

elect, in such manner as the Chairman may direct, one member from among themselves to be a member of the Central Advisory Board of Education."

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA (West Bengal): Sir, only one suggestion. The hon. Minister should hold consultations with the representatives of all the opposition groups and of course also of the Congress group before a person is nominated to this Board of Education. That, again is a very simple thing.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That is a matter not for the Minister but for the House.

SRI BHUPESH GUPTA: You are quite right, Sir, it is a matter for the House. Therefore I appeal to the hon. Members and to the Minister to be agreeable to an approach of this kind.

DR. K. L. SHRIMALI: These elections will be held as directed by the Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I am telling you that this is not the opportunity. You have got so many opportunities to discuss Education, the Central Advisory Board, Defence matters or the National Cadet Corps. But simply because there is a motion before the House to agree to an election you should not get up and say all these..

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Sir, over this Education Board we have serious grievances. We want the right type of persons to be put there. I am making this suggestion, and it is for the House to accept.

DR. K. L. SHRIMALI: The House in its wisdom makes proper selection. I do not think it is right for any Member to cast any reflection on the House. It is for the House to make any selection it wants.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Have I cast any reflection on the House? If I appeal, is it casting reflection?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That in pursuance of sub-clause (d) of clause (2) of paragraph 3 of the Government of India (Educa-

tion, Health and Lands Department) Resolution No. F. 122-3/35,E, dated the 8th August, 1935, as amended, this House do proceed to elect, in such manner as the Chairman may direct, one member from among themselves to be a member of the Central Advisory Board of Education."

The motion was adopted.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I have to inform Members that the following dates have been fixed for receiving nominations and for holding election, if necessary, to the Central Advisory Board of Education:—

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. Number of Members to be elected.                  | One   |
| 2. Last date and time for receiving nominations.     | 24th August, 1959.<br>(Up to 3 P. M.)                                 |
| 3. Last date and time for withdrawal of candidature. | 25th August, 1959.<br>(Up to 3 P. M.)                                 |
| 4. Date and time of election.                        | 28th August, 1959.<br>(Between 3 P. M. and 5 P. M.)                   |
| 5. Place of election                                 | Room No. 28<br>Ground Floor<br>Parliament<br>House, New<br>Delhi.     |
| 6. Method of election.                               | Proportional representation by means of the single transferable vote. |

#### DISCUSSION ON REPORT OF THE ROAD TRANSPORT REORGANISATION COMMITTEE

THE MINISTER OF TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI S. K. PATIL): Sir, I beg to move:

"That the Report of the Road Transport Reorganisation Committee 1959, laid on the Table of the Rajya Sabha on the 4th May, 1959, be taken into consideration."

Sir, I would make a few observations in the beginning if only to indicate the mind of the Government as regards the recommendations of this Committee.

As the House is aware, the Road Transport Reorganisation Committee was appointed in May last year to conduct a comprehensive enquiry and make recommendations for the reorganisation of the road transport set-up in the States. For some time it had been felt that the existing transport set-up was concerned more with the regulation of motor transport than its planned development. In order to secure fuller development of motor transport and further expansion to meet the growing demands in the country it is necessary that there should be a suitable machinery at the Centre as well as in the States to look after the various problems facing the industry and to plan and foster its progressive development.

The Committee submitted this report in March this year and it was placed before the House soon after its presentation. The Committee have made exhaustive and far-reaching recommendations regarding the reorganisation of the transport administrative set-up in the States. They have recommended that there should be a Transport Ministry in each State to deal exclusively with the roads and road transport, and such a Ministry should be under the Transport Minister charged exclusively with the responsibility for the subject. The Ministry should have a Roads Wing under a Chief Engineer and a Transport Wing under a Transport Commissioner and a Secretary to the Ministry to co-ordinate the work of both the Wings. In a sense this recommendation is that the State Transport Department should be reorganised on the lines of the system obtaining in the Union Ministry of Transport and Communications.

The Committee have further recommended that under the Transport Commissioner in a State there should be three Deputy Transport Commissioners dealing with enforcement, licensing and registration of vehicles and planning and development. It has been suggested that the State Transport Authority should be reconstitu-

ted with an official Chairman with judicial experience and two official members and two non-official members. The Transport Commissioner should normally be the Chairman of the State Transport Authority.

The Committee have also made recommendations regarding the hearing of appeals and revision petitions by a State Transport Appellate Tribunal with a full-time judicial officer of the status of a District and Sessions Judge.

A number of recommendations made by the Committee are intended to overcome the inhibitory factors in the development of road transport. Mainly, increased provision for road construction, grant of permits more freely wherever transport facilities are inadequate, use of trailer-truck combinations and doing away with multiple taxation are some of the suggestions made by this Committee. These recommendations are generally in line with the views already held by the Ministry of Transport. With the co-operation of the State Governments I hope that most of these recommendations will be implemented in the near future. As the hon. Members will realise, most of the recommendations made by the Committee have to be examined and implemented by the State Governments. These recommendations were placed before the last meeting of the Transport Development Council held in June in New Delhi. The Council which is a high-powered body consisting of Ministers in charge of Transport in the respective States felt that the State Governments should, in the first instance, be consulted in regard to these recommendations. These Governments have accordingly been asked to give urgent attention to these recommendations and communicate their views to the Government of India as soon as possible. I expect that these views will be presented to us by about the end of next month, and possibly at the end of November or in December another meeting of

[Shri S. K. Patil.]  
the Council will be held where decisions will be taken.

I may briefly make a reference to another aspect of the problem of road transport, namely the so-called controversy between rail and road transport. As I said in the other House a few days ago, there is in fact no controversy as such. The problem relates to better co-ordination in the matter of rail-road development. I am sure there are no two opinions in the country that both rail as well as road transport should be utilised to the fullest advantage of the country. In order to frame the broad objectives of a national transport policy the Government have recently set up a Committee under the Chairmanship of Mr. K. C. Neogy so that the development of transport machinery may be effected in consonance with our growing needs, with economy and efficiency and avoiding duplication to the maximum extent. As soon as the views of the State Governments on the various recommendations made by the Masani Committee are received, the views of the Government of India thereon will be finalised and steps taken to implement them.

Arguments have been advanced, and it may be asked, that while there was one Committee appointed and it had made its recommendations, where was the need of appointing another Committee. In the other House such questions were asked to which reply has been given that this Committee, namely the Neogy Committee to which I made reference, has really no direct connection with the Masani Committee. Both are for different objectives and for different purposes. The Masani Committee was appointed, as I have stated, in order to streamline, to make recommendations and to find out the bottlenecks which have got to be removed. The Neogy Committee is a Committee which advises the Government as to how there should be better and more efficient co-operation or co-

ordination between the various modes of transport. Such a Committee was promised by me any number of times—I do not know whether it was on the floor of this House or on the floor of the other House—that it should be appointed so that we should have co-ordination between various modes of transport so that all functions smoothly and efficiently. Therefore, there is no contradiction between the one Committee and the other Committee that has now been appointed.

In the end, Sir, I am sure that this House would like to join me in thanking the Chairman and members of the Committee on which this hon. House was also represented, for the very good job they have done and the wide interest they have stimulated in this very vital national activity, our national road transport.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Motion moved:

"That the Report of the Road Transport Reorganisation Committee, 1959, laid on the Table of the Rajya Sabha on the 4th May, 1959, be taken into consideration."

SHRI J. S. BISHT (Uttar Pradesh):  
Mr. Chairman, Sir, I must congratulate the Government for having appointed this Road Transport Reorganisation Committee, and the reason for that congratulation is that the Government of India is primarily interested in the development of its Railways.

[MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN in the Chair.]

Railways being a very big undertaking, somehow the Railway Board has always been against the development of road transport in any shape or form and it must be due to some pressure—inside pressure—that this Committee was at last appointed. I also welcome the main recommendations that have been made by this Committee.

Now, Sir, the Committee themselves have brought to our notice that in India today our road mileage is very

small. I will not compare it with that of the United Kingdom or France which are small and compact countries where road transport has been developed over a very long time. I would rather compare it with a country of continental magnitude like that of the United States of America. There, the road mileage is about one mile to one square mile of territory, whereas we have got one-quarter of a mile to a square mile. We are, in fact, much less in area than the United States of America—practically one-third. In fact, America is  $2\frac{1}{2}$  times the size of India. But, Sir, we know that transport by motor vehicle is increasing very fast and it is only because of our economic poverty that we have not been able to develop motor transport to the extent that we should have done. I will not compare it with countries like America, Australia or even England, but compare it with small countries like Iraq. You will be surprised to find that for a population of one lakh in Iraq, they own 611 motor vehicles, and in the Phillipines they own 483 vehicles for a population of one lakh, whereas in India, we own only 89 motor vehicles to a population of one lakh. Now, it is true that as development proceeds and our economic condition improves, the total number of motor vehicles is bound to increase many, many times over what it is today. It is, therefore, very necessary that we should take immediate and early steps to reorganise this motor transport, especially the reconstruction and expansion of Highways—National Highways as well as State Highways—which are in a very backward condition. We have got 1,21,617 miles of metalled roads and 1,95,051 miles of unmetalled roads and on these the total load is about ten million animal-driven vehicles, one hundred and thirty thousand goods trucks, fortyfive thousand buses and three lakhs of motor cars. You will thus see that this system of transport is facing many great difficulties. The Committee has pointed out what those great difficulties are. Firstly, the system of taxation is very bad. The motor vehicle

industry is subjected to Central taxation, state taxation and local taxation, from which the Railways are practically, completely, exempt. The Central taxation comes in the form of excise duties or import duty on petrol and diesel oil and on parts that are imported for these motor vehicles as also on many types of motor vehicles that are imported from foreign countries. Then there is the State taxation for registration and other sundry objects. Then there is the local octroi or the vehicle tax imposed by municipalities. In fact, an appendix is given here—Appendix V—in this Report, which is rather very surprising. I will give out just one or two instances to show what exorbitant rates of taxation are charged. In Andhra Pradesh, for instance, the amount of yearly tax levied on a 40 seater stage carriage is Rs. 4,800, whereas in that very Andhra Pradesh, in the Telangana area, it is Rs. 1,488. There is a great disparity even within the State in the level of taxes. Then there are other taxes which I need not recapitulate here. In other States also, the taxes vary. For instance, in the reorganised State of Bombay, it is Rs. 1,390. In Aurangabad, it is Rs. 768. In Kerala, if you go to Malabar, it is Rs. 4,800, whereas in the T.C. area, it is Rs. 6,000. I think it is a record. No other State has got such a high taxation as the Travancore-Cochin area the former Travancore-Cochin State. Of course, there are other taxes—wheel tax by municipalities and taxes of various other types.

Now, Sir, this is a very great handicap to the motor car industry. They have got to pay taxes at every stage. Then there are other difficulties that have been very rightly pointed out and to which very pointed attention has been drawn by the Committee from pages 41 to 45.

Chapter IV is with regard to the licensing policy. I have had something to do with it because I was once a member of the Transport

[Shri J. S. Bisht.]

Authority. So I know what difficulties there are, because a man who wants to have a licence for a motor vehicle, especially a truck, has to grease his way through the whole hierarchy of officialdom. If he is lucky enough, he will get a chance that way. It is so very difficult and the advantage of it is that once you happen to get a permit and then if you are not inclined to go into that business, it has got a tremendous market value. You can sell it at a big price. So people who have got some influence are able to get these licences or permits as they are called. Then they can trade in them without even spending a single pie on any of these things. It is therefore necessary that this thing should be cleared up and better arrangements should be made so that these permits are issued freely. In certain areas, they have got a sort of syndicate. The motor vehicle owners have formed themselves into a syndicate and nobody outside this syndicate is allowed to have a permit at all. I do not know how far that is legal or is permissible under the law, but such sort of monopolistic development should be strongly discouraged. Everywhere there is this transport syndicate consisting of private owners. Maybe, a man may be owning a truck or somebody may be owning five or six trucks and they form themselves into a syndicate. There is no reason why a man who wants to stand out of the syndicate and give them good competition should not be allowed to have a permit. In fact, there must be a rule that a certain percentage—twenty or twentyfive—of the permits should be given only to those people who do not go into syndicates or that sort of monopoly concerns. Even in a capitalist country like America there are very strong laws against trusts, cartels and monopolies. Therefore there is no reason why in this motor transport industry we should allow the growth of a monopolistic tendency in a particular area, because they try to make profit out of it. And then, of course, there is also the road trans-

port owned by the States. There are certain States, of course, where the private sector is also operating on the same route as the State, I mean the buses running. That is very good; that is very welcome, because there is competition, and that keeps both the services in good order. But in many States in U.P. for example wherefrom I come, there is the general policy in evidence that the private buses are not allowed to operate on those routes on which State transport buses are operating. This also should be strongly discouraged, because we should know wherein the users' choice lies, the customer, the man who wants to use this particular type of transport, whether for travelling as a passenger or for sending his goods. Well, he should be allowed to have the advantage of free competition and we should strongly disapprove of any action that does not allow scope for free competition. I hope the Ministry of Transport, which is now totally different from the Ministry of Railways—it was a good day when it was, so to say, disengaged from the Railway Department—will have a free hand in this matter and not allow itself to be controlled or directed by the Railways. As I was submitting just now, as between the motor vehicles themselves, whether owned by the State, by the syndicate or by a private owner, there should be free competition. Similarly, there should be free competition between road transport and railway transport and river transport and other modes of public transport. The Railways should not be allowed, under any pretext whatsoever, to come in the way of the development of road transport. The Committee has very strongly pointed out these points. In fact, they say in paragraph 23 at page 41:

"In respect of railways and roads, the principle of roadrail co-ordination was accepted long ago but, in the opinion of the Committee, it has not been fairly applied and has

been working in a one-sided way so as to restrict road transport."

