाहिये ।

श्री शीलभद्रयाजी : आप बेशर्म हैं जो इस तरह से कहते हैं । इस तरह से

भागना वह बेशर्मी है । वह बेशर्मी है जो ड्यूटी छोड़ कर भागते हैं, वह कावर्ड हैं ।

मैं कह रहा था कि अगर मंत्री के अधीन विभाग में कोई खामियां हों, गलतियां हों तो उन्हें सुधारने की और दूर करने की कोशिश होनी चाहिये नहीं तो 'रिजाइन' करने की एक परिपाटी बन जायेगी । कौन से डिपार्टमेंट में गड़बड़ नहीं होती ? जरा सा कहीं एक्सीडेंट हो गया तो क्या इस का मतलब है मंत्री मरिजाइन करेगा और दूसरा मंत्री उसका जगह पर आयेगा ?

SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN: He will also get a chance to become a Minister.

SHRI SHEEL BHADRA YAJEE: He will never get a chance.

श्री विमलकुमार मन्नालालजी चौरड़िया :
क्या यह आपस में ही प्रश्नोत्तर चल रहे हैं ?

SHRI SHEEL BHADRA YAJEE: He belongs to Jana Sangh, and Jana Sangh will never come into power.

मैं यह भविष्यवाणी कर रहा हूँ और सही कह रहा हूँ । इसलिए रेलवे कर्मचारियों को चाहिये कि चाहे वे चतुर्थ श्रेणी के हों या ऊपर चोटी के, वे अपने कर्तव्य का निर्वाह निष्ठा के साथ करें और उस की समझें । यह जो मैबोटाज का बात है, दूसरी चीज है । हम नहीं समझते हैं कि मैबोटाज से रेलवेज की ज्यादा दुर्घटना होती है ।

इसलिये मेरा सुझाव है कि जो रेलवे वर्कशाप में काम करने वाले और तमाम रेलवे में काम करने वाले मुलाजिम हैं, सब लोगों को अपनी ड्यूटी समझ कर, कर्तव्यनिष्ठा के साथ और पूर्ण सतर्कता के साथ अपना काम करना

[श्री शीलभद्र याजी]

चाहिये तभी हम इस तरह की दुर्घटनाओं को रोक सकते हैं। जो यूनियन में काम करने वाले लोग हैं उनको इन बातों की तरफ अवश्य ध्यान देना चाहिये; क्योंकि जब हम उनकी मांगें मानते हैं तो उनका फर्ज ही जाता है कि पूरे निष्ठा के साथ काम करने के लिये रेलवे कर्मचारियों को प्रेरित करे। यह कह देना कि फंक्शनमें की गलती नहीं थी, उसकी नेग्लिजेंट थी जिसस एक्सीडेंट हो गया और स्टेशन मास्टर उसका उत्तरदायी नहीं है। मिसिस्टेंट स्टेशन मास्टर की गलती नहीं तो हम कहें कि उसकी गलती नहीं थी, टाप के लोगों की गलती थी तो मैं समझता हूं इन शब्दों को दोहराने की यहां जरूरत नहीं है बल्कि रेलवे के कर्मचारियों को सतर्क और कर्तव्यनिष्ठ होने की शिक्षा हमें देनी चाहिये।

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH: Madam Deputy Chairman, I have derived great benefit from the speeches which the hon. Members have made with regard to this important question of railway accidents. This matter has been one of very great concern not only to the railway administration, the zonal administration and the Railway Board, but to me and to my colleagues also.

It is quite one thing to mention a variety of reasons and details when things go wrong; it is not unnatural that we should start having a searching look at our shortcomings and should list the various defects. It is important and it will be my endeavour to derive the maximum of benefit and to take the maximum of advantage from the great deal of thought that has been bestowed upon this subject by the hon. Members.

I think that, on the whole, the Members who have participated in the debate have tried to give a number of suggestions. May be that in the

case of some hon. Members they felt angry at the shortfalls, but I was greatly impressed by the mention of some constructive suggestion or other by almost all Members. I feel considerably strengthened by the thought that in a matter like this party considerations or party affiliations do not dominate our discussions and we try to find remedies with regard to matters with which all of us are concerned.