This is quite correct; I entirely agree with this; I endorse this opinion because the Government of India, as long as road transport was also under the control of the Railways, rather, the Railway Ministry, tried to issue directives to the States so as to see that road transport was developed only along what they call "feeder lines." that is to say, lines along which road transport brought goods and passengers to the railway stations, but not any road transport which was running parallel to or in competition with the Railways, why not? Why should they not have it? Now, this is a point which is worthy of serious consideration.

Then, Sir, they have also said in paragraph 25:

"The Railway Board has since been carrying out a campaign for restricting road transport in the name of co-ordination."

I draw the attention of the hon. Minister and the Ministry to this particular point, because they have given on subsequent pages—42, 43 and 44—the various reasons, and I think on page 46 they have reviewed the various conclusions with regard to cheapness or otherwise of one form of transport as against another. Whatever be the calculation made, the fact is that a large amount of capital is forthcoming in the private sector and the capital is being invested in motor transport. Apart from that the user finds it of very great advantage, of moving the goods by using road transport instead of rail transport. We all know what great disadvantage there is in rail transport. There was an anti-corruption committee with regard to the Railways. They pointed out various things, how it is difficult to get wagons, how it is difficult to get the things to the stations and we see from the Railway Budget, every year, that the Railway Ministry is paying three crores of rupees a year by way of compensation to people whose goods

are lost in transit, and remember this please, that before 1941 or 1940 the annual compensation that the Railways were paying was only three lakhs of rupees for the whole of India, which then comprised India as well as Pakistan. And now the improvement is that in India alone they are paying three crores of rupees a year. They cannot stop pilferage of goods in transit. And then there is the difficulty with regard to wagons. There may be wagons or there may not be wagons, but unless the *mal babus* and the station masters and the goods transport department are—what should I say—well paid, it is virtually impossible to get these things. Therefore, what is happening today is this—it is so even in Delhi itself—that people who are importing cotton textiles from Bombay get them direct by road transport from that place. They get many advantages in this. In the first place they get it very quickly, in two or three days. In the second place they go out to the wholesale merchant in Bombay, at his shop, and from there they bring it to the wholesaler here, at his shop, delivered from door to door.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: It is time.

SHRI J. S. BISHT: Therefore, for all these reasons I am submitting my views and I hope that the Minister of Transport will take a strong line in this matter and not be carried away by the considerations that are put forth so speciously by the Railway Department, that it is a State investment and therefore this thing should be stopped or discouraged, because what they have to consider, as a Government, is the facility which the ordinary customer is provided with, whether he wants to travel by motor transport or wants to carry his goods by motor transport. His convenience and his facility and his economy should be the first consideration which should weigh with the Government as a Government. There is one way of doing it and that is by making the Railways alive to a pro-

[Shri J. S. Bisht.]

per sense of their responsibility in this matter, not the Railway Minister particularly, but the railway staff because, after all, one Minister or two Ministers can do nothing in this matter. It is a big corporation of one million people and it is so big that these people have gone on their way whether this Minister comes or that Minister comes. They cannot control it; it is beyond their power. Therefore the only thing that will control them is very strong vigorous competition by other modes of transport so that it will make them sit up and think about it.

SHRI D. P. SINGH (Bihar): Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, I have gone through the Masani Committee Report very carefully and I am of the view that the recommendations made in that Report are very salutary. I extend my welcome to that Report generally.

Sir, it is a well-known fact that if our country is to be industrialised rapidly, it is absolutely necessary that road transport is developed as fast as possible. We all know how road transport has been neglected all these years, and the Masani Committee was appointed not a day too soon. In fact, a committee of this kind should have been appointed earlier to go into the whole question and to make its recommendations. Now that the Report is there and the recommendations are there, and the hon. Minister in the course of his remarks told us that the Ministry was very much in agreement with the recommendations contained in that Report; I only hope that no inordinate delay will occur in implementing the recommendations contained in that Report.

Sir, it has been our experience, over and over again, that committees are constituted; they submit their reports; there is a general welcome extended to these reports; but the Government do not find it possible, for some reason or the other, to give effect to the recommendations contained in these reports.

Sir, we all know how the Railway Ministry—I do not want to throw the blame on any particular individual—has been coming in the way of the development of road transport. They lay down conditions from time to time that a bus or a truck should not be allowed, for instance, to ply over 70 miles or 100 miles and things like that, that there should be no competition between the road transport and the Railways. I am definitely of the view—and I believe this House is also of this view, as was made clear in February last in the course of the speeches made by the Members of this House—that the Railways must not be allowed to come in the way of the development of road transport, that no mileage limit should be imposed on buses or trucks plying on the roads, and that this competition between the Railways and roadways will lead to a rapid industrialisation of our country.

Sir, I am a bit surprised that in the wake of this Report the K. C. Neogy Committee has been appointed. Personally I have great regard for Shri K. C. Neogy. He is a man of great integrity and all that. But this Committee, unfortunately, is loaded with officials and bureaucrats. It is a well-known fact how these officials, whenever they are on a committee, always pull in the direction of their departments. They do not look at the picture as a whole; they look at the picture piecemeal. They look at the picture from the point of view of their department. Therefore, I would appeal to the Minister that, if possible, this Neogy Committee should be reconstituted and some Members of Parliament belonging to both Houses should be associated with it. That will introduce the necessary balance.

Sir, I also think that this Neogy Committee, which has been appointed to go into the question of national transport, should have come earlier than this Masani Committee. If the whole picture would have been there

already, the Masani Committee would have functioned in a much better manner. As it is, it is something like putting the cart before the horse

Having said this, I would like to point out that so far as the mileage of roads and all that is concerned, our country is extremely backward. It has been pointed out by Mr. Bisht, who spoke before me, how the mileage of roads in our country is very small, and how the motor vehicles in our country are in a very small number. Sir, we do not compare favourably, in the matter of motor vehicles and roads, even with countries which are not considered to be very advanced, such as Ceylon, Iraq and Malaya. Every effort must be made to see that there is no obstruction in the path of the development of road transport. With that end in view certain recommendations have been made by the Masani Committee which, I am sure, are being taken into consideration.

Sir, so far as taxation on road transport is concerned, in India it is considered to be the heaviest in the whole world. I do not see why such a heavy taxation should be there when we are so keen on developing our road transport. It is a well-known fact how passengers moving in buses or trucks are harassed when they go from one part of the country to another. But in Europe, for instance, one can go from one part of the country in a bus, nay from one country to another without any harassment at every step. All kinds of duties are there—terminal tax, octroi duty, toll duty and so on. All that is coming in the way of the development of our road transport. I, therefore, suggest that there should be a single point tax. Such a move was suggested a few years ago—I do not exactly remember the year—but it was pointed out that the Government of India could not direct the States as to the quantum of taxation because that is a State subject. But the Parliament, certainly, can legislate on that. Some kind of principle of taxation should be incorporated in

our legislation to the effect that there would be only one tax—a single-point tax. That will make things very much easier. It will avoid so much of botheration and so many impediments. It will certainly be a proper thing to do.

It may be pointed out that if these municipalities and local bodies are not permitted to impose octroi duty and things like that, possibly they will not have the necessary finances. I suggest that something must be done to make it possible for them to have additional finances which they will be deprived of as a result of there being only one tax. Certainly, that argument should not be advanced as a very cogent argument for putting down the development of road transport.

Sir, excise duty has been imposed on diesel oil which is imported in our country. Most of our buses and trucks—about three-fourths of them—are run on diesel oil alone. This imposition of excise duty is bound to militate against the development of road transport. This should be borne in mind.

Sir, another recommendation of the Masani Committee is about truck-trailers. It is argued that our roads are not good enough to be able to carry a heavy load and all that. Sir, I very much doubt that. I think no serious effort has been made to find out what load our roads and bridges can carry. On the other hand, it is said that our roads can carry three to four times more than the present load. I, therefore, suggest that there should be a proper examination of the bridges and roads to ascertain whether or not it is possible for them to carry bigger loads. In this direction also, I suggest, some improvement is necessary. Sir, I feel the attachment of trailers with trucks makes road transport more economical. You can carry much more load with the lesser expenditure. I, therefore, suggest that the truck-trailer

[Shri D. P. Singh.]

combination should be definitely encouraged in view of the fact that we are not able to produce the necessary number of trucks. For instance, during the first three years of the Second Five Year Plan, as against a target of 60,000 trucks we were able to produce only 47,000. Actually we required even more than 60,000, but that was what was aimed at during the first three years. Even that target we have not been able to reach. I, therefore, suggest that production of trailers will go a long way in removing the deficiency which is there as a result of a shortfall in truck production.

Sir, there is another aspect also from which we have to look at the whole thing. It is from the point of view of employment that we have to look at the recommendations of this Committee. There is so much unemployment in our country that we cannot afford not to utilise any opportunity that comes to us for removing it. Railways, Sir, in the year 1955-56, employed about a million persons, whereas road transport employed about 2.6 million people. From that point of view also, Sir, it is necessary that we develop road transport. I also find that the Planning Commission recommended some time ago that no further taxes should be imposed on road transport with a view to making it possible for road transport to be developed. I do not know how many States have really paid attention to that. I also find, Sir, that the economic mission sent by the World Bank made certain recommendations that road transport should be developed in this country because it is very much cheaper to develop road transport. Roads are cheaper to build than railway lines. So, from all points of view, from the point of view of economy, from the point of view of employment etc., the development of road transport is absolutely called for.

Sir, a number of recommendations have been made, which are of very great importance, for reforming the

administrative set-up. I need not go into all those details because we know all those things. But I believe, Sir, that the sooner these recommendations are implemented the better, because our experience has been that lots of impediments are there as a result of our administrative set-up being what it is. Therefore, it is absolutely necessary that these impediments are removed without any further loss of time and that all the necessary reforms are made, so that there is absolutely no hindrance in the path of road transport development. Thank you.

SHRI N. M. LINGAM (Madras):  
Mr. Deputy-Chairman, I welcome the opportunity that this House has been given for debating this very important question. Sir, the question of transport reorganisation has been before the Government for some time past, but I feel that it is only now that the Government is coming to grips with the problem.

Sir, transport, as the House knows, occupies a very important place in the economy of the country. It is not only necessary for quickly transporting our passengers and goods, but it is also necessary for rapid industrialisation, and to keep in step with the scientific age in which we are living. Sir, judging from the development of transport, both rail and motor, during the last few years, we have every reason to be satisfied that we are making headway in the development of transport, and it is time that we consider the question of reorganising the entire transport system not only in the interests of the development of our country, but also in the interests of the efficiency of these services themselves.

Sir, the Committee has gone into almost all aspects of road transport and has made its valuable recommendations. I feel inclined to agree with most of the recommendations. Where I differ, I shall briefly comment upon. Sir, the Committee feels that for the sake of efficiency, an

operator should have a certain minimum number of vehicles for passenger transport. I feel, Sir, that this minimum of five vehicles which the Committee has mentioned should be relaxed in special cases, depending upon the development of the area and the need for transport in it. There need not be any rigid principle with regard to an economic unit.

Then, Sir, with regard to the appointment of committees at the regional or State level, the Committee has said that it is in favour of having an Advisory Committee attached to the State Transport Commissioner. But it does not recommend the appointment of a similar committee at the district level. I feel strongly that a similar committee even at the district or regional level should be appointed. The present practice in some of the States is that there is only one officer—the District Collector—who deals with all matters connected with transport, issuing permits etc. Although there is a State civil servant—Secretary—it is necessary that there should also be a committee of two or three members associated with the Regional Transport Authority.

Sir, the other provisions relate to delays in the issue of licences and the necessity to make the present provisions of the Motor Vehicles Taxation Act less irksome and less harassing. They are no doubt welcome. The question of taxation is a major question and it has got to be dealt with in the context of our fiscal policy as a whole. But the fact remains that motor transport is heavily taxed in the country, and some kind of rationalisation is called for. Then, Sir, the Committee recommends truck-trailers. I think that is something to be welcomed. It also recommends dieselisation which is also going on apace. It further recommends credit facilities and development rebate for the development of this industry—similar to the concessions that we have been giving for the development of other industries. These things have to be

considered by the Government probably in the context of industrialisation of the country as a whole. But a corporation for giving credit facilities seems to be called for, because we have got corporations for giving assistance to every conceivable enterprise in the country.

Sir, before I go to the next subject, I only wish that this valuable Report had been submitted after our national transport policy had been decided upon. It is only now that the Government has appointed a Committee under the chairmanship of Mr. Neogy to formulate our national transport policy. Sir, that should have preceded, as my hon. friend, Mr. Singh, said, the consideration by this Committee of the reorganisation of road transport, because any road transport development ought to take place in the framework of our national transport policy. Otherwise, Sir, we are apt to take a detached view with regard to the development of road transport in the country. But, Sir, I am glad that the final decision on recommendations of the Committee will be made only after the Committee under the chairmanship of Mr. Neogy submits its report.

Now, Sir, before I conclude, I would like to say a few words on the question of rail-road co-ordination.

Mr. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You can continue after lunch.

The House is adjourned till 2-30 P.M.

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 (PANDIT S. S. N. TANKHA) in the Chair.