I would like to assure my esteemed friend opposite, Mr. Dahyabhai Patel, that the life of each citizen in our country is as important as, if not more important than, that of some of us who happen to be carrying responsibility either at the Centre or in the States. It may be a matter of coincidence, but if it is by exercise of greater vigilance and by taking more precautions that accidents have not taken place when important persons travel, I am one with him, and I would like to impress upon the railway administration that they should take the same measure of care and they should exercise the same quantum of vigilance which they exercise when I or my colleagues or my friends opposite are travelling in the trains.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Why opposition?

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH: It is because you are dear to us; we want you to exist; we want to protect you against yourself sometimes.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: You are seeing that care is taken of you.

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH: Therefore it is a matter of great concern and it will be our constant endeavour to exercise the maximum of vigilance.

Without introducing an element of argument or debate as to whether there is defect in the track in the form of old rails or the like and what the relevance of these factors is in the occurring of accidents, I would like to say something about one or two

aspects that have been touched upon. I agree with hon. Members—I think they were Mr. Kumaran and Mr. Mani—when they said that we have inherited from the British regime a system of railways which had been greatly overworked and where replacements and renewals had not kept pace with the increasing strain to which the railway system was put. It is not for me to go into the history thereof, but the fact remains that we had the World War, when not only was too much strain put upon our railway system but some tracks were actually dismantled and taken to other theatres of war, and new railway lines were constructed. But it does pain me when some of the hon. Members talk of that period and cite it as an example of efficiency and the like. May be that the main stress at that time being authoritarian, there might be some semblance or show of discipline and show of exercise of authority, but I think even in the present time we can exercise the same authority and can enforce discipline without adopting a stern tone or without appearing to be wielding the big stick. It is true that where somebody goes wrong, punitive action has to be taken, and it should be taken, and I am grateful to the hon. Members who have pointed out that in certain cases the action taken does not appear to be commensurate with the gravity of the delinquency which was involved. These points will be taken note of, and they will serve as some guide to those on whom the responsibility of taking decisions with regard to the quantum of punishment rests. But in an overall manner let us not take this view that it is only by exercising our authority in an ostentatious and authoritarian manner that we can enforce discipline. I think, if the workers and employees at the various levels are approached in a spirit of asking for their co-operation, the response is quite encouraging. Madam Deputy Chairman, I might recall that I made it a point to attend two annual meetings of the two Federations of

employees who are working in a highly organised manner in the railway system, and I put to them my viewpoint and I also heard their viewpoint. I would like to assure the House that in both the Federations' meetings, which were held at Jaipur and Udaipur within an interval of about four or five weeks, there was a great feeling amongst the workers about the occurrence of accidents and both the Federations assured me that with regard to all the steps that might be taken for prevention of accidents they would extend the fullest co-operation. Not only that, I invited both the Federations to give thought to this problem of accidents and to give suggestions so that these may be prevented or the recurrence of them may be stopped or they should be greatly minimised, and I am happy to report to the House that this received a good response.

Apart from resolutions and speeches, I could notice that all those persons who participated in the Federation conferences were greatly influenced and were powerfully affected, and when this subject was touched upon, I could see from their eyes, from the throbs of their voices and the way they were reacting that they were feeling very much in regard to this matter and I count a great deal upon this response. The core of their heart appeared to have been touched. Even thereafter, they have met me in small groups and have assured me that they will themselves constitute special committees in the various unions to go into this aspect and will constantly remain in touch with me and will be giving their suggestions.

A large number of suggestions have been made by the hon. Members. Many of them are such as of a technical nature. I think the best way to utilise these suggestions, apart from the advantage that the administration will have of studying them and taking advantage thereof, would be to pass on all this discussion to the Accidents Enquiry Committee so that with the technical knowledge, with the

[Sardar Swaran Singh.]

other facilities that they have and with the background of other material that they have collected—and the response to the Questionnaire also has been fairly good—the Accidents Enquiry Committee, I am sure, will also be benefited by the discussion here and in the other House. I will arrange to transmit copies of the speeches that have been made here so that they might be examined with the care that they deserve and we might, therefore, be able to derive great benefit from these discussions.