SHRI N. M. LINGAM: Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, I was referring to the question of rail-road co-ordination. In

[Shri N. M. Lingam.]

the Report of the Road Transport Reorganisation Committee there is a Minute of Dissent. I think it requires greater attention than Members have cared to bestow on it. The majority report says that there should be unrestricted expansion of motor transport, that is, they call it the consumers' choice. They say that the individual should have the freedom to choose the mode of transport he wishes to employ; but then we must have regard to certain things, certain conditions in the country in looking at a problem of this kind. I do not know what the attitude of the Ministry is. For all I know the Ministry is keeping an open mind on this question, but it is the duty of this House to focus attention on certain aspects of this problem. It is true that ours is an undeveloped country, an under-developed country and it is a big country. So there is enormous scope for the development of both rail and road transport and under the Five Year Plans we are developing both. For the Railways the outlay during the Second Plan is of the order of Rs. 1,200 crores. I would like to analyse the implications of unrestricted development of road and rail transport. It is arguable that that problem does not exist in the country today. I agree, but I do not entirely agree because certain sections of the country are developed and certain parts are not developed. We are having scarcity areas and we have areas where there is concentration of industries. We have areas which are starved of communication facilities. So to the extent that there is this lop-sided development, this problem exists. I shall show how this exists. Now 25 years ago, this question was discussed and the Government came to certain conclusions. They laid down what is called, a Code of Principles and Practice for the regulation of motor transport. That was in 1945. According to that Code it was stipulated that the following distance limits in regard to the licensing of goods vehicles between points connected by rail should be observed:

Up to 50 miles.....free licensing; 50 to 100 miles.....justification to be established;

100 to 200 miles....stronger economic justification to be shown;

over 200 miles.....permits to be issued only in exceptional cases and for commodities such as perishable and fragile goods.

I do not see how anybody could take exception to this Code of Principle and Practice. If there is unrestricted competition between these two, one or the other is bound to be affected. Take, for instance, the transport between the principal cities of Madras, Bombay and Calcutta. We have rail transport connecting these metropolitan cities and now we see goods services also being introduced. What will happen? The rail transport is bound to be affected. I could understand the road transport going and opening up undeveloped areas. There is vast scope, I agree. But this competition has a tendency to come into conflict in areas where there is adequate arrangement for transport.

So, even in an under-developed country, there is this competition which is inimical to the economic of the country. So if our national assets—and one of the biggest asset is our Railways—are to be put to best advantage, then co-ordination between the two is inevitable and to ensure effective co-ordination, it is not enough if you merely lay down and observe these Principles. We should go to the root of the matter. Even in planning our National Highways, even in opening new railway lines, even at that level, this co-ordination has to start. Unless we open up undeveloped areas, inaccessible areas, we cannot have a balanced development of the country. So, even at the developmental stage, there should be this understanding between

the Railways and the motor transport wing of transport. Our National Highways system should be based on such an understanding. Otherwise what will happen is, we will have a first-class National Highway system without regard to the transport facilities available by other means. It will mean a huge outlay. It will mean that the existing investment on the Railways will not be put to the best advantage. So in having a transport policy, not only in regard to Railways but in respect of roads also, we must have regard to the existing modes of communications and the most important system of communication we have now is the Railways. So even at that stage, co-ordination should start. If that happens, it is easy to visualise that there will be easy co-ordination at the transportation stage. Hon. Members may be aware that even in advanced countries like the U.S.A., West Germany and the U.K. this unrestricted encouragement to road transport has resulted in the Railways suffering severe losses and going out of existence. In the U.S.A., the passenger traffic is almost nil, thanks to the development of air traffic and road transport. But even goods transport has been diverted to such an extent that Railway lines are being uprooted. So even in a free country like the U.S.A., it has been thought necessary to frame rules and other conditions under which the private sector in the road transport should operate. Even in West Germany, which is a right-wing Government at the moment, with highly developed autovans, they have re-oriented their policy because that has proved inimical to their Railways. Then the Railways have other purposes too. They have to serve the larger national interests of integrating the country by a unified communication system. They are useful during times of emergencies also and an undeveloped country which is just trying to plan its development can ill afford to see that the best return is not made out of the Railways. We talk of free consumers' choice or

freedom in choosing the mode of transportation. In a planned economy everything is regulated.

We regulate industries and we regulate the growth of every kind of economic activity in the country and as I said, when advanced countries have found it necessary to regulate the various modes of transportation, there is a great and compelling reason for regulating the means of transportation in our country. I shall give a few figures in this connection. It is said in favour of unrestricted development of road transport that the cost is cheaper and that transportation is quicker. It is true; it has several advantages. I am not going into the details of the figures. The figures of rates per ton mile of road transport and rail transport are available and they can be worked out very easily but we have to examine the conditions in which the Railways are working. The rate structure in the Railways has a profound social bias; they have to charge concessional rates for the essential commodities required by the people and to make up for this loss that they incur, they charge higher rates for luxury goods. It is said that the cost of construction of a highway is cheaper. It works out at Rs. 1½ or Rs. 1¾ lakhs per mile whereas it costs about Rs. 7 lakhs to construct a mile of railway but then this does not take into consideration the volume of transport that will be on the respective lines of communication. It is quite easy to come to a conclusion without having regard to the impact of the respective modes of transport on the other aspects of the economy. So, Sir, here is a matter on which the House has to impress upon the Government the need for a well-laid out policy of co-ordination. I do not agree with the view that the Railways are out to emasculate road transport. I agree there is unlimited scope for the development of road transportation but then the competition should not be where the Railways

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are functioning. I agree too that the Railways have to show greater efficiency; they have to go in for increased dieselisation and the operational efficiency should increase. All that should be there and the Railways cannot simply sit back and say that there should be no competition. They should increase their efficiency to the maximum possible extent but having said that, Sir, I would strongly urge that this question of transport co-ordination should not be lost sight of. This has not been given the attention due to it in this Report because probably as one Member in the other House said, the Chairman of the Committee had a philosophy of *laissez faire*. That may partly be the reason but it is a mistake that this Committee has entirely overlooked the need for regulating the development of the various modes of transportation. We have to develop transportation to the maximum possible extent. There is great room for it but each system of transport has got a definite place in the economy of the country and unless we apportion to each mode of transport a place in the development of the country, there will be national wastage, overlapping and it will be the people who will be suffering.

Thank you, Sir.

SHRI J. V. K. VALLABHARAO: (Andhra Pradesh): Mr. Vice-Chairman, at the outset, let me welcome the Report which is before us. It is a comprehensive one on road transport. Of course, with some modifications here and there, we may get a very good report. There are good suggestions worth considering in this Report but at the same time, I cannot but express my strong dissatisfaction at the attitude of the Government, at the way they gave almost every interested party a place on the Committee excepting the workers. Nowadays, so much is talked about workers participating in the management of industries. Here is an example of the Government appointing a Committee

of enquiry to go into the problems of an industry which is vital to society and yet the person who does the actual operation does not get a representation to give his suggestions about the working of the industry. Much worse, Sir, is the way the Government made the appointment of a representative of the Railway Board on this Committee. This Committee was appointed in May and, after six months, a representative of the Railway Board was hustled into it but not a representative of the workers.

SHRI P. N. SAPRU (Uttar Pradesh): There is one person, Secretary-General of the All-India Motor Owners' Union. Was he a worker or was he not a worker?

SHRI J. V. K. VALLABHARAO: That is a body representing the transport owners, not the workers. It is clear also from the memorandum submitted by them.

SHRI P. N. SAPRU: Was that gentleman a labour leader?

SHRI J. V. K. VALLABHARAO: No, he represented the motor owners.

Another surprising thing is this: The questionnaire was circulated to all and sundry but not to any central organisation of the transport workers. No copy was received by any central organisation officially. The central organisations were also not asked to give their suggestions in spite of the fact that day in and day out it is they who carry on the transportation. I bring this to the notice of the Government now with a view to seeing that at least in the matter of appointing advisory committees they take the workers into consideration. I do not mind from which section of the organisation the representative comes so long as there is opportunity for the workers to express their views on such a body so that we may have all the aspects of the industry represented on such committees.

Sir, coming to the recommendations of the Committee, an unfortunate controversy is there and has again been brought to the forefront, the question of competition between rail and road transport. I am surprised at the minute of dissent recorded by the Member of the Railway Board. Perhaps he was sent only to record that. Even taking the targets of the Second Plan into consideration, nearly 68 million tons of goods traffic have got to be moved and the Railways, with all their schemes of expansion materialising, can account for only 48 million tons, leaving a gap of nearly eighteen to twenty million tons to be covered. How are we going to cover this gap with the present set-up in the States, the types of licensing systems adopted, the delay in the grant of permits, the favouritism and the undue impediments that are placed on road transport? Over and above all this is the question of taxes. I am glad that the Committee has taken into consideration all these factors and has roundly blamed the respective State Governments and in some cases the Centre also. I hope the Government will take note of this. I know from my own personal experience in my State, Andhra Pradesh, the position regarding the taxes, the octroi duties and the inter-State permits. From one end of Andhra Pradesh, if a lorry has to run to the other end, it has to pass through three States, Madhya Pradesh, Madras and Mysore and Orissa—which means four States—in the case of a lorry going to Vizag District. What are these taxes? Can small operators function with these? One has to take a lot of permits and for every permit we all know how much has to be shelled down, both legal and illegal. Well, can we encourage motor traffic in this way? Can't we do away with all these and have a single point tax as is suggested by the Committee? This is a serious suggestion worth considering by Government.

Another important thing is about the delay and the favouritism, if not

nepotism, that is practised at the time of giving permits and issuing licences. Some machinery has to be evolved whereby this licensing system should be liberalised. I do not agree with some of my friends who said that liberalising will lead to competition. I know in some States the routes run parallel to the railway line but fortunately they are few but I know areas where we have absolutely no other transport facilities at all and for months and months together goods have to lie idle at railway stations with urgent labels and all kinds of things. Taking all these into consideration, at least so far as goods carriers are concerned, we must liberalise the system of permits and licensing.

Another very good suggestion which I welcome in this Report is the one about the question of loans. Here again I know of cases—I am sure even in Delhi it must be the case—of small transporters getting a loan and paying interest at the rate of between 15 and 20 per cent. to private individuals to get a vehicle and eke out a living. They get the vehicle all right but they cannot keep the vehicle in order because the interest eats away all the income and it is with great difficulty that they run the vehicles with the result that the transport suffers, both passenger as well as goods. So here is a welcome suggestion according to which the State Bank and the Reserve Bank should come to their aid. When you consider that transport is a vital sector, when you consider that it is necessary to encourage quicker transport of goods and passengers, it is all the more necessary that some arrangement should be made whereby the State Bank and the Reserve Bank should give loans to parties who are there in the transport industry. In this connection I may even go a step further and say, if you like you limit the loans to co-operative societies, say, of transport operators or of transport workers. This way you will

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not only help them to run better vehicles but it will also result in better speed and better comfort for both passengers and goods.

Then there are many suggestions with regard to speed, laden weight and trailer combinations. Though these are welcome suggestions, I am afraid that there is another serious obstacle when we think of the suggestions and that is the obstacle of accidents. And that is a serious problem because once we increase the speed, increase the laden weight and also put into operation the trailer combinations, can we run all these on these Moghul fashion roads, roads which were built during the time of the Moghuls? Now, Leyland buses have got to run on them. One has only to go to Old Delhi to find out with what great risks the drivers have to manoeuvre a curve here and a turn there. What about these roads? An erstwhile Home Minister and Chief Minister of a province and a party leader today, the Swatantra Party, once called the Public Works Department as Public Waste Department. They function without any regard for the traffic and transport system and the roads are absolutely left neglected. I can only cite the example of the grand trunk road between Madras and Calcutta. If one were to travel they will find at least 15 bridges down with at least four of them down in a distance of 20 miles, that is, in the Vizag District. No bridge is repaired; nothing is taken care of and it is on the National Highways also. The roads are absolutely neglected and you expect that the buses should ply on them. How can they? And the Transport Ministry has nothing to do with road maintenance; their job is to issue licences and permits. And then they keep quiet. Sir, there must be co-ordination. I will go a step further and say that the Ministry of Transport should be combined with the Ministry of Highways and Public Works especially in the States. Unless and until we do that, co-ordination cannot be effective and unless and until we have full co-ordi-

nation, better transport is not possible and all our conceptions about speed, trailer combinations and other things will not help to solve the problem. So this is a very important aspect so far as the States are concerned. Even at the Centre, if I may be permitted to suggest, the Government should consider this. I would not say how these two departments are running not even parallel, but sometimes they run one contradicting the other. This has got to be taken into consideration and we must see that better co-ordination prevails at all levels.

Now, I come to another very interesting point. Suggestions have been made about reorganisation of the committees at State level. I am glad about the suggestions but I am only sorry that none of the members again thought of the workers in spite of the fact that some of them, I am told, were in the past workers' leaders including my friend, Mr. Masani. When they considered the question of reorganisation of Regional Transport Committees and State Transport Committees, they never thought about the workers, I do not know why. But it is highly essential that on those committees at least one representative of the workers should be there. If I take my own State of Andhra, I know how the Transport Committee is there. Unfortunately as it is, there are two or three M.L.As who have nothing to do with transport either from the owner point of view or from the operator point of view or the driver point of view. This kind of patronage should stop because transport is a vital sector and there should be no party consideration, no favouritism, no patronage in these things. Since such unfortunate things are happening, the Centre should at least direct the States that such committees should be manned by people who are actually in the industry either as operators or as workers or who are vitally interested in it and just X, Y or Z to whom they may like to show some patronage should not be made members. It is very necessary. I would only request the hon. Minister to go through some of

the proceedings of these Committees in some of the States. And what do they discuss if at all they discuss anything? I do not know of all States but I know of at least one or two States.

(Time bell rings.)

Sir, there is a very important question which was not referred to at all by this Committee and that is the question of nationalisation. I do not know why the members felt shy of nationalisation. As it is, only 20 per cent. of the passenger transport services are nationalised, there is still 80 per cent. to be nationalised. Nationalisation will not stand in their way, because there is ample scope. If we extend nationalisation even up to 50 per cent. still there is ample scope. And they also did not think it fit to discuss the question of the automobile industry in the public sector. Look at the present condition. Take the case of the Delhi Transport Service. How many Leyland buses are lying idle for want of spare parts which some X, Y or Z has to go abroad and buy at what rate we do not know. Why does not the Government think of having at least one or two workshops to manufacture spare parts in one or two States where the entire transport is in the State sector? This suggestion is not there and I hope my friends who are today thinking of extending the public sector into all spheres will take this into account along with these proposals. Thank you, Sir.

3 P.M.

SHRI BABUBHAI CHINAI (Bombay): Mr. Vice-Chairman, however belated, the constitution of the high-level Committee under the Chairmanship of Shri K. C. Neogy to recommend the basis on which the long-term transport policy of the country should be based, is extremely welcome. In the light of the recent controversy especially over the respective roles of rail and road transport, I am sure that the formulation of a national transport policy will provide the basis for resolving some of the dilemmas which transport issues in India, as in all countries, throw up for the authorities.

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The problems of road transport are many and varied. First of all, there are the Railways which are opposed to competition from roads. Secondly, there is the heavy burden of taxation, perhaps the most heavy in the world, which the country's road transport system is bearing. Thirdly, there is the administrative problem. These are only a few important problems which require immediate attention.

Let us now consider road rail competition. The case for rail transport rests chiefly, if not wholly, on the ground that, if some of its lucrative lines of traffic are diverted to road transport, it cannot continue to carry on several essential commodities such as coal, cement and mineral ores at the low rates at which they are now being transported by rail. It is true that there is some truth in this argument but it does not constitute the whole truth. There is scope for the development of both the road and rail transport in this country. Lest I may be misunderstood, I would like to make it clear that I am not for unhealthy competition between road and rail transport. A certain amount of control and regulation on both is inevitable. Nevertheless, there is also need for a certain element of competition so that transport services might not only be economical but also efficient.

It may be argued that Railways have made a very heavy investment which must be safeguarded and the return on the capital must be maintained. Nobody denies it. But it should not be forgotten that road transport is as much a national enterprise as the Railways. It is wrong to think that by encouraging road or any other form of transport, the investment in Railways will be in jeopardy. Besides, the contribution of road transport to the exchequer is not inconsiderable. In fact, the investment in road transport is estimated at as high as Rs. 1500 crores and the return to the Government by way of taxes is as much as Rs. 94 crores. This is in contrast to a return of Rs. 40 crores on an investment of about Rs. 1000 crores in Railways. Thus even on grounds of return

[Shri Babubhai Chinai.]

on investment, road transport deserves better treatment. Again, even the claim that the average cost of carriage by rail is less than that by roads is not borne out by facts.

The development of automobile industry is closely connected with the development of road transport. The country has already established its automobile industry and unless road transport is encouraged, the future of automobile industry will not be bright. India has only 89 vehicles for 100,000 of population. This contrasts with 37,998 in the U.S., 25,236 in Canada and 22,939 in U.K. Further, the employment potential in road transport is also very high. Road transport employs roughly 2.68 million men as compared with 1.05 million in the Railways. If we are to take only surfaced roads in the country and mechanised transport for comparison with the U.K., our roads carried in 1956 only 1½ trucks and 2 other motor vehicles per mile, as against 9 and 27.7 respectively in that country.

Let us now turn to taxation aspect. Surprisingly, nowhere else in the world is road transport so heavily taxed. There is not only multiplicity of taxes but also a variety of authorities to collect them. In some States, the licence fee is so heavy that it amounts almost to a tax. There is large confusion in regard to inter-State taxes. There is, therefore, need for reorientation of the tax-structure so as to assist the development of road transport on sound economic lines. Octrois, wheel taxes and other imposts charged by municipalities as well as tax on passengers and goods carried should be discontinued; octroi being merged in general sales tax and the other imposts in the vehicles tax. Sales tax on trucks and buses should not be at luxury rates.

There is also the problem of finance to be considered. I would like to point out in this connection that the cost of vehicle has increased so much

since 1939 that it is difficult for the owners in this field either to replace old vehicles or to increase their fleet without a certain amount of financial assistance. I, therefore, agree with the recommendations of the Masani Committee in regard to the provision of credit facilities by the State Banks, the scheduled banks and the State Finance Corporations. I am also one with the recommendation of the Committee that the development rebate granted to the shipping and scheduled industries should be granted to road transport industry also.

The cost of road transport has become heavy in India. This is due to several factors. First of all, there are many bridges and culverts yet to be constructed. Then, there is a glaring lack of metalled roads. There are severe load limits on trucks. These are besides the heavy load of taxation and the hanging threat of nationalisation, which has made investment not only risky but also unprofitable.

It would not be out of place here to mention that of late we have found that in the State of Bihar nationalisation of road transport is going apace. In spite of the fact that road transport is run very efficiently, this is being done. On top of it, when nationalisation takes place, the owners of the vehicles are not allowed to sell their vehicles to the State. They should be taken over by the State, but this is not taking place. Not only that, compensation is also not granted to the people whose vehicles are being taken away due to nationalisation.

[MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN in the Chair]

Therefore, Sir, as I said, there is no wonder that the cost of transport has been springing up.

Finally, Sir, there is the consumers' point of view which must be taken into consideration. After all, in the ultimate analysis, the best form of transport is that which serves the users best. He who serves best requires to be treated best. In other words,

consumers' interest should be given top priority. In this connection I feel that it will be doing great injustice to the consumer if the monopoly for long distance traffic is to be given to the Railways only. The advantages of road transport lie in its quicker and efficient door-to-door service. There is also virtual immunity from pilferage. I have no doubt that the railway authorities can profitably divert a part of their attention to finding out the means by which their services can become much more acceptable to the consumers. It is only when they have done this that they will have a better case for a larger share of total traffic. As it is, the complaint of the Railways regarding unfair competition of road transport does not stand justified.

From the point of view of efficiency and consumers' interest, I feel that the formation of a unit of five vehicles for intra-State transport and ten vehicles for inter-State operation is essential. Such viable units will be facilitated only if fears of nationalisation are removed and the burden of taxation reduced. It is now generally agreed that there should be no nationalisation of road transport before the end of the Third Plan. There is certainly need for extending this period of immunity, considering that road transport will have to expand at a faster pace in the Third Plan.

So far as the administrative aspect is concerned, except the National Highways, all the rest are in the State sphere. The present administrative set-up is altogether inadequate for the purpose of expansion. We have today three times as many vehicles as in 1939. I agree with the suggestion of the Masani Committee that there should be a Transport Ministry in each State to deal exclusively with roads and road transport, and such a Ministry should be under the Transport Minister exclusively devoted to these subjects.

Before concluding, may I point out that roads are to the nation like the arteries to the human body? There are five lakhs of villages in India.

Many of them do not have even approach roads. Unless these villages are closely connected, which can be done largely by roads, the future development of the country will be bleak. In this context, roads and road transport reserve the topmost priority. What is wanted is a bold policy which will give steady and lasting benefits, and I am sure the hon. Transport Minister is not neglecting that.

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR (Punjab): Mr. Deputy Chairman, first of all I would like to pay my tribute to the Masani Committee for the excellent report submitted by them. They have taken pains to go into every aspect of the question of road transport and have suggested some excellent ways and means for the solution of what is a very vital problem for any country and, in particular, for ours where I think it may be said that today we literally carry on with not even a bare minimum of facilities. Not only is the insufficiency of roads horribly apparent in comparison with other countries, but the quality of our roads is also lamentable. The fact that 60 per cent. of our road mileage is unmetalled and unable to withstand bad weather conditions should make us pause. Unbridged river crossings and weak culverts, belated repairs, to mention only a few handicaps, limit the utility of even the few roads at our disposal.

In fact, it is high time that proper consideration should be given to the development of road transport without which there can be, if I may say so, no all round development of the country.

It was good this morning to hear from the lips of the Minister in charge of Communications that he was grateful to the Masani Committee for their exhaustive report and that the latter had been sent to the States for their comments which were expected to be received by the end of November.

Sir, I can only hope that there will be no delay in implementing the re-

[Rajkumari Amrit Kaur.]

commendations of the Report and that the same will not be allowed to lapse into obscurity as is often the case with so many excellent reports.

It should be possible without delay to begin to do away with the inhibitory factors which the Report has highlighted. I refer to the inadequacy of roads and bridges for which temporary arrangements to facilitate through transport could surely be made. In the construction of bridges I believe the Government's programme is a good deal behind schedule already. It is said that foreign exchange to the extent of Rs. 5 crores is not to be had. Why not, when Rs. 380 crores of foreign exchange is available for Railways and Rs. 35 crores for port development?

Then there is the unnecessarily low limit of vehicle weights permitted to ply over our roads and bridges. This is a handicap which, again I feel, should not be beyond redress.

Why are truck-trailers not allowed in order to encourage road transport? In every country they are allowed, and I think that this is something which needs to be looked into by the Ministry.

The import of automobiles has been banned. Production in this sphere must not fall short of the demand. But I believe, if we were to look into the figures, we would see that it does fall short of the demand. If it does, then I think that some relaxation in import should be resorted to.

The heavy taxation—to which the speaker who spoke just before me has also referred—under which the road industry suffers, is one of the major handicaps in the way of development. The taxation, if I may say so, is not only heavy but it is also chaotic, wholly unscientific, wasteful and damaging. Moreover there is no uniformity in it as between State and State.

There are other points raised in the Report also on which, Sir, I have not the time to touch. But I sincerely hope the Minister will give them his favourable consideration at the proper time.

Sir, I was happy to learn from the Minister that the Neogy Committee—which is purely an official body—is in no way connected with the terms of reference of the Masani Committee. The need for co-operation and co-ordination is also very very great and this problem stands in need of urgent solution. The Minister also stated that there was no competition between rail and road transport. I believe he used the word controversy. I wish I could be convinced of that. I am afraid the Railways do look upon road transport as something which impinges on what they consider is their preserve. The convenience of the user is not given the consideration that is its due. The primary objective of the Railways seems to me always to be railway earnings. Sir, this attitude must be changed. Transport and communications of all kinds must primarily cater to the needs of the public for, after all, they are utility services—something whose efficiency, whether from the point of view of speed, of safety or of comfort, is essential.

Lastly, Sir, I do hope the Minister whose interest in the proper development of road transport is well known, will see to it that private endeavour in this field is not sought to be crushed. I submit—and I think he has said so more than once from public platforms—that there is ample room for both the private and public sectors to serve the public. Why must the State want to control everything? The Prime Minister has on more than one occasion also said that everyone must help to fulfil the needs of the country and that there is room for both private and public endeavour. Here is a sphere then where Government whose hands should be more than full with the building of

roads should welcome private enterprise coming to their aid in transport. But the evidence at my disposal goes to show the contrary. The speaker who spoke just before me referred to Bihar. I think I saw in some newspaper the other day that Mysore State has actually fixed a date by which road transport will be wholly controlled by the State. I think this is a wrong policy at a time when the need is immense and when the State by itself cannot cope with this need. Healthy competition, moreover, is a good thing, because it not only encourages initiative, but it also helps to maintain high standards of efficiency. To crush initiative is intrinsically bad. No nation can develop without initiative and this particular industry is not in the hands of what are called 'vested interests'. Private road transport has generally been undertaken by members of the middle class and they have literally been pioneers in this sphere. They should be encouraged to form co-operative unions and they should be allowed to develop what is a vital necessity for the country. Neither village nor town can flourish without communications. I appeal to Government to spend all the funds they can spare on ever-expanding programmes of road construction and allow private endeavour largely to run the transport on these roads.

And when roads are constructed, may I appeal to the Minister to see that they are wide enough and really well built? It seems to me that this art of road building is unknown to those who construct roads today. We have so many technicians helping us in various fields from various countries, and I think that an expert or two in this sphere should be brought or else, the annual expenditure on extensive repairs simply because roads are badly built, will go on mounting sky-high.

There are many other recommendations as, for example, the creation of a Ministry of Transport in every

State and the creation of an Advisory Committee also in each State and at the Centre, to which I hope due consideration will be paid. The problem is a very, very vital and urgent one, and I am glad that it is being seriously considered.

SHRI BISWANATH DAS (Orissa): Sir, I thank the hon. Minister of Transport for establishing a very healthy convention of placing the matter before Parliament after the report of a committee is received by Government. Let me state in this House that we devote more of our time to legislation than to discussing the principles which should govern this country. Committees have been appointed, reports are submitted and decisions are taken. Of course, Members of Parliament are kept informed of these reports of committees, often without a discussion. Under the circumstances, I welcome this motion, and let me hope that my hon. friend proceeds a step further in placing the final decision of the Government on the Report of the committee and take the approval of Parliament or at least have a discussion in this House.

Sir, having stated so much about the convention set up by my hon. friend, himself a parliamentarian of reputed, let me plead with him as to why he did not in the statement he made, try to place his cards on the table. He said nothing more except thanking the Committee for their labours. I expected the Government who has received the Report four months back to have examined and considered the same. Having this before us, have we not a claim to know what steps or what decisions or what attitude Government is going to take on certain specific matters recommended by the Committee? To illustrate, the Committee has made certain distinct recommendations, and let me quote a few—arrangements for carrying more weight, even under the existing roads and bridges, under certain changes; recommendations about a healthy competition in pas-

[Shri Biswanath Das.]

senger traffic; the system of trailers; the financial accommodation to which a reference has been made, then the development rebate and so many other things. We would have been delighted to have some guidance in this regard from the Government. We expected that a note at least would be circulated to hon. Members of this house showing the difficulties or the inconveniences or the extent to which Government could possibly go. This would have been very helpful in such a discussion.