On two matters, namely overaged engines and track renewals, I would like to add only this much that a huge backlog had accumulated as a result of the World War and its aftermath, pre-independence period, when naturally the foreign administration was not very much interested in the developmental aspect of the country and they were running the country more or less as a police State—all these factors accumulated—they left a legacy to us where the railway system on the whole was not in good shape. Over and above that, came the partition where the system got truncated. We had some very vital links to establish. For instance, a number of bridges, the Assam Rail Link and a number of other works had to be undertaken as a matter of high priority. Still on the maintenance side, this renewal of track and replacement of overaged engines, locomotives, coaches, wagons, all this has been tackled in a very systematic and sustained manner. It is true that we have not replaced all overaged engines, locomotives or the other rolling stock, but there has been a phased programme both in this respect as well as in toning up our track.

We had, as the House might recall, a definite programme in the course of the Second Five Year Plan for renewal of tracks. We were faced with difficulties with regard to availability of steel rails and the like; they had to be imported. Now we are manufacturing more of the rails. Even now

we have, for our pressing requirements, to import certain quantities. Therefore, we had a definite programme of replacement of rolling stock and renewal of tracks. These programmes were, by and large, carried out in the course of the Second Five Year Plan. I think the shortfall was only of a very small percentage. We have not only to clear the backlog, we have not only to get over the legacy which had been left to us by the British, but as time goes on there are fresh additions to the debit side. And, therefore, our pace has been quicker. Even during the present year we have a definite programme of track renewal of about 1,800 miles approximately—I am giving this figure from memory—and there is a provision of a little over Rs. 40 crores for track renewal alone.

Our manufacturing programme of locomotives, wagons, coaches is going ahead at a very satisfactory speed. We have undertaken projects for manufacturing our own electric locomotives and diesel locomotives. These are the basic matters that are being attended to because we could not clear the backlog of worn-out tracks or overaged engines and rolling stock by imports alone. Some friendly countries have helped us. The World Bank also has helped us.

SHRI S. C. DEB (Assam): With regard to the renewal of railway track, may I know, Madam from the hon. Minister whether the question of replacing wooden sleepers by concrete sleepers has been considered?

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH: It has been considered and very concrete steps have been taken, namely, a project report for producing concrete sleepers on mass production scale is being prepared. An Officer on Special Duty has been entrusted with this responsibility and we have given him other technical staff. We attach great importance to this programme because we know that the forest wealth of our country is progressively becoming poorer and poorer. We were also

importing sleepers from foreign countries. Now, we have taken a decision that no wooden sleepers should be imported and we should try to manufacture our own sleepers.

In that connection, we have tried a number of alternatives like cast-iron sleepers, pressed steel sleepers, concrete blocks, tie bar etc. The latest to be manufactured by our technical people will be the cement concrete reinforced sleepers. This has been tried in a number of other countries. We are also going ahead with the preparation of a project report, as I stated.

Madam, I was submitting, when the hon. Member intervened, that we have succeeded in creating in the country adequate capacity for our rolling stock excepting electric locomotives which, at the moment, are being, by and large, assembled. A small percentage is being manufactured by us.

With regard to diesel locomotives, the project is going ahead and it is our intention to manufacture all the equipment in the country. So, we have this co-ordinated picture—our steel plants producing rails, plates and other essential material, even the wheel and axle plant at Durgapur and by Tatas. They are producing these necessary components of the equipment. Rolling stock in the form of wagons, coaches and locomotives, all these are being prepared in the country. The House will readily agree that the entire approach is in the larger interests of the country. Consistent with our economic conditions, even from the point of our national self-respect, it is a matter of high importance. While at this, I would like to record my appreciation of the welcome help that we have received during this transitional stage from other friendly countries including the U.S.A., Canada, the U.K., West Germany and the World Bank, who have helped the railways in a very generous manner

and have helped us to undertake essential programmes of renewal and of new construction programmes but now I think we are progressively required to look for our requirements to a large extent, to our own internal sources. For some of the highly mechanised types of equipment particularly in signalling, electronics and the like which are the latest in this category, we will continue to be dependent upon foreign help but by and large the bulk of our requirements will progressively be met from our own resources.