Sir, I must in this connection also place certain feelings which arise in my mind, namely, certain omissions in the terms of reference of the Committee. There seems to be some sort of a mania among my friends in the House for nationalisation. Sir, I cannot have it nor could I agree to nationalisation for the fun of it. I refuse to have nationalisation. As a user, I am called upon to pay more the moment Government enters into the field of nationalisation of an undertaking. When I say this, I have just to illustrate it. Sir, the moment Government assumed charge of the bus service, they enhanced the fare. I speak of my State, and in many other States. Also the same thing has been done, not once, but twice. I leave all the comforts to my friends and if they are really the users of the bus, they will also know the difficulties arising out of nationalisation in a State where you cannot have all the transport buses that the service needs and have to overstuff the passenger traffic. Indeed, the difficulties of the users are probably unknown to my friend; otherwise, he would not have blurted out. Secondly, I am surprised that a person, so much accustomed to earn his own living and to find its resources for any undertaking that he takes on hand, should have forgotten not to refer to the question of the road transport services eking out an existence, I mean earning something out of the roads themselves. Sir, I find in our country that no attempt what-

soever has been made to derive some income out of the roads, out of the road services as such. I specifically refer to the question of the development of avenues on both sides of the roads which would earn and make a distinct contribution towards the maintenance of road services in this country. Sir, unless and until this item of activity is under taken by the Government, I do not think that I for my part would very much advocate nationalisation of road services; I would not agree to Government undertaking any service without the service earning something for its own existence. Sir, I believe the development of avenues should be undertaken by the Transport Ministries, both in the Union and in the States, so that roads could earn something as a sort of contribution for the maintenance of road services and thus make a distinct contribution to the national wealth. Unless and until this outlook is cultivated in this country, specially by the road services and the Transport Ministries of both the Union and the States, there is no salvation for the country. Sir, I feel that my hon. friends have to explain why no reference to this Committee has been made on both these counts. If you nationalise the services without having a strong check on the forces that you create to carry out nationalisation, then the sufferer will be the user, the user of nationalised transport. I cannot agree to repeated additions to freights, without necessary control. Sir, a very well regulated national service necessarily calls for a well co-ordinated system of roads. How can you have it in a country like ours where you have a Planning Commission which is lacking and lacking hopelessly in the manner and in the method of regulated development of the country? Sir, having made this charge I have to justify it. When I say this I say the following to justify what I say. I speak nothing from myself but speak from the Evaluation Report of the first five-year programme, which is in our hands. Sir, there are certain States which are very poor in transport. I speak of

the State of Rajasthan, of Madhya Pradesh, of the State of Orissa and of Assam. What have you done? Precious little has been done in those States to develop the road transport services. Sir, if you look into the Evaluation Report you will find that more than 50 per cent. of the money allotted to the State sector has been consumed by three States of Bihar, Bombay and West Bengal. Is it fair, Sir? I would not place any reliance on the recommendations of this committee which wants a graded hierarchy and more power at the Centre. As long as this attitude remains with the Centre, we will have to cry halt and say 'no' to any further powers that are needed. Sir, distribution must be fair. We were neglected by the British Government, and are you, the Government of the Union and the so-called Planning Commission going to put us again to the same strain, to leave us in the same neglected state? Undeveloped States need more money for road development. And is this the way that you should distribute money, the national finance? It is not your own money. Therefore, as long as this attitude lasts I have to say 'no' to whatever the Commission may say or the committee may say, and I refuse to accept and oppose a graded hierarchy that has been suggested in the report.

Sir, then comes rail-road competition. Why should there not be competition? Competition is the sauce of life. We are having Railways, not for luxury but for the use of the nation but, Sir, I have to admit shamefully that people carry fruits from Andhra to my State Orissa, and carry cotton-goods from Bombay to Orissa in trucks. Why? It is because they find that it is not safe to carry them by rail, because of thefts, awful thefts, and then things remain uncared for for a very long time. Are you going to throttle trade? Are you going to throttle consumers by refusing, by denying a thing which is so necessary? I cannot be a party to a suggestion which refuses, which denies co-ordination. Sir, in the

transport organisation let there be corporations. I do not want any Government to make it a part of Governmental activity and thus control everything and hide everything and then justify everything. That should cease. There should be corporations and the corporations should be on the commercial account basis of the States Government or the Union Government, as the case may be, Legislature should get balance-sheets. Therefore I want that there should be competition between Railways and roadways, between nationalised road transport services and the road transport services run by private operators or by co-operatives. Sir, my district has got the privilege of having nationalised road transport, and that is being run by a corporation. The operators very often approach me and say: "Why have all these? We will constitute ourselves into co-operatives. Leave us the service. We will run the service cheap and give you the dividend. You have your dividends and we will run it cheap". Why can't you agree to this? If you cannot manage this cheap, if you cannot run it economically there are the drivers and conductors ready to form themselves into co-operatives and willing to undertake this service. Why can't you have it? If you cannot have it, you have no business to throttle the user and to throttle other parallel activities which are going to serve the nation. Therefore, I am not a party to any nationalisation unless it is really national and serviceable to the great numbers, to the millions of users that are to benefit by an efficient and properly-run service.

Therefore, I want not only rail-road competition but also competition of the nationalised road transport service with the private operators, or by drivers conductors being constituted into co-operatives. There should be competition; otherwise the user will be the first person to be put in the casualty list. Thank you.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE  
MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT AND  
COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI RAJ  
BAHADUR): Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir,

[Shri Raj Bahadur.]

I am grateful to the Members who have, I believe, expressed appreciation and approval of the step we have taken in placing this Report for discussion by the House, and accorded their agreement with the broad recommendations of the Committee in regard to reorganisation of the transport departments in the various States.

I do not think there are any points raised here about which one could take any objection, because we find almost near unanimity in the House about these recommendations. But, Sir, some sort of apprehension seems to have been expressed by Shri Lingam, if I have been able to understand Mr. Lingam correctly, that the Ministry of Transport may or may not have an open mind so far as the recommendation of the Committee in regard to the freedom of the "consumers' choice" goes. I would like to start with that point.

I can assure my hon. friend, Mr. Lingam, that we have got an open mind on this subject. We have, however, got to take note of the economic factors and forces that come into operation whenever the question of choice of transport comes. What we need for the country, as has been very rightly observed by Rajkumariji, is an efficient and adequate system of transport which could meet the requirements of our growing economy. We are trying to take the torch of prosperity to the remotest corners of our country. We want to bring happiness and smile on the faces of our people in the villages. If they want to have the fruits of freedom, if they want to enjoy what real prosperity and civilisation is, they must be connected by roads.

Sir, we are lamentably lacking so far as the mileage of roads is concerned. Figures have been given from time to time. I would only say that at present we have got 26 mile of roads per square mile. The twenty-year plan, which our Road Engineers have formulated, if implemented in

twenty years, at a cost of Rs. 5,200 crores, will increase that particular average to 52 mile per sq. mile. So, it is obvious that the first need of the country, if the fruits of freedom are to be enjoyed, if the fruits of all the developmental activities that are taking place in the country under a systematic programme drawn up under our successive Plans, have got to be reaped, is that roads must be built. And with roads comes the road transport. So, naturally, when we have said time and again that there is ample scope for the development and expansion of the road transport system and the rail transport system, there is no exaggeration.

Sir, the need for co-ordination of the two has been felt from time to time. Objections have been raised by those in the road transport industry that this need for co-ordination has, more often than not, resulted in restrictions being placed on the expansion of road transport. Now, let us assess and realise the basic facts of the situation. Road transport has been labouring under certain conditions and limitations which cannot be ignored. Firstly, there is lack of roads, lack of strong bridges capable of carrying the heavy traffic that is emanating now. Then there is the shortage of production of automobiles. After all, all these factors have got to be taken note of. Added to this is the code of principles and practices which has been in operation for some time since 1945. That also is an important factor which we have to bear in mind. Functioning under these handicaps, or limitations, it has to be recognised and appreciated that whatever development has taken place in the road transport industry has largely been the result of the initiative of the people in the industry.

We cannot claim that road transport as such has come to its present level of development by any significant help or assistance from the Government, although, lately, since the

separation of the Ministry of Transport we have tried to place due emphasis and given due importance to the needs of development of road transport. Let it be realized that the road transport industry as such has been functioning and labouring under certain inherent limitations and restrictions. That is the situation. Despite that, it offers certain advantages. Those advantages have been referred to from time to time and have been under lined again in the Report. Whether those advantages pertain to the higher speed road transport ensurers—it is estimated that motor transport is thrice as fast as the Railways—, whether it enables one to effect savings in the terminal costs, whether it is comparatively much more convenient in so far as it avoids and eliminates the need for transshipment, whether it provides door-to-door delivery and so many other advantages that are inherent in motor transport, on account of all these factors the consumers' choice has been definitely influenced by these over-riding considerations. All these advantages influence and determine the choice of the user. The consumer or the user has also to judge for himself on the basis of all these facts and advantages what means of transport should he choose for transporting his goods or commodities. Obviously, when it comes to that, whatever rules and regulations or laws we frame, they do not help us much when the laws of economy come into play—it may be that we think that for some time the rules and laws might help us—but in fact, the consumers' choice prevails in the end. It is like a fast—rushing, torrential stream; and it is very difficult to swim against the current. The consumers' choice prevails often despite the limitations of distance that are being enforced today. We know that these limitations have been bypassed by the present operators by clever adjustments of arrangements. So, all these limiting factors have led to certain disadvantages and even malpractices which, I would say, are not

healthy for the society either because it has been observed—and we also know that—that a sort of premium obtains on the grant of permits, a sort of premium obtains also on the sale and purchase of vehicles. It is not good for the society; the society and the operator, both are exploited that way. It is high time that we should reorganise our transport departments in the various States in a manner which would ensure that such irregular practices or such malpractices are avoided. And that is why this Committee came into being. At the moment, Sir, our deliberations in this particular debate are restricted to the recommendations which are contained in this Report, so far as they relate to the reorganisation of our transport departments in the various States.

As I said earlier Sir, there seems to be a general agreement in regard to these recommendations. I would only add that we have evolved a procedure by which these recommendations will come up for consideration by the highest body in the land, namely, the Transport Development Council, which advises the Government in regard to the formulation of policies about matters pertaining to transport, by the end of November. We hope these recommendations would find favour with the Transport Development Council as well.

Now, Sir, certain observations were made by Mr. Lingam to the effect that unrestricted operation or competition should not be allowed. That is a rule by which we have stood all this time. I have just now explained that the principle that unrestricted operation or competition should not be allowed, may be a healthy principle, but it has got to be observed by all the modes or forms of transport. It cannot be enforced only in respect of one system. When we speak of co-ordination, we should realise that it is a two-way traffic and not a one-way traffic. The rules of the game have got to be observed by all the

[Shri Raj Bahadur.]

parties concerned. Therefore, Sir, I am sure that the Neogy Committee that is now considering this particular question will be able to decide upon certain principles which will be beneficial and which will serve as good guiding principles for determining the premises or the limits within which these various modes of transport can expand.

Then, Sir, he also suggested that there should be planning at the root, and even in planning there should be co-ordination. Well Sir, I am at one with him in this, and I am sure that whatever planning we do, we have got to take note of the fact that the needs of the country are adequately and efficiently met. Infact, there it is that Members have felt a little concerned, if I may say so, about the need for greater emphasis on the improvement of roads and the development of road transport system. In the Second Five-Year Plan—I am just referring to this fact in order to illustrate my point—we had been given an allotment of about Rs. 260 crores for the development of roads. Against this, if I remember aright, the Railways got Rs. 1,125 crores. Out of these Rs. 1,125 crores, Sir, the foreign exchange content was of the order of Rs. 375 crores. I think that that figure has been given by Rajkumariji also. Against that, Sir, we want a small allotment of Rs. 5 crores for getting high-tensile steel for our bridges. We find some difficulty in regard to that too. That is where we shall have to take some more care of the principle that we should have co-ordination at the root or at the stage of planning itself. One mile of railway line costs about Rs. 6 or 7 lakhs and we know that at this much cost we can have as many as six or seven miles of new roads. Out of the total programme for Rs. 1,125 crores for the Railways we had a provision for new lines extending to only about 842 miles. In these five years' time, if everything goes well, we shall have 842 miles of new lines. So far as we

are concerned, Sir, it is obvious that roads have got to expand, and expand at a much faster rate than at present. We also know that the demand for road expansion is coming from each district and from each taluk, and we cannot ignore that. I would very much welcome the principle that has been supported by Mr. Lingam that there should be planning at the root and there should be co-ordination at the planning stage. And that principle we shall bear in mind.

Then, Sir, he said that planned economy always meant some regulation, and I have no doubt that this particular principle also will be taken care of by the Neogy Committee but this obviously means regulation for all the different links of the industry. So far as the other recommendations in this Report are concerned, I would not touch upon them, because they also are largely covered by the terms of reference of the Neogy Committee. At the moment, Sir, we are concerned with the recommendations pertaining to the reorganisation of State Transport Departments; and I believe, Sir, that they have found favour with this House. Therefore, I should thank the hon. Members for the interest that they have shown and for the importance that they have attached to the needs of road transport in this country. Thank you.

सरदार रघुबीर सिंह पंजहारो (पंजाब) :  
उपमहापति जी, ट्रांसपोर्ट मिनिस्ट्री  
ने इस वक्त तक सात अलग अलग किस्म की  
कमेटियां बनाई और उन के फैसले उस के  
सामने आये । जहा तक मिनिस्टर्स का मवाल  
है, एस० के० पाटिल साहब और राज बहादुर  
जी चाहते हैं कि कुछ न कुछ किया जाय,  
लेकिन अभी तक उन के माइंड्स में कुछ  
कंप्यूजन मा चल रहा है, जिस की वजह से  
कोई सही फैसले पर नहीं आ सके हैं । मिसाल  
के तौर पर आप के सामने व्हीकल टैक्सेशन  
इंक्वायरी कमेटी १९५० में बनी, उस के  
अलावा स्टडी ग्रुप आफ ट्रांसपोर्ट प्लानिंग

कमीशन बना उसके बाद एस्टीमेट कमेटी की रिपोर्ट आप के सामने आई। इंग्लैंड वाटर एंड ट्रांसपोर्ट कमेटी की रिपोर्ट आप के सामने आई और ट्रांसपोर्ट कमिशनर्स कांफ्रेंस जो मसूरी में हुई थी, उस के फैसले आप के सामने आये। उस के बाद मसानी कमेटी की रिपोर्ट हमारे सामने अभी डिस्कशन के लिये आई। तो वे डिस्कशन के लिये आई ही हैं कि इन्होंने एक नियोगी कमेटी और सामने रख दी। नियोगी कमेटी में चाहिये तो यह था कि कुछ अगर इन्होंने बनाना ही था, तो उस में पब्लिकमेन, जिन को कुछ एक्सपीरियेंस था, जो कुछ काम कर सकते थे, जैसा मसानी कमेटी ने जगह जगह जा कर किया, इस किस्म के आदमी लगाते। लेकिन इन्होंने वही आफिशल्स, सिवाय नियोगी जी के, बाकी सब के सब इस में लगा दिये। मिसाल के तौर पर प्लानिंग कमीशन के सेक्रेटरी को लगा दिया, रेलवे बोर्ड का सेक्रेटरी लगा दिया, चेयरमैन लगा दिया, ट्रांसपोर्ट मिनिस्ट्री का सेक्रेटरी लगा दिया। मैं नहीं समझता कि इन आदमियों को इस कमेटी में ला कर इन से क्या ज्यादा मे ज्यादा फायदा करवा सकते थे। ट्रांसपोर्ट मिनिस्ट्री के सेक्रेटरी अपनी मिनिस्ट्री में बड़ी अच्छी तरह एडवाइज दे सकते हैं। रेलवे बोर्ड के चेयरमैन अपने सजेशन पहले भी देते थे और देते रहे हैं। ट्रांसपोर्ट मिनिस्ट्री अपनी अलग राय रखती है। लेकिन इन को ले कर फिर कमेटी बना कर इक्वायरी करना, इस से मैं तो समझता हूँ अभी तक इनका माइंड क्लीयर ही नहीं हुआ कि हमें क्या करना है, क्या नहीं।

हमारे हिन्दुस्तान में पांच लाख देहात बसे हुए हैं। अब भी कई ऐसे गांव हैं जहाँ पचास पचास, पैंतालीस पैंतालीस मील से लोग चल कर दूसरी जगह पर पहुंचते हैं। सिवाय बैलगाड़ियों के उनके पास और कोई चारा नहीं है। मैं चाहता था कि हमारी उन कमेटियों की सिफारिशों के बाद जल्द

से जल्द सड़कों का जाल सारे हिन्दुस्तान में बिछ जाता या उसके लिये कोशिश होती, लेकिन अभी तक प्लानिंग कमीशन न जाने क्या कर रहा है। हालांकि फाइव इयर प्लान चला गया, दूसरा चल रहा है और तीसरा सामने आ रहा है। चाहिये तो यह था कि कुछ डेफिनेट सजेशंस आते लेकिन नियोगी कमेटी बना कर इस मामले को लम्बा बनाया जा रहा है और फॉर्थ फाइव इयर प्लान में शायद कोई चीज़ आ जाय तो आ जाय, लेकिन अभी तक उन के माइंड में कंप्यूजन ही चल रहा है। चाहिये तो यह था कि एस० के० पाटिल साहब कोई डैशिंग चीज़ लाते और ट्रांसपोर्ट के प्रॉब्लम को दूर करते। अभी आप के मामले राजबहादुर जी ने बतलाया कि रेलवे बहुत कम मील लम्बी बनने जा रही हैं, दूसरी तरफ यह होता है कि ट्रांसपोर्ट के ट्रक्स वगैरह पर रेस्ट्रिक्शन लगाये जा रहे हैं, उन के ऊपर टैक्सेज लगाये जा रहे हैं और एक सूबे से दूसरे सूबे में आ जा नहीं सकते। उन को

4 P.M. आठ दिन या छः दिन के लिये टैम्पेरीरी परमिट दिया जाता है और उस के बाद कंसिल कर दिया जाता है। मैं समझता हूँ कि आजकल की दुनिया में, जबकि हिन्दुस्तान नया बनने जा रहा है, ज्यादा आगे बढ़ने जा रहा है, तो इस तरह के ट्रांसपोर्ट रेस्ट्रिक्शंस को बिल्कुल हटा दिया जाना चाहिये। अगर कोई ट्रक बम्बई से दिल्ली या किसी सूबे में जाना चाहती है उस को फ्रीली जाने की इजाजत दी जानी चाहिये, ताकि सामान एक जगह से दूसरी जगह जल्दी पहुंच सके और जनता को आराम मिले। आजकल क्या हो रहा है? ट्रांसपोर्ट में रेस्ट्रिक्शन की वजह से ज्यादा जोर रेलवे गुड्स द्वारा सामान भेजने पर दिया जा रहा है। इस से लोगों को यह परेशानी होती है कि पहले उन्हें घर से सामान स्टेशन ले जाना पड़ता है और इस के लिये उन्हें खर्च देना होता है। स्टेशन से फिर वह माल दूसरे शहर में जाता है और

[ सरदार रघुबीर सिंह पंजहजारी ]

वहां स्टेशन से फिर उस को दुकान या घर में ले जाया जाता है। इस तरह से उस सामान को रेल द्वारा भेजने पर काफी खर्च हो जाता है और इस का असर जनता पर पड़ता है, क्योंकि जब सामान को भेजने पर ज्यादा कीमत लगेगी तो चीजें महंगी हो जायेंगी। ट्रक्स द्वारा जो सामान एक जगह से दूसरी जगह जाता है उस में एक तो खर्च कम होता है और दूसरे सामान घर के दरवाजे तक पहुंच जाता है जिस से चीजें जनता को सस्ती कीमतों पर मिलती हैं। इस समय जो ट्रक्स परमिट सिस्टम है, उसे जल्द से जल्द दूर कर दिया जाना चाहिये ताकि हिन्दुस्तान के एक इलाके से दूसरे इलाके में ट्रक्स आसानी के साथ बिना किसी रुकावट के सामान ले जा सकें।

इस के अलावा मैं यह अर्ज करना चाहता हूं कि इस वक्त ट्रान्सपोर्ट को नेशनलाइज्ड करने की स्कीम चल रही है। अगर सरकार के पास रुपया होता तो सारे हिन्दुस्तान में प्राइवेट चीजों को नेशनलाइज्ड कर देती और यह हमारे सोशलिस्टिक पैटर्न आफ सोसाइटी के लिहाज से ठीक होता और मुझे इस में कोई एतराज भी नहीं होता। लेकिन इस वक्त हम तीसरे प्लान को पूरा करने के बारे में अपना सब दिल व दिमाग लगा रहे हैं और हमें दूसरी ऐसी चीजें करनी हैं, जिन से हमारा देश ज्यादा तरक्की कर सकेगा और दुनिया में ऊंचा गिना जाने लगेगा। इस समय हमें उन चीजों पर रुपया लगाना चाहिये, जो हमारे मुल्क के लिये निहायत ज्यादा जरूरी है। पंजाब सरकार न ट्रान्सपोर्ट के बारे में एक पालिसी अस्तित्वार की है और वह यह है कि आधे रूट्स उस ने पब्लिक को दे दिये हैं और आधे अपने पास रख लिये हैं। इस तरह से इन रूट्स में कम्पटीशन होता है, जिस से लोगों को फायदा होता है। इस तरह के कम्पटीशन से यह फायदा होगा कि ट्रांसपोर्ट सर्विस में एफिशियन्सी ज्यादा बढ़ जायगी और साथ ही साथ जो जनता इन बसों का

इस्तेमाल करती है, उसको काफी फायदा होगा। ट्रांसपोर्ट मिनिस्ट्री को नेशनलाइजेशन के प्रोग्राम को हटा कर इस फिफ्टी फिफ्टी के प्रोग्राम को सारे देश में लागू करना चाहिये जोकि पंजाब सरकार ने अपने सूबे में लागू किया है। इस तरह से आप इस चीज को नेशनलाइज करने पर जो रुपया खर्च करना चाहते हैं, उसे बचा सकते हैं और दूसरे जरूरी कामों में लगा सकते हैं। इस तरह की स्कीम को अगर आप सारे हिन्दुस्तान में लागू करेंगे, तो बहुत फायदा होगा।

इस तरह से जनाबवाला, मैं यह अर्ज करूंगा कि मसानी कमेटी की रिपोर्ट में एक बात बिल्कुल साफ लिखी हुई है।

श्री. शाल भद्र यादो (बिहार) : यह फिफ्टी फिफ्टी का मामला क्या है ?

सरदार रघुबीर सिंह पंजहजारी : जिस वक्त मैं फिफ्टी फिफ्टी की बात कर रहा था उस वक्त आप का दिमाग दूसरी तरफ था। मैं कह रहा था कि पंजाब सरकार ने अपने यहां सब रूटों में फिफ्टी फिफ्टी की पालिसी रखी है। इस का मतलब यह हुआ कि अगर किसी रूट में दस गाड़ियां चलती हैं तो पांच गवर्नमेंट की चलेंगी और पांच पब्लिक की चलेंगी। इस का नतीजा यह होगा कि दोनों के बीच कम्पटीशन होगा, एफीशियन्सी बढ़ेगी और जनता को ज्यादा से ज्यादा फायदा होगा। मैं ने कलकत्ते में देखा कि वहां गवर्नमेंट की जो बसें चलती हैं उन्हें प्राइवेट बसों के मुकाबले में काफी लाँस होता है। वहां पर प्राइवेट आपरेटर काफी कमाते हैं और जनता को काफी अच्छी सर्विस भी देते हैं। इसीलिये मैं यह चाहता हूं कि सारे देश में पंजाब सरकार की पालिसी पर चलना चाहिये। तो मैं यह अर्ज कर रहा था कि मसानी कमेटी की रिपोर्ट में रीजनल ट्रान्सपोर्ट और प्राविशियल अथॉरिटीज के लिये निहायत अहम सिफारिश की गई है। उस सिफारिश में कहा गया है कि उस का चेयरमैन एक जुडीशियल आफिसर होना

चाहिये, दो आफिसर और एक नान आफिसर मेम्बर होने चाहियें। मैं समझता हूँ कि यह एक माकूल बात है और रीजनल ट्रांसपोर्ट अथॉरिटी और प्राविशियल ट्रांसपोर्ट अथॉरिटीज को मसानी की रिपोर्ट को पूरी की पूरी मान लेना चाहिये। मैं मिनिस्टर साहब से अर्ज करूंगा कि वे मसानी कमेटी की रिपोर्ट को पैरा बाई पैरा मंजूर करेंगे और उस पर कार्यवाही शुरू कर देंगे, बजाय इस के कि एक नई कमेटी बना कर बक्त जाया करें, जिससे कोई फायदा नहीं होगा। तीसरा प्शन आप के सामने आ रहा है, उसमें कुछ न कुछ आना चाहिये।

SHRI P. N. SAPRU: Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, the Minister for Transport deserves our congratulation on having placed this Report before us for consideration before arriving at any definite conclusions in regard to specific recommendations. I say that the procedure is good because it enables Parliament to make its influence felt. When a Minister has made up his mind and he places a report before the House, the discussion is apt to be only of an academic character. Here we can, by making suggestions, influence his decisions. May I say, Mr. Deputy Chairman, that the Report of the Committee which was presided over by Mr. Masani, a leading light of the Swatantra Party and a great leader of the Forum of Free Enterprise, is, apart from the social philosophy which finds expression in some parts of the report, is an excellent document. Mr. Masani and his colleagues deserve to be congratulated on the thoroughness with which they have done their work. Now, Mr. Deputy Chairman, I have made a reference to the social philosophy underlying this Report. There is evidence of it in the Report. Other speakers also referred to it and I will also do it in a different way. I think there is in the Report, a bias against nationalisation or speedy nationalisation of the road transport. On page 74 the recommendation is:

"The existing moratorium on nationalisation of goods transport should be extended for a period of at least 10 years from the end of the Third Five Year Plan."

In recommendation No. 25 they say that nationalisation should be resorted to only as a last resort, as a desperate remedy. That is really what they mean. Now, whether nationalisation is or is not essential for a socialistic pattern of society is a difficult issue and on that I do not wish to make any observation just now. But I would like to say that no Government, by any pledges that it gives in this House, can bind future Governments. What will happen in 10 years or 15 years no one knows and we are living in a period of great changes. It does not really appeal to me that we should talk in terms of *laissez faire* economics. The interventionist State has come to stay not only in this country but I believe in all countries. In the Note of Dissent which was appended by a Member of the Committee—a word of thanks is due to him, for having supplied a corrective to some of the extravagant ideas of the majority—a quotation is made from Prof. Galbraith and I think that quotation is worth repeating:

"In parts of the country, not now served by rail lines, there may be investment economies in developing long distance road haulage. With this exception, however, investment in this industry should be viewed with scepticism."

I am not for a moment suggesting that there should be no development of road transport. Development of road transport is vital for the development of the country. We need to open up the countryside. We need to give to our villager opportunities of selling his goods in the best markets. We need to give to our villagers opportunities of seeing something of urban life. All this work cannot be done by Railways alone;

[Shri P. N. Sapru.]

but it is one thing to say that road transport should be encouraged and another to say that the State should follow a policy of *laissez faire* in this matter, that is to say, there should be no effort at co-ordination between the Railways and road transport. The correct thing is to strike a proper balance in this matter and, therefore, I think there is a case for a review of the entire problem by a new committee. It is unfortunate that this matter had to be considered by so many committees. Four committees have preceded, and a fifth committee will do no harm.