So far as the question of maintenance is concerned, hon. Members have expressed concern and they have said that we are perhaps not giving enough attention to maintenance. I would like to share my own personal views in this respect with the House that I attach the highest importance to maintenance, not only to see that the rolling stock, tracks, etc. are in good trim and are in good shape, but I feel, that in a poor country like ours, maintenance is a matter of high importance both to keep up standards of efficiency which by itself is important and more so because our resources must give the maximum result to us and it is quite axiomatic that maintenance is one important factor which enables any country to get the maximum out of her resources. I agree with Mr. Jaipuria when he said that we should attach greater importance to this as compared to show-pieces, although I have a little grievance because he belongs to Kanpur where they have got a very huge railway station and now he grudges a little improvement to other small stations and tries to explain it away by saying that those are minor things after having got himself one of the most magnificent railway stations in the whole country. Now, that the improvement is percolating down to the small stations, he should not grudge it, because we have to keep a judicial balance between these essential things, and we have also to look to the amenities and we should always remember that a

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large number of our railway stations are for the rural people. The people get into the trains and get out at the smaller stations where the amenities are not as much as I wish they were. Therefore, we should not grudge that, but I agree that we should continue to attach the highest importance to this question of maintenance, whether it is maintenance of track or of loco shed or of anything else. I would like to assure the House that I have constantly been impressing upon the authorities concerned the great importance that they should always attach to maintenance although I would like to say that it is perhaps not quite fair when it is said that engine drivers or others are compelled to take out locomotives which are not in good shape. All these locomotives before they leave the loco shed, are properly tested by the foremen and others and it would not be quite correct to say that this aspect is ignored. In fact the railway organisation can claim to have a highly organised and well-set system of maintenance where the drill is completely laid down and various steps are indicated that when a locomotive comes, these are the points of details which have to be attended to; it is a sort of a religious ritual which is gone through before a locomotive leaves a loco shed. There are various rules saying that after so many miles, this much checking has to be done and this much replacement has to be done or what are called periodical overhaul or general overhaul and overall checking has to be done. So this is a matter which has always received very great attention and I would like to assure the House that this will continue to receive all possible attention.

Mention has been made that the staff appears to be overworked. So far as the operational side is concerned, we have got three important links or categories, I may say. One is the maintenance staff about whom I have

already mentioned that if work requires that more people should be recruited, they should be recruited. But the quality of work is more important and great attention is paid to it from time to time. Then, on the operational side, we have the people who are actually on the trains, and we have got the station staff in the cabins, pointsmen, cabinmen and we have got the engine drivers and others, that is, on the track and those who are moving with the trains. So far as those cabinmen, pointsmen, A.S.Ms. and the like are concerned, I would like to say that they do not have to work overtime at all normally, because they have got fixed duty hours. Their duty changes after a fixed number of hours and those duty hours have been worked out after a good deal of thought had been bestowed on the amount of strain to which they are put; this matter has been the subject-matter of even adjudication, and we are adhering to the hours of duty which were evolved as a result of the various processes of discussion or talks with the unions and even as a result of judicial pronouncements. Then we are left only with one category, that is, those who go with the trains. The House will readily appreciate that much as we desire that they should also strictly follow the hours of duty, the very nature of the work is such that there may be occasions when they have to work overtime. Even with regard to that, a definite standard has been laid down that, when they have to put in overwork, not only that they have to be paid extra but also steps are being taken that every endeavour should be taken to replace them so that as far as possible they are not made to work beyond the hours permitted under the various adjudications and the like.