There is one point about which I must speak and that is with regard to the procedure for appeals which has been provided in one of the recommendations of this Committee. I think the old system was a bad one. I had opportunity to observe its working in another capacity in connection with various writ applications, I know that the transport authorities did not use to do their work properly. They used to issue temporary permits when they should have issued regular permits and they were criticised for that. I think it is a good thing to have a judicial officer who will be the reviewing authority. I hope Mr. Patil will accept this suggestion. The Committee deserves to be congratulated for having made this suggestion. It will also make it unnecessary for these bus owners to go with frivolous applications to our High Courts and the Supreme Court. I welcome this part of the recommendation very much.

As the time is up, I cannot say anything more.

SHRI P. S. RAJAGOPAL NAIDU (Madras): Mr. Deputy Chairman, though one cannot fully agree with all the recommendations made in this Report, one can say that on the whole it is a very good Report and some of the recommendations made are really worth pursuing. I am glad, Sir, that

the hon. Minister had placed this Report before us so that he can hear the diverse views and opinions on the matter so that at the final implementation stage, he will be in a position to take into account the views of various Members in this House. At the very beginning of this Report, it is said that the transport business is generally lucrative but unfortunately this is not always reflected in the prosperity and well-being of those engaged in it. My experience on the other hand, especially in certain States like Madras and Andhra, is different. There we call these bus owners as bus barons. We find that a man owning even one bus is able to make at least Rs. 2,000 per month in spite of all the taxation that is imposed on a bus. The taxes amount to nearly Rs. 4,000 per vehicle but in spite of it, they get an income of about Rs. 100 per day, though it cannot be said that this is the same case with every lorry owner engaged in the transport of goods. Some Members said that the incidence of taxation is very high. I may say that it is not at all high. On the other hand, I can say with boldness that the taxation should be doubled at least in the case of the bus owners. There was a point about a single point tax. I strongly support that recommendation of the Committee for the imposition of a single-point tax. If some buses or lorries have to ply between one State and another, they have to pay tax in the other State also. This is working to the disadvantage of the lorry owners. I live in a district which is in the borders of two States. There is a recommendation that buses engaged in intra-State transport must have a fleet of five buses. What about those who are having only one or two? While discussing the viability and the efficiency of maintenance of service in the case of goods transport, it is said elsewhere that the owner must have one lorry for plying in an area confined to a particular region; if he wants to ply throughout the State, intra-State, he must have five and in the case of intra-State, the

number should at least be ten vehicles. There is the case of a border district in which a man owns one lorry and transports goods to a place in the other State. If this provision is applied, this will work as a very great hardship on that man. It is my strong opinion that this sort of imposition should not be there, this fixing of a limit in regard to the number of buses to be owned by an individual wanting to operate on a particular route or routes. In the case of passenger traffic, it is said that for public safety and for the regular and efficient maintenance of service, the owner of a single bus cannot perform the job efficiently. On the other hand, it is our experience that it is the person who is having one or two buses who operates the service very well and to the convenience of the public. It is said in the report that only the owners of fleets owning not less than five buses should be given these routes. If this rule is imposed, then those persons owning less than five buses will not be able to run on these routes. Those men who are already in the field will be able to further expand their business and no new-comer will be allowed to enter the field. I do not know how this recommendation has been made and I hope that the hon. Minister will go into this matter very carefully and see that the small fleet owners owning less than five buses are not throttled out from their business.

There are several people who have become multi-millionaires by plying more than fifty and even hundred buses. I do not know about the condition in other States; but so far as our State is concerned, a particular individual is having more than hundred buses and his daily income is said to be about Rs. 20,000. It is also said that such of them maintain two accounts, one for income-tax purposes and another for some other purposes and if no ceiling is fixed, as suggested by the Committee—it has said that no ceiling should be fixed—the rich will become richer and the poor will remain poor for ever.

There is not much of a recommendation for the organisation of the co-operative system of transport in the country. This co-operative transport system is becoming very efficient, at any rate in certain areas in the South and I would have very well welcomed if this Committee had suggested the organisation of future transport on co-operative lines. At the same time, I will not recommend or encourage nationalisation of the transport. When once it is nationalised, there will be no efficiency at all. We have been seeing certain routes nationalised in certain areas recently and we find that it is not working efficiently at all. The bus drivers and the bus conductors do not behave properly with the passengers as a result of which lots of complaints have been made against the drivers and conductors of the buses by the passengers. Several cases of intimidation and assault had also taken place and apart from that the rates also have increased and in the buses that ply they do not look after the comforts of the passengers. It is for that reason, though when it is nationalised the State will be getting greater income, in the interests of the passengers, in the interests of those people who look to the buses as cheap transport, in their interest I would suggest that these buses should not be nationalised at all.

SHRI P. D. HIMATSINGKA (West-Bengal): They would not make income either.

SHRI P. S. RAJAGOPAL NAIDU: They will.

Now, I find that one thing does not find a place in the Report. There are certain routes which are monopolised by one fleet owner. Suppose for instance, from a place X to a place Y in a distance of 20 miles there is only one fleet owner who always monopolises that route. I would suggest that monopoly should not be there. There should be a healthy competition between one fleet owner and another

[Shri P. S. Rajagopal Naidu]  
and in one route there should be a number of persons plying their buses. It is only in the midst of competition there will be efficiency and the timings between the two places will always be perfectly maintained.

Sir, much controversy has been raised about rail road co-ordination. At the present time, as between the services rendered by the Railways and the services rendered by the buses in the transport of goods, I would always pay my compliments to the lorry system as they are quick, efficient and at the same time they maintain certain standards in the matter of transport of goods; but that does not mean that there should be unhealthy competition between rail and road. If there is unhealthy competition, if indiscriminate licensing is resorted to, if liberal licences are granted to buses for the transport of goods, what will happen ultimately is, the lorries will not thrive at all. There will be more lorries on the road and there will be less efficiency and as a result of this unhealthy competition, the efficiency and maintenance of these lorries will go down. So there should be a certain amount of co-ordination between road and rail but at the same time one should not forget the people's preference in the matter. If a particular person wants to transport his goods only by a lorry, by all means let him do it. He should not be compelled to transport his goods by rail. In all such matters one should always respect the preference of the people and if the preference of the people is to transport goods by lorries, by all means let them do so and if the preference of the people is for the rail let them have it. But if the Railways claim any priority over the road in the matter of transport of goods, I would suggest on the floor of the House that they should maintain their services in an efficient manner. There should be no delay on the part of the Railways; they should also see that there are no thefts of the goods handed over for transport and they should also see that a certain amount of

accommodation is given to those who transport their goods by rail. Even if there is a delay of one or two hours in the matter of unloading the goods from the wagon, heavy demurrage charges have to be paid. Such charges are not made by the lorry owners. They just go and dump the goods at some place and go away. They do not charge anything as demurrage. If the Railways want to compete with the road they must manage their services in such a way that people should feel attracted to send their goods through the railways. And it is not for us Parliamentarians to say that there should be no competition between the Railways and the road. People's preference should always be respected in this matter. With these few words I conclude.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Bhargava. I want to call on the Minister to reply at 4.40.

SHRI M. P. BHARGAVA (Uttar Pradesh): Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, I am happy that the Report has found a warm welcome in the House and hon. Members have generally appreciated the recommendations made by the Committee. As the House may be aware, the Report was signed on the 28th March this year and it was laid on the Table of the House on 4th May 1959. On the same day I gave a motion for its consideration in the House but for several reasons it could not be considered during the last session of the Rajya Sabha. I am grateful to Mr. Patil for having brought forward this present motion because it enabled the House to discuss the Report for three hours or rather for a little over three hours. If it was my motion, it would have been only two hours and therefore it has been a positive gain that Mr. Patil's motion is being discussed.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA (West Bengal): But you have lost also.

SHRI M. P. BHARGAVA: Now, I may state in the beginning that road transport has been having a sort of secondary role in the Government of

India for about 20 years previous to 1957. The Transport and Railways portfolio was held by the same Minister and he naturally gave more attention to the Railways and the road transport and the roads suffered, if I may say so, due to some degree of inattention. The present Committee was appointed with a specific purpose and I would take two minutes of the House to read out the terms of reference because I have to refer to something else later on.

The terms of reference were mainly three in number. The first was:

"(1) To survey the existing machinery for the administration of motor transport in the States, with particular reference to the working of the Regional Transport Authorities and State Transport Authorities and their suitability to look after the development, co-ordination and regulation of road transport consistently with the economic development of the country *vis-a-vis* our successive Five Year Plans and the need to expand motor transport to rural areas in order to develop village economy.

(2) To suggest a model administrative set-up which will . . .

This second was, I think, the main term of reference. Then there are certain conditions mentioned for fulfilment and the third was:

"To make any other recommendations germane to the subject matter of the inquiry."

Now, in order to have full knowledge in relation to item No. 1 of the terms of reference, the whole Committee held a number of sittings and examined as many as 95 sets of witnesses at Delhi, Bombay, Madras, Calcutta and Lucknow. In addition to this the Committee appointed several sub-committees to go to other States headquarters to apprise themselves with the administrative conditions of the road transport there and other matters. Almost all the State capitals were touched and as would be clear from the Schedule, the Committee was

able to study the administrative set-up in all the States. Now, after the Report of this Committee has come out, another Committee under the Chairmanship of Mr. K. C. Neogy has been appointed and there is a lot of misapprehension among the people that Mr. Neogy's Committee has been appointed over and above the Masani Committee. Well, I would like to dispel this fear and say that it is not so. The terms of reference of the two Committees are quite different and if there is any overlapping it can be only with regard to the third item of the terms of reference, namely, to make any other recommendations germane to the subject matter of the inquiry.

As far as one and two are concerned, there has been no overlapping whatsoever. Well, if the country did not have a national transport policy for all these years since independence, the responsibility for that state of affairs will have to be shared by the Planning Commission, who have not been able to give a clear and correct lead in the matter regarding the development of the various modes of transport.

Now, Mr. D. P. Singh from the other side has complained that this Neogy Committee only has its Chairman as a non-official and the rest of the members are officials, Secretaries of the various Ministries. I share his views and I am myself of opinion that an important Committee like the Neogy Committee, which is to be appointed, should have more of non-official elements and should not be confined to officials only. There is no doubt that Mr. Neogy is a man of very outstanding ability and independent views. But he will be one in a committee of seven. In this connection, I would like to throw the same suggestion, as was thrown in the Lok Sabha and which Mr. Devandra Prasad Singh also mentioned, that at least this Committee should have three non-official members, two from the Lok Sabha and one from this House.

[Shri M. P. Bhargava.]

I just forgot to mention one point about the questionnaire. Mr. J. V. K. Vallabharao from the Communist Benches mentioned that the Committee did not try to ascertain the views of the workers. Well, the questionnaire was issued by the Committee in hundreds and besides the questionnaire I may tell the House that I have definite knowledge that at least we took the evidence of two societies which were manned by workers only. We interviewed the Ambala ex-Service-men's Transport Co-operative Society where the drivers and conductors formed the society and were running the buses and the trucks. Then, we also interviewed the representatives of the Saurashtra Transport Co-operative Society, which is run on almost the same lines. In addition to these two, the small sub-committees, which were appointed, also had the occasion of meeting and knowing the views of other workers. In this connection, I will especially mention the Tripura people, where I had also the pleasure of going. There we took the evidence of the workers who were running the transport services.

Now, coming to some of the recommendations of the Committee, I wanted to lay emphasis on certain points. I shall talk about the inhibitory factors. I will not go into Chapters I and II. There they have given a bird's eye view of what was happening in the past. I will confine my remarks to Chapters III, IV and V, because the time at my disposal is very short. Now, about the inhibitory factors, the Report states, in brief, inadequate surfaced roads and bridges, rigid load restrictions, lack of encouragement to truck-trailer combinations, inadequate supply of vehicles, multiplicity of taxes, absence of reciprocal agreements between States, absence of viable units, lack of proper credit facilities and the fear of nationalisation. These are some of the inhibitory factors that stand in the way of development and road transport. Now, regarding each of these points, the Committee has devoted several

paragraphs and I am sure the Ministry will study those factors and try to remedy as many of them as may be possible. Now, one thing which I must state here is about the credit facilities. We came across evidence where people said that they had to pay as much as 18 to 20 per cent. interest on the loans which they had taken. Now, Mr. Vallabharao also mentioned this point. In this connection, I would refer the House to the recommendation made at page 74 of our Report where the three main recommendations are:

(1) The Reserve Bank may issue directives to the State Bank and Scheduled Banks to advance money to hire purchase concerns and Co-operative Banks and operators for helping the industry;

(2) The State Finance Corporations also should lend money to operators and proper machinery should be set up to regulate the interest to be charged by the intermediaries; and

(3) The development rebate granted to the Shipping and Scheduled industries should be granted to the road transport industry also.

Since I have got very limited time, I will not touch on the main question of rail-road controversy. I agree with Mr. Patil when he says that there is no controversy whatsoever. The only thing is that proper guidance has not been given to the two modes of transport and a so-called controversy is there.

Now, I would like to draw the attention of the House to a provision in the Motor Vehicles Act wherein, if everything else is equal, preference should be given to co-operative societies for running these transport services. Now, I am sorry to state that in none of these States, barring one or two, the co-operative societies have come up and I feel that enough encouragement has not been given by the authorities concerned for developing co-operative societies. Since we are laying so much emphasis on co-operatives and co-operative societies,

I would request the Minister to see that the provision in the Motor Vehicles Act is enforced. I would go further and request him that, if necessary, he may bring an amendment to the Motor Vehicles Act whereby it may be made more positive and imperative on the authorities granting permits to give permits to co-operatives wherever possible.

Next, I will come to the question of tourist traffic. In other countries all sorts of facilities are given to the tourists for travel. In India I find that tourists are not getting as much facilities as they should and in this connection I would like to invite the attention of the hon. Minister to the paras regarding tourist traffic in the Committee's Report. (*Time bell rings*). Well, Sir, I wanted to lay more emphasis on the administrative set-up, but since I have no time I will not do that and I will simply wind up

The Transport Ministry had been separated from the Railway Ministry only in 1957 and till that time they were working under great odds. The two years' achievement of this Ministry is not little. At least they have been able to focus the viewpoint of road transport in the two Houses of Parliament if nowhere else, and that itself is a great achievement. Mr. Patil himself has been very much interested in road transport. He is an ex-President of the All-India Motor Congress Union. Mr. Raj Bahadur has also been taking a lot of interest in road transport work. I feel that the interests of road transport are safe in their hands.

People have expressed their fear about the non-implementation of the Report. I can say that whatever steps are possible will be taken. The Transport Development Council has given a preliminary thought to the Report. I think in their next meeting they will consider it in full, and I have my own belief that before the end of the year it will be possible for Mr. Patil and Mr. Raj Bahadur to come here to the House and announce that such and

such recommendations of the Committee have been implemented. If even the administrative side of the Report accepted *in toto*, I think we would have done our work.

Thank you, Sir.

SHRI S. K. PATIL: Mr. Deputy Chairman, I must begin by expressing my gratefulness to the House for the chorus of praise that they have showered on the recommendations of this Road Transport Reorganisation Committee. Before I come to the various suggestions which the Members have made, there are two matters on which there is general complaint or doubt, and I shall refer to them first.

The first is there has been a feeling in the House that the Government have not put all their cards on the table. The hon. Member, Mr. Biswanath Das said it and a few other hon. Members also said so. I began by saying when I introduced this subject that we shall indicate the Government's mind. I could tell you that the Government's mind was made up when the Transport Development Council met some months back, and if the States had not required time or asked for time, surely at that very meeting we could have indicated what the Government wanted. We had gone there ready. But as the House understands, this subject of road transport is a concurrent subject where the States are even more concerned than ourselves because they deal with it, and therefore even the process of implementation cannot be completed without one hundred per cent co-operation from the States. So when they said that they wanted time, we had to give them time. That is exactly where the rub comes in and not because the Government have not made up their mind. I have said that, by and large, we accept the recommendations of the Masani Committee, and it shall be our endeavour to implement them as speedily as we can; I mean such of them as really do not require the concurrence of the States we can implement.

[Shri S. K. Patil.]

The last speaker, Mr. Bhargava, alluded to one subject, and that was about the machinery. Now, the machinery is not the machinery of my Transport and Communications Ministry. It is the machinery of the States and we have been after that subject even before the Masani Committee Report came. We have been considering that the machinery has got to be streamlined more or less on the same model as the Committee has recommended. For 90 per cent. of those recommendations to be implemented, we shall have to depend on the goodwill of the States, and we shall do everything in our power to see that we align these States so far as the development of road transport is concerned.

Then, another thing was the appointment of the Neogy Committee. My friend Mr. Bhargava mentioned it and also some other hon. Members. I am sure I made it clear that it is a Committee which is not really a Committee to have a check up of the Masani Committee. I have been making these promises on the floor of the House during the last year even when the Masani Committee was functioning, that such a Committee was necessary in order to evolve and focus attention on a national transport policy which the country needs. But apart from the national transport policy, there is that immediate purport for it, namely that we are now thinking of the Third Five Year Plan and therefore the allotment of money has got to be made. Now, for that allotment of money we must have some rough idea. I do not talk of a big national transport policy, but even for our immediate policy we should know as to how, within the available resources at our command, we can apportion them or distribute them between the various States. That is why this Committee was necessary. This is not a big Committee of public men and so on, that our friends are contemplating. This is a Committee for a limited purpose, namely, how best we should use our limited resources. That is exactly the purpose,

and that is why you find there the Secretaries of the concerned Ministries. The idea is not that we should really have more officials or Government people in that Committee. Here you will find the Secretary of the Transport Ministry, the Secretary of the Railway Ministry, then the Commerce and Industry Ministry, then the Finance Ministry, then the Planning Commission. These are the departments that are concerned with it. Whatever Committee they may be, they will sit in order to consider how best to apportion . . .

SHRI M. P. BHARGAVA: On a point of clarification, Sir. Am I to think that the national transport policy of the country is to be chalked out by officials alone?

SHRI S. K. PATIL: It is not that. Therefore I am suggesting that it was not really for the national transport policy. We use sometimes big expressions. I am not really detracting from the utility of the Committee or anything. But the immediate effect of it is, I can assure my friend that if any problems remain for which a national transport policy is not formulated by this Committee or if the Committee does not prove equal to it, then surely it would be open to the Government to have a Committee of public men for that purpose. But it will take time. It will not be useful for the limited purpose of making allotments for the Third Plan. That is why as an interim measure it has been appointed. It is at our suggestion that Mr. Neogy has been specially appointed in order that he could do the work of co-ordination, and I could tell you that in this business the officials are not necessarily bad; they are perhaps more useful than many Members of Parliament, because their views also are not views that you can take as necessarily against those that are expressed here. I am merely saying that that is a Committee appointed for an immediate purpose. The appointment has not been made by our Ministry. It has been done by the Planning Commission or by the Prime Minister in his capacity as the Chairman of the Planning

Commission. We have not done it in the Ministry of Transport and Communications. One should not feel that there is something, that there has got to be another check up of the Masani Committee and therefore this Committee has been appointed. Nothing of the kind. We can await its decisions and those decisions will not be of a far-reaching character, as I said, because the purpose of it is very limited indeed.

Sir, as somebody pointed out, and very well indeed, for the last almost twenty years—I do not know the exact period but, until 1957—there was one Ministry of Railways and Transport. You can quite understand—and I am blaming nobody for it—when you have a small thing attached to a big chariot what the fate of it would be. Therefore, two years are not really a time when you shoot up and do something spectacular. What spectacular thing could be done in two years? The very fact that you have been able to focus attention on the development of road transport is something which is really good indeed. It augurs well for the future development of road transport. I am not claiming any special credit for it. But I am just telling my friends that what could be done or what was done the last 20 years has got to be undone in a certain way and the new standards and the new idea have got to be created. Now, that requires some time and we have persuaded the Railways to go into this Committee because this Neogy Committee has been jointly created with the concurrence of both the Ministries and therefore, to that extent, we could come together. It is indeed an index of our preparedness. In the larger interests of a national transport policy, we should come together.

Now, I shall go very hurriedly—because the time at my disposal is very short—to some of the suggestions made. My friend, Mr. Bisht, wants me that we should take a very strong line, and I assure him that we shall take a strong line. Now, what

is the strong line that he means? Sometimes, the Railways, the engines, they look big as compared to our transport. Even with the truck and the trailer, the business is not as heavy as Railways. But we are not afraid of the size of the engine or anything of the Railways. And it is a matter as to how national transport in its various modes has got to be developed and whatever interests there are in road transport, these interests will be really safeguarded. We imagine—and everybody will agree with me that in a country like India with five hundred and seventy thousand villages—there may be a few thousand more—and with an area which is a million and a quarter square miles, the surfaced and the unsurfaced roads only go to the extent of 26 in a square mile or 26 in a hundred square miles and after spending Rs. 5,200 crores in the next twenty years, we want to lift it from 26 to 52. Then you can understand what the development of road transport is and what it would cost because Members must have seen what is known now as the 'Bombay Report'. The Bombay Plan will cost us, if implemented in its entirety, Rs. 5,200 crores in twenty years which almost means Rs. 250 crores a year which perhaps is impossible to get and even then, the development which would have doubled will be that we shall be going to a position of 52 in a square mile or 52 miles in one hundred miles. Then we shall have achieved something which is at the bottom of our heart as compared to the various other nations to which reference has been made. Therefore, this being an uphill task, we have got to pull our weight together in order that we fulfil it as best as we can.

Then, Sir, reference was made by Mr. Singh that no obstruction must be put on the road transport. I assure him that any attempt, no matter where it comes from, to put any obstruction will be very stoutly and successfully resisted by the Transport and Communications Ministry. There

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should be no doubt in anybody's mind about it.

About more employment in transport, he gave some figures. Sometimes, I do not know about the correctness of these figures because proper statistics have not been kept, but figures are generally given that the Railways employ about a million people, while the road transport employs more than two million. I can be quite sure of it that it is more than two million. But I cannot be so definite as to the 2.6 million, etc., unless I have got the whole statistics with me to prove it. But it is so, and as an intensive employment potential, road transport is a better thing and here, the question is not what is better and what is there. Surely, it is very necessary because all these five hundred and seventy thousand villages—or at least some of them, if not all of them—could not be approached by Railways because even if the Railways spend more than a hundred crores of rupees, there would not be even a thousand miles of Railways because they cost heavily—Rs. 10 lakhs—and that is the least cost per linear mile. Therefore, in about, say half of that cost, perhaps ten times more road transport facilities could be given and more satisfaction to the millions of people residing in these five lakh odd villages. Therefore, the importance—or rather, as I used the expression in the other House, the 'primacy'—of all modes of road transport is recognised and it is not a matter of doubt anywhere in this world, and surely it is not a matter of doubt in this country too.

My friend, Mr. Lingam said—and that is a point of view also—that the consumer choice should not necessarily be obeyed in a planned economy. Now, it is right, but for God's sake, in the name of planned economy, let us not go back. There is something which is really progressive which we are aiming at. I can quite understand that it is possible. But in this age—in

this modern age—if I want to send my things even by air, not by motor transport, I have got a right to do so, provided I am prepared to spend more money. We do that and that applies to the road transport and the Railways. And even perhaps, our water transport is slower than the Railway. All that is done. But after all, it is the consumer in a democracy, after all, it is the citizen in a democracy, who has got to be respected unless he goes wrong and then the Government or anybody comes in super judgment and says "You are wrong and therefore your choice has got to be restricted." Beyond that, it becomes the duty of every Government to see that to the extent possible the choice is respected. But I am not merely saying that you do it. That is why, to telescope the activities every period of five or ten years so far as the allotment of money is concerned, the present Committee—the Neogy Committee—has been appointed. To that extent, if the consumer choice is slightly to be restricted surely it will be restricted, but not beyond that.

Then, Sir, Mr. Vallabharao asked, "What about labour?" Now, I can tell you. My friend here, Mr. Rajagopal Naidu, gave some very illustrious examples of South India. Of that, I quite understand. They may be millionaires or multi millionaires. But that is not so all over the country. And in many cases, the truck driver himself is the truck owner. He has everything combined in himself. He asked why labour was not consulted. I do not know if by 'labour' he means the cleaners, the conductors, etc. But in a majority of cases, their representatives themselves are the labourers. Except where all these big things exist. It is a different matter altogether. Something could be done about it.

Mr. Chinai talked about the development of the automobile industry, and I am one with him. I am not quoting figures here because they have been quoted in that Report and there.

you will see that we are at the bottom of it. There is no comparison between a country like Australia—so small—with a population of not more than seven million and a country like India with a population of 380 million. Possibly, we multiply every year as much as the whole population of Australia and you will find that every year, we require not more than eighteen to twenty thousand vehicles as against perhaps one hundred or two hundred thousand vehicles in such a small country. Therefore, it becomes possible for them to develop, and it has got to be done in this country also. I am not merely quoting this figure to show our poverty. But we must make every endeavour to see that the automobile industry makes progress as far as possible and without its progress, surely, all these things that we are talking of will not really come.

Then, Sir, one or two other points were made by Rajkumari Amrit Kaur. She is now the President of the All India Motor Union Congress—the place which I used to occupy for some time and which I have now left in better and more efficient hands. She has made out a very beautiful case for the development of road transport. I know her views, I have heard them very often, they have been my views all this time, and surely, I shall do everything in my power to see that those views are implemented. She used certain adjectives in connection with taxation. She used the words “chaotic and unscientific.” It is chaotic; it is unscientific. And whenever the State Governments do not get any money, they immediately make the poor motor or truck owners their target. I can perhaps agree with Mr. Naidu that it is possibly because they want to mop up money. You mop up their money in some other way. They are escaping from payment of income-tax. Many more people escape from paying it because we cannot catch them. That does not mean that we must finish them at the very beginning so that there would be nothing left for them for taxation.

But it is a chaotic and unscientific policy and that is why whatever allotment we fix, it has got to be scientific. There is no doubt about it and it can be easily acceptable everywhere.

These are some of the views that have been expressed. My friend, Mr. Bhargava, made a plea as to why some of the Members of Parliament should not be associated with that Committee, etc. I have made it clear that that Committee was not intended to be of that type. There might be perhaps a second Committee necessary afterwards. We shall try to have a much longer time and go round the country, and possibly, they would do it. That Committee is something different from the Committee that is there.

With this explanation, Sir, I can assure this House that as far as it lies within the power of the Transport and Communications Ministry, it will be our constant endeavour to see that road transport develops very fast in this country and to the extent possible, we can persuade our State Ministries to line with us so that we can jointly do it because it is a concurrent subject, apart from the legal aspect of it. Without their co-operation, we can do precious little, and I am sure they will join us because they are more interested in it than ourselves. With the co-operation of all of them and with your co-operation, we shall really forge ahead and do something of which we shall have reason to be proud.

#### ANNOUNCEMENT RE ORDER OF BUSINESS FOR 21ST AUGUST, 1959

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I have to inform the hon. Members that after the transaction of Private Members' Business set out in the List of Business for Friday, the 21st August, 1959, Government Legislative Business will be taken up in the following order:—

1. The Wakf (Amendment) Bill, 1959.
2. The Dowry Prohibition Bill, 1959. (Reference to Joint Committee.)