Again as it is said in a general way, if you glance through some of these accidents where, for instance, the so-called human failure is concerned, in one of these accidents, for instance, a trolley was left on the track itself—that enquiry is still being held—when the signal was lowered. I need

hardly say that trolleys operate even against signals. No amount of work or any effort could be an excuse in a matter like this. So it will not be a correct thing to say that people are unnecessarily having fatigue and the like. All these matters are always being considered and they will continue to be considered. I would like to say categorically that fatigue, at any rate, will not be permitted to be a cause of accidents or cause of laxity in the performance of their duties. I have already issued instructions that we should try to analyse some of these accidents so that I might be able to present some authentic figures to the Houses of Parliament which might bring out whether there is any relationship between the fatigue element and the happening of these unfortunate accidents. It may be that we are trying to find some reason or some cause which may not be borne out until we fully scrutinise the accidents. We will certainly go into that. Apart from that, this general principle that persons, particularly those who are entrusted with vital duties, should not be fatigued and should not be made to work beyond a certain time so that they may not feel dizzy or may not feel sufficiently enthusiastic, is one which is unexceptionable.

SHRI M. RUTHNASWAMY: May I ask the hon. Minister whether any scientific study has been made of fatigue among the workmen on the railways?

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH: Well, I have not been long enough here to say whether any scientific study as such has been made or not on the railways. But this is one of the important matters of personnel management. Scientific study, for instance, would be something which is evolved as a result of discussions, because the greatest effect is on the workers themselves. If, for instance, they make out their case and place it before an impartial tribunal and that impartial tribunal decides on it, then that is some basis or some yardstick

upon which we could go. It is true that these matters were gone into in considerable detail in what is known as the Rajadhyaksha Award. They on that committee went into all these aspects and they also went into a mass of evidence that was produced before them. And then they laid down certain norms for different types of work that are involved.

Something has been said, Madam, about the level crossings. This is a matter which has been considered from time to time. The basis for providing manned level crossings is something like this. When there is an existing highway or an important road, and a new railway line is constructed, then they provide a level crossing there. It is true that the geography of our country is changing and we are developing. New roads are coming and traffic is developing on our roads. The intensity of the traffic on the railway lines is also increasing and therefore, the pattern is changing. We are trying to keep pace with this and we continue to examine the various level crossings with a view to seeing whether any reclassification is required. Wherever it is felt that either on account of the intensity of the railway traffic having increased or on account of new roads having been constructed or due to other reasons the road traffic has increased, we take steps to provide regular gates and we try to man those gates. It is a matter of financial adjustment between the States and the Centre with regard to financing works necessitated by such new developments. The States are also expected to contribute something and there is a code which has been, more or less, laid down and that has been acted upon in some cases. We have recently held again a check on the various level crossings that are still unmanned and we feel that another about 1,100 or 1,200 unmanned level crossings are such that they should be manned. We are initiating action in conjunction with the State Governments with whom we hope to arrive at a suitable

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financial arrangement to provide these level crossings with manned gates on a phased programme. It will be appreciated that all this cannot be accomplished within a short time, say in a year or so. It is our hope that we will try to progressively provide these. In the meantime the other authorities—the State Governments, and the Transport Ministry will also take steps to see that the road signs are more prominent and other steps like creating artificial bumps and so on, on the roads so that the road traffic may be compelled to slow down, are also taken. These have been suggested and I hope some of these points will be picked up by all the road authorities.

I am sorry, Madam, we are already sitting late and it is not my intention to go into details and into the various points that have been mentioned. As I have said, apart from being for our own benefit, these will be examined

by the Accidents Enquiry Committee presided over by Shri Hridaynath Kunzru, and we are looking forward to their recommendations and also to the various points or suggestions that might be made as a result of the various other enquiries from time to time.

I would like to assure the House that it will be our constant endeavour to make rail travel not only more comfortable but also increasingly safe. Thank you, Madam.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The House stands adjourned till 11 A.M. tomorrow.

The House then adjourned at forty-five minutes past five of the clock till eleven of the clock on Wednesday, the 22nd August 1962